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Waging War among Civilians: The Production and Restraint of Counterinsurgent Violence in the Second Intifada

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Waging War among Civilians:
The Production and Restraint of Counterinsurgent Violence
in the Second Intifada

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science

by

Devorah Sarah Manekin
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Waging War among Civilians:
The Production and Restraint of Counterinsurgent Violence

in the Second Intifada

by

Devorah Sarah Manekin

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Edmond Keller, Chair

Theories of violence against civilians in conflict have tended to view combatants in homogenous terms, as the obedient pawns of military elites, or as uniformly prone to violence due to passionate emotions, economic opportunism, or military socialization. In contrast, this study shows that combatant participation in violence is variable: While in some circumstances soldiers embrace violence eagerly, in others they attempt to shirk it or refuse to commit it outright. What accounts for this variation in violence and restraint? Why are some individuals, and some combat units, more likely to act violently than others? And what accounts for combatant participation in varying forms and targeting of violence? This dissertation examines
these questions through an analysis of Israeli soldiers in the Second Intifada, employing interview, survey, and observational data.

The core argument is that variation in combatant violence and restraint is a consequence of organizational control within the military. Drawing on theories in organizational and management studies, I define organizational control broadly to include not only formal mechanisms such as rules, discipline, and enforcement, but also informal mechanisms, such as the inculcation of values, norms, and beliefs among organizational members through training and leadership. Through organizational control, the military seeks to align the preferences and beliefs of combatants regarding the use of violence with those of military leaders, ensuring that combatants both produce the violence demanded of them (strategic violence) and at the same time do not surpass or subvert such violence so that it no longer serves military interests but their own (opportunistic violence). I show that effective organizational control leads to participation patterns consistent with the preferences of armed group leaders – maximal participation in strategic violence and minimal participation in opportunistic violence. In contrast, weak control leads to participation patterns inconsistent with the preferences of armed group leaders – reduced participation in strategic violence and increased participation in opportunistic violence. When leader preferences are uncertain and control is ambiguous, new, entrepreneurial forms of violence emerge from the military's lower levels.
The dissertation of Devorah Sarah Manekin is approved.

Deborah W. Larson

Elisabeth Jean Wood

James Ron

Edmond Keller, Committee Chair

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2012
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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS


Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Between 2000 and 2005, the embattled territory of Israel-Palestine experienced one of the bloodiest episodes of its turbulent conflict, killing over 3000 Palestinians and over 1000 Israelis.\(^1\) Civilians bore the brunt of much of the violence in what came to be known as the Second Intifada, comprising an estimated two thirds of casualties on the Israeli side and one half of Palestinian casualties.\(^2\) However, the statistics on lethal force only partially reflect the extent of suffering experienced by parties to the conflict. In the course of repression of the insurgency, Palestinian civilians experienced a steep increase in Israeli military regimentation and control, leading to the loss of freedom of movement, widespread destruction of property, an ongoing threat of detention and arrest, and physical force and verbal abuse at sites of friction with the Israeli military. Israeli civilians suffered a major blow to their sense of personal security, with cafes, buses, and shopping malls becoming sites of bloody terrorist attacks. The economy took a major hit, and, at the peak of the Intifada, civilian life grinded to a near halt.

During the Second Intifada most Israeli combatants spent their military service conducting counterinsurgency operations in the Occupied Territories.\(^3\) As is typical of

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\(^1\) The Second Intifada never officially ended, but levels of insurgent violence dropped considerably since 2005, leading most commentators to view 2005 as its final year.

\(^2\) Like many other aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the number of Palestinian civilian casualties is deeply contested. While the Israeli side to the conflict is a state with a clear distinction between soldiers and civilians, the Palestinian side is a non-state actor without a formal military. The distinction between combatants and civilians in such circumstances is sometimes blurred, leading to vigorous debate as to the status of casualties. For purposes of this article I adopt the statistics maintained by Israeli human rights organization B'tselem. For clarifications regarding B'tselem's fatality statistics see [http://www.btselem.org/English/Statistics/Casualties_Clarifications.asp](http://www.btselem.org/English/Statistics/Casualties_Clarifications.asp).

\(^3\) The term "Occupied Territories" (OT), which I use interchangeably with "Occupied Palestinian Territories" (OPT), refers to the predominantly Palestinian areas of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, which Israel occupied in 1967. Shortly after its occupation East Jerusalem was annexed to Israel in a move not recognized by the international community. The majority of its Palestinian residents present at the time were given permanent resident status. The West Bank and Gaza were administered by the IDF. In 2005 Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip, though its status remains contested as it continues to control access to the strip by land (together with Egypt), sea, and air.

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counterinsurgency, many of these operations were conducted among civilians who were their deliberate or unintentional targets. As a result, combatants encountered countless opportunities to inflict harm on civilians and their property, both under superior orders and in excess or contravention of those orders. Nevertheless the level of combatant participation in violence against civilians varied dramatically. While in some cases combatants inflicted violence enthusiastically, in others they exhibited considerable restraint. Sometimes, variation existed in the behavior of the very same combatants, who were eager to commit violence under some circumstances but resisted violence in others.

What accounts for varying levels of participation by combatants in violence against civilians? Why do some combatants act violently against civilians, while others witness violence but do nothing to perpetuate or stop it, and still others refrain from violence altogether? Why are some combat units more violent than others? And what accounts for combatant participation in varying forms and targeting of violence?

The research questions posed in this dissertation shift the level of analysis from the elites that plan military policies to the ordinary soldiers and small combat units that carry them out. This is not a study of why leaders order violence against civilians, or whether and how such violence serves strategic interests. Rather, it asks why and how ordinary soldiers come to commit such violence or refrain from it. As such it rejects two assumptions that underlie much of the literature on violence against civilians in conflict: First, that soldiers are automatons who follow orders without question, and relatedly, that patterns of violence mirror elite preferences; and second, that soldiers are motivated en masse by economic opportunism, ethnic hatred, or violent socialization. Rather, it views soldiers as a heterogeneous lot motivated to commit violence by a variety of factors, and sometimes not motivated to commit it at all.
The Argument

In the growing body of research on violence against civilians in conflict, variation is typically attributed to one of two causes: First, to the shifting strategic incentives and constraints of military elites who employ violence for instrumental goals; and second, to the whims of unrestrained soldiers who exploit the opportunities presented by conflict to wreak havoc on civilian populations. Often these two approaches are seen as conflicting, as one posits that violence results from obedient soldiers serving the interests of military leaders, while the other evokes images of undisciplined and bloodthirsty bands of warriors inflicting harm on innocent victims that come their way.

In contrast, I argue that the two approaches do not conflict, but instead are concerned with different types of violence against civilians, both of which commonly occur in conflict. Proponents of the violence-as-strategy approach predefine violence as violence committed in accordance with armed group leader interests, or "strategic violence". Such interests vary on a number of dimensions and include not only preferences regarding the required scale of violence but also regarding the forms such violence should take and its preferred targets (Wood 2012). Depending on leader preferences, strategic violence can encompass homicide as well as a wide range of non-lethal forms of violence such as physical and non-physical abuse, sexual violence, and violence against property. At the same time, violence can vary in targeting, ranging from narrow and selective to indiscriminate or collective. Advocates of the violence-as-indiscipline approach, on the other hand, analyze violence committed without the permission of armed group leaders, or "opportunistic violence." Like strategic violence, opportunistic violence also varies in scale, targeting, and form, reflecting the individual inclinations of combatants.

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4 See Wood (2012) for further discussion of the dimensions of violence against civilians in conflict.
Furthermore, I argue that the conventional dichotomous construction of violence as either strategic or opportunistic does not sufficiently account for the complexity of violence dynamics in conflict. Some violence against civilians, while designed to serve strategic interests, is not initiated by top-brass but rather emerges from the bottom, the initiative of junior commanders seeking to capitalize on yet unexploited opportunities for strategic gain. I therefore identify and develop a third category of violence in conflict, which I term "entrepreneurial violence," to reflect this as yet undertheorized category. While without the appropriate data the three categories of violence may be observationally equivalent, they nevertheless stem from different and often conflicting causal processes. As a result aggregated analysis is likely to be misleading.

My central contention in this dissertation is that variation in combatant participation in strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic military violence can best be explained by mechanisms of organizational control. Combatant violence takes place within organizations, which provide the opportunity, ideology, incentive, and context for violence. Organizational control is required to ensure that combatants both produce the violence demanded of them and at the same time do not surpass or subvert such violence so that it no longer serves military interests but their own. For state militaries, wielders of sanctioned violence, organizational control is particularly critical, as violence that is insufficient or that is carried out in excess or in contravention of military interests may undermine both the effectiveness and the legitimacy of military action.

The central implication of this argument is that organizational control should align diverse combatant preferences regarding the scale, forms, and targeting of violence with those of the military. When control is strong, combatant participation in strategic violence is likely to increase while participation in opportunistic violence is likely to decrease. Alternatively, weak or
failed control should lead to a decline in the production of strategic violence and a rise in opportunistic violence. I take the elite strategies and policies regarding desired violence to be exogenously given, and assume that such preferences fluctuate in accordance with strategic interests and institutional constraints.

Drawing on scholarship from organizational and management studies, I approach organizational control as comprised not only of formal mechanisms such as rules, discipline, and punishment but also of informal mechanisms, including the inculcation of values, norms, and beliefs among organizational members through training and leadership. I further argue that control does not simply flow top-down from generals to soldiers, but is rather relational and negotiated among all members of the organization. By drawing attention to the complex ways in which control is defined and redefined by and among members, patterns of ambivalence and restraint are brought into view, and homogenizing views of soldiers as obedient automatons, passion-driven ideologues, or opportunistic thugs are challenged. I attribute patterns of violence and restraint to various modes of organizational control, thereby analyzing participation in strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic violence under a single explanatory framework.

**Scope, data, and method**

The focus in this dissertation is on state forces conducting counterinsurgency warfare. This focus is warranted as counterinsurgency presents states with substantial challenges both to civilian protection and to organizational control. Counterinsurgency involves a particular risk of civilian victimization for several reasons: First, the blurring of distinctions between civilians and insurgents is a hallmark of guerilla strategy, leading to an "identification problem" that makes it difficult for states to employ violence selectively against militants (Kalyvas 2006). Second,
insurgents often depend on civilians for information, support, and shelter, rendering them in some ways participants in or accomplices to the insurgency. Finally, unlike conventional warfare, counterinsurgency takes place "amongst the people," in dense urban quarters and remote rural areas. Counterinsurgent violence against civilians can thus be a product of deliberate targeting strategies designed to sever ties between insurgents and their civilian support base, the inability to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, or simply the existence of many opportunities and incentives for violence by virtue of soldier presence in civilian areas rather than on a conventional battlefield.

Counterinsurgency warfare also poses many challenges to organizational control:

Conventional warfare typically involves large, mechanized military units facing each other on the battlefield. However size and mechanization, while an asset in conventional war, become a liability in counterinsurgency (Lyall and Wilson 2009), requiring militaries to adapt their capabilities and organizational formations. Consequently, counterinsurgency warfare is frequently conducted by small teams of soldiers, isolated from command headquarters and subordinate only to a junior commander, often at the squad or platoon level. While such operations enhance the effectiveness of counterinsurgency by mimicking the organization and mobility of guerilla networks, they make control much more challenging, as soldiers are geographically dispersed and difficult to monitor. Counterinsurgency operations thus provide a particularly suitable lens through which to view the challenges of control of combatant behavior towards civilians.

My study focuses on a particular case of counterinsurgency, that of the Israeli military in the Second Intifada. Also known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada after the mosque at which the violence first broke out, the Second Intifada is one of the longest and bloodiest episodes of the Israeli-
Palestinian conflict. As an instance of counterinsurgency taking place in civilian areas, the Second Intifada provided combatants with innumerable opportunities for strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic violence. Indeed, many incidents of violence against civilians were documented during the conflict's five years. Nevertheless, the violence was not uniform in scale, form or targeting, and participation varied among military units and individual combatants, with restraint sometimes apparent even when violence was expected. This dissertation explores the determinants of some of this variation.

I employ a sub-national research design with individuals and small combat units as the units of analysis. A sub-national design is particularly useful in areas in which there is little data and the available data is poor (Kalyvas 2003). The organizational perspective employed in this study requires data on two phenomena that are typically hidden from the public eye – combatant violence against civilians, and the organizational characteristics of small military units – making a sub-national design appropriate. I utilize several sources of data collected during eighteen months of fieldwork in Israel in 2009-2010. First, I conducted some seventy in-depth interviews with Israeli men who carried out their regular military service during the Second Intifada. Second, I conducted an online survey of approximately 120 former combatants from the same period. I supplemented the interviews and survey with data collected from various sources including media and NGO reports and testimonies. Finally, I carried out limited observation at such sites as a military checkpoint, a military courtroom, and a military training session.

In analyzing patterns of violence and restraint I employ both deductive and inductive methods of inquiry. When discussing variation in combatant participation in strategic and entrepreneurial violence I develop theory inductively, as few theories exist to guide such an
inquiry. When discussing opportunistic violence I shift to a deductive mode, testing existing theories on the determinants of opportunistic violence and specifically on the role of organizational control in limiting such violence.

The scope of this project is limited to the ground forces of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Other relevant actors in the Israeli security establishment, such as the air force, navy, border police, or its internal security services (the Shabak or GSS), were excluded from the study. In addition, the study excludes Israel's reserve forces, as IDF regular ground forces carried out the bulk of its counterinsurgency operations during the Second Intifada.

Outline of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 reviews various theoretical approaches accounting for variation in violence against civilians in conflict, and then presents and develops a theory focusing on the role of organizational control in shaping patterns of participation in violence and restraint. I argue that variation in organizational control produces three different types of violence against civilians – strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic – each associated with different forms, targeting patterns, and levels of participation. Organizational control is exercised in two stages: First, in the military training period, centralized control determines which forms of violence are considered legitimate and which are not, creating boundaries between normative and deviant behavior. This creates baseline patterns of relatively high participation in organizationally sanctioned violence, and relatively low participation in violence that is not sanctioned. Second, during the operational deployment period, organizational control exercised by commanders at the small unit level enforces these normative boundaries, ensuring violence remains within circumscribed limits. When control fails or is ambiguous, rates of participation fluctuate, such
that participation in opportunistic violence increases, participation in strategic violence decreases, and entrepreneurial violence emerges. I conclude with an overview of the trajectory of organizational control in the IDF, illustrating this two-phase process.

**Chapter 3** examines the methodology of this study, outlining some of the challenges involved in conducting research with former combatants. I address questions of case selection, research design, and methodology, noting the strengths and limitations of the Israeli-Palestinian case for studying the organizational production of violence against civilians. The second section of the chapter examines some of the methodological challenges inherent in studying violence from the perspective of combatants and what might be done to mitigate these challenges.

In **Chapter 4** I provide an overview of Israeli counterinsurgency strategies and tactics in the Second Intifada. The goal of the chapter is not to present a detailed historical account of the conflict but rather to highlight the various practices of strategic violence that Israel employed to repress the Palestinian insurgency of 2000-2005, focusing on the impact, both direct and indirect, that such practices had on civilians. By outlining the various practices of strategic violence employed during the Second Intifada, this chapter sets the stage for the next chapter's examination of how such practices, once devised, are then produced in practice by ordinary combatants through mechanisms of organizational control.

**Chapter 5** underscores the often overlooked fact that efforts must be invested not only in curbing or limiting violence, but in producing it. The first part of the chapter analyzes the control mechanisms employed in the military training period to prepare soldiers for wielding violence, thereby aligning the diverse interests and beliefs of individual combatants with those of the military. I argue that these control mechanisms, both formal and informal, served to legitimate some forms of violence but not others. Specifically, I find that for much of the Second Intifada,
control processes normalized violence that was aggressive, dangerous, targeted at a concrete enemy, and promised tangible results. To the extent that violence met these criteria it was accepted by the vast majority of combatants as legitimate, even desirable, and was therefore characterized by high levels of participation and even enthusiasm. However, when strategic violence strayed from these criteria, as did much of the violence in the Second Intifada, it was up to commanders at the small-unit level to realign diverging combatant interests and beliefs with those of the military. When they failed to do so, participation in strategic violence declined.

Chapter 6 introduces and analyzes the category of entrepreneurial violence, referring to acts of violence that junior and midlevel commanders initiate under conditions of ambiguity to advance strategic goals. Such violence is a product of unintended or deliberate ambiguities in organizational control that create the space and incentive for entrepreneurial behavior. Applying theories of entrepreneurship in organizational settings, I show that entrepreneurial violence entails risk but also the potential of reward: In the case of detection and condemnation of violence, entrepreneurs are invariably held liable as it is difficult to produce evidence linking senior commanders to the crime. In the case of success, entrepreneurs gain credit and recognition, and such violence can spread and become tacitly approved practices, or institutionalized by military elites as part of their strategic violence repertoires.

In Chapter 7 I turn to the dynamics of opportunistic violence, or violence that combatants commit for their own benefit, rather than for the benefit of the military. I use survey and interview data from the Second Intifada to test theories on the sources of opportunistic violence against civilians. I find that opportunistic violence in the Second Intifada was most strongly associated with duration of deployment among civilians, rejecting the explanation that the drive for revenge motivates violence. However, I also find that the relationship between
deployment duration and opportunistic violence is moderated by armed group structure, such that long deployments were more likely to cause opportunistic violence in units with weak organizational control. But while effective control is crucial in reducing opportunistic violence, its exercise in practice is far from simple due to the leadership challenges that junior commanders face as well as to the nature of counterinsurgency warfare. The last part of the chapter surveys these obstacles to effective control.

**Chapter 8** concludes by summarizing the theory and empirical findings of the study and considering its external validity, contribution, limitations, and theoretical and practical implications.

**A Final Note**

Before turning to the theoretical analysis of violence and control in the Second Intifada, two final comments are in order. First, it bears emphasizing that this study is limited to Israeli state forces and does not include Palestinian insurgent violence. This is not to suggest that violence against Israeli civilians during the Second Intifada was inconsequential. To the contrary, two thirds of Israelis killed in the conflict were civilians, making the Second Intifada the bloodiest conflict in terms of Israeli civilian death tolls since the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. Insurgent violence is mentioned throughout the text insofar as it is linked to the production and restraint of violence in counterinsurgency. However, the unique dynamics of Palestinian insurgent violence, and especially suicide bombings, have been studied extensively elsewhere, and are outside the scope of this study.⁵

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Second, the academic analysis of violence and suffering necessarily does an injustice to the experiential dimension of pain shared by those who have been personally touched by conflict. This injustice is perhaps compounded by the analytical rather than normative approach taken by this study. As Nordstrom and Robben (1995, 5) write, "Researching and writing about violence will never be a simple endeavor… Like power, violence is essentially contested: everyone knows it exists, but no one agrees on what actually constitutes the phenomenon. Vested interests, personal history, ideological loyalties, propaganda, and a dearth of firsthand information ensure that many 'definitions' of violence are powerful fictions and negotiated half-truths." I do not pretend that I can avoid these challenges. But while some dimensions of violence can never be reduced to written representation, it is my hope that continued attention to the empirical dynamics of political violence, and in particular to the ways in which such violence can be restrained, can nevertheless make a contribution.
Chapter 2
VIOLENCE AND CONTROL IN THE SECOND INTIFADA

2.1 Introduction

On September 28, 2000, Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon paid a controversial visit to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, a holy site for both Muslims and Jews. While the visit itself was brief and greeted with relatively mild demonstrations, it would soon trigger an outburst of mounting tensions signaling the collapse of the Oslo Peace Process which, throughout the 1990s, had attempted to bring a negotiated solution to the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict.\(^1\) The day after the visit riots erupted in Jerusalem and in other locations across the West Bank and Gaza, soon spreading to the state of Israel itself.\(^2\) In the next few weeks mass demonstrations and riots involving rocks, Molotov cocktails, and occasional gunfire became an almost daily ritual. Israeli security forces responded forcefully, targeting armed protestors with snipers and using such means as rubber bullets, teargas, and shock grenades to disperse the rest. Within two months, over 200 Palestinian civilians and 24 Palestinian security force members were killed. 17 Israeli civilians and 16 Israeli security force members were killed in the same period.\(^3\)

The large number of Palestinian casualties led to a change in the nature of the violence, as mass demonstrations subsided and a full-blown insurgency began. Over the next few years, Palestinian insurgent groups would employ a variety of violent tactics against Israeli soldiers and civilians, including gunfire attacks on roads and in settlements, bombings, rocket attacks, and most notably, a suicide terror campaign in Israeli cities. Israeli counterinsurgency tactics

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\(^1\) The Oslo process culminated in the Camp David Peace Summit in July 2000, in which the parties failed to reach agreement on a final status settlement. For analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process see e.g. Quandt (2005), Ross (2005), Slater (2001), Maoz, Rothstein, and Shikaki eds. (2004), Barak (2005).

\(^2\) Thirteen Palestinian Israeli citizens were killed by police in the course of its suppression of the demonstrations, eventually leading to the establishment of a National Commission of Inquiry to investigate police behavior.

\(^3\) Data from B’tselem, available online: [http://www.btselem.org/statistics](http://www.btselem.org/statistics).
included assassination of insurgents, bombings of suspected militant installations, widespread arrests and detentions, house demolitions, and severe restrictions on Palestinian movement, eventually leading to military re-occupation of the West Bank cities from which the IDF had withdrawn under the Oslo Accords, and, three years later, to the unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005.

As an irregular conflict taking place in civilian areas rather than on a conventional battlefield, the Second Intifada brought Israeli soldiers into close contact with Palestinian civilians – at checkpoints, roadblocks, homes, and streets. This contact created opportunities and incentives for military violence against civilians. Indeed, local and international NGOs documented many instances of such violence. However, the violence was not uniform in form, targeting or scale, and participation in such violence varied dramatically, both among individual soldiers and among combat units. What accounts for such varying patterns of participation in military violence and restraint?

Several theories from a range of disciplines have sought to explain variation in violence against civilians in conflict. In this chapter I review the most prominent of these theories, arguing that while many provide an understanding of some aspects of violence in conflict, they do not sufficiently account for patterns of violence and restraint in the Second Intifada. After specifying definitions of key concepts in the study, I present a theoretical framework focusing on the role of organizational control in shaping patterns of violence and restraint. I conclude with an overview of the trajectory of organizational control in the IDF, to illustrate the workings of military control.
2.2 Theories of Violence against Civilians in Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general, and the Second Intifada in particular, can be analyzed as an instance of civil war, ethnic conflict, or state repression. Though often studied separately, these categories overlap to a large extent in many contemporary internal conflicts and each offers insights into patterns of state violence. In this section I draw on literature from all three of these areas as well as relevant literature from social psychology to distill four theoretical approaches to state violence against civilians in conflict: (1) Instrumentalist theories that view violence against civilians as a strategic tool aimed at reaching a particular goal; (2) Identity-based theories that view violence, and in particular the violence of ethnic conflict, as the product of the polarization of ethnic identity and intergroup animosities; (3) Social influence theories that investigate the role of social context in shaping violent behavior; and (4) Organizational theories that locate the source of violence in characteristics of the armed organization. Each is reviewed in turn.

2.2.1 Instrumentalist theories

Most dominant in the field of political science, instrumentalist theories posit that violence against civilians is used strategically to advance particular goals. For instance, violence can be used to generate compliance from a resistant population (Kalyvas 2004; Mitchell 2004), to obtain information and collaboration (Kalyvas 2006), to change the political status quo (Balcells 2010),

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4 The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict is not typically thought of as a civil conflict and is excluded from several internal conflict datasets, such as the C.O.W dataset, which classifies the Second Intifada as extra-state war, and the civil war dataset compiled by Fearon and Laitin (2003). Nevertheless, the second Intifada conforms to many recent definitions of civil war, including the comprehensive definition offered by Kalyvas (2006): “armed combat taking place within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of hostilities.” Given Israel’s prolonged occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinian insurgency is an example of such combat. I thus follow Sambanis (2004) in classifying the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and specifically the outbreak of violence beginning in 2000, as civil conflict.
to signal determination to continue fighting in the face of deteriorating prospects so as to improve bargaining leverage (Hultman 2007), to counter rising threat levels (Valentino, Huth, and Balch-Lindsay 2004) and perceptions of threat (Straus 2006) or to reduce losses and bring about victory in prolonged wars of attrition (Downes 2006). Research on state repression has also consistently found state violence to be directly related to threats to the political status quo (Davenport 2007).

In the Israeli-Palestinian context the instrumentalist approach was most explicitly advocated by Mitchell (2004, 57–95), who contends in a historical analysis that Israel employs violence rationally to protect its power and security. Mitchell demonstrates a high correlation between Israeli deaths and Israeli retaliation, concluding that acts of violence (as measured by number of fatalities) are a response to objective threat in a calculated effort to protect security. In an analysis of Israeli state violence in the Second Intifada, Brym and Maoz-Shai (2009) find partial support for this theory, demonstrating that once threat levels crossed a certain threshold, state violence varied in accordance with insurgent threat.

The instrumentalist approach is useful in drawing attention to the factors motivating policy makers to design policies that target or disregard civilians. It challenges popular explanations of civil violence, which frequently evoke ahistorical images of primordial, irrational "ancient hatreds," by demonstrating that violence is often a calculated expression of self interest rather than a spontaneous eruption of fury. However, the approach is also limited in its ability to explain patterns of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian case. First, instrumentalist theories often assume that in pursuing military strategies, security policymakers take only their own costs and

5 The specific strategic goals of Israeli elites remain unspecified, as “imputing goals is risky analysis” (Mitchell 2004, 69). Mitchell suggests that some of Israel’s more recent violent actions may be motivated by a desire “to degrade living conditions to the point that more Palestinians consider leaving voluntarily,” thus thwarting the possibility of creating a viable Palestinian state.
benefits into account. This is, however, rarely the case. In his analysis of state violence in Israel and in Serbia, Ron (2003) shows that states are constrained by institutions and norms that shape their preferences and their ability to exercise violence. Thus, while states may exercise violence without restraint in areas outside their borders ("frontiers"), their use of violence is controlled by institutional frameworks within areas incorporated in their own borders ("ghettos"). Throughout the Second Intifada, the West Bank and Gaza formed such ghettos, and indeed violence against civilians in such areas was relatively restrained (see discussion later in this chapter).

A second limitation of instrumentalist theories is that they often reflect an elitist bias, privileging the machinations of leadership over the complex exigencies on the ground. By assuming that actual violence patterns mirror strategic calculations such theories essentially argue that ordinary soldiers act precisely in accordance with elite preferences, depriving ordinary combatants of their agency and portraying them as automatons acting strictly in accordance with orders from above. As Petersen (2002, 5) argues, "social scientists should not assume that participants are ignorant dupes of elites." Rather, the preferences of ordinary soldiers may diverge from those of elites, either for utilitarian or normative reasons. This creates a series of principal-agent dilemmas down the chain of command, as military elites, the principals, must find ways to align the interests of their agents with their own through the use of incentives or monitoring of ordinary soldiers (Gates 2002; Mitchell 2004; Weinstein 2007; Wood 2009). The principal-agent problem is exacerbated by the organizational structure of the military, which on the one hand operates under a strict hierarchy, emphasizing command and control, discipline, and following orders, but on the other hand grants considerable autonomy and discretion to agents in pursuing their tasks (Tyler, Callahan, and Frost 2007). Soldiers operate in messy and
uncertain local conditions and are expected to interpret sometimes threatening situations in real
time and respond accordingly using their best judgment.

Indeed, some of the violence committed by soldiers in the Second Intifada exceeded the
preferences of military elites, and in some cases went explicitly against them. Soldiers
sometimes committed violence opportunistically or for personal gain, with rates of opportunistic
violence varying among individuals and among combat units. And while such violence was
generally limited to a minority of soldiers, it was also widespread, with many reporting having
witnessed such violence in their units. The divergence of preferences between elites and
ordinary soldiers was apparent not only in circumstances where violence took place, but also in
circumstances where it was absent. In some cases, soldiers resisted the violence ordered by
elites, creating yet another challenge for military commanders.\textsuperscript{6} Such resistance is obscured by
instrumentalist approaches that view violence as the direct result of elite preferences.

Moreover, instrumentalist arguments assume that elite preferences are always known to
ordinary soldiers through explicit commands and orders governing the exercise of violence. This
assumption too is problematic in the context of armed conflict. In the Second Intifada, as
elsewhere, ordinary soldiers were often unaware of the big strategic picture motivating military
and political elites. Explicit instructions are simply not available for every situation that a soldier
may encounter. Sometimes this is a technical matter, as circumstances can change radically and
it is impossible to regulate every possible scenario. Other times military elites deliberately
choose to remain ambiguous regarding the exercise of violence, allowing their subordinates to
interpret them as they see fit.

\textsuperscript{6} Participation and resistance were not binary opposites. Rather, they formed two poles on a continuum that included
differing levels of participation and "everyday forms of resistance" (J. C. Scott 1985, 1990), ranging from private
initiatives to engage positively with civilians, through evasion of tasks, and more rarely, to outright refusal to take part.
Thus, soldier agency, uncertainty on the battlefield, principle-agent problems, and deliberate or unintentional ambiguities at the elite level preclude an analysis of violence patterns rooted solely in elite strategic calculations and require additional attention to the preferences and constraints of ordinary combatants who carry out the violence, as well as to the organizational mechanisms in place to direct violence to reflect elite preferences.

2.2.2 Theories of identity and emotion

In contrast with instrumentalist accounts that privilege elite strategic calculation, studies based on accounts from ordinary participants in conflict have often found instrumental interpretations to be secondary to interpretations based on emotion, symbolism, and identity (Kaufman 2001; Kreidie and Monroe 2002; Wood 2003). Such approaches, particularly dominant in the field of ethnic conflict, hold that intergroup animosities and the struggle for group status are the primary source of violence in conflict (Horowitz 1985). Theories in this approach emphasize the role of emotions, arguing that fear, hatred, rage, and resentment (Petersen 2002), or the appeal to emotionally-laden ethnic symbols (Kaufman 2001) drive intergroup violence. Another emotional factor frequently linked to violence against civilians is the drive for revenge. Kalyvas (2006, 59) argues that the motives of soldiers are often expressive, noting that "revenge is probably the most recurrent feature in the descriptions of violence in civil war." The emphasis on heated emotions generally and on revenge in particular would seem to be particularly relevant to the Israeli-Palestinian case, as one of the paradigmatic examples of longstanding ethnic conflict.

The role of ethnic animosity in civil war has recently been contested however (Kalyvas 2007; Sambanis 2001; Wimmer, Cederman, and Min 2009). Ethnic opposition does not
necessarily lead to ethnic violence (Brubaker and Laitin 1998). In fact, ethnic polarization is often a consequence rather than a cause of conflict, leading to a difficult endogeneity problem (Kalyvas 2006). Moreover, the focus on heated emotion overlooks civilian abuse which stems not from heated passion, but from “standard operating procedures” (C. R. Browning 1992) or moral disengagement (Bandura 1999). As discussed in the next section, psychological drives and motives are diverse and more complex than a restricted emphasis on intergroup passions might suggest.

In my research on the Second Intifada, soldiers rarely invoked ethnic hatred or intergroup passions as a motive for violence. In fact, violence was much more likely to be associated with boredom, routinization, and in many cases emotional numbness than with passionate animosities. This may be a reflection of the prolonged and routine nature of Israeli counterinsurgency and military occupation in the Occupied Territories, which appears more likely to foster feelings of disengagement and desensitization than heated passions.

Finally, while approaches based on identity and emotion contribute to our understanding of why people mobilize to target other ethnic groups, they do little to explain why violence may vary within a particular conflict, as presumably once passions have been unleashed, we should witness little variation in how violence is employed and controlled.

2.2.3 Theories of Social Influence

The causes of participation in violence by ordinary people have been extensively analyzed by social psychologists, whose approach bring to the fore the effect of social context on individual behavior. Social psychological studies have found time and again that people can commit atrocities under certain social conditions (Darley 1992). In a meta-analytical review of
the literature on the role of social influence in enabling aggression, Fiske, Harris, and Cuddy (2004, 1482) conclude that “the right (or wrong) social context can make almost anyone aggress, oppress, conform, and obey.” One such context that has been studied extensively is the setting of legitimate authority, which has been found to be a powerful enabler of behavior otherwise considered unacceptable. This finding was famously demonstrated by the Milgram experiments (1974), in which a majority of participants followed instructions to deliver potentially deadly electric shocks to other participants.

The obedience to authority argument was developed and expressly applied to military killings of civilians by Kelman and Hamilton (1989), who identified three social processes that create conditions under which moral norms against violence are eroded: authorization, routinization, and dehumanization. Authorization refers to the tendency of people to obey legitimate authority regardless of their own preferences. Behavior which otherwise would have been off-limits is rendered legitimate through the approval of authority, and responsibility for the action is shifted from the perpetrator to the authority figure. Once an initial act of violence is committed under the influence of authorization, moral considerations become weakened through processes of routinization, and harmful action becomes routine and mechanical. Finally, the inhibitions against violence are minimized through dehumanization of the victims both as individuals and as members of groups.

Arguments that focus on obedience to authority are particularly relevant to the military setting where soldiers are trained and expected to follow orders. They provide a powerful theoretical account linking the instrumentalist calculations of elites designing violence policies and the collective behavior of ordinary soldiers who carry those policies out. However, such theories overestimate the degree to which superior orders are clear or even known to soldiers in
the field. As has already been noted, in concrete situations explicit orders are often lacking, whether due to superior inability or unwillingness to deliver them. Moreover, soldiers sometimes commit opportunistic violence that goes beyond the call of duty or in contravention of superior orders. The role of authority can also be overestimated due to the tendency of soldiers to invoke the "following orders" defense after they have been accused of misconduct. As Kelman and Hamilton themselves note (1989, 49–51), soldiers may commit acts of sanctioned violence for a variety of motives, including personal gain or ideological zeal, making it difficult to identify and separate the unique role of obedience in enabling violence. Finally, such theories cannot explain why shirking and failure to produce violence occur even in contexts of powerful social influence.

The strategic culture of the IDF is also inconsistent with explanations emphasizing obedience to authority. The Israeli military has historically been relatively decentralized, encouraging initiative and risk taking by subordinates and emphasizing resourcefulness rather than obedience (Shamir 2011). This general feature of the IDF was echoed in my own research. I found that small unit commanders preferred to rely on leadership skills and persuasion rather than invoke blanket authority and issue strict orders. Relationships between commanders and soldiers were more likely to be founded on trust than on blind obedience. Kelman and Hamilton's theory thus cannot adequately identify or account for entrepreneurial violence and opportunistic violence, and also neglects the ongoing processes of reinforcement necessary to maintain obedience to strategic violence.

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7 According to Shamir (2011), these traditions began to change beginning in the 1980, as the IDF became increasingly engaged in asymmetric conflicts rather than conventional wars. Reform efforts in the 1990s were only partially successful. Nevertheless, Israeli commanders remain "by and large aggressive, creative, good improvisers and initiative takers" (Shamir 2011, 198).
8 Indeed, the need to resort to strict authority often reflects a failure on behalf of a commander to inspire the trust and respect of his subordinates.
A second well known demonstration of the powerful effects of social context on enabling violence was provided by Zimbardo and his colleagues in the Stanford Prison Experiment. The study randomly assigned individuals to roles as "prisoners" or "guards" in a simulated prison setting, providing no training on what the enactment of such roles might look like. The experiment, planned for two weeks, had to be terminated after six days due to the brutalizing behavior of the guards and emotional distress of some of the prisoners (Zimbardo 1973). It highlighted in stark contours the pressure to conform when groups function within an institutional setting (Haney and Zimbardo 1998), and the speed at which individuals confirm to their roles in asymmetric power relations even absent an immediate authority figure (Zimbardo, Maslach, and Haney 2000). Yet like the Milgram experiments, the Stanford Prison Experiment was performed within the contrived setting of the research laboratory, and the extent to which its lessons can be generalized to real-life situations of conflict and domination, as well as some of its methodological features, are contested.⁹

A third influential account of how ordinary people come to commit acts of violence is Bandura's theory of moral disengagement (1990, 1999, 2002). The theory focuses less on the power of a social situation and more on the cognitive processes that allow individuals to suspend their moral judgment, disengaging moral self control from behavior. By doing so they are able to commit acts they had previously found reprehensible while maintaining a positive self image. Moral disengagement encompasses a range of rationalization strategies that reduce the dissonance between a harmful act and its full meaning (Bandura 2002). Disengagement takes place gradually through repeated exposure to moral dilemmas "until eventually acts originally

⁹ See e.g. Banuazizi and Movahedi (1975), Carnahan and McFarland (2007), and Haslam and Reicher (2007).
regarded as abhorrent can be performed with little personal anguish or self censure" (Bandura 1999, 203).

Theories locating the origins of participation in violence in obedience, conformity, and disengagement are highly applicable to the military setting, where soldiers are socialized to follow orders, enact aggressive roles, and routinely engage in acts of violence that are largely considered illegitimate outside the military. Indeed, I found evidence for the presence of all three mechanisms among Israeli soldiers. However, such theories were also limited in illuminating the dynamics of military violence in the Second Intifada. First, as has already been noted, the role of blind obedience to authority is largely overstated in the relatively informal culture of the IDF. Second, because obedience to authority, role conformity, and rationalizing disengagement strategies are nearly universally present in situations of violent conflict, violence against civilians would seem overdetermined. Nevertheless there is still considerable variation in how individuals respond to the pressures of social influence. Israeli soldiers varied in their enactment of aggressive roles, and some successfully resisted psychological pressures. While social-psychological theories identify conditions in which violence by ordinary people becomes likely, they are less able to explain how even under such conditions, violence can be controlled.

2.2.4. Organizational Theories

A fourth group of theories locates the source of violence against civilians at the level of the armed organization. One variant of this theory focuses on organizational formation, arguing that recruitment mechanisms have an important effect on whether armed groups develop coercive or cooperative relations with civilians. In analyzing the differing strategies of rebel groups, Weinstein (2007) argues that groups in resource-rich environments tend to commit far
higher levels of civilian abuse than groups that emerge in areas that are resource-poor. In the former, participation is less risky and material rewards more forthcoming. As a result such groups will tend to attract opportunists without local ties to civilian populations and with a demand for short term rewards. These conditions make violence against civilians for personal gain much more likely. In the latter, rebels rely not on material but on social endowments, possessing social ties with the local community that enable effective organization and effective control by armed group leaders. As a result violence becomes more strategic and selective. In this view, violence is a byproduct of organizational formation rather than a means to pursue strategic goals.

In a different conceptualization of the role of recruitment mechanisms, Cohen (2010) contends that sexual violence is more common among groups that forcibly recruit members, as rape serves to create bonds and cohesion among armed group members in absence of social ties that would allow for the creation of cohesion in less costly ways. Thus, violence is not simply a byproduct of organizational structure but a means of advancing armed group cohesion and thereby effectiveness.

A second variant on the theory expands the role of organizational factors beyond recruitment mechanisms to institutions of command, control, and discipline within armed organizations. Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) consider the effects of three measures of armed group structure: social ties, recruitment mechanisms, and discipline levels, and find that recruitment and discipline are the primary predictors of civilian abuse in a sample of ex-combatants from Sierra Leone's civil war. Wood (2006b, 2009) argues that armed group leaders can encourage or restrain sexual violence, depending on their normative and practical inclinations, provided that the organization is strong enough to enforce leader preferences on
ordinary soldiers, as measured by punishment of infractions and ability to tax the population. Weinstein (2007) examines the role of three armed group institutions - training, organizational culture, and hierarchical structure – in controlling insurgent behavior, arguing that when groups are unable to effectively police "defection," or opportunistic violence, high levels of indiscriminate violence will result.

Organizational theories draw attention to the multiple actors and interests operating within armed groups, complicating and sometimes severing the link between elite strategies and empirical patterns of violence. However, some early organizational accounts of violence against civilians took a relatively narrow approach to armed group institutions, and as such were limited in their ability to explain violence patterns in the Second Intifada. Arguments that focus on recruitment, for instance, assume that organizational structures are stable and path dependent, though in practice such structures evolve over time as combatants undergo training and later deployment and combat. Moreover, it is unclear to what extent arguments emphasizing recruitment can apply to modern state militaries, which typically recruit soldiers through mandatory conscription, material benefits, or a combination of the two. The IDF recruits a very diverse group of combatants through conscription, but relies on ongoing control institutions to instill obedience.

Those studies that examined armed group structures beyond recruitment tended to focus narrowly on formal sanction systems, though in practice organizations can control members through informal and often more effective means. In IDF combat units punishment is used relatively infrequently, as its effects are often seen as counterproductive. Instead, commanders prefer to rely on positive leadership, personal example, and educational efforts to shape subordinate behavior. The limited focus on sanction systems is perhaps due to data constraints,
since armed organizations, whether insurgents or state militaries, are notoriously difficult to penetrate, and as a result little is known about how their control mechanisms operate. As Wood (2006b, 330) notes, "Independent evidence for the existence of constraints may be difficult to establish beyond the non-observation of the type of violence supposedly constrained."

Addressing these limitations, Hoover-Green (2011) develops a broader notion of armed group structure that recognizes that the conditions of combat present ongoing challenges to the control of combatants, and that discipline and punishment are insufficient for the effective control of violence. Expanding her focus beyond lethal violence, Hoover-Green examines variation in forms, or repertoires, of violence among armed groups, arguing that armed groups leaders face a "commander's dilemma," in which they must train combatants to produce violence on the one hand, and control such violence once unleashed on the other. She argues that military training renders combatants inclined towards the "over-production" of violence through the valorization of aggression, creating a control problem for commanders. The conditions of combat further contribute to the desensitization and violentization of combatants, making wide repertoires even more likely. Those groups who are concerned with restraining combatant behavior and producing narrow repertoires must rely not only on discipline and punishment, which are difficult to exercise under the conditions of combat, but on ongoing political education and indoctrination that can continuously align combatant norms regarding violence with those of armed group leaders.

Like Wood (2006b, 2009, 2012), Weinstein (2007), and Hoover-Green (2011), I argue that patterns of violence against civilians can be traced to varying modes of organizational control. Military violence is produced by organizations, which provide the opportunity, ideology, incentive, and justification for violence. State militaries are particularly totalizing organizations
that attempt to control nearly every aspect of an individual member's behavior, through such practices as uniform codes of appearance, 24 hour availability, subjection to military discipline and law, inability to negotiate working conditions and long deployments (Moskos 1977). The military is not just a workplace but "a way of life and frequently a lifetime commitment" (Gal 1985, 553). As a result the study of armed organizations offers promising venues for better understanding of how violence against civilians is enabled and unleashed. However, this study is also distinct from earlier approaches in several ways:

First, few studies have used an organizational approach to understand the behavior of modern, well-organized state militaries, concentrating instead on rebel organizations or on state militaries that are far less organized or bureaucratized. This study extends the study of violence and control, demonstrating that even within modern militaries the imposition of control is sometimes weak or ambiguous, leading to varying levels of violence and restraint.

Second, many organizational theories tend to conceptualize control as a strictly top-down phenomenon, originating among armed group leaders and implemented down the chain of command. In contrast to this view, Ron (2000a) shows that security organizations are "decoupled organizations," where the lowest ranks are given considerable freedom within general guidelines formulated by the state. Following Ron I argue that control does not flow unidirectionally from leaders to members, generals to soldiers, but is rather relational and negotiated among all members of the organization, challenging homogenizing views of soldiers and allowing for patterns of ambivalence and resistance to be revealed. Relatedly, rather than viewing organizational control as a simple binary process that either succeeds or fails, I point to the ambiguities of control that manifest when military leaders employ such strategies as deliberate
ambiguity and delegation of authority, and the consequence of these ambiguities for violent behavior.

Finally, though not always explicitly acknowledged, organizational approaches have largely been employed to study violence that is opportunistic, while instrumental approaches have been employed to study strategic violence. For example, Humphreys and Weinstein (2006) studied civilian abuse, but only measured violence that was committed without the permission of armed group leaders. Hoover-Green (2011) defines control as the efforts commanders make to limit violence through discipline and education, explicitly excluding wide repertoires of violence that are the product of strategic interests, or strategic violence.\(^\text{10}\) And though Weinstein (2007) recognizes that weak organizational control can lead not just to over-production of violence, or defection, but to under-production through shirking, his analysis of violence focuses solely on defection.

In contrast, I argue that organizational factors can contribute not only to an understanding of opportunistic violence but of strategic violence, as it is insufficient for armed group leaders to desire that certain forms of violence be employed for instrumental purposes. Leaders must find ways to enforce their preferences on ordinary combatants, and such ways are mediated through the organization. This is not always successfully achieved, regardless of the existence of plentiful opportunities for violence. Indeed, the history of warfare is replete with examples of soldiers

\(^{10}\)However, in some cases armed group leaders find it in their interest to employ violence broadly, whether in scale (e.g. Downes 2008), repertoire (Ron 2003), or targeting (Kalyvas 2006). Indeed, in the Israeli case, Ron (2003) shows that Israel varied its violence repertoires in different geographical zones while retaining its organizational structure (Ron 2003). And while leaders choosing broad repertoires would not face the commander’s dilemma outlined by Hoover-Green, they face an equally formidable challenge: How to ensure that combatants direct violence to serve the interests of the organization, rather than their own. This is no easy task, as evidenced by the notorious Serbian paramilitary organization, the Serbian Volunteers Guard (SDG), which imposed strict discipline on its members to ensure wide repertoires of violence served the interests of the group and its leader, Zeljko Raznatovic Arkan. Looting, for instance, was regularly conducted but tightly organized, to ensure the organization and its leaders were the primary beneficiaries. Looting for personal profit was a punishable offense. See Chapter 8 for further discussion.
who failed to pull the trigger despite the powerful effects of military socialization (Grossman 2009). As Mueller (2000, 42–43) demonstrated in the context of Croatia and Bosnia, "the Yugoslav army, despite years of supposedly influential national propaganda and centuries of supposedly pent-up ethnic hatreds, substantially disintegrated early in the war and refused to fight," forcing the government to rely on opportunistic paramilitary bands to execute ethnic violence (see chapter 8). In the case of the Second Intifada, rates of participation in strategic violence were relatively high, but nonetheless shifting. Put differently, combatants must be trained and controlled, not only to abstain from violence but to engage in it.

In the remainder of this chapter I specify a theory of military violence against civilians in conflict in the Israeli-Palestinian case, focusing on the role of organizational control. I argue that military control unfolds in two phases: centralized organizational control during military training determines normative boundaries between legitimate and deviant, while mechanisms of organizational control at the small unit level then enforce those boundaries. As this study focuses on ordinary combatants I take the elite strategies and policies regarding forms and levels of desired violence, reviewed in detail in Chapter 4, to be exogenously given, without examining the shifting strategic calculations that shape policy development throughout the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Strategic concerns of military leaders in the Second Intifada have been analyzed elsewhere (Bhavnani, Miodownik, and Choi 2011; Brym and Maoz-Shai 2009; Catignani 2008; Frisch 2006), yet can only provide a partial explanation for how violence, once planned, comes to be implemented. Regardless of whether elite violence preferences are limited or broad, combatants must be controlled to ensure they do not underperform, and that violence against civilians, even when encouraged, serves organizational rather than individual interests.
2.3 Concepts and Definitions

Despite the wave of recent research on the dynamics of violence in conflict, violence remains, in Kalyvas's (2006, 19) words, "a conceptual minefield." Definitions of violence are embedded in socio-cultural contexts that are historically contingent and reflective of power asymmetries. They are contested, as they involve recognizing the suffering of some and disregarding the suffering of others. And they are subject to political manipulation, as actors jostle to legitimize the harm they inflict while delegitimizing the harm inflicted by others. Definitions of "civilian" are also far from straightforward and have generated much debate. For conceptual clarity, this section defines the dependent variable in this dissertation, participation in violence against civilians.

2.3.1 Participation

This study examines the participation or non-participation of ordinary combatants in violence. While the notion of participation is straightforward, meaning simply whether individuals commit particular acts of violence or not, two aspects bear further clarification. First, as Wood (2012) shows, violence patterns vary in frequency, form, and targeting. Building on this distinction I show that participation can vary along all three of these dimensions. For example, combatants can participate or refrain from participating in selective, indiscriminate, or collective targeting of civilians, indicating variation in participation in targeting. Similarly, combatants can participate or refrain from participating in particular forms of violence but not in others.

Second, while participation in violence is an individual-level phenomenon, it can also be thought of as a characteristic of groups, as individual combatants are nested within small combat units (typically squads or platoons). On the unit level, participation is indicated by the average
level of soldier participation or non-participation in violence in a particular unit. While individual soldiers are diverse and are not equally likely to participate in violence, there is also considerable variation between units in average levels of participation. My argument addresses each of these levels.

2.3.2 Violence

Following the World Health Organization (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, et al. 2002, 5), I define violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation." This definition of violence is broader than the one used by most studies of violence against civilians in conflict in a number of ways: First, it includes the indirect harm wreaked on civilians through political violence, unlike most studies that analyze only direct physical harm. Indirect victimization of civilians causes far more suffering than can be captured by statistics of direct targeting alone (Davis and Kuritsky 2002; Pedersen 2002).\(^{11}\) Conflict affects civilian access to food, medicine, and education. It destroys civilian infrastructure. Freedom of movement is severely impaired, as are physical and mental health, employment opportunities, and earning capability. Large numbers of civilians are displaced as refugees across national borders and as internal migrants. Sometimes such indirect damage is caused intentionally, as when a warring party deliberately prevents the transfer of humanitarian supplies to a civilian community. Other

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\(^{11}\) The inclusion of indirect damage in the empirical study of wartime violence patterns is not necessarily intuitive. Conceptually, violence is usually perceived as a physical, interpersonal act (Tilly 2003) and not as the indirect production of suffering. Indeed, most of the empirical studies surveyed in the previous section define only direct physical harm as violence. While a new research program is emerging in political science concerning the indirect, long-term impact of armed conflict on civilians (Ghobarah, Huth, and Russett 2003, 2004; Hoddie and Smith 2009; Iqbal 2006; Li and Wen 2005), this program is developing quite separately from the program on patterns of political violence, despite the many links that connect the two.
times the damage is caused unintentionally, as when infrastructure is destroyed in the course of
military activity.

The reluctance to include indirect violence in an analysis of wartime violence stems in
large part from the difficulties in identifying and measuring it. Sometimes such violence is
couched in normative terms as the natural and inevitable consequence of war. As a result, no one
is held accountable for the suffering that is inflicted, unlike the personal, direct violence that is
visible, measurable, and directly traceable to a particular agent. Even when such violence is
visible, it is often difficult to measure (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005; Ugalde 2000), as information
systems in war are frequently destroyed or manipulated (Brunborg and Tabeau 2005; Murray
2002). Yet despite these problems, there are important empirical and normative grounds for
addressing indirect violence in research on wartime violence. Ignoring the indirect effects of war
leads to significant underestimation of civilian victims (Benini and Moulton 2004), and obscures
violence patterns. Moreover, the difficulties of measuring indirect violence are not
insurmountable. In this study, I employ qualitative methods to uncover indirect forms of
violence inflicted on civilians in conflict.

The definition is also broad in that it includes non-lethal violence, contrary to most
analyses of wartime violence that take only lethal violence into account. Even when,
conceptually, violence is understood to encompass multiple forms, operationally the number of
casualties is usually the sole indicator of violence. Often this limitation is due to data constraints.

12 Recent research shows that the deleterious effects of war are distributed unevenly, and that marginalized groups
including women and children are wont to suffer even more (Li and Wen 2005; Plümper and Neumayer 2006).
Counting direct violence only obscures these effects, yet another way in which indirect violence privileges select
processes of victimization and silences others.
13 New and innovative methods are being designed and employed to deal with measurement problems, see e.g.
Ghobarah, Huth, and Russett (2003, 2004); Murray (2002); and Obermeyer, Murray, and Gakidou (2008). In
addition, collaborative research can be conducted with experts from other fields, such as epidemiology (Thoms and
Ron 2007) and demography (Brunborg and Tabeau 2005).
14 A recent exception to this rule is the emerging literature on sexual violence in war. See for example Cohen
There is usually better and more widely available data on deaths than on other forms of violence. Other times lethal violence is viewed as the most extreme and total form of violence, and therefore as its clearest and least ambiguous representative (e.g. Kalyvas 2006). However, the limited focus on lethal violence can be misleading (Hoover-Green 2011). First, it may skew the picture of violence to bring to light certain experiences of victimhood and obscure others. Sexual violence, for instance, is primarily directed against women. Analyses that only count incidents of homicide tend to miss this dimension of conflict altogether. Moreover, precisely because lethal violence is more likely to be detected and documented, political elites may shift to non-lethal methods in order to avoid international scrutiny.  

Finally, the definition is sufficiently broad to include both violence that is directed from above and used instrumentally to advance a particular policy or strategy (strategic violence) and violence committed for the personal benefit of individual soldiers (opportunistic violence). As argued earlier in the chapter, most empirical studies of violence against civilians have focused on one or the other. In practice, both strategic and opportunistic violence are features of armed conflict, and at the micro-level, I argue, both can be traced to organizational control.

A broad definition of violence is particularly appropriate in the Israeli case as it provides insight into patterns that have long puzzled analysts of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. First, a sole focus on number of deaths would lead to the conclusion that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is relatively non-violent. The Second Intifada, one of the conflict's bloodiest periods, saw the death of over 4000 Palestinians and Israelis in 5 years. Such numbers are relatively small when compared to other conflicts, even after adjusting for population size. But despite these relatively small numbers...
low levels of lethal violence the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has proved to be one of the world's longest and most intractable ones.\textsuperscript{16}

Moreover, by only taking account of death tolls it becomes difficult to understand the behavior of the parties to the conflict. Palestinian suicide bombers, for instance, have typically been viewed as either "cultural dopes or rational fools" (Brym 2009) – cultural dopes, according to a view that saw suicide bombers as prisoners of fundamentalist Islam, or rational fools, who used suicide bombings as a strategy of utility maximization, such as liberation of territory. But systematic analyses of suicide bombers in the Second Intifada reveal instead that revenge for Israeli acts of repression, many of which were non-lethal, were the primary motivation given by suicide bombers and Palestinian organizations for their actions (Araj 2011; Brym and Araj 2006). This finding is supported in a recent study by Benmelech, Berrebi, and Klor (2010), who found that indiscriminate Israeli house demolitions were followed by a significant increase in suicide attacks.

Attention to non-lethal and indirect violence also sheds light on what initially might seem like puzzling self restraint on the part of the IDF in combating the Palestinian insurgency. Examination of lethal statistics alone suggests that Israel's counterinsurgency strategy in the Second Intifada was surprisingly restrained, both relative to its own practices in other conflict arenas\textsuperscript{17} and to the practices of other modern militaries engaged in counterinsurgency warfare.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16} This is not a uniquely Israeli-Palestinian phenomenon. Other prolonged violent conflicts, such as Northern Ireland, have also been characterized by relatively low levels of lethal violence.

\textsuperscript{17} Israel's relative restraint in the Second Intifada is evidenced most clearly by the Israeli-Palestinian civilian casualty ratio for the conflict, which, depending on how some of the casualties are classified, ranged between 1:2 and 1:3. Given the vast asymmetries of power between the parties, as well as the blurring of boundaries between civilians and combatants typical of insurgency, this ratio is puzzling. It is even more puzzling in light of Israel's history of counterinsurgency operations. In December 1987 Palestinians first revolted against Israeli rule in what came to be known as the First Intifada. Lasting approximately four years, the First Intifada was largely unarmed and included mass protests, a tax rebellion, and the throwing of rocks, Molotov cocktails and occasional explosives on Israeli troops. Israel's repression of the Intifada was conducted primarily through harsh policing methods (Ron 2000a, 2003). Over 800 Palestinian civilians and 59 Israeli civilians were killed in the Intifada's four years, a civilian
Analysis of Israeli non-lethal repression sheds light on this apparent puzzle of counterinsurgency restraint. In addition to the direct costs of war, the indirect costs of mass violence against civilians are steadily rising. States that employ such violence are increasingly liable to receive widespread condemnation, loss of domestic or international support, and in more rare cases, economic sanctions or even military intervention. As a result, conditions that may have made state indiscriminate or targeted violence against civilians likely in the past may no longer result in the same policies today. Reflecting on these changing circumstances, Kalyvas (2006, 171) notes that "if this trend continues, we are likely to observe either a decline in the use of indiscriminate violence in irregular wars as incumbents become acutely aware of its costs, or new, sophisticated ways for hiding such violence from international scrutiny." Since insurgent threats show few signs of abating, it is not likely that states will simply abandon the use of indiscriminate violence due to its rising costs. Instead restraint may mask "sophisticated" strategies of violence against civilians that provide similar results but at lower costs, such as the use of indirect or non-lethal violence. These strategies produce violence which is more likely to slip under the radar of human rights NGOs, media outlets, and scholars for as long as

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For instance, the counterinsurgency strategies Israel and the U.S. employed in the Occupied Territories and in Iraq are notable for their restraint when compared to the strategies employed by Russia against Chechen rebels or Sri Lanka against the LTTE. Each of these ruthless counterinsurgency campaigns of civilian victimization included indiscriminate shelling and bombardment that led to the death of tens of thousands of civilians. The puzzle of relative restraint in counterinsurgency has been noted in other settings as well. Kahl (2007) argues that contrary to popular perceptions, the U.S. exhibited notable restraint in respecting non-combatant immunity in Iraq during both the Second Gulf War in 2003 and the subsequent period of counterinsurgency. Kahl argues that U.S. military conduct represents a significant departure from its previous counterinsurgency campaigns in Vietnam and the Philippines, each of which led to casualty figures in the hundreds of thousands, cording civilians in concentration camps in the Philippines, and using massive air bombardments in Vietnam.
compilations of statistics on battle deaths remain the primary means of documenting the costs of war.

