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Conflict in the Military World-View: An Ethnography of an Israeli Infantry Battalion

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for

**Contracting Officer's Representative
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The Organization of Military Knowledge	3
From Military Traditions to Military Culture	3
Mixtures, Multiple Orientations and a World View	4
The Intellectual Field: "Meaning" and Methods	6
Anthropology, Meaning Systems and Folk Models	7
The Case Study: The Unit and Fieldwork	9
The Battalion	9
Fieldwork and the Ethnographic Approach	10
Why Study the Unit?	13
Professionalism, Combat and the Prototypical Schema	15
The Unit (Battalion) as a Machine	15
The Unit as a Bureaucracy	17
The Unit (Battalion) as Brain	19
War, Survival and the Rhetoric of Emotional Control	22
A Key Schema: Combat	25
The Schema in Use	28
Evaluating Soldiers: Professionalism	28
Trust and Survival: Evaluating Commanders	30
Training: Simulation of the Prototypical Scenario	33
Combat and the Enemy	36
Enemies, Seriousness and Prestige	36
Depersonalization	37
Civilizations and Emotional Control	39
Motivation	41
Officers: Need Fulfillment	41
Gibush, Atmosphere and the "Ordinary Soldier"	44
The Folk Models: Further Implications	49
The Sharedness and Coherence of Folk Models	49
Methodology	50
Representativeness and Generalizability	52
Conclusion	53
Notes	55
References	59

INTRODUCTION

Most soldiers know what "soldiering" and "commanding" entail. They can for example, easily furnish illustrations of competence (or its lack) in training or combat, evaluate concrete instances of professional conduct, prescribe appropriate behaviors, as well as discuss and analyze proper ways of producing "good soldiers". But what is the nature of this kind of military knowledge? How is it organized? In what way is it applied? Where is it "located"?

Given the centrality of the armed forces in most, if not all, contemporary societies it is not surprising that military knowledge is both substantial and extensive. But this general category of "military knowledge" actually encompasses different kinds of expertise and different types of "know-how". Let me give a number of examples in order to delineate the sort of ongoing knowledge of "soldiering" that I refer to. Military doctrines (themselves part of wider security doctrines) form a central part of the social knowledge of military matters. These sets of authoritative principles -- formulated by generals, politicians and related experts -- guide the design of force structure and the conduct of operations (Levite 1989). While field officers and soldiers often have a good idea of how these precepts are instancized or actualized in the ebb and flow of their everyday lives, military doctrines form a rather general background for routine soldiering. Another kind of knowledge of military matters is represented in the expert investigations of social scientists who study such things as military leadership, motivation or cohesion. These experts attempt to produce systematic theories and postulates that help improve military performance (see Gabriel 1987). Although some of this thinking seeps into the reasoning of soldiers and officers in field units, it does so in a peculiarly partial way. While military men may use social scientific concepts -- borrowed from psychology or management studies, for example -- they tend to use only some ideas or purported causal relations between variables with little or no systematic or coherent testing of their pet theories.

Some of the of the knowledge I refer to -- the everyday, common-sense, normal understandings of "soldiering" and "commanding" -- is found in the handbooks, primers, or guides that are regularly published within military organizations and outside of them. But these books, for all their "how-to" orientation, are basically sets of rules and prescriptions. Though contributing to the performance of tasks, they can never cover all the exigencies of military activities let alone apply to the dynamic and changing environment within which military people operate. Other areas of this kind of knowledge are found in the volumes devoted to military history or biography. The knowledge depicted in these books is part of the worldly wisdom officers and soldiers apply to the routines and extraordinary events of military life. This kind of knowledge is primarily

practical and experiential, what Donald Schon (1987) has termed knowledge-in-action. The practical and experiential nature of this military expertise implies, for instance, that while military people do not (and may not be able to) fully define such terms as "discipline", "leadership" or "performance", they rely on experience to assess the practical meaning of these terms as they are applied to individual soldiers, officers or even whole units (see also Walker 1992:309). The questions thus still remain: what is the nature of this kind of everyday military knowledge? how is this knowledge -- part learned, part past experience and part worldly wisdom -- organized so that soldiers and officers can (with little reflection) carry out a host of what social scientists call cognitive tasks: describe, evaluate, characterize, diagnose, advise or prescribe?

I would like to address these questions through a focus on the models -- later I will term them 'folk' models -- that members of the armed forces have of military service and of "soldiering" and "commanding". In other words, my aim is to uncover the assumptions, images, and interpretive schemes that lie at base of mundane or common sense military knowledge. By such terms as "mundane" or "common sense" I do not mean that this knowledge is simplistic, nor do I imply that it is unimportant. Rather, these terms refer to the unquestioned knowledge that "everyone knows"; to what Geertz (1983) has termed the "of-courseness" of common sense understandings. These models are of great importance because they are the basic points of reference for "what we are" and "what we are trying to do" through which military reality is constructed.

More specifically, this report represents an attempt to explore the main assumptions about, and images of "conflict", the "use of military force", or the "enemy" that are held by soldiers and officers. My study proceeds from the assumption that these conceptions -- of combat, performance, or antagonists -- form the basis for interpreting the environment within which armies operate. Thus, to use a pair of old fashioned words, this report is a study of the "world view of soldiership".

This essay tackles this set of themes by examining a case study: a battalion of elite infantry reserves of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). Based on a number of years of participant-observation (I was an officer in the unit), this analysis is basically ethnographic in its approach. I begin by briefly situating myself in relation to some of the contemporary scholarship of the armed forces in general and of the Israeli army in particular in order to clearly identify the issues I have singled out for analysis. I then move on to a description of the unit, the rationale for the case study, and a brief explanation of my field methods before presenting my findings.

II

THE ORGANIZATION OF MILITARY KNOWLEDGE

From Military Traditions to Military Culture

Writing in the mid-1970s, Luttwak and Horowitz (1975) contended that the IDF had neither its own military traditions, nor did it import other countries' traditions as virtually all post-colonial armies had done. Rather, the growth of the Israeli army has been marked, according to them, by a turmoil of innovation, controversy and debate. Luttwak and Horowitz were right in noting that the Israeli army (especially in its first decade of its existence) had no 'tradition' as the term is used for example in the British, American or French forces. At the same time however, the IDF was based from its beginnings on certain principles borrowed both from the British military and from pre-state army organizations like the Palmach (Sheffy 1991).

In the past decade or so, a number of studies have shown how the Israeli military is characterized by some rather concrete organizational ideologies and tenets. Here are a few examples. Hasdai (1982) showed how two typical modes of thinking found in the Israeli army were related to decision-making. Horowitz (1982) in a later essay, talked of the doctrines and tacit doctrines that permeate the Israeli military world-view, while other scholars such as Kellet (1982:250) have observed the importance of understanding the basic assumptions about mutual responsibility and support which lie behind the army's tactical doctrines. In a similar vein, Sheffy (1991) has meticulously traced the origins of the fighting doctrine of the IDF back to the officers courses of the pre-state Haganah. Studies carried out outside of Israel echo a growing concern with understanding the way managerial and organizational ideologies constrain or facilitate the operation of forces (Feld 1977; Buck and Korb 1981). These kinds of works, carried out within Israel and without it, while emphasizing the need to comprehend the interpretive side of military life still often revolve around the "traditionality" -- i.e. the authoritative conventions, practices, and ways of thinking -- of the armed forces.

It is against this background that my study suggests a subtle shift of focus: from one on military 'traditions' to one on the culture of military organizations. The advantages of such a shift rest in widening the subjects of military related research into hitherto little explored areas. In this way we may be able to focus less on the existence (or its lack) of some military legacy but rather to concentrate on the ways in which military meanings are organized and used. In a related vein, such a move may allow us to concentrate less on the way generals understand military matters, than on how soldiers and officers in field units make sense of soldiering and commanding. But what kind of approach best suits these analytical purposes? Let me suggest an answer to this question by formulating anew a central

controversy in the study of armed forces and society.

Mixtures, Multiple Orientations and a World View

The classic debate between Samuel Huntington (1957) and Morris Janowitz (1971) has fueled discussion about the basic character of the military for over three decades. Essentially, the debate revolved around the, 'civilianization' of the armed forces. The parameters of this argument were certain social and organizational developments in the post-war era. Janowitz' thesis was that after the Second World War, the "traditional" heroic warrior role gave way to an ascendant managerial-technical role, and that military professionals had become similar to the professionals of large-scale, bureaucratic, non-military institutions (see Harries-Jenkins and Moskos 1981:11). In place of the rather static model of the armed forces as characterized by a radically different professionalism which was propounded by Huntington, Janowitz proposed a more dynamic one stressing the emergence of a pragmatic orientation in the military. Among the changes that led to the new orientation were technological developments, shifts in the number of staff, support and technical soldiers deployed (often formulated as the teeth-to-tail ratio), and the similarity to civilian institutions (in terms of careering or authority relations for example).

Janowitz, however, hastened to add that the convergence he described and analyzed would never be total. As he and a long line of other scholars well realized, the organized use of legitimate violence remains a type of human activity unlike any other; not even the impact of technology could succeed in making the conduct of war a purely technical set of tasks (Boene 1990:21). Thus later, Janowitz began to talk of the military profession as consisting of a "mixture" of professional orientations: heroic leaders, military managers, and technical specialists. Indeed, in his words (Janowitz 1971:xiii), any "one officer can come to embody various mixtures of these elements".

But by formulating a thesis based on a "mixture" of orientations Janowitz raised other questions: What does this "mixture" consist of? How, for example, is an individual's diverse set of expertise -- of managerial know-how, of what it is to be heroic, or of technical proficiency -- interrelated? In the past two decades, scholars have offered a range of answers to such questions. Rather than undertake a full scale review of this literature let me trace out three approaches in order to situate the analytical thrust of my analysis.

The first, rather influential, approach has been proposed by Moskos (cited in Harries-Jenkins and Moskos 1981:17ff.). His contention revolves around a complex and dialectical movement of different parts of the armed forces towards or away from civilian society. The resulting model is thus not one based on polarization in which the military profession is or is not like civilian ones, but is rather 'segmented' or 'pluralistic': at any one point some parts are like and others different from civilian society. Thus for example, according to Moskos combat units

diverge from (given the propagation of a heroic self-image) and administrative units converge towards the civilian sector. Two major criticisms have been directed toward this model (Harries-Jenkins and Moskos 1981:17-8). The first is that the model seems to predicate the creation of two military institutions: one elitist and militaristic and one popular and civilianized. The second criticism is that in practice it is impossible to break down integrated military units into distinct, delineated segments each of which has its own orientations.

The second approach is exemplified in a later paper written by Harries-Jenkins (1986). While his specific empirical focus is on enlisted men in the British army, it has analytical suggestions which interest us here. Harries-Jenkins begins his analysis from the realization that both the older center (combat units) and periphery (support units) model of the military, and Moskos' segmented military model rightly emphasize the heterogeneous nature of the military (empirically in his case a diverse enlisted culture). Yet he offers an interesting way of conceptualizing this heterogeneity. He suggests that we differentiate between two sets of criteria which underlie conceptions of the army: 'pull' factors for joining the military' which represent different role-images: warrior, worker and technician; and 'push' factors which are not so much ideal but practical attitudes regarding what can be achieved within military service (careering for instance). The advantages of this approach lie not only in heightening our awareness of the internal differentiation within the British -- or for that matter any -- military, but no less importantly in underscoring the diverse ideal images and practical attitudes which govern the way military life is described or evaluated. For all this however, this approach leaves unexplained the organization of "mixtures" of images and attitudes in specific units or in individual soldiers, and the manner by which these images and attitudes are played out in the concrete reality of military life.

The third approach, developed by Hubert Jean-Pierre Thomas and taken up by Boene (1990:24ff.), represents an attempt to deal with some of these problems. The thrust of their argument is the necessity of moving beyond the theoretical divergence/convergence debate. The hypothesis Thomas raises is the existence of two subsystems that are functionally and culturally -- not structurally -- distinct: the combat-oriented or operational subsystem and the administrative-technical subsystem. The objective of the combat oriented subsystem is to execute combat related missions and the role model is that of warrior. The administrative-technical subsystem is instrumental in nature, the technical division of labor is important, and the role models are workers, technicians and managers.

Since they are not to be equated with surface structural features, it is futile to search for physical boundaries between them: they are two largely conflicting logics of organized collective action, to be found in varying relative proportions in all components of military organization and all situations. In other words, their

relationship is one of dialectical tension: the full expression or incarnation of one logic is necessarily frustrated by the inescapable presence of the other (Boene 1990:25).

This is, to say the least, an innovative way of thinking about the military, for here we find the notion that military uniqueness may reside in a duality of subjective orientations and dialectically related organizational patterns of rationality and internal legitimacy (Boene 1990:26). Furthermore, the conceptualization of different "logics of action" lets us ask different questions of military organization: first, because it cautions us to cease looking for some kind of essential connection between particular orientations and specific physical persons or units; and second, because this conceptualization prods us to take as problematical the coexistence in a state of tension of a number of "things" (orientations, ways of thinking) inside peoples heads¹. But how are these "logics of action" organized as practical knowledge? What methodology can best uncover and explicate the different reasonings attendant on military actions? A new line of research about the armed forces in general and about the IDF in particular seems to be suggestive in this respect.