In sum, the expanded definition of violence employed here is of analytical value, not only because it more accurately reflects the forms of violence actually experienced in the Second Intifada, providing a more "experience-near" account that resonates with the experience of inflicting and enduring violence, but because it sheds light on hitherto puzzling violence patterns in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both incumbent and insurgent.

2.3.3 Civilians

The category of civilian, too, is far more complex than initially apparent. The understanding that targeting civilians, unlike combatants, is illegitimate and therefore worthy of scholarly analysis is rooted in the legal principle of distinction in international humanitarian law, according to which combatants are entitled to kill other combatants with impunity, while civilians are protected from targeting. In civil conflict, however, boundaries between combatants and civilians are notoriously fluid. And while civilians receive protection under international humanitarian law, that same law provides that they lose the protection when they participate directly in hostilities, for such time as they participate. When civilians engage in hostilities they lose protection and may be targeted subject to necessity and proportionality conditions. Unfortunately for those who would wish to rely on international law, “direct participation” is nowhere defined, and opinions differ greatly as to how broad the interpretation should be.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20} See for example Article 51(3) of Additional Protocol I, 1977. This provision is largely considered to be part of customary international law, and therefore universally binding even on non-parties to the protocol.

\textsuperscript{21} In a case examining the legality of targeted killings, the Israeli High Court of Justice ruled that “a civilian takes a "direct part" in hostilities when he is physically engaged in them or when he plans, decides on, and sends others to be thus engaged. At one end of the spectrum, a civilian bearing arms who is on his way to (or from) the place where he will use (or had used) them, clearly is taking a direct part in hostilities. At the other end are cases of indirect
Particularly difficult questions arise in internal conflict with respect to civilians who enable military activity through provision of material aid, protection, or infrastructure. Is such activity deemed participation in hostilities, and does it make civilians legally subject to attack? Also problematic is the common case of the "part-time combatant," who leads a civilian life with occasional forays into violent activity (Berman 2004). In 2009, the International Committee of the Red Cross published "Interpretive Guidance" on the meaning of "direct participation in hostilities," expanding the notion of combatants in intrastate conflict to include not just soldiers in the state's armed forces but members of organized armed groups "whose continuous function it is to take a direct part in hostilities" (Melzer 2009, 16). Those members who do not fulfill a "continuous combat function" are to be treated as civilians, and are only legitimate targets for such time as they are taking direct part in hostilities.

Given increased intermingling of combatants and civilians on the battlefield, the relatively expansive ICRC definition of civilian has engendered much controversy (Boothby 2010; Melzer 2010; Schmitt 2010; Watkin 2010). Several critics note that the definition is biased in favor of armed groups, as their members must perform a continuous combat function in order to be considered combatants, while soldiers of state militaries are legitimate targets by virtue of their membership with no combat role required. The definition of civilian is thus far from consensual, a fact which became clear in many of the interviews I conducted. Family members who provided support to militants, or civilians who provided food or shelter, were often not seen by combatants as civilians at all. Thus, while employing the conventional legal definition of support, including selling of supplies and financing hostile acts. In between are the hard cases, where the function that the civilian performs determines how direct a part he takes in the hostilities; in this middle area, collecting intelligence, servicing weapons, and functioning as a "human shield" are direct acts of participation" (cited in Ben-Naftali and Michaeli 2007, 461).
civilians for the purpose of clarity, the empirical complexity of the term will be noted as appropriate.

2.4 Organizational Control and the Production and Restraint of Violence

I argue that participation in violence against civilians in counterinsurgency is shaped in large part by mechanisms of control within the military, which are intended to ensure that violence is unleashed only in accordance with the interests of the military organization. Control, however, is never absolute, and is punctuated by ambiguity and failure. As a result ordinary execution of violence could never be a precise reflection of elite preferences, but rather varies in particular ways, producing different patterns of violence and restraint. In this section I first define organizational control, drawing on literature in management and organizational studies to explore the different modes and mechanisms of organizational control that are relevant to the production and restraint of violence. Next I present a theory of violence and control, disaggregating among three forms of violence – strategic, opportunistic, and entrepreneurial - and demonstrating how each is shaped by control processes.

2.4.1 Organizational Control

The problem of organizational control has been characterized as the fundamental problem of management: how to overcome the conflicts of interest between organizations and their members (e.g. Flamholtz, T. K. Das, and Tsui 1985; Kunda 2006; Ouchi 1979; W. R. Scott 1992). Managers must find ways to align the varying abilities, attitudes, and inclinations of
individual members and place them in the service of organizational goals. As organizations expand in size, structure, and complexity, the challenge of control becomes even greater (Weinstein 2007). In face of these challenges, organizational control is broadly defined as "any process whereby managers direct attention, motivate, and encourage organizational members to act in ways desirable to achieving the organization's objectives" (Cardinal, Sitkin, and Long 2010, 56-57).

In the military context, individual combatants of disparate dispositions must be harnessed to serve the strategic goals advocated by military leaders. This entails two separate challenges: First, ensuring that soldiers indeed perform the violence that is expected of them; and second, that violence is organized and directed towards organizational preferences. Neither of these goals is simple to achieve. While the former entails transforming ordinary people into professional wielders of violence, or violence workers, the latter involves ensuring that such violence, once unleashed, does not spiral out of the organization's hands. Control, then, is necessary whether violence preferences of leaders are extensive or limited.

Importantly, the process of control is much broader and deeper than formal mechanisms such as rules, rewards, and sanctions, though these remain constant features of most organizations. These formal mechanisms are limited as they require direct monitoring of behavior, which is often impossible in large, complex organizations where members exercise a measure of independence (Weibel 2010). Moreover, formal controls have been shown to

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22 For the sake of clarity I posit a simple dichotomy between managers and subordinates, or in the military context, between military leaders and ordinary soldiers. Of course, in reality organizations harbor a much wider variety of potentially conflicting interests, such as shareholders, directors, managers, and employees, whereas military interests may diverge among senior generals, political elites, various military branches, and soldiers and commanders of varying ranks.
undermine motivation, as they are perceived as a signal of distrust and impingement on autonomy (Falk and Kosfeld 2006; Kramer 1999).23

Informal control mechanisms are more subtle, and involve the inculcation of values, norms and beliefs among organizational members (Cardinal, Sitkin, and Long 2010). Organizations may influence their members by fostering a common culture and sense of shared identity that direct members to cooperate in pursuing in organizational goals (Korsgaard, Meglino, and Jeong 2010). Etzioni (1961) referred to such control as "normative control," in which members act in the best interest of the company not out of coercion or due to economic incentives but rather by commitment and identification with organizational objectives. As Kunda (2006, 11) observes, "under normative control, membership is founded not only on the behavioral or economic transaction traditionally associated with work organizations, but, more crucially, on an experiential transaction, one in which symbolic rewards are exchanged for a moral orientation to the organization. In short, under normative control it is the employee's self – that ineffable source of subjective experience – that is claimed in the name of the corporate interest." Put differently, informal control aims to instill not just compliance but identification with organizational goals and internalization of its mission. While identification involves a sense of commitment to organizational values and norms, internalization indicates a belief in the justness of such norms.24

23 In the economics literature, conflicts of interest between organizational members have been analyzed primarily under principal-agent theory, which assumes a conflict of interest between a principal and a rational, utility maximizing agent under conditions of uncertainty. This inherent conflict requires the design of incentives that would make it in the agent's self interest to advance the interest of the principal (G. Miller 1992). Incentives represent a formal control mechanism that appeals to the self interest of the agent; one may not be the only, or best, way to direct the agent towards the principal's interest.
24 On the distinction between compliance, identification, and internalization as forms of social influence see Kelman and Hamilton (1989, 103–116).
Traditionally, formal and informal control mechanisms were viewed as alternatives. However recent research suggests that both tend to be utilized to varying degrees within a given organization (Cardinal, Sitkin, and Long 2004). As a result, while perhaps more difficult to measure than formal controls through standard indicators, informal controls nevertheless constitute an integral and often primary means of control in complex organizations.

Issues of control are particularly central in the modern military, which must prepare soldiers to function in the most threatening, uncertain and disorganized of conditions – those of the battlefield. As a result discipline is a central element of military culture (Burk 1999). While in the popular imagination military discipline is often perceived as the exercise of strict control through explicit orders and severe punishment, these portrayals are somewhat overstated. Methods of military discipline have largely shifted from harsh punishment to informal control mechanisms such as positive leadership and example (Burk 1999; Janowitz 1960). Moreover, as has already been mentioned, the nature of the military occupation is such that soldiers are granted considerable autonomy and discretion in pursuing their tasks. As a result clear orders are often simply unavailable, and behavior goes unmonitored. Formal control mechanisms would thus fall short in directing and managing soldier behavior. Hoover-Green (2011) finds that political education and indoctrination are the primary informal mechanism used to instill identification with organizational goals. However, such a mechanism is more typical of ideologically motivated groups, and therefore less applicable to professional state militaries. The mechanism I emphasize is small unit leadership, referring to the formal and informal ways in which junior commanders, agents of control at the field level, seek to influence their combatants.
2.4.2. A Logic of Violence and Control

My argument proceeds from the observation that soldiers differ in their participation in violence against civilians. This variation, I argue, is best explained by differences in organizational control, which shapes the scale of violence inflicted, the forms that it tends to take, and the targets typically chosen. The relationship between organizational control and violence unfolds in two broad phases. The first period, that of initial military socialization and training, inculcates in combatants a value system that constructs some types of violence as normative and others as illegitimate, imposing limits on the exercise of violence so that the organization can carry out its missions in a coordinated fashion and avoid devolving into anarchical subunits. Specifically, through training, militaries seek to legitimize the levels, targeting, and forms of violence that serve their interests. These interests will vary from campaign to campaign and from military to military, depending on the threats each faces and the missions that it wishes to carry out. But at the most general level, a central goal of military training is to construct boundaries between normative violence that serves organizational goals, and deviant violence that does not. If effective, the training period establishes differential baseline rates of participation in violence: Participation in levels, forms, and targeting of violence deemed normative will be relatively high, and participation in violence deemed deviant will be relatively low (as in other domains of human behavior).

In the second period combatants are sent into operational deployment. The encounter with local unit traditions, the exigencies of the combat situation, and the strains of longtime

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25 Weinstein (2007) points out that in some cases, rebel groups may tolerate high levels of opportunistic violence despite its organizational costs, so as to ensure their own survival. In organized state militaries, however, organizational survival is likely to be less of an issue, providing the organization with greater ability to control its members.

26 Combatants may also undergo some form of ongoing training during deployment, but a distinction is still maintained between the initial training of recruits and the period in which they are deemed qualified for warfare.
deployment erode the normative boundaries inculcated in the training period and pose renewed challenges to organizational control. The extent to which small unit commanders, agents of control at the field level, can overcome these challenges and re-enforce the boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate will further shape patterns of participation in violence. The next sections discuss how control shapes violence patterns in each period in greater detail.

**Phase 1: Constructing normative violence**

The initial military training period is designed to transform disparate individuals into a cohesive, aggressive force prepared to wield violence at the service of the military organization and its strategic objectives. To create professional violence workers, individual values and behaviors must be harnessed in favor of the organization; pre-existing normative frameworks that consider violence unacceptable behavior must be transformed to a value system that legitimizes violence insofar as it serves organizational needs; and any negative meaning of violence must be defused. These goals are achieved through a variety of neutralization techniques that obscure the painful dimensions of violence, reframing it as ideologically meaningful and as thrilling and exciting. While the former links the production of violence to the promotion of lofty goals, such as service of the nation and protection of its people, the latter appeals to the youthful desire of new recruits for excitement. In the resulting new value system, violence that serves strategic needs is normative and desirable, and in consequence is not constructed as violence at all.

When conducted effectively, military training renders normative **levels** of violence that are appropriate for the strategic objective, **forms** of violence that carry benefits for the organization, and **targeting** of individuals that the organization wishes to target. For example,
carrying a mission out to the letter is unquestionably legitimate in terms of scale, while using insufficient or excessive violence that harms organizational goals is not. Looting and theft of private property for personal enrichment, or abuse of civilians for personal enjoyment, are forms of violence clearly directed at individual goals, and are therefore likely to be constructed as deviant. 27 Lethal violence on the other hand is more likely to be associated with organizational goals, as soldiers are expected to use lethal weapons in combat. 28 Finally, targeting an enemy combatant clearly advances organizational objectives and would therefore be deemed normative. In the context of counterinsurgency legitimate targeting extends to the more fluid category of "insurgents," which, as discussed earlier, may include such categories as "part-time combatants" or civilians who are direct accomplices to violence. In contrast, targeting members of groups completely unrelated to the insurgency, most obviously a fellow combatant or friendly civilian, would be considered deviant. 29

The control process that normalizes organizationally sanctioned violence during military training, redefining the boundaries between normative, or strategic violence, and deviant, or opportunistic violence, is crucial for understanding patterns of participation in violence. Participation in normative behavior is far higher than participation in deviant behavior, and the processes that produce each differ in important ways. 30 However, the determination of whether particular levels, forms, or targets of violence serve military objectives is not always as

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27 This observation should be qualified, however, as some armed groups engage in organized, strategic looting, which may be difficult to distinguish observationally from looting for personal gain. The same might be said for sexual violence, which, while typically considered self-serving behavior, may under some circumstances be employed as a strategy of war. See Wood (forthcoming) for an analysis of the conditions under which sexual violence as a strategy is more likely.

28 Indeed, a few study participants remarked that in the army, beating a civilian was considered a greater offense than killing. The workings of organizational control shed light on this seemingly paradoxical statement – While killing is considered part of professional soldier conduct, beating is not.

29 Again, this argument should be qualified with respect to armed groups strategically engaged in ethnic cleansing or genocide, for whom collective targeting of all members of a particular group would be considered normative.

30 Consider, for instance, the difference between a parent grounding a child and imprisoning a stranger, or the difference between legally executing a person and murdering him.
straightforward as suggested by the foregoing examples. Higher levels of violence than
authorized, for instance, may promote strategic objectives but may also backfire and lead to more
casualties. Forms of violence designed to punish or deter potential insurgents may be successful
but may also increase motivation to take up arms. Targeting civilians thought to be supporters or
accomplices of the insurgency may reduce the insurgents support base but may also attract
domestic or international condemnation, leading to negative consequences for the military.

The common thread linking these acts of violence is the ambiguity that surrounds their
implementation. Sometimes this ambiguity results simply from the fact that no preconceived
military strategy can possibly address every empirical contingency that occurs in conflict. But
often ambiguity is strategic, reflecting the military elite's to delegate responsibility to the lower
ranks. Under conditions of ambiguity, violent practices are likely to emerge from the bottom of
the organization, whether because explicit direction is lacking or because junior officers wish to
impress upon their seniors that they are proactive and aggressive in promoting the organization's
strategic mission. I term such violence "entrepreneurial violence" (EV), indicating that such
practices are innovative yet risky. In the case of detection and condemnation of violence,
subordinates are invariably held liable as it is extremely difficult to produce evidence linking the
senior commander to the crime. In the case of success, such practices can be adopted and
institutionalized by the military as part of its strategic repertoire.

In sum, control mechanisms implemented throughout the military training period
construct a normative system that legitimizes violence insofar as it serves military goals. This
system creates three categories of violence: strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic,
characterized by the degree of ambiguity associated with a particular act. The relationship is
summarized in Figure 1.1.
As previously noted, the construction of violence as normative or illicit determines baseline patterns of participation in each type of violence. Strategic violence is normative, and therefore induces high levels of participation. Participation in entrepreneurial violence is more likely to fluctuate, depending on the degree to which it is perceived as serving organizational goals. Finally, opportunistic violence is deviant, and is therefore a low base rate phenomenon. Table 1.1 summarizes the key distinctions between strategic violence (SV), opportunistic violence (OV), and entrepreneurial violence (EV).
Table 1.1 Distinctions between Strategic, Entrepreneurial, and Opportunistic Violence

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SV</th>
<th>EV</th>
<th>OV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary of violence</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of military necessity</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline patterns of participation</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of authorization for action</td>
<td>Senior commanders</td>
<td>Junior commanders</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated forms of violence</td>
<td>Lethal; Property destruction</td>
<td>Punishment; Psychological pressure and harassment</td>
<td>Theft; humiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated targets</td>
<td>Enemy combatants; insurgents</td>
<td>Potential supporters or accomplices</td>
<td>Unconnected civilians</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Phase 2: Policing Violence**

While the intense military training period instills a normative framework among combatants legitimizing some forms of violence and prohibiting others, such a framework can become deeply undermined once a combatant is deployed. Individual attributes such as personality traits, beliefs, or attitudes may predispose some combatants to lashing out violently against civilians beyond what is mandated by the organization. Violence may also be triggered by elements of the environment or social situation. In a comprehensive review of the sources of aggression, Anderson and Bushman (2002) list several situational factors that influence cognition, affect, and arousal for aggressive behavior, including aggressive cues (objects that prime aggressive thoughts), interpersonal provocation, frustration, and pain and discomfort.

In the context of violent conflict, in particular irregular conflict taking place in civilian areas, situational triggers for violence abound. Combatants, uniformed and armed, are surrounded with aggressive cues. For young men patrolling and operating in civilian areas,
provocations – real or perceived – are plentiful. In circumstances of heightened fear and animosity, a slur, a comment, even an inopportune glance, can be perceived as provocation. Moreover, violence can be employed as retaliation (direct or indirect) for the loss of a comrade or even for being the reason why the combatant must be there in the first place. Pain and discomfort are highly present, as soldiers are deployed away from home for long periods of time in physical conditions that are uncomfortable and sometimes grueling. Such conditions can erode the norms that were instilled in combatants during the training period, and raise the likelihood of opportunistic violence.

In addition, the strain of ongoing operations can lead to greater shirking, as soldiers become increasingly stressed, frustrated, or bored, and therefore less willing to carry out their missions. Other soldiers may grow resistant through exposure to the realities of combat. The neutralization techniques that were part of the normative control process, glorifying violence as heroic or as thrilling and exciting, become less effective once the strains of combat are experienced firsthand. Moreover, some soldiers might resist entrepreneurial violence initiated by their commanders if it is not perceived as consistent with what they believe to be in military interests and therefore legitimate.

I argue that in this phase too, levels of control will largely shape patterns of violence and restraint. However, while organizational control in the previous phase is exercised in large part on behalf of the military organization in a centralized fashion, control in the operational phase is entrusted to small unit commanders, the NCOs and junior officers who supervise soldiers at the field level. Effective organizational control at this stage can ensure opportunistic violence is reduced to a minimum and participation in strategic violence is increased to a maximum. Effective control can also persuade soldiers that entrepreneurial violence is necessary and
legitimate, reducing ambiguity and resistance. However, the challenges to exercising effective control during deployment are numerous, and include local unit subcultures, geographical dispersion, and individual commander charisma and skill, therefore leading to variation in participation in violence.

The theory presented here has two main implications for participation rates in violence by individual combatants and small combat units: Effective organizational control should produce high levels of participation in strategic and entrepreneurial violence, and low levels of participation in opportunistic violence. In contrast, weak control should reduce rates of participation in strategic and entrepreneurial violence, while at the same time raising participation in opportunistic violence. This relationship is summarized in Table 1.2.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>High Control</th>
<th>Low Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Violence</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial Violence</td>
<td>Medium/high</td>
<td>Medium/low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunistic Violence</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
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In addition, the theory has implications for variation in forms and targeting of violence. When organizational control is strong, forms of violence employed should reflect strategic, rather than individual interests, and targets should be those who the military organization is interested in targeting. When organizational control is weak, self-serving forms of violence should multiply, and violence should increasingly be directed at those whose targeting serves no
military purpose. When control is ambiguous, forms and targets of violence with uncertain military utility should emerge.

2.5 The trajectory of control in the IDF

To illustrate the workings of organizational control in the military, this section outlines the trajectory of control in the IDF in some detail, beginning with its efforts to shape and direct the disparate interests of Israeli youth prior to enlistment and ending with operational service in the IDF's "senior companies" prior to release from regular service.\(^{31}\) In each of these stages I highlight the dual mechanisms of formal control, represented by laws, discipline, and sanction systems on the one hand, and informal control, which aims to instill identification with IDF goals and internalization of its mission on the other hand. The workings of informal control are best captured by the IDF slang term "ra'al", literally "poison," meaning motivation for combat, the instillation of which is a primary goal of IDF informal control mechanisms.\(^{32}\) Throughout, I note the relationship of such control mechanisms to the production of violence, arguing that both discipline and "poison" are closely linked to the legitimation and normalization of violence, yet this link is obscured through neutralization techniques designed to recast violence in a positive light and defuse its negative meanings. In addition, I examine the effects of control at each of these stages, discussing the ability and tendency of individuals to resist the effects of such overarching control.

\(^{31}\) "Senior companies" is an unsatisfactory translation for the Hebrew term meaning "old-timer" companies, in which combatants serve for the greater part of their regular military service, having completed their training.

\(^{32}\) The source of the term "ra'al" is not clear. Israeli slang expert Rubik Rosenthal has suggested that it initiated in the Hebrew initials for "fighting spirit." However such initials would require a different spelling, whereas contemporary usage and spelling points to the literal meaning of poison.
2.5.1 Prior to enlistment: Instilling motivation to fight

Under Israeli law, all citizens are conscripted at the age of 18, though several groups, most notably Israeli Arabs (but not Druze), ultra-Orthodox Jews, and religious women, receive exemptions from service. Mandatory, or regular, service for men is three years, and for women two years. Upon release from service, soldiers are transferred to the reserve force, where they may be called up for service for several weeks each year until final release between the age of 40 and 50, depending on their military role.

Writing in the mid 1980s, Reuven Gal, a prominent IDF psychologist, argued that motivation to serve in the IDF relied on an "extremely powerful normative system which makes serving in the IDF so highly appreciated, so socially desirable and – for most Israelis – so taken for granted" (Gal 1986, 74). To some extent this is still true today. Israel continues to be "a nation in arms" in which the combat soldier is identified with "the good citizen" (G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008) and symbolizes hegemonic masculinity. The IDF consistently ranks as the state institution with the highest level of public trust (Arian et al. 2010) and motivation for combat service generally remains high. As a result of these societal norms the conflict of interest between individual interests of Israeli youth and the manpower needs of the IDF are reduced to some degree.

Nevertheless, accumulating evidence suggests that this general societal norm has been eroding. During the 1990s, Israeli security elites declared a "motivation crisis" that was evidenced by a slow but steady decline in willingness to enlist in combat units, and a rise in attempts to evade military service through draft dodging or deliberate efforts to enlist in non-

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33 Exemptions are also given to individuals on religious, physical and psychological grounds. In recent years, due to shifts in Israeli demographics, the exempt sectors have been rapidly growing. As of 2011 only some 50% of Israeli citizens enlisted, constituting about two thirds of its Jewish population, see Rappaport (2011).
combat roles (Adres, Vanhuysse, and Vashdi 2012; Y. Levy 2009; Nevo and Shor 2002). These trends were particularly pronounced among the secular Ashkenazi sector, Israel's social and economic elite that had previously formed the backbone of the IDF's combat force (Y. Levy 2007; Y. Levy, Lomsky-Feder, and N. Harel 2007). While scholars debate the actual scope of the problem, there is widespread agreement that the Israeli military is losing its sacred status in the Israeli public space, and is increasingly a subject of criticism and public debate. In face of these challenges the IDF has allocated additional resources to align the motivation of Israeli youth with its strategic goals and needs.

While formal control mechanisms, chief among them mandatory conscription, exist to ensure widespread recruitment, the military places heavy emphasis on informal control mechanisms intended to shape and direct individual motivation, values, attitudes, and emotions in the interests of the IDF. As explained by Brigadier General Amir Rogovski, head of the IDF's personnel planning unit:

"You ask me, 'Why do you have to convince or promote service when you have compulsory service? If we don't explain every day the importance of serving the country and the importance of being in military service, we won't fill the quantity and quality needs for the next decade."\[35\]

As Rogovski's statement makes clear, it is not simply the self interest of potential combatants that must be shaped through coercion or incentives, but their beliefs and values. Recognizing the importance of this goal the IDF administers a series of programs together with the Israeli Ministries of Defense and Education designed to prepare high school students for military service with an emphasis on combat roles\[36\]. It meticulously tracks motivation trends

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\[36\] Many would argue that military socialization in Israel begin as early as preschool (Gur Ziv 2005; G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008). However, as my concern here is with organizational control I limit the examination to the socialization processes conducted by the IDF.
among Israeli youth and forwards the results to the Ministry of Education so that preparatory programs can be tailored to the draft rates of individual schools. While implementation of various elements of the program is flexible, the preparatory program is compulsory, and its primary objective is "internalization of the value of combat service, the obligation to serve, and identification with the IDF and its goals."37 The twin goals of normative control, internalization and identification, are thus explicitly referenced in the program's mission statement.

The preparation program includes three key elements: information, experience, and values.38 Information is transferred through talks and lectures by current soldiers who present the various options available to enlisting youth. Values are inculcated through lectures, workshops, stories of famous battles and fallen soldiers. Experiences include such programs as the veteran Gadna Youth Regiments program, a week-long quasi-military training camp in which students wear uniforms and experience military discipline, target practice, and lessons about historic battles and battle heroes, as well as visits to military bases, memorial ceremonies, and exposition of military technologies and weapons.

Though the terms "violence" or "use of force" are conspicuously absent from preparatory program and materials, the fostering of combat motivation is closely related to the production of violence. Some of the educational materials are intended to stir emotion and idealism, such as heroic stories of battle, bravery, and sacrifice. Others are intended to evoke thrill and excitement through the presentation of advanced technologies of warfare. Cultural artifacts, such as the rapidly growing genre of "poison films" set to thumping soundtracks, celebrate weapons,

37 Other stated goals include providing information about the enlistment process, raising awareness to the values associated with military service, and improvement of physical fitness. See mission statement at the IDF Education Branch website (in Hebrew): http://www.aka.idf.il/chinuch/klali/default.asp?catId=43975&docId=44041&list=1.

firepower, and explosions.\textsuperscript{39} The darker side of violence, the suffering of its victims, or the heavy strain it imposes on soldiers themselves, are completely absent from such films, thereby neutralizing the implications of violence and reframing it as thrilling and inspiring. Such neutralization techniques are a fundamental element of control, as they allow behavior that in other contexts is viewed as aggressive and unacceptable to be transformed into fulfillment of values and heroism, or pursuit of fun and thrill, when committed in service of the military organization.

The link between combat motivation and the normalization of violence is further evidenced by the documented rise in motivation that accompanies reports of a unit's successful performance in combat operations. Discussing relatively low motivation rates to the armored corps, Roe'e, a former tank commander I interviewed observed:

"In the past the news would report an operation conducted by "Golani" (an infantry unit) and an "IDF force." … It was forbidden to mention the names "Combat Engineering" or "Armored Corps." The same was true for instance when a terrorist was eliminated. They would say "Golani" eliminated him, or "Nachal" (an infantry unit) eliminated him, or "an IDF force." They were never allowed to mention [the armored corps], for one security reason or another … Those reasons are no longer relevant and now it's allowed, and motivation shot up to such a degree that today there is a match between available spaces and candidates."

Josh, another former tank commander, told me that he decided he wanted to serve in the armored corps during high school, after an IDF preparatory program sponsored by his school took students to watch an armored brigade exercise. In his words, "the sight of 100 tanks making noise definitely 'does it to you' and three of my friends and I decided that day that we're only going to armor, and we all went to armor."

\textsuperscript{39} Many of these films are publically available and can be easily viewed on websites such as youtube.
In my interviews I asked each respondent to rank their motivation for combat service prior to entering the IDF on a scale of one to five. A full 60% indicated they were thoroughly "poisoned" prior to entering the military, ranking their motivation as five or above. An additional 25% responded ranked their motivation at a high four. Approximately 11% said their motivation was medium, or had oscillated between low and high. Less than 5% indicated that their motivation had been low. As noted at the outset, it is difficult to determine to what extent such extraordinary figures are affected by the organizational control mechanisms implemented by the military during high school rather than other determinants such as family, peer, or societal norms. For some soldiers at least, it is likely that these sources reinforce each other, producing a large pool of young men who subordinate their individual interests to the strategic goals of the IDF, and are eager to exercise violence (though not typically conceived as such, due to neutralization techniques) on its behalf. The vast majority of these men do not decide to serve in combat due to coercion and certainly not because of material incentives, but rather because of their values, norms, and beliefs, and because they have come to view the use of military force as both an expression of ideological commitment and an exciting thrill which they eagerly await.

Nevertheless it must be noted that although adoption of such values is dominant, it is not complete. A few respondents did note low levels of motivation, citing primarily individual interests. For instance, one respondent, a star athlete, had unsuccessfully attempted to evade combat service to pursue his sports career. Others simply resisted any form of normative control, and remained uninterested despite efforts at persuasion. Still others tempered enthusiasm for the military with such traditional "everyday forms of resistance" (J. C. Scott 1985, 1990) as irony.

40 These statistics should be interpreted carefully as they rely on respondent memory, which may have been shaped by later experience. Nevertheless it is of significance that the majority of respondents overwhelmingly recalled very high motivation for combat service during high school.
and dark humor.\textsuperscript{41} In such cases, formal mechanisms such as the legal power to enforce mandatory combat conscription were employed to ensure that organizational interests overrode personal ones.

2.5.2 Military training: Creating violence workers

The exercise of IDF organizational control reaches its peak in the military training period, which lasts anywhere between six and eighteen months, depending on the military unit.\textsuperscript{42} Upon induction into the military, new recruits are given uniforms, their hair is cut and any facial hair must be shaven. They are assigned a strictly enforced schedule and are severely restricted in their means of communication with family members and friends outside the military camp. Cadets must relearn skills which they had mastered long before, from properly tying shoelaces to ways of addressing young men only several months their seniors, now occupying a command position. They are shouted at and harassed, and their most minor infractions are punished. They undergo rigorous physical exercise and suffer immense physical strain and mental stress.\textsuperscript{43} Commanders are given extreme authority, and soldiers must demonstrate complete obedience. While in the past stories of commander abuse were common, the general trend in the IDF has been to clamp down on physical abuse and harassment, since their risks often outweigh their gains.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{41} Moreover, as my sample only included combat soldiers, it is quite likely that figures on low motivation are underestimated, as some young men who attempted to evade combat doubtless succeeded.
\textsuperscript{42} This section refers to the training experience of recruits into combat units, not those in non-combat roles who undergo different training.
\textsuperscript{43} Indeed, a small but substantial share of inductees breaks under such stress, with some being transferred to non-combat units or out of the army altogether. Notably, approximately half of soldier suicides take place in the first six months of the military, see Ilan Marciano, "Half of soldier suicides – at the beginning of their military service," Ynet, 17 August, 2004, www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-2964884,00.html.
\textsuperscript{44} Beginning in the late 1990s the IDF began to limit the means of punishment that commanders could impose on trainees, see Michal Danieli, "Today's Drill is not the Past's Drill," Mako, 29 August, 2011, http://www.mako.co.il/pzm-soldiers/Article-2c587cfccfe0231006.htm. Since then combat units have periodically engaged in reforms to limit punishment and drilling, see e.g. Yaniv (2010).
Nevertheless military training remains a period in which recruits into combat units are toughened through exposure to constant aggressive behavior.

At the same time, basic training is a site for socialization into and identification with the recruit's new unit and his combat role. Soldiers are introduced to their unit's unique traditions, rituals and songs and are encouraged to take part. They are told inspirational stories of bravery and dedication in their unit and are exposed to new and exciting technologies of warfare. They learn to treasure their rifle and not separate from it, and are taught about the value of camaraderie and are expected to make sacrifices for their peers. The initial months of military training thus instill discipline and obedience, inculcate norms and values, and forge a shared cultural identity which subordinates individual interests and concerns to the military framework.

As Matan, a former infantry soldier reflected:

"Part of what I find amazing about this system is its ability – in the training process – to simply program the person. It's programming! It's so crazy and extreme. The training period is when you learn to do things that make no sense to a normal human being, whether it's to crawl in a field of thorns or run forward when you're being shot at, or stuff like that, that isn't logical. It's not something that a reasonable person would do of their own free will, and part of the programming is really… internalizing your place. Internalizing."

The intensive training period inspires in most soldiers not just an acceptance of but a fervent desire for combat, colloquially referred to as "ekshen," or "action." Matan recalled the feelings among his comrades when, upon completing their training, they were deployed to the increasingly volatile Gaza Strip:

"The atmosphere was becoming one of a war zone. When you're inside it, the truth is that it feels less like danger and more like adrenalin, because that's what you're there for and that's what you've been programmed for for an entire year, so there's definitely an atmosphere of adrenalin, an atmosphere of ekshen."
The desire for "ekshen" among ordinary soldiers was one of the most common themes in my interviews, reflecting soldiers' eagerness to participate in what they were conditioned and trained for: the use of violence to serve military goals. As Micah, a former infantry soldier, observed:

"No, there's no sense of fear at all. None at all. Everyone lives in the present, you don't think about it… Listen, in retrospect there's no doubt that this is the accomplishment of the brainwashing that the army did. It's like, 'wow, there's action, fun!' In Basic Training there was nothing, nothing, nothing, and here there's ekshen and it's cool."

The widespread soldier desire for "ekshen" underscores the role of neutralization strategies in the exercise of normative control. To encourage widespread, eager participation in violence on behalf of the military, violence is defused of its dangerous, frightening, or harmful meanings and is recast as thrilling, fulfilling, and admirable. Nadav, a former infantry soldier, deployed just prior to the outbreak of the Second Intifada, put it this way:

"We enlisted, and my unit [traditionally] serves in the South. 4-5 months earlier the IDF withdrew from Lebanon, and the North was considered the "hot" zone. We were heading south, so our commander gave us a pep talk and said, 'listen, there's nothing we can do, we're going to be in Gaza even though the North is the "hot" zone, and that doesn't mean anything.' He started to tell us not to be too upset by it… Because, after all…you undergo a process where they try to "poison" you, a sort of brainwashing. There was a period where we even woke up every morning and the loudspeakers blasted our unit's anthem. So you reach this state, a state that's a little absurd, because you wake up in the morning and say, 'I want to go. I want to go take down terrorists.' … But there's no real training that can prepare you for an encounter with a terrorist. No one shoots at you [during training], you don't know what a bullet flying over your head sounds like, you don't know what a mortar shell landing close to you sounds like… nothing can really prepare you for that."

Yet even such powerful conditioning is never completely successful. Some soldiers cannot (or do not want to) handle the pressure of basic training and drop out along the way due to physical or mental conditions that warrant exemption from combat. Others remain part of the system but are more resistant to its attempts at inculcation. But ultimately, the vast majority of
respondents emerged from their training period having internalized the values of the organization, and eager to employ violence on its behalf.

2.5.3 Operational deployment: erosion of control

Once training is complete, those soldiers who successfully endured the process and have not been immediately selected for commander training generally enter their units in deployment, where they join older cohorts in performing missions. The eagerness to use violence is finally put into practice, and the messy conditions of fighting begin to undermine the neat, neutralized normative system espoused in the earlier periods.

Whereas the training period was characterized by intense, nearly totalizing control, during the period of deployment control weakens considerably, for a variety of reasons. First, powerful unit subcultures often interfere with the exercise of centralized control, imposing their own set of norms and values that soldiers must learn and follow. Young commanders are often weak and ineffectual in face of these powerful local forces. Second, soldiers who have completed their training are assumed to have already internalized the IDF's objectives and accordingly are treated with more trust. Hillel, a former infantry soldier, noted,

"A major difference between the senior companies and the training period is that [commanders] trusted us. During the training period the entire goal of the NCOs is to catch you and make sure you're [behaving] ok, whereas in the senior companies they have a job to do, they lead operations… I don't think their purpose [in the training period] is [to catch you], I think their purpose is educational, operational, but in the senior company… they didn't do it as much."

At the same time, as soldiers grow more experienced and confident they become more resistant to overt attempts at normative control. As Aryeh, a former officer, explained,
"Commanders in the [senior company] are primarily mission commanders… This is different from commanders in basic training, who give a lot of talks and speak about values, blah blah blah. There are no talks about values in the [senior company]… because you’ve been in the army for a year and half already and if someone comes and talks to you now about values, then really, good luck to him…”

Finally, the nature of operational deployment, particularly in counterinsurgency warfare, is such that soldiers often operate in small teams, far from the supervision of the commanding officers. Control thus becomes much more difficult as soldiers are dispersed and difficult to monitor. Due to these factors, organizational control shifts in form and scale when soldiers enter senior companies. Centralized control decreases considerably, and the control and leadership exercised by small unit commanders begins to play a much larger role in shaping the degree to which violence is harnessed in favor of the organization. When junior commanders are able to overcome the challenges posed by deployment and enforce the normative boundaries constructed in the training period, organizational control is restored.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented a theoretical framework that considers the effect of organizational control on patterns of participation in violence and restraint in counterinsurgent violence against civilians. I argued that control shapes violence in two distinct ways: First, centralized control mechanisms inculcate a set of beliefs and values among combatants that construct violence against civilians as legitimate and normative to the extent that it is serves military needs. This normalization of violence is achieved through the use of neutralization techniques that diffuse violence of its negative meanings insofar as it serves the organization. The result of this initial training period is a normative system that constructs three distinct categories of violence:
strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic. The construction of strategic violence as normative and opportunistic violence as deviant determines baseline rates of participation in each type of violence, as well as its associated forms and targeting patterns.

However, such baseline rates are subject to substantial fluctuation as combatants enter the real world of combat, and opportunities for violence multiply. Effective commanders at the small unit level can employ formal and informal mechanisms to control violence and resistance to a large extent, reshaping the scale, forms, and targets of violence so that they conform to the strategic interests of the military. When commander leadership is ineffective, participation in opportunistic violence can be expected to rise considerably, and participation in strategic violence is likely to decline. At the same time, weak control is likely to lead to a rise in self-serving forms of violence, and to increased targeting of civilians in no way connected to the insurgency.
Chapter 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS: COLLECTING SENSITIVE DATA

I think that no matter how many stories people tell you, I don't know if you'll be able to understand… I understood that no matter what happens, if I try to explain it to people no one will understand. I came home and [people would ask] "how was it?" "OK." I understood that I reached the point where it's better not to talk to people because they won't understand. You know I was a sergeant of [a team of] snipers. Most my friends in university don't know that. I don't feel the need to say it at all.¹

3.1 Introduction: Collecting Data from Combatants

Despite the recent boom in civil conflict studies, the dynamics of civil war remain insufficiently understood (Kalyvas 2007; Sambanis 2002). Data on civil conflict is notoriously difficult to obtain (Lacina and Gleditsch 2005), and available data on violence tends to be distorted and overaggregated (Kalyvas 2006). The collection of data from combatants or other members of armed groups during ongoing conflict is particularly uncommon.² NGOs, foreign journalists, and many researchers tend to gather information from civilian victims. When combatant perspectives are sought it is usually after a political transition was effected. Thus, scholars survey and interview ex-combatants in peacetime (Fujii 2009; Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Straus 2006; Weinstein 2007), and study the archives of military tribunals, truth commissions, and other investigative bodies (Kalyvas 2006; Leiby 2009; Payne 2008), hoping to shed light on perpetrator motives. Yet such data may be distorted by the attempts of yesterday's heroes to protect themselves from today's victors. Once their actions have been discredited, ex-combatants are more likely to trivialize the extent of participation, to blame others, or to deny outright the commission of violent acts (S. Cohen 2001).

¹ Personal interview with Gil, December 2009. All names have been changed to protect respondent identity, see Section 3.3.
² But see Ron (2003), Wood (2003), Baaz and Stern (2009) for exceptions.
The reluctance to collect data from combatants during ongoing conflict can be attributed to many factors. Most importantly, combatant accounts are usually hard to access. In some contexts, the conflict setting is simply too dangerous to allow for in-depth research. But even when physical danger is not a major obstacle, access to combatants is difficult to negotiate. Soldiers are often legally barred from speaking or fear reprisal if they do. The military has little incentive to collect data on violence against civilians, and even less to publicize it. Qualitative methods such as participant observation are usually off limits to outsiders and interviews of active service members can be difficult to secure.

Even when combatants can be accessed, other factors tend to impede scholarly engagement with their narratives. Some scholars find it morally unsettling to seek the perspectives of combatants engaged in violence, leading to what Clendinnen (2002) has called a "moral sensitivity exclusion" in the study of violence (Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo 2002). Moreover, to the extent that combatant perspectives challenge victim narratives, scholars may worry about the implications of such research (Lee and Renzetti 1990; Mahmood 1996). As Robben (1995, 84) observed, "we have more sympathy for unmasking abusers of power than doubting the words of their victims." Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo (2002, 25) similarly worried that a study of perpetrator narratives "might raise questions about researchers' methodologies, their findings, and even their values and political loyalties…"

Other concerns can be raised as well. Can combatants be trusted to reveal the workings of violence? Does understanding the perspectives of combatants indicate an acceptance of their beliefs? And more importantly, does such research reveal more than one would like to know about the shadowy workings of state power, and about the unscrupulous roles it imposes on its agents? Despite all of these obstacles, violence in conflict cannot be fully understood without the
perspectives of those who employ it. Moreover, an understanding of combatant behavior is important not only for theoretical purposes but for policy reasons. Too often simplified, dichotomous categories of victim and perpetrator inspire efforts at post-conflict reconstruction, thereby polarizing groups even further and increasing the risk of a slip back into a cycle of violence. By accessing the diverse perspectives of combatants this study deconstructs the category of “perpetrator,” allowing for a more nuanced understanding of conflict.

This chapter outlines some of the methodological challenges that I faced in conducting research with former combatants, and the strategies I used to counter them. In the first section of the chapter I discuss my methodology in conducting this study. I first address the question of case selection, arguing that the unique features of the Israeli case make it an appropriate case to study the organizational production of military violence. I then lay out my research design, describing the methods I used to study military violence and restraint in the Second Intifada. The second section addresses in greater detail some of the methodological challenges inherent in studying violence against civilians from the perspective of combatants, and what might be done to mitigate these challenges.

3.2 Case Selection

My study focuses on the Israeli military in the Second Intifada, employing a sub-national research design with individuals and small combat units as the units of analysis. In many ways Israel represents a relatively advantageous location for the study of violence in conflict. Local and international human rights organizations assiduously track violations of human rights in the OPT. The details and circumstances of death of nearly every casualty of the Second Intifada are known and monitored, and though disputes exist regarding the classification of victims, some
sources are widely perceived as sufficiently accurate and credible. Data is also available regarding other Israeli counterinsurgency measures such as punitive house demolitions and restrictions on movement.  

Second, Israel's compact size and mandatory conscription laws mean that combatants are relatively easy to locate and access. While soldiers in regular service may not interview on political or military matters without the approval of the IDF, former combatants who are current members of the reserve force may speak freely as Israeli civilians. In addition, fieldwork is possible in most areas and observers can collect data with greater freedom than exists in many conflict settings. Sites of friction between soldiers and civilians (such as military checkpoints or demonstrations) can sometimes be observed directly. Data can thus be collected in a variety of ways even as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues.

Third, the IDF's prolonged engagement with asymmetric warfare and insurgency has turned it into something of a counterinsurgency expert in international security circles. Israeli military experts regularly export knowledge and experience to other countries engaged in counterinsurgency warfare. While some of the features of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are unique, such as its engagement in prolonged military occupation, the counterinsurgency tactics that it uses and dilemmas that it faces can thus illuminate to some extent the experiences of other modern militaries engaged in counterinsurgency.

Yet despite the relative availability of data in the Israeli case, some aspects of military violence remain largely hidden. First, while comprehensive data exists on lethal violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, non-lethal violence is systematically underreported. Much non-lethal

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3 In recent years detailed data on movement restriction has been collected by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian Territory. However this fine grained data is not available for much of the period of the Second Intifada.

violence occurs away from the watchful eyes of the media and NGOs and is rarely reported by victims. This poses a problem, since as was argued in the previous chapter, analyses that take only lethal violence into account can lead to a skewed understanding of violence, in particular given state incentives to reduce lethal violence in the face of growing international scrutiny.

Second, media and NGO observers primarily rely on victim testimony, producing an incomplete account of violence. There are a few exceptions to this rule, most notably the Israeli organization "Breaking the Silence" (BTS), founded in 2004 with the express purpose of collecting testimonies from soldiers who served in the Occupied Territories. Since its establishment BTS has collected over 700 such testimonies, documenting the violence that results from military combat within a civilian population. But while BTS testimonies provide an important and unique source of data on the production of military violence, they are often perceived as unrepresentative of the soldier population, as soldiers who choose to testify are a self-selecting group who largely oppose Israeli military policies.

Third, information about the structure and organization of military units is not readily available. Israel's security establishment is secretive and places high barriers on access to data and personnel. Israeli scholars studying the military have circumvented this barrier in two ways. First, some utilize personal networks with IDF officials, receiving access informally or off the record. This method is increasingly more difficult to use as the IDF has recently clamped down harshly on officers who have collaborated with journalists or researchers without prior IDF consent. Alternatively, some scholars cultivate formal (but sometimes unacknowledged)

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5 This is of course not a uniquely Israeli phenomenon, as state security apparatuses are invariably highly secretive and notoriously difficult to study, whether in authoritarian countries (see e.g. Peritore 1990) or democracies (Arkin 2005; Gill 1994; Masco 2010; A. S. Roberts 2006).

relationships with the military, providing teaching and research services and thereby gaining
access to quality data. Beyond the ethical aspects of this relationship, such scholars face practical
obstacles as well, as the IDF retains the right to veto or censor the products of such formal
collaboration. My own experience with official channels underscored this difficulty. Having no
personal or institutional connections to draw from, I nevertheless attempted on three occasions to
receive non-classified data through official channels, and was unsuccessful in each. Formal and
informal collaboration was thus out of the question, and I would need to circumvent these
barriers in order to access data on the intricacies of small unit organization.

Indeed, the variation in violence among military units is a topic on which no systematic
data exists, despite anecdotal evidence suggesting that there are in fact important differences
among units in their use of violence against civilians. One attempt to assemble such data was
made by the Israeli NGO "Yesh Din", which sought to monitor which units were subjects of
investigations by the IDF military police for misconduct against Palestinians and their property.
The IDF responded that it did not collect such data. "Yesh Din" then turned to an appeal under
the Israeli Freedom of Information Act, compelling the IDF to collect and publish information
regarding military investigations per unit for the years 2006-2007 (Yesh Din 2008). While this
information is valuable data that is not available elsewhere it is limited in several ways, as most
cases are never reported and are therefore not investigated, and the data is limited to the years
2006-2007 and even in those years is incomplete.\footnote{Perpetrator unit is unknown for 22% of the cases in 2006 and 45% in 2007 (Yesh Din 2008).} Moreover, while the report includes statistics
on the number of investigations initiated, it includes no contextual data regarding the
mechanisms that lead to varying levels of violence among different units. The processes that
produce violence thus remain opaque.
Finally, existing data sets are, for the most part, unable to distinguish between strategic violence, entrepreneurial violence, and opportunist violence. Yet since these forms of violence result from different processes, aggregation of all three forms can produce misleading results. In addition, existing data are subject to a selection bias as they typically document cases of violence but not cases of nonviolence, restraint, or resistance.

My primary strategy in dealing with these limitations was to rely on a variety of data sources and to employ several methods. While not eliminating the limitations completely, the use of multiple methods and sources increased my confidence in my findings. My research design and data sources are discussed in the next section.

3.3 Data and Research Design

This study utilizes several sources of data collected during eighteen months of fieldwork in Israel in 2009-2010. First, I conducted some seventy in-depth interviews with Israeli men who carried out their regular military service during the Second Intifada. Of these, eight interviews were conducted with "refuseniks," most of whom had served in the reserves during the Second Intifada. As was already indicated, interviews of active service members were generally not an option given the absence of official collaboration. I therefore employed two methods to access combatants. First, I decided to interview only released combatants, who, while still belonging to the IDF's reserve corps, were at the time of my interviews civilians who could speak freely. In the rare occasion when an opportunity arose to interview a current IDF member off the record I carefully weighed the risks to the participant and only conducted the interview if it was clear to

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8 Outright refusal to serve during regular service on principled grounds carries a much higher personal price and is highly unusual (as opposed to efforts to evade the draft in the first place, which are more prevalent.) The "refuseniks" I interviewed declared their refusal as reservists, after their regular service had ended.
me that he was fully aware of these risks. Second, I made use of open online forums and social networking sites, which provided a public forum for observation of discourse among soldiers or former soldiers.

The majority of respondents were recruited through chain referral ("snowball") sampling, using several initial "seeds" to maximize the diversity of the sample. A few respondents were recruited in other ways, such as in chance meetings or through the social networking site Facebook. The sample proved to be very diverse, and included former soldiers and officers from almost all of the IDF's ground combat units. Respondents also formed a demographically diverse group, hailing from cities, towns, and agricultural settlements (moshav and kibbutz) across Israel and the Occupied Territories. Respondents differed in their ethnic background (Mizrahi, Ashkenazi, immigrants from the former USSR and elsewhere, and mixed background), levels of religious affiliation (religious, traditional, and secular), and political opinions (see appendix for full sample details). Interviews typically took place in cafes or the homes or workplaces of respondents, and lasted between one and a half and four hours. To protect respondent confidentiality, identifying details have been obscured and all names used are pseudonyms, with the exception of public events and official documents.

In order to further test the relationships between violence and control that I found in my interviews I conducted an online survey of approximately 120 former combatants from the same period. Men who served in combat units constitute a hidden population, meaning that no publically available sampling frame exists from which it could have been possible to select a random sample and that membership in the group raises issues of privacy or sensitivity (Heckathorn 1997, 2002; Watters and Biernacki 1989). Several sampling methods have been used to study hidden populations, including snowball sampling (N. Cohen and Arieli 2011),
targeted sampling (Watters and Biernacki 1989) and location sampling. While such methods are not representative by definition, it is possible to increase their quality through access to parallel networks and through the use of complementary methods (N. Cohen and Arieli 2011).

To maximize the diversity of my survey sample, I utilized two sampling methods. First I employed chain referral sampling, aiming for diversity in selection of several initial respondents ("seeds") from different units and social networks. Second, I replaced traditional location-based methods with "virtual" locations using the widespread social networking website Facebook. In Israel Facebook use is especially prevalent, penetrating over 47% of the population as of the date of the study. In the age bracket I studied, 25-30, Facebook has an even greater presence, cutting across gender, ethnicity and class cleavages. I contacted former combatants through Facebook groups of military veterans in which they were members, enlisting the help of group administrators rather than contacting each member directly. Those administrators who agreed were asked to circulate the survey to group members. 195 people began taking the survey. Of these, 34 were disqualified as they did not fit the survey criteria (soldiers who served in combat roles in regular, as opposed to training, companies). After deletion of those individuals who did not complete the survey or had substantial amounts of missing data, 118 surveys remained for analysis, 42% of which were sampled through Facebook and 58% through snowball sampling.

The interviews and survey were supplemented by data collected from various sources including media and NGO reports and Breaking the Silence testimonies. Finally, I conducted limited observation at such sites as a military checkpoint, military courtroom, and a military training session.

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The reliance on interview and survey data raises several difficulties, such as the inherent difficulty in reconstructing memory regarding events which took place several years earlier (I conducted my interviews in 2009-2010 about the period between 2000-2005) and, in the case of interviews, the impact of the interviewer on the exchange. These difficulties are compounded when conducting interviews of combatants on sensitive questions of violence. Military violence is difficult to talk about, as it carries diametrically opposed meanings: Legitimate, necessary, even glorious in one context, and illegitimate and brutish in another. The very classification of an act as violent or not is intensely contested, politically and emotionally. Those who were involved in the violence, whether as perpetrators, victims, or witnesses, have deep stakes in ensuring that their interpretations of events are recognized and accepted. As a result of these conflicts of interpretation, the research encounter can become a site for the negotiation of meaning and legitimacy, which determines to what extent, and in what ways, stories of violence are to be revealed.

The remainder of this chapter is organized as follows: I first discuss the conflicts of meaning underlying the concept of violence, employing the concept of "violence work" to suggest that "violence workers," like other "dirty workers" (Hughes 1958, 1962), are a part of a division of a labor that enables society to benefit from state violence on the one hand while being spared its unsavory details on the other. I reflect on the challenges that such conflicts created for talking about violence, focusing on three meaning-making strategies that I encountered in the field – transformation of meaning, solicitation of loyalty, and emotion. While each of these strategies represented a dilemma to be reckoned with, I recognize that none has easy solutions. For violence researchers, ultimately, as Gary Fine (1993, 268) argues, "Unresolvable moral

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dilemmas are endemic to [our] work." Still, like others who sought to demystify the backstage process of research on violent conflict (see e.g. Fujii 2010; Wood 2006a), I argue that more attention to the challenges and obstacles of political violence research can illuminate not only the ways in which violence is talked about, but how violence work is enabled and sustained.

3.4 The Conflicting Meanings of Violence: Violence Work and Dirty Work

Whoever opens up clogs will smell like sewage. There nothing you can do. What can you do, whoever handles it – something sticks.\(^{11}\)

A slap or a blow in one situation is dangerous and immoral and a terrible thing and in another situation it's something that's not only legitimate but inescapable. And in the end… whoever's not there cannot judge the person who is. At the end of the day the military and all the [military] activity is a very aggressive framework, what we do is fight, and there's nothing you can do.\(^{12}\)

My project involved a study of an agency of authorized state violence, the military. Like other coercive state institutions, such as the police, the prison system, and state security agencies, much work in the military, particularly if the military is engaged in armed conflict, involves the use of coercive power and violence on a regular basis. Combatants undergo rigorous training that teaches them to employ violence efficiently and productively. They deploy in areas where they engage in violence against a variety of targets. They are measured and promoted by their ability to achieve desired objectives through the prescribed use of violence. In short, they routinely engage in "violence work," employing forceful means on a more or less routine basis in accordance with rules and institutional control mechanisms. This is especially true for militaries engaged in counterinsurgency, occupation, stability operations, low intensity conflicts, and other

\(^{11}\) Personal interview with Ofer, February 2010.
\(^{12}\) Personal interview with Ilan, September 2009.
forms of protracted asymmetric warfare which take place in civilian areas and combine policing with military combat.

The concept of "violence work" is useful as it illuminates many of the ways in which violence becomes routinized and normalized through coercive state practice. Indeed, a common refrain for many violence workers when faced with allegations regarding their conduct is that they were just doing their jobs. As Nagengast (1994, 123) argues, "the discourse of work has historically been an effective instrument of state control, an instrument whereby certain sectors of society have been deprived of essential aspects of their humanity through the work of others." Put differently, violence is enabled through the routine, everyday practices of work. The theme of work was prominent in my interviews as well. Many of the respondents used the discourse of work to refer to their experiences as soldiers in the Occupied Territories, conveying both the routine aspects of the use of force against civilians as well how such force became professionalized and standardized.

The concept of violence work also draws attention to the division of labor between state institutions that engage in violence work on the one hand, and those that benefit from it on the other. This division enables society to reap the benefits of violence while shielding them from its unsavory details. In this way, violence work is a form of "dirty work" (Hughes 1958, 1962), in that it is regarded, at least in some quarters, as physically or morally suspect. 13 Yet "violence work" is also unique in that unlike dirty work it is not uniformly stigmatized or perceived by society as degrading. Indeed, the work of soldiers, policemen, and other agents of authorized violence is as likely to be glorified as devalued, lauded as heroic rather than denigrated. This is

13 First coined by Hughes (1958, 1962) the term "dirty work" refers to occupations that are stigmatized by physical, social, or moral taint. For an elaboration and typology of the concept see Ashforth and Kreiner (1999), Kreiner, Ashforth, and Sluss (2006).
particularly true in Israel, where service is mandatory and where the IDF enjoys very high societal regard.