The Intellectual Field: "Meaning" and Methods²

Since the mid-1980s a series of studies -- rooted primarily in psychology and sociology -- have begun to ask particular questions about Israel's military. These works -- like some very rare work done in the 1970s (Schild 1973, or Gal 1973) -- all focus on the "meanings", "images", or "intentions" that are related to military duties. As the following examples suggest, the import of these works lies in their methodological and analytical suggestiveness. A book by Reuven Gal (1986), a former chief psychologist of the IDF, includes very good chapters about heroism and the "spirit" of combat units, and suggests that it would be fruitful to explore how certain Israeli (Jewish male) propensities for initiative and gregariousness are inculcated by and used within the army. Through an enticing use of oral life histories, Amia Lieblich (1989), a developmental psychologist, examines the transitions to adulthood that Israeli (Jewish) men undergo during their compulsory term of service. Another project is a Ph.D. thesis written (at the Hebrew University) by Sarit Helman (1992) which focuses on conscientious objectors to the Lebanon War. By analyzing in-depth interviews with these -- rather marginal, but nevertheless highly perceptive -- men, she is uncovering the types of discourses underlying war, peace, citizenship and military service in Israel. An investigation into military funerals carried out by Nissan Rubin (1985), deals with the way that military organizations maintain a sense of a shared past. Finally Edna Lomsky-Feder's paper (1991) (her Ph.D. thesis is also being written at the Hebrew University) on the life histories of veterans of the Yom Kippur War of 1973 examines how war and military service figure in the life histories of Israeli men. Common to all of these works is the coupling of innovative methodologies with novel areas of research.

Interestingly, many newer works which have been carried out in regard to the armed forces of other democracies seem to be going in these directions. Thus for example, the studies appearing in the collection edited by Segal and Sinaiko (1986) have demonstrated not only the importance of a 'bottom-up' approach to the analysis of military life but have suggested the utility of studying hitherto little explored areas such as socialization into military life, the different criteria by which soldiers appraise themselves and their service, or the creation within the armed forces of certain folk images and stereotypes. Other works (Eisenhart 1975; Shatan 1977) have suggested the profitability of analyzing military training in symbolic or ritualistic terms. Finally Ingraham (1984) has shown most forcefully how a qualitatively minded approach can provide a basis for analyzing the relations between individual identities, primary group dynamics, and military culture. Here again it is apparent that creative tools for qualitative analysis have been married to new areas of research centering on the systems of meaning and significance of military service.

While it is within this approach -- or more correctly set of approaches -- to military meaning systems that my study is situated, it offers a specifically anthropological perspective.

Anthropology, Meaning Systems and Folk Models

The study of cultures or "meaning systems" has long been one of the primary subject of anthropological inquiry. Contemporary anthropology offers an array of analytical approaches to the study of culture. Yet there seem to be three underlying issues which any convincing approach to the analysis of meaning systems must be able to address (Quinn and Holland 1987:3-4): (1) the apparent systematicity of cultural knowledge, or how a certain culture is characterized and distinguished from others by certain central themes; (2) the internal organization of complex meaning systems, or how humans come to master the enormous amount of knowledge that they have of the world; and (3) the generative capacity of cultural knowledge, or how this knowledge is extended to new or novel situations. One rather innovative approach which I have adopted here, may be fruitful in helping us to grapple with these issues as they are related to the military.

Cognitive anthropology, as this approach is labelled, began its inquiries by pursuing the question of what one needs to know in order to behave as a functioning member of one's society or social group. This school of thought came to stand for a view of culture as "shared knowledge": not a people's general customs and artifacts or received oral traditions, but what they must know in order to act as they do, make things they make, and interpret their experiences in distinctive ways (Quinn and Holland 1987:4). Since the early 1980s cognitive anthropology has begun to inquire about 'cultural' or 'folk' models: the taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared by members of a social group (although not necessarily to the exclusion of alternative models) and that represent and explain the way the "world" (or parts of the world) is ordered. The term 'folk' does not imply that these

models are adhered to by the untutored masses, but suggests rather their common sense nature and the fact that they characterize a certain organization or group of people. These models -- which predicate certain simplified causal chains and may be marked by internal contradictions -- serve practical purposes: they figure in the way people describe, explain, or justify such things as their tangible surroundings, the probable outcomes of behavior, and their ongoing experiences (Keesing 1987:374).

Accordingly, I suggest that an examination of the "folk" models -- the logics of action, reasonings, and propositions -- that officers and soldiers use in order to "make sense" of what they do and who they are, may be a good entryway into the meaning "soldiering" holds for them. Furthermore, I propose that this kind of analysis may lead us to understand how concepts like "conflict", "force", or "the enemy" which are related to the ongoing actions of troops and commanders. The aim of this project is thus to reconstruct the practical cultural understandings of military life in the infantry battalion I have singled out for analysis.

I now turn to a brief description of the unit and to the reasons for choosing it as the focus of this study.

III

THE CASE STUDY: THE UNIT AND FIELDWORK

The Battalion

The battalion -- a few hundred men (there are no women) -- belongs to one of the army's elite infantry brigades, and has a history dating to the Six Days War (1967). It is distinguished, to put this by way of the abstraction and preciseness which characterizes military parlance, by a high level of readiness and combat effectiveness. Yet it is an organization that is made up exclusively of reservists, of miluim-niks (literally, people who fill in the gap). These soldiers and officers volunteered for one of the 'crack' infantry forces during their compulsory term of service and upon completion of that term were assigned to our unit. By law every man who has completed compulsory service can be mobilized (until the age of 50) for a yearly stint of up to 42 days. In reality, units like our battalion are usually called up twice a year and often for longer periods. As in other parts of the army (Gal 1986:40) the burden shouldered by officers and senior NCOs (non-commissioned officers) is considerably greater than that of lower-ranking soldiers. The former are continuously involved in such matters as briefings, staff meetings, additional training, or tactical tours.

Like many reserve units in the IDF -- and in contrast to many Western armies -- the general atmosphere in the battalion tends towards the informal and the familiar. While there is a clear divide between officers (or senior NCOs filling officer roles) and the rest of the men, rank is (again, comparatively speaking) deemphasized. For example, everyone (including the unit's commander) is called by their first name (or equivalent nicknames). All of us serve under similar general conditions: the same beds and barracks, the same food and canteen services, similar clothes and equipment, and approximately the same kind of furloughs. This relative egalitarianism is all the more notable since the battalion is quite heterogeneous in terms of (Jewish) ethnic groupings (more than half of the soldiers and officers are from Middle-Eastern backgrounds) and religious affiliation (it has a very sizeable group of observant Jews).

The battalion is, to use a term often used in the IDF, an "organic" unit (vechida organit). Organizationally this implies (1) a framework characterized by a permanent membership and structure of roles, and (2) that upon mobilization the whole battalion (as one complete organized entity) is recruited. Socially, this term implies a military force characterized by relatively high cohesion, overlapping primary groups and a certain sense of a shared past. The unit trains at least once a year and its senior commanders are proud of the high level of competence shown during these maneuvers. While the battalion carries out a variety of military tasks, during the last two years (1990-91) it was deployed (ta'asooka mivtsa'it) along

Israel's northern borders.

And myself? I am a staff officer, an adjutant (shalish). I have been in such a noncombatant support role in front line units for most of my army career, and served in this specific unit for seven years between 1985 to 1991. In general I was in charge of personnel and manpower: helping the battalion commander issue orders, mobilizing and demobilizing the whole unit, or dealing with such things as soldiers gone AWOL or promotions. With the exception of the last stint of duty I held the rank of captain. I am now a major waiting to be reassigned to a new post.

Fieldwork and the Ethnographic Approach

The origins of this research venture lie in a piece I wrote about the experience of my battalion during the Intifada, the Palestinian Uprising (Ben-Ari 1989). In wake of that project I decided to utilize my professional anthropological capabilities (honed outside of Israel on Japanese material), and to write a broader, more wide ranging ethnography of my battalion. Ethnographies, the standard fare of anthropological work, are detailed studies of the life and activities of groups of people. In older times these groups were overwhelmingly tribes and villages, or 'ethnic' collectivities and minorities. In the past few decades however, anthropologists have begun to write ethnographies of different types of groups: for instance, urban communities, schools, or business organizations. All of these ethnographic studies -- of the older and of the newer varieties -- depend to a great degree on firsthand observations of the way people act, believe, and feel in concrete situations. In this sense, this report forms part of an ethnography of the unit I have just described.

Because my approach is ethnographic -- in sociology an equivalent term is naturalistic -- it seems especially important to say a few words about my research methods. It is important because any piece of social research should spell out its methodological tools in a way that enables readers to appraise their appropriateness. Moreover, it is important because some social scientists tend to view naturalistic methods as somewhat weaker, somehow less scientific versions of other methods. In other words, I think it important to describe as clearly as possible the research procedures used so that the limits and benefits of my interpretations may be evaluated. I begin with the technical side of research.

Throughout the four years (1987-1991) of fieldwork I utilized stints in the army, and occasionally other periods, to gather information based on observation, participation, and interviews. I always tried to be clear about my purpose of collecting material for a book about the unit, and gave copies of the Hebrew version of my paper on the Intifada to whomever was interested. The data itself -- not unlike my findings in other projects -- were recorded in a journal and entered chronologically. My fieldwork journal now includes observations, long and short parts of conversations, transcripts of interviews,

unclassified documents (invitations to parties or letters from commanders for example), and some very elementary thoughts about analysis.

I carried out about thirty interviews during this period³. While the term "interview" grants these occasions an air of structured engagements, and while I did go through an ordered set of questions, in reality they were often conversations. In holding these exchanges, I tried to get a wide a view as possible of the unit, and thus they were held with the battalion's commanders, NCOs, soldiers, and even a driver and a cook. I felt that interviews with 'ordinary' soldiers were especially important in order to get out of an overly "officero-centric" view of things. In this endeavor I was aided both by my formal capacity and by my fieldwork persona. Being in charge of personnel, part of my job can be likened to that of a social worker with whom it is legitimate to air one's grievances, or to talk about a variety of problematic matters. My persona, a bit of a 'softy' and a scholar studying something vaguely related to psychology, probably helped in getting people to open up as well. While I have no comparative data to back this point up, it is my impression that I was helped in my research by the relative egalitarianism of the IDF, a factor which allows for a great openness between ranks.

I was aided throughout my research by one of the most characteristic qualities of military life: boredom. I often felt that talks with me were a good way to pass the time, and very frequently after it was known that I "was writing a book" my mere presence would prompt people to talk of the military or of their lives. In this regard however, I repeatedly sensed that I was lending an attentive ear to people's ongoing interests rather than having them answer questions that arose out of my own research agenda.

As in all fieldwork, informal discussions provide an excellent venue for gathering information or for testing out one's ideas. Thus for example, I very frequently accompanied the commander, his deputy or other staff officers to places where the battalion was deployed or in training. Almost invariably, I would be invited for the ubiquitous coffee sessions that characterize the Israeli army, and which provide opportunities for discussion and repartee. Other times, I would visit people on guard duty for a chat or a look at the scenery.

To what extent did the men 'level' with me? This question bears methodological implications for any study purporting to study meaning. First, I would argue that openness and honesty marked my interactions simply because you cannot hide your feelings, actions and (frequently) thoughts while on reserve duty because you are in the public gaze for so many days and weeks. Second, I think that people like to talk, and even in regard to intimate topics once a modicum of trust has been built up in interviews or conversations people are willing to explore painful or difficult matters. Even a short list of the difficulties discussed with me would seem to indicate a relatively high level

of candor: hating senior NCOs, feelings of being exploited, disappointments at not being promoted, fear of parachuting, taking personal responsibility for casualties during exercises, as well as problems associated with civilian life (fear of being unemployed, financial predicaments or medical problems of relatives, for instance)⁴.

Why use the ethnographic approach? Methodologically speaking, this approach provides the kind of rich data needed for examining social knowledge and meaning systems (Orum et.al. 1991:12). It can provide such data because it focuses on the concrete activities undertaken by people -- like discussions, conversations, or story-telling -- rather than directly on complex notions and beliefs. Such an approach, in other words, allow us to focus on the explicit images, metaphors, or reasonings through which more abstract notions are expressed. The qualitative approach is especially useful for gathering data on 'natural' language use in a way that comes as close as possible to the understandings of the participants of their own actions. Moreover, as I will show later, collecting data from a variety of sources -- interviews, natural conversations, or observations, for instance -- allows one to check one source against another. No less importantly, a focus on tropes and images enables one to show how meanings are related to the dynamics of the social world. They are related because people use such images to carry out a host of pragmatic tasks such as evaluating, characterizing, or prescribing⁵.

Is my membership in the unit not a sign of methodological weakness? Like the social role of any researcher, so my position presents both strengths and weaknesses. I am assume, of course, that no perfectly objective knowledge of a situation is possible: knowledge is always relative to knower (see Peacock 1986: 110). The major disadvantages of my approach, it may be argued, are the biases and lack of proper "distance" from the unit and its dynamics that my membership entails. As will become clear, I have tried as much as possible to be clear about my prejudices and preferences, and to explicitly state the limits of my assertions. On the reverse side, the major advantages of my participation in the unit are twofold: first, in my being closest to the way the folk models and meanings are actualized in the reality of the unit; and second in my ability to use my native understandings of soldiering and of commanding in themselves as a resource. Both these strengths and weaknesses are predicated on my ability to achieve what interpretive social scientists call a reflexive stance towards the unit and towards the meaning of soldiering. By this notion is meant an ongoing effort not to rely only on introspection, but to meticulously record, describe, analyze and eventually formulate my findings in a way that will allow them to be critiqued by others⁶.