These contradictory reactions to violence work are a product of the ambiguous nature of the concept of violence, a term that simultaneously carries diametrically opposed meanings. First, as argued in chapter 2, some forms of violence are normalized and socially sanctioned while others are considered deviant and destructive. In the case of state violence, this dichotomy is represented by the separation between the sanitized "use of force" and the excessive or illegitimate "use of violence." Second, the dangerous nature of some violence work means that violence workers may sometimes suffer pain themselves. Thus they may be perceived by some as sacrificing heroes or by others as pain-inflicting thugs. While the former distinction draws attention to political debates surrounding the nature of violence, the latter points to its emotional dimensions.

The result of these conflicts of meaning is that depending on the beholder, violence work can be understood in a variety of ways, ranging from the heroic to the brutal, from the necessary to the impermissible. Moreover, the meanings of violence are intensely contested in a charged debate, since as Tilly (2003) observes, the boundaries between (legitimate) use of force and (illegitimate) violence are deeply disputed. These debates render the classification of state violence as legitimate or illegitimate, suffering or aggression, a fundamentally political and emotional decision.

The consequences of these conflicts of interpretation for conducting fieldwork are significant. Those who have experienced conflict often have deep stakes in determining what constitutes violence and what does not, which acts were legitimate and which were not, which were heroic acts of sacrifice and which the aggressive infliction of suffering. Indeed, victims and
perpetrators, incumbents and insurgents, insiders and outsiders, define violence in differing and
often irreconcilable ways. The struggle over conflicting definitions is tightly linked to questions
of representation and recognition, with each actor seeking to ensure that his account of violence
survives as the dominant one. In situations of violent conflict, as Feldman (2000, 54) observes
regarding Northern Ireland, "the dominant morality is not a matter of choosing nonviolence over
violence but of morally legitimizing one act of violence in another."

The shifting meanings of violence between contexts were a recurrent theme in my
interviews. Many informants told me that they had not shared details of their military service
with their families or girlfriends since they could never understand what they had gone through.
A similar dynamic often emerged in the interviews, as violence that had appeared completely
natural to combatants in the context of their military service suddenly took a different form under
the scrutiny of the interviewer's gaze, in a quiet café, home, or office. This made some
informants uncomfortable, as they sought to resolve the dissonance between what seemed so
normal, indeed desirable, in their military service, and so out-of-place when relaying the story to
an outsider. As Oded, a former infantry officer, told me,

"Here we can sit at a table in a café, it's very nice, everything is very nice, but when you're
in [deployment] … on the one hand everything is sharper and you know what's right and
what isn't, you understand that there's a just side and an unjust side that's fighting against
civilians and a side that's trying to defend itself. On the other hand everything is mixed up
because… what are the boundaries, because you actually have to do something … Here it's
very easy to criticize soldiers but there, they see their friend who was wounded a few days
ago, or they find a gun in [someone's] house…and they have to do something about it. It's
easy to sit here and criticize but they have to do something."

The inherently political and emotional questions of how violence, legitimacy, and pain
are constituted were a constant presence in my work in the field, and imbued much of the data
that I collected, whether in the form of soldier narratives or victim testimony. In the course of my
fieldwork I realized that talking about violence was never a mere documentary or neutral act but instead was an active and mutually negotiated search for meaning and legitimacy. The interview encounter thus became a site for such processes of meaning making, which determined to what extent, and in what ways, stories of violence were to be revealed. In the next sections I discuss three meaning making strategies which I encountered during my interviews: transformation of meaning, solicitation of loyalty, and emotion.

3.5 Talking about Violence: Transformations of Meaning

One discursive strategy that I frequently encountered was the transformation of meanings of violence so that it no longer appeared as such. Discussing the strategies that "dirty workers" employ to foster self esteem and a positive occupational image, Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, 421–424) identify "occupational ideologies" that transform the meaning of their work, rendering what was stigmatized and devalued acceptable and even attractive: Workers reframe their occupation by focusing on its lofty larger purpose or neutralizing its negative value, recalibrate the standards by which the dirty aspects of their work are judged, and refocus attention away from the devalued aspects of their work.

These discursive strategies can pose challenges for the researcher if not recognized. How does one talk about violence when its meanings are continually reframed? How to bring up a subject that is so elaborately protected? And how can the workings of violence be identified when refocusing techniques are such that the topic seems to constantly slip out of conversation?

A dominant reframing technique for violence workers and for "dirty workers" more generally, was to emphasize the honorable purpose of their work rather than its practical techniques (Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). Thus, soldiers do not typically speak of themselves as
engaging in violence, but rather in security measures, counterterrorist measures, self defense, or legitimate responses to threat, perhaps unpleasant, but always justified. Of course, such reframing techniques are not simply individual strategies but institutionally embedded discourses propagated by security elites and adopted by society, with the exception of a few oppositional groups. In the context of my fieldwork the discourse of fighting terror was so deeply established and naturalized that the very reference to routine soldier actions as violence could be misunderstood or perceived as threatening. In order to talk about these actions with my interlocutors I would need to use a language that they could relate to and not feel threatened by. This involved adopting, to some extent, the interpretive frames used by soldiers themselves, inquiring about counterinsurgency practices, anti-terror measures, and security routines.

Yet even this strategy could only reveal some of the actions that combatants used against civilians, those that could convincingly be reframed as necessary and admirable. Forms of violence that were opportunistic or entrepreneurial could not as credibly be reframed using institutional terminology. When informants weren't willingly forthcoming in disclosing details of such violence, how were such details to be discovered?

Discussing her study of Brazilian police interrogators during the dictatorship, Huggins describes her interview strategy as "espionage" used to "penetrate an interviewee's defenses" (Huggins and Glebbeek 2003, 376; see also Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo 2002). By giving her informants such symbolic capital as reminding them how important their knowledge was to an understanding of Brazilian police, and by allowing them to digress and present their narratives in a way which was most favorable to their self image, she was able to access their hidden stories. This use of espionage as an interview strategy, however, raises some questions.
Might researchers mislead interviews into revealing more information than they wish to reveal? Is "penetration of defenses" a justifiable research objective?

Initially unnerved by the possibility of bringing up violence directly, I had hoped that stories of violence would emerge unprompted in the course of the interview. They did, sometimes, but many times they didn't. Many informants preferred to discuss aspects of their jobs that were not violence-related, a strategy the Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) term "refocusing". Upon realizing this I resolved to be more specific and to ask direct questions about the incidence and circumstances of particular acts of violence. Some interviewees resisted my direct questioning, answering cryptically and refusing to say more. Others answered more willingly. But I wondered about the ethics of the interrogatory dynamic that this strategy precipitated. Why should people divulge information about illicit behavior, which they may not have come to terms with on their own, with a complete stranger? Under what authority did I profess to drag secrets out of their heretofore keepers? I wanted to respect my informants' boundaries but worried about allowing violence to slip out of the conversation too easily.

The more people I talked to the more I began to realize that combatants did talk about violence, but in ways that might not have been initially apparent. I began to pay attention to the discursive strategies that combatants actually used to talk about violence. Three particular strategies emerged in my interviews: euphemisms, codes, and metaphors. Each of these allowed combatants to maintain the legitimate/illegitimate dichotomy underlying the concept of violence by allowing them to speak of its use without registering its full effects. These strategies, once recognized, signaled to me to look deeper at what the rhetorical devices masked and why.

Euphemisms for violence were common in my interviews. Euphemisms "mask, sanitize, and confer respectability," allowing their users to shield themselves and their listeners from the
full meaning of their actions (S. Cohen 2001, 107). Some of the euphemisms used were institutionally embedded terms that were recognizable to anyone familiar with the Israeli military. Such terms as "took down" to indicate killed, "exposed" to indicate razed homes or orchards, or "neighbor procedure" to indicate the practice in which soldiers order a civilian to enter home of a suspected militant and tell him to turn himself in (a procedure later outlawed by the Israeli High Court), are understood by every IDF soldier who has served in the Occupied Territories. Other euphemisms were improvised by interlocutors during the interview, such as "lack of ethical normativeness" to indicate aggressive handling of civilians at checkpoints, or "physical confrontation" to indicate that a civilian had been beaten.

Codes, like euphemisms, are intended to mask the true meaning and impact of violence. Their function is to render the precise meaning of an action vague and ambiguous, encoded in a term that can't quite be pinned be down. Codes, too, are culturally shared, allowing users to understand each other while avoiding the full meanings of action. For instance, the word "shtuyot," meaning nonsense, was used by nearly all informants to refer to what they saw as minor or trivial acts of violence, such as harassment and humiliation.

Other codes were embedded in institutional terminology, which used vague language to refer to military tasks that were not precisely defined, allowing junior officers to interpret them as they saw fit (and providing plausible deniability for senior officers). For instance, the common military task "demonstration of presence" had no official definition and instead referred to various ways of making IDF presence known to Palestinians. Though sometimes the term referred simply to military presence, many times it masked various methods designed to "create deterrence" by instilling a sense of fear in the population, through such means as "noisy patrols" (another code) in which soldiers throw stun or gas grenades or otherwise create loud noises in
civilians areas, searching random homes in the middle of the night, or questioning passersby.

A third discursive strategy often employed to talk about violence while avoiding its full meaning was the use of metaphor. For example, one dominant metaphor used to describe military confrontations with civilians was that of a game. Some informants described the chase after civilians who tried to bypass a checkpoint, or after workers who tried to enter Israel illegally, as a "game of cat and mouse." Assaf, a former soldier and officer, spoke of dispersing a demonstration as playing a game:

"You start working your brain, you start with tricks, you play games with them, and if someone tries to pass the fence you throw a stun grenade at them behind the fence, nonsense like that."

The game metaphor was also used to describe harassment and humiliation at checkpoints as soldiers playing games with civilians, or the destruction of property such as running over cars with tanks. The function of such metaphors is to neutralize to some extent any harm that was done by infusing the act with a playful or trivial meaning.

In addition to identifying the ways violence was talked about, I found it useful to identify ways in which violence was not talked about, noticing how and under what circumstances informants resisted questioning. As Fujii (2010) argues, the stories that are not articulated in interviews, including such "meta-data" as rumors, inventions, denials, evasions, and silences, provide vital information about the experience of violence and its aftermath.

As my understanding of the discursive strategies that former combatants used to reframe violence increased, I was better able to recognize how violence operates in practice, as well as how its meanings and memories were constantly negotiated and interpreted in conversation. This growing recognition allowed me to participate more actively in this negotiation process and use it for my research purposes. Once I recognized the use of euphemisms, codes, and metaphors I
could employ them in conversation, signaling to my informants that veils of secrecy were not necessary, as I understood the rhetorical devices through which the information was masked. This was particularly useful to uncover activities which, though systematic, occurred at the shadowy margins of authorized force, and were therefore often less forthcoming in interviews.

3.6 The Politics of Violence: Solicitation of loyalty

As other researchers of state violence have found, the highly politicized and contested nature of violence means that those affected by it have deep stakes in ensuring that their own narratives are recognized and accepted (Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo 2002; A. C. G. M. Robben 1995). These conditions gave rise to another meaning making strategy, in which informants actively attempted to gauge to what extent I accepted their interpretations of violence, implicitly or explicitly expecting me to take sides. As a result of these demands for loyalty, researchers in situations of violent conflict often find that neutrality is not an option (Sluka 1995; Smyth and G. Robinson 2001). Importantly this is not so much a consequence of the researcher's actions or the research design but an inherent feature of the research setting. As Sluka (1995, 287) observes, "whether or not you take sides, those actively involved in the situation are going to define whose side they think you are on. They will act toward you on the basis of this definition, regardless of your professions of neutrality." Whether acknowledged or not, the question of taking sides thus becomes an important issue in the field. It will inevitably affect the data collected, as varying levels of trust will produce varying levels of disclosure.

As other scholars have found, the researcher's own identity becomes salient in this process (Finlay 2001; Gazit and Maoz-Shai 2010; Hermann 2001; A. C. G. M. Robben 1995). Those with "insider" status are likely to find it easier to collect data, as they are assumed, rightly
or wrongly, to be more understanding of their informants and as a result are likely to be met with
greater trust and openness. However greater access comes at a price, as explicit and implicit
demands for loyalty entangle the researcher in conflicting webs of allegiance (Gazit and Maoz-Shai 2010; Hermann 2001). As Gazit and Maoz-Shai (2010, 289) argue in the context of
studying the Israeli security establishment, "The extent of cooperation the researcher received
while in the field might become a honey trap. As cooperation increases, so might the official
demand for censorship under the terms 'do no harm to your country' as well as the informal
expectation to 'do no harm to your fellow comrades'."

My own position in the field was that of what anthropologists call a "partial insider,
sharing some features with my respondents but not others. I grew up alternately in the U.S. and
in Israel and held dual citizenship. As an Israeli citizen I had been drafted into the military at age
18, where I served for two years in a non-combat role. I had fluent command of Hebrew
language and Israeli culture, and relatively easy access to a variety of social networks. Alongside
these "insider" features of my identity, some features made me very much an outsider. First, I
was a woman investigating the closed, very masculine world of combat service. My informants
were invariably surprised at the knowledge, gleaned from months of research, which I
demonstrated on the intricacies of military life, a domain largely sealed off to women.
Complicating my positionality was my earlier history of activism in the human rights movement.
While I made a choice to refrain from activism while in the field, I still had family members and
friends who were engaged in the struggle to end Israeli occupation.

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14 The typical assumption is that while insiders have better access and understanding of local dynamics, outsiders are
less partisan and more objective in their research. However, in violent conflict objectivity is a myth for any observer
(Smyth 2005; Smyth and G. Robinson 2001). For an analysis of how outsiders bear a risk of becoming enamored of
a particular side and losing critical distance see Bourgois (2001).
15 For a critique of the insider/outsider dichotomy see Narayan (1993).
Taken together these factors both enabled and complicated my research with former combatants. Not all of them, of course, were known to the study's participants. Some informants asked about them, others did not. Some told me they had investigated my background, and I imagine others did so without my knowledge. Still others may have made implicit assumptions about who I was, deciding whether or not to talk to me on the basis of these assumptions.

The problem of taking sides can be exacerbated by current political events. The months in which I conducted fieldwork were tense ones. In entering the field I initially drew reassurance from the fact that my research focused on a period that had ended a few years earlier, hoping that in this way some of the most contentious aspects of the period would have dissipated somewhat. As it turned out my fieldwork coincided with the Gaza War of January 2009. In the aftermath of the Israeli incursion into Gaza several allegations began to surface against IDF conduct, culminating in the publication in September 2009 of the findings of the U.N. Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, known as the Goldstone Report.\textsuperscript{16} The final report found evidence indicating war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity were committed during the Gaza Conflict.\textsuperscript{17} The Goldstone Report was angrily rejected by Israel and near consensus emerged against the Commission and international and local organizations perceived as its allies.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16} In March 2009 an Israeli educational institution published the testimonies of several graduates regarding incidents in which IDF soldiers had fired at civilians, evicted families from their homes into no-enter zones in which anyone present would be shot, vandalized and destroyed property. See Amos Harel, "Cast Lead: Soldier Testimonies are Revealed: Permissive Open Fire Regulations, Killing of Palestinian Civilians, Deliberate Destruction of Property," \textit{Haaretz}, 18 March, 2009; Amos Harel, "Cast Lead: Soldier Testimonies Revealed: Sniper fire on women and children, blind bombings, and desire for destruction," \textit{Haaretz}, 20 March, 2009. A few months later Israeli veteran's organization "Breaking the Silence" published soldier testimonies indicating that the IDF had engaged in such practices as firing white phosphorous at civilian areas, lax open-fire regulations and massive property destruction (Breaking the Silence 2009). The credibility of the testifying soldiers was attacked by security elites, who dismissed the testimonies as unsubstantiated rumor, lies, and at most isolated incidents to be duly investigated, see Reuters, "The IDF: 'Breaking the Silence'." \textit{Ynet}, 15 July, 2009.

\textsuperscript{17} Both the IDF and Palestinian armed groups were accused of war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity. The report can be found online: \url{http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf}.

\textsuperscript{18} In a nationally representative survey, 93.5% of Jewish Israeli respondents responded that the Goldstone Report was biased against the IDF. 79% opposed the claim that the IDF committed war crimes (Yaar and Hermann 2009).
This political climate made soldier testimonies about conduct in war a very heated public issue for much of the period in which I conducted fieldwork. As a result, following the publication of the Goldstone Report it became markedly more difficult to recruit informants for my study. Participants worried about the uses to which the study could be put, whether through my own (mis)handling of the data or through others' exploitation of my presumed naïveté. I was sometimes asked what the "agenda" of my study was, with one participant expressing concern that in order to get published I would need to "create a provocation." Another potential informant argued that this was not the time to conduct such a project, as it could easily be appropriated by others seeking only to attack Israel.

There are no easy solutions to the problem of taking sides, and to a large extent it is up to each researcher to develop guidelines for ethical conduct. In my own case, I made three decisions to help me navigate the complex relationship between violence and politics while in the field. First, as noted earlier, I engaged in no political activism during my time in the field and distanced myself from its many manifestations in the Israeli arena. Nevertheless I have no doubt that many informants made various assumptions about my political preferences and listened keenly for signs of such inclinations in my interview questions. Many of them asked me why I had selected this particular research topic. Some expressed satisfaction that someone was listening to their narratives, since this meant that "someone would finally tell their story." Only in two cases was I asked directly about my political opinions following an interview, and I responded candidly.

19 Advocates of a "militant social science" (see e.g. Scheper-Hughes 1995) would no doubt object to this decision, but I felt it necessary in order to maintain critical distance as well as an open mind, eye, and ear to the diverse perspectives of my interlocutors.
Second, while I could easily assure participants that I was not affiliated with any NGO, that my study did not include the Gaza War, that it was my ethical obligation not to invent or misrepresent data, and that they were free to decide what they chose to share with me and what they did not, I was careful not to make any statements or commitments regarding what the content of the study might look like. While this might seem like an obvious injunction, it can be challenging in an environment where quality data is often a reward in a transaction that solicits researcher loyalty. Thus the third decision I made was that I would rather lose potential informants who might feel uncomfortable about participating in the study then market my study at any cost and later feel pressure to write in a particular way. Indeed, there were a few interviews that I chose to forgo on these grounds. When potential participants expressed concern I did not brush their concerns away but urged them to make an informed decision, reminding them that interviews inherently involved some loss of control on their part. Perhaps surprisingly, this honest approach usually ended in consent, though on occasion respondents were visibly uneasy in the beginning of the interview.

Despite these decisions the interview process sometimes provoked concern about whether I may implicitly be misleading some of my informants, particularly those whose opinions about the conflict were very different than my own, who held attitudes that I found difficult to stomach, or who trivialized or justified violence to which I very much objected. In her study of a South Korean evangelical community, Chong (2008, 380) worried that though she was never deliberately dishonest to her informants, she did make "at least some effort to conform to the expectations of the church in my behavior and mannerisms, highlighting aspects [of identity] that would produce a positive reception or downplaying those that would inhibit cooperation." For her, this negotiation of identity led to anxiety about overstepping ethical boundaries.
Similarly, I worried that informants with attitudes very different than my own might have been less forthcoming with their narratives had they had a better sense of some aspects of my identity. Paradoxically this anxiety was most acute after particularly productive interviews in which rapport was well established. It was precisely the easy, open, and frank nature of these conversations that gave rise to worries about whether my interlocutor may implicitly have expectations of me which I would not be able to meet. As Kaplan Daniels (1983, 196) observed, "deception is an ever present part of fieldwork – if only because one plans to examine findings from a social science perspective rather than one exclusively sympathetic to the values of those studied." When the topic of investigation is so deeply contested the gap between these perspectives may be significantly widened.

3.7 Violence and Emotion

I wanted to say that… first, everyone who came out of my squad has a scar, for each one it came out differently. But what we all talk about is that no one understands. You're not looking for… I never looked for someone who would… but it's absurd, that you're with people and no one has any clue.20

Several scholars have recognized that research in conflict zones can generate intense and difficult emotion (Mahmood 1996; Pickering 2001; A. C. G. M. Robben 1995; Wood 2006a). Collecting data from former combatants proved to be a very emotional experience at times. One reason for this difficulty is the second conflict of meaning complicating the discussion of violence with violence workers: violence as pain and violence as harm. Violence workers not only inflict harm on others but often suffer pain themselves. Their dangerous working conditions raise the likelihood that they or their comrades might become victims of physical or

20 Personal interview with Tom, October 2009.
psychological injury. This harm is evidenced in the discourse of sacrifice that surrounds the suffering of violence workers. Though less recognized, personal suffering can also result from bearing witness to or perpetrating acts of violence.21

Within the military context such pain is typically considered irrelevant and suffering is frowned upon as weakness. Indeed my interviews indicated that the common official response to such suffering was to stamp it out through deliberate and immediate return to the traumatic circumstances. Thus one respondent recounted how he had been guarding his military base when several mortar shells were launched at his post. His comrade suffered a direct hit and fell before his eyes, and shortly thereafter another shell landed close to his body destroying his guard post. He vividly recalled his knees shaking uncontrollably, begging to be released from the spot. His commander responded that in order to overcome any trauma he needed to remain in the post for another sixteen hours. Another informant laconically described how, following the explosion of an Israeli armored personnel carrier (APC) due to a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) attack in the Gaza Strip, he and his unit were sent to manually comb the area for the body parts of the five APC team members. When I asked whether he and his friends had received any treatment or special preparation for this task he responded with cynicism that "no one ever comes to talk to you about your experiences and your feelings and stuff like that."

The dissonance between employing force and suffering pain is an inevitable, but very much suppressed, consequence of violence work. Narratives of pain and suffering undermine the very basis on which violence work is glorified, naturalized, and sanitized. As a result there is

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21 This particular aspect of violence work has been understudied by mental health professionals, whose research on the harmful effects of combat exposure has largely been limited to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). To address this gap, mental health researchers recently developed a new construct, termed "moral injury," referring to the harm caused by transgressing moral or ethical beliefs or norms (Maguen and B. Litz 2011). Initial research on the conditions associated with moral injury in the military (Drescher et al. 2011; B. Litz et al. 2009) and police (Komarovskaya et al. 2011) is currently underway.
little tolerance for the "ordinary pain" of soldiers, which is seen as a weakness, a failure of character and courage, and perhaps most importantly, a threat to the morale of others (Wessely 2006). The interview encounter can therefore become a site for addressing the painful dimension of violence, which may hitherto have been silenced.

Several of my informants recounted stories of pain and suffering. Almost all had lost friends and comrades in the insurgency. Some had had direct contact with severed bodies and body parts, either of Israelis or Palestinians. A few showed me their gunshot wounds. Several told me graphic stories of pain and death which they had witnessed. I began to dread the increasingly familiar cue in which informants would offer to tell me something they had not yet told anyone, something about which I invariably had not asked. A few mentioned they were still haunted by nightmares. One informant appeared so fragile that I was afraid he would break down in front of me, and all I could do was steer the interview to a safe space and a quick end.\(^{22}\)

Social scientists are ill-equipped to recognize signs of re-traumatization that informants may feel when recounting narratives of violence. While my intuitive response was to avoid topics which appeared to be deeply emotional for my informants I never knew whether this was the correct reaction.\(^{23}\) Like other qualitative researchers, many of my informants thanked me at the end of the interview for the opportunity to tell their stories.\(^{24}\) For some the interview had been the first opportunity to unload experiences that had been burdening them for years and which a "society-in-arms" had little tolerance for. However even the most sympathetic and

\(^{22}\) Prior to entering the field my university IRB had directed me to offer the contact information of counseling services to all participants in the event they experienced difficult emotions. However this was often an awkward step to take, inasmuch as it intimated that my informants needed help, a problematic suggestion in the hyper-masculinized context of military service.

\(^{23}\) Whether correct or not, my reaction was apparently not unique. Robben (1996, 75) writes how the trauma of others "was sometimes a heavy load to carry…. now and then provoked feelings of guilt, and made me decide more than once not to ask any further about traumatic experiences."

\(^{24}\) Indeed this response by research participants leads many researchers to believe that "with skilful and sensitive interviewing, persons actually benefit from talking openly about their experience" (Bell 2001, 185). However, as Bell (2001) notes, in absence of empirical verification, this may be an attempt at self-justification.
secure interview space is temporary by nature, and it is unclear how its effects may manifest later. Unfortunately it appears that this problem is an inherent feature of research on violence and other sensitive topics. As a result it seems like there is little that can be done beyond ensuring that participants are aware of the risks involved in telling their stories and of their right to choose which experiences to relay (see also Wood 2006a).

While the display of emotion is one way of infusing violence with a particular meaning, emotion can also be used by informants as a reframing tool through which the harmful effects of violence are concealed. In his study of the Argentine military dictatorship Robben (1996, 72) called this pull of emotion "ethnographic seduction," which he defined as the "complex dynamic of conscious moves and unconscious defenses that may arise in interviews with victims and perpetrators of violence." He recounted his surprise, upon meeting his military informants, at their polite, friendly manner and their love of literature, art and music. He initially found himself seduced away from his research objectives by his informants' charm. As analysts of violence are time and again surprised to discover, people who have committed acts of violence are frequently friendly, sensitive, reflective, and in short, "ordinary people."

The lure of emotion is a particular risk in in-depth interviews, which are founded on the establishment of rapport and even a certain intimacy. Each party in the interview encounter naturally engages in impression management, the deliberate attempt to project a certain image to the other (Goffman 1959). But as Robben (1995, 84) argues, the dangers loom even larger in research on violent conflict, "because the interlocutors have great personal and political stakes in making the ethnographer adapt their interpretation." In the case of combatants, such stakes can mean the difference between being lauded as a hero and being condemned as a criminal.
Research participants may therefore attempt, consciously or unconsciously, to manipulate the researcher's understanding of violence in ways more favorable to them.

Sometimes such tools are awkwardly employed, alerting the researcher to their workings. I recall how one participant recounted the story of how he had killed an armed insurgent who had attempted to infiltrate his military base. He proceeded to describe in great detail the tremendous guilt he had felt after the incident. Something about the account struck an odd chord, as I knew that the killing of insurgents in the course of a guerilla attack was a cause for pride and celebration in military units. When I confronted him about this discrepancy, he acknowledged the satisfaction he had felt, and the prestige he enjoyed as a result of the incident, offering a much more complex and nuanced account of his experience.

The process of manipulation, however, is not necessarily a conscious one. Those who experience violence may raise a variety of defenses so as to avoid dealing with the implications of their own actions. I recall one interview in which the participant told me he was most ashamed of how he had once urinated in front of a Palestinian family, since their very presence had become transparent to him. He had already divulged this story once before, he said, but at that time he told it as though it had been done by someone else and had modified the details. Indeed he had come to believe that that had been the case, as for several years he had simply been unable to face his own action, shame and guilt. This moment of disclosure provided a brief glimpse of the workings of emotional manipulation, which, especially when employed by sophisticated interlocutors, tend to operate invisibly. I will never know the extent to which the defenses of others interfered in the interview process. As Robben (1995, 85) put it, in the
presence of ethnographic seduction "we believe to be seeing the world through our interlocutor's eyes. Yet those eyes are looking away from what we are seeing."  

Robben reports the use of different seductive strategies by different groups of interlocutors, such as former guerillas, human rights activists, and religious figures. Whereas military officers generally turned to his rational capacities, stressing the logic of their action in attempts to persuade him of their legitimacy and honor, informants who had been victims of violence turned to his emotions. In my own fieldwork I mostly interviewed ordinary soldiers and junior commanders, not the elite officers and experienced speakers that design military policies. Thus in my own case I found emotion to be a more powerful strategy than polished rhetoric and sophisticated rational argument, as it exposed the deep vulnerability of some of my interlocutors. While many did not visibly show signs of pain and suffering, those who did left me emotionally drained and sometimes incapable of asking difficult questions.

My engagement with the issue of manipulation had a particular local inflection. In the Israeli context, combatant narratives of pain and suffering represent a text so recognizable that it has become a cultural trope known as "shooting and crying." The term, which originated after the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, refers to the proliferation of testimonies, literature, films, and other cultural products in which former soldiers lament the violence in which they participated. Texts belonging to this genre place emphasis on the dilemmas of soldiers and their torment. The term is used ironically to express the tension inherent in a discourse victimizing perpetrators of violence, and the dissonance between combatants who continue to exercise force while assuaging associated moral guilt through the expression of pain. To the extent my interviews exhibited these tensions I worried about becoming complicit in this cultural reframing strategy.

25 Just as vexingly, victims of violence can engage in the same processes, see Robben (1995), James (2010).
The problem of manipulation or ethnographic seduction suggests the importance of heightened reflexivity and awareness of interview dynamics. The most seductive interviews are often those in which the researcher feels she has reached a deep understanding of the participant. Only later does it become apparent that she had been led astray, silenced, or steered off course. In addition to awareness of these risks, I found it important to counteract the effects of manipulation through triangulation of my data. By accessing a wide range of perspectives on similar events, such as press and human rights reports and victim testimony, I was better able to maintain critical distance in the face of the pull of raw emotion.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology of this study and has sought to address some of the methodological challenges associated with interviewing combatants on the topic of violence in conflict. I argued that these challenges arise from the conflicting meanings that underlie the concept of violence, highlighting the extent to which violence is politically contested and emotionally charged. First, depending on the position of the beholder, state violence can be understood as the legitimate use of force, necessary in order to achieve the admirable goals of order, security, and peace, or as illegitimate and unacceptable aggression. Second, violence can be interpreted as causing pain and sacrifice, or as inflicting harm and suffering. In the case of state violence, significant institutional and cultural resources are committed to ensuring that the state's interpretations of violence as legitimate and heroic are adopted and remembered. The state's violence workers, former soldiers in the case of my research project, are deeply invested in such interpretations, as they allow them to continue to practice violence on a routine basis while avoiding its negative meanings.
The consequence of these conflicts of interpretation for violence research is that violence becomes a difficult subject to approach and talk about in the research encounter. The workings of violence are shielded by a series of elaborate protections designed to ensure that a proper narrative is recognized and remembered. In some ways these strategies of protection are similar to the strategies used by workers in "dirty occupations" everywhere in order to boost their self esteem and neutralize society's stigmas (Ashforth, Kreiner, M. Clark, and Fugate 2007; Ashforth and Kreiner 1999). However, I have argued that in the case of violence workers such strategies become even more crucial as the stakes involved in ensuring proper recognition mean the difference between achieving hero or criminal status.

In the course of my fieldwork it became apparent to me that only by recognizing the ways in which violence was protected in conversation would I be able to access data regarding how violence work operated in practice. As Fujii (2010) argues, failure to attend to such strategies bears directly on the quality of data gathered, as well on the findings reached. Once I had a better understanding of how violence was concealed, reframed, or exchanged for guarantees of loyalty, I could employ a variety of counter-strategies to keep narratives of violence from slipping out of the research encounter. For example, while I sometimes challenged my informants when reframing techniques signaled that something was being hidden or neutralized, I sought at the same time to respect them by paying attention to ethical and emotional boundaries. Second, I took efforts to ensure that I did not to make any commitments of allegiance in a desire to obtain quality data. Finally, to the extent possible I made sure to triangulate the data that I collected using alternative sources. These strategies could mitigate somewhat the political and emotional issues associated with interviewing former combatants, if not eliminate them completely.
Chapter 4
IDF COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE SECOND INTIFADA - BACKGROUND

This chapter surveys Israeli counterinsurgency strategies and tactics in the Second Intifada. The goal of the chapter is not to provide a detailed historical account of the conflict. Rather, it is to highlight the various practices Israel employed to repress the Palestinian insurgency of 2000-2005, based on the interviews I conducted with ex-combatants and supplemented by additional material collected by international and local NGOs and media reports. The list, while extensive, is not exhaustive, as I focus in particular on practices that resulted, directly or indirectly, in violence to civilians.

4.1 Introduction

IDF counterinsurgency strategies and tactics evolved throughout the Second Intifada, in response to the shifting nature of the insurgency. The Intifada began with violent clashes between Palestinian protestors and Israeli security forces in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. Over the next several weeks mass demonstrations and riots involving rocks, Molotov cocktails, and occasional gunfire became an almost daily ritual. Israeli security forces responded forcefully, targeting armed protestors with snipers and using such means as rubber bullets, teargas, and shock grenades to disperse the rest.¹

In the early months of the Second Intifada the political directive from the Labor-led government, headed by Ehud Barak, was to contain the conflict. Barak and his advisors continued to frantically attempt to reach a ceasefire and return to negotiations. According to Palestinian chief negotiator Sa'eb Erekat, over 50 meetings were held between Israelis and Palestinians.¹

For an analysis of IDF conduct in the conflict's first two months see B'tselem (2000).
Palestinians in the months that passed between the failed Camp David Summit of July 2000 and Barak's loss in Israel's national elections in February 2001 (cited in A. Harel and Yissakharof 2004, 39). Yet while Israeli and Palestinian negotiation teams talked, the violence raged. As a result of the clashes over 200 Palestinian civilians and 24 Palestinian security force members were killed in the conflict's first two months. 17 Israeli civilians and 16 Israeli security forces were killed in the same period (B’Tselem 2000).

Following the large number of Palestinian casualties mass demonstrations quickly subsided and the conflict evolved into an armed insurgency by several Palestinian organizations with varying levels of coordination. Insurgent activity focused first on targeting Israeli soldiers and civilians on roads, military posts, and settlements within the Occupied Territories, and later a violent campaign within the state of Israel, reaching its height in a surge of suicide bombings beginning in the summer of 2001. The change in nature of the insurgency presented a threat of unprecedented proportions to Israeli civilians and soldiers. According to Israeli security forces, between October 2000 and July 2005 nearly 1000 violent attacks were carried out inside Israel, some 9000 in the West Bank, and thousands more in the Gaza Strip. Approximately 1000 Israelis were killed in these attacks, and some 7000 more were wounded. To counter this threat the IDF devised a range of counterinsurgency practices which, by 2005, would lead to nearly complete repression of Palestinian resistance. Approximately 3250 Palestinians were killed by Israeli security forces in this period.

2 The major participating groups were the Tanzim, the military wing of Fatah; the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, formed by Fatah members; the Hamas Islamist movement; Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ); and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).
3 This brief account does not do justice to the full range of events that characterized the five year conflict. A more detailed chronology of the Intifada is beyond the scope of this chapter, but see. Cordesman (2005), A. Harel and Yissakharof (2004).
4 Data summarized by former Israeli Chief Justice Aharon Barak, HCJ 7957/04, Mara’abe et al. v. the Prime Minister of Israel, September 15, 2005. See also Amnesty International (2002b).
Broadly, the IDF's tactics in the Second Intifada can be divided into three categories: defensive measures, population control measures, and offensive operations. The aim of defensive operations was to protect Israeli soldiers, civilians, and property in the Occupied Territories and in Israel from violent attacks. The stated goal of population control measures such as curfews, closures, restrictions on the use of certain roads, and permit requirements, was somewhat more ambiguous. Official Israeli spokesmen (and their legal advisors) consistently claimed that their purpose was to disrupt insurgent activity and the ability of insurgents to move freely and to smuggle weapons. However, in unofficial statements Israeli military leaders explained such measures as means to pressure the population into rejecting the insurgency. Thus, in a series of "messages to the Palestinian public" issued by the IDF spokesman's office following terrorist attacks and demonstrations of mass support for armed insurgency among the population, the IDF repeatedly stressed that its goal was not to occupy the PA territories or fight the Palestinian population but rather the terrorists, but that in areas from which terrorists emanate "the entire local population will have to bear the consequences of the IDF's determined struggle against terror – The choice is yours."

Finally, offensive operations were designed to kill or capture suspected insurgents, target supporting infrastructure, collect intelligence, recruit collaborators, and capture arms and equipment thought to support militant activity. Each of these strategies is discussed in turn, highlighting the implications for civilians.

6 This policy, informally termed "the levers policy," called for the imposition of pressure on Palestinians as levers on insurgent activity (Ben-Yishai 2004; A. Harel and Yissakharof 2004; Lavie 2010) . As explained by a former senior IDF officer, "Since 1996 we already started to formulate the policy of exerting, we called it exerting pressure levers… the harming of hope, the harming of economic security, the harming of innocent people, which is intentional … it's done intentionally, since it's viewed as pressure levers that are exercised on elements that are uninvolved in terror, so that they will put pressure on terror, so that it won't happen" (Brym, Araj, and Maoz-Shai, 2005-07).
4.2 Defensive Operations

Prior to the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September 2000, control of the Palestinian territories was fragmented and divided into three different regimes: The West Bank's major cities and towns, constituting approximately 18% of its territory, as well as a majority of the Gaza Strip, were designated "Area A," and entrusted to the control of the fledgling Palestinian Authority. The villages and towns surrounding Palestinian cities in the West Bank, constituting an additional 22.8% of the territory, were designated "Area B" and placed under the security control of Israel and civilian control of the Palestinian Authority. The remaining areas, encompassing the Jewish settlements and surrounding areas in the West Bank, and some 24% of the Gaza Strip, remained under full Israeli control.

For over a year after the Second Intifada broke out the IDF largely adhered to the restrictions on military entry into Area A stipulated in the Oslo Accords, creating territorial enclaves in which insurgent organizations could operate with relative freedom. To contain the escalating insurgent threat to Israeli civilians and soldiers the IDF relied primarily on a mix of defensive tactics and population control mechanisms aimed at preventing approach or attack by insurgents on roads, settlements, and military and civilian targets. This section surveys some of these defensive tactics.

4.2.1 Static protection of roads and settlements

Much of the activity performed by the IDF throughout the Second Intifada involved the use of mobile patrols and static military outposts to guard Israeli settlements in the Occupied

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8 There were some exceptions to this rule, as detailed in section 4.4 of this chapter.
Territories, the boundaries between the Occupied Territories and Israel,\(^9\) and roads on which Israelis travelled. Such posts ranged from heavily armored outposts in the Gaza Strip, which were frequently targets of insurgent fire and attempted infiltration, to temporary outposts in Palestinian buildings, emptied of their residents and converted into makeshift military bases. Since such bases were static and fortified they typically did not involve any direct contact between soldiers and civilians. However, they did affect civilians in two primary ways: First, through the open fire regulations governing the use of firearms in populated areas, and second, through the process of converting civilian homes into makeshift military bases.

**Open fire regulations**: Prior to the Second Intifada IDF open fire regulations in the Occupied Territories were based on a policing paradigm, permitting soldiers to open live fire only as a last resort for self defense or in pursuit of a suspect of a dangerous crime (B’Tselem 2002c; Ron 2000a, 2003). In anticipation of an oncoming outburst of violence the IDF’s legal division prepared a new set of open-fire regulations just a few months prior to the outbreak of the Second Intifada, expanding the authority of soldiers to open fire at Palestinians whom they defined as a source of danger (A. Harel and Yissakharof 2004). Shortly after the outbreak of violence Israel announced that it viewed unfolding events as an “armed conflict short of war,” shifting from a policing paradigm to one of armed conflict. Throughout the Second Intifada open fire regulations shifted many times, and their precise scope is difficult to systematically track as they were kept classified.\(^10\) While in the past IDF soldiers received pocket copies of the

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\(^9\) The internationally recognized boundaries between the Occupied Territories and Israel run along the 1949 Armistice Lines, or “Green Line.” In Gaza, the border was fenced by an elaborate barrier system in the mid 1990s. In the West Bank no physical separation existed until the construction of the separation barrier beginning in 2003. However, much of the barrier route runs inside the West Bank and not along the Green Line, as discussed later in this chapter.

\(^10\) Some of the controversial new regulations implemented in the Gaza Strip included authorization to shoot armed Palestinians without warning in predefined buffer zones, authorization to fire without warning at Palestinians who approached the barrier fence or other predefined areas in the Strip, and authorization to fire from a semi-automatic...
regulations during basic training, this practice was suspended during the Second Intifada, and regulations became period and area specific, transmitted orally to soldiers by their commanders.\textsuperscript{11} Designed to allow soldiers to operate more freely against suspected insurgents, the more lenient regulations, when in force in densely populated areas, meant a rise in civilian casualties.\textsuperscript{12}

In the Gaza Strip open fire regulations were even more lenient, as IDF soldiers lacked effective control over much of the territory and the insurgent threat to Israeli soldiers and civilians was greater. The increased ease of opening fire was most evident in the creation of buffer zones, areas in which anyone who entered was subject to a substantial risk of targeting. The largest buffer zone, up to one kilometer wide, was created around the fenced Gaza border. The military razed many of the orchards and buildings in the border zone to facilitate observation and issued special open-fire regulations with regard to anyone who entered the area. Similar "security buffer zones" of sizes ranging from 50 to 300 meters were created around Israeli settlements, IDF posts, and access roads.

\textsuperscript{11} An internal IDF report conducted in 2005 found that many soldiers were confused with regard to open fire regulations, which were often unclear and open to interpretation, see Chanan Greenberg, "IDF Report: Soldiers Don't Understand the Open Fire Regulations," \textit{Ynet}, 4 April, 2006, \url{http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-3235501,00.html}.

\textsuperscript{12} The liberalization in open fire regulations was also reflected in the change in IDF policy regarding the investigation of civilian deaths. Prior to the Second Intifada, every case of civilian death in the Occupied Territories was investigated by the IDF Military Advocate General's office. The shift to an armed conflict paradigm led to a change in this policy, as civilian casualties were now viewed for the most part as the inevitable consequence of war between armed groups (Finkelstein 2002, 2006). The Military Advocate General's office would therefore investigate only cases in which a serious violation of the rules of engagement was suspected (B'Tselem 2002c). In all other cases, civilian deaths would be subject to internal review in the soldier's unit. As a result of this change in policy the number of investigations into cases of civilian death plummeted, with only 73 investigations taking place between 2003-2006 (Yesh Din 2008), a period in which, according to B'tselem, over 1000 Palestinian civilians were killed.
According to Major General (res.) Doron Almog, who designed the policy, the results of the security buffer zone were that of more than 400 attempts to enter Israel from Gaza during his service as head of the IDF Southern Command between 2000 and 2003, none succeeded (Almog 2004). According to Israeli human rights organization B’tselem, this same policy led to the deaths of at least 280 Palestinians in the border buffer zone, at least 103 of which were civilians who did not participate in combat activity. In addition, the creation of the buffer zone prevented access to approximately 35% of cultivable land in the Strip, inflicting economic loss on tens of thousands of people (B’Tselem 2011).

As typical of the period, open fire regulations in the security buffer zones were classified and ever-shifting. Nadav, a former infantry commander who served in Gaza between 2001-2003, explained,

"At first there was a lot of emphasis on warning the suspect. You yell, and in the worst case scenario you shoot in the air. Shooting at the knees and downward happened in really extreme cases. At some point … let's say spring 2001…no one had any business approaching us. In other words, you're at your post, defensive posts around the settlement, and whoever approaches you shoot… shoot to kill. In other areas it was different because there were still… civilians, and Palestinian civilians drove on roads parallel to the roads we worked on… so you didn't immediately…shoot to kill. But

13 The precise size and scope of the restricted zones cannot be determined as they were never made public by the IDF, and enforcement has been irregular. Qualitative data collected by the U.N. indicates that prior to 2008, restrictions on access to the border zone were typically enforced 300 meters from the fence. The area closest to the fence was defined as a "no-go zone," in which entry posed an "extreme threat to life", and the area adjacent to it was classified a "high risk zone," in which enforcement of entry restrictions fluctuated and was much less predictable. "As a general rule, the deeper one enters these areas in the direction of the fence, the more likely one is to receive warning or direct fire" (OCHA and WFP 2010, 10).

14 In 2007 the Israeli High Court was asked to determine whether open fire regulations in the security buffer zones were legal, following a case in which soldiers shot and killed a 13 year old girl who had approached a military outpost on the outskirts of Rafah, near the Egyptian border. The petitioners argued that the security buffer zones in the Gaza Strip were in fact "death zones" in which soldiers were authorized to fire at anyone who entered. The court analyzed the open-fire regulations for the zone (which were not made public) and found that while the regulations called for soldiers to exercise discretion and restraint and stipulated that mere presence in the security zone did not in itself indicate a security risk, in practice soldiers believed that in some circumstances they were authorized to shoot to kill. The court also noted that no physical barrier or signposts marked the perimeter of the security buffer zone. See HCJ 741/05, El-Hams et al vs. the IDF Military Advocate General, December 14, 2006. These findings are confirmed in my interviews that found that soldiers were given considerable latitude in these zones and often exercised individual discretion on whether or not to use live fire.
ultimately the [old warning] procedure was disregarded; it just didn't exist much of the time…"

In addition to the buffer zones, a second practice involving open fire regulations in military outposts was the response by IDF soldiers to gunfire, mortar, or rocket attacks launched by Palestinian armed groups at IDF bases. In the case of such fire soldiers were authorized to fire back at the source of attack. However, identifying the precise source of fire was often impossible, and as a result IDF fire was sometimes directed in a general direction, sometimes at "suspicious points" (perhaps identified in past attacks), and sometimes in no particular direction at all, consequently causing civilian casualties. Gil, who served in Gaza between 2001 and 2003, described this practice:

"We were in the military base in Netzarim just as the area was heating up, during the major mayhem there, and we shifted from not firing for a week to firing every day, until the [Israeli] civilians there complained to my company commander that we were making too much noise. We really fired there like crazy some nights…"

In addition to firing back in response to Palestinian fire, soldiers were sometimes instructed to initiate "deterrent shooting" to ward off prospective attacks. Aryeh, who served in Gaza as an infantry soldier, described this practice:

"There was a lot of deterrent shooting… for instance if there was intelligence [about a prospective attack] we would fire deterrent shooting, which is shooting at a wall or sand barrier that you know will catch the bullets …If you don't have a barrier you shoot into some ditch, not a wall since it might ricochet from a wall, but into sand from which you know it won't ricochet…or a wall if it's large enough and far enough that if you shoot it you won't endanger anyone, neither yourself nor people who live in the area if there are any… These are standard orders… the purpose of the fire is to make a lot of noise…"

While some soldiers who described deterrent shooting were careful to emphasize that fire was directed at the ground, at barriers, or at foliage so as to avoid incidental casualties, others
were less cautious, as demonstrated by the following quote from an interview with Nadav, a former infantry commander who served in Gaza:

"We would go out on the APC for 12 hours and observe the fence… There were times when we would do "deterrent shooting," take a machine gun and just empty the ammunition box on nothing… You just shoot towards the area of the fence… since in that area there is a lot of crossing… So if you want to cross and you're not exactly sure, you'll hear shooting in your direction or somewhere in the area and you'll get scared. Even if you don't go back, the likelihood that you'll make a mistake rises."

In the West Bank, indiscriminate fire from defensive military posts was more characteristic of the Intifada's first eighteen months, prior to the IDF's entry into and increasing offensive operations within Area A, culminating in its reoccupation of West Bank cities in Operation Defensive Shield. As Yoav, a former paratrooper, explained:

"The army in the Intifada – before Operation Defensive Shield and after Operation Defensive Shield – was two completely different things. Because before we went in during Operation Defensive Shield… the IDF wouldn't enter [Palestinian territory]. There was Area A, Area B, and all that silly stuff. We were stationed outside, and the only thing we would do was to shoot into the refugee camps with no target. For instance someone would identify a target, it could even just be something that someone imagined… he would say I identified a target – and everyone would fire… It was all about looking from the outside and firing and firing and firing and not really getting mixed up in there."

Ariel, another infantry commander, described a similar dynamic. His soldiers were stationed in a post guarding a settlement near the city of Ramallah during the first months of the Intifada, at a time when Palestinian insurgents would regularly fire at the settlement from afar:

"They would fire so we would fire back. Those were the missions back then. They fire and you fire back, like ping pong… Not even at the source of fire… I remember seeing a soldier firing and asking him, what are you firing at? 'at the lamp.' And you realize that you're an idiot, you're shooting six bullets at that lamp but it's not exploding, and you notice there's a window behind the lamp. You're firing at someone's house…"
In the Intifada's second year, the IDF increasingly began to conduct offensive operations in Area A, eventually regaining effective control of the territory. Indiscriminate fire in the West Bank therefore decreased with time, though it remained a feature of combat service in the Gaza strip where the IDF did not gain effective control over Area A.\footnote{For a theoretical analysis of the relationship between territorial control and the targeting of violence see Kalyvas (2006), Ron (2003).}

**Using homes as military bases:** A second defensive practice that involved contact with civilians was the use of civilian buildings as military bases. In some cases civilians were evicted from buildings due to their strategic location. In other cases homes were taken after they had been used by insurgents to launch attacks at Israeli soldiers or civilians. While some soldiers were involved in conducting the eviction itself, most arrived at the buildings after they had already been converted to makeshift outposts, though sometimes some remnants of civilian life remained, as noted by Aryeh:

"Our base was essentially a three story building. There were no people there, but there was a whole room, actually the whole kitchen, living room, the entire ground floor, which was full of things that belonged to the residents that we didn't touch."

In most cases the use of the building was temporary, lasting for as long as strategic conditions demanded it in the judgment of local commanders.

4.2.2. **"Infrastructure Activities"**

Another defensive practice with severe ramifications for civilians, employed most forcefully in the Gaza strip, was the clearing of territory to facilitate military operation.\footnote{Razing, leveling and clearing territory also took place in the process of offensive operations when deemed necessary by commanding officers. For instance, extensive razing was conducted during Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank, particularly in the refugee camp of Jenin, and in special operations in the Gaza Strip. See e.g. Shachar Fisher, "Glory Monsters," Bamachane, 2005; Human Rights Watch (2004).} Such
activity, euphemistically referred to as "infrastructure activities" and specifically as "exposure," involved razing buildings and vegetation that could obstruct the IDF's ability to view approaching threats, could or had served as the site for launching an insurgent attack, or could or had concealed an underground tunnel for smuggling weapons into Gaza from Egypt. Under this policy buffer zones along Gaza's borders and around its settlements and roads were gradually cleared of trees, orchards, agricultural fields, greenhouses, and homes. Thousands of homes were demolished as a result of military "exposures" and tens of thousands of civilians were displaced. Throughout the Second Intifada such razing became so common that IDF Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz referred to the D-9, the massive armored bulldozer that executed most of the demolitions, as Israel's strategic weapon in the Gaza Strip (B’Tselem 2002b).

Idan, an infantry soldier who had served as a soldier and a commander in Gaza, described the liberalization of the exposure policy over time, and the gradual clearing of areas around his post:

"Over time the whole exposure thing began. How do you expose territory? The Commander of the Southern Command issues an order to expose. I'm talking about little things, not houses, but exposure of vegetation so that the territory will be clear for

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17 While IDF officers cited military necessity as justification for the demolition policy, human rights organizations charged that the policy was applied excessively in order to exert pressure on civilians. In an interview with the IDF's weekly newspaper, the commander of the Defense Ministry's Civil Administration was asked whether Israel excessively razed buildings and trees as part of its exposure policy. He responded, "In Gaza – very much. I think they did some excessive things … After [militant attacks in two Israeli settlements in the Gaza strip] they committed very massive exposure. They uprooted hundreds of dunam (approximately .25 acres – D.M.) of strawberries and orchards and greenhouses… In the West Bank as well there are places where we are not innocent of it. Sometimes I approve a certain amount of exposure but when I get to the field I find hyperactive forces" (quoted in Guy Zakham, "Tzedaka under fire," Bamachane 28 December, 2001.) Another former senior IDF officer stated in an interview, "in Gaza, Israel destroyed over 60% of agricultural land. I don't know the statistics today, but let's say that as of 2005, over 60% of the agricultural land [had been demolished]. The agricultural areas did not create terrorist attacks. [The policy] was intended, no one will tell you this, but it was intended to exert pressure on the population so that it would pressure terror to stop" (Brym, Araj, and Maoz-Shai 2005-07).

observation...so [insurgents] won't hide in certain places. When I returned to the area [later in my service] as a company sergeant major I'm talking about much more massive exposure...exposure that you decide on, a battalion commander even. If the brigade commander decides this house is a problem right now, immediately they make sure there's authorization from above, they bring a D-9, and the building is finished... As a company sergeant major ... I suddenly realized that wow, you can take down entire areas around here. Not entire areas, let's keep things in proportion – I'm talking to you about areas of hundreds of meters, to keep the zone clear and sterile before the last defense lines, and to give you an easier range..."

Extensive razing and clearing of territory noticeably changed the Gazan landscape in areas where the IDF exercised control. Gil recalled his father's reaction when driving him to his base at the changes that had occurred in Gaza since he had served there many years earlier:

"He was utterly shocked that there was nothing there. Nothing. Everything was flat, everything was level. He was shocked. [He remembered] hills next to the ocean, sand dunes, trees, palm trees, and now it just looked dead. An empty plane. I think they may have left a few palm trees next to the road but I'm not sure. They razed buildings, too."

In sum, defensive measures, while involving little direct interaction with civilians, nevertheless led to violence against civilians and their property, especially in the Gaza Strip.

4.3 Population Control Measures

Population control measures were not new to the Occupied Territories, which the Israeli security forces had administered in varying forms since their occupation in 1967. However the Second Intifada witnessed a steep and unprecedented rise in measures designed to monitor and control the population, primarily through the fragmentation of territory into separate cells and imposition of strict restrictions on the movement of people, goods, and services.¹⁹

¹⁹ The economic impact of this policy has been estimated at billions of dollars though the losses are difficult to quantify, see World Bank (2008) for an analysis.
The IDF's primary population control strategy was the severe restriction of movement through physical obstacles and administrative measures. Physical obstacles included the placement of hundreds of roadblocks, ditches and earth mounds, as well as dozens of partial and fulltime manned checkpoints around towns and villages in the West Bank. Movement between these obstacles was governed by a labyrinthine permit system administered by regional District Coordination Offices (DCO), a branch of the Ministry of Defense's Civil Administration Authority. Movement permits required a magnetic ID card, renewed annually, which was granted to civilians who were not classified by Israel's security services as "denied entry". Those who possessed an ID card and were able to access the regional DCO office, an act that in itself often required movement through checkpoints, could apply for a dizzying array of permits valid for limited periods, depending on the purpose of movement. However even a valid permit did not guarantee movement, as permits could be revoked at any time without notice for political or security considerations and often depended on the discretion of the soldiers at the checkpoint. As a result many civilians travelled without a permit, using improvised bypass roads to circumvent checkpoints.

The checkpoints created constant friction between soldiers and Palestinian civilians and became symbols of civilian suffering in the Second Intifada (Zureik 2011). As such they were

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20 The list of blacklisted Palestinians includes suspected militants, those deemed likely to be involved in militant activity, family members of casualties from IDF fire who are considered likely to desire revenge, and Palestinians who had previously been caught for illegal presence in Israel (Machsomwatch 2004; Machsomwatch and Physicians for Human Rights - Israel 2004).

21 The complex and inefficient permit system continued to expand over the years. To date some 100 different permits govern travel in the West Bank, see Chaim Levinson, "The Civil Administration Presents: 101 Types of Entry Permits for Palestinians," Haaretz, 24 December 2011. In-depth discussion of Israel's military bureaucracy in the Occupied Territories is beyond the scope of this study, but see Machsomwatch and Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (2004).

22 With time, as internal and external criticism of the conditions at checkpoints mounted, many major checkpoints were expanded, fortified, and rebuilt, and more sophisticated surveillance methods were introduced to facilitate the monitoring and control of people and goods, including cameras, electronic, remote-control operated turnstiles, x-ray machines, and biometric ID cards. In 2005, a crossings unit was established at Israel's Ministry of Defense to
primary sites of strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic violence. In ever-shifting and often arbitrary ways, the obstacles to movement barred access to education, medical care, and employment, imposed long waits at multiple checkpoints in difficult physical conditions, separated friends and family members, and created constant uncertainty as to whether movement that day would be possible or not. Moreover, the behavior of soldiers at checkpoints was often aggressive, including shouts, threats, and brandishing of weapons, so as facilitate the control of large crowds. As Yoav explained,

"You have to control all these people, so you have to be aggressive so they won't overwhelm you. Think about it, it can be a situation of 2-3 soldiers and suddenly 100 people [approach.] If you're not aggressive they can run at you... It's only possible to the extent that you communicate aggression. First of all, you have a gun, and people naturally don't want to get in trouble. If you're aggressive people won't come at you."

Media attention often focused on unusual, dramatic events, such as women giving birth while detained at checkpoints, or sick and elderly people collapsing for lack of prompt medical care. However it is the everyday violence of the checkpoint – the aggressive soldiers, long waits, lack of basic facilities, arbitrary changes to regulations, and the often insurmountable difficulties of obtaining permits – which is the primary focus of this section. While difficult to quantify as it does not divide easily into neat indicators, such ordinary violence was often the most insidious source of harm to civilians inflicted by the military during the Second Intifada. As Hammami (2004, 27) argues, "The world witnesses the tank invasions and aerial assassinations, demilitarize the crossings. In the following years a growing number of Green-Line checkpoints (renamed "terminals") were outsourced to private companies and the role of the military in administering them gradually decreased. The power of individual soldiers to determine civilian fate was reduced dramatically as decisions were entrusted to a bureaucratic, opaque and sanitized "system," operating from behind bullet-proof glass walls through a system of loudspeakers. See Meron Rappaport, "Outsourcing the Checkpoints," Haaretz, October 2, 2007; Mansbach (2009); Kotef and Amir (2007). Hammami (2010).

23 For example, as of August 2004, Israeli NGO B'Tselem documented 39 cases in which Palestinian civilians died after not receiving timely medical care due to detention at checkpoints. These cases, nevertheless, were relatively infrequent (B'Tselem 2004a).
but rarely sees the relentless everyday of 'internal closures,' whose impact has been to create a crushing regime of sanctions that has forced 60% of the population into poverty."

4.3.1 Closure

Since 1993 the Occupied Territories of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem had been placed under general closure enforced by checkpoints at border areas, forbidding Palestinians to enter Israel or to travel between the territories without a permit from Israeli security authorities. Throughout the 1990's, the level of enforcement of the closure varied, with Israel's willingness to grant entry permits shifting in accordance with security considerations. On occasion, such as during Israeli holidays or in response to terrorist attacks, Israel would tighten its closure policy, imposing comprehensive closure on the Occupied Territories. Under comprehensive closure all entry permits were revoked, no additional permits were issued, and commercial crossing points were often closed, barring commercial goods from entering or exiting areas under the control of the PA.

Immediately after the outbreak of the Second Intifada in October 2000, comprehensive closure was imposed on all of the Occupied Territories, reaching a height of 244 days in 2001. After 2001 Israel began issuing restricted work permits to limited numbers Palestinian workers as well as permits for necessary medical treatment, re-imposing comprehensive closure from time to time, as demonstrated in Figure 4.1 below.
Illegal workers continued to enter Israel at varying rates through the West Bank's porous border, but movement out of Gaza, surrounded by an elaborate barrier system, was largely halted.\textsuperscript{24} Prior to the Second Intifada, over twenty percent of the Palestinian workforce was employed in Israel. As a result of the comprehensive closure, tens of thousands of Palestinians lost their jobs, causing a severe blow to the Palestinian economy.\textsuperscript{25} While the restriction of

\textsuperscript{24} The barrier, consisting of an electronic fence, observation posts and patrol routes, was constructed in 1995. It joined the closure policy, implemented in Gaza since 1993, which barred Palestinian entry into Israel or the West Bank without a personal permit. Following the outbreak of the Second Intifada the number of permits to enter both Israel and the West Bank was cut by approximately 98%. In addition, Israel frequently imposed "comprehensive closure" on the Occupied Territories, forbidding all movement out of the Gaza Strip and revoking all permits. As a result the number of Gazan workers employed in Israel during the Second Intifada dropped by approximately 96%. Together with strict limitations placed on the entry and exit of goods to and from the Gaza Strip these restrictions on movement contributed to a sharp rise in unemployment and poverty during the Second Intifada. For more information see B'Tselem and HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual (2005).

\textsuperscript{25} In the initial months of the Intifada the Palestinian workforce in Israel declined from 146,000 to 43,000, signifying a drop from 22% to 9% of the Palestinian workforce generally. These numbers rose somewhat in 2001 to 15% of
worker flows into Israel was portrayed as an issue of security, a senior IDF officer indicated other motives were at play:

"If you go and check what the real reason is, is there really a reason to prevent work in Israel … There is no reason. It turns out, for example, that there hasn't yet been, no, [there was] a single terrorist attack, there was one exception, but aside from this exception…there was no terrorist attack committed inside the Green Line by someone with a permit to work in Israel. Not one, except that [single exception], and that one, the GSS isn't even sure it was a terrorist attack…. So of the thousands of attacks and attempted attacks besides that one, none, not even one [was committed by someone] who entered Israel with a work permit" (Brym, Araj, and Maoz-Shai 2005-07).

The imposition of comprehensive closure also severely curtailed the flow of goods in and out of the Palestinian territory. At one point in the Intifada's early months Israel's Deputy Minister of Defense, Ephraim Sneh, requested that the export of strawberries be allowed from the Gaza strip. An officer close to Chief of Staff Ya'alon would later remark that "the Palestinians were on the verge of breaking, but the strawberry issue ruined the chance of breaking them" (Drucker and Shelah 2005, 83). In a similar vein, the commander of one of the regional brigades in the West Bank blamed the IDF's failure to "break the Palestinians" on the decision to allow a shipment of cement into one of the Palestinian cities.26

Checkpoints alongside the Israel-West Bank border or Armistice Line (known as "Green Line checkpoints," though often located inside the West Bank) were initially fairly crude installations, consisting of a few cement blocks, a makeshift shelter for soldiers on duty, and perhaps a watchtower. At peak hours hundreds of civilians would crowd around the checkpoint making the task of monitoring nearly impossible. Yair, a former infantry officer, described his

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experiences in the early months of the Second Intifada at the Qalandia checkpoint, separating the Palestinian city of Ramallah from the Jerusalem area:

"It was a major mess back then. One of our guys lost an eye... because there was such chaos. There were demonstrations every day, people threw rocks and [soldiers] didn't know how to handle it.... It was a huge checkpoint and it wasn't clear [what to do], they told us our job wasn't to check people... just to make sure suspicious people didn't exit... They told us not to start checking every car because there were too many cars and it would create huge traffic jams, and there's media there all the time. Just protect each other, open the car trunk and look under, don't ask people to get out of their car... Every time something else. It was really difficult... and there were demonstrations right up to the checkpoint. We used to stop them 10 meters from the checkpoint. It was really hard to control the chaos there. All the vehicles pushing forward, and all those organizations like "Women in Black" would yell at us, 'Why aren't you letting the ambulances through?' There was a special ambulance lane...It was total, total chaos."

Adding to the feelings of chaos at the checkpoints themselves was that fact that in many locations the checkpoints could be circumvented with relative ease. As a result one of the main tasks of soldiers was to patrol the areas around checkpoints to ensure no one entered Israel illegally. Soldiers were charged with apprehending Palestinians, checking their papers to ensure they were not blacklisted, wanted for investigation, or otherwise suspected by the security services, and then sending them back to the Occupied Territories.

Yoav, who had served in the West Bank between 2001 and 2003, described his service at a checkpoint separating Bethlehem from the Jerusalem area in the Intifada's early years:

"The checkpoint was problematic at the time, because there was the checkpoint and to the left there was a valley. Now obviously anyone who wanted to cross into Israel could just go down to the valley and bypass the checkpoint and go back up again...so what happened...

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Qaladla is located in the West Bank and as such is technically an internal checkpoint. However, the area separating Qalandia from Jerusalem was annexed to the municipality of Jerusalem, turning the checkpoint into a de-facto border checkpoint.

During the Second Intifada tens of thousands of workers entered Israel illegally each year. The Israeli police's official policy was to warn a first-time offender and send him back, and upon apprehending a repeat offender to arrest, investigate, and charge the suspect. However, enforcement of this policy was highly selective due to Israel's inability to prosecute such large numbers of workers. As a result members of the police, border police, and army developed repertoires of entrepreneurial and opportunistic violence to deter Palestinians from repeated illegal entry. Apprehended workers were often victims of beatings, abuse, theft, humiliation, prolonged detentions, indiscriminate fire, and other forms of violence (B’Tselem 2007).
was that every morning everyone who wanted to work in Israel would go through the valley and there were tons of people, not dozens but hundreds, from Bethlehem, men, women, everything… and you had to stop them. Your shift would end early in the morning and then the team that finished its watch would go down to the valley and chase them… and it’s tough to stop them, it takes a lot of energy."

Over time checkpoints were expanded and bypass roads were cut off, either with physical obstacles or, beginning in 2003, through the construction of the separation barrier. Tawil-Souri (2010, 30) describes the expansion of the Qalandia checkpoint, one that is typical of several major Green Line checkpoints:

In late 2000, [the checkpoint] emerged as an earth mound along the main Jerusalem-Ramallah road that drivers had to circumvent with sporadic military checks; by 2001, there were concrete barricades and a fence controlling the flow of pedestrians and vehicles 24 hours a day. By 2003, there was a watch tower, a corrugated tin roof overhead the travelers’ walk-way; around it an open-air shopping mall was taking root. By 2005, a nearby hilltop had been razed, the 8-meter high wall snaked along its Western flank and increasing numbers of merchants were permanently located there. By 2006 it became a monstrous – and in certain ways, final – border crossing point, one of ten ‘official’ crossing points for two million Palestinians across the West Bank.

Ben Ari, Maymon, Gazit, and Shatzberg (2005) analyzed the governing regime at checkpoints as based on three parallel modes of control: administrative, security, and humanitarian. The administrative mode involved enforcement of the permit system that determined who could cross and when. While ostensibly based on a series of bureaucratic rules and regulations, in practice the system was difficult to enforce as regulations were ever-shifting and seemingly arbitrary, and the permit system had grown to unmanageable proportions. Daniel, who served as an infantry officer in the West Bank in 2001, described this confusing situation, "At 6:00 AM the people begin to flow in, lots of people. But they only tell you which cars are allowed to cross that day at 5:30 AM. And the orders change every day. Today it's just construction materials and tomorrow only corn… and you know, there's no way there's any logic to it, it's not like [they're saying] 'today we're afraid of a terrorist who will come in a vehicle carrying corn,' there's absolutely no logic to it whatsoever."
At the same time soldiers enforced a system of military control in which there was an ever-present risk of attack, either against the soldiers themselves or through the smuggling of arms or militants into Israel. This involved viewing each Palestinian as a potential terrorist threat and treating him accordingly. This mode of control was particularly strong after attacks on checkpoints or the interception of arms or insurgents, as described by Eran, who had served as an army paramedic in Gaza in 2000-2002:

"We got to the checkpoint and there was a frantic ambulance there that wanted to transfer a woman in labor from a hospital in the south of Gaza to one in the north. The soldiers there had only been there for a week, they were very humanitarian [sic], and immediately let them pass. We stopped them at the last moment, something didn't look right to my officer, to the paramedic taking care of matters...We lifted the woman, really it was a woman in her tenth month, her water had broken, I can testify, and there were three IEDs under her. She was lying on them. And then you have a really tough dilemma, she's about to give birth, eventually she gave birth at the military clinic and then was arrested, no joke, 3 IEDs, 3 explosive belts, it doesn't matter what happened to her... but a week later at that same checkpoint an 80 year old Palestinian with a heart condition died, he was detained, they didn't let him pass, they detained him, and then you say, it's so inhumane, it's so unjust, but you understand the situation that a week earlier the same soldiers wanted to let someone pass and were taken advantage of. You're between a rock and a hard place, you can't win no matter what you do...That checkpoint commander went to prison for two months."

Finally, a humanitarian mode of control was instituted to allow for crossing of emergency cases, often after the intervention of local human rights groups. However, the judgment of whether cases would be considered "humanitarian" or not was generally left to the discretion of individual soldiers, leading to substantial variation in how such cases were treated.

These three modes of control often clashed directly, as described by Lior, a former infantry officer whose soldiers were charged with manning one of the West Bank's northern crossings into Israel in early 2005:

"There were lots of times when the orders would change... especially in relatively quiet periods when there was no tension and everything was calm, and then there'd be an order from above, a political order, to ease restrictions. So we would let everyone in that we
could under the restrictions. And then suddenly there's intelligence information about a suicide bomber and we close up everything…and don't let anyone pass…and a guy on a wheelchair comes forward and I have to tell him he can't cross. You see he's in a wheelchair; he's not threatening you right now. So what do you do?

4.3.2 The separation barrier

The lack of physical separation between the West Bank and Israel meant that Palestinians, both civilians and insurgents, continued to enter Israel illegally by bypassing checkpoints. In June 2002, in response to mounting domestic pressure following a series of deadly suicide attacks inside Israel, the Israeli government approved the construction of a barrier to physically separate the West Bank from Israel. Initially, the IDF proposed a route that ran largely along the Green Line (Drucker and Shelah 2005). However Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon rejected the proposed route, instead planning a route in the West Bank that would encircle many of its Jewish settlements, expropriate large amounts of territory, separate Palestinians from their agricultural land and seal in villages and disconnect them from vital services in urban centers. Between 2003 and 2007 the proposed route was rerouted four times following judgments by the Israeli High Court, which declared parts of the barrier illegal due to their excessive harm to the civilian population. Still, over 80% of the altered route is located inside the West Bank (Bimkom 2006).

For much of the route the barrier consists of a strip averaging 60 meters in length, comprised of an electronic fence at the center, patrol roads, fenced ditches, side service roads, and a buffer zone. Close to 15% of the barrier, particularly around the urban areas of Jerusalem, Tulkarem, and Qalqilya, is comprised of a concrete wall six to eight meters high. The projected
length of the barrier is 708 km (twice the length of the Green Line), of which approximately 60% had been constructed as of 2011 (OCHA 2011).\textsuperscript{29}

The barrier route created a series of enclaves sandwiched between the barrier and the Green Line, amounting to some 10% of the territory of the West Bank. The IDF declared the area a closed military zone it dubbed "the seam zone." A strict permit regime was imposed on the area, requiring its 6500 residents to obtain (and periodically renew) residential permits, and visitors, agricultural laborers and workers wishing to access the area to obtain personal permits.\textsuperscript{30} Access to the "seam zone" from the West Bank for residents and visitors was possible through the major crossing checkpoints as well as a series of electronic gates, some of which open and close at set hours daily, and others open seasonally during the harvest season. The stringent permit requirements and irregular enforcement of opening hours has inflicted severe economic damage on rural communities in the West Bank, and countless hardships on its residents.\textsuperscript{31}

4.3.3 Internal Closure

While closure of the Occupied Territories had been imposed in the past, a hallmark of IDF policy in the Second Intifada was the internal closure. Beginning in October 2000, in response to the lynching of two Israeli reserve soldiers in the city of Ramallah by an angry mob, many of the West Bank's towns and villages were placed under internal closure by blocking the access roads to the towns through physical obstacles as well as permanent and temporary

\textsuperscript{29} Construction of the barrier has largely halted in recent years due to the sharp decline in militant attacks from the West Bank, a resulting drop in public interest, financial constraints and international pressure (OCHA 2011).
\textsuperscript{30} The number of residents in the "seam zone" is projected to include 25,000 Palestinians if and when the barrier is completed, in addition to 270,000 residents of East Jerusalem. Residents of this zone remain dependent on the West Bank, which they can only access via checkpoint, for education and health services, as well as for access to family and social networks. Visitors, workers, and others who wish to enter the area must apply for one of an array of permits with varying expiration dates (OCHA 2011).
\textsuperscript{31} On the permit regime in the seam zone see Bimkom (2006), OCHA (2011).
checkpoints. Unmanned roadblocks could frequently be bypassed on foot through makeshift dirt paths, as could, in some cases, manned checkpoints. In early 2001, following the election of hardliner Ariel Sharon as prime minister, the policy became stricter still, and the IDF Central Command determined that each village in the West Bank would be completely blocked with the exception of one exit (Drucker and Shelah 2005). Through its severe restrictions on movement internal closures cut off villages from adjacent urban centers, impaired access to medical care, educational facilities, and workplaces, and severely damaged the Palestinian economy.\footnote{For data and analysis of the effects of the internal closure policy see e.g. B’Tselem (2001a, 2001b, 2007); B’Tselem and Physicians for Human Rights - Israel (2003), UNSCO (2001) World Bank (2004).}

Closures were usually tightened following Palestinian attacks in Israel, reflecting IDF policy to demonstrate the "price of terror" to the population.

Hundreds of internal roadblocks and dozens of manned checkpoints dotted the West Bank, their numbers fluctuating occasionally in response to political and military events.\footnote{During the Second Intifada there was an average of six hundred obstacles to movement in the West Bank (Hammami 2004). Since August 2005, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OCHA) has periodically documented the number of obstacles, see OCHA (2011).} The internal closure policy effectively severed the West Bank into six territorial units, separated by a network of checkpoints and roadblocks with shifting levels of restrictions on movement, as well as internal fragmentation inside these units (B’Tselem 2007).

Physical roadblocks and ditches were created by soldiers in a variety of ways, as explained by Josh, who served as a tank commander in the Nablus area in 2002:

"I went in a few times for infrastructure activity, meaning to accompany a D-9 to block [roads]… We got to the path and I told him to block it. There was an orchard close by so I thought he'd bring dirt from there. But no, he just dug into the ground, opened up the entire infrastructure, sewage, whatever was there, and created a hill. So you think, 'ok, that's how it's done, well I didn't know, but go for it.'"
The physical obstacles funneled pedestrian and vehicle traffic into military checkpoints throughout the West Bank. Like at the Green Line checkpoints, the rules at internal checkpoints were ever-changing. In some periods and areas permits were required to travel in vehicles, move inside the West Bank during internal closure or to access health services (B’Tselem 2007). In other cases, blanket prohibitions were imposed on movement based on criteria of gender, age, and residence. Blanket prohibitions were particularly common in the first years of the Intifada but in certain locations remained in force for much longer. In Nablus, considered by the IDF to be the most dangerous source of militant activity in the West Bank, entry and exit was only permitted through one of four surrounding checkpoints, and blanket restrictions were particularly far-reaching. Private vehicles were completely barred from entering the city without a special permit, and throughout all of 2002 and 2003, and periodically in 2004-2007, certain categories of people (typically men aged 16-35) could not enter or leave the area without a permit, granted primarily on medical or other urgent humanitarian grounds (B’Tselem 2007). I asked Avi, a former infantry officer who served in Nablus, how a Palestinian from Nablus could visit a family member elsewhere in the West Bank.

"At that time, a man between the age of 16-35 who lived in Nablus and wanted to travel outside of Nablus could not exit. It was like that for years… He couldn't leave the city unless he got a special permit from the DCO. People in other age groups could leave the city by foot. Or if they were in the [16-35] age bracket but possessed a permit to work outside of the city they could exit. But you needed a special permit for a vehicle. And anyone who wanted to enter with a vehicle needed a special permit… [My job] was to check each person's papers in the computer, talk to him a bit and see who we was, check his bags, check under his shirt – check each person who passed through."

Most checkpoints were manned by 3-4 soldiers and an NCO who served as the checkpoint commander (the larger checkpoints occasionally required the presence of an officer.) They were given ultimate discretion in determining who could pass and who could not, and there
was therefore substantial variation in patterns of enforcement of administrative rules at checkpoints. Typically, enforcement was much stricter in the wake of militant attacks on soldiers or civilians. For instance, after a series of attacks on checkpoints in the Ramallah area in early 2002, in which 17 soldiers and civilians were killed, the behavior of soldiers at checkpoints reflected the soldiers' tension, as described by Yair, a former infantry officer:

"People were really on edge [after the three attacks.]… You don't know when someone will flash a gun …there were clear regulations for all commanders and soldiers… a vehicle or a person would approach, and you'd stop him 30, 50 meters from the checkpoint. Everyone lifts their shirts, turns around, one guy brings their papers, and you check all the papers with the GSS and then check them one by one. You take apart the entire vehicle while one or two soldiers stand close by with loaded rifles pointed at all the people. Everyone stands in one place, no one takes any risks. We all point our rifles. That was the situation."

However, actual monitoring at the checkpoint was often ineffective as a handful of soldiers attempted to control the movement of masses of civilians. Hammami (2004, 26–27) describes the commute between Ramallah and Birzeit University which required crossing a pedestrian-only checkpoint:

"Commuters would disembark from transit vans that jammed both ends of the no-drive zone. Skirting rubble and concrete blocks, they would trip down the valley and hold their breath as they passed the Israeli soldiers, before finally trudging up the incline to the vans on the other side. Thousands made the walk every day…On the worst days, trigger happy soldiers suddenly prohibited pedestrian traffic, and students and villagers were stranded on the wrong side of getting to work or home. More commonly, soldiers would drop in at the checkpoint for a few hours, to toy with the droves of walking commuters, stopping all – or a select few – for interminable identity card and baggage checks."

Army vehicles and small groups of soldiers would patrol the areas around the checkpoint to locate and stop Palestinians from circumventing checkpoints. Avi described this task:

"First you have to identify the roads they go on, and then you have to catch the people… In principle you're supposed to send them back – 'you can't go through here, go home.' In rare cases that actually happens. They go back to the checkpoint. But that doesn't really happen, they [usually] come back and try again after two hours. And if you're waiting for them
they'll turn back… The thing is that if [the person] is allowed to go through the checkpoint, and he's circumventing it just to save time, he'll prefer going through the checkpoint the next day. But if it's someone who can't cross, someone who's blacklisted, then he'll try anyway…”

Internal closures were much more prevalent in the West Bank than in Gaza, where a fortified barrier sealed in the Strip, creating complete separation from the state of Israel, and where most Palestinian towns and villages were territorially contiguous. However, on several occasions following the occurrence of Palestinian insurgent attacks Israel would block the main road crossing the Gaza Strip thereby partitioning the strip into three separate areas and severing the north from the south.

Internal and external closures were not the only forms of population control mechanisms that Israel employed. Throughout the Second Intifada Palestinian travel on major West Bank roads was fully or partially restricted, making travel within the West Bank much longer and more costly and creating "Israeli-only" roads in the Occupied Territories. Random, or "flying," checkpoints were set up frequently across the West Bank, imposing vehicle and person spot checks and prolonging travel even further. Lengthy curfews were often imposed on Palestinian towns and villages during the first years of the Second Intifada to facilitate military activity. In all, the harsh population control measures that the IDF implemented during the Second Intifada were a major source of civilian victimization.

4.4 Offensive operations

In the first year of the Intifada the IDF mostly refrained from deploying its ground forces within PA-controlled areas, limiting its offensive measures to two main tactics: First, it often

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34 For more on West Bank road restrictions see B'Tselem (2004a, 2007).
conducted bombings from the air of buildings serving Palestinian security organizations accused of contributing to the insurgency. Second, just a month after the Intifada began Israel embarked on an official policy of targeted killings, killing militant and political figures in Palestinian armed groups. Between November 2000 and the end of 2005 nearly 300 armed groups members and approximately 150 civilian bystanders had been killed in these attacks. Israel's official policy of targeted killings, since adopted as a counterinsurgency and counterterrorism tool in a variety of conflict settings, has received widespread scholarly attention (see e.g. Ben-Naftali and Michaeli 2003; Brym and Maoz-Shai 2009; Byman 2006; Gazit and Brym 2011; Gross 2003). While targeted killings carry the risk of collateral damage, the IDF has increasingly improved its technological abilities allowing it to minimize the number of civilians killed.\footnote{While in 2003 the ratio of insurgents to civilians killed in targeted killings was 1:1, by the end of 2005, the ratio had been reduced to 1:28, see Amos Harel, "Killings in Gaza becoming more targeted, and less civilians are getting killed," (in Hebrew) \textit{Haaretz}, 12 December 2007.} Rather than focus on this much publicized policy, this section highlights the IDF's strategic turn to offensive measures beginning in 2002, including combat in urban centers, mass searches and arrests, ambushes conducted from within private homes, and house demolitions, and considers the implications of these measures for civilians.

4.4.1 \textbf{Large-scale operations}

As the Palestinian insurgency escalated, and particularly with the advent of suicide bombings in Israeli cities, pressure mounted both from the IDF and from the Israeli public to deploy troops in the cities and towns of the West Bank. Beginning in the second half of 2001, and especially following the assassination of the Israeli Tourism Minister by PFLP gunmen in October 2001, the army began conducting raids into towns in Area A. These initial incursions
typically lasted just a few hours and required the approval of the IDF general staff (Hirsch 2004). Over time, restrictions on offensive operations in Area A were relaxed. The attacks on the World Trade Center in 9/11/2001 cleared the way for more aggressive Israeli tactics as international support for counterterrorist measures rose sharply. In early 2002 the IDF abandoned the distinction between Areas A, B, and C, and dramatically increased its offensive operations in Area A.

The turn to offensive tactics reached its peak in March 2002, the bloodiest month of the insurgency in terms of Israeli civilian death toll. 105 Israeli civilians and 26 soldiers were killed that month, culminating in a suicide bombing that killed 30 civilians during a Passover celebration at an Israeli hotel. Within days the Israeli government authorized Operation Defensive Shield, a large scale, month-long ground operation that took place simultaneously in nearly all of the West Bank's major cities. Operation Defensive Shield brought tanks, infantry, and engineering forces into the crowded streets of Palestinian towns and refugee camps. In Ramallah, troops laid siege to the PA presidential compound, the Muqata, isolating PA leader Yasser Arafat in his residence until his death in 2004.

Gilad, a former infantry commander, was deployed outside of Nablus, where he could easily observe IDF forces entering the city, and its quick occupation:

"We had the best possible vantage point. The best example of what happened was that initially the muezzin would call people to prayer every day like clockwork, but after a few days the muezzin stopped, there was silence… We saw the vehicles move in total desolation. Maybe not at first, but after a few days everything looked dead except for the occasional military vehicle. And sometimes we would suddenly see a long line of Arabs, Nablus residents, who surrendered or were arrested, which was pretty amazing to see… we saw a few military vehicles and then several dozens of people just waiting to be loaded onto the vehicles and investigated. There were helicopters above us all the time, and a few times we saw them launch missiles into buildings. One of my friends was lucky enough to see one go into someone's window… The first few days it was like listening to a war, there were helicopters all the time, and jets, and then in the last days we just saw a few
army vehicles circling the city, a few tanks in the middle of Nablus, and the place was
dead. No one left the house. You see there was nothing there, no movement, just a few
isolated tanks circling the city."

During major operations civilians were placed under strict curfew for days or weeks with
only a few occasional hours to replenish necessary items. The curfew was enforced through
liberal open fire regulations, which viewed almost anyone as suspect. Yair recalls,

"They made sure there was a curfew. I saw it first in Nablus and then in Bethlehem. No
one leaves the house, period. They were told that if they left their houses they'd get shot.
People didn't dare leave their houses…and it was very easy to enforce. If in the past
[soldiers] would shout or shoot in the air…now if someone left the house and started
walking boom! You fire a round near their legs and they run back inside. People wouldn't
go out. If someone went out then immediately a tank would fire a round near him, or one
of our snipers on the roof. One time we identified someone on the roof of one of the
houses. Snipers were immediately sent and shot the water canister next to him several
times just to startle him and make sure he goes back in."

Under the cover of heavy fire, infantry soldiers disembarked and entered Palestinian
homes, conducting searches and arrests, confiscating weapons and equipment, and killing
militants (defined as anyone armed). Upon entering the city the first task was typically to settle
in a local building that would be used as a makeshift base during the ensuing operations. Soldiers
would leave the building to conduct specific missions, such as searches and arrests. As a result of
the curfew, much of the contact between soldiers and civilians took place inside civilian homes.
As Shai, a former member of an elite unit, explained:

"The most contact [we had] with civilians was in Operation Defensive Shield, because you
actually went into people's homes. The rules were that once you enter a home you first shut
the family in one room under the watch of a guard, and they are not allowed to leave
except to get food or go to the restroom or something…. Sometimes that meant going into
people's homes in the middle of the night, and sometimes it meant making a hole in their
wall to move into the neighbor's house…"

This included, in some cases, members of the Palestinian police force that had been established pursuant to the
Oslo Accords. Orders regarding the permissibility of targeting Palestinian police shifted, as in some periods and
locations they were treated as armed militia members while in others as policemen protected from targeting.
During the operation the IDF conducted mass arrests, arresting approximately 7000 Palestinians, the majority of whom were released without charges within days or weeks (Btselem 2002). Yair described the arrests:

"In the center of Nablus for instance, nearly every young man was arrested. Everyone who was a certain age went to a detention center and was investigated by the GSS. Lots of them were subsequently released…so they were constantly coming back. People would walk with a note from the GSS explaining why they were in the streets, but they were really scared, they usually waved a white undershirt in the street so that no one would shoot them."

To protect its men from ambushes, IEDs, and sniper fire in cramped urban areas the IDF employed several means, each of which had grave implications for civilians and civilian property and infrastructure: First, in several areas soldiers moved through the walls of buildings rather than on the streets, minimizing their exposure but causing heavy damage to civilian structures (Weizman 2007). In the Jenin refugee camp, where 23 IDF soldiers were killed by Palestinian gunmen, a different tactic was used: IDF forces moved behind armored D-9 bulldozers that cleared roads to allow for the movement of tanks and infantry through the camp's narrow alleyways, in the process leveling between 80 and 140 buildings and wreaking extensive damage to infrastructure. Any building suspected of harboring a Palestinian militant, of being booby-trapped, or of having served as a site for firing at soldiers was demolished.

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37 Heavy damage to buildings and infrastructure was also caused by the mere fact that tanks and other heavy armored vehicles rode through cramped urban alleyways.
38 The vast damage in the Jenin Refugee Camp led to a whirl of rumors and accusations that the IDF had conducted a massacre in the camp. Palestinians reported between 500-3000 civilians dead and demanded international intervention. A U.N. Commission appointed to investigate the battle in Jenin found that no massacre had occurred, and reported 52 Palestinian victims, up to half of which may have been civilians. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International confirmed these figures, finding that of the 49 dead, 27 had been armed. The IDF reported it had found 46 bodies, the vast majority of which had been armed. See e.g. Amnesty International Israel and the Occupied Territories: Shielded from Scrutiny: IDF Violations in Jenin and Nablus” Amnesty International (2002a).
Finally, the IDF occasionally made use of Palestinian civilians during military operations, enlisting them to search buildings suspected of being booby trapped, to protect IDF forces by checking or removing suspicious objects or walking in front of soldiers, and most extensively, to enter the homes of suspected armed insurgents and order its occupants out (a practice termed "neighbor procedure").

Operation Defensive Shield was deemed a success, as it reestablished IDF presence in Palestinian population centers in a operation with relatively few casualties: 34 soldiers were killed, 23 of them in Jenin. 261 Palestinians were killed during the operation, and thousands more were wounded or arrested (A. Harel and Yissakharof 2004). However, the effects of the operation soon faded and in the summer of 2002 suicide bombings resumed in full force. As a result the IDF embarked on a second large scale operation, lasting several months, designed to regain effective control of population centers in the West Bank. Many Palestinian towns were once again placed under curfew and IDF troops conducted repeated raids and arrested hundreds of suspected insurgents and supporters. Rather than staying in the cities for several weeks as had been done in Operation Defensive Shield, in this period raids were briefer in duration and involved fewer forces, and IDF troops generally remained stationed outside the major population centers. The pattern of brief offensive raids, house-to-house searches, arrests, and strikes in the West Bank would continue throughout the Second Intifada and is discussed in the next section.

While Operation Defensive Shield and its subsequent operations gradually re-established Israeli military control over Palestinian population centers in the West Bank, a similar operation was deemed impossible and unnecessary in the Gaza Strip, for several reasons. First, throughout

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39 See e.g. Human Rights Watch (2002). After Operation Defensive Shield several human rights organizations filed a petition with the Israeli High Court against the use of civilians in military operations, which ultimately led to the outlawing of any use of civilians in fighting, see Chapter 6 for further discussion.
the Second Intifada Gaza was considered far more dangerous than the West Bank. Insurgents in
Gaza were more heavily armed, and violence employed against Israeli soldiers and settlers was
more lethal and sophisticated. Kobi, a former infantry soldier who served in various posts in the
Gaza Strip in 2001-2003, described a typical day in Gaza:

"Almost every day there was a [violent] incident. Every night there was an incident. And
it's not just [firing] at military posts, but for example IEDs on the road, attempted
infiltrations [of settlements and bases], and mortar fire also… It was like that everywhere
we were...I think the Gaza Strip was more intense in terms of [violent] events, fire
episodes, encounters [with militants], etc… It happened much more and I think with a
much greater intensity. And different weapons too, like anti-tank missiles and mortars,
things you don't have in the West Bank, and [armed] encounters at a very short range."

At the same time, the insurgent threat was largely contained within the Gaza Strip, as
Gaza was surrounded by a heavily guarded security barrier that made entry into Israel nearly
impossible. Finally, Gaza was different in that it contained far fewer Jewish settlers than the
West Bank, with approximately 8000 residing in the former and over 250,000 in the latter. In the
West Bank Israeli settlers intermingled with Palestinians, making friction between Israelis and
Palestinians inevitable, whereas in Gaza separation between Palestinians and Israelis was much
easier to maintain. As put by Ido, who served in an infantry unit in Gaza in 2004-2005,

"It's completely different over there [in Gaza]… There's the block of [Israeli] settlements,
and there's a fence around them, and Rafah and everything else on the other side is like an
enemy state. You don't go in there and you don't conduct operations in there, definitely
not arrests and such, since over there it's simply a terrorist state. We would go in during
large or special operations but then we'd go in convoys with air cover and it was a really
big operation."

Due to the effective separation of Gaza from Israel, its settlement patterns, and the greater
risk posed by Gaza's insurgents, Israel's strategy in Gaza was initially largely defensive, relying
on liberal open fire regulations and extensive razing of territory to separate Palestinians from
Israelis settlers and soldiers in the Strip. However, this policy proved insufficient with time as Palestinian militants in Gaza developed indirect fire capabilities, firing makeshift mortars and artillery rockets first at military posts and settlements in Gaza, and later over the barrier into Israeli towns and settlements close to the Strip. While these unsophisticated and imprecise weapons were far less threatening to Israeli interests than the suicide bombings emanating from the West Bank, they nevertheless presented the IDF with a challenge that purely defensive strategies could not counter. 40

As a result, beginning in 2002 the IDF began conducting brief offensive raids in Gaza's cities and refugee camps. The operations had several objectives: Demolishing homes of suspected militants (punitive house demolitions), destroying rocket and explosive manufacturing sites, destroying tunnels used to smuggle weapons under the border with Egypt and razing territory close to the border to prevent future construction, and capturing or killing militants. These brief operations will be discussed in the next section. While Operation Defensive Shield did not take place in the Gaza Strip, IDF troops did conduct two large scale operations in Gaza over two years later: "Operation Rainbow" in May 2004 and "Operation Days of Penitence" in September-October 2004.

"Operation Rainbow" was authorized following several Palestinian militant attacks in the Gaza strip, killing a total of 5 civilians and 13 soldiers. The goal of the operation was to reduce militant activity against IDF soldiers on the border with Egypt. As Brigadier General Shmuel Zakai, then commander of the IDF Gaza Division, explained (quoted in Eldar 2005),

"The goal of the operation was to expand operational freedom of action along the Philadelphi Route. 41 Before the operation, an APC and a tank would clear a road on

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40 Between 2001 and Israel's withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, twelve Israeli civilians were killed and nearly 400 were wounded due to rocket or mortar attacks, see Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (2007).
41 The Philadelphie Route was an IDF controlled road that ran along the Gaza-Egypt border.
Philadelphi and be hit by an average of three rocket propelled grenades and one IED. The goal of the militants was to blow up another APC and cause casualties that would hurt Israeli morale, or alternatively to present to the world a picture of a humanitarian crisis as a result of IDF activity in the [Rafah] neighborhoods, thereby turning international public opinion against Israel… The way to [achieve our goal] was simple: to kill as many militants as possible. Period. That was the rationale of the operation."

The operation took place under heavy IDF fire in various neighborhoods of Rafah and lasted approximately one week. The precise scope of damage is disputed: The IDF claimed that 40 militants and 14 unarmed Palestinians were killed while international NGOs claimed that of 55 killed only 12 were armed, and that over 150 homes were demolished leaving thousands of Palestinians homeless (Human Rights Watch 2004). A second major operation, "Days of Penitence," was conducted in Northern Gaza in response to a rise in rockets launched at Israeli towns. Large IDF ground and air forces entered the crowded towns and refugee camps in order to kill militants and destroy rocket production facilities. Approximately 116 Palestinians were killed in the operation, and over 230 homes were destroyed or badly damaged.42 Once again tactics included extensive use of demolitions, liberal open fire regulations, and sniper fire to target militants.

4.4.2 Small-scale operations

In the months and years following Operation Defensive Shield the IDF conducted hundreds of raids in the West Bank designed to kill or capture suspected militants, collect intelligence, and prevent or disrupt insurgent attacks. The most common offensive operation was the arrest of suspected militants or others wanted for investigation by the Israeli security

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services. More complicated arrests were assigned to elite infantry units, but over time the vast numbers of arrests conducted meant that ordinary infantry units also conducted arrest operations. In some periods, combatants reported conducting arrests in Area A nearly every night, with some respondents, particularly in elite units, reporting having participated in hundreds of such operations. In many cases soldiers did not know who they were arresting, as Assaf, a former infantry officer, explained,

"When I think about it we never knew who we were arresting. It could be that we arrested someone who didn't pay the electric bill and the GSS then took him and said they'd forget about his debt if he gave information. On the other hand it could be someone who was starting to show signs of beginning to be a terrorist... You don't know who it is."

In some areas with high levels of insurgent activity soldiers would encounter Palestinian gunfire and IEDs. To eliminate this threat the IDF developed what it called "stimulus and response" operations, whereby small teams of infantry soldiers, typically from elite units, would covertly enter a civilian home and set up sniper positions. Another military force would then noisily enter the area as decoys. When Palestinian gunmen began to fire at the entering force the snipers would shoot to kill. In these operations, any armed person was considered a legitimate target that could be shot immediately without warning. The urban ambushes lasted several hours or even a couple of days. During such ambushes soldiers would confiscate the household's cell phones and shut residents in one room under the watch of a guard for the duration of the operation. In some cases, the IDF would first rehearse the operation in another, unrelated, civilian home.43

Other operations included searches of homes and offices, whether as part of major house-to-house search operations or in response to information regarding the location of arms or explosives. In some cases civilians were used during these operations, as recounted by Gil:

"Say there's a house that you know, you have intelligence, that you need to go in there and look for weapons or for a [suspected] person. We would take someone from a nearby house, he'd knock on the door, and we'd go in... Or you stand next to one of the male household members, even a child if you have no choice, and you tell him what to do. Search, lift the mattress, move the couch, things like that. You put the rest of the household members in a room with a guard."

A final tactic with grave consequences for civilians was the demolition of homes belonging to militants who had carried out violent attacks against Israelis, argued to be an effective deterrence measure against future militants.\footnote{Punitive house demolitions were not a new tactic and were employed by the IDF long before the Second Intifada, see BTselem (2004b).} Between 2001 and 2004, 663 homes were demolished or boarded up under these circumstances. Homes would sometimes be demolished without advance warning and families were given just a short time to pack a few belongings and leave the house. Punitive house demolitions were stopped in 2005, after an IDF inquiry committee found that they were not an effective deterrent.\footnote{See Amos Harel, "A Commission Appointed by the Chief of Staff: Stop Demolishing Terrorist Homes – It Causes more Harm than Good," (Hebrew) Haaretz, February 17, 2005.}

In Gaza special operations took a different form than those in the West Bank. Unlike West Bank raids, which were often covert so as to prevent discovery of soldiers, offensive operations in Gaza were larger in scale and heavily fortified, including infantry, armor, air cover, and special forces, due to the much heavier threat posed to IDF forces there. Offensive operations in Gaza can broadly be divided into two stages. The first raids, beginning in 2002, usually lasted only a few hours and had concrete objectives measures such as demolishing the homes of militants or suspected weapon manufacturing workshops. Over time IDF attention increasingly focused on the Egyptian border, where dozens of underground tunnels were constructed connecting the Egyptian side and the Palestinian side of Rafah under the Israeli-controlled Philadelphi Corridor. Tunnels were used to smuggle goods and arms into Gaza,
including rockets, explosives, and rifles. Many operations were conducted to bomb tunnels and demolish the homes that concealed them, as recounted by Dror, who participated in several raids in Gaza between 2002 and 2004.

"Every operation was a war movie… After [the summer of 2003] we were surprised when we didn't find a tunnel. Every other building hid a tunnel. Weapons were scattered around like peanuts. In the past, the Brazil neighborhood in Rafah had been considered [dangerous], like 'Wow, are we going to go in there?' and after [summer 2003] it all turned into one big Brazil…. So of course operations required many more forces… and the objectives of the operations were much deeper. That is, to destroy infrastructure, weapon workshops for instance, to look for the production system rather than the gun."

In August 2005, IDF forces withdrew from Gaza under the unilateral disengagement plan, and control of the Philadelphi Corridor was transferred to the Palestinian Authority.

4.5 Conclusion

Throughout the Second Intifada Israel employed a range of defensive, offensive, and population control measures to repress the Palestinian insurgency. Some of these measures were familiar from the IDF’s administration of the Occupied Territories in previous decades. Others were new or employed at unprecedented levels. Some of the IDF tactics described here were later adopted by other countries engaged in counterinsurgency.

From a military standpoint, IDF counterinsurgency in the Second Intifada can be viewed as a success. The insurgency was repressed and Palestinian armed groups failed to reach their strategic goals. As Sufian Abu Zaida, a former leader of the Fatah party in Gaza, remarked, "Show me one achievement of that Intifada…We were afflicted by all possible disasters - the separation barrier, the checkpoints, the expansion of the settlements, the split in the Palestinian people. I'm trying to think of a single benefit we received from this campaign and am unable to
Since 2005, levels of insurgent violence against Israeli soldiers and civilians have dropped dramatically.

It bears emphasis that, while Israel reacted forcefully to the Palestinian insurgency in 2000-2005, it did not adopt a policy of deliberate or indiscriminate lethal targeting of civilians. Though 1500-2000 Palestinian civilians lost their lives in the Intifada's five years, some civilian casualties are inevitable when military operations are conducted in dense urban areas in which insurgents and civilians intermingle in cramped quarters. There is no doubt that some of these civilians were killed as a result of insufficient respect for the norm of non-combatant immunity. Nevertheless the majority of casualties were not the result of a policy of civilian targeting. Many studies of violence against civilians in conflict might therefore exclude the Israeli-Palestinian case altogether.

Yet Israel's counterinsurgency policies inflicted heavy damage on civilians in ways that may not be immediately apparent. While relatively restrained in terms of numbers of civilian deaths, the IDF’s policies of widespread non-lethal violence, territorial annexation and fragmentation, destruction of political and social networks, total separation of the West Bank and

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46 Cited in Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, "Years of Rage" Haaretz, 1 October 2010,
47 The suggestion that Israel acted with restraint in the Second Intifada may seem to some like an odd proposition. Some analysts of Israeli counterinsurgency policies tend to attribute ruthless, disproportionate methods to Israel, and certainly not relative restraint. Gordon (2008, 206–207) for instance writes that “with the eruption of the Second Intifada, Israel adopted a new approach toward the Palestinians which rendered them, in many respects, expendable. The fact that the average number of Palestinians killed each year during the Second Intifada has been more than the number of those killed during the first twenty years of occupation is extremely telling…a politics of death slowly emerged.” However, the contrast between relatively small casualty ratios in the Second Intifada and Israel's earlier and later counterinsurgency operations suggest otherwise. Moreover, in analyzing the change in Israeli policies Gordon ignores the vastly different levels of threat posed by the two Intifadas. Approximately 1000 Israelis were killed in the Second Intifada, two thirds of them civilians, making it the most deadly conflict for Israeli civilians in Israel's history since its War of Independence.
48 This is particularly true in regard to the first three months of the conflict, characterized by mass clashes between demonstrators, some of them armed, and Israeli security forces. The IDF had prepared precisely for this scenario and had considered a forceful response the best way to quickly quell the riots. Maj. General Giora Eiland, former head of the IDF's Operations Branch and Planning Branch, explained (2010, 28), "it was understood that the intention was to reach a casualty ratio that would demonstrate which side was stronger." This policy indeed crushed mass riots but contrary to IDF expectations, the insurgency only escalated.
Gaza, and intense surveillance and control have led to civilian victimization far beyond what can be captured in casualty figures.⁴⁹

Ordinary soldiers, the agents of Israeli policies in the Occupied Territories, were the direct cause of much of this victimization. Interaction between soldiers and civilians was extensive and ranged from engagement from a distance by gunfire, through endless direct contact at checkpoints, to the most intimate contact of all, in which soldiers forcibly entered Palestinian homes, often staying for hours or days. The ways in which soldiers understood these policies and produced the violence required of them is the subject of the next chapter.

⁴⁹ In the wake of the First Intifada Ron (2000a) termed this logic "savage restraint." Since then, scholars have struggled with finding words to describe Israel's policies in the Second Intifada and beyond, capturing their relative restraint on the one hand, and their comprehensive repression on the other. Such policies have been called "enclavisation" and "spatial strangulation" (Falah 2005), "creeping apartheid" (Yiftachel 2005), and "spaciocide" (Hanafi 2009). Moreover, these policies have been the cause of sweeping political changes that have all but destroyed hopes for a negotiated resolution to the conflict in the foreseeable future.
"This is what an infantry soldier is supposed to deal with: To destroy, period. Bye. Leave me alone. What's a civilian, [what's] not a civilian, I'm an infantry soldier. I know how to take territory, destroy it, turn it into dust and move into the next territory. That's what they taught me, that's my job."\(^1\)

5.1 Introduction

Amir, a young secular man from the north of Israel, served in the IDF as a tank commander at the height of the Second Intifada, between 2001 and 2004. An engaged and committed soldier, Amir was well liked by his commanders and peers and rose quickly up the ranks of command. Throughout his regular service Amir had been deployed to the West Bank twice. The first time, he was deployed to Nablus in Operation Defensive Shield, the IDF's large scale reoccupation of West Bank cities in the spring of 2002. His unit was charged with opening and clearing roads so that infantry units could enter the city and search for insurgents and weapons, and with cordonning the area to ensure that no one exited or entered during the operation. The following year Amir returned to Nablus as a tank officer. Operation Defensive Shield had long ended and his unit was charged with the more routine task of enforcing the closure of Nablus by preventing people from entering or leaving the city.

In both periods Amir had encountered civilians. During Operation Defensive Shield he had seen them in the crowded buildings of the West Bank's cities and refugee camps. Less than a year later he had administered them at a makeshift checkpoint, examining their papers and instructing them to turn back. Yet in each of these periods, Amir's attitudes towards civilians were very different. During Operation Defensive Shield, Amir was fully prepared to fire in

\(^1\) Interview with Eyal, February, 2010.
crowded urban areas even if that meant killing, injuring, or rendering civilians homeless in the process:

"Every movement you see is a terrorist as far as you're concerned... We fired plenty. We fired plenty. Tons of shells, tons of all sorts of things, everything... We shot at houses, even houses where there's just a risk and you don't see the terrorists. Most of the time we didn't see who we shot... we just fired plenty; it was crazy, tons, tons, the tanks fired... And you don't necessarily know what [the results were], it's hard to know... You do see the house, you make holes with your shells so you see the walls; you see the physical damage..."

The second time he arrived in Nablus, however, Amir's attitude towards civilians was completely different. Faced with a flow of men, women, and children, Amir was upset by his task and found it difficult to carry out. His orders required him to forbid passage in and out of Nablus to all people except "humanitarian emergencies." However, Amir found the orders increasingly difficult to obey, and with time he began to relax the restrictions.

"It was strange and it was difficult, dealing with that... because you don't know. You see people, pretty miserable, often women who don't have anything... families that want to go to their homes, to their families, you hear a thousand stories .... Eventually I started letting some people pass, people that seemed ordinary, like they didn't have a problem... you decide it's ok because you see they have nothing, you see that it's kids with a knapsack, and they're overjoyed and you feel like you've done something good, you really feel like you've done something right."

While in Operation Defensive Shield Amir had been prepared, even excited, to use heavy fire in civilian areas, in the West Bank he had defied orders in order to allow Palestinian civilians to enter or exit Nablus. What accounts for such divergence in attitudes and behavior towards civilians? Social-psychological explanations that highlight obedience to authority cannot explain Amir's behavior, as he had exhibited outright disobedience at the checkpoint in allowing people to pass against orders. Nor can the variation be explained by objective threat. While Amir's unit encountered some insurgent resistance during Operation Defensive Shield, such as an occasional
gunfire attack or Molotov cocktail, he and his comrades were repeatedly surprised to find much
less resistance than they had expected. "In all those incursions, it was always less than we
expected … We were prepared for a lot of resistance, anti-tank missiles, IEDs like in a war, and
at the end it was like, 'where are you?' We had to look for them."  

One factor that may have contributed to Amir’s divergent attitudes and behavior is the
difference in physical distance between soldiers and civilians in each case. While in Operation
Defensive Shield, firing from within a tank at the walls of buildings, Amir didn’t see most
damage to civilians (although he did see damage to their property), his post at the checkpoint
brought him into close interpersonal contact with civilians. However, this explanation is
insufficient, as Amir was not unique in expressing divergent attitudes and behaviors towards
civilians, even without the protective cover of physical distance. Many respondents appeared
indifferent to the plight of civilians in some circumstances, yet troubled, sometimes even
resistant, in others, even when both circumstances involved physical contact. What accounts for
the willingness of ordinary soldiers to commit violence against civilians in some instances and
their reluctance to do so in others? Put differently, how is the strategic violence ordered by
military elites produced by ordinary soldiers in some cases, and why does it fail to be produced
in others?

I argue that the divergent attitudes and behaviors of ordinary soldiers can be explained by
variation in organizational control, which rendered some forms and targets of violence, but not
others, normative in the eyes of combatants. As detailed in chapter 2, organizational control in
the IDF was exercised in two broad stages. First, centralized control mechanisms in the military

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2 The overall level of Palestinian resistance encountered by the IDF in Operation Defensive Shield, especially in
Nablus that had always been considered to be particularly dangerous, was generally low. The one exception was the
city of Jenin, in which insurgents killed 23 Israeli soldiers.
3 For more on the role of physical distance in enabling violence see Grossman (2009, 97–133).
training period constructed some forms of violence as legitimate, neutralizing their harmful aspects and reframing them as valuable and exciting. Insofar as the violence required of soldiers during deployment was consistent with the violence constructed as normative and legitimate, it was more likely to attract relatively high levels of identification and compliance. Indeed, Amir's mission in Operation Defensive Shield corresponded with the norms and values that he had internalized during training, and he was therefore prepared, even enthusiastic, to use heavy fire in populated areas despite the resulting injury to civilian life and property.

Yet the realities of combat often interfered with the neat normative schemes imposed during training, weakening the power of centralized control to align the values and interests of combatants with those of the military. For Amir, the assignment to the checkpoint was one for which he had been completely unprepared, physically and mentally, and he therefore found it difficult, at times impossible, to carry out his orders. It was up to commanders at the small unit level to overcome challenges to military control like the ones posed by Amir's behavior. In the event that they failed to do so, as they had in Amir's case, the likelihood of compliance with strategic violence decreased, and shirking resulted.

The goal of this chapter is to examine the role of organizational control processes in producing strategic violence against civilians, defined as violence that is planned, ordered or authorized by military superiors to advance the military's strategic mission. As such this chapter highlights the often overlooked fact that efforts must be invested not only in curbing or limiting violence, but in producing it. The first part of the chapter analyzes the organizational control mechanisms employed during the Second Intifada to prepare soldiers for wielding violence, thereby aligning the diverse interests of individual combatants with those of the military. I argue that control mechanisms, both formal and informal, served to legitimize some forms of violence,
but not others. Specifically, I find that control processes normalized violence that was aggressive, dangerous, targeted at a concrete enemy, and promised tangible results. To the extent that violence met these criteria it was accepted by the vast majority of combatants as legitimate, even desirable, and was therefore characterized by high levels of participation and often enthusiasm. The military training period thus produced a continuum of violence, analyzed in the second part of the chapter, rendering some forms of violence normative. The third and final section discusses the strategies that commanders at the small unit level employed to realign soldiers with the military in cases where the realities of combat caused their beliefs or interests to diverge. I argue that to the extent that commanders were successful in reestablishing control, soldier participation in strategic violence would rise. However, when commanders failed in establishing control, identification with and participation in strategic violence declined.

5.2 Organizational Control and the Production of Strategic Violence

5.2.1 Pre-enlistment attitudes towards military violence

In many cases, the attitudes of Israeli youth towards combat service have been shaped well before the compulsory draft, enforced by societal and family norms that view combat service as the valued expression of lofty ideals. When asked why they had wanted to join combat units, several respondents justified their service on principled grounds, citing ideals such as service of nation and country, the performance of meaningful duty, and contribution to society. Others saw combat units as the true melting pot of Israeli society, a place where race, class, and background didn't matter and where anyone could get ahead based on skill and charisma alone.⁴

⁴ While this is a myth that the IDF tries to propagate as part of its "people's army" ethos, the military is in fact deeply stratified by ethnicity and class, not to mention gender (Sasson-Levy 2003).
Still others were brought up on heroic stories of parents and grandparents who had fought in Israel's wars. For them, joining a combat unit was the fulfillment of a family ideal.

For other teenagers on the verge of enlistment, idealistic goals were less of a motivator than the promise of increased prestige, masculinity, and social status that are associated with combat units. The insignia of the different combat units, the colors of their berets, the badges they wear, and the weapons they carry, are all immediately recognizable markers that for many youth are reason enough to join the most elite combat units and enjoy increased status and prestige. Several respondents reported being rejected from a selective elite unit as one of the greatest personal crises they had experienced, a cause for depression, a pervading sense of failure, and in some cases, a reason to appeal and cheat the system by, for instance, concealing incriminating medical data. But regardless of whether the desire for combat service is a product of idealism, a youthful desire for masculinity and social status, or a combination of these, the idealization of combat service entails the neutralization and reframing of violence in ways that render it desirable, obscuring its ability to inflict damage on both perpetrators and victims.

While combat service continues to be identified with hegemonic masculinity in some parts of Israeli society, this perception is challenged among some of Israel's more marginalized groups, which hold ambivalent and sometimes outright resistant attitudes towards combat service (Carmeli and Fadlon 1997; G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008; Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport 2003; Sasson-Levy 2003). Sasson-Levy (2003), for instance, shows that immigrants from the former Soviet Union and youth of lower-class Mizrahi origin construct counter-hegemonic notions of masculinity, emphasizing the role of provider over the role of combatant, and glorifying resistance rather than sacrifice. This alternative construction is necessary since the background of these youth often compelled them to support and provide for their families rather than devote
themselves to combat service. Several of Sasson-Levy's informants had initially enlisted in combat units but were soon removed to non-combat roles due to persistent disobedience, underscoring the diversity of attitudes towards combat service even among Israeli recruits.5

Patterns of ambivalence and resistance are also evident among Israel's Ashkenazi elite, who are increasingly choosing to avoid combat service, instead turning to non-combat roles perceived as more useful for personal advancement, in such fields as computers, media, or intelligence, or less commonly, dodging military service altogether (G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008; Y. Levy, Lomsky-Feder, and N. Harel 2007). This "motivation crisis," mentioned in Chapter 2, has prompted some experts on the Israeli military to declare a general shift among secular, Ashkenazi youth from "obligatory militarism" to "contractual militarism," in which military service is provided only insofar as it advances individual interests and ambitions (Y. Levy, Lomsky-Feder, and N. Harel 2007). The result of this shift is that since the 1980s there has been a gradual decline in middle class participation in combat units (Y. Levy 2007, 2009).

Accordingly, while the IDF continues to enjoy widespread public support, and while combat service is still highly regarded, social and demographic trends are increasingly eroding its appeal, both among marginalized groups and among Israel's secular elites. The pre-enlistment preferences of Israeli youth regarding combat thus remain diverse despite social norms and political socialization processes, making organizational control by the military crucial in order to produce willingness among soldiers to produce violence in service of military goals.

5 For example, Sasson-Levy (2003, 330) provides the following quote from a respondent, the eighth child in a poor Mizrahi family from Israel's periphery, "Everywhere I went I made a mess. I turned their offices upside down. Finally, they said they would put me in jail. I said, put me in jail, I'm not afraid of you. I have sick parents at home. I don't care. Either you put me up in the north [where his parents live] or I'll go home. I don't care."
5.2.2 Military training during the Second Intifada

The men I interviewed performed their regular service in 1999-2006, and as a result spent much of their deployment carrying out Israel's occupation and counterinsurgency policies in the West Bank and Gaza. Nevertheless, for much of the period examined, IDF combat training primarily prepared its soldiers for conventional, high intensity war. Recruits practiced combat in the open, charging forward on simulated posts of enemy soldiers and recreating scenarios from historic Arab-Israeli wars. Prior to the outbreak of the Second Intifada the training period sometimes incorporated reference to southern Lebanon, the arena where the IDF had been most intensely engaged at the time, and to which most soldiers expected to deploy prior to the IDF's withdrawal in May 2000. In general however, training prepared soldiers for a conventional war between states, of the type last fought by Israel in 1973. As such, soldiers received very little preparation for what would ultimately become their mission. A senior officer I interviewed put it this way,

"A soldier is taught to conquer, charge forward, fight. He doesn't learn how to handle a checkpoint; he's not trained for that. They teach you to charge forward under fire, to kill, to storm. The figure with the kaffiyeh is the enemy. And [at the checkpoint], you suddenly have to protect him."