A closely related methodological matter has to do with the intrusion of the anthropologist into the life of the people being researched. Here the problem is the extent to which the unit's men standardized their answers or views because of my presence or prodding. In this regard, I would argue that "natives" tend

to standardize their acts, utterances, and other manners of expression whether "we" scholars are there or not. Stories, talk, metaphors, or ways of thinking have a great coercive power that overrides external influences including the ethnographer (Peacock 1986:70). Thus I probably did add a greater awareness, a measure of self-examination to the battalion, but I do not think that I altered things. To reiterate, it would be a measure of little more than self-delusion or self-aggrandizement to think that the unit has changed in some fundamental way because of my attendance or my research.

Why study this Unit?

As I noted earlier, some scholars -- many of them devotees of the "harder" methodologies -- see ethnographic case studies as somehow weaker or less dependable strategies of research when compared to more 'rigorous' surveys or experiments. Such scholars tend to criticize case studies for the problems of generalization and comparison that are inherent in this method. The study of a single case, according to this argument, limits both the strength and the range of arguments that can be made on the basis of it. Yet the analysis of a case study also has considerable methodological and theoretical advantages. In the first place, ethnographic case studies allow the careful and sustained exploration of theoretical problems precisely because of the diversity of data on which they are based. In addition, such studies do not preclude a careful formulation of those attributes on the basis of which they may be compared to other cases. Along these lines, let me now devote a few words to the theoretical grounds for choosing this particular case.

The Israeli army, in Reuven Gal's (1986:29) words, was founded in the crucible of war, born in the battlefield: it is a fighting army. On the one hand, this image has fired literary and popular imaginations into portraying Israel as a nation of soldiers disciplined to the rigors of frequent and long years of service. On the other hand, this representation has colored scholarly depictions of the "typical" soldier. This exemplary figure has often been portrayed -- in general, quite correctly as regards front-line units -- as a professional whose experience in the military has been characterized by high motivation, considerable technical skills, a general acceptance of Zionist ideology, and an ethos of mutual responsibility on and off the battlefield.

There seem to be a number of reasons that underlie the scholarly interest in, and preoccupation with, these highly capable soldiers. First, the abundance of combat situations in which excellence figured as the primary element deciding victory or defeat has accentuated the role of these soldiers. Second, an emphasis on their excellence and professionalism has long served the interests of Israel's military authorities in setting up examples for recruits and in justifying the kinds of rewards the army offers its troops. Third, the expertise and relative success of the IDF has perforce drawn the attention of students of other armies to its elite forces as a model to emulate (see Van Creveld

1977:120). In this sense, Israel's elite forces constitute an ideal "laboratory" for analyzing the issues we have singled out for study. Hence, if we aim at uncovering the everyday, common sense understandings of "soldiering" and "commanding", then combat units would seem the logical place to begin our inquiry.

In effect however, a good part of the IDF's elite soldiers are reservists: soldiers who are either mobilized yearly for routine tasks or activated in times of crisis. As a host of scholars have noted, reservists comprise the bulk and most important part of Israel's forces (Levite 1989:34). The US army has only recently moved towards implementing the concept of "total force" in which reserve units are held to training standards and assigned combat missions equivalent to those of the permanent troops (Moskos 1988:47). Furthermore, in contrast to the American, British and German settings there seems to be less criticism from Israeli regulars about the capabilities of reservists to perform on the battlefield (Walker 1992: 303). Thus in Israel the concept of "total force", or its equivalent, has been the norm rather than the exception. Moreover, because of the internal organization of the IDF, all miluim-niks initially serve in the standing army, and reserve troops are socialized by (and in many ways are also active socializers of) members of the permanent forces⁷. Thus we can safely assume a basic commonality of orientations and knowledge between elite elements whether they be regular or reserve units.

Along these lines, a focus on the infantry battalion I belonged to may shed light on the military knowledge of an elite segment of the IDF: focusing on this combat unit will allow us to examine how the organizational reality of the military is produced and reproduced. My assumption thus is that the "findings" of this report are representative of a certain kind of elite combat force in the Israeli army. Moreover, I assume that my findings may be suggestive of combat outfits in the ground forces of other military establishments⁸.

Having devoted much space to preliminaries, it is time to move on to the main part of my analysis.

IV

PROFESSIONALISM, COMBAT AND THE PROTOTYPICAL SCHEMA

Soldiers are the tradesmen of killing, but officers are the managers of violence -- Harold Lasswell

Let me begin with a not untypical passage from a conversation I had with Ehud, now commander of one of the rifle companies, and one of the most eloquent and articulate of the unit's officers. We spoke of what he had undergone in Lebanon (he had been commander of the mortar platoon) when he said:

At that period I reached the apex of my competence in terms of activating six [mortar] barrels under conditions of pressure, night after night. Really, with successful hits, really excellent hits. And from that moment I went down in terms of my professional ability, in terms of the tension, in terms of everything.

While very brief, this passage includes many of the main elements we associate with soldiering and commanding in combat: professional competence, composure under fire, attainment of assigned tasks, and the firefight as the essence of military service. How does such an officer formulate this kind of statement? And conversely, how do we as comprehending listeners (or readers) understand the meaning of such texts? My argument here is threefold: first, it is that soldiers like Ehud formulate such accounts based on a basic set of cultural or folk understandings about military life; second, that while such basic understandings may actually be very complex, given the workings of human cognition they are formulated on the basis of rather simple causal chains or models of soldiering; and third, that these models may be uncovered through a focus on the images and metaphors -- that is the likenesses, suggestive resemblances, and representations -- that soldiers use in order to talk about military service. Accordingly, I begin with the three central clusters of metaphors that are used in this Israeli battalion to talk about military units. For anyone familiar with the military it will be readily apparent how similar these metaphors are to the ones used in front line units of other armies. While I think that there are features which are unique to the IDF, I will leave an explication of these distinctive qualities for later.

The Unit (Battalion) as a Machine

It is probably no surprise to learn that the dominant metaphors used by officers and soldiers in describing the battalion are related to machinery and to industrial production. It is not surprising, because analyses of the military have long underscored its claim to professional competence: the management of violence (Lang 1979:29). This claim alerts us to the fact that

underlying much of modern military structures are certain 'folk' notions of organization. The Israeli military, like all modern armies is characterized by strong mechanistic assumptions and images: units of the armed forces are thought to operate and have the qualities of machines. But what does it mean that military units are likened to machines? What the metaphor of machine -- or its closely related image of industrial factory -- does is to map the characteristics of a machine onto those of a military unit (or any other organization). Let me clarify this through the following short excerpt from a three hour interview I held with Yoel, a former commander of the battalion. We were talking about how he saw his role when he said:

Your mission (mesima) is to build a framework that will be able to immediately undertake any task assigned to it and that it will perform that mission with a minimum of casualties. Your responsibility is that things will go smoothly in this framework and this would include the capability of one company commander to replace another. This means that there will be the smallest number of snags as possible in the way of the framework continuing to function as a framework.