Sometimes, though not always, the training period included brief instruction for combat in built terrain, or urban warfare. Urban operations are much more complex than operations in the open, as the terrain is three dimensional (combatants can be engaged from above or below the ground), mobility for armored vehicles is limited, civilians and civilian infrastructure present a

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6 "Open terrain," as distinct from built or urban terrain, refers to combat on the conventional battlefield, without the obstruction of built space.

7 The IDF occupied a strip of territory several miles wide in Lebanon between 1985-2000, to act as a security zone protecting its northern settlements from rockets and mortar shells. The final years of the occupation saw mounting Israeli casualties and a growing popular movement to withdraw from Lebanon.

8 Cardboard figures with Kaffiyehs, traditional Arab headgear, were sometimes used as targets in shooting practice during military training.
significant obstacle to operations, observation and firing ranges are limited by built space, and
movement is decentralized and conducted in small teams to avoid detection and attack. All these
features present significant challenges to command, communication, and operations. However,
the minimal urban operations training that soldiers received in this period was far removed from
the operations they would eventually conduct in the cities and villages of the West Bank and
Gaza. As several respondents explained, the training focused on high-intensity urban combat
techniques, designed to seize and clear urban terrain.\textsuperscript{9} Such techniques assume that no civilians
are present, and involve the use of grenades and heavy fire to enter and clear buildings. In the
low-intensity conditions of the Second Intifada, where urban operations were often covert and
precise, intended to kill or capture a pre-identified target while not arousing resistance elsewhere,
these traditional techniques became irrelevant.

While the outbreak of the Intifada did not initially change the type of training that
combatants received, it did affect their training in other ways, creating frequent interruptions to
schedule as units still in training were often deployed on short term tasks to support the IDF’s
counterinsurgency effort. The situation was particularly acute for units who trained at bases in
the Occupied Territories as those sometimes came under insurgent attack, interfering with the
training schedule.\textsuperscript{10} As a result, new recruits who had just learned to handle a gun were sent on
guard and patrol missions at the expense of basic training. Moreover, the intensity of Israel’s
counterinsurgency efforts between the years 2000-2005 and the demands these efforts placed on
its armed forces led to a near absolute termination of ongoing training during the deployment
period. Prior to the Second Intifada, IDF combat units typically alternated between several

\textsuperscript{9} For more on high intensity urban combat see U.S. Army Field Manual 3-06.11, Combined Arms Operations in
\textsuperscript{10} For instance, the Paratrooper Brigade’s training base, located in the West Bank, was subject to repeated gunfire
from the first months of the Intifada. After 17 months of insurgent fire and IEDs the IDF closed down the base and
training facilities were relocated to within Israel.
months of training and several months of deployment throughout their regular service. During the Second Intifada ongoing training all but stopped, reduced to a few days or weeks after long periods of consecutive deployment. Many senior IDF officers believed that the intense counterinsurgency activity required of combatants provided sufficient replacement for ongoing training. Thus, the initial training period was often the only substantial training that combatants received.\textsuperscript{11}

Based on my interviews it appears that the ongoing violence in the Occupied Territories only began to be reflected in training towards the end of the Intifada's third year. At that time, commander courses began including training for dilemmas likely to be encountered in the Occupied Territories, at such sites of contact with civilians as checkpoints and arrests.\textsuperscript{12} Such training expanded in the Intifada's fourth year and beyond, to include both ethical and operational aspects of combat in civilian areas. Yet while a change in training is evident, it is less clear to what extent this change was distributed across units. Some respondents reported increased incorporation of training for service in the Occupied Territories in 2004-5 and beyond, but others described training more similar to the Intifada's early years, with most of the emphasis on conventional warfare.\textsuperscript{13}

In sum, for much of the Second Intifada the training combatants received focused predominantly on conventional war, characterized by a clear and well defined enemy that could be targeted with impunity, and by the absence of such complicating factors as civilian

\textsuperscript{11} Following Israel's poor performance in the Lebanon War of 2006 the IDF's termination of much of its ongoing training came under heavy criticism. See "the Commission of Inquiry into the Events of the Military Campaign in Lebanon 2006 " (in Hebrew,) April 2008, \url{http://go.ynet.co.il/pic/news/vinograd/vinograd.pdf}.

\textsuperscript{12} In September 2004 the IDF published a training kit entitled "Ethics in Combat – Checkpoints," which raised typical dilemmas soldiers might encounter in administering civilians at checkpoints, see Chanan Greenberg, "New in the IDF: A 'Preparation Kit' for Checkpoints" (in Hebrew,) \textit{Ynet}, 7 September, 2004, \url{http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-2974112,00.html}.

\textsuperscript{13} This is likely a function, at least to some extent, of the type of unit in question. Units whose primary mission was in the Occupied Territories received more training than regular infantry units, who rotated deployment in the OPT with other zones.
populations or infrastructure. In this way, training maintained the disjuncture between the glorification of combat and the neutralization of the prospects of violence. Combatants-in-training have not yet experienced the physical and mental stress of prolonged deployment or the toll that the experience of violence can exert on its perpetrators. Soldiers thus emerged from training wanting "ekshen" and eager to put the skills they had learned to practice.\(^{14}\)

The outbreak of the Second Intifada and the prospect of fighting terrorists were therefore greeted as exciting developments that would allow combatants to engage in real combat rather than in such lackluster tasks as guarding quiet borders. Aviv, who had served as a commander during paratrooper boot camp, explained how the experience of insurgent fire during training increased his soldiers’ motivation during basic training:

"The added value for my soldiers… was really the professional experience, because they’re getting shot at. So if usually in basic training the squad or platoon commander explains to soldiers what it feels like to be shot at and tells heroic stories, here they were actually under fire and so understood what it's like. They understood matters very quickly and had a whole lot of motivation. Because we're not telling them, '[you'll just] guard for hours and hours, you're guard dogs because you're in ordinary and not elite units.' [Instead,] they see that 'wow, there's ekshen! It's cool to be in the regular units, there's stuff to do here too!' And that really increased their motivation."

The prospects of combat against armed insurgents (or terrorists, as they were more likely to be called), excited the new recruits, especially in the wake of rising bombing attacks in Israel. Those who were not deployed to the Occupied Territories were frustrated and eager to join the fight. Daniel, a former infantry officer, recalled that when the Intifada first broke out he had been on temporary leave from the military. He kept calling his former company commander asking whether to return, whether the company needed him, and pleading to join his comrades. When he

\(^{14}\) "Ekshen," or "action", was the military slang used to connote true, active combat, see Chapter 2.
finally returned and entered the Occupied Territories, he recalled his excitement: "You're going to battle. You know something big is going to happen and we're going there."

Avi, who shortly after the outbreak of the Intifada was deployed to an Israeli settlement in a relatively quiet and uneventful corner of the West Bank, remembered how envious soldiers felt of another platoon in the company, which was deployed to a different area and came under insurgent fire at their outpost:

"Ultimately, yes, you look for ekshen… you're upset that you're stuck with these [settlers], and others in the company are getting shot at all day, and your brigade is deployed to Gaza with the mayhem there, and here you are…missing out on everything. What am I a soldier for, if in such a period I'm stuck with these settlers?"

Compounding the effects of training for conventional war and the desire it instilled for combat and "ekshen" was the totalizing nature of army life, which further shaped the mental state of young combatants. Many ex-combatants described a process of gradual disengagement from their families. Daniel, for instance, recalled how he was teased in officer training for still having a girlfriend, with his fellow soldiers promising that the relationship wouldn't last long (they were right.) It was quite common for respondents to note that they did not share their military experiences with their families, whether because they didn't wish to worry them or because they didn't think they'd understand. Assaf, a former infantry officer, had returned to religious study for a year in the middle of his service. Just one year away from the military completely changed his perspective, as he recalled:

"I was very 'poisoned.' I knew exactly what I wanted to be… and after I went back [to school] it faded, for two reasons. First, I met my girlfriend, and when I look at it in retrospect that changes your perspective, and second, the yeshiva distanced me a little from the combative aspects of the military. I was less enthusiastic [about combat] and more interested in the military tasks of dealing with [diverse] people."

Assaf and other respondents had participated in the IDF Hesder program designed for religious soldiers, which integrates military service with study at a religious institution, or yeshiva.

On the use of the term "poison," or "ra'al" in Hebrew, see Chapter 2.
For the majority of combatants who do not have the benefit of prolonged leave during their military service, combat training and the totalizing nature of army life are intense and transformative experiences. As Gil, who had served as a soldier and commander in Gaza, explained,

"How shall I put it: You get smacked around and it's just terrible. And when you go home you don't understand so many banal things, like how come there are colors here, I didn't see any colors in the desert. Or things that drive you crazy, like waiting in line for more than 30 seconds. Do you know how much I could accomplish in basic training in 30 seconds? So these are the types of things [you experience], emotional upheavals, you might call them."

Overall, the goal and consequence of the intense and totalizing experience of combat training is to instill in combatants an eagerness for engaging in combat, targeting the enemy, and experiencing violence in practice and not just in theory. This eagerness is predicated on the neutralization of any negative meanings of violence and its harmful effects, and on its reframing as ideologically important and justified, or alternatively, as thrilling (see Chapter 2). In this way, combat training serves as an extreme method of organizational control, in which both formal and informal mechanisms are employed to align the beliefs, values, and interests of combatants with those of the military organization, generating an eagerness among the former to carry out the mission of the latter. With respect to the performance of violence, the training experience thus produced a continuum of legitimacy, in which forms of violence that were consistent with combatant training were widely perceived as normative and desirable behavior, while those that were not enjoyed less legitimacy and acceptance. The next section outlines this continuum.
5.3 Strategic Violence and the Continuum of Legitimacy

Rather than legitimate all forms of violence, processes of formal and informal control during the Second Intifada produced a continuum in which some forms of violence were perceived and experienced as normative and desirable and others as less legitimate, therefore generating more discomfort and less compliance among combatants. This distinction between different categories of violence was best captured by Erez, a former officer, who recalled his horror upon witnessing soldiers from another unit run over farm animals with their vehicles:

"[My friends] had to stop me, I got off the tank and wanted to hit them, it was horrifying. I mean, even though I can be very cold and I can kill people, it belongs to a very specific rubric. Like I told you, not everything is black and white. And the fact that you are an animal in one situation, very cold, doesn't mean you're like that in your whole life. People might say, how can you talk to me about values when you go and kill people? Yes, that's my mission. But it doesn't mean that I think that killing an armed person is the same as killing a woman, or any civilian."

In other words, soldiers can and do make distinctions between forms of violence that they employ. This section discusses the continuum of legitimacy that IDF organizational control processes during the Second Intifada produced and the consequences of this continuum for the implementation of strategic violence.

The IDF prepared its soldiers for the thrill and glory of "combative" violence, of the kind valorized in conventional war. Such violence was dangerous, targeted a clear enemy, and resulted in concrete military achievements, such as the conquest of territory and killing or forcing the enemy to retreat. In the context of the Second Intifada the operations that best fit this description were operations in the heart of Palestinian cities and towns, where soldiers often encountered gunmen or IEDs and where arms and militants could be captured or killed. Other missions that combatants routinely performed such as the population control measures of manning checkpoints and enforcing internal closure, lacked this aura of risk, thrill, or glory. Such
missions required combatants to work long, routine shifts, were primarily targeted at civilians, and involved largely administrative tasks.

Table 5.1 summarizes the differences between normative and non-normative violence, as produced through processes of organizational control. For ease of presentation the differences are presented as dichotomous, though in practice they form a continuum. Each difference is then discussed in detail.

Table 5.1 Organizational Control and the Legitimization of Violence

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Desirable Violence</th>
<th>Non-Desirable Violence</th>
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<td>Population control</td>
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<td><strong>Governing logic</strong></td>
<td>Combat</td>
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<td><strong>Form of violence</strong></td>
<td>Shooting, explosions</td>
<td>Movement restrictions, administrative measures</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target of violence</strong></td>
<td>Selective: Enemy combatants</td>
<td>Indiscriminate/Collective: Civilians unconnected to the insurgency</td>
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<td><strong>Threat</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Achievements</strong></td>
<td>Concrete and tangible</td>
<td>Unclear and marginal</td>
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5.3.1 Type of operation

Offensive operations, both large and small scale, best conformed to the control processes that combatants underwent prior to deployment. Combatant excitement to take part in violence was most evident in large-scale operations such as Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank. Several respondents likened the operation to war and expressed their satisfaction in taking part in something meaningful and important. Many noted their excitement to finally put their training
into practice. Doron, a former officer in an elite infantry unit, recalled the thrill of entering Nablus in a large armored convoy during Defensive Shield as a newly deployed soldier:

"You haven't experienced anything like this before except in your imagination. And your imagination flies to very far off places. But the truth is that the first moment we dismounted really conformed to my imagination. I remember the moment I got off the APC there were bullets everywhere… it was a real trial by fire for any new soldier. There was no question of motivation there…"

Similar reactions were reported by combatants who had participated in special operations in Gaza. Tamir, who as a member an elite infantry unit between 2002 and 2004 had participated in many offensive operations inside the cities of Gaza, explained that unlike in the past, during the period of his service even the most senior soldiers did not want to leave the unit for more comfortable, less demanding positions:

"No one wanted to leave …. First of all you feel like you're doing something. You're really, really doing something… we felt it on a daily basis. We'd go in, blow up manufacturing workshops for weapons and bombs, blow up houses that sheltered weapons or bombs, blow up terrorist homes, or arrest insurgents…. Every day you feel like you're doing something."

This sense of active, meaningful combat led to high levels of compliance and participation in large scale operations, regardless of the damage that they inflicted.

While somewhat less glorious than large-scale operations, targeted, small-scale offensive operations such as ambushes and arrests also enjoyed high appeal. Assaf put it succinctly: Arrests were "Quality missions – combative and cool." Arrests were meticulously prepared in advance, soldiers' faces were painted, guns loaded, and missions often deployed surreptitiously

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17 The eagerness to participate in the operation was reflected not only in the excitement of combatants in their regular service but in rates of enlistment topping 100% following the issuance of an emergency draft issued to some 20,000 reservists for the operation (Heiman 2004, 6). The operation was widely supported in the Israeli public due to the wave of suicide bombings that killed over 100 Israelis in the previous month.
under the cover of darkness. As such they incorporated an element of thrill that was absent from many other missions. As Micha, a former infantry commander, explained,

"Arrests are the [height of] ekshen. They're the meat of combat service. It's like a movie – if you add Hollywood music it will look like a movie. You stop the vehicles and jump out, or arrive stealthily at the house and surround it. You never know how it will develop, there could be trouble with the family, or you might really find something there, like guns or ammunition or even a poster of someone with an AK-47… there's no end to the experiences... In short, it's ekshen."

It bears emphasizing that arrests, in themselves, are of course not truly "combative" in the traditional sense, as they are very different than combat in conventional war. The eagerness to conduct arrests was therefore somewhat ironic. A few respondents were keenly aware of this. Yair, who served as an infantry commander between 2002 and 2004, recalled his annoyance when one of his soldiers complained that he was primarily charged with guarding static posts, though his commander in basic training had led him to expect he would take part in more arrests.

"Is that what they told you in basic training? What are you thinking? You're a combatant! You need camouflage and [preparation] for urban warfare if necessary but it's about combat! Is that what you're interested in? Arrests?? You usually don't shoot during arrests; arrests usually end without a bullet fired."

Nevertheless, for the majority of combat soldiers, arrests and other offensive operations were typically considered the height of combative activity, due to the features of combat they possessed: They were risky, aggressive, and resulted in concrete and tangible achievements. Indeed, in the online survey I conducted of former IDF combatants in the Second Intifada, 87% of respondents indicated offensive operations as the tasks considered most attractive in their units (N=63). Of these, the most attractive operations were special operations such as Defensive Shield in the West Bank or Operation Rainbow in Gaza, arrests, and ambushes.

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18 This question was only posed to approximately half of the sample.
At the other end of the spectrum were population control measures, which primarily included the enforcement of closure and internal closure. Nearly all respondents reported that they disliked checkpoints, though the degree of aversion varied among individuals. Many respondents expressed frustration at checkpoint missions, which were perceived as inappropriate for combatants and inconsistent with their training. Others simply disliked the boredom and absence of "ekshen," and constantly pushed for more offensive activity. David, a former infantry commander, said he often felt like a monkey may as well have carried out his mission at the checkpoint. Eran, a former infantry soldier, explained:

"I think it's screwed up to begin with. In my opinion it's not us, not the army, who should be standing at checkpoints but the border police and the police. I think it's their job, not ours, since it's not what we learned. Combatants are trained to charge forward, to conduct urban warfare, to fight! And suddenly they tell you to stand at a checkpoint."

Many combatants found it difficult to find military justifications for checkpoints. As Nir, a former company commander, put it,

"Personally I always understood the "what." It was the "why" that was the problem… I knew what I had to do at the checkpoint: This person can pass and this person cannot. I open fire only if A, B, or C happens. But why this person passes and this one doesn’t was the main problem…Why are we placing a checkpoint on this shoddy road when a car only comes by once every four hours? Why do we need a checkpoint there? … I have a woman without a permit who's 90 years old and is going to die here at the checkpoint any minute. Why can't I call someone and get a temporary permit for her? Why? 'Because.' The 'why' questions don't usually have an answer in the army."

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of service at checkpoints was the need to adjudicate between ever-changing regulations governing movement and a never ending stream of civilian requests and pleas to cross. This task, which checkpoint commanders were expected to perform with very little guidance, was a consistent source of frustration and anger for many who served at
checkpoints (often taken out on civilians). The soldier’s decision was influenced by a wide range of factors, often fluctuating daily. As Hillel, a former infantry soldier, put it,

"In the beginning you're more generous and let the old lady with the shopping baskets pass, and by the end of your deployment when the same woman comes again, with the same complaints again, and the same requests again, you have no patience anymore and you say 'Come on, you've been here 1000 times and you know you're not allowed to pass. Sometimes you passed, sometimes you didn't, enough already!'"

Several combatants commented on the absurdity of manning checkpoints when it was patent that people were easily bypassing them, or when the sheer numbers of people attempting to cross precluded any meaningful security check. Some expressed anger at being expected to perform tasks which were impossible to effectively carry out. As Guy, a former infantry soldier, explained:

"The checkpoint is fairly simple. If you have the right papers you cross… [The problem is] that the more you are in the army, the more you start to ask, 'wait, why are we here?' They can't 'poison' us anymore, you understand it's one big bluff I think, all that 'poisoning,' like 'you are protecting your country, you're preventing explosions,' and really, come on, we check 1000 cars a day. We're not actually going to take apart each car, so it's pretty easy to hide stuff from us… the more time you spend there the more you know that no matter how much they tell you about the threat here and the threat there, no one takes it seriously anymore."

Guy's words demonstrate the failure of organizational control mechanisms to inspire belief among combatants that checkpoint duty imposed by military authorities serves its stated purpose, and the growing divergence of beliefs between ordinary combatants and the military organization that occurs as a result.

In general, then, combatants were eager to participate in offensive operations but much less eager about participating in population control. There were some exceptions to this rule,

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19The lack of guidance and training for checkpoint duty created a space for entrepreneurial and opportunistic violence, both of which flourished at checkpoints, as discussed in chapters 6-7.
however, as in some cases former combatants reported a waning of interest in offensive missions as well. Such disinterest was most likely when combat operations could no longer credibly be reframed as thrilling or glorious, or in Guy's words, when soldiers couldn't be "poisoned" anymore. For example, the desire for *ekshen* was abruptly curtailed when violent threat materializes, wounding or killing a fellow combatant. The pain associated with violence was sharply felt, and could no longer be defused or reframed. As Amos, a former infantry officer, put it, "until you get wounded, until you see the blood flowing, you don't get that it's real."

Disinterest and reduced motivation could also result when offensive operations were performed again and again, as was the case for some elite units, who spent much of their service conducting risky arrest operations in the West Bank. While initially perceived as exciting, such operations lost their luster after being conducted dozens of times, and could no longer be convincingly portrayed as exciting or glorious. Over time exhaustion set in, as did cynicism regarding the purpose of many of the arrests themselves. As Doron explained,

"We'd do these arrests every time, night after night, and at some point it became hard to get excited by it. I can tell you that at some point even gunfire didn't bother me. To this day I have very explicit, very clear memories of one situation...of very close fire... bullets whistling, very close and very dangerous, and I didn't even get down on the ground... you just turn around, get down on your knee for a moment, and fire."

However, Doron added that when particularly important or dangerous militants were targeted, soldiers were motivated once more. Concrete military thus allowed commanders to reframe violence that had lost its appeal as ideologically justified and vital.
5.3.2 Governing logic

Population control measures stood in sharp contrast to the control processes in the initial training period that cast military violence as meaningful and thrilling. However, when I asked respondents whether additional training could have prepared them better for their tasks, many responded that military training was unnecessary for checkpoints and that no amount of military training could have prepared them for eight hour checkpoint shifts. The military aspects of checkpoints, such as how to behave during an attack, or what the open fire regulations were, were clear to them. Yet such scenarios were rare, and the main problems soldiers encountered at checkpoints were not military ones. As Nir explained,

"The main problem is that [the IDF] doesn't mentally prepare people for [checkpoints]. It's no problem learning military doctrine for the checkpoint….The problem is preparing people mentally for standing at a checkpoint for 16 hours and preventing an eighty year old man from passing on his way to a [medical] operation. Those are the problems I experienced as a soldier. It's not a professional problem and there are hardly any professional problems in the field. There are problems of conception and mental problems of soldiers who don't understand where they are and what they're doing."

Unlike offensive operations, which were perceived by most combatants as combat activity, population control operations followed a logic of policing. As Yair put it, "you become a cop at the checkpoint. You walk like a cop, you check papers all day, you check vehicles… it wears down your combativeness, your soldierly-ness." However, combatants did not receive training to perform policing activities nor were they equipped with policing tools. There was a large degree of ambiguity as to the measures that soldiers could employ to administer civilians and curtail resistance at checkpoints, forcing soldiers to improvise solutions that frequently involved violence (see chapter 6).
In sum, due to the disjuncture between the training that soldiers received and the realities of deployment, population control measures were seen as less normative than offensive operations. As a result, shirking was more common at checkpoints than during offensive operations. Several combatants reported that they sometimes let people pass without the proper permits, whether because they felt sympathetic towards particular civilians, because they exercised judgment and didn't view them as a threat, or because they were simply too drained, bored, or tired to enforce movement restrictions. Similarly, some respondents reported that during patrols intended at catching people bypassing checkpoints they dodged their assignment without their officer's knowledge, instead taking road-trips or resting somewhere out of sight.

5.3.3 Forms of violence

The processes of organizational control also produced differences in the legitimacy of different forms of violence. Forms of violence that conformed to military training and expectations, such as firing weapons or using explosives, were perceived as normative and desirable. Tomer, a former engineering officer whose unit had been responsible for demolishing homes and other property across Gaza, recalled his soldiers' reactions to the prospect of a home demolition:

"I have to say that soldiers would get really excited and there were always arguments about who would [blow up the house], because those are the cool tasks, the bread and butter of operations. Everyone wants to demolish a house, it's the coolest. They don't want to flatten the ground or open a road, they want to demolish houses. That's what they're there for. And the infantry soldiers too, they think it's cool… Soldiers really love it. And I have to say, I totally understand them … I did it several times and it's cool, you bang, bang, bang and it's every child's dream… People really love it, they get really excited and there's always a battle about who will get to demolish the house."
On the other hand, the task of enforcing movement restrictions was perceived by many combatants as inappropriate for soldiers, an undue burden, and generally one which was to be avoided if possible. As David put it, "Checkpoint [duty] bothers some people more and some people less, but in general, no one really likes [being at] the checkpoint."

5.3.4 Targeting of violence

Processes of organizational control during military training also legitimated violence against certain targets. The training period instills among soldiers a clear distinction between friend and foe, and a desire to protect the former and fight the latter. In conventional war this is simple enough, as the enemy is a member of the opposing military. In counterinsurgency however, the distinction between insurgents or militants and ordinary is much more challenging. In the case of the Second Intifada, the insurgency involved of a range of loosely connected actors, some with official ties to the PNA and others resistance movements, making the identification of legitimate targets all the more complex. While Israel viewed the insurgency as armed conflict, it was never made sufficiently clear who the other party to the conflict was. As former head of Israel's national Security Council Major General (ret.) Giora Eiland (2006, 307), observed:

"The classic question that a commander used to ask his intelligence officer in a normal war was 'where is the enemy.' In new wars this question is less relevant. The more relevant question is 'who is the enemy?' … The conflict between us and the Palestinians is an armed conflict, and the question arises: Who is the enemy? All the Palestinians? Some of them? The terror organizations? And who are [those] organizations?"

And if senior officers would not easily identify the enemy who could legitimately be targeted, the situation was all the more murky for ordinary soldiers. Yoav, a former infantry soldier and commander, reflected on this confusion:
"Towards the end of my service things got really blurry, it becomes really blurred who is an enemy and who is not, since you come from a place that emphasizes "us" and "them", and because of all this mixing in with the population you begin to look at them a little differently… you understand that there are extremists among them but they are not a high percent, so what's going on here?"

The absence of a clear demarcation between friend and foe was particularly true in population control operations, which involved collective or indiscriminate targeting.\textsuperscript{20} Soldiers dealt with the discord between their expectations of an unambiguous enemy on the one hand and the civilian targets of population control operations in different ways. Some constructed civilians as enemies, interpreting population control operations to the extent possible as combative tasks. As Yaniv, a former company commander who served in the West Bank throughout the Second Intifada in various command positions, remarked,

"The terror blends into the population. And the simple soldier doesn't understand who he's fighting…I heard that from many soldiers… For the soldier, if we enter the area and don't capture weapons or a senior wanted person or something, than from his perspective we're currently fighting [all] the Arabs. From his perspective, terror exists but he can't see it. It's not concrete, so physically and mentally he doesn't see it. And this is where the problem begins – that you're fighting against something that you can't see and you hear and hear and hear and hear about but can't see it."

But while some grew to regard the population as a whole as enemies, thereby legitimating indiscriminate or collective targeting of civilians, others became uncomfortable, confused, and found it increasingly difficult to produce the violence expected of them. Nir, for example, a former company commander, expressed his frustration at soldiers who treated each civilian at the checkpoint as a potential threat:

"I had friends who enjoyed it. Enjoyed the feeling of 'I decide, I'm the boss, I'm 20 years old and I tell whoever I want to do what I want.' Some guys enjoy it. They have mental

\textsuperscript{20} On the distinction between collective and indiscriminate targeting see Wood (2012).
problems or something…When I would say something to them they'd respond, 'what, are you a sissy? Why are you even thinking about these things? She's a terrorist, she's this, she's that…' OK, it could be that she's a terrorist but she probably isn't. You too could, for instance, take your gun out and shoot everyone in the base. Does that mean you're going to do it? Maybe, but probably not."

After relaying his discomfort at the lack of distinction some soldiers made between civilians and militants in population control operations, Nir emphasized, lest I misunderstand, that he identified with the IDF and its missions, describing himself as "militant." He had served for over six years in the military and still works in the security field. He was certainly no anti-war activist or someone who shied away from violence. Rather, he had a hard time justifying operations in which targets were primarily civilians. As he put it,

"It's hard to connect the face of a 90 year old woman to a suicide bomber. And that's what they ask you to do all the time. And it's hard to take a suspicious woman into a tent and call a female soldier from the base [to check her], and by the time she shows up [the woman] has waited for two hours… Ultimately, it's true that anyone who passes might be a terrorist. No doubt. But after some time you say to yourself, enough already, poor woman, let her pass. And that's one problem, because she might really be a terrorist. But on the other hand, if you're completely focused on the mission and don't let her pass there's a 99%, 100% chance that she's completely [innocent], she just forgot her permit or it tore or I don't know what. And she can't pass because those are the directives. So eventually you say, Damn it, let her pass, what can happen already."

Nir's story demonstrates the decline in the production of strategic violence that can occur when control processes break down, and combatants are no longer able to identify with military goals. He was simply unable to view an elderly woman as a legitimate target, and therefore began to shirk his checkpoint duties. Another example of the under-production of strategic violence can be found in Guy's account of an operation designed to capture and send back illegal Palestinian entrants into Israel.

"That was my biggest crisis, the time that was hardest for me in the military in that sense… There was a gap in the fence where we knew there were always illegals. So what we did
basically was not just stand there and stop people from exiting or entering, but we waited a bit farther away, and every time someone came we took him aside... until there was a large group assembled. We kept them there for a few hours and didn't let them talk on the phone or talk to each other. We didn't want any information leaking out... We just stood them against the wall. There were old women, old men, all types of people, and it was a really bad feeling standing there with guns guarding people, population, it's not what we came to do... We had to take them back [to the West Bank]...and the soldiers who happened to be with me there were not the authoritative types... not the type of people who would tell someone to shut up, or take their phone away if they didn't listen and continued talking on the phone, so the task fell to me even though there was a commander there. We just walked and each time I had to yell at people, 'don't push!' and get in uncomfortable situations, and I was walking and walking and suddenly I choked up because I thought of my grandparents and how they were on the other side a few years ago, and it was unpleasant."

Among the soldiers who were with Guy during this incident, almost no one, including his commander, was able to summon sufficient aggression to execute this task of population control. Soldiers who in more combative circumstances would likely have been eager to participate in violence regardless of the damage they might have inflicted found themselves unable to participate in more limited violence due to the disparity between the targets they had been trained to fight and what they were assigned to do in practice.

In contrast, offensive operations presented combatants with fewer dilemmas. In terms of targeting, selective strikes or raids based on concrete intelligence were much more similar to the conventional scenarios for which soldiers had trained, rendering such operations more attractive and legitimate in the eyes of soldiers and raising compliance and enthusiasm. Respondents often pointed out how much easier it was to serve in the Special Forces and in elite units, since they participated primarily in selectively targeted offensive operations. Yotam, an officer in an infantry unit regularly assigned to the Nablus area, explained,

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21 In reality, the targets of selective operations were not necessarily "enemies" as typically defined. Some were arrested for the purpose of gathering intelligence, others to disguise potential collaboration, and still others for such reasons as involvement in criminal activity. Nevertheless the selective and concrete nature of these operations allowed soldiers to more easily construct targets as enemies, regardless of their true identity.
"It's really easy to be in a commando unit, because your black and white are black and white, and very clear. You have a mission, there's a terrorist, so you shoot him. But when you're in the reality of the Territories as a soldier in an [ordinary] battalion, you're at the checkpoint and it's not clear who's good and who's bad. And they change the definitions every day – now check this one, now check the other one; now they're allowed [to pass], now they're forbidden. It's very confusing. It's hard for soldiers and for officers too."

Though offensive and defensive operations often led to civilian casualties, civilians were rarely viewed as targets but rather as the incidental effects of legitimate combat activity, or in some cases, not as civilians at all. In defensive operations, this was often evident in the transferring of the onus of the duty of civilian protection to civilians themselves. For instance, when justifying lax, indiscriminate open fire rules combatants often explained that "civilians knew" that they were not allowed to advance beyond a certain point or exit their homes during certain hours, whether or not those rules were actually explicitly conveyed to civilians.22 Those who nevertheless violated the rules thus became legitimate targets. As Eran, who had served in Gaza, calmly explained,

"In some places there is no such thing as innocent [civilians]. That's your basic assumption. No matter how sad or painful it is, they know they'll get shot. It's not something they don't know. Even a kid who crosses the Philadelphie Road, he lives there, he knows he might get shot."

Put differently, from the perspective of combatants, people could lose their civilian status by simply being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Similarly, combatants might perceive individuals as non-civilians by association. Eitan, who had served in an elite Special Forces unit, explained when he was most likely to encounter civilians:

"Contact with civilians was most common during the arrest itself… but whether they're innocent civilians or not is already a question. Most of the time they were clearly not innocent, since there's a reason that someone in their family is sought by the Shabak."

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22 Indeed, they often were not. For instance, lines preventing access to military posts or bases were rarely demarcated, and often shifted.
In Eitan's eyes, family members of someone wanted by Israel's security services no longer qualified for civilian status. This understanding was reflected in IDF terminology, which distinguished between the "involved" and the "uninvolved", rather than between combatants and civilians. Ilan, who too had served in an elite unit, explained,

"We didn't do checkpoints, so we didn't have entire periods of friction with the population. The thing is that really, in our operations, there's no difference between "involved" and "uninvolved". For each mission everyone is 'involved'... because they are all targets of the operation. For instance, if you're conducting searches and need to collect information then even the family, which ostensibly is "not involved," becomes 'involved,' because you need to get intelligence from them. That's the point."

In offensive and defensive operations, then, combatants were less likely to view civilians as civilians at all, since they were perceived either as incidental to the operation or as losing their civilian protections due to their very presence in combat operations or to their relationship to suspected militants. Moreover, contact with civilians was much briefer in duration than the seemingly endless and tedious checkpoint shifts. As a result such operations were seen as targeting enemy insurgents and therefore as far more legitimate.

5.3.5 Sense of threat

An additional difference between normative and non-normative violence was the sense of threat that accompanied the task. Soldiers are trained to function in highly threatening circumstances, and the existence of an armed threat therefore serves a central legitimating and motivating force for military violence. Moreover, violent threats and the presence of risk and danger are a primary component of the thrill and "ekshen" that soldiers eagerly look forward to.

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23 This distinction may be rooted in international law, which distinguishes between civilians who are involved in hostilities and those who are not, and allows targeting of the former for such time as they participate in hostilities.
In the absence of such perceived threat, the perception of necessity and legitimacy of violence can decline. In the first few years of the Intifada a sense of threat was pervasive as soldiers encountered hundreds of violent incidents.

As a result, while the enforcement of movement restrictions was consistently ranked as an unattractive military task, it was nevertheless perceived as more attractive and legitimate in the first years of the Second Intifada, when checkpoints in many areas were less structured and more likely to be the targets of insurgent attacks. The improvised nature of the checkpoint, the element of added risk, and hence its more combative nature made checkpoints in some areas more attractive in this period. Over time however, attacks on checkpoints sharply decreased, making checkpoints a far more mundane and undesirable task than offensive or defensive operations, which were more likely to encounter gunfire, IEDs, or non-lethal violence such as the hurling of rocks or Molotov cocktails.

5.3.6 Military achievements

A final feature of normative violence was its potential for military achievement and for the accompanying sense of accomplishment and glory. Killing and capturing militants, finding stashes of arms, or destroying weapons manufacturing sites were considered heroic accomplishments that generated respect from peers and praise from commanders. An informal IDF tradition involved marking an "X" on a gun that killed an enemy. Each X was a source of social pride for soldiers. One respondent described his beloved company commander as an impressive officer who had some twenty Xs on his rifle. As one combatant explained in a newspaper interview,
"For a combatant, the biggest thing you can do is eliminate a terrorist. Just like for pilots the biggest achievement is to take down an [enemy] plane. It's like proof that here, we did it, marking an X on your weapon after taking down a terrorist. It's a type of machismo, when you do it you think about showing the guys. What can you do, we are trained all the time to kill people, that's part of the military. The moment a terrorist stands across from you, you don't see him as human anymore. When you're in the killing business, as we are, the situation comes to that and much worse."  

Similarly, Doron, a former officer in an elite unit, recalled,

"When you come back from an operation where you kill someone, everyone is thrilled. It doesn't matter that today I look at it retrospect like it's crazy. It's ok when you’re a 19 year old kid. That's why they take you at that age. They sent you to battle and either you died or you didn’t… You kill and it's great, everyone is happy."

Aside from the killing of militants, which combatants likened to "actual battle," arrests of "heavy" terrorists (those considered armed and dangerous, or men who had been involved in large-scale terrorist attacks in Israel) were also a cause for pride and glory, as was the finding of weapons or equipment. As Yaniv explained, when I asked him what the high point of his service had been,

"As a platoon commander there were many high points, whether they were activities that I personally sent out and succeeded in, or whether it was capturing an armed man or capturing weapons in [Palestinian] villages, things like that, when you know you're involved and there are results, and the soldiers see it with their own eyes. They see what we're doing, essentially. In general, this success in fighting terror is really satisfying, so it pushes you forward."

Such concrete operational successes raised soldier morale and brought glory to the unit. Most importantly, they made soldiers feel important and significant, as they were doing exactly what they had expected and hoped to do. Ariel had served as an infantry officer in the Jenin area

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24 Interview with former infantry combatant who served in Southern Lebanon on the practice of taking pictures of the bodies of terrorists after they've been killed, Uri Blau, "Photo-Retsach" (in Hebrew), Kol Ha-Ir, 5 October, 2001. Also quoted in the article is a former head of the IDF's behavioral sciences unit, Gadi Amir, who reflected on the difference between achievements in conventional and irregular war: "This is how a successful mission is expressed. In the past, success for infantry-men was measured in how much territory you captured. Today success is measured in how many terrorists are eliminated."
in the months after Operation Defensive Shield, a time when the IDF was engaged in intense offensive operations to re-establish control and arrest suspected insurgents. He fondly recalled the period,

"Ah… that was [a good] time. At that time you felt like you were doing something. You really felt there were no terrorist attacks. You go and blow up the home of a terrorist who committed a suicide bombing, and walla, you feel like you're part of the climax of the Intifada. You're at the center of the center of the stuff you read about. That's you. It was a period when you felt great about yourself. A good period, a time when you really felt like you were doing something. Look, most of my military service was a waste of time…and here it was absolutely the real thing."

In contrast, population control operations promised few successes and were devoid of heroism and glory. Soldiers didn't boast to each other about their shifts at checkpoints, which were perceived as drudgery, not thrill. As Roy, a former tank commander, explained,

"Another reason that it wears you down is that these are gloryless achievements. Catching an illegal, for instance; 99% of illegal entrants are people who want to work. They do it illegally but they want to work. You catch someone and now you know he can't work in agriculture or in the greenhouse. You feel you did what you're supposed to do but you don't feel much satisfaction. That's one of the problems – you don't feel satisfaction in what you do."

While soldiers sometimes intercepted weapons at checkpoints, these events were usually few and far between. Hillel, a former infantry soldier, said that for most of his military service he felt insignificant:

"When you stand at a checkpoint, then maybe, maybe, maybe in seven months you'll find one knife. That one time is so negligible after all those eight hour shifts that you did that you feel like it's insignificant. And I guess you could look at it another way, I don't know if to call it a rational way, and say, it's important, the fact that there's no ekshen is good, routine is good, quiet is good, it means nothing bad is happening, but you don't feel significant that way. You feel significant when you see, physically and actively, that your presence there makes a difference."
Military achievements, thrill, and glory were largely absent from population control operations, further contributing to the feeling of many soldiers that these operations were insignificant and undesirable, and reducing compliance with senior directives for strategic violence.

In sum, IDF organizational control processes at the military training phase led combatants to identify with and normalize violence of a certain form: offensive, combative, targeted at an enemy, risky, and leading to concrete and tangible achievements. Such violence was eagerly produced by the vast majority of combatants, who viewed it as a desirable expression of lofty values, an opportunity for excitement and thrill, and as a means of receiving social respect and admiration. On the other hand, violence that did not meet these criteria and was relatively safe, collectively or indiscriminately targeted with an unclear and often invisible enemy, and absent any promise of glory or heroism, was perceived by many combatants as less legitimate. As a result, during population control operations the beliefs, values, and interests of some soldiers were much more likely to diverge from those of their military superiors. Soldiers found it harder to believe that such operations were necessary, which could lead to shirking and a general decline in compliance in such forms of violence.

5.4 Producing Strategic Violence: The Role of Small Unit Commanders

In face of growing divergence between the beliefs and interest of combatants and the military, one concern of small unit commanders involved motivating combatants to produce strategic violence at such sites where military training failed to instill identification with the mission. The scope of this challenge varied, depending on the individual values and interests of combatants. But for some combatants, the divergence in beliefs led to shirking from strategic
violence, particularly in population control operations. This section analyzes some of the strategies small-unit commanders used to realign soldiers with military interests, ensuring that strategic violence was produced at the desired level.

5.4.1 Informal control: Reframing violence as normative

A central problem with legitimizing population control operations was the absence of many elements that normalized violence in the eyes of combatants. Put differently, the administrative or humanitarian modes of control at the checkpoint would overshadow the military one, reducing soldier motivation to employ strategic violence, whether due to discomfort at its targets or form, or simply to boredom, fatigue, and a lack of faith in the contribution or importance of such operations. One strategy that some commanders used to minimize this gap was to apply informal control processes that reframed population control measures to the extent possible as combative, in an attempt to re-instill in combatants the motivation and enthusiasm that had faltered. By recasting violence as normative commanders could realign the beliefs of combatants with those of the military, establishing the necessity and value of population control operations and thereby rendering any associated violence normal and invisible once more.

One such commander was Erez, who as a tank officer in the West Bank had been assigned to checkpoint duty for several months. Erez pointed out that at checkpoints, commanders were not only responsible for curbing excessive violence but for pushing soldiers to **produce** violence, a task he had found no less challenging.

"Soldiers, for example, who feel uncomfortable because of the population, and don't strive for contact – the commander can push them… motivate them, serve as a personal example… for aggressiveness, initiative, and charisma. [Some soldiers find it difficult] because of their personality, their opinions, everything. It's not pleasant to be harsh, it's a real problem. I had lots of dilemmas."
To illustrate these dilemmas, Erez told the story of a man who had approached the checkpoint and yelled at one of his soldiers:

"Suddenly I heard yelling at the checkpoint…I went in immediately and don't even remember what I did, I guess I did something, I kicked him out of the checkpoint, I loaded my weapon in his face and ordered him out of there. It sounds crazy but [you must] understand what it means for him to yell at a soldier: it means that had he had a knife [the soldier] would be dead now! The very fact that he approached and felt comfortable enough to enter a checkpoint of IDF soldiers, tomorrow he'll come with a knife and slaughter two soldiers! … I told them, 'you don't understand – no one enters. And if someone enters, the moment he crosses the line – boom, all guns are loaded at the checkpoint. The guy will be shocked. If he's an informant or involved in some sort of [militant] activity he'll say 'listen, that's one checkpoint I don't want to enter."

Erez's command strategy was to reestablish the military mode of control at the checkpoints, framing the man not as civilian frustrated at the long wait but as a potential terrorist who may exploit soldiers' weakness to attack them. When his soldiers asked how they should have responded in that situation, Erez instructed,

"'Listen, you're the soldier here. You have the gun. You control who enters and who does not… and there's no way… that someone yells at one of your comrades and you do nothing! … I loaded my gun at someone, how come none of you loaded your guns?' It took me a lot of time, maybe two months, to train them to be somewhat aggressive… I asked them, what would happen had he attacked me? Would you start deliberating whether to do something? And I started talking to them about it, and training them with different scenarios, like – 'what happens if someone jumps on me with a knife, what do you do?'… At first they said stuff like, 'we'd separate you,' but I told them, 'there's no such thing, someone who jumps at a soldier and tries to stab him is a dead man, and it's over. There's no discretion here…With some things you must behave like a machine.'"

Erez described a long process of training soldiers to view the checkpoint as a dangerous military site, where military response was appropriate and necessary. Ultimately, he believed he was successful:

"About two months later I was on patrol, I stopped some car and the guy approached me and started yelling. Immediately I loaded my gun and the minute I loaded – bam, all of [my soldiers], they knew already, they loaded their guns and the guy was shocked. And I said to myself, I succeeded."
By reframing checkpoint duty as a military, rather than an administrative, task, and by training his soldiers to continue the logic of combat even at sites of population control, Erez was able to re-instill identification with the mission, and consequently, compliance among his soldiers.

Like Erez, Eyal had served for several months as a checkpoint commander. As a soldier Eyal had encountered opportunistic violence at checkpoints, such as harassment and beating, as well as what he saw as unprofessional soldier behavior, such as informal chatter with the local population. Eyal attributed both behaviors to a single source: the non-military nature of checkpoints, which, depending on the circumstances, could cause soldiers both to falter in producing strategic violence or to engage in opportunistic violence. Eyal explained,

"Another thing that frustrates the soldiers is their inability to do their mission… We don't have a police dog, or mirrors, or time to totally take apart the entire car for drugs or weapons, so as a soldier you feel frustrated because you're not really doing your job. You let cars pass and pray there's no terrorist or explosives or drugs or weapons… it's a performance, it just looks like you're a checkpoint, you just look like you're checking, it just looks like you know what you're doing. We don't know how to recognize a forged ID card, we're not connected to any database that can identify the person, we don't have concrete intelligence… And that terribly frustrates soldiers, to do nothing hours upon hours upon hours for months on end, and to just look like you're doing something. It creates a lot of anger towards the system and towards the checkpoint. And when you're at an internal checkpoint then you really don't understand what the significance of what you're doing is. There's a village here and a village there, and a checkpoint in the middle, you just have to check people, but there are no clear guidelines for how to check. How much should you check? Should I strip him? Should I not strip him? Should I take the car apart? Or not?"

The absence of concrete achievements at the checkpoint and the feeling that the job could not be properly performed and was insignificant placed distance between the belief of soldiers in the importance of what they were doing and the strategies and needs of the military organization, leading to increased shirking. To deal with these problems, Eyal, like Erez, adopted a strict stance:
"I was very tough with my soldiers regarding human rights and contact with the population. There was to be no chatter, no conversations, no jokes, and no yelling, beating or pushing. Nothing. I prevented contact. I told them that from my perspective they either let the person pass or shot him in the head. There was no middle ground…. There's no reason for deep conversations or pleadings or whatever. He's either allowed to pass according to the permit, or forbidden, and that's it, he's out of there."

Eyal's strategy, in other words, was to attempt to re-establish the soldier's black and white perspective, which separated friend from foe, removed civilian considerations from the picture, and left no room for negotiation. It was an effort to impose a military logic on a primarily civilian site so as to ensure soldiers behaved as they had been trained. As he put it, "You're not a cop, you don't try to find out the story and you don't care what happened. You're a combatant. You identify an enemy – you shoot. You don't identify an enemy – you shut up."

Commanders like Eyal and Erez recognized that population control operations were quite different than the operations the military had trained them for, and sensed that such operations caused a divergence in beliefs, values, and interests between soldiers and the military. By reframing such operations as combat activity and instituting a military regime at sites of friction with civilians, they sought to realign combatants with strategic interests, thereby facilitating the production of strategic violence.

In other cases, commanders relied on personal charisma and leadership skills to inspire soldiers. Yoav, for instance, explained that a good commander was not necessarily one who "poisoned" his soldiers, but rather a leader who could use any variety of means to get combatants to follow in his path.

"A good commander is one who gets people to follow him, period. It's not to 'poison' them. It's to say this: This is the mission and we have to do it. It doesn't matter whether you see yourself as Rambo with a knife between your teeth or if you… think this is my country and I'll do everything for the county, or if you [do it because] you like me, or who knows what. All [of these reasons] are good. As long as you follow him, he's a good commander."
Charismatic commanders were able to rely primarily on the force of their own leadership to inspire combatant compliance regardless of their own attitudes towards the task at hand.

5.4.2 Formal control: Obedience and leadership

Not all commanders could employ informal control mechanisms to inculcate among combatants a sense of identification with their mission. Some commanders were unable to recast population control operations as normative, as they themselves were critical of the mission. When approached with questions and complaints from their subordinates they found themselves at a loss to defend the military necessity of enforcing an ever-shifting regime of movement and control. In these circumstances several commanders resorted to formal mechanisms, reminding soldiers that they must carry out orders whether or not they identified with them.

Aviv, for example, had served as an officer in a paratroopers unit. A self described "yes man," Aviv was a typical "good soldier," aiming to please his superiors and follow in their path. As a commander Aviv had eagerly taken part in the operations preceding Operation Defensive Shield, where his unit had participated in ambushes and killed and arrested several militants, wreaking heavy damage in civilian areas. While he describes those operations as memorable and exciting, he was much more critical with regard to his service at checkpoints.

"There are cases when they tell you to let only these people pass, and you let them pass, and then suddenly they tell you 'No, now stop, because it might be a [terrorist].' And you say, 'but wait a minute, all those who I just allowed to pass – the terrorist could be one of them? So how did they pass until now? Couldn't you have told me sooner?'… You don't understand the idea behind it. Or they tell you to check every vehicle thoroughly, and then suddenly tell you everyone can pass with an ID card. So you feel a bit like, what have I done until now, what has it contributed…. It's an annoying situation, and totally lacking in logic…As a commander you hear soldiers complain and you say…'there's nothing you can do, this is the army.' Maybe if it's a stubborn soldier I'll make up something so he'll leave me alone… but basically, that's the army."
Similarly, Nir explained that he would tell his soldiers that important people with more experience than him made the decision, so there must be a reason for such tasks, even if they seemed illogical. Lior, who served as a platoon commander in the West Bank, resorted to a similar response when soldiers complained of the arbitrariness of checkpoints and opposed the occasional relaxing of movement restrictions. "I would tell them, 'guys, we're juniors in these matters. There are people above us and we do what they decide.'" In this case, the resort to formal mechanisms that relied on the power of authority and the chain of command indicated a failure on behalf of small unit commanders to induce identification among combatants with forms and targets of violence with which they themselves did not identify.

5.4.3 Failure of control and the decline of compliance

In some cases small unit commanders failed to resolve the discrepancies between military training and counterinsurgency practices that primarily involved population control. It was in these cases that soldier production of strategic violence was most likely to falter. Sometimes, such failure resulted from the example given by senior commanders who themselves didn't seem to take regulations at checkpoints very seriously. Amir's case, introduced at the outset of this chapter, illustrates the consequences of such behavior. Amir had initially attempted to follow orders at the checkpoint despite his growing discomfort. However, on occasion his battalion commander would come to the checkpoint and let everyone pass without checking their status. Amir recalled his frustration:

"And then you say to yourself, wait a minute, why is he doing it and not me? … What does he know that I don't know? He would look at their papers and wouldn't contact headquarters, he'd just decide whether people could pass or not. And then you feel like,

25 At the same time, diverging preferences and weak control meant that opportunistic violence was likely to rise, as discussed in chapter 7.
OK, why did I detain him here for five hours? For what? You don't really understand it… You see the top commander letting anyone he wants to pass… And I felt like it's doubtful that he knew more than me about these people since he didn't check their ID with headquarters… And it starts to gnaw at you, because every day you encounter [civilians]… people in the rain... students, kids who want to go in or out but can't because of the closure…. These are feelings that, as a 21-22 year old kid, it's pretty crazy when you think about it today, why should you have to deal with it? It feels like the army is shaking you off, because you tell yourself that the day after [you stood there,] the battalion commander let 75% of the people pass. You feel like an idiot."

After observing his battalion commander exercise discretion and allow civilian movement despite existing regulations, Amir began to exercise discretion himself, eventually allowing people to cross in contravention of his orders.

A second form of failure of control occurred when different commanders in the same unit imposed varying standards as to required behavior, leaving soldiers without a clear and unequivocal picture of what was expected of them. This was the case in David's unit, where different NCOs imposed different policies at checkpoints so that combatant behavior could change daily, depending on the responsible commander on shift. David explained,

"I think that compared to the other commanders in the company I was pretty average in terms of attitudes towards Palestinians or attitudes towards regulations. I heard of other commanders who were much more lenient in terms of who they let through. I don't know if it's because they were gentle souls or because they were just tired of it. On the other hand there were definitely commanders who were much stricter in terms of punishment or detentions or enforcement of restrictions to the letter."

As a result of these differences among commanders, levels of strategic violence could vary among the same combatants at the same checkpoint. A similar dynamic could be found at other sites of encounter between soldiers and civilians, such as patrols in rural areas, where NCOs were the only authority and often operated with very little supervision. Omer, a former infantry officer, recalled that during patrol assignments "lazy squad commanders could take the soldiers and sit around for eight hours, whereas another squad commander might go beyond the limits of
the task and patrol inside a village or something, and another squad commander would do [the job] rationally."

A final pattern, evident in the least disciplined units, was a near complete lack of control by commanders, which led to uncontrolled behavior and shirking from strategic violence. Gilad had served in such a unit, a battalion in a unit later known as the Kfir Brigade. He and his comrades were often deployed on patrols or checkpoint shifts with little to no briefing. "It was more like, you have eight hours, don't do anything stupid that could hurt you or others. And that's it." Moreover, in contrast with military regulations, soldiers in Gilad's unit were rarely debriefed after shifts, nor monitored during missions. As a result,

"Let's just say all of us did stuff we weren't supposed to do, whether it was our attitudes towards Arabs or our attitudes towards the mission. For instance, sitting around for eight hours [instead of patrolling.] … Sometimes an officer would ask what we had done …but most of the time you finished your task and that was it. If the battalion commander had investigated what we had done he would have found that there were a lot of problems, ethical and operational. Silly stuff we'd do….because they put you there and you work eight hour shifts, the same tasks, for an entire week, so at some point you start going crazy. So yes, there was a period when one of the soldiers would set off bonfires, and we almost burnt down an olive tree….we were sick of doing the same things over and over so we tried to make it interesting, which usually meant doing stuff we weren't supposed to do… For example, we'd go hang out in an abandoned trailer park instead of patrolling…"

On a final note, Omer and Gilad's stories also demonstrate the relationship, discussed Chapter 2, between reduced participation in strategic violence and increased participation in opportunistic and entrepreneurial violence. Weak or ambiguous organizational control not only leads to increased shirking, as evidenced by the squad commanders who abandon their patrol, but to a rise in production of opportunistic and entrepreneurial violence, as evidenced by the behavior of squad commanders who employ violence opportunistically, damaging property for entertainment. These dynamics will be discussed further in chapters 6 and 7.

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26 For further discussion of discipline problems and opportunistic violence in the Kfir Brigade see chapter 7.
5.5 Alternative Explanations

This chapter has shown that while IDF combatants in the Second Intifada sometimes eagerly participated in military violence against civilians, in other cases they shirked from such violence, leading to a decline in the production of strategic violence. I have argued that this variation can be attributed to organizational control. When the violence demanded of combatants conforms to the levels, forms, and targets of violence normalized through military training participation is likely to rise. However, when combatants are expected to perform violence that was not normalized through training, control weakens, and shirking emerges. This section considers whether the alternative theories of violence against civilians in conflict laid out in chapter 2 can account for these patterns.

Instrumentalist theories attribute variation in violence to the shifting strategic calculations of elites. Such theories, which essentially assume that empirical patterns of violence mirror elite preferences, cannot account for combatant divergence from these preferences. In the Second Intifada, Israeli security elites deemed population control operations necessary to protect Israeli combatants and civilians from the Palestinian insurgent threat. However, they failed to sufficiently impose these preferences on ordinary combatants, leading in some cases to a decline in the production of strategic violence. In its focus on elite strategy, instrumentalist explanations cannot explain patterns of violence that stray from the preferences of armed group leaders.

Theories that attribute violence to polarized identities and passionate emotions are similarly limited in explaining variation in combatant participation in strategic violence. While such theories can account for the unleashing of violence, they cannot account for shirking or restraint. If rage or revenge is behind soldier eagerness to commit violence, it is unclear why in some cases rage and revenge would be absent.
Social-psychological theories that focus on the role of social influence in promoting violence are similarly limited in explaining variation in participation in strategic violence, as they cannot account for the disobedience and non-conformity associated with shirking violence ordered from above. Indeed, this limitation is a concern for social psychologists as well, since experiments on the role of social influence in enabling violence consistently find that some individuals are able to resist these powerful social pressures. As Fiske, Harris, and Cuddy (2004, 1483) note with respect to theories of social influence: "We also need to understand the basis for exceptions—why, in the face of these social contexts, not all individuals succumb."

Finally, variation in participation in strategic violence cannot be explained by organizational theories that assume that weak discipline (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006; Weinstein 2007) or military socialization (Hoover-Green 2011) lead solely to the over-production of violence. While this study confirms that opportunistic violence is associated with weak organizational control (see chapter 7), it shows that weak control also leads in some cases to underproduction, or shirking from strategic violence. As argued at the outset of this chapter, combatants can and do make distinctions between different levels, forms, and targets of violence, engaging in some but not in others.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I argued that IDF organizational control processes, applied most forcefully during military training, were successful in normalizing some forms of violence but not others. Specifically, violence that was perceived as aggressive, risky, targeted at a concrete enemy, and promising concrete results was constructed as normative soldier behavior, not just legitimate but the expression of esteemed values, thereby rendering the consequences for civilians largely
invisible. Such violence typically elicited high levels of compliance and enthusiasm, as it was consistent with the portrait of meaningful service, glory, and thrill painted by the IDF.

In practice, however, much of the IDF’s counterinsurgency strategy in the Second Intifada did not fit this description, instead relying heavily on population control operations such as the enforcement of strict movement restrictions. This was particularly true for ordinary (non-elite) units, which bore most of the burden of such operations. The non-combative nature of these missions, its collective and indiscriminate targeting, and the lack of glory or military achievement led to a divergence between combatant and military preferences, whether because of principled resistance to the targeting of civilians, or simply due to boredom or lack of belief in the necessity or importance of the task. For some combatants, this divergence led to a decline in the production of strategic violence, for example through relaxing of enforcement of movement restrictions at and around checkpoints, or through dodging such missions altogether by choosing to take a break somewhere far from sight rather than patrol to catch checkpoint circumventers.

It was up to small-unit commanders to intervene where centralized control mechanism had failed and realign shirking combatants with the military. This could be accomplished in large measure through informal and formal control mechanisms. While the former attempted to raise combatant motivation by imposing a military logic on population control missions, re-instilling among combatants a sense of significance and purpose, the latter required obedience regardless of combatant beliefs due to the formal authority of the chain of command. When commanders failed to impose either of these mechanisms, participation in strategic violence declined.

Towards the latter part of the Second Intifada, the IDF itself became increasingly aware of the control problems associated with checkpoints and other population control mechanisms. In 2004 Major General (ret.) Amos Yadlin, then commander of the IDF’s military colleges, dressed
as a reserve soldier and performed checkpoint duty for one day. He was later quoted as saying:
"It's shitty work. I wouldn't want to continue it for even one moment. You never know who the terrorist is and have to treat everyone with suspicion… Not all soldiers are doctors. If they had good skills they would be somewhere else. It's a tough and unrewarding job."²⁷ That same year an internal IDF review identified several problems at checkpoints, including behavior and ethical problems, lack of training and instruction for checkpoint duty, and the absence of sufficient physical and technological infrastructure to enable its smooth functioning.²⁸

Senior IDF officers, realizing that the checkpoints posed severe problems to military control, gradually found ways to outsource the enforcement of Israel's movement regime in the Occupied Territories. In 2004 a special "crossings" unit was established in the Military Police for the sole purpose of administering Green-Line checkpoints. In 2005 a "Crossings Administration" was established in the Israeli Ministry of Defense with the aim of constructing and administering up to 40 crossings from the West Bank and Gaza into Israel. Since 2006, under the auspices of the Crossings Administration, Israel has been engaged in a multi-million dollar "de-militarization of border crossings" project, transferring many checkpoints into the hands of the Police or the Ministry of Defense, which operates the checkpoints through private security companies.²⁹ The de-militarization project provides evidence for the IDF's ultimate failure to retain control of the violence associated with its enforcement of movement regime.³⁰

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²⁹ For an official overview of the project see Knesset Dept. for Information and Research report "Border Crossings to Israel from Gaza and the West Bank" (2006), online: http://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m01532.pdf.
³⁰ Perhaps ironically, many argued that privatization of checkpoints actually resulted in more violence for civilians. While soldiers could sometimes be swayed and exercised a large measure of discretion, private security companies allowed for no negotiations, effectively dehumanizing operations, e.g. Rappaport, "Outsourcing the Checkpoints."
"These things, these so-called educational acts, are something for which authority is not defined. You do it, and you don't violate any law… as a checkpoint commander I'm authorized to do anything as long as I don't violate the law. And then it's endorsed in retrospect by my company commander.”

6.1 Introduction

The small courtroom at the old Military Court Building in Jaffa was unusually crowded. Impatient journalists paced in and out of the room, anxious for the hearing to begin. The narrow wooden benches were filled with people: family and friends of the defendant, journalists, representatives from Israeli human rights organizations, and soldiers of various ages. All awaited that day's witness, Major General Gadi Shamni, head of the IDF's Central Command. In an unusual move, the senior ranking officer had been summoned to testify in the case of Lieutenant Adam Malloul, charged with physical violence against Palestinian civilians during a military operation in the West Bank village of Qadum.

Malloul, second in command in his company, was deployed to Qadum late one night following a report of gunfire towards the nearby Israeli settlement of Q'dumim. His mission was to try and obtain information about the incident, and if possible, about the whereabouts of the shooter or the gun. During the course of that night Malloul and his soldiers would encounter 2 groups of civilian men, the first on the road leading to the village, and the second in its central square. Precise accounts of ensuing events diverge, but according to the facts as determined by the court Malloul interrogated some of the civilians using physical force, including slaps and shaking. In addition, one of the sergeants under his command was charged with butting a civilian

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1 Personal interview with Roe'e, November 2009.
with his helmet and kicking him in the stomach. After the incident was discovered Malloul and his sergeant were arrested and charged with assault.

The trial would have joined the statistics of yet another unexceptional military trial of violence against Palestinian civilians were it not for an unexpected turn. The defendant's primary argument throughout was that his behavior reflected common practice in his unit and conformed to what he had learned from his commanders. While there was nothing atypical about this line of defense, Malloul's battalion and brigade officers, who might have been expected to renounce his behavior and label him a rotten apple, surprisingly confirmed his account in court. The two prominent officers testified that Malloul, a leading commander in his unit, had in fact acted in accordance with his mission and his responsibilities. While they acknowledged that his use of force may have slightly exceeded accepted practice, they argued that his actions in no way constituted a criminal attack but rather a normative and legitimate military reaction under the circumstances. In a statement later quoted widely in the Israeli press, Malloul’s brigade commander, Colonel Itay Virob, testified:

“A slap, sometimes a blow to the back of the neck or the chest, sometimes a knee [to the stomach] or strangulation to calm the person down, is reasonable. Is there a chart that determines what’s permissible and what’s forbidden? No, and it is impossible for there to be.”

The next day Malloul's battalion commander stepped up to testify. Like the brigade commander before him, he explained that while aggression for aggression's sake was unacceptable, and aggression had to be proportional, it was certainly acceptable and often

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necessary to use some physical violence in order to carry out the military mission of protecting Israeli civilians.

The testimonies by two high-ranking officers permitting physical violence against civilians under some military circumstances caused an uproar in the Israeli press. A few NGOs called for the dismissal of the officers, arguing that they should not be training soldiers. The IDF Chief Military Advocate General (MAG) contacted the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Central Command to emphasize that the testimonies posed grave problems, as they provided explicit legitimacy to engage in unlawful violence during interrogations, were at odds with IDF values, and conveyed an unacceptable message to soldiers. Less than two weeks after the testimonies, Central Command Chief Shamni issued a letter to all brigade, battalion, and division commanders under his command emphasizing and clarifying the rules regarding physical violence, and especially "the express prohibition on the use of force and violence without justification or in excess of necessary towards Palestinian residents, and the prohibition against harming their dignity without justification." A few days later Colonel Virob was officially reprimanded for his testimony and his promotion was stalled.

The reprimand had swift effects. While Virob was denied permission to testify a second time, he filed an affidavit that contradicted his earlier testimony, stating that mild, non-wounding physical violence was permissible only in very limited circumstances, when necessary to prevent an explosion (in the event of "a ticking bomb"), or in order to prevent injury to soldiers or

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3 Two organizations, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) and Yesh Din even filed a petition to this effect in the Israeli High Court, which was withdrawn when the IDF promised an internal investigation of the officers following the conclusion of the trial, see HCJ 5282/09 Yesh Din - Volunteers for Human Rights et al. vs. Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Gabi Ashkenazi et al., 11 July, 2010.

civilians. Some weeks later, when the two officers were summoned once more to testify in the trial of the sergeant charged along with Malloul, their accounts had changed so thoroughly that the court declared the battalion commander a hostile witness.

It was against this volatile background that Major General Shamni was summoned to testify at the military court and clarify the contradictions between the testimonies of two senior ranking officers and the letter he had circulated among all the officers under his command. Shamni took the witness stand for approximately two hours, never once faltering in his account. In response to repeated questions from the defense attorney regarding the accepted norms in Malloul's brigade, as evidenced by the testimonies of its senior leadership, Shamni emphasized that there was no such thing as "proportional violence" against civilians that commanders could exercise at their discretion. He explained that his letter to his subordinates was intended to ensure that no soldier misunderstood the testimonies as allowing unlawful violence against "uninvolved." Moreover, he had spoken with the officers and found that they regretted their statements on the witness stand, explaining that in their desire to support an officer under their command their words had been misunderstood and taken out of context. Shamni maintained that all agreed that the testimonies, while an unfortunate turn of words, did not reflect what actually happened in the field. In the field, he insisted, rules regarding the use of force were unambiguous and were generally obeyed.

Malloul's trial and its aftermath revealed a form of violence against civilians that is initially difficult to classify. Much of the literature on patterns of violence in conflict explicitly or implicitly distinguishes between strategic and opportunistic violence (Manekin forthcoming; 

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Wood 2012). While the former involves activity that implements the preferences of armed group leaders, the latter refers to self-serving violence that exceeds or contravenes armed group strategy. Malloul's violence was strategic in that it was conducted to serve the interests of the military organization – in this case, to obtain information regarding a possible militant attack – and in that it was endorsed by the senior leadership of his unit. On the other hand, once discovered, the appropriateness and even existence of such violence was vehemently denied by senior military leaders, who emphatically argued that he had engaged in misconduct in no way related to military strategy.

This chapter identifies and examines this third category of violence, which is neither strictly strategic nor opportunistic. It builds on the assumption that in large, complex organizations, organizational strategy is a more complex phenomenon than implied by the conventional top-down/bottom-up dichotomy between strategy and opportunism. As Burgelman (1983a, 61) argues in the corporate context, in large organizations “most strategic activities are induced by the firm’s current concept of corporate strategy, but also emerging are some autonomous strategic activities, that is, activities that fall outside the scope of the current concept of strategy.” In other words, while most strategic activity in the organization emanates from managers at the top, some strategic behavior results from autonomous initiatives at the firm’s lower and middle levels. I term such behavior, intended to serve the organization’s strategic mission but originating autonomously from the organization’s lower levels, “entrepreneurial violence” (EV).

The notion of a middle category between strategic and opportunistic violence was recently explored by Wood (2012, 394), who identified a category of "practice," defined as "violence which is not ordered but is tolerated by commanders, and occurs when it is not"
Strategic as well as when it is.” Like EV, violent practice typically emerges from below. However, the concept of practice is somewhat broader, as it includes forms of violence that do not serve organizational interests but are nevertheless tolerated by commanders because the costs of curtailing such practices outweigh the benefits.\(^7\) In contrast, the emergence of EV reflects not failure, but ambiguity of control.

The concept of EV draws on Ron's (2000a) analysis of Israeli state violence in the First Intifada. Ron argues that state security forces face conflicting pressures, as they must find a balance between effective repression and the maintenance of an image of legality through rules limiting the use of force. This balance is achieved in practice through "organizational decoupling," which promotes "auras of rule conformity for public consumption, but practically engages in rule deviation to get the work done" (Ron 2000a, 453). Rather than simply serving as a vehicle for the top-down implementation of leader strategies, organizations contain internal contradictions, creating space for the emergence of violent practices, or "clandestine operating codes," that circumvent organizational rules but do not defy them completely. Importantly, such operating codes are designed to further the organization's mission and are not committed for personal gain.

Like the operating codes identified by Ron, entrepreneurial violence serves strategic, not opportunistic purposes, and is typically covert, reflecting its deviation from the authorized strategic practices of the military. Ron's analysis, however, pertains primarily to organizations engaged in policing, where rules governing the use of force are clearer and security forces more constrained by domestic and international institutions. In a context where rules restrict behavior, "senior officers, political leaders, and rank-and-file soldiers… negotiate these contradictions by

\(^7\) Accordingly, I would classify such violence as opportunistic, even if it is tolerated by superiors who are unable or unwilling to control it.
decoupling their situational activities from general rules” (Ron 2000a, 453). My argument concerns armed conflict, which is characterized by a much greater degree of norm ambiguity. Under conditions of uncertainty regarding the limits of permissible behavior, junior and mid-level officers have incentives to develop violent practices, sustained by the ambiguity maintained by the higher ranks. If these practices prove successful, they may eventually be institutionalized in the military's strategic repertoire.

This chapter seeks to further advance the theorization of a middle category of military violence by specifying an analytical framework that identifies when and how entrepreneurial violence emerges and the conditions under which it persists or terminates. I use the case of the Second Intifada as a deviant case that allows for theory development (George and A. Bennett 2005; Mahoney 2007; Seawright and Gerring 2008), as it reveals a category of violence that cannot be explained by extant theories that focus on strategic or opportunistic violence alone. Nevertheless such violence is ubiquitous, as it allows organizational leaders to advance strategic goals without shouldering responsibility if something goes wrong.

The chapter is organized as follows: I first provide some empirical background on practices of entrepreneurial violence in the Second Intifada. After defining the key conceptual elements underlying the notion of EV, I outline an analytical framework for understanding its emergence and persistence, developed inductively from observed patterns of violence in the Second Intifada. I then analyze ordinary soldier attitudes towards entrepreneurial violence, arguing, as in previous chapters, that organizational control mechanisms shape the degree to

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8 During the First Intifada, Israel constructed the Occupied Territories as an arena of law enforcement (Ron 2000a, 2003). The Second Intifada, in contrast, was declared armed conflict from the outset. Restrictive regulations that had previously constrained Israeli soldiers in the OT were suspended, and civilian deaths were no longer investigated, see chapter 3 for further discussion.
which combatants participate in EV. However, in the case of EV the control of combatants is naturally more difficult as it is ambiguous by definition.

Before beginning, a brief comment on data is necessary. As described here, the entrepreneurial process requires input from all levels of the organization. Ideally, then, evidence for such a process would need to be collected directly from all levels of the military chain of command. However, entrepreneurial behavior is by nature risky, and failed entrepreneurs are liable to pay a price for banking on uncertain outcomes. This is especially true in the case of EV, which, by nature of the industry, is dangerous and often occurs at the shadowy margins of accepted notions of legality and morality. It therefore tends to remain concealed until it becomes clear whether or not the entrepreneurial opportunity has paid off. As a result, much of what I initially learned about entrepreneurial violence came from interviews with ordinary combatants and junior officers who provided local observations of the decisions of their superiors. Data from my interviews, together with data collected by other organizations, provided an initial basis for detecting patterns in violence that could not be explained by reference to either strategic or opportunistic mechanisms. Some clues that alerted me to the presence of entrepreneurial violence during interviews included attempted concealment on behalf of respondents, shifting terminology that described similar practices, and the treatment of such behavior by respondents as somehow different than ordinary strategic violence.

In addition, observations from the Malloul trial provided an important source of data, as they offered a glimpse of entrepreneurial violence stripped of its characteristic ambiguity and highlighted the role played by various links in the chain of command in the entrepreneurial

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9 In the case of the IDF, entrepreneurial violence is most likely to be the initiative of career officers, seeking to advance up the ranks of the organization. Such officers are forbidden to speak with outsiders without the approval, and sometimes active participation, of the IDF spokesperson’s office. Moreover, even if they were allowed to speak freely, it is unlikely that they would divulge behavior that could jeopardize their careers.
The trial therefore offered a unique opportunity to examine the dynamics of entrepreneurship, risk, and reward, first hand. Nevertheless, the inability to directly access data on some forms of entrepreneurial violence necessarily places some limits on its study.

6.2 Entrepreneurial Violence in the Second Intifada: Empirical Background

Before laying out the analytical framework explaining the emergence and persistence of entrepreneurial violence it is useful to first survey the phenomenon empirically. For the sake of consistency I divide this section, as previously, into offensive practices, defensive practices, and population control mechanisms.\(^{10}\)

6.2.1 Offensive practices

**Disruption**

A common offensive practice during the Second Intifada was generally referred to as "disruption," though it went by many different local names.\(^{11}\) The logic of disruption was elaborated succinctly in Colonel Virob's testimony in the Malloul trial, as Malloul was engaged in a "disruption" mission when the violent incidents occurred. According to Virob, "disruption" missions were used when no concrete intelligence about the identity of militants or their whereabouts was available. Disruption "undermined the balance" of a neighborhood or village, thereby leading to information that could facilitate targeted operations. Disruption operations

\(^{10}\) The precise moment at which a particular practice emerges is nearly impossible to pinpoint. This section reviews practices that based on my interviews and other data sources were common during the Second Intifada. However, some may be extensions or reincarnations of practices from earlier periods.

\(^{11}\) Some of these terms included "demonstrating presence," "noisy patrol," "violent patrol," "inquiries," "noise-making," "disruption block," "floating intelligence," "high signature activity," "creating uncertainty," and "creating a sense of being hunted."
could also expose "hostile elements" within the village by causing them to react or respond to military presence. Practically, disruption could occur in several ways:

"Disruption actions can operate on a number of levels. First is entering the village. Galloping jeeps enter the village. Sometimes just entering the village disrupts the course of the attacker. The second way is to use means of pressure, throw shock grenades, burst into a number of homes and institutions in the village, arrest residents in them, take over roofs and so on…"\(^{12}\)

It was further explained that the goal of disruption missions was to "float intelligence," or generate information when there was none available about militant networks or impending attacks. The idea behind the missions, then, was to disrupt everyday life so as to instigate a reaction on the part of militants that would hopefully lead to the creation of information. In the absence of concrete information, such activities were necessarily indiscriminate, with civilians bearing much of their brunt. Virob explained this logic:

"We will detain, interrogate and use suitable pressure on every person to get to the one terrorist. Of all the means of pressure that we use, the vast majority are against persons who are not involved. This is true of the checkpoints, of combing whole neighborhoods, and also of questioning passersby […]"\(^{13}\)

Evidence for similar practices was common in my interviews. Guy, a former infantry soldier, summed it up:

"Sometimes you just create problems, you might say. What does it mean to create problems? You go in to provoke the population… They call it demonstrating presence."


Another disruption practice entailed entering random homes to conduct searches. Ran, a former paratrooper, provided more detail:

"There were those who would [enter] for no reason. It didn't happen often but sometimes, by an arbitrary decision of a squad commander, we'd go into some house without intelligence, nothing specific, just to go in and search. If there was no intelligence information I found it completely unnecessary... I know for sure that one time when we were on patrol there were parameters for the patrol and [the commander] decided to enter a home and conduct a search. It was an innocent search, nothing that you can define as [violent], no one hit anyone, no one yelled at anyone, everyone spoke nicely and didn't threaten anyone, we left the house the same as we entered it, it was just that going in and waking people up in the middle of the night, I don't understand what they were looking for."

Similarly Hillel, a former infantry soldier, explained:

"Sometimes we just did 'demonstrations of presence'... We didn't create chaos, there's no way anyone in our company or battalion did, but I'm sure that in other battalions and other brigades they did go in and create chaos. With us it was just to show that the army is there and that there's military rule. Not that that's so good and pleasant, but it's definitely better than... there was no violence, I mean, no physical violence. The fact that you enter a home with a uniform and a weapon is violent, yes, but no physical violence. There was aggression, machoism, showing who's in charge here so that it's clear that no one [objects], that if you put everyone in a room then everyone goes into the room, no arguments."

Other times disruption could simply consist of creating disturbance and noise in populated areas. Josh, a former tank commander, described such a practice:

"Our battalion commander had a procedure; it was called the 'Good morning procedure'... This was during [Operation] Defensive Shield. You set up all the tanks, anything that could make noise, at around 5:00 AM, and then it went something like 'Prepare for Good Morning: 5-4-3-2-1!' And you'd fire whatever you could and as much as you could... The idea was to wake people up [and tell them] we're here."¹⁴

**Stimulus and Response**

As described in Chapter 4, stimulus and response operations involved small teams of infantry soldiers who would covertly enter and set up sniper positions in civilian homes. Another

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¹⁴ A similar procedure was reported by a different soldier from an infantry unit.
military force would then noisily enter the area as decoys, intended to provoke gunmen to attack.

Once they did, the snipers would shoot to kill. These operations initially emerged as entrepreneurial initiatives from below, the innovation of a battalion commander in the Paratroopers brigade. Itay, a former soldier in an elite unit, described such operations:

"You go into the Kasbah to draw fire. And that fire might hurt you! They place snipers somewhere, and you go in to draw fire, so that the snipers can see who's firing at you and can then respond... You go into a hostile place so that they'll fire at you so that you can fire at whoever is firing at you. That's the operational rationale...there's no intelligence about someone who's armed and wants to shoot you. But they have to do something so they do something like that. The commander wants to send out his unit and show that his unit is active and that he pushes it forward, so he conducts activities like that every day. That's the feeling. After a while of doing it, [you feel] that the commander wants to promote himself and his unit so that's what he does."

The practice, which led to the death of many Palestinian militants, was eventually institutionalized and became part of official IDF strategy.

6.2.2 Defensive Practices

Moving through Walls

An entrepreneurial practice that emerged during Operation Defensive Shield was the movement of troops through residential walls rather than on the narrow streets, to protect them from sniper fire and IEDs. The practice, attributed to then Colonel Aviv Kochavi, then commander of the Paratrooper Brigade, was first tested in a raid in a refugee camp on the outskirts of Nablus that preceded Defensive Shield. Brigadier (ret.) Shimon Naveh, former director of the IDF's Operational Theory Research Institute (OTRI) and a key figure in planning operations during the Second Intifada, recalled the initial planning meetings for the raid, in

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15 Bergman, "Code Name: Straw Widow."
which Kochavi expressed concern regarding the risk to troops of moving through narrow streets and alleyways. One of his brigade commanders responded,

"Well Aviv… while you were developing your operational ideas we did some deliberation on pragmatics of warfighting. If you are ready to compromise on some principled sensitivities, and overcome some tactical mind-sets, I think we have a revolutionary solution to the tactical problems you indicated. Two of my boys, a platoon commander and his sergeant… think that once we penetrate an urban enclave, we should conduct our tactical movements through the houses or buildings and not by them. Our experiments with this new mode taught us two things. First, we need to organize ourselves for breaking through walls and movement through houses of individual families. Secondly, navigation and orientation must be thought through institutionally."\(^{16}\)

The entrepreneurial initiative of moving through the walls was adopted and became a hallmark of IDF strategy in Operation Defensive Shield. As Kochavi stated in an interview (Weizman 2006, 56):

"This is why we opted for the methodology of moving through walls. . . . Like a worm that eats its way forward, emerging at points and then disappearing. We were thus moving from the interior of homes to their exterior in a surprising manner and in places we were not expected, arriving from behind and hitting the enemy that awaited us behind a corner. . . . Because it was the first time that this methodology was tested [at such a scale], during the operation itself we were learning how to adjust ourselves to the relevant urban space, and similarly, how to adjust the relevant urban space to our needs. . . . We took this micro-tactical practice [of moving through walls] and turned it into a method, and thanks to this method, we were able to interpret the whole space differently! . . . I said to my troops, 'Friends! This is not a matter of your choice! There is no other way of moving! If until now you were used to moving along roads and sidewalks, forget it! From now on we all walk through walls!'"

**Human Shields**

A second defensive entrepreneurial practice employed in the Second Intifada was the use of civilians as human shields during offensive operations. Civilians were used to protect soldiers in several situations, such as entering buildings first to verify their safety, conducting searches under soldier orders, checking and moving objects suspected of being booby trapped, and

\(^{16}\) As told by Naveh (2005).
standing or move in front of soldiers so as to shield them from militant gunfire. Of these, the most common practice was what was informally called "the neighbor procedure," used during arrest operations. To avoid the risk of a violent confrontation, soldiers would send a neighboring civilian into the home to order the suspect and his family out of the house. The use of this widespread practice declined substantially after it was declared illegal by the Israeli High Court of Justice, as discussed later in this chapter.

6.2.3 Population control operations

Population control operations primarily involved restriction of movement through closures, internal closures, and curfews. As these restrictions often proved difficult to enforce, entrepreneurial practices developed to punish or deter civilians who disobeyed them. Two such practices that spread rapidly were confiscation and detention.

Confiscation

The restriction of movement system in the West Bank was not hermetic, especially in the Second Intifada's early years. A counter-system of resistance to movement restrictions developed: Roadblocks were removed, dirt roads forged, and taxi operations flourished to meet increasing demand. One practice that soldiers widely employed in efforts to curtail the flow of population was the confiscation of vehicles, car keys, and identification papers. David described the use of the practice as a checkpoint commander in the Nablus area:

"There was a large open area…where we would have random foot patrols or an APC try and catch people bypassing the checkpoint. There were often vehicles that would pass through, and what we often used to do there - again, we didn't really know in terms of regulations what we're supposed to do with them – are you supposed to detain them?"

Confiscate their vehicles? By what authority are we confiscating vehicles? So sometimes yes, it was the platoon commander's decision. You'd see four taxis parked next to our outpost of four Arabs whose taxis and keys were confiscated and they were told to come back in a week and take the car… It was impossible for the company commander not to know about it because after all, he saw a few taxis parked outside his outpost, but I don't know how high authorization goes for such an act… It took a while until it happened; it grew gradually, out of attrition, of being given a task to prevent the movement of people and vehicles that we simply couldn't do. We didn't have [the tools.] So you have to make deterrence steps more severe. It won't help to ask them nicely not to come tomorrow."

Similarly, Gilad, a former infantry soldier and squad commander, described how Palestinian taxis were routinely confiscated in his unit:

"There was a time when we confiscated taxis and after a while the battalion commander discovered it. At first he supported it but then he found out that the IDF didn't support it so much. We would confiscate taxis for a week; we'd accompany them… and let the driver park the taxi, take his keys and license and tell him to go home... The idea was first to deter them and to punish those who brought people there… Sometimes it helped and sometimes it didn't, usually it didn't, they had another taxi and just kept on going… We'd park them at an empty lot near where we were stationed; we turned it into a parking lot for taxis… "

A similar practice was reported by Josh, a former tank commander:

"There's a procedure that if someone does something to you, you take his keys… [For example] there was a person there who didn't understand us and we didn't understand him. He thought he could go, he started to drive, and one of the guys who was there, it had to do with inexperience, started yelling at him "stop, stop, stop!"… I remember standing there and not knowing what to do, I see the guy approaching the checkpoint and didn't know what to do until he stopped because he heard the yelling. Had I operated according to procedure I should have fired in the air. Anyway, we stopped him, took his keys, took his ID, and then at the end of the day you get a ton of keys back at headquarters… the tank commanders collect keys….so you have a pile of keys and ID papers… no one ever said anything [against] it, absolutely not…. Afterwards you'd play with the keys and the cars would be scattered all over the place… With time I think we'd park them somewhere, or maybe at some point a tank would accidentally run them over."

In 2004 a group of former combat soldiers formed an organization called "Breaking the Silence" to raise awareness among the Israeli public regarding life in the Occupied Territories and the experiences of soldiers there. One of their first activities was an exhibit of filmed testimonies and photographs from Hebron, including a collection of approximately seventy keys
that had been confiscated from Palestinian drivers.\textsuperscript{18} In August 2004 the practice was partially institutionalized by military decree, which allowed for the confiscation of vehicles (but not keys) that violated internal closure for up to 14 days, to be held at a lot operated jointly by the military and police.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{Detention}

A second common practice used to punish, deter, or "educate" disobedient civilians was detention. Assaf, who served as an officer in the Hebron area, explained how restrictions on Palestinian use of a main traffic route in the area were enforced:

"They want to pass and they pass. So you bring a bulldozer and block [the road] and they break through it. So you catch them and leave them there and meet them the next day...you take the keys and tell him to stay, you stay with him, there are lots of ways, you take his keys and bring them to the DCO, they would change the procedure of how to do it every day. Once I brought a bulldozer and lifted the fork over his car, he was sure I was going to crush it. You scare them, stuff like that... Ultimately the system doesn't give you a solution; you need to come up with your own solutions. There's no magic solution since their desire to eat is greater than your desire for them not to use the road."

While detention of civilians was a widespread practice, the discretion given to checkpoint commanders meant there was individual variation in its implementation. As Roee, a tank commander who served at a checkpoint in the Jenin area, explained:

"As a checkpoint commander...your authority is everything that happens at the checkpoint. For instance there was one illegal we would catch every day. He said 'I'm trying to enter [Israel], and I'll try five times a day because that's where I can find work and if I can get into Israel for a few hours I'll have more work.' So for three consecutive days, every single day, he sat at our checkpoint under a tree with the bottle of water that we made sure to


bring him. Why? So that he'd sit under a tree for three days and understand that these infiltrations are not worthwhile because we catch him, and it's better for him to look for work inside [the West Bank] or to get a permit."

All of the practices described here were entrepreneurial innovations developed by field-level commanders to address operational problems they had been unable to solve with strategic violence authorized from above. They were strategic in that they served military interests, but they were not, at least initially, ordered from above or included in the military's strategic repertoire. It is to theoretical analysis of such practices that I now turn.

6.3 Definitions and Concepts

The analytical framework laid out in this chapter builds on three concepts: entrepreneurship, organizational strategy, and strategic ambiguity. This section discusses and elucidates each in turn, drawing first on organizational and management theory to elaborate the organizational dynamics at play in enabling and sustaining entrepreneurial behavior, and then applying each to the military context.20

6.3.1 Entrepreneurship and Corporate Entrepreneurship

In the past two decades research on entrepreneurship has expanded rapidly.21 While several definitions of entrepreneurship exist, the most prominent defines entrepreneurship as the process by which people identify and exploit opportunities for innovation in goods, services, and ways of organizing (Aldrich and Cliff 2003; Davidsson, Low, and Wright 2001; Shane 2003;
Shane and Venkataraman 2000). While much research on entrepreneurship has focused on the creation of new organizations and ventures, a separate area of research has explored the discovery and exploitation of new opportunities within existing firms, typically termed “corporate entrepreneurship” (CE).\footnote{For reviews see e.g. Covin and Miles (1999); Dess et al. (2003); Katz and Shepherd (2004); Kuratko (2007); Phan, Wright, Ucbasaran, and Tan (2009).} The concept of CE has been used to refer to two related but distinct phenomena: a firm's orientation towards entrepreneurship in its ranks as expressed by the attitudes of top management towards such behavior, and the informal entrepreneurial behavior that emerges at the firm's lower levels (Kuratko 2010). As a result some have suggested viewing CE as "a system of roles and social exchanges" within the organization, incorporating all levels of management (Dess et al. 2003, 358).

A key element of entrepreneurial behavior is the presence of uncertainty and risk (Casson 2005; Gifford 2010; McMullen and Shepherd 2006; K. Miller 2007; Shane 2003; Vereshchagina and Hopenhayn 2009).\footnote{On the distinction between uncertainty and risk see Jones and Butler (1992).} As Jones and Butler (1992, 734) observe, "Entrepreneurs create value by acting in the context of uncertainty." If all had access to perfect information, opportunities for gain would be immediately exploited, leaving no space for the entrepreneur (Gifford 2010, 303). Moreover, the possible outcomes of opportunity exploitation and the ultimate value of the venture are unknown, and can be costly (Alvarez and Barney 2005; Eckhardt and Shane 2003; Shane 2003). Indeed, studies of entrepreneurs have found them to be significantly higher in risk propensity than managers (Stewart Jr. and Roth 2001, 2004; Zhao, Seibert, and Lumpkin 2010).

Turning to the military setting, the concept of entrepreneurship may at first seem misplaced. Militaries are typically perceived as bureaucratic, highly centralized organizations that privilege obedience over innovation. At the same time however, military innovation is
essential for adaptation to changing circumstances, and as such is a central feature of military history (Grissom 2006). Surveying several approaches to the sources of military innovation, Grissom identifies two approaches that most closely conform to the entrepreneurship model described here: First is what he calls "the intraservice model of military innovation," which contends that innovation results from "intra-service politics," and specifically, from struggles among mid-level and senior-level officers within the military organization. Second are explanations that emphasize the strategic culture of a military service, and the manner in which such culture approaches innovation.\textsuperscript{24}

6.3.2 Organizational Strategy

As surveyed in chapter 2, many studies of violence against civilians in conflict view military strategy in purposeful, top-down terms. Military leaders are assumed to formulate policies in an intentional process of strategic choice, and implementation is facilitated by the hierarchical military structure, which enables the flow of information from higher to lower levels. This perspective is also reflected in studies of military innovation, nearly all of which operate from the top down (Grissom 2006). However, such stylized descriptions are removed from the empirical reality of organizational processes, including those in the military. Empirical studies of large, complex organizations have found the actual formulation of organizational strategy to be a more dynamic and emergent process than implied by the top-down model, involving managers at varying organizational levels (Bower and Doz 1979; Burgelman 1983a, 1991; Floyd and Lane 2000; Floyd and Wooldridge 2000; Mintzberg 1978; Mintzberg and Waters 1985; Noda and Bower 1996; Wooldridge, Schmid, and Floyd 2008).

\textsuperscript{24} For a comparative exploration of the role of strategic culture, or "national cognitive style," in military change and innovation see Adamsky (2010).
One prominent example, the Bower-Burgelman process model, traces strategy making in a complex firm through the lower, middle, and top levels of the organizational hierarchy (Bower and Doz 1979; Burgelman 1983b; Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel 1998; Noda and Bower 1996). According to this model, strategic initiatives emanate primarily from the organization's lower and middle levels, but top managers shape the process by establishing the context in which such initiatives emerge. Indeed, research has identified lower and middle levels of management as vital in driving the process of strategy formation in existing firms (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1993; Floyd and Lane 2000; Wooldridge, Schmid, and Floyd 2008). Due to their proximity to day-to-day operations and outside information, lower level managers can “conceive new business opportunities, engage in project championing efforts to mobilize corporate resources for these new opportunities, and perform strategic forcing efforts to create momentum for their further development” (Burgelman 1983a, 65). Finding new, innovative solutions to existing problems and improving the performance of the organization presents an unparalleled opportunity for junior managers to stand out in the eyes of their superiors and gain recognition and promotion.

In turn, middle managers who recognize the contribution of these initiatives can seek support for and embed them within a broader strategic framework (Wooldridge, Schmid, and Floyd 2008). Middle managers “perform the crucial role of linking successful autonomous strategic behavior at the operational level with the corporate concept of strategy” (Burgelman 1983b, 241), refining such ventures so that they fit with the organization’s mission, purpose, and constraints (Kuratko, Ireland, Covin, and Hornsby 2005). The efforts of middle level managers are therefore essential for enabling and encouraging entrepreneurial activity within the organization (Hornsby, Kuratko, and Zahra 2002; Kuratko, Ireland, and Hornsby 2004).
In this more complex view of strategy formation within organizations, top managers are not simply the initiators of strategy but managers of the entrepreneurial process (Wooldridge, Schmid, and Floyd 2008). Top managers empower lower levels to act entrepreneurially and then ratify initiatives that they deem beneficial for the organization. This ratification process takes time however, as top managers delay decision-making until some of the uncertainty surrounding entrepreneurial initiative has been resolved (Floyd and Lane 2000).

In the military context, a relevant concept to the idea of autonomous strategic initiative is mission command, a philosophy of decentralized command that encourages initiative by commanders at the field level (Ben-Shalom and Shamir 2011; Shamir 2011; Storr 2003). Mission command was first developed by the Prussian army in the 19th century in response to the challenges of modernizing warfare, which rendered ineffective the prior command model of total control that viewed subordinates simply as obedient automatons. In light of its advantages, mission command has been gradually adopted as a philosophy of command among Western armies since the 1980s, with varying degrees of success (Shamir 2011). Under mission command, lower level commanders are encouraged to exercise independent judgment, as their access to the ever-changing and uncertain conditions of the battlefield gives them an information advantage that can be exploited to devise effective military solutions quickly and flexibly. It thus envisions more complex and decentralized strategy-making processes than the traditional command philosophy of total top-down control. Put differently, mission command involves the delegation of authority to lower levels, by providing minimal parameters of commander intent within which subordinates are empowered and expected to exercise initiative, take risks, and act independently.
6.3.3 Delegation and Strategic Ambiguity

The previous sections have shown that managerial delegation of authority and encouragement of entrepreneurship empower the lower ranks and at the same time exploit their information advantages for the overall benefit of the organization. However, delegation of authority also promises other, more sinister benefits that have received far less attention. When managerial decisions can potentially generate negative consequences for top managers, they can avoid such consequences by delegating the decision down the ranks.\(^{25}\) In this way, delegation of authority provides plausible deniability for decision makers (L. Browning and Folger 1994; Ron 2000b), who can thereby shift the blame for negative outcomes.

This feature of delegation complicates the principal-agent relationship between organizational leadership and its ordinary members. In agency theory, principals are assumed to employ agents to increase efficiency. The principal's primary dilemma then becomes how to align the interests of agents with her own through monitoring and incentive schemes. Put in organizational terms, the manager's primary task is to design and implement organizational control mechanisms that ensure members interests, values, or beliefs are aligned with those of the organization. However, the blame shifting aspect of delegation reflects a deliberate desire on behalf of management to place some distance between itself and the lower ranks, so that plausible deniability can be achieved. In other words, such delegation indicates neither successful nor failed control, but intentional dissociation.\(^{26}\)

\(^{25}\) Research in economics has only recently begun to investigate the blame shifting aspect of delegation. See for example Bartling and Fischbacher (2012); Coffman (2011); Paharia, Kassam, Greene, and Bazerman (2009) and Hamman, Loewenstein, and Weber (2010). For an application in political science see Fox and Jordan (2011).

\(^{26}\) The notion of a misbehaving principal delegating tasks to scrupulous agents thus turns the majority of principal-agent theory on its head, as agency theory largely concerns the law abiding principal's efforts to curb the self-interest of her agents, given conflicts of interest and information asymmetries. In contrast, the situation here is one of a self-interested principal delegating responsibility to an agent so as to escape sanction.
In practical terms, the intentional abandonment of control is best achieved through the use of what I term, following Eisenberg (1984), "strategic ambiguity," or the intentional use of ambiguous language to achieve particular objectives. Strategic ambiguity is a method of communication that leaves many important matters unsaid and therefore open to multiple interpretations. It provides many advantages, as it allows for flexibility in implementation and minimizes potential for disagreement. As Eisenberg (1984, 230) argues, "People in organizations do not always try to promote this correspondence between intent and interpretation. It is often preferable to omit purposefully contextual cues and to allow for multiple interpretations on the part of receivers."

As a strategy of command, strategic ambiguity offers the important benefit of delegation of responsibility to lower ranks. The senior commander need only mention the goal – his subordinates are responsible for making sure that goal is achieved. In the case of misconduct and detection, subordinates are invariably held liable, as it is extremely difficult to produce evidence linking the senior commander to the crime. Strategic ambiguity thus allows commanders to exploit uncertainty as to who is actually responsible for violent behavior by delegating responsibility down the chain of command.27

### 6.4 Analytical Framework

Having laid out the key elements of the framework I can now elucidate the relationships among them, drawing on IDF practices in the Second Intifada to specify the process through

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27 The use of ambiguity and delegation does not necessarily implicate managers in illicit intentions. Intentions may be honorable and aimed at empowering subordinates or achieving organizational flexibility. Moreover, through strategic ambiguity commander can engage not just in "other deception," but also in "self deception," allowing themselves to continue believing they are engaged in no misconduct (Dana, Weber, and Kuang 2007).
which entrepreneurial violence emerges and the conditions under which it persists. The framework is summarized in Figure 6.1, and detailed in the following sections.

Figure 6.1 Process Model of Entrepreneurial Violence

6.4.1 The emergence of entrepreneurial violence

Entrepreneurial violence emerges, in Burgelman’s (1983a) terms, as an autonomous strategic activity. Three conditions are necessary for such violence to arise: Ambiguity, entrepreneurial individuals, and opportunities.

**Ambiguity:** First, the strategic context must be one of uncertainty and ambiguity. In other words, entrepreneurial violence does not encompass forms of violence that are expressly prohibited by the military's top leadership, nor forms of violence that have already been explicitly identified and incorporated as part of the organization's strategic repertoire. Ambiguity stems from several sources: Some ambiguity is inevitable as it is impossible to foresee and
mandate every form of individual behavior. This is particularly true in the field of combat, famously referred to by military theorist Carl von Clausewitz ([1931] 2008, 61) as the "province of uncertainty." Second, some ambiguity will vary between military organizations, depending both on their organizational culture and on the degree to which their structure is decentralized. The IDF, for instance, possesses a strong tradition of decentralization and a culture emphasizing leadership, independence, and innovation throughout the ranks (Ben-Shalom and Shamir 2011). Finally, some ambiguity is strategic, reflecting a deliberate intent on the part of the senior ranks to delegate responsibility and ensure deniability in the case of negative consequences.

An example of strategic ambiguity, noted with frustration by many former combatants, is the absence of clear rules determining how to enforce military authority at checkpoints in the event that Palestinians evaded movement restrictions. Barak, a former infantry officer, explained:

"I remember situations when we would detain someone at the checkpoint for several hours, I can't remember why, there were things like that. And there was a dilemma what [to do]: You can't arrest him, you're not a cop. You don't have the authority of a cop – handcuffs and onto the police car. On the other hand, if as a commander you see someone disrupting the operation of the checkpoint you want to solve it. Sometimes, most of the time, the Palestinian who is disrupting the checkpoint harms the population more than he harms the checkpoint itself. It creates mayhem and delays, so you ask yourself, what do I do? One of the solutions was to detain the person at the checkpoint and not let him pass or something. Is that ethical? Unethical? To this day I don't know how to answer that."

When I asked Barak whether the rules permitted such detention, he responded:

"The rules… there are rules, I'm trying to remember, I think that from the beginning we would encounter these problems with patrols and such, similar situations, of someone who essentially disrupts order and you want to do something to solve it, to maintain order. I think at first it was allowed, maybe, I really can't remember the details, maybe it was allowed within a certain time limit, just not to go crazy with it, but I think that after some time they decided that you don't do it anymore."

I pressed him further, asking what his battalion commander or other senior officer would say if the question of how to enforce authority was posed to him. What was the "correct" answer in this case?
"That's the whole complexity of it. I don't know [the answer.] Maybe the battalion commander knew how to give the right answer but if I don't know it, it means that from my perspective there's no clear answer… If I don't know then it doesn't exist from my perspective. It could be that I've forgotten, but other things are very clear to me, and I still remember what's permitted and what's not. So if I don't remember, or if I remember that it was unclear, then it means that it wasn't clear enough."

Barak's stumbling response reveals a fundamental ambiguity in which senior officers delegated authority down the chain of command, leaving commanders to devise their own solutions to the enforcement problem.

Strategic ambiguity was also evident in the offensive practices generally termed "disruption." During the Malloul trial, Major General Shamni was explicitly questioned about Malloul's disruption mission:

Q: Are you familiar with the "disruption brick"? Is that a military mission?
A: Familiar. It's an operational concept… not a mission. It happens with the necessary frequency.
Q: Are there orders?
A: In my opinion there are not, because it is not a mission, but a concept.
Q: Are you familiar with "creating deterrence"?
A: Of course.

Q: Are there orders?
A: You don't need [orders], because it's fluid. A "disruption brick" - when there's a threat, for instance, on a road with civilians, a variety of forces go out to prevent it and to create deterrence through their presence. It's a general name for the concept of the use of force aimed at disrupting hostile activity without specific intelligence, in a hot arena.
Q: Are there written orders?
A: No.

Q: Are you familiar with "floating intelligence"?
A: Yes, in a different context.
Q: With "creating turmoil in order to float intelligence"?
A: It can happen if there's a specific intelligence requirement and operational logic with appropriate preparation…

On the witness stand, the existence of "disruption" was confirmed by the Chief of Central Command, but its details and operating procedures remained shadowed. He acknowledged there
were no written orders regulating such tasks, arguing that disruption was not a mission but rather a fluid concept. From the perspective of ordinary combatants often deployed to perform this very task, the intentional ambiguity of definitions created space for the invention of practices which, while widespread, were not formally authorized.

**Entrepreneurs:** In addition to ambiguity, entrepreneurial violence requires the presence of enterprising individuals, or "violence entrepreneurs," who are aggressive, creative, and willing to bear the risk of uncertain outcomes. Such individuals are more likely to "think outside the box," identifying and exploiting opportunities in the external environment to better reach strategic goals and improve organizational performance. In the military context entrepreneurs are often junior level commanders at the squad, platoon, and company level, who have most access to information due to their intensive engagement in daily operations.

As has already been noted, the IDF has a tradition of encouraging aggressive initiative at the lower levels. Moreover, counterinsurgency and irregular warfare, which is typically carried out by small, geographically dispersed teams of soldiers led by relatively independent junior commanders, is particularly conducive to entrepreneurial behavior. It is therefore not surprising that enterprising commanders were fairly common in the Second Intifada. While many officers were satisfied with carrying out the missions entrusted to them, and in a few cases, found even those tiresome, entrepreneurial officers showed initiative and were proactive in initiating missions. One such officer, a commander of an elite unit, was described by Ethan, one of his former soldiers, as "bloodthirsty," after announcing to soldiers that he was "not afraid of peace":

"He said it to a room full of soldiers. It was like the guy was living in an action movie… Like, 'if we have nothing to do we [still] won't sit here with our hands folded'…And it was scary because he was bloodthirsty – we're here to kill terrorists. He wanted to take terrorists apart. You could see he was totally goal oriented… Some [commanders] are bloodthirsty, they go beyond their mission, I don't know, maybe it's a stupid 'ekshen' thing."
Daniel, a former platoon officer in an infantry unit, described with irritation the private initiatives his company commander used to take when stationed in the Nablus area, leaving him to deal with most of the administrative tasks:

"He would disappear. Every night he'd disappear. He'd go into the [built] territory with a few soldiers to create a commotion, shoot in the air, throw stun grenades. He would create a commotion and disappear all the time... and he was pleased! Every night he'd go into the village and shoot."

To emphasize, these were not rogue commanders carrying out private opportunistic missions. They were highly valued officers, who were not content with simply doing their jobs but constantly searched for opportunities in which they could take initiative to advance what they saw as the organizational goal of preventing terror and repressing the insurgency.28

Entrepreneurial officers often supported and encouraged their own subordinate commanders to take initiative. Doron recalled how an admired company commander empowered his subordinates:

"There was a company commander who, in terms of his drive towards contact [with the enemy], his professionalism, and especially the determination that he communicated in everything he did – just totally propelled us forward. But at the same time we were like kings... we felt like we were in the top commando unit. We'd sit at the base and get ready for special operations, I'd go on [special] operations whenever I felt like it, take vehicles and go wherever I wanted, to whatever Palestinian city I wanted and whatever village I wanted… we'd do any training exercise we wanted… complete and total endorsement: 'Have a good trip.'"

Similarly, Gilad described how mundane nighttime tasks of patrolling around settlements in the Nablus area could be turned with some initiative into more exciting missions in Palestinian villages:

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28 Like many other entrepreneurial commanders described in the interviews, the officers mentioned by Daniel and Ethan, whose identifying details have been obscured, went on to develop successful military careers.
"We used to set up checkpoints, patrol the area, and every once in a while we'd go into the village, especially at night, if our [superiors] agreed, if our company commander allowed us to do something a bit enjoyable. One night I asked if I could go around inside the village instead [of the usual patrol]. We just went around the village for an entire night, we initiated our own activity. I don't know if the battalion commander would have been happy about 4 soldiers walking around the village at night, the village was just on the outskirts of Nablus, but for us it was a bit of a head rush, a bit of adrenalin, and it was fun…"

**Opportunity:** Finally, entrepreneurial violence requires opportunity. Most obviously, entrepreneurial violence against civilians cannot occur without military access to civilians. Furthermore, opportunities are created when current strategy does not seem to be fully meeting its goals and is unable to sufficiently address all the problems or challenges it was designed to resolve. Such external circumstances create the demand for new, innovative solutions that go beyond the practices mandated and authorized by military leaders.

Offensive practices, for instance, were developed as a result of a fundamental problem plaguing counterinsurgency warfare: the fact that initiative regarding how and when to strike is held by the insurgent. Insurgents can time attacks to their advantage, lying low for much of the time, blending into the population, and reducing the effectiveness of counterinsurgency operations. This was precisely the problem the IDF encountered in the first eighteen months of the Intifada. Insurgent initiative was met with defensive operations designed to catch militants who had already embarked on attacks. Many militants were able to slip through the IDF's defensive nets and carry out violent attacks within Israel, and the IDF initially found itself unable to effectively target militants before they set out to strike.

This operational problem created many opportunities for violence entrepreneurs to devise innovative solutions. "Disruption" activities, for instance, were designed to create intelligence in situations when insurgents chose to lie low and no information existed as to their identity and whereabouts. Through random military activities in villages IDF officers hoped to create
upheaval that might generate intelligence and lead to the identification of militants. Stimulus and response operations, though much more sophisticated and risky, were born out of similar need. Proactive field officers in the paratroopers unit developed the idea of clandestine urban ambushes, craftily luring militants into the streets of Palestinian cities and refugee camps by creating a noisy diversion and then targeting them by concealed sniper fire. In this way they were able to overcome the problem of heavily mechanized forces in conflict zones (Lyall and Wilson 2009), employing "guerilla against guerilla" by using small bands of highly trained soldiers hidden deep in civilian areas. Doron, a former officer who had engaged in dozens such operations (which he called "initiated activities"), explained:

"Initiated activities were operations in which we would go out into the field... at the time at least it seemed true, the claim that if we engaged them in their own territory they wouldn't hurt Israeli civilians. That was the claim and it seemed very reasonable to me at the time, justified even... It's an operation with one objective: to kill terrorists. You go out into the field in all kinds of ways that are very suspenseful and very scary in my opinion... and it's very cynical... if something happens that night and you say, 'wow, we escaped death by a thread,' it was because we wanted to be there, because we went there without anyone telling us to, as an initiative of the unit commander... but the result is that you kill, injure, or capture terrorists..."

Defensive and population control entrepreneurial practices also reflected the identification and exploitation of opportunities to solve existing problems. For instance, moving through house walls made use of the spatial organization of Palestinian towns and refugee camps to address a basic problem in urban warfare: the vertical dimension that exposed soldiers to hidden sniper fire in the open streets. Similarly, various punishment and deterrence activities were meant to "educate" Palestinian civilians to comply with the regime of movement restrictions that the IDF imposed, addressing the problem of Israel's porous borders with the West Bank (prior to the construction of the separation barrier) and the tactical inability of the

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29 Bergman, "Code Name: Straw Widow."
IDF to control Palestinian space in its entirety. Oded, a former infantry commander, described how violence against civilians emerged from situations in which commanders were not given the tools to solve everyday problems:

"There was a road in our area that [Palestinians] couldn't use. And when people were caught there then I think they'd be detained for days sometimes…it's a decision that even a squad commander can make but it comes from above. It's basically that 'we don't have a solution so improvise in the field… We can't deal with it, so improvise.' They didn't know how to deal with that road because no matter how much they tried to block it, it would be broken open. So the response in the field was to leave people [who tried to pass] there, take their ID card and they can stay there..."

When I asked Oded what it meant to detain people on a road for several days, he was evasive:

"I don't remember that exactly, but say his car would stay there for example. People didn't stay for days, let's say he would stay for a day, but the cars would stay there... It's not confiscation, it's: 'your ID is at the checkpoint, come in an hour and get it.' If you cared, it would be there [when he came to pick it up.] If not, people would lose it."

In sum, the emergence of entrepreneurial violence is a bottom-up phenomenon, generated by enterprising individuals identifying and exploiting opportunities and enabled by ambiguity at the senior level. Having identified an opportunity for increasing the military’s effectiveness or solving a persistent problem, proactive, entrepreneurial commanders can formulate solutions to these problems, devising new violent practices to counter unresolved threats.

6.4.2 Endorsement and proliferation

Once a violent practice has emerged, its costs and benefits can be better assessed. The utility of a practice can be measured by its operational effectiveness and the degree to which it achieves its stated objectives. For instance, a violent practice designed to prevent repeated bypassing of checkpoints will be judged by its effectiveness in stopping the circumvention. The
risks of an emerging practice include operational risks, such as a disproportionate threat to soldiers, or legal risks, such as excessively violating the principle of distinction, thereby raising the likelihood of domestic or international scrutiny and condemnation. Some innovative practices are likely to be egregious failures, especially if it is patently clear that their costs far outweigh their benefits. When a violent initiative is clearly harmful to organizational interests the incident may be covered up at the lower levels or, if discovered, can lead to punishment for instigators.

One prominent case of failed entrepreneurial violence in the Second Intifada was what came to be known as the "Dahariya Incident," in which a platoon officer on a patrol mission in the Palestinian town of Dahariya initiated an unauthorized undercover raid with the objective of finding and killing a Palestinian insurgent. The soldiers, in civilian clothing, stopped a Palestinian cab, ordered the passengers out, blindfolded and tied up the driver, and began to drive in the town's streets. During their ride they encountered a civilian who aroused their suspicion and one of the soldiers shot the man, critically wounding him. Fearing the consequences, the soldiers left him to bleed, abandoned the cab and driver and returned to their base where they attempted to cover up the incident. When it was discovered the commanding officer was indicted and charged with multiple offenses. He was ultimately demoted and sentenced to 15 months in prison, and his brigade and battalion commanders were reprimanded.

The Dahariya Incident was a case of entrepreneurial violence in which the costs clearly outweighed the benefits. A group of soldiers from an ordinary unit, with no training in special operations and no suitable preparation, attempted to carry out a raid that they were unequipped to

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perform and who's only result was the wounding of a passerby. It was therefore apparent that such an operation would not be endorsed, and indeed, quickly realizing this, the soldiers unsuccessfully attempted to conceal it.

In contrast, in cases where entrepreneurial violence appears effective and its costs not prohibitive it is more likely to be endorsed by the supervising ranks. Once endorsed, the entrepreneurial initiative can be expected to spread to adjacent units, as it provides effective, or at least not overly risky, responses to actual problems. Roee, a former tank commander, explained that when the rules were ambiguous, checkpoint commanders could develop their own initiatives to solve operational problems, and these were later endorsed by higher ranks:

"One time I remember that…one of the [Palestinian] agricultural workers got angry because it took a long time to get merchandise through [the checkpoint]. So he thought, there are open areas [in the separation barrier], I'll just drive my tractor with the vegetables there. When we saw him we sent two vehicles to catch him and bring him back to the checkpoint, and as a punishment we not only checked each fruit as if it had a grenade inside, but we took apart his tractor, physically: 'Take the tractor apart, take the wheel off, take apart the engine, let's see it.' The goal was that he'd have to be stuck there all day. By definition, the punishment was to be stuck there all day so that by evening his vegetables would spoil. Now why would we do such a thing? So that next time he'd come to the checkpoint. And indeed after that beginning it didn't happen to us, because people understood that walla, if something like this happens I lose a workday, I'm now in their computer systems, and on top of it all my merchandise is spoiled, which is tremendous economic damage."

When I asked Roee whether such a step was within his authority, he responded that as a checkpoint commander he was authorized to do anything as long as he did not violate the law, and that his company commander would endorse him in retrospect.

Eventually, successful independent initiatives become what Wood (2012) calls "practice," spreading locally across several units and endorsed by their leadership. Mid-level commanders at the battalion, brigade, and division levels are key figures in this process, as it is they who determine whether or not to endorse the innovation and if so, how to link it to existing policies.
6.4.3 The Outcomes of Entrepreneurial Violence

Once a violent initiative has been endorsed by the intermediate ranks of command and has spread among several units, mid-level commanders are responsible for advocating such practices with the military's strategic leadership, so that they can be integrated into its strategic repertoire. At this phase, too, senior commanders are likely to conduct a cost-benefit analysis, assessing the utility of a violent practice as well as its potential risks. Several elements can influence this decision: First, individual differences between generals matter, as some are likely to be naturally more risk-averse than others. Moreover, the present circumstances of the military are likely to play a role in shaping the general's assessment of the expected utility of violence. Whether the military is perceived to be winning or losing, whether threat levels are high or low, and whether public opinion is pushing for a tough campaign or is relatively indifferent, are all factors likely to be taken into account. Finally, the level of domestic or international scrutiny will affect a general's perceived risk of authorizing entrepreneurial violence.

Ultimately, this calculation yields three potential outcomes: First, when the costs of an endorsed practice are perceived to clearly outweigh its benefits, it is likely to be explicitly rejected by the senior ranks, leading to the withdrawal of endorsement and prohibition of such violence. In the Israeli context, previously uncertain costs often materialized after unexpected media exposure or the initiation of legal proceedings. For instance, the use of Palestinian civilians during operations was a widespread practice in the first years of the Second Intifada. However, when seven Israeli and Palestinian human rights organizations petitioned the Israeli high court against this practice, the IDF immediately announced that:

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32 In the corporate context, this role is played by middle managers; see Burgelman (1983a, 1983b).
"In light of various complaints that reached the respondents, including, *inter alia*, the information detailed in the petition, and without expressing a position on the question of whether these complaints are true or not, and for the removal of any doubt, the IDF has decided to immediately issue an unequivocal order to its forces, pursuant to which there is a complete prohibition on all forces operating in the field to use civilians as such as a "human shield" from fire or attack by the Palestinian side, or as "hostages." The order also clarifies that this prohibition applies in homes, streets, and any area and place where IDF troops operate."