In this short passage we can see quite a number of examples of this metaphorical mapping: the smoothness and efficiency of the unit's performance, the activation of the battalion, or the interchangeability of parts are all like similar qualities that we assume (or more correctly, know) that machines have. Likewise in the same interview, Yoel goes on to stress that different parts of the unit have different prices attached to them, again not unlike the different prices that parts of a machine have:

I don't think it would be good for the battalion commander to be the first to go [get killed]⁹, because of the price this would entail. Not the moral price, but the price in terms of the functioning of the framework. When he goes the chance that the system will continue to go on working won't be very high.

Thus when we talk of organizations as machines (Morgan 1986:22), we often have in mind a state of orderly (mechanical) relations between clearly defined parts that operate in a steady and productive manner. In analytical terms, the machine is the source domain, while the military unit is the target domain (Lakoff and Kovecses 1987:199). Because we usually have a more extensive knowledge of the source domain -- in our case machines and factories -- the use of the metaphor illuminates certain characteristics of the target domain -- in our case the battalion.

Let me give a number of other examples. Tasks undertaken by the services company were often referred to by the deputy battalion commander as "finished products", and one of the most popular expressions used by superiors is "give me the bottom line", as in a balance sheet or a business recommendation. Yet again in appraising the caliber of soldiers it is not uncommon

to hear of "product quality" or "product description", or of filling or emptying organizational slots as in "I need three marksmen", "I can still make use (lehishtamesh) of that soldier", or "I need three backs [to carry communications gadgets] during the exercise". Correspondingly, in referring to himself before a combat patrol on the border with Lebanon one company commander said, half jokingly: "if I don't come out don't worry there are plenty of spare parts [sper, lit spare tires] around". Finally during a training exercises the battalion commander was explicit about the replacement of one commander by the next should the first one be "finished".

In a related vein, the stress on coordinating and synchronizing units, actions and assignments is evident to anyone who has been in the army through such devices as firing-tables, task assignment programs, timetables, unit combat readiness and location tables, and definitions of missions and forces. The point to note in regard to all these kinds of lists and tables is the assumptions which lies at base of their use: by expecting military units to work like machines, we expect them to operate in routinized, efficient, reliable, and predictable ways.

Other examples are linguistic usages which are found only in the army, and which implicitly posit a continuum or equivalence between people and machines. The first example is the verb "to operate" (letaf'el) which can be equally employed in regard to light and heavy firearms and APCs (armored personnel carriers), as to individual soldiers or units (squads, teams, platoons, companies, and battalions). The second example is the term "combat readiness" (kshirut mivtsa'it) which again can be applied to equipment (of various scale and complexity) and to units comprised of combatants. The third example is to talk of a unit in terms of the equipment it uses, as in the example of the kitchen orderly who told me "I'm going to give the tanks breakfast", i.e. the tankists who were training with one of our companies.

The Unit as a Bureaucracy

A closely related, yet analytically distinct metaphor is that of the unit as a bureaucratic organization. Some men use not only terms like "system" or "framework" to talk about the battalion but also such expressions as "large firm", "business", "big plant", or simply "organization". The connotation of such imagery may be understood through the following two expressions often used by officers and NCOs. The first term is "to close matters" (lisgor invanim) which carries with it the American English connotations of "connect", "secure", "finalize", or "make clear". It is employed in regard to finalizing plans, settling agreements, or checking that preparations for activities have been carried out. The second term is "definition" (hagdara) or "to define" (lehagdir). This expressions is used when people want to emphasize the clear and specific contents of their expectations and requests (for instance: "give me a definition of what you want accomplished in the drills"). In both terms the undertone is one of clear and unambiguous communications about

practical army tasks, and the emphasis is on clear categorization of actions, people, and things as a basis for action.

This metaphor differs from the machine metaphor in terms of the chunk of attributes it evokes. If the image at base of the machine metaphor is that of an automaton, the image at base of the bureaucratic metaphor is that of clerks carrying out their assigned tasks. The bureaucratic imagery is of an organization based on fixed division of labor, hierarchical supervision, and detailed codes of instructions and regulations. The point to note is that these chunks of characteristics are not a set of Weberian ideal typical elements which form the basis of a scientific analysis but rather ways in which the ongoing life of the unit and military service is appraised.

In reality, the two metaphors -- machine and bureaucracy -- are often used in combination with little self-reflection about the differences between them. Thus it is often hard to delineate the exact type of metaphor used in the reasonings of soldiers and officers. Take the kind of connections made between communication and hierarchy and between equipment and men in the following text from an interview with Ehud, the previously cited commander of C company. We were discussing the ubiquitous term of "professionalism" (miktso'iyut) in the army:

There are two levels to a professional company. The first level is that of command... The line (shdera) of command, leading from me to the platoon commanders to the NCOs. Things do not run on their own, but are controlled, commands are given and performed according to directions that I give and I work according to the line of thought of the battalion commander... The other side is that of professional soldiering (chayaloot), how to enter a firing position (emda), how to enter a room, how to attack a fortified target, how to ride an APC, all of these things down to the simplest things.

Turn your attention first to the way Ehud uses the machine metaphor to talk of soldiering. Notice that he provides me with a list of techniques in which men, equipment and drills are part of a single process. For those not familiar with the army I should mention that a great deal of time is devoted to specific drills like the proper manner by which a team of two soldiers enter a room in which there may be enemy soldiers, or the correct manner by which one provides covering fire for attack. These drills involve set patterns of movement, specified uses of weapons, and fixed vocal reports of completion (of the drills). Yoel, the former battalion commander, gave me an example of this singular men-equipment-drills process when we discussed soldiering. He said that the soldiers had done most drills hundreds of times and that by now they carried them out smoothly and efficiently. "Professional" soldiers according to this characterization then, are expected a high level of automaticity in carrying out certain drills.

Consider command next. It seems almost as though Ehud is

talking of "driving" the company -- like a mechanical means of transportation -- but along a route dictated to him by the battalion's commander and dictated by him to the company. His image of the company is a compound of mechanics and bureaucracy: unity of command (beginning, of course above him), a scalar chain (being the frame through which communication from top to bottom is effected), and a span of control which allows the coordination of all constituent units. In a similar vein other officers address the constant necessity for supervision and control (bakara). The connotation of these characterizations however, is not always -- if at all -- that of a mindless use of machines, but rather, the regulation of the unit on the basis of clear lines if communication and strict rules and regulations.

To conclude this section then, the metaphors I have outlined offer composite images of efficiency and rationality (men, equipment and drills), coordination and synchronization (times, places and activities), and distinctions and categorizations (of units, authority structure, and regulations).

The Unit (Battalion) as Brain

Yet arguing that the primary metaphors used in regard to the unit are that of a machine (a mechanical instrument) or of a bureaucracy (an ordered division of labor) designed to carry out tasks, is still too simple. In the interview I held with Yoel (a highly successful director of a manufacturing firm), he often used other terms that, while grounded in the language of management, sounded somehow different. For example, he spoke of such matters as "acquiring managerial skills", "building a system of working relations", or of "management wisdom". I began to comprehend the significance of this terminology when I reread another part of the interview during which we discussed the resemblance between running a business and commanding an army battalion:

Now in terms of thinking and planning. In both places [business and the army] you make decisions, its your role as commander or manager if your looking for the commonalities. Now you can't plan anything if you can't define the situation - the conditions of the environment (matsav hateva). Now here you call it intelligence and there you call it market research. Its the same thing... Now its true in the army, that you won't send someone [without real directions], sort of like "go over there, somewhere there is a wadi [a dry bed of a river]", so its the same in business. Policymaking in both places is the same. You have to set the parameters: price, number of agents, advertizing budget. In marketing these things are your ammunition. Now in the army you say: "wait a minute what have I got here, point targets, area targets? infantry, armor?" -- you even choose the types of ammunition in the part called fire-plan.

In general terms, Yoel is talking about the relationship between organization and environment. More specifically, he is discussing

the planning and reactive capacities of the battalion to uncertain and changing circumstances.

The reasoning underlying this passage may be clarified against the background of a pair of contrasting labels -- one negative and the other positive -- which are sometimes applied to soldiers and officers. The rather standard derogatory term is "rosh katan", which literally means "small head". Closely associated terms are the humorous "pin head" (rosh sika), "tweezers head" (rosh pintseta) implying a crown small enough to be picked up with tweezers, or "small-light-bulb head" (rosh natznatz). These terms usually refer to soldiers who are considered somewhat 'lower-grade' -- whether mediocre, inept or unwilling -- and who lack motivation or are disillusioned with army life (see Feige and Ben-Ari 1991). From the point of view of commanders, the prime grievance against these soldiers is their unwillingness to take on responsibilities and their apathy. Interestingly this negative label is a corollary of both the machine and the bureaucratic metaphors. If the image of one "small head" one is an automatic soldier unthinking and lacking initiative, the other is the clerk doing exactly what is in his job specification. One soldier who was rather proud of his "small head" put it this way: "What I know is only what interests me, and not all those things the decision-makers sit there and talk about all day."

The contrasting category is one of "rosh gadol", a big head, which is used to characterize people with initiative, drive and a sense of enterprise. Related terms include "open head" (rosh patu'ach), "open not square" (patu'ach lo meruba), "thinking" (chashiva), "using one's head" (haph'alat rosh), "judgement" (shikul da'at), or "operating the brain" (haph'alat moach). The essential metaphor at work here, although it is not one used explicitly by the men, is of 'unit as brain', or 'unit as mind'. By this assertion I mean the likening of certain military activities to the information processing and reactive capabilities of the human brain or mind (Morgan 1986:81).

The use of this metaphor is related to the limits of the machine image. The mechanistic approach is well suited to conditions characterized by straightforward tasks and a stable environment, i.e. circumstances in which machines and standardized bureaucracies work well (Morgan 1986:34). Conversely, it is restricted in terms of its adaptability and its potential for leading to 'robotic' compliance or strict adherence to rules and regulations. Thus organizations which, like the army, need to be able to scan and sense changes in the environment, and to innovate and react to these changes are usually characterized by figures of speech related to the "braininess" or "mindfulness" of the organization.

Let us look at a number of examples of the 'unit as brain' metaphor. The first instance is taken from an interview with Itai the battalion's deputy commander. We were having a conversation about what he looks for in military service:

Where do the interesting things begin? When the field (shetach) creates problems that are unexpected, and you have to meet those problems with your own initiative.

Corollaries of this view are found in expressions commanders use such as "creativity in managing", "problem solving", or "meeting challenges is like solving crossword puzzles". Moreover, when officers on all levels talked of accepting "smart comments" from soldiers they seemed to be stressing the need for a basic openness to suggestions about the operation of the unit in a changing environment.

One of the most common, if telling, phrases used to appraise troops and commanders is their "ability to think beyond their organizational slot or box (mishbetset)". This concise expression captures at one and the same time a desired ability to comprehend the general picture within which the unit is operating (i.e. the environment), to process information relevant to concrete action, and to act beyond the dictates of one's role (in the machine or in the bureaucracy). While I have very little comparative data on this point, I would suggest that to a greater degree than in other armies, the IDF's elite combat units encourage initiative down to the level of ordinary soldiers. One expects troops to be open and innovative to a greater degree than in other armed forces (Moshe Lissak, personal communication; Gal 1973; Gal 1986). Indeed, so prevalent is the stress on innovation that it has even led to the coining of the humoristic phrase "every plan is a basis for changes" (kol tokhnit hi bassis leshinuim).

This kind of feature -- on the "open headedness" of all troops -- is also evident in the constant stress on self-improvement and learning from mistakes in carrying out tasks (lekakhim). My dairy is full of references to meetings at the end of training or operational deployment, short gatherings at the end of patrols, or conversations between soldiers in the barracks in which quality improvement is the central theme. During these formal and informal assemblies the accent is on discussing ways to better one's performance or the performance of one's unit. To put this by way of the previous metaphor this kind of talk seems to be related to the way soldiers and officers tinker with the production process and with the quality of their products.

Yet for all the stress on innovation and thinking, the 'brain' metaphor is subordinated to the metaphor of 'machine'. This is evident in the following two excerpts. The first is from the exchange with Itai, the deputy battalion commander:

If you don't give the company commanders the limiting framework, and if you don't give them a degree of independence, then you lose any output you can produce from them.

The second passage is from an extended talk with Ehud, commander C company:

I don't get up in the morning and give an order here and an

order there: "this is what and how I want things!". I think about things and when I send someone I explain why it's important that he do that thing. This goes on until the stage where I say: "OK this is after all the army. I've explained until now, and from this moment on what I say is an order.

The implication of such statements seems to be that creativity and innovation are welcome so long as they represent contributions to the greater efficiency of the military machine. Along these lines, units like this infantry battalion are populated by resourceful and reflective people who are encouraged to contribute to the innovative and multifaceted quality of their military units but within the limits imposed by the overall machine-like "logic-of-action".

War, Survival and The Rhetoric of Emotional Control

For all of this however, my analysis does not stray far from rather conventional examinations of organizations. The combination of "machine-like" performance, bureaucratic administration, and "brain-like" innovation as guiding imagery, to put this by way of example, is not untypical of many business firms. What distinguishes military organizations are the kind of representations used in regard to the environment they are supposed to function in, are trained to perform in: combat. At the risk of stating the obvious let me emphasize that the focal environment at the level of field units is combat and not war in general. What interests soldiers most of all is the localized, violent encounter of two armed organizations (Boene 1990:29). As I began to appreciate when I went over my fieldnotes, the portrayal of combat harbors the distinctiveness and the strength of military metaphors.