Ultimately, the High Court ruled that any use of civilians in fighting was illegal, forcing the army to curtail the practice.

Conversely, in cases where the strategic benefits of entrepreneurial practices clearly outweigh their costs, these practices are likely to be adopted and institutionalized by the senior ranks, thereby becoming part of the organization's strategic repertoire. For instance, "stimulus and response" operations, which initially emerged as the innovative practices of low-level officers, proved to be highly effective at targeting Palestinian gunmen in the streets of Palestinian towns, a preemptive measure that killed many militants and insurgents. Since the operations were highly targeted they did not come under public criticism. At the same time, while risky, the practice did not turn out to be costly in terms of soldier casualties. The innovation was thus institutionalized and become a central feature of Israeli counterinsurgency strategy. Similarly, the costs of moving through walls during large scale operations – severe damage to Palestinian property – were deemed far less severe than the advantages promised by such activity – minimization of IDF casualties from IEDs and sniper fire. As a result the practice was quickly institutionalized and incorporated into IDF strategy.

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34 Bergman, "Code Name: Straw Widow."
In many cases, however, the expected benefits and costs of a particular practice remain uncertain for some time, and it is difficult to determine which outweighs the other. Under such conditions senior commanders are likely to choose to maintain strategic ambiguity, delegating the responsibility for uncertain outcomes to the lower ranks. Strategic ambiguity sustains entrepreneurial violence, allowing it to continue as an endorsed but non-institutionalized practice for as long as outcomes remain uncertain. Examples of such sustained ambiguity in the Second Intifada include various "disruption" practices, as well as mild "punishment" or "educational" activities at checkpoints. Such practices involved violence against civilians but the scope of the violence was relatively limited, and included such acts as creating a commotion through the use of random fire or stun grenades in villages and towns or limited detention at checkpoints. As a result, the operational and legal costs of such activities were not particularly high. At the same time, the effectiveness of these activities was also uncertain. While in some cases civilians may have been deterred or intelligence may have "floated," in other cases neither measure achieved its stated goal. Given these uncertain costs and benefits, the most likely result was therefore continued strategic ambiguity as long as uncertainty remained. Entrepreneurial violence, then, is sustained by uncertainty of a practice's costs and benefits, and by the resulting unwillingness of senior commanders to end ambiguity by either institutionalizing or prohibiting it.

6.5 Compliance with Entrepreneurial Violence

I have argued in this chapter that entrepreneurial violence is a separate category of violence that follows a unique logic. As such, patterns of soldier participation in such violence differ to some extent from patterns of participation in strategic or opportunistic violence. My main argument in this dissertation is that the degree of soldier participation in violence is largely
shaped by organizational control. To the extent that violence was normalized by organizational control processes, it elicited high levels of compliance and enthusiasm. In contrast, when organizational control mechanisms failed to normalize violence, levels of compliance declined. In the case of entrepreneurial violence, organizational control processes were by definition ambiguous. As a result, such violence was greeted among some combatants with greater suspicion than ordinary strategic violence, leading in some cases to reduced participation.

Small unit commanders were particularly important in the implementation of entrepreneurial violence, as it was they who typically initiated such violence and needed to ensure their troops were behind them. Sometimes this task was relatively simple, as some soldiers needed little persuasion to engage in violence of any sort. Other combatants however were uncomfortable with ambiguous missions whose strategic benefits seemed unclear, since they stood in contrast to the clear authorization of strategic violence. Still others viewed entrepreneurial officers as overly hungry for "ekshen," taking undue risks for unjustified reasons. As with strategic violence, in the absence of effective organizational control at the small unit level, soldier participation was likely to decline.

David, a former infantry commander, was able to avoid "disruption" tasks that made him uncomfortable:

"Another thing we did besides checkpoints, occasionally, was that someone, usually an officer, would go on a mission, an initiated mission, we called it "entering houses," and that was something that really, really upset me. It really bothered me. I don't think I said anything or expressed it to my commanders but I did talk about it with my friends. An officer would take a few soldiers, decide to patrol in some village, and enter a house to conduct a search. It was different than anything I had experienced earlier in the army since there was no intelligence information or anything, just code words, "demonstration of presence"… so that they know that the IDF is there. I remember one officer coming back from a mission like that all excited like, 'wow, I surprised him when I came in through the window and he almost died in bed.' He said it like it was funny, I felt it was wrong, and it bothered me…There were a few cases like that. I didn't participate in those missions, I don't remember if they asked if I wanted to and I said no, or if it just didn't work out…"
Avner, a former combatant in an infantry unit of religious soldiers, also described his aversion to "disruption" activities conducted in the Bethlehem area:

"A lot of the arrests we did were for no reason, that is, we'd get information about a house and cordon it, and we'd take everyone out, check ID papers, and not arrest anyone... because we were trying to "create a sense of being hunted" ... that's what [those missions] were called... People didn't identify with "creating a sense of being hunted." With knocking on people's doors and going around inside and then exiting there were some people who identified more and others less.... We understood the rationale of [guarding] static posts, we understood that there were Israelis we needed to protect. OK. But the rationale of knocking on Palestinian doors at 2:00 AM, not so much... We kept asking why, and when they weren't successful in explaining it to us we didn't like to do it."

Enterprising small unit commanders used various means to control such soldiers. Sometimes, as evidenced by several passages in this chapter, they took just a few soldiers on such missions, whom they could trust would be as excited to participate as they were. When that was impossible they relied on a mix of formal and informal means to bring skeptical soldiers back in line. Doron, a platoon commander in an elite unit, recounted his attempt to use persuasion to restore soldiers' belief in the necessity and utility of risky "stimulus and response" operations, which at the time were entrepreneurial practices initiated by unit officers:

"During such operations there are a lot of [command and control] problems, like how do you keep hold of your soldiers. Because they tell you, 'OK, listen, what's up with this, enough.' There were weeks when we'd have three encounters [with armed militants], some of them with casualties, and they'd say 'OK, what do you want from us, let's do [only] what we have to do'... Soldiers suddenly start asking you questions, they ask themselves also. 'I'm ready to die for my country – when it's necessary.' ... So you have to sell clichés, but you better believe them or else it won't work. And other times the results prove [that the operations are effective]... I knew back then that I had to use clichés but clichés don't mean that it isn't true. I'd use a cliché to raise their morale a bit. But sometimes I didn't need to say anything because when you come back with a result, then, they understand."

While "stimulus and response" operations often had concrete results, as indicated by killed or captured gunmen, vague "disruption" activities were more difficult to justify. Nir, a former company commander, explained:
"Tasks such as mapping, they have no purpose. It doesn't give you anything. The likelihood of finding a terrorist in these kinds of missions is zero, it's totally meant to harass, to create an unpleasant feeling among the residents. And the results are more damaging than good. The likelihood of creating another terrorist in such missions is higher than the likelihood of finding one… Why do mappings? You see that the battalion commander stammers and comes up with some stupid answer, so you don't identify with it. What can you do, you're human after all. But you do it anyway, and you represent the system, and you educate your soldiers to do it."

Other times, when persuasion efforts failed, formal mechanisms were used to control soldiers, as evidenced by the story told by Ethan, a former combatant in an elite unit:

"There were some missions that made people raise an eyebrow, even in my team. There was an activity in a village near Jenin called "making noise," where the army purposely goes in to make noise so as to stir up the area because you know there is gunfire there. So you wake up the whole village, create a whole festival for them. And in my unit our entire team raised its head and said that the mission made no sense. So they told us to shut up and that's it. There was some anger, they tried to explain to us that that's how it went, and we tried to reach an understanding. We said there's no way we're doing something like that again. By chance it happened that we didn't do things like that again…"

A small minority of junior commanders simply refused to accept ambiguity, compelling officers to clarify the objective of the mission. As in the Malloul case, dispelling ambiguity necessarily led to a rejection of the practice. Yotam, a former platoon officer in an infantry unit, related such an experience:

"There's no such thing as "demonstrating presence." I checked it once. As a squad commander I was once sent on a "demonstrating presence" mission, and I said there was no such thing and refused to do it. I said there's no such military mission. My company commander and I went the battalion commander… It's true that company commanders order soldiers to do it, they tell them to go demonstrate presence. But there's no such military mission. There's a handbook of military orders… and there's no order that says to demonstrate presence. There's attacking, there's defending, there are lots of other missions… and I said I have no problem doing it but they can't call it "demonstrating presence," they need to give me a concrete task. So we went to the battalion commander and talked about it. Eventually we changed the name. It wasn't demonstration of presence. The battalion commander took my side; he said it really didn't exist…"

35 "Mapping" indicates a practice in which soldiers cordoned and combed a particular zone, recording information about its homes and residents.
When forced to confront the ambiguity of the widespread "disruption" practice of "demonstrating presence," the battalion commander acknowledged that it was not in the strategic repertoire and was forced to reorient the mission so that it fit the criteria of strategic violence. In contrast, Malloul's battalion and brigade commanders made a much less common choice on the witness stand, explicitly endorsing entrepreneurial violence and stripping it of its ambiguity. Consequently their testimonies were renounced, and they paid a personal price for their choice.

6.6 Conclusion

Despite the support he had received from his superiors, Lieutenant (res.) Adam Malloul was eventually found guilty as charged. Unlike the officers who had defended him on the witness stand, the court could not dismiss acts of violence against civilians as routine and normative, thereby definitively dispelling the ambiguity that surrounded "disruption" missions conducted across the West Bank. However, in its sentence the court decided that the 64 days Malloul had already spent under arrest, in addition to 32 days he had spent in house arrest, were sufficient punishment under the circumstances. His sergeant was demoted to the rank of private, but he too was not required to serve any additional time beyond what he had already served during the trial. A criminal investigation against Colonel Virob, Malloul's brigade officer, was launched after the trials, but was later closed. His promotion was delayed for two years, following which he was promoted to Brigadier General and appointed as chief infantry and paratrooper officer.

In its analysis of entrepreneurial violence, this chapter has sought to demonstrate that military strategy is a more complex phenomenon than implied by conventional top-down models.

36 Both men appealed the conviction. As of the date of writing Malloul's appeal is still pending. His sergeant's appeal was accepted and the case was sent back to the first instance.
focusing on the calculations of military elites, and that the relationship between armed group leaders and ordinary soldiers and commanders is not limited to conventional agency problems alone. Armed conflict is characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity, both unintended and strategic. Under such conditions, entrepreneurial junior officers have incentives to develop proactive violent practices, exploiting new opportunities and taking risks. In the event of success they gain credit, glory, and advancement. At the same time, senior commanders can delegate the risks of uncertain outcomes to their most enterprising officers, thereby avoiding responsibility should such ventures fail.

The theoretical framework proposed in this chapter was developed inductively based on the Israeli-Palestinian case, further developing the notion of a middle category between strategic and opportunistic violence analyzed by such scholars as Ron (2000a) and Wood (2012). By specifying the conditions for emergence and persistence of entrepreneurial violence, the model developed here can be tested in other conflict contexts. Primarily, it suggests that the institutionalization, rejection, or continued ambiguity surrounding a particular practice of entrepreneurial violence will depend on its relative costs and benefits as assessed by senior generals examining the practice once it has been endorsed by mid-level officers. In cases where costs and benefits remain uncertain, strategic ambiguity can be expected to continue, enabling the persistence of entrepreneurial violence.
"At the end of the day, how to treat the population is also a type of order. You're carrying out orders. It’s a mission just like any other, like preparing for military drills … If you treat your mission seriously and in a measured way, and you don't get enticed by what's around you or act excessively, then it will manifest at the checkpoint also."¹

7.1 Introduction

Chapters 5 and 6 explored violence committed by combatants in pursuit of strategic goals. In Chapter 5, I examined the dynamics of participation in strategic violence, or violence that is authorized and ordered by military superiors. Chapter 6 introduced and analyzed the category of entrepreneurial violence, initiated from below in the interests of the military under conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity. This chapter shifts the focus of analysis from violence that soldiers commit to advance strategic interests, to violence that they commit for their own benefit, or "opportunistic violence."² I define opportunistic violence as intentional harm inflicted by combatants on civilians that is (a) not planned, ordered, or authorized by military superiors, and is (b) carried out by combatants for their own benefit rather than the benefit of the military organization. The functions of opportunistic violence are diverse, and include violence for instrumental purposes, such as personal enrichment, as well as violence with no apparent purpose that is carried out in response to real or perceived provocation.³

From a contractual perspective, opportunistic violence can be viewed as a specific instance of the classic agency problem, in which conflicts of interest and information...
asymmetries lead ordinary soldiers, or agents, to diverge from the interests of their superiors, the principals (Gates 2002; Hoover-Green 2011; Mitchell 2004; Weinstein 2007; Wood 2006b).

From an organizational perspective, opportunistic military violence is a form of organizational misconduct, as it violates the legitimate interests of the organization (Trevino, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006). 4

This chapter also differs from its predecessors in its style of inquiry. Since there are relatively few theoretical accounts of variation in soldier participation in strategic and entrepreneurial violence, chapters 5 and 6 employed an inductive approach, utilizing data from the Second Intifada to build and develop theory. In contrast, theories of participation in self-serving aggression, violence, and misconduct are far more developed, enabling a deductive approach aimed at testing, rather than building, theory, based on within-case analysis. I rely on two sources of data: an exploratory online survey of Israeli ex-combatants, as well as combatants’ own interpretations for violence expressed in interviews (for a full description of these sources see Chapter 3). Since the soldiers sampled were not selected at random, the study cannot be used to make inferences regarding patterns of violence in the Second Intifada. It can, however, suggest provocative tendencies grounded in evidence regarding the correlates of opportunistic violence, and specifically, regarding the central role of organizational control in reducing opportunistic violence.

Opportunistic military violence, like violence in general, is a product of many factors, both individual and situational (Anderson and Huesmann 2003). Individual differences increase

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4 Organizational misconduct has been studied under a wide variety of labels, such as workplace or employee deviance (R. Bennett and S. Robinson 2000; Hollinger and J. P. Clark 1982), counterproductive work behavior (S. Fox and Spector 2005), organizational misbehavior (Vardi and Weitz 2004; Vardi and Wiener 1996), and organizational ethics (Kaptein 2008; Tenbrunsel and Smith-Crowe 2008; Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006). While definitions vary somewhat from construct to construct, I use the term generally to refer to violent behavior that violates organizational norms or deviates from its interests.
the propensity of some people to behave more violently than others given the same opportunities (Farrington 1998). Situational variables are elements of the social situation that are likely to trigger aggression and violence (see Fiske, Harris, and Cuddy 2004 for a review). Many of these variables are plentiful in violent conflict, thereby creating a high risk that combatants will lash out opportunistically. Nevertheless, as others in the organizational approach have argued, in this chapter is that effective organizational control can reduce opportunistic violence. Moreover, I argue that organizational control acts as a moderator variable, moderating the detrimental effects of some of other risk factors for violence.

To test these proposed relationships I consider two factors often linked to opportunistic violence against civilians in the Israeli-Palestinian context: Duration of deployment among civilians, and revenge, arguing that in the Israeli-Palestinian case, social-psychological processes of moral disengagement and routinization are more likely to be associated with opportunistic violence than heated passions such as the desire for revenge. Next I consider the effects of organizational control on opportunistic violence, operationalizing control by three indicators: Strength of the unit commander, compliance with rules governing operations, and sanction systems. I also examine the potential role of unit morale, hypothesizing that opportunistic violence is negatively associated with well-functioning structures of command and control and high morale. Finally, I hypothesize that command and control structures moderate the effects of deployment duration, such that prolonged deployments should have a stronger effect on opportunistic violence in units with weak command structures than in units with well-functioning structures of command and control. The chapter thus proceeds as follows: I first discuss the variation in the dependent variable, opportunistic military violence in the Second Intifada. I then lay out my central hypotheses regarding the determinants of opportunistic violence and present
my results. Next, I turn to interview data to shed additional light on the mechanisms underlying the observed associations, before closing with an assessment of alternative explanations.

### 7.2 Variation in Opportunistic Violence in the Second Intifada

Repertoires of violence vary among armed groups and from conflict to conflict (Hoover-Green 2011; Ron 1997, 2003; Wood 2009, 2012). In a study of soldier misconduct during the Second Intifada, Minka (2003) identified ten behaviors which constituted primary forms of opportunistic violence in the 2000-2005 period: Stealing money, taking "souvenirs" or material goods (looting), threatening to use firearms when not necessary, damage to symbols, confiscation of property, physical violence, vandalism and destruction of property, taking property in exchange for granting benefits (forced bribes), verbal abuse, and detention of Palestinians at checkpoints for no purpose. This list is consistent with the evidence from my own interviews as well as data collected by local NGOs. For the sake of clarity I collapsed these forms of violence into four categories: physical; non-physical (e.g. humiliation, harassment, and false detention); violence against property (e.g. vandalism, property destruction); and taking private property (e.g. looting and forced bribes.)

**Levels** of opportunistic violence across time, space, and military units are much more difficult to estimate than its most prevalent forms.\(^5\) Despite the relatively high scrutiny of IDF military violence by local and international media outlets and NGOs, there is no systematic data on the prevalence of opportunistic violence, in particular non-lethal.\(^6\) In most cases Palestinians

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\(^5\) This paucity of data is not unique to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Systematic data on opportunistic violence in conflict is essentially non-existent, due to such factors as difficulties in access to conflict zones, the highly sensitive nature of the topic, and the fact that opportunistic violence, like organizational misconduct in general, tends to be concealed by its perpetrators.

\(^6\) Complete data do exist on casualties from lethal force, but in many cases strategic and opportunistic lethal violence are hard to distinguish. Moreover, much of the opportunistic violence in the Second Intifada was non-lethal.
do not file complaints against such violence and due to its typically covert nature, it is difficult to systematically monitor through external observation. While some Israeli organizations, most notably "Breaking the Silence," collect testimonies from soldiers, such soldiers are a self-selecting group that is widely perceived as unrepresentative of the soldier population. Others have attempted to study violent behavior based on internal military investigations and court records, but even when these are accessible, they form only the tip of a much larger iceberg. Systematic data on variation in opportunistic violence among combat units is nonexistent.  

As noted at the outset, the data collected for this study cannot be used to draw inferences about general prevalence rates due to the inability to randomly sample combatants or violent events. However, the data does suggest three general observations with respect to prevalence: First, opportunistic violence, as behavior that deviates from organizational interests, norms, and rules, is a relatively low base rate phenomenon in the IDF, a modern, well-organized military. This is consistent with the argument that organizational control constructs such violence as deviant, unlike violence that advances organizational goals. Second, rates of opportunistic violence nevertheless fluctuated dramatically among units, over time, and through space. While some respondents described opportunistic violence as a routine occurrence in their units, others rarely encountered it. And finally, though most combatants, most of the time, did not commit opportunistic violence, it nevertheless was common enough to be witnessed by a majority of combatants during their deployment.  

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7 Yesh Din was able to induce the IDF under the Israeli Freedom of Information Act to provide very limited data on internal investigations of criminal offenses by soldiers against civilians and their property per combat unit, see Yesh Din (2008), and discussion in chapter 3.  
8 One respondent, who had served as a commander in Combat Officer Training School, recalled a class he had given cadets on ethics in combat. He began by asking each participant to give an example from his platoon of abuse of Palestinians, and every participant found it easy to do so.
These trends are demonstrated in the survey I conducted among Second Intifada veterans. My sampling method, described in more detail in Chapter 3, included snowball sampling as well as sampling via the social networking site "Facebook," a modern-day adaptation of the location-based sampling methods traditionally used to sample hidden populations. Of the 118 completed surveys, 42% were sampled through Facebook and 58% through snowball sampling. Nearly all IDF regular ground units are represented in the survey, including its five infantry brigades, its armor, artillery and engineering corps, and its independent/special forces.

The dependent variable in the dataset is an index summing four items representing the primary categories of violence against civilians in the Second Intifada: physical violence, verbal abuse/humiliation, destruction of civilian property, and taking private property. While subject to important limitations, multiple item self-report measures are a primary means of measurement in other domains of opportunistic behavior, such as workplace deviance in organizational studies (R. Bennett and S. Robinson 2000; S. Fox and Spector 1999), and deviance and delinquency in criminology (Osgood, McMorris, and Potenza 2002; Thornberry and Krohn 2000). In both of these fields self-reports are used due to the recognition that reliance on statistics of perpetrators who have been caught is likely to vastly underestimate the problem.  

To ensure only opportunistic violence was measured and not violence ordered by military superiors, items were referred to in the survey as "infractions" and were included in a list of various infractions that sometimes occur in military units, the majority of which were not related to violence against civilians, such as refusing orders, destroying army property, violating guard duty, etc. To minimize the perceived threat of self-incrimination as well as to reduce social desirability bias, respondents were asked to report levels of each form of violence in their unit rather than their own

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9 For further discussion of multiple item self-report measures for deviant behavior see Osgood, McMorris, and Potenza (2002).
engagement in violence. Responses were arranged on a Likert type scale ranging from "none" (0) to "very high" (5). Inter-item reliability analysis of the four items produced a relatively high Cronbach Alpha of 0.85.  

The reported levels of opportunistic violence among survey respondents are presented in Figure 7.1. It is of note that over 85% of respondents reported having witnessed at least one incident of opportunistic violence in their unit, and approximately 18% reported witnessing high levels of at least one form of opportunistic violence. While it is likely that these figures are underestimates, due to the sensitive nature of the topic and to social desirability bias, they are nevertheless remarkably high compared to other estimates of opportunistic violence based on different data sources. For instance, an internal IDF study leaked to the press found that approximately 25% of soldiers had engaged in or witnessed abusive behavior at checkpoints. Reliance on official statistics such as court or conviction records would have led to estimates that were much lower still (Yesh Din 2008).

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10 As an additional robustness test the analysis was repeated on all four items separately. The core findings remain substantially unchanged, with the possible exception of taking private property, on which a few of the estimated effects in some of the models changed somewhat. Further research would be required to determine whether this results from the distribution of the item, which is the most skewed of all items in the index, or whether the logic of looting differs from the logic of other forms of opportunistic violence.

11 Yossi Yehoshua, "Abuses are Revealed" (in Hebrew), Yediot Ahronoth, 16 December, 2007. Abusive behavior was defined broadly and included such items as physical abuse, verbal humiliation, taking bribes, and unlawful detention. An unnamed senior officer quoted in the article stated that "we knew there was a problem, but did not assess it to be so severe."
7.3 Predictors of Opportunistic Violence

There are many reasons why combatants might commit opportunistic violence against civilians. Violence may result from individual attributes, such as personality traits, socio-demographic factors, gender, age, attitudes or values. Combatants are overwhelmingly likely to be male and young, two factors that are consistently associated with aggression and violence (Barling, Dupré, and Kelloway 2009). Violence can also be triggered by elements of the environment or social situation, such as aggressive cues (objects that prime aggressive thoughts), interpersonal provocation, frustration, and pain and discomfort (Anderson and Bushman 2002), all of which are highly present in conflict. Nevertheless such violence is highly variable, and is often absent even when expected. In this section I first consider the role of two situational variables: duration of deployment, and revenge. I then consider the role of organizational factors.
7.3.1 Duration of deployment among civilians

One factor I propose is associated with opportunistic violence is the psychological effect of prolonged deployments among civilians from another group, in many cases a group identified with the enemy. Compounding the ordinary preference that people give their own group over outgroups is the conflict situation that creates sizeable asymmetries of power between soldiers and civilians. Civilians are low status opponents, which tend to elicit contempt and disgust (Fiske, Harris, and Cuddy 2004). Individual norms against violence erode over time with repeated exposure to moral dilemmas, through well documented processes of moral disengagement (Bandura 1990, 1999), dehumanization (N. Haslam 2006; Huggins, Haritos-Fatouros, and Zimbardo 2002), desensitization (Bandura 1978), and routinization (Kelman and Hamilton 1989). In the Israeli-Palestinian context, opportunistic violence is often attributed to prolonged deployment among civilians and to the resulting numbing and erosion of norms (e.g. Elizur and Yishay-Krien 2009). Long term deployments among civilians are frequently cited as explanations when cases of opportunistic violence surface in the Israeli media.12

The process of moral disengagement has been studied most extensively in the context of violence and aggression (see also chapter 2). This process refers to the selective disengagement by people of moral standards and inhibitions to which they have been socialized. Moral standards can be disengaged in four ways: First, by reframing the violent behavior itself so that it is understood as morally justified; second, by displacing or diffusing responsibility of an agent for the violent act; third, by disregarding or minimizing the act's harmful consequences; and fourth, by denying the victim of violence, either through victim blaming or through

12 See for example Yuval Azulay, "Kfir soldiers abuse, and officers admit: We are in a bad period," (in Hebrew), Haaretz, 24 February, 2008; Uri Blau, "Chief Education Officer in a letter to soldiers: Stop printing abusive statements on shirts" (in Hebrew), Haaretz, 1 April, 2009; Amos Harel, "Officers testified in support of Givati soldiers convicted of endangering a child" (in Hebrew), Haaretz, 26 October, 2010.
dehumanization (Bandura 1990). Importantly, the process that leads to the removal of ordinary inhibitions against violence is a gradual one. As Bandura (2002, 110) observes, "Disengagement practices will not instantly transform considerate persons into cruel ones. Rather, the change is achieved by progressive disengagement of self-censure. Initially, individuals perform mildly harmful acts they can tolerate with some discomfort. After their self-reproof has been diminished through repeated enactments, the level of ruthlessness increases, until eventually acts originally regarded as abhorrent can be performed with little anguish or self-censure."

A second, perhaps related mechanism is the tedium of repetitive, mundane tasks, and the desire of soldiers for action and thrill. Acts of violence, especially in the aggressive context of the military, can create excitement and entertainment when it is absent. As Baumeister and Campbell (1999, 215) argue, "in many cases, the perpetrator may not even be seeking or intending to cause harm. The goal is to find something arousing and enjoyable, and this could be reached by a broad variety of excitement such as pranks or diversions. Exuberant, risky, physically stimulating activities are sought. The outcome may seem evil to the person who unfortunately ends up being harmed by the acts, but it is very possible that evil was the farthest thing from the perpetrator's mind prior to the event."

To measure deployment duration, I asked respondents to indicate the areas in which their unit served, corresponding with the four major zones of activity for the combat units of the IDF: Israel's northern border, Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza. I also asked how long they were deployed in each area. Responses were measured on a 5 point scale indicating the following increments: "no time" (0) "less than 4 months" (1) "4-8 months" (2) "8-12 months" (3) "12-18
months" (4) and "over 18 months" (5). Duration of service in the West Bank was used to measure deployment among civilians, as this was the zone in which most direct soldier-civilian interaction took place. Hypothesis 1: Opportunistic violence increases as duration of deployment among civilians increases.

7.3.2 Revenge

An alternative theory attributes opportunistic violence against civilians to heated emotions and passions, most notably the drive for revenge. The approach linking violence against civilians to heated emotion, reviewed in chapter 2, is especially prevalent in the literature on ethnic conflict, much of which focuses on the role of intergroup animosities and passions in fostering violence (Horowitz 1985; Kaufman 2001, 2006). Similarly, Petersen (2002) develops four models that describe processes that lead individuals to commit violence against ethnic others: fear, hate, rage, and resentment. Such accounts are rooted in psychological explanations that emphasize affective mechanisms, arguing that certain conditions trigger aversive stimulation, raising the likelihood of an aggressive or violent reaction (Anderson and Huesmann).

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13 Respondents reported the durations of their own deployments with particular units, an indicator that is generally correlated with the length of deployments of their units as a whole. Some units served in particular zones for extended periods of time, leading to extended deployments for their individual members. For instance, the Kfir Brigade discussed later in this chapter was deployed solely to the West Bank, such that respondents who served in Kfir reported long deployments in that zone. Other units rotated between zones of deployment, thereby shortening the deployments of individual combatants in particular zones. For example, armored units rotated between the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel's northern border. Respondents who served in such units therefore typically served only a few months in the West Bank.

14 Service at the northern border and Lebanon in the period under study provided almost no opportunities for contact with civilians. In Gaza direct contact with civilians was limited as well, as for the most part soldiers operated from within fortified posts protecting Israeli settlements and roads. As discussed in chapter 4, special operations among civilians were limited and typically large scale, heavily fortified, and carefully orchestrated from above, leaving much less room for opportunistic behavior. This was confirmed in the survey data, as the West Bank was the only zone positively and significantly related to opportunistic violence.
The emphasis on heated emotions stands in stark contrast to explanations such as Bandura's theory of moral disengagement (1999), which contend that in many cases violence results not from aggressive emotions and drives but from the gradual cognitive recasting of the meaning of violence so that it is no longer understood as wrong or immoral.

Two indicators were employed to measure revenge. First, I collected data regarding the number of conflict-related combatant deaths per each IDF unit represented in the sample.\(^{15}\) Several studies have found battle losses to be related to strategic violence, both by states (Downes 2006, 2008) and rebel groups (Hultman 2007). By a similar logic, battle deaths might also drive opportunistic violence by creating rage and vengefulness among combatants. In the context of irregular war where distinctions between militants and civilians are blurred, the more deaths a particular unit sustains, the more likely it is to lash out in retaliation against civilians on the opposite side. Accounts of the My Lai massacre, for instance, emphasize the role of mounting casualties suffered by the Charlie Company in the weeks prior to the massacre, and the resulting demand for revenge among soldiers (Bilton and Sim 1993; Olson and R. Roberts 1998).

**Hypothesis 2:** *Opportunistic violence increases as the drive for revenge rises.*

### 7.3.3 Unit morale

Military morale has long been studied as a predictor of military effectiveness and performance (Britt and Dickinson 2006; Gal and Manning 1987). Morale is defined as "the enthusiasm and persistence with which a member of a group engages in the prescribed activities

\(^{15}\) A full list of Intifada-related casualties is maintained by Israeli Human Rights Organization B’Tselem. Each casualty on the list was matched with his military unit using publically available sources. Data was collected for units of roughly similar size.
of that group" (Manning 1991, 455). A high level of unit morale would thus indicate a large number of individuals with high enthusiasm. Unit morale has been linked to a number of positive outcomes, such as psychological wellbeing and resistance to stress (Britt, Dickinson, Moore, Carl A. Castro, et al. 2007) and military effectiveness (Motowidlo and Borman 1978). In light of the positive consequences of morale it is plausible to hypothesize that units with high morale will be less likely to engage in self-serving, opportunistic behavior.

To measure morale, respondents were asked to rate the level of morale in their unit on a 5 point scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). This item is commonly used to measure morale both in military surveys and in scholarly studies of military morale (e.g. Bliese and Britt 2001; Maguen and B. T. Litz 2006).

**Hypothesis 3:** Opportunistic violence is negatively related to high morale.

7.3.4 Organizational Control

In order to enforce armed group leader notions of strategic violence and prevent opportunistic violence, the command hierarchy must function properly, allowing for communication along the chain and command (Wood 2009). Prohibitions against opportunistic violence must be inculcated in combatants through training and rules of engagement, and enforced through formal and informal control mechanisms. Small unit commanders are central figures in this process, at it is they who are given authority over soldiers in the deployment phase. To effectively enforce the preferences of armed group leaders, small unit commanders must be strong and authoritative in the face of negative influences from below. To assess the
effects of organizational control I examine three indicators: Commander authority, compliance with operational rules, and sanction systems.

**Commander Strength**

A strong command structure is necessary for commanders to exercise authority and for soldiers and commanders to communicate with one another. State militaries are typically centralized, hierarchical institutions. Nevertheless, due to principal-agent problems down the chain of command, the strength of the military hierarchy will depend on the strength of the individual links in the chain and their ability to enforce their authority on their subordinates. When commanders are weak and lack authority, competing sources of authority can emerge undermining the hierarchical group structure. In such an environment it is hypothesized that opportunistic violence will be more prevalent, as commanders will be less able to enforce rules and norms prohibiting opportunistic violence against civilians.

Commander authority was measured by the number of privileges exercised by the senior cohorts in the unit (i.e. those who had served in the unit for over a year), on a scale ranging from 0-11. Units where senior cohorts received no extra privileges received a score of 11, and each privilege reduced the score by one point. This measure of commander strength is independent from the existence of violence, as senior privileges are associated with particular unit traditions and exist regardless of where soldiers are deployed. As discussed later in this chapter, the number of privileges granted to the senior cohorts is an important indicator of how well the unit's hierarchy functions. Privileges range from the relatively benign (no more kitchen duties) to the disruptive (exemptions from disciplinary rules and requirements), to more extreme privileges that utterly undermine hierarchy, allowing soldiers from senior cohorts to punish or impose tasks
on their more junior counterparts. In units where senior cohorts are strong, commanders are by
definition weak, as they are unable (or unwilling) to impose discipline on all but the most
vulnerable members of the unit. An informal hierarchy is created in the unit in which the primary
mark of authority is not rank but seniority, severely undermining and challenging the authority of
the formal chain of command.16

**Hypothesis 4:** Opportunistic violence is more common in units where commanders are stronger.

**Compliance with operational rules**

In addition, soldiers in units with well functioning command structures should exhibit
compliance with rules governing behavior during operations, unrelated to the treatment of
civilians. Commanders who are able to induce compliance with such rules as preparation of
equipment, briefing and debriefing before and after military tasks, maintenance of alert
conditions, etc. are likely to be stronger than those who do not or cannot enforce such rules.
Moreover, soldiers who are disciplined in following operational rules are likely to also be
disciplined in following rules relating to violence.

To measure compliance, respondents ranked on a ten point scale to what extent seven
operational rules were enforced in their unit. Cronbach Alpha for the seven items was 0.85.

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16 Amos, a former platoon commander in the Golani infantry brigade, described the detrimental effects of the
informal hierarchy: "Being a platoon commander is really complicated… as an officer the [senior soldiers] tell you
they expect you to be the professional figure. They say, 'let us manage [daily] affairs…let us be in charge of junior-
senior relations, we'll do what we want, we'll organize the shifts, we'll do the maintenance, let us worry about
everything. You can lead us in ambushes.' And then immediately afterwards they tell you 'you're not professional at
all, we're much more professional than you. You know nothing, you've done nothing. Were you deployed with us?
Did anyone fire at you?'… It's a problem. For instance, an officer is not allowed to inspect his soldiers, their
weapons, their equipment… And it's something pretty basic for a commander to inspect his soldiers' equipment…
The junior soldiers will let you do it, but you can't touch the senior ones. You're really not allowed… it's an order
that a senior soldier will disobey without thinking twice. It's grounds for mutiny… Who's a popular officer? An
officer who lets them do what they want."
**Hypothesis 5:** Units in which soldiers have a high degree of compliance with operational rules engage in less opportunistic violence.

**Sanctions and Punishment**

Formal control mechanisms are hypothesized to play a role in reducing levels of opportunistic violence. In units where punishments for opportunistic violence are severe, potential violators will be deterred from violent behavior. The logic of deterrence is not uncontested however. Empirical studies of the effects of organizational punishment have had mixed results, with some showing positive outcomes for punishment, others stressing the indirect effect costs of punishment which are said to outweigh benefits, and still others finding a more complex, non-linear relationship between severity of punishment and misbehavior (Tenbrunsel and Messick 1999; Trevino 1992; Trevino, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006). The hypothesis I test here is consistent with the more conventional deterrence model.

As a measure of formal control, soldiers were asked to identify the typical punishment a member in their unit would receive for each of the four items included in the dependent variable. Punishments were then ranked by severity as follows: "none" (0), "verbal reprimand" (1), "fine" or "grounding to base" (2), and "incarceration" (3). The punishment measure is an index of the average punishment for violence against civilians in the respondent's unit. Cronbach Alpha for the scale was 0.73.

**Hypothesis 6:** Opportunistic violence is less prevalent in units where violence against civilians is punished severely.
Beyond its direct effect on opportunistic violence, I propose that organizational control structures should moderate the detrimental effects of prolonged deployments on opportunistic violence. Commanders are responsible for ensuring that soldiers remain in line with prescribed rules, regulations, and norms, even as the passage of time makes the preservation of such discipline increasingly difficult. Thus, prolonged deployments among civilians should have less effect on opportunistic violence in units in which control is strong, than in units in which control is weak. This logic generates two hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 7:** Commander strength acts as a moderating variable, reducing the association between duration of contact with civilians and opportunistic violence.

**Hypothesis 8:** Severity of punishment acts as a moderating variable, reducing the association between duration of contact with civilians and opportunistic violence.

**Control variables:**

I controlled for two additional variables that may have had effects on opportunistic violence: Whether respondents were soldiers, NCOs, or officers, and whether or not the respondent was in an elite unit.

**7.4 Analysis of Survey Data**

Table 7.1 presents summary statistics for variables used in the analysis. While the dependent variable exhibits substantial variation its mean is relatively low. This is likely attributable, at least in part, to the fact that opportunistic violence in an organized state military, like deviant behavior generally, is a relatively low base rate phenomenon.
### Table 7.1 Summary Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunistic violence (square root)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of contact with civilians</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit losses</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian deaths (per month of service)</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>23.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commander Authority</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>8.42</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment of Opportunistic violence</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite unit</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2 reports the zero order correlations among the dependent and independent variables.

### Table 7.2 Intercorrelations among Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opportunistic violence (square root)</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>-0.57***</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>-0.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Duration of deployment among civilians</td>
<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Unit losses</td>
<td>-0.19*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Civilian deaths per month</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Morale</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Strength of Hierarchy</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Compliance with operational rules</td>
<td>0.28*</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Punishment of Opportunistic violence</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Role</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Elite unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in table 7.2, presenting bivariate relationships, indicate that duration of deployment among civilians is a significant predictor of opportunistic violence, in support of hypothesis 1. The desire for revenge, as measured both by unit losses and civilian deaths, is not associated with opportunistic violence and neither is morale, providing no support for hypotheses 2 and 3. All three organizational control measures are negatively and significantly associated with opportunistic violence, providing initial support for hypotheses 4-6. In addition, table 7.2 shows that a number of the variables are correlated with one another, in particular various measures used to measure organizational control. Of the control variables, membership in an elite unit was negatively associated with opportunistic violence.

Standard OLS regression was used to test the hypotheses and identify the independent effects of the measures used (table 7.3). Since data on deviance and misconduct have the characteristic of being positively skewed, I transformed the dependent variable using a square root transformation before conducting analysis. In each of the multivariate models I tested specifications with and without moderation effects. Because one of the measures – severity of punishment of opportunistic violence – contains many missing observations, I report in columns 1 to 2 the results excluding the variable and columns 3 to 4 the results including it. In models 2 and 4, the predictor variables were centered before creating the interaction term (Aiken, West, and Reno 1991).

\[\text{A recent strand of research in criminology has advocated the use of tobit regression in the case of self-reported measures of delinquency, as these are characteristically skewed and bounded at zero, provided the dependent variable has first been transformed to reduce skewness (Osgood, Finken, and McMorris 2002). Tobit analysis of the multivariate models yielded similar results in terms of coefficients size and significance levels.}\]
Table 7.3 Predictors of Opportunistic Violence - Multivariate Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration of contact with civilians</td>
<td>0.22***</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit losses</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian deaths</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of Hierarchy</td>
<td>-0.14**</td>
<td>-0.16***</td>
<td>-0.13*</td>
<td>-0.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment of Opportunistic violence</td>
<td>-0.76***</td>
<td>-0.75***</td>
<td>-0.76***</td>
<td>-0.75***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite unit</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of contact with civilians x strength of hierarchy</td>
<td>-0.07**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of contact with civilians x punishment of opportunistic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R2</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effect of duration of deployment among civilians retains its size and significance in all models. In contrast, both measures of revenge have no significant relationship with opportunistic violence, and only the civilian deaths measure takes a positive sign. This provides strong support for the argument that disengagement and routinization, not rage and revenge, are associated with opportunistic violence in the Israeli-Palestinian context. As hypothesized, measures of command and control are negatively and significantly associated with opportunistic violence. Unit morale does not seem to be related to opportunistic violence, nor does soldier or commander status. Furthermore, once command and control variables are controlled for, the elite unit measure no longer exhibits independent effects. All of these findings are discussed in the next section.
**Moderation effects:** As hypothesized, commander authority significantly moderated the relationship between deployment duration and opportunistic violence. However, while the interaction with severity of punishment carried the expected sign, it was not significant (p=0.31), providing no support for hypothesis 8.

Figure 7.2 shows the duration of contact with civilians – opportunistic violence relationship for units with command structures that are one standard deviation above the mean (i.e. strong commanders) and units that are one standard deviation below the mean (i.e. weak commanders).

**Figure 7.2   The Moderating Effects of Hierarchy Strength**

For soldiers in units with weak commanders, the simple slope for the relationship between duration of contact with civilians and opportunistic violence was positive and differed significantly from zero ($b=0.37$, SE=.07, $t=5.1$, $p<0.001$). For soldiers who were in units with strong, authoritative commanders, the simple slope remained positive but did not differ significantly from zero ($b=.05$, SE = .08, $t=0.63$, $p=.53$). This provides support for Hypothesis 7,
as breakdown of hierarchical structure strengthens the association between duration of deployment and opportunistic violence.

The findings support the hypothesis that extended deployments among civilians, not the drive for revenge, are an important determinant of opportunistic violence. This finding is consistent with social psychological theories regarding the gradual erosion of social and individual norms against violence against a low-status out-group. While rage and revenge may play an important role in other contexts, the prolonged and routinized nature of Israeli counterinsurgency and military occupation in the Occupied Territories appears more likely to foster feelings of disengagement and desensitization than heated passions.

However, the findings also tell a more complex story about the deleterious effects of extended deployments, suggesting that these effects can be limited by well-functioning command structures: Commander authority, though not punishment, was found to have a moderating effect, mitigating to a large extent the effects of long deployments on opportunistic violence. While the nonsignificant moderating role of punishment may simply be a result of the reduced sample size, it could also point to a substantive finding, suggested throughout this study, that commanders can be more successful in inculcating prohibitions against opportunistic violence through such "positive" means as personal example and strong leadership, rather than through "negative" means such as severe punishment. Further research would be required to investigate this question.

Contrary to expectation, unit morale was not found to be significantly associated with opportunistic violence. A possible explanation for this is that opportunistic violence can itself raise levels of morale, creating bonds between participants through their witnessing of, or participation in, illicit behavior (D. K. Cohen 2010; Wood 2009). The data also suggest an
interesting finding regarding elite units. In the bivariate analysis elite units were found to be negatively and significantly associated with opportunistic violence, suggesting that members of elite units were less likely to engage in such behavior. This observed relationship is consistent with popular perceptions in Israel that admire members of elite units as "higher quality" soldiers. However, once factors related to organizational control are controlled for, the association loses its significance, suggesting that the difference between elite and regular units is explained by the much stronger control and discipline structures existing in elite units rather than the individual characteristics of their members.

7.5 Analysis of Interview Data

My interview data confirm the survey's central findings, highlighting the injurious effects of long deployments, as well as the central role of organizational control in reducing opportunistic violence. This section discusses both of these factors, considering the processes that produce opportunistic violence.

7.5.1 Deployment duration:

The most dominant interpretation that soldiers themselves gave for opportunistic violence was long, tedious deployments and the resulting processes of disengagement. Eran, a former infantry combatant, put it this way:

"When you meet combat soldiers you see it's the best people, the highest quality people there are. You'd never dream if you met one of them that they could behave badly towards someone. They help old ladies cross the street… But when you taken anyone and put him in a situation… like this which is impossible, day after day after day after day, you lose, I'm not sure that it's your humanity, you lose your concern for others. And that's the main problem. "
Tomer, a former engineering officer who had overseen dozens of house demolitions in the course of his military service, gave a chilling example of this gradual numbing:

"The truth is that I must admit it didn't do anything to me. I'd like to tell you now that it was sad, but I didn't care … Sometimes there was a moment of discomfort, but even when [the victim] was someone completely [innocent], the army wouldn't rush to demolish his house… but even boarding up his windows, which essentially meant he couldn't live there anymore, it didn't make me feel bad... It didn't break my heart… I didn't care. I could, for all intents and purposes, eat a snack while I was doing it. No emotion really."

The interviews also shed light on the mechanisms linking deployment duration to opportunistic violence. Two processes of moral disengagement were particularly dominant in my interviews: Minimization of the consequences of violence, and denying or blaming its victims.

**Minimization of the consequences of violence:** In many interviews, the consequences of opportunistic violence were portrayed as trivial, minor, and not particularly harmful, or in Hebrew, "shtuyot" (see Chapter 3). Such trivialization allows perpetrators to perform acts of violence without the moral self-restraint that would inhibit their behavior in other settings. Gal, a former infantry soldier, was told by a friend that his platoon officer in an adjacent company used to make Palestinians stand in line and then throw food into their mouths, later forcing them clean the mess. When Gal criticized the behavior, his friend responded that the abuse was silly, minor, and that Palestinians weren't really hurt since it was just a joke. Similarly Ethan, a former special forces soldier, recalled an officer who was prone to doing "shtuyot," such as blowing up half of a building instead of just its door, and "all sorts of other things that were a little out of place."

Respondents often noted that they had encountered "trivial" acts of opportunistic violence, but nothing serious. Yair, for example, said that during Operation Defensive Shield some members of his unit took "souvenirs," but he never saw anyone break into a safe and take money or loot a home. Guy noted that at checkpoints, some of his "retarded friends would do silly
things, nothing extreme like beating." Matan recalled that some of his soldiers had done "little things, like take prayer beads from a car, nothing horrible, not a total humiliation of the person."

Oded, when asked about harassment of civilians at checkpoints, responded that "these are things that happen that you hear about, maybe not beatings, but games and stuff – that happens." And

David, when discussing how civilian belongings were treated when soldiers were deployed inside private homes, said that "I think using [private] property is erosion that's natural psychologically, or something, because how long can you avoid using the bathroom or taking a shower? It's not like you're destroying anything."

**Dehumanization:** A second mechanism through which moral inhibitions can be disengaged over time is through dehumanization of the victim, so that his suffering engenders no empathy and hence discomfort or distress (Bandura 2002). Prolonged deployments among civilian populations facilitated a gradual process of dehumanization in which civilians came to be seen by many combatants as one nameless, faceless mass. As Erez explained,

"The power you are given as a soldier at the checkpoint is immense. You control other people, control them forcefully with weapons. And suddenly the need and purpose of your control begins to fade. Because if you're only doing it for the security of the state, there's no reason to humiliate people. But time goes by and your contempt for these people grows, and you become more and more inconsiderate of them, and suddenly you no longer see them as individuals but as a society… Your values and your common sense are no longer as clear as they were initially. Your patience begins to wane, your annoyance grows, and your violence rises…"

Ido, a former infantry soldier, also described a process in which civilians were dehumanized over time as combatants grew increasingly tired and dejected. The same people he initially tolerated eventually seemed disgusting to him:

"In the beginning when everything is new to you then the attitude [towards civilians] is more or less as it should be, but after a while as time goes on you understand that you're tired of it, with all the gloominess and resentment you simply take it out on them. Now, it's not exactly like there's no reason to take it out on them, right? Because ultimately they're the reason why you're there. But there's a difference. The more you have contact
with them and the more you work with them, the more you hate them. Or at least that's how I felt…"

7.5.2 Organizational control

While respondents gave several interpretations of the causes of opportunistic violence, nearly all agreed that commanders played a key role in contributing to or curbing levels of violence in their units. The military is after all a highly hierarchical organization in which soldiers must obey their commanders on matters ranging from dress code to charging forward under enemy fire. Commanders therefore possess the authority and power to shape and restrain soldier behavior towards civilians. Yoav, a former infantry combatant, explained:

"The way you behave towards the population…depends on two factors. First of all, on the person himself, that is, who he is, what kind of person he is, what home he came from, what world he came from. And the second thing is who his direct commander is. And when I say direct commander I mean even his squad commander, because that's who's typically with you in most of these places: the squad commanders and maybe the platoon commanders… these are the people that can influence this issue."

Many respondents, former soldiers and commanders, gave examples of cases in which commanders were able to prevent incidents of opportunistic violence. Oren was a junior tank commander whose subordinates were all older and more experienced than he. On one occasion he was asked by his tank's driver whether he could drive over cars for entertainment:

"I told him he couldn't. I don't remember if I threatened him, but I forbade it. Those soldiers didn't particularly care about what I said, but if you say no – you have real authority over them. I had the [official] authority and they didn't, what can you do. It's not that they didn't listen to me because they weren't nice or something… but just because they usually knew better than me what to do, or how to behave… But in this case the soldier had no choice because if I tell him 'No' than it's clearly forbidden, and if I decided to make an issue out of it, and I would have made an issue out of it, it was clear [that he would get in trouble.]"
Similarly Barak, a former infantry soldier and officer, argued that behavior at checkpoints would reflect the behavior of the commander, since it was he who had the ultimate authority and power of decision.

In a few cases respondents compared the levels of opportunistic violence in their units to other units, identifying the approach of their commanders as the most central factor in determining violence levels. Aviv, a former infantry commander argued that opportunistic violence was "all a matter of education. [Some] is the education a person came with from home, and much of it is education from commanders, who set the course for how to treat [civilians.] That's the most influential factor." He described an adjacent platoon that was much more "trigger happy," in his terms, and at the same time, much less disciplined:

"That platoon was much more lax, less disciplined. There was a difference between platoons. [That one] was less disciplined, more "hood," with a more exuberant atmosphere. And I think there's a connection, because ultimately how you treat the population is also following orders, it's a type of mission."

Opportunistic behavior generally, and opportunistic violence specifically, reflected deviance from military strategy, orders, and interests. Units that were more professional and controlled were therefore less likely to engage in opportunistic violence. Yossi, an officer in an infantry brigade notorious for its levels of opportunistic violence problems, explained that discipline, professionalism, and ethical behavior were impossible to separate:

"Professionalism is automatically connected with ethics… I can't imagine a soldier who is unethical and is professional. It's impossible. Because… a soldier that understands his mission is a professional soldier. But if you start pushing and hitting people then you didn't understand your mission and you're unprofessional. You're not using your energies properly."
Commanders at the small unit level could use both formal and informal control mechanisms to shape soldier behavior and restrain opportunistic violence. The remainder of this section discusses the most prominent of these mechanisms.

**Formal controls: Punishment and monitoring**

My survey findings demonstrate that more severe punishments are associated with lower opportunistic violence. Interview findings shed more light on the conditions under which punishment is more likely to be effective, given difficulties in monitoring soldiers and the sometimes counterproductive effects of punishment. I found that punishment was more likely to be used in cases when the entire command structure in a particular unit made a concentrated effort to eradicate a particular form of behavior. A case in point is a directive that was apparently issued regarding the use of property in private homes during large scale offensive operations.\(^{18}\) Initially, the use of property in private homes was fairly rampant, as described by Doron, who was a combatant in an elite unit at the outset of Operation Defensive Shield:

"What we did then that was wrong, but it wasn't clear back then [that it was wrong], was to use their furniture, sleep on their beds. I think that the IDF didn't know at the time, it wasn't aware that it was wrong, as an army. It was the beginning; we didn't do the Occupied Territories before that. So those were the parts that were really wrong, though as a soldier I didn't see it that way. We slept on their beds, we sat on their chairs, ate at their tables. We did use our own food and I don't remember taking anything, but still, if I think about a soldier sitting and opening a can of food on my table I would… you know?"

However, it seems that in the course of the operation the practice began to change, as several respondent reported prohibitions issued by their commanders regarding the use of private property. Yair, who served in the paratroopers, recalled the change, effected much to the frustration of soldiers, who didn't view the use of private property as opportunistic at all:

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\(^{18}\) I surmised the existence of such a directive as it was reported by several respondents who served in different units in similar time periods.
"For two weeks you're in a home, and you use it like your own, and rightly so. You need to sleep so you take old mattresses. And then at some point… there was a new directive: 'You can no longer sleep on their beds.' Because we used to sleep on their beds… They often have a pile of mattresses in the corner, so we could take the mattresses and spread them on the floor. And then there was a period when they said we weren't allowed to use anything, not even their mattresses. So we used to argue… 'We sleep 3 hours a night and you tell us to sleep on the floor? What happened? It's a military necessity! What's the difference between using a table as a post and sleeping on a mattress? I'm willing to sleep on the floor if necessary but I want to use the mattress.' I remember commanders would come in and yell at us not to sleep on the beds, and kick us off the beds."

I heard similar accounts from combatants from other paratrooper units as well as from other infantry and armored units. And while the mere presence of a directive did not guarantee its enforcement, it seems that the concentrated effort to eradicate a practice increased its likelihood of success, and several respondents noted that the directive was strictly enforced by commanders, with violators receiving reprimands or being temporarily grounded to their bases.

In other cases, sanctions were initiated and enforced locally, typically by mid-level officers such as brigade or battalion commanders. When the elimination of particular practices were important to them, these relatively high-ranking commanders had sufficient power to ensure their directives were enforced, if they so chose. For example, Lior's unit was charged with opening gates in the separation barrier to allow Palestinian civilians access to the "seam zone" (see Chapter 3). When deployed in the Tulkarem area, the soldiers had regularly arrived late at the gate, requiring civilians to wait in varying weather conditions in order to access land, educational or health facilities. However, after the soldiers deployed to the nearby area of Qalqilya, the practice changed:

"The Qalqilya area commander was not the Tulkarem area commander. It was a totally different person. We changed commanders, and he was very strict. If the gate had to be opened at 1:00, it would be opened at 1:00, not 1:01 and not thirty seconds after 1:00. We had just arrived from Tulkarem and we were used to getting there at 1:30 because the patrol had other things to do, not out of malice … and by the time we got there it took a half an hour. So one platoon commander was fined, another one was grounded for a weekend, the company commander was reprimanded, and then the company commander"
issued a directive that 1:00 is 1:00 no matter what happens... Even in Tul Karem when we opened late we felt a little bad about it, when we arrived and saw 150 Palestinians waiting in the sun, elderly people and children, it's disturbing. But we thought, 'OK, what can we do.' But it turns out there is something you can do, because if you get slapped for it you'll find a solution.

Punishment, then, was more likely to be effective when originating from relatively senior officers and when enforced on the entire unit. For junior commanders, the authority figures charged with shaping combatant behavior on a regular basis, punishment was less likely to be used as it could stir resentment, anger, and resistance among soldiers, making the commander increasingly unpopular. Such junior commanders could risk paying a heavy personal price, from becoming a target of anger, to being ostracized, and eventually even to mutiny or removal from command. Naturally, deteriorating relations with soldiers would have a negative effect on commanders' ability to lead, in combat and otherwise. Many commanders found it hard to resist such social pressures. As Oded explained:

"[Discipline] really depends on how much you're willing to take a risk, how much you believe in it. If you believe something has to be a certain way then you do it and that's it, and you pay a personal price. Here and there you have explosions with soldiers. It's much easier to play it safe and avoid conflict."

A related problem was the difficulty in shaping combatant behavior through punishment when commanders in a particular unit differed among themselves on the extent to which punishment should be used. In addition to making the strict commander unpopular, punishment was simply ineffective when imposed inconsistently. Soldiers were keenly aware of differences among commanders and would simply ensure that violence took place under the supervision of

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19 This finding is consistent with studies of organizational punishment that link the effectiveness of punishment with its perceived fairness (see Trevino and Weaver 2010 for a review). When punishment is not evenly distributed by commanders, it is more likely to be perceived as unfair and therefore cause resentment.
those considered more lenient. Nadav recalled how members of his unit had used their APCs to flatten cars for entertainment:

"In the West Bank they did it sometimes… I have to admit that we had that in our company… it's not supposed to happen. Some officers knew about it, and some officers didn't. It’s part of knowing who you're with, or more precisely, who you're up against – who your platoon officer is and who your company officer is."

Given the limited effectiveness of punishment, some junior commanders determined to restrain opportunistic violence struggled instead to increase monitoring, in an attempt to prevent violence by their very presence. Daniel, a former infantry officer, was particularly concerned about opportunistic violence by his soldiers, but knew that other commanders in his unit were far less strict. His solution was to attempt to directly monitor soldiers so as to prevent such violence.

"I would constantly move from guard post to checkpoint, constantly. There was just one post that I never visited, an isolated watchtower, because I didn't care if my soldiers didn't guard properly. I only cared if things happened under my [responsibility] that I opposed. For instance, you go to the checkpoint and see a Palestinian standing in a puddle, and you ask the soldiers, who are under the supervision of a sergeant, 'what's up?' and he responds, 'he was wearing a Hamas t-shirt so we're making him wait in this puddle.' Or once they beat up a photographer because she came to take pictures at the checkpoint. Stuff like that… I come to the checkpoint, so they tell me."

Punishment did not seem to be an option for Daniel, who fought an uphill battle with other commanders less concerned about checkpoint abuse. Instead he hoped that by increasing his presence at sites of contact with civilians he would be able to stop violence before it happened. Similarly Ariel, a former infantry officer, used increased monitoring to curtail another common practice of opportunistic violence – beating detainees after they were arrested. After he realized that detainees were sometimes severely beaten when taken to investigation, he made sure to sit in the back with his soldiers, rather than in his place at the front:

"During my first arrest [as an officer]… I opened the door of the jeep and asked 'Where is the Palestinian? Where is the prisoner? Where is the prisoner?' A jeep can hold barely eight people, say, and we had sixteen people, and a dog, and a prisoner. But where was the prisoner? I couldn't see him. It turned out that someone was sitting on his head… They sat on him the entire ride… When they brought in the prisoner I saw red marks on him, he was beaten up badly, it looked like [he had burned with] a cigarette… and it became obvious that in the few minutes when I wasn't with him somebody totally beat him up…. So [after that] I always tried to sit in the back with the prisoner, almost always… They knew it was important to me but even if they didn't [beat him] just because I was there – that was already something."

But as these officers well knew, while punishment and monitoring might have prevented some incidents of opportunistic violence, they were difficult to implement consistently and had limited effectiveness in circumstances when violators had ample opportunity to commit violence without superior knowledge. As a result, many former combatants and commanders I interviewed stressed the importance of positive leadership based on informal control, rather than formal control mechanisms such as strict orders and punishment. Itay explained:

"If the platoon loves the commander they'll do things because they love him, not because they'll get punished or because that's what they have to do. They'll do things for him, that's how I felt, that you do things in order to please him."

**Informal controls: Commander Authority and Leadership**

While my survey found that severity of punishment was negatively associated with opportunistic violence, punishment was not found to have a significant moderating effect, in contrast with commander authority. While this may be due to reduced sample size, my interviews suggest an alternative explanation. In the daily operations of combat units, junior commanders used punishment much less frequently, preferring to employ informal control mechanisms that relied on positive example, leadership, and education to shape combatants behavior. Nir, a former platoon and company officer, explained:
"I think what happens after [the violent incident] is less important, less influential, than what happens before. Because what happens is that people make a direct connection between a particular act and the commanders' response. When [commanders] talk to you beforehand, before something happens, and discuss the issue, then you understand that it's important. It's no longer related to something you did or didn't do, it's an important topic on the agenda, a topic we need to talk about... That's how I see it. Punishment is always perceived as related to a particular incident – [e.g.] he took a box of cigarettes so was put in jail for a week, or something, I'm being extreme of course. So the punishment is just because he took those cigarettes. But if you talk about it beforehand it sinks in deeper, I think."

Given the drawbacks of punishment, effective commanders typically relied on their own leadership skills to shape combatant behavior, repeatedly communicating to their subordinates the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate, acceptable and unacceptable. Yossi, a former platoon commander, described such a tactic:

"When you send out a mission, you add a few words at the end ... and try to influence them a little ethically. 'Guys, these are human beings, you're talking to a grandfather, imagine that it could have been your grandfather. Think [how you would feel] if a soldier would come and talk to your grandfather like you're talking. Imagine a bit what it feels like on the other side.' I'd explain to them that ultimately, a very small percent is problematic, and they can't let the stress and fatigue affect their discretion. 'Be professional; check [only] what's really important. If you need to come and take apart a vehicle because it seems right to you then do it, but don't do it to every vehicle because you'll create a traffic jam, and that jam endangers us and isn't professional, and it isn't ethical. Use discretion so that you can really use your power properly.' I would give them the feeling that I want them to be professional and ethical at the same time."

Barak, a former infantry officer, explained that he was very concerned with ethical problems at the checkpoint.

"Statistically, these checkpoints create many more ethical problems than operational successes, like catching a weapon or something. Statistics. And it's really important to be strict about that and emphasize it. There was no checkpoint shift that I briefed where I didn't emphasize it. Obligatory. Obligatory, obligatory, obligatory. Totally. It was really important to me, and important to the company in general... And of course we as officers behave accordingly."
Even more important than these formal messages were the informal messages that commanders communicated to their subordinates through their own behavior. As Assaf put it:

"A commander doesn't need to say anything. It's enough that on a mission a soldier gave some civilian, some Arab, a little slap and the squad commander or sergeant didn't say anything – that's it. The soldier interprets it as permission. And the next time when he's alone he'll do more. Soldiers in the beginning don't know what to do, so they look at the commander, for instance – how he checks someone, how he talks to someone – and they learn… A soldier always watches you, how you do things, what you do, and it really matters a lot."

Yoav emphasized the importance of small unit commanders in determining soldier behavior at checkpoints:

"You're standing at a checkpoint. How do you behave? You have power in your hands at a checkpoint and a civilian arrives… There's the potential of doing anything you wish, because he comes to you, you're there with a weapon, and whatever you say will happen. So what will you do? What won't you do? If there's a squad commander with you, then he can tell you, he can monitor events and tell you yes or no… If the squad commander is not like that, if he's the type of person who would himself slap a Palestinian, the checkpoint will mirror that. And if he doesn't do it… if he's a sufficiently responsible and dominant leader, such things won't happen if he decides that they won't happen."

In squads and platoons where commanders were careful in their treatment of civilians, opportunistic violence was less common, even if not completely absent. Lior described the influence his squad commanders had on him and his peers:

"I learned a lot from my squad commanders… my commanders had a lot of respect and appreciation for the civilian population and they tried to convey that to us soldiers. It's not something we talked about, but things we saw and pretty much everyone imitated them. I say pretty much because there were a few that didn't."

At the same time, commanders who modeled abusive or careless attitudes towards civilians were likely to be imitated as well, raising levels of opportunistic violence in that particular unit. Josh, for instance, was attached for a few months to a tank unit stationed in the Nablus area. He described the unit as trigger happy, often shooting for no apparent reason. One commander had
even killed a child as a result of negligent firing. He gave several examples that indicated that levels of opportunistic violence in the unit were relatively high. It was therefore not surprising when Josh described the behavior of unit commanders, which provided a model for excessive violence.

"I remember there was an incident when a Mercedes tried escape the battalion deputy commander… He chased him until he reached an alleyway or someplace he couldn't escape, brought a bulldozer, and erected dirt barriers around the car so that it couldn't move anywhere. The driver was inside."

When I asked how soldiers reacted to the incident, he responded,

"It was really funny, it was considered really cool, like what a cool deputy battalion commander we have. It spread like wildfire, it was the coolest thing there was."

In sum, small unit commanders had a variety of means at their disposal to bring soldiers back into line and reduce opportunistic behavior generally, and opportunistic violence in particular. Formal control mechanisms and sanctions could be used in some circumstances to align combatant preferences with those of the military by raising the costs of opportunistic violence. In cases where monitoring was difficult or directives against opportunistic violence were unevenly enforced, some commanders used informal mechanisms to shape commander beliefs, norms, and values, reducing the temptation of resorting to violence and moderating the effects of long deployments.

7.6 Obstacles to Organizational Control

The previous sections treated the exercise of organizational control as relatively unproblematic, due to the authority given to commanders by virtue of their positions in a hierarchical organization. In practice, however, the exercise of effective control during the deployment stage is much more complex than suggested by the mere presence of an authoritative
hierarchy and formal power to issue and enforce orders. This section discusses two obstacles to effective organizational control: unit structure, and the decentralized nature of counterinsurgency warfare. When commanders did not successfully overcome these obstacles, opportunistic violence increased.

7.6.1 Unit structure

As noted earlier in this chapter, a central factor limiting the exercise of effective control in IDF combat units was a well entrenched informal command structure, privileging seniority over rank. In many units, the informal command structure and its regulation of status was so strong that it dominated nearly every aspect of daily life. When asked how much of their time was preoccupied with seniority-related issues respondents, most replied between 70% and 90%. Fighting such established social codes was difficult and socially isolating, and many officers simply give in, concentrating on their many duties and allowing senior soldiers to manage the daily affairs of the company. In such units disciplinary problems in general and opportunistic violence in particular were especially common.

Some forceful commanders tried to break the informal structure, abolishing senior privileges and attempting to reestablish authority. Yet by doing so, they risked losing the trust and cooperation of their subordinates. As Nadav, a former NCO, explained:

"When a new platoon officer arrives from officer training, there's nothing you can do, officer training makes them proud, and he walks around all smug like 'I'll do what I want, this is my platoon.' Often they don't understand that they're entering a system that's already running. It works. And one of the roles of the sergeant is to explain how things work, who the soldiers are, and to bring him down to earth a little bit, to reality."
Many officers quickly understand that to avoid conflict and retain cooperation they would need to relinquish some of their authority. Those who tried to fight the informal structure could fail miserably, as recalled by Avishai:

"The platoon commander was very strict with his soldiers, and over time the problems started. Real problems. [He would tell people], 'Come, we're going on patrol' and they'd say – 'we're not coming.' … People went to jail for it… Two or three went to jail, the leaders who were already indifferent to everything, their senior privileges were taken away, they had nothing to lose, they were with their backs to the wall. Other guys had something to lose, they're junior, they didn't want to go to jail or be removed from combat, so they shut up and waited for him to leave on his own. And he did leave on his own because he didn't get along socially. Eventually he couldn't be there anymore, he couldn't be with soldiers who did what he said but had no relationship with him. He couldn't talk to them and ask them what's up, [they'd respond] 'ok, I don't want to talk to you. I hate you and I don't want to talk to you.' It's impossible to function socially in a place like that. You need to be with these people 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and it's impossible!"

Avishai's narrative demonstrates that weakened control not only leads to increased opportunistic violence but also to reduced participation in strategic violence, as argued throughout this dissertation. His commander's overly strict discipline undermined his attempts at establishing control, ultimately leading to combatant shirking from missions.

Only a few commanders had the leadership skills necessary to challenge the well-established informal structures and restore the formal chain of command. As Amos explained,

"There are unique individuals who are able to buy the platoon. I don't know how they do it. They have special charisma, and they're somehow good enough politicians. They manage to get along with the sergeant somehow, and generally make things go the way they want them to."

I interviewed a few such unique commanders, who approached the process of winning over the soldiers as an art form, a mix of discipline on the one hand and forging supportive relationships with soldiers on the other. One such commander was Ariel, who served in one of the IDF's most notoriously unruly units as a soldier and later as a platoon officer, and was
successful in establishing control over the most undisciplined soldiers in the unit. Ariel was familiar with the power of the informal command structure from his time as a soldier. When he first entered the platoon and was summoned to an introductory talk with his platoon officer, he recalled that his sergeant took him aside and said "Now you're going in to talk with the platoon commander. Whatever he says to you, you listen and say yes, and then forget about everything. Everything you need should go through me."

Understanding these dynamics, Ariel emphasized the importance of building a command staff that supports the formal command structure. One of his first steps was to have the popular company sergeant removed from the unit after he found out that he had ordered one of the junior soldiers to disobey the formal dress code and punished him for refusing to do so. Ariel forbade senior members of the company to disturb the sleep of junior members by imposing menial tasks on them, sleeping in the soldiers' tent rather than in officers' quarters to ensure his orders were obeyed. He made sure that only one junior soldier at a time was sent to kitchen duty, breaking the tradition that junior soldiers slaved away for hours as a hazing ritual.²¹ When senior soldiers balked and threatened him, he had them removed from the company. Ariel attributed some of his success to luck, since his own commanders were very supportive and his soldiers ultimately complied even when they could have been more resistant. Indeed, other respondents who successfully fought the informal command structure emphasized the importance of institutional support as well as sheer luck. Uri, an officer in the engineering corps, described his experience in what he called "regaining the power":

"The only way to do it is by force, by giving them painful blows, and doing it constantly. Not physical blows but punishment. Dealing with every deviance. Not ignoring anything.\footnote{The Golani infantry brigade was particularly notorious for such rituals. One respondent described how after he and other junior soldiers had cleaned all of the bathrooms, the company sergeant made them do it again because the faucets weren't turned towards the wall. Another described how after he and his friends had washed hundreds of dishes, the company sergeant arrive, poured oil and spices everywhere, and forced the soldiers to wash them again.}
If a junior soldier guarded two hours and fifteen minutes instead of two hours, I'd take care of it... It's not just to my credit, it was my platoon, but the other platoon commander also did a really good job, and we had support from our company officer...The company first sergeant was also with us, he came from another unit and not from inside...which was really significant. So to establish himself he also had to exercise a lot of power and he did. We all did....Also, we were able to do it [in our company] because our senior soldiers were relatively weak. It was easier to break them... But if you ask me today whether I'd be willing to do what I did again, I'm not sure. I had a really big ego then. It's smaller now..."

As demonstrated by the survey findings, weak commanders and a strong informal hierarchy promoted opportunistic violence. In many cases, it was easier for commanders to simply not monitor their soldiers, or to look away from violent incidents, so as to avoid conflict.

Nir, a former combatant and officer who served in various combat roles for over six years, reflected:

"When you hear about ethical problems in the Occupied Territories, in my opinion, I didn't do a survey, but I think that in 90% of the cases of ethical misconduct the commanders were junior. I'm almost sure. Whether it's a platoon commander who recently arrived, a squad commander whose soldiers are more senior than he is, a new company commander who hasn't established control yet...The senior cohorts in the senior companies place a great deal of emphasis on experience and professionalism, and who are you, fresh out of commander training, to tell me what to do when I've been standing at this checkpoint for a year. And it's natural and it's the biggest problem, because the minute you arrive as an inexperienced junior, it doesn't matter what you say, you're considered inexperienced and that's it. I'd see it when new platoon commanders would arrive at the company...You have to be a very, very, very emotionally strong person to issue directives and give orders."

Several accounts in my interviews suggested that Nir's intuition was correct. Matan, who served as a squad commander in a senior infantry company, emphasized that commanders have the power and authority to stop opportunistic violence, but nevertheless sometimes choose not to exercise that power.

"One of the memories I carry from that period, is that one time at a checkpoint I was reluctant to face soldiers who took prayer beads [from civilians.] It's something I'm ashamed of but I've come to terms with. It was one of my first shifts as a commander, and I didn't feel confident yet, so I allowed soldiers to do things I could have easily stopped.... Had I stopped it, it would have stopped, no question. You know, it was a little thing, taking
one string of beads from a vehicle, not something terrible, not totally humiliating for the person. There were lots of justifications at the time, but it was especially not wanting to deal with the senior soldiers there, and maybe to appear more cool for the guys, because even as a commander you're still one of the guys."

Other respondents recounted similar experience. Avishai, for example, reported relatively high levels of opportunistic violence in his unit, including physical violence and humiliation of civilians. When I asked if commanders knew, he explained that commanders had to choose their battles if they were to maintain leadership over the platoons:

"Look, let me tell you something, if the commander had seen or heard about very serious abuse...I think he would have reported it. I don't think he would have let it happen. But there are some things you have to close your eyes to, so that you can reach a point where you can actually report something you want to report."

7.6.2 Counterinsurgency and the "strategic corporal"

In an influential article in "Marines Magazine" published in 1999, the former commander of the U.S. Marine Corps, Charles Krulack, coined the term "strategic corporal" to describe the importance of small unit commanders in modern military operations. Unlike conventional warfare in which combatants operate in large units, asymmetric and counterinsurgency warfare is based on operations in small teams, often far from the sight of supervising officers. In the Second Intifada, many of the IDF's operations were performed in teams of 3-6 soldiers. Moreover, in an era of instant communication and heightened media exposure, the actions of such junior commanders are often highly visible and can therefore have strategic effects (Kilcullen 2006). As Krulak (1999) notes, these changing battlefield conditions requires small unit leaders, often NCOs, "to confidently make well-reasoned and independent decisions under extreme stress – decisions that will likely be subject to the harsh scrutiny of both the media and the court of public opinion."
The use of small teams led by NCOs was a feature of IDF counterinsurgency warfare as well, in particular for defensive and population control measures.\(^\text{22}\) Units were often deployed in broad, geographic areas, with platoons operating very far apart. Platoons were also fragmented, with small groups of soldiers conducting routine missions such as checkpoints, patrols, and watches. As a result, many officers rarely saw their soldiers together in one group.\(^\text{23}\) These evolving and geographically dispersed frameworks made monitoring very difficult and often impossible, considerably weakening organizational control. Daniel, who served as a platoon officer in the Nablus area, explained that he rarely saw his own commander, the company officer, or half of his subordinates, who were under the command of his sergeant in a distant area. In a period of several months he had been unable to see the entire platoon in one sitting. Despite his best efforts, he often simply had no idea of what was going on. Respondents who had served as combatants similarly reported rarely seeing their platoon officer. Gilad described the autonomy combatants and NCOs exercised while deployed:

"There was no real monitoring at the checkpoints. It was more like they'd send us for eight hours and say 'Go for it.'… Not just at checkpoints, but in general, like patrols in the [Nablus] area, there was no monitoring, no one came and checked. If an officer came by and saw a bunch of guys [detained] on the side of the road, he'd ask about it… It's not that he came to check on us, he just happened to pass by and see them, so he'd ask why there were there. Usually there's a logical answer so he'd say 'OK, release them soon.' But I can't say that was monitoring…"

This lack of monitoring facilitated the occurrence, and concealment, of opportunistic violence. Avishai recounted an incident in which civilians were beaten by combatants on patrol,

\(^{22}\) Offensive measures, particularly large scale operations and operations in Gaza, were considered more dangerous and therefore typically involved larger forces, though some operations were conducted by small teams. For instance, routine arrests were conducted by units split up into several small teams, with some conducting the arrest itself and others cordoning and securing the area.

\(^{23}\) In addition to this widespread geographical dispersion, units were often broken apart and new, temporary frameworks were created combining small groups of soldiers from armor, infantry, or border police. On the breakdown of traditional organic units in the Second Intifada see Ben Shalom, Lehrer, and Ben Ari (2005).
under the watch of a squad commander who from the same cohort as the offenders. The soldiers agreed that no one would report the event and it was never discovered.

Officers were acutely aware of the obstacles to control posed by geographic dispersion, fragmentation of units, and empowerment of NCOs. As Barak, a former infantry officer, explained, "as a platoon officer you can't see everything, you can't hear everything. You can't. But you come to terms with it because there's really nothing you can do."

The inability of officers to monitor their soldiers on a regular basis meant that much of the burden of control was born by inexperienced NCOs with little training and often without the leadership skills necessary to guide and control combatants. Moreover, junior commanders are forced to function in very difficult structural conditions. Unlike officers who benefit from some separation from their soldiers, sleeping in separate quarters and wearing distinguishable marks of rank, NCOs spend every minute of the day with their soldiers. Oded, who served both as an NCO and a platoon officer, explained:

"When you're a squad commander…you have 24 hours a day of conflict with soldiers… [You] have live with them, eat with them, and constantly maintain comportment, 24 hours a day. It's not easy. It's the hardest job there is."

Due to this social closeness, junior commanders cannot afford to be overly strict. They must be, as Yoav put it, "people who can be friendly and affable and at the same time lead… it's an art… not everyone can do it, they don't teach it in commanders or officers training." Beyond the intensity of contact between soldiers and NCOs were often of the same or more junior cohort than their own soldiers. Assaf, like others, described squad commanders as "upgraded soldiers":

"That's how they saw themselves. They slept during watches, like us, they complained, like us, they participated in cleaning duties, like us, though they were exempt from kitchen duties, and they slept in our room. They were more like camp counselors than commanders, and socially they were our friends."
Assaf’s description underscores the tight link between weak commanders and disciplinary breakdowns. In his case, commanders not only failed to prevent soldiers from sleeping during their watch, but did so themselves. Junior commanders also participated in various forms of opportunistic violence. Two respondents from two different units described NCO involvement in breaking the windows of a civilian vehicle at a checkpoint. In one of these cases, the window was broken by negligence, as a result of the commander’s independent decision to carry a club at the checkpoint. Avi, the platoon commander, only learned of the incident much later:

"As a platoon officer there were many things that my squad commanders did that I discovered long after… one time it turned out my squad commander had shattered a car window at a checkpoint…He walked around the base with a club because he felt a club was a much better deterrent than a gun, because the [Palestinians] knew he wouldn't use the gun… he stood by a car and told it to stop, and it didn't, so he hit the windshield to make noise and the windshield shattered. He didn't tell me about it. Apparently the driver complained… so I was asked about it several weeks or months later… I realized how detached I was. And it wasn't the only time."

In other cases, junior commanders weren't directly involved in the violence but allowed it to happen for fear of jeopardizing their already delicate position. Assaf gave an example of such social dynamics, which continued well into reserve service nearly a decade later:

"There's pressure from the soldiers, I even see it in reserve service. We go out on an eight hour mission [and the soldiers say to the commander] 'make it fun, let's go in, let's show them, let's fire at them,' stuff like that … and a weak squad commander can be dragged into these things…"

Soldiers quickly recognized eager-to-please commanders and exploited their weakness, goading newcomer commander to allow lapses in discipline or violence. Yotam recalled his soldiers complaining that other commanders were more fun than he was:

"They'd say, 'All the commanders take the patrol and have coffee for five hours,' which wasn't true. Yes, there were commanders who did it, that's true, because they were just like you once. It's hard because in the army your age and cohort really matters and also you're under a lot of pressure, you're with 3 soldiers on patrol and they drive you crazy, just let us [stop the patrol] and go buy food… let's go buy falafel from Palestinians… and some"
squad commanders are eventually worn out, they don't feel like representing the system so they do what the soldiers want them to. And eventually it will reverse and they'll lead soldiers into such places, or do stupid things or take big risks…"

As in all contexts of social influence, some individuals are able to resist such powerful pressures. Some possessed the charisma and leadership skills to navigate among the conflicting demands of their position. Others were sufficiently senior to exercise authority. However, in units where even just a few of the squad commanders were weak or ineffective, attempts at control were much more likely to fail. David, who served as a squad commander in the paratroopers, recalled that his soldiers used to force people who wanted to pass at makeshift checkpoints to give them cigarettes or soft drinks. When I asked him how he reacted, he responded:

"They didn't hide it. And I didn't report it. I don't remember if I had enough, not authority, but enough of a conscience that something wrong was going on to tell them it's not ok, stop. Maybe I also knew after several months there that if I said it, it wouldn't matter and they'd do it anyway. So no disciplinary action was taken, and it was something that became routine by the end."

David conceded, however, that other commanders in his situation might have acted differently. Some may have exercised control to stop the violence, while others may have participated in it themselves.

7.7 Alternative Explanations

Survey and interview data provide support for theories highlighting the important role of organizational control in reducing violence, especially given the deleterious effects of long deployments. I found no support for theories attributing violence to passionate emotions such as rage or revenge. Nevertheless, other explanations may be consistent with the observed relationships. One such explanation is that both weak command and control structures and
opportunistic violence may be typical of particular units that attract lower-quality manpower, echoing arguments that attribute violence against civilians to the thuggish nature of combatants. Indeed, some units in the IDF are less selective in the quality of manpower they recruit, a factor which may be associated with both opportunistic violence and disciplinary breakdowns.

To assess the plausibility of this alternative explanation I investigated the role of unit membership in the survey by creating dummy variables for each of the brigades included in the sample. A bivariate analysis of opportunistic violence and brigade membership produced a significant relationship in the case of only one unit, known today as the Kfir brigade. This finding is consistent with journalistic accounts, in which Kfir has been particularly notorious for opportunistic violence against civilians. However once brigade identity was entered into a multivariate regression controlling both for duration of employment and command and control factors, the effects of membership in Kfir were no longer significant. This suggests that long deployments and disciplinary problems in Kfir account for its relatively high share of opportunistic violence rather than any particular individual characteristics of its members.

Indeed, Kfir is the only IDF brigade to serve solely in the West Bank, and its soldiers are deployed in one area for particularly long periods.

A second explanation suggests that an alternative mechanism underlies the association between strength of hierarchy and opportunistic violence. It might be argued that the senior privilege measure employed in the survey is actually a measure of bad modeling rather than of commander authority. Social learning theory (Bandura 1978) suggests that violence is learned

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24 The Kfir infantry brigade was formed in 2005 by unifying six battalions that had previously been subordinate to regional commands in the West Bank. Respondents


through exposure to role models who model violent behavior as a method of conflict resolution or in response to stress. In units where senior soldiers mistreat junior soldiers, taking advantage of their power to haze, humiliate, punish, and impose ridiculous tasks, new recruits may learn to abuse their own power when faced with vulnerable civilians. However, the similar results found when compliance with operational rules and severity of punishment were used as measures lend additional support to the effects of command and control.

### 7.8 Conclusion

Data from the Second Intifada show that while risk factors for opportunistic violence are abundant in violent conflict, it nevertheless varies substantially among combat units. My findings suggest that extended deployments among civilians raise the likelihood of opportunistic violence as soldiers become more disengaged and desensitized over time. Together with mounting evidence regarding the negative effects of long deployments on the physical and mental health of soldiers (Adler, Huffman, Bliese, and Andrew Castro 2005; Ritzer, S. J. Campbell, and Valentine 1999), this suggests that, where shortening deployments is not an option, both soldiers and civilians in warzones may benefit from better care and support services to those deployed.

Yet while long deployments are likely to have harmful effects on both soldiers and civilians, the slide into violence is not inevitable and can be controlled at least to some extent. Units with well-functioning command structures are better able to delineate and enforce rules, ensuring that soldiers remain in line with the interests of superiors and refrain from opportunistic behavior. This study thus provides additional support from the Israeli-Palestinian context to findings from Sierra Leone (Humphreys and Weinstein 2006), Sri Lanka (Wood 2009), and El
Salvador (Hoover-Green 2011) regarding the role of organizational structure in restraining opportune violence.

In the IDF, as well as in other militaries engaged in counterinsurgency, organizational control is exercised at the small unit level by field commanders who are empowered to implement formal and informal control mechanisms to bring deviant soldiers into line with organizational interests. Indeed, my data analysis suggests that junior commanders were often quite effective in shaping soldier attitudes towards violence, and in preventing incidents of opportunistic violence at sites of friction with civilians. However, analysis of opportunistic violence in the Second Intifada also suggests that military elites cannot simply assume that control will happen on its own by virtue of the mere existence of an authoritative hierarchy. In counterinsurgency, the exercise of effective control is often hampered by weak NCOs with poor leadership skills, and by the difficulties in monitoring dispersed combatants engaged in irregular warfare. A concentrated effort at the senior level is thus required to train, monitor, and respond to soldier behavior throughout the period of their deployment, long after basic training ends.
Chapter 8
CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Why and in what ways does participation in military violence against civilians vary? Why do some combatants and combat units participate eagerly in violence against civilians while others show considerable restraint or resistance to violence? And what accounts for variation among combatants in forms and in targeting of violence? This dissertation set out to answer these questions through an examination of patterns of violence and restraint in a particular case of counterinsurgency, that of the Israeli military in the Second Intifada. A five-year insurgency which brought IDF combatants into the most intimate spaces of civilian life, the Second Intifada presented a unique opportunity to collect typically inaccessible data on the details of military life at the small unit level, as well as on the challenges of conducting combat operations among a chiefly civilian population.

The Israeli case suggested a puzzle that challenged conventional wisdom regarding the behavior of combatants in conflict, which is generally assumed to be homogenous and uniformly violence-prone. The data I collected demonstrated that combatants neither obediently implement the preferences of generals, nor flock as one to opportunistically victimize civilian populations. Instead, I found that participation in violence against civilians varied dramatically during conflict, with some forms and targets of violence drawing widespread participation and even enthusiasm, and others remaining limited to relatively few. While sometimes combatants "overproduced" violence, exceeding or contravening commander orders, other times they "underproduced" violence, shirking from the violence demanded of them.

Moreover, data from the Israeli case undermined the conventional binary construction of armed groups as composed of strategy makers and implementers, principals and agents. Rather,
it showed that strategy often emerged at the bottom of the military organization, reflecting both the informational advantages and the higher risk propensities of violence entrepreneurs at lower organizational levels.

Theories that focus on the shifting strategies of military elites, the passionate emotions of rival ethnic groups, or the powerful effects of social influence cannot adequately explain patterns of violence in the Israeli-Palestinian case. All of these theories assume that combatants act uniformly, either by following leader strategies, acting on rage or revenge, or by succumbing to social pressure. While all of these phenomena are sometimes present, they provide only a partial representation of combatant behavior. Combatants sometimes shirk or defect from elite preferences; violence often results from the cognitive disengagement processes associated with long deployments rather than from passionate emotions; and combatants, like all individuals, sometimes resist to the pressures of social influence.

My response to the puzzle takes an organizational approach, tracing patterns of violence and restraint to mechanisms of organizational control that are put in place to ensure combatant violence reflects the strategies and preferences of military elites. I argued that when military control of combatants is effective, participation in authorized or strategic violence should rise while participation in unauthorized, or opportunistic, violence should decline. When control weakens, participation in strategic violence should decline while participation in opportunistic violence should increase. And when control is ambiguous and military interests are uncertain, entrepreneurial forms of violence emerge. Participation in violence is evident not only in levels of violence inflicted but in its forms and targets, as effective control is likely to lead to a rise in forms and targets of violence that serve military goals, while weak control is likely to increase participation in self serving forms of violence, and in targeting that serves no military purpose.
This chapter begins by summarizing the theory and empirical findings of the study. Next it briefly considers issues of external validity, addressing the important question of whether the theory advanced here "can travel" to other conflict contexts. I then consider the study’s theoretical contribution, outline some of its main limitations, and conclude with an assessment of its implications, both theoretical and practical.

8.2 Summary

In this dissertation I developed a theory of counterinsurgent violence against civilians focusing on the role of organizational control in producing and restraining violence by combatants. I define organizational control as encompassing any intentional process or institution designed to direct the diverse inclinations of members to serve the needs of the organization. As such, organizational control is comprised not only of formal mechanisms such as rules, discipline, and enforcement, but also of informal mechanisms, such as the inculcation of values, norms, and beliefs among organizational members. I argue that variation in organizational control produces three distinct types of violence against civilians – strategic, entrepreneurial, and opportunistic – each associated with differing forms, targets, and levels of participation. Strategic violence refers to the violence committed in accordance with the interests of military elites and under their authorization. Opportunistic violence refers to self-serving violence that combatants commit to advance their own goals, in excess or in contravention of organizational objectives. Between these two categories is a domain of behavior characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity regarding organizational strategy, creating space for entrepreneurial initiatives at the field level to advance strategic goals without explicit authorization or endorsement. I termed such initiatives entrepreneurial violence.
Broadly, organizational control in the military is exercised in two stages: First, in the initial military training period, control mechanisms, typically centralized, determine which forms of violence are considered legitimate and which are not, creating boundaries between normative and deviant behavior. This creates baseline patterns of relatively high participation in organizationally sanctioned violence, and relatively low participation in violence that is not sanctioned. Second, during the deployment period, commanders at the small unit level must enforce these normative boundaries, to ensure violence remains within circumscribed limits. When control fails or is ambiguous rates of participation fluctuate, such that participation in non-sanctioned violence increases, while participation in sanctioned violence decreases.

Organizational control affects not just participation levels but forms and targets of violence, as some are more easily construed as serving organizational needs than others. For instance, while soldiers are expected to use lethal violence under certain conditions, making lethal violence appear normative in the military context, looting for personal gain clearly serves individual goals at the expense of the organization. Alternatively, while targeting an enemy insurgent (broadly defined) is constructed as normative, targeting an individual completely unconnected to the insurgency would be deemed deviant.

Turning to the specific patterns of violence and restraint in the Second Intifada, I found that participation in violence against civilians, as well as its forms and targets, varied substantially among individual combatants and combat units. Centralized organizational mechanisms employed by the IDF beginning in high school and culminating in basic training created a normative system valorizing violence that served military needs. This task was in large part successful due to the IDF’s ability to neutralize and reframe the violence inherent in combat activity as heroic, glorious, thrilling, prestigious, and masculine, obscuring the potential both for
victimizing others and for experiencing pain and suffering oneself. The intense training and conditioning that combatants underwent produced a cohesive, aggressive body of trained violence workers, prepared and eager to engage in the missions imposed on them. While these control mechanisms were never absolutely successful, with a minority of combatants remaining resistant to its workings, by and large centralized control mechanisms in the IDF were able to harness the diverse interests, beliefs, and preferences of individual combatants in the service of the military, producing high baseline rates of participation in strategic violence, and low baseline rates of participation in opportunistic violence.

Chapters 3 and 4 focused on patterns of participation in strategic violence during the Second Intifada. I found that while the IDF's counterinsurgency tactics encompassed a wide range of practices, including offensive, defensive, and population control operations, its military training for the most part continued to prepare combatants for conventional warfare. As such, it glorified violence which was aggressive, risky, targeted at a clear enemy, and promised concrete results. Violence that conformed to such expectations, such as large scale offensive operations or targeted ambushes and arrests of suspected terrorists, therefore enjoyed high rates of compliance and even enthusiasm. However, much of the violence in the Second Intifada (and in counterinsurgency more generally) involved far more mundane and police-like population control operations, which required collective or indiscriminate targeting and in which achievements were lackluster. This growing divergence between organizational control and the realities of combat on the ground caused some combatants to drift away from organizational objectives, whether for principled reasons or simply due to boredom and lack of identification with the mission. Some of these combatants consequently evaded or shirked their strategic duties or defied outright the directive to employ violence.
It was up to commander leadership at the small unit level to realign wayward combatants with the interests of the military, through formal or informal mechanisms of organizational control. While the former attempted to raise combatant motivation by imposing a military logic on population control missions, thereby re-instilling among combatants a sense of significance and purpose, the latter required obedience regardless of combatant beliefs, relying on the formal authority of the chain of command. When commanders failed to impose either of these control mechanisms, the production of strategic violence declined.

The weakening of organizational control resulted not only from the mismatch between military training and the realities of counterinsurgency in the Second Intifada, but from other factors as well, discussed in chapter 7. Shifting to a deductive mode of inquiry, chapter 7 tested the increasingly established finding that weak control leads to opportunistic violence. Employing unique survey data, I found that in the Second Intifada opportunistic violence was strongly associated with duration of deployment among civilians. Long deployments erode social and moral norms, raising the likelihood that combatants will act opportunistically. However, the relationship between deployment duration and opportunistic violence was moderated by armed group structure, such that long deployments were more likely to cause opportunistic violence in units with weak command structures. These findings suggest that the deleterious effects of long deployments are not inevitable but can be limited to a large extent through well-functioning structures of command and discipline.

Finally, I introduced a third category, termed entrepreneurial violence, to indicate violent practices that emerge at the lower levels of the military organization in the service of strategic goals. I argued that entrepreneurial violence initially emerges in the presence of three conditions: (1) the existence of proactive, aggressive officers, or violence entrepreneurs, (2)
identification of opportunities to advance strategic goals when such goals are not adequately met, and (3) the presence ambiguity regarding the permissibility of a particular practice. Both junior and senior officers have incentives to allow entrepreneurial violence to emerge and spread: Entrepreneurial junior officers, who enjoy an informational advantage, can exploit new opportunities to advance strategic goals. When such initiatives are successful they can then gain credit and advancement. At the same time, by maintaining ambiguity senior commanders can transfer the risks of uncertain outcomes to their most enterprising officers, thereby avoiding responsibility and gaining deniability should such ventures fail. The category of entrepreneurial violence demonstrates that strategy-making in a complex organization consists not just of top-down instruction but of emergent behavior, and brings into view previously invisible patterns of violence and restraint.

8.3 Violence and Control beyond Israel/Palestine

Does the theory developed in this study travel beyond the Israeli-Palestinian context to other cases of military violence? Some evidence suggests that it does, though further research would be required to access micro-level data on the organizational features and participation patterns of armed groups. One aspect of the theory that has received increasing empirical support from diverse conflict settings across Africa, Latin America, and Asia is the link between weak organizational control and opportunistic violence, not just among counterinsurgents but among armed groups in general. Humphreys and Weinstein (2006), for instance, find that a large share of abusive behavior across and within armed groups in Sierra Leone can be explained by their institutions, and specifically their recruitment and internal discipline mechanisms. Groups with
weak structures and poor organization are unable to police their members, leading to an increase in opportunistic violence.

Wood (2009) provides evidence from Sri Lanka's civil war demonstrating that although the LTTE engaged in various forms of civilian abuse and indiscriminate lethal violence, they rarely committed sexual violence. She explains this relative absence of sexual violence by the strength of organizational control in the LTTE, which allows for the enforcement of the LTTE leadership's ban on sexual violence. Importantly, Wood emphasizes that control is exercised through a combination of formal discipline and punishment with socialization and training. Similarly, in her study of variation in violence repertoires among armed groups in El Salvador, Hoover-Green (2011) found that insurgent groups employed more limited violence repertoires than state forces, primarily due to their political education and socialization systems that focused on limited violence. Such institutions were largely absent among state forces, leading to much wider repertoires of violence.

Disciplinary problems and weak organizational control have also been widely cited as explanations for incidents of civilian abuse and opportunistic violence among U.S. counterinsurgency forces in Afghanistan. For example, in 2010 five U.S. soldiers were accused of deliberately killing at least three Afghan civilians "for sport" and collecting their body parts, in what came to be known as the Maywand District Murders.¹ Several factors were subsequently linked to the killings: The brigade had sustained particularly heavy casualties, they were isolated for a long time in a remote outpost, and they were frustrated and bored, having failed to identify and target insurgents as they had expected. In a statement echoing the desire for "ekshen" I have

¹ Four of the five were convicted of various offenses. See Laura Myers, "Army drop charges against last soldier in Afghan murder case," Reuters, 4 February 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/04/us-soldiers-crimes-idUSTRE81303L20120204.
chronicled at length among Israeli soldiers, one soldier from the brigade explained his comrades' behavior:

"I think at the end of the day what it boiled down to is these guys wanted some stories to tell when they got home. They weren't getting the action they thought they deserved. So they went out and made their own action."²

An internal military inquiry conducted in the wake of the killings found the brigade to have "significantly lower standards and discipline than other units," with the soldiers' platoon commander and sergeant reportedly weak, disengaged from daily operations, and focused on wanting to be liked by soldiers at the expense of enforcing discipline.³ Accordingly, the unit was plagued by a variety of discipline problems including lack of adherence to dress code, widespread drug use, and violence among soldiers.⁴ The problems in organizational control were not limited to the junior level, however. The brigade's commander at the time was known for his aggressive "counterguerilla" approach towards the enemy, his advocacy of a "search and destroy" policy, and his vehement rejection of the U.S. military's "hearts and minds" approach to counterinsurgency. Though the internal investigation acknowledged that the brigade commander's mocking attitudes towards counterinsurgency doctrine created confusion and frustration among junior level commanders, it found no causal connection between these attitudes and the behavior of soldiers. Whether or not this was indeed the case, at the very least it reflects a lack of consistency among unit commanders, which I discussed in chapter 7 as a

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⁴ Elisabeth Bumiller and William Yardley, "Accused GIs were Isolated from Officers" New York Times, 15 October, 2010.
central reason for the breakdown of organizational control. It is therefore not surprising that the killings, which took place over several months, were not reported by soldiers who knew of the events, and that unit commanders appeared indifferent to rumors and photos that circulated among soldiers during this period.\(^5\)

Disciplinary breakdowns have also been linked to other recent episodes of opportunistic violence in Afghanistan, such as the defiling of bodies and burning of Korans.\(^6\) Like in the Israeli case, such acts have been attributed to the relative weakness of NCOs, who bear much of the direct command responsibility in U.S. operations, as well as to the isolation and geographic dispersion of small teams of soldiers inherent in counterinsurgency warfare, both factors discussed at length in chapter 7.\(^7\) In sum, accumulating empirical evidence suggests that there is a clear relationship between weak organizational control and participation in opportunistic violence, and that in contrast, strong organizational control can moderate to some extent the many risk factors leading to opportunistic violence against civilians in general and in counterinsurgency in particular.

Yet while the relationship between organizational control and participation in opportunistic violence is fairly established, its role in producing strategic and entrepreneurial violence has received far less attention. Nevertheless some evidence provides initial support for the theory. As an example I briefly consider the case of the Yugoslav wars of succession in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1991-1995.

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\(^6\) See for example David Zucchino, "U.S. Troops posed with body parts of Afghan bombers," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 April, 2012. An anonymous soldier provided photos of the incident to the L.A. Times, claiming that they point "to a breakdown in leadership and discipline that he believed compromised the safety of the troops."

Yugoslavia's federal military, the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA), had had mandatory conscription for all 18 year old males for a period of one year. Upon release soldiers were transferred into the reserves, where they were periodically called up for military exercises and training. Prior to the outbreak of the wars, in 1990, the JNA had some 185,000 personnel on active duty, and approximately 500,000 more in the reserve forces (Milicevic 2004).

On June 25, 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence, with Bosnia following suit a few months later. In response to these declarations armed conflict broke out between the JNA and an assortment of Serb armed groups on the one hand, and the forces of the seceding republics on the other. When the wars broke out the JNA began to call up its reservists for service on the front lines. In the confusion of the first months many men responded to the call, but soon a phenomenon of desertion began, with drafted men leaving the front lines in increasingly large numbers. Other large groups of men employed a variety of means to avoid the draft altogether, secretly leaving the country, going into hiding, or devising other creative means to avoid receipt of the call-up notices. Milicevic (2004), who studied patterns of participation in and resistance to the draft in Serbia, quotes one reservist who decided to desert his unit and flee the country following his brief stint at reserve duty in the conflict's early days (p. 103):

"No one was responsible for anything. Not even about the weapons – I never signed that I received it, and I never signed that I returned it…People started shooting, a guy discharged an automatic weapon, while I was standing right above him, because he was listening to folk music and getting moved by it. Others started crossing the Danube [to Croatia], shooting there. There was a rumor that a group of Croats dressed in JNA uniforms crossed to our side of the river to commit sabotage… And yet you don't get any tangible assignments or explanations…"

The respondent's account stresses the near total breakdown of control in his unit, evident in matters ranging from care of equipment to the conduct of violence. He went on to describe how before he deserted the frontlines, some 80 soldiers his unit reacted to the general sense of
confusion by conducting a three day strike, in which they refused all superior orders. The soldiers in his unit were not alone. The numbers of deserters and draft dodgers in the first few months of the conflict reached record numbers, with an estimated 50,000 reservists escaping their units as of August 1991 (Milicevic 2004). Estimates regarding reservists who fled the country vary widely but range between 100,000 and 300,000 (Milicevic 2004; Sikavica 2000). At the same time, large numbers of men were evading the draft altogether, with an estimated 50% of recruited men reportedly dodging their call-up notices in the fall of 1991. As a result the JNA could simply not assemble enough men for its war with Croatia, beginning the conflict 18 divisions short (Milicevic 2004).

The widespread draft dodging, desertions, and mutinies provide evidence of the decline in production of strategic violence that ensues when organizational control is weak. Military commanders were simply unable to shape combatant violence to serve their own interests, facing high levels of resistance and rebellion instead. Indeed, the JNA eventually dissolved and replaced by the newly formed Army of Yugoslavia (Sikavica 2000).

While the military disintegrated in face of low participation rates, voluntary Serbian paramilitaries flourished (Ron 2003; Schlichte 2010). These disparate groups, ranging from several dozen to several hundred men, were ultimately responsible for much of the most egregious violence and atrocities in the early months of conflict in Croatia and Bosnia (Ron 2003). The most notorious Serbian paramilitary, the Serbian Volunteers Guard (SDG, also known as the Tigers), was headed by a criminal and associate of the Serbian state security service, Zeljko Raznatovic Arkan. The SDG was infamous for its ruthlessness and brutality and for the broad repertoires of violence it inflicted on civilians. A closer look, however, reveals that

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8 Milicevic (2004, 108) notes that these are likely to be minimum estimates, as some argued that in Belgrade as few as 15% of those called up actually reported for service.
such violence was not the work of unrestrained criminal thugs but was rather tightly controlled and directed by armed group leaders. Arkan insisted on a formal hierarchy and strict discipline, employing corporal and capital punishment when members deviated from rules (Milicevic 2004; Schlichte 2010). A case in point was the organization's attitude towards looting, which was carried out in a centralized and organized fashion. Organized looting was a privilege, typically granted to members for 24 hours after "freeing" a town. Opportunistic looting for individual gain, however, was considered a punishable offense. As Milisevic (2004, 76) explains,

"Members of the SDG were not allowed to loot as they pleased; this was a centralized and well-organized operation. Arkan had a monopoly on gasoline, cigarettes, wine etc… The SDG had its own storage facilities to which all the plunder had to be sent. When the spoils were sold, the profits were used partly for the purchase of equipment, partly to pay the wages for the fighters, with the rest divided among Arkan and his closest associates."

As the case of the SDG shows, broad repertoires of violence can be consistent with organizational control. Moreover, the SDG's attitudes towards looting demonstrate that effective organizational control can shape soldier violence to serve group leader interests, regardless of the target or form of violence employed. As expected, strong organizational control in the SDG led to high participation in strategic violence while reducing participation in opportunistic violence. In contrast, other Serbian paramilitaries were far less disciplined, granting their members license to commit atrocities opportunistically (Ron 2003).

The case of the former Yugoslavia also provides initial evidence regarding the emergence of entrepreneurial violence. The proliferation of paramilitaries in the conflict's first years with concealed and ambiguous connections to the Serbian state security service indicates that conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity can produce violence from below that is directed towards strategic goals. Indeed, the connections between the Serbian paramilitaries engagement in ethnic cleansing and Serbia's leadership have been difficult to prove to this day, though many
have argued that Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic himself directed the violence. In 1999, Milosevic was charged with joint criminal enterprise in connection with ethnic cleansing in Croatia and Bosnia, and with de facto command responsibility for crimes committed in those conflicts (Armatta 2012). Evidence from the trial indicates that Milosevic frequently employed strategic ambiguity, allowing paramilitary leaders to act as they saw fit (Armatta 2012; Glaurdić 2009). Through persistent strategic ambiguity and delegation of authority, Milosevic was able to maintain plausible deniability, which he continued to exploit until his death during the trial.

8.4 Theoretical Contribution

This dissertation contributes to the growing literature on violence against civilians in conflict in a number of ways. First, organizational theories of violence in political science have typically been used to explain opportunistic violence, arguing that armed group institutions can restrain combatants from acting opportunistically. While I test and confirm this theory in chapter 7, the theory developed here goes beyond this increasingly established finding, accounting at the micro-level not just for opportunistic violence but for strategic violence as well. In contrast with theories that argue that soldiers are uniformly prone to violence, I show that combatants sometimes shirk from strategic violence through evasion, dodging, and sometimes outright defiance. In so doing I am able to integrate the study of strategic and opportunistic violence under a single explanatory framework. Moreover, I show that the two are empirically linked,

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9 See Ron (2003, 57–62) and Schilchte (2010) for a discussion.
10 Some of this testimony, for instance, indicates that Serbian paramilitaries were financed, equipped, and trained the Serbian State Security Service (SDB). More generally, based on evidence from the trial, Glaurdić (2009) argues that the security structures under the direct control of Milosevic, chief among them the SDB, played a key role in planning and carrying out the war in Bosnia. However, even the phone intercepts he cites are remarkable for their degree of ambiguity.
11 Grossman (2009) provides several historical examples demonstrating that combatants often do not execute the violence expected of them, and observes that there is a "conspiracy silence on the subject".
such that strong control at the aggregate unit level is likely to result both in less shirking and less defection, while weak control should result in more shirking and more defection. This advances our understanding of the role of organizational control in both producing and restraining military violence.

Second, I apply organizational and management theories to the study of military violence, employing a notion of control that makes no general assumptions about the violence preferences of either armed group leaders or ordinary soldiers, but rather assumes that both are variable. The primary organizational task is simply to align the latter with the former. The theory thus has implications not just for levels of violence but for its forms and targets, which vary in accordance with the degree of organizational control. By assuming heterogeneity at the elite and ordinary soldier level, the theory is thus able to account for patterns of participation in wide or narrow repertoires, and selective or indiscriminate targeting.

Finally, like Ron (2000a) and Wood (2012) I challenge the dichotomy between strategic and opportunistic violence explicit or implicit in much of the political science literature on violence against civilians in conflict, arguing that strategy is not just imposed top-down but often emerges from below. Applying insights from studies of strategy formation in complex firms, I identify and develop the category of entrepreneurial violence, proposing a model that specifies the conditions under which such violence emerges and persists. While developed inductively from the Israeli-Palestinian case, the model I propose can then be tested in other conflict contexts.
8.5 Limitations

In its focus on the role of mechanisms of organizational control at the training and deployment stages in shaping patterns of participation in violence, this dissertation has put the IDF and its structures at the forefront, neglecting to a large extent the evolving actions of insurgents and their interactions with counterinsurgents. While I argue that the typical inaccessibility of data on the inner workings of military units warrants such a focus, I acknowledge that counterinsurgent behavior is shaped not only by internal mechanisms but by a variety of other factors, and importantly, by the shifting interactions between insurgents and counterinsurgents, not just at the strategic but at the tactical level.

A second limitation of this study concerns its methodology. While the methods used in this study allow for in-depth analysis of phenomena typically hidden from the public eye, both the qualitative and quantitative data I collected were based on convenience samples and as such cannot claim to be representative of the population of Israeli combatants. This limitation is a feature of most studies on violence due to the sensitivity of such data, and is also a feature of qualitative methods in general. While I was unable to sample combatants randomly, I did take efforts to triangulate my data using several sources. In addition I attempted to the extent possible to diversify my sample by including former combatants from almost all IDF ground combat units, as well as a diversity of ethnic backgrounds, level of religious affiliation, and political opinions (see appendix). The sample does suggest some socioeconomic bias, with an overrepresentation of educated respondents from medium to high socioeconomic backgrounds. This is also reflected in the overrepresentation of commanders in the sample. However, it is unlikely that this substantially affected the study's results.
A final question that remains open is the applicability of the theory beyond modern counterinsurgent forces. The scope of my argument was restricted to counterinsurgency due to the particular constraints and implications of such operations, both for protection of civilians and for organizational control. However it is likely that at least some parts of the argument are applicable much more broadly to armed groups in general. This is especially true for opportunistic violence, for which the relationship with organizational control is already fairly established, as discussed in the previous section. The role of control in shaping participation in strategic violence, as well as the relationship between participation in strategic and in opportunistic violence, is as yet underexamined. Even less examined is the category of entrepreneurial violence, which undermines the traditional dichotomy between strategic violence as top-down, and opportunistic violence as bottom-up. I have argued that strategic violence can emerge at the bottom of the organization under conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity. It remains to be seen to what extent this category of violence played a role in other armed groups who differ in organizational structure, culture, and strategy.

8.6 Implications for Theory and Policy

This dissertation has explored in depth participation in violence at the level of ordinary combatants and small combat units, drawing attention to the fact that combatants are a heterogeneous group of actors with their own preferences, beliefs, and propensities towards violence. In its insistence on combatant agency, the theory advanced herein rejects two assumptions that underlie much of the recent literature on violence against civilians in conflict: first, that patterns of violence directly reflect elite considerations, an assumption that essentially denies the ability of combatants to shape facts on the ground regardless of elite preferences; and
second, that combatants are by and large opportunistic thugs or frenzied ideologues, ready to
inflict violence on civilian populations at the first opportunity. Since combatants are diverse and
motivated by a variety of factors, armed organizations must invest significant resources in
ensuring that combatants direct their own interests and beliefs in the service of the organization,
whether for the production of strategic violence, or for the non-production of opportunistic
violence. These resources, or organizational control mechanisms, will determine to a large extent
both levels of participation in violence and the character that such violence takes.

Second, the theory presented here also provides a challenge to the dichotomous
separation of strategic from opportunistic violence. In much of the literature these forms are
explicitly or implicitly analyzed separately, with instrumental theories being used to explain the
former, and organizational theories to explain the latter. A shift in the level of analysis to
ordinary combatants and small combat units demonstrates that control is required not only to
limit opportunistic violence but to produce strategic violence. Without effective control, some
combatants may simply not perform the violence expected of them, either because they prefer to
commit violence for their own purposes or because they prefer not to commit it at all. Moreover,
the analysis undermines the dichotomy between strategy as top-down, and opportunism as
bottom-up. A relational view of organizational control reveals the spaces for emergent strategy
and entrepreneurship created by ambiguity and delegation at the senior level, thereby revealing
previously invisible patterns of organized violence and restraint.

Finally, by opening the black box of military unit organization I am able to provide a
more nuanced account of organizational control, which goes beyond recruitment mechanisms or
formal sanction systems. Effective control cannot be limited to formal mechanisms of discipline
and punishment, especially in the chaotic conditions of combat where soldiers exercise a large
degree of discretion, where monitoring is often impossible, and where relationships are often built on trust and esteem rather than fear and intimidation. Instead, control encompasses a variety of formal and informal means, including training, leadership, personal example, and most importantly, the neutralization and reframing of violence so that it loses its destructive meaning and is instead infused with glory, heroism, thrill, and excitement. Only through such reframing can the negative and painful consequences of violence, both for its perpetrators and for its victims, be obscured.

From a policy perspective, this dissertation has several important implications. First, it suggests that while organizational control is a central factor in curbing opportunistic violence against civilians, it is not a panacea for reducing violence in general. This is because while effective control reduces participation in opportunistic violence, it increases participation in strategic violence. To the extent that strategic violence in a particular conflict victimizes civilians, effective control might reduce restraint that would otherwise be present. Policies designed to limit strategic violence in conflict should thus target leader incentive structures, rather than organizational institutions.

As for curbing opportunistic violence, current prescriptions attempt to enforce organizational control primarily through the doctrine of command responsibility, which holds commanders accountable for the misdeeds of their subordinates. Rooted in criminal law and thus requiring a relatively high standard of mens rea (intention to commit a crime), the doctrine imposes liability on a commander who knew or had reason to know of his subordinates’ misdeeds, and did not take reasonable measures to prevent or punish such acts. However, given growing empirical evidence of the link between breakdowns in discipline and opportunistic

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12 Much has been written about the doctrine of command responsibility, its strengths and limitations. See for example Osiel (2005), Martinez (2007), Damaska (2001), O’Reilly (2004), Danner and Martinez (2005).
violence, it might well be argued that commanders bear some responsibility for the violence of
their subordinates when they allow command and control structures to lapse, even in the absence
of concrete or imputed knowledge regarding subordinate violence. The narrow lens of criminal
liability with its relatively high standard of intentionality may therefore be inadequate to capture
the full extent of responsibility that commanders bear for behavior of their troops in conflict.¹³

One potential avenue of policy reform might be to draw lessons from the domain of
corporate crime and corruption, which is analogous to wartime violence in that it involves the
infliction of damage on others in a setting of organizational complexity, making individual
liability difficult to prove. This problem has been dealt with in several ways, such as imposing
criminal or civil liability on the firm itself for the misconduct of its agents (Arlen and Kraakman
1997) or moving from deterrence-based models of corporate crime regulation to compliance-
based or governance models, which require companies to institute programs that monitor and
ensure compliance with ethical standards (Hess and Ford 2008). While there are important
differences between these two domains, the similarities between them, as well as the
acknowledged inadequacy of international criminal law to enforce and prosecute prohibitions on
violence against civilians, justify the exploration of more creative legal policies.

Finally, by studying patterns of violence and restraint among ordinary soldiers, this
dissertation has sought to unpack the category of "perpetrator." Too often simplified,
dichotomous categories of victim and perpetrator inspire efforts at post-conflict reconstruction,
thereby polarizing groups even further and threatening a slip back into a cycle of violence. A
more nuanced understanding of variation in combatant behavior can allow for a better
understanding of conflict processes, and hopefully, of conflict resolution

¹³ Moreover, criminal trials with their high evidentiary requirements are inherently slow, costly, and complex
resulting in extreme under enforcement and consequently in an absence of deterrence.
### Table 1  Sample Characteristics - Demographics (N=188)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secular</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<td>Other/Prefer not to respond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Center-left</td>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
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<td>Prefer not to respond</td>
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Table 2. Sample Characteristics – Military Service (N=186)

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<tr>
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<td>Officer</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Elite</td>
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<td>Givati</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golani</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paratroopers</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Nachal</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Armor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combat engineering</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special/independent units</td>
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<td>4</td>
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http://www.israeldefense.co.il/?CategoryID=485&ArticleID=658&SearchParam=%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%92%D7%95%D7%91%D7%A1%D7%A7%D7%99.