What kind of experience is combat? In the stark words of various soldiers from the battalion, combat is a matter of "survival", circumstances of "meeting danger", "the moment of truth", the "critical instant", "a situation of life or death", or, "a game you just can't lose". These depictions of combat are typical of any modern army where the scene of the actual firefight is one of utmost chaos and confusion. In this situation the soldier confronts not only the imminent danger of loss of life, and perhaps more frightening the loss of limb, he also witnesses wounds and death suffered by others (Moskos 1988:5). In addition, there is a constant and gnawing sense of uncertainty about the unfolding 'action' on the battlefield (what has often been termed the "fog" of war). Closely related to this experience are more 'routine' stresses: the weight of the pack and the equipment, the taste and quality (or lack) of food and water, loss of sleep and at times difficult weather conditions. Keegan's (1976:47) eloquent evocation puts it thus:

Battle, for him [the soldier], takes place in a wildly unstable physical and emotional environment; he may spend much of his time in combat as a mildly apprehensive spectator, granted, by some freak of events, a

comparatively danger-free grandstand view of others fighting; then he may suddenly be able to see nothing but the clods on which he has flung himself for safety, there to crouch -- he cannot anticipate for minutes or hours; he may feel in turn, boredom, exultation, panic, anger, sorrow, bewilderment, even that sublime emotion we call courage. And his perception of community with his fellow-soldiers will fluctuate in equal measure.

In the context of the IDF one of the most common terms used to describe combat is lachats. The literal translation of this term into English is pressure, but the Hebrew includes all of the synonyms and connotations of the English word: stress, anxiety, strain, or tension. What is the significance of this "pressure"? I am going to argue that it is at the juncture in which the "machine", "bureaucratic", and "brain" metaphors are applied to the highly stressful situation of combat that a whole 'rhetoric of emotional control' emerges; that this emotional control under pressure -- within and later without the combat situation -- comes to figure in a key schema or model of military performance; and finally, that it is this key model that is used in evaluating soldiers and actions, and interpreting new situations.

Let me begin by laying bare the rhetoric of emotions that underlies talk about combat. Much of what I am going to say about emotions may appear to you to be taken-for-granted, and it is so because it is "our" (i.e. Western middle-class) rhetoric. It is, of course, also this character of taken-for-grantedness that gives this theory of emotions its strength.

In our usual thinking, actions occur because of intentions. Since we don't say what is obvious, we usually don't explain action by saying it was intended (D'Andrade 1987:120). Thus in Hebrew and in English, verbs having to do with perception, thought, desire, and intention all typically predicate an active agent. In regard to feelings and emotions however, the agent is typically described as a passive experiencer: "Things bother, bore or excite us". In general, feelings and emotions are considered to be reactions to the world which are mediated by our understanding of the world, and we often we speak of them as being 'triggered' by external events. Typically then, emotions are not thought to be completely under one's control (D'Andrade 1987:119).

Closely related to these notions is the categorization of emotions by mass nouns rather than count nouns: except in poetry one does not usually say one sadness ago. Mass nouns, thus, have no defined edges that make counting possible. Furthermore, like water or color, emotions can blend so that one can feel several feelings at once. Finally, emotions are thought to cause various involuntary visceral responses such as turning pale, flushing, trembling, or shedding tears, sweating although individual and situational responses may differ greatly. At base here is a folk theory of emotions as "things" that one (or one's group) must deal with in functional sense (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990:1): the existence of these 'things' -- emotions and feelings created by

external circumstances -- creates internal states that may prove difficult to handle or regulate.

We are now in a position to return to the combat situation. It is in this situation that emotions -- remember, mass, intermingling, and externally triggered emotions -- take on prime importance for soldiers and commanders. In these circumstances, fear, apprehension, dread and at times exhilaration blend together, and issue forth within oneself because of the external situation. The problem becomes one, I would suggest, of agency: who will be master? situation or person, circumstances or (because this is such a male thing) man. This is a problem because in combat control of or by the situation -- via emotions -- is related to the overall character of the unit as a fighting machine which is performing actions on the environment. To put this by way of example, destruction of enemy personnel and equipment or securing advantageous positions are tasks that are predicated on the management of internal feelings and emotions. Because emotions, again to make the reasoning here explicit, may impede, may hinder the performance of military tasks they must be overcome, channelled and above all controlled¹⁰. Conversely, the automaticity and the ability to react to circumstances which are required of soldiers and commanders are based on the problematic control of their internal states.

This point may become clearer by means of another distinction made in regard to emotions. In Lutz' (1990:70) explication, lack of control of emotions in American culture -- and I would argue that by extension in most middle-class cultures in the West -- is depicted as leading to uncontrolled action: for instance, "running wild" or "boiling over". In her words (Lutz 1990:72), the metaphor of control implies something that otherwise would be out of control, something wild and unruly, a threat to order. This type of argument has been propounded by Katz' (1990) in her study of US Army drill sergeants. She found that for these men the prime danger of emotionality is lack of control leading to uncontrolled behavior which would prove to be an obstacle to military performance.

I would argue that this is only part of the picture, for under certain situations -- combat being one -- the understood danger is not only or even primarily wild, untamed, or frenzied behavior but in a curious way its very opposite: lack of action, paralysis. It is this aspect of uncontrolled behavior which is very often implied by the term being "pressured" in combat. The image seems to be one of physical pressure on one's limbs and body that impedes intended, forceful and effective action. This image of external forces operating on all or parts of one's physical form well fits "our" logic of causation: an external situation influences emotions which impede action¹¹.

Talk in the IDF is replete with terms involving emotion and action. Much of this rhetoric is centered on the term "cool performance" (kor ruach). This phrase, which encapsulates emotional control in the service of military missions, is the one used most often in appraising performance under "pressure". The

literal meaning of kor ruach is "cool" or "cold spirit" but it refers to the ability to act with poise and composure under trying circumstances. Specifically, this ability involves such things as control of breath and voice while talking, giving orders smoothly, thinking clearly, reacting quickly, or even controlling one's limbs or countenance (no grimacing for example).

A closely related term is dvekut bamesima, which strictly speaking means "cemented" or "glued" to one's mission but carries the connotation of carrying out one's assigned mission despite all of the difficulties of the combat situation. Perhaps an English equivalent of this latter term is "sticking to one's guns" during an enemy attack. Here emotional control is explicitly linked to motivation: the end result is what should be kept in sight when carrying out one's combat mission. While kor ruach is centered on one's personal character and demeanor, dvekut bamesima is focused on impulsion towards the defined goals. In essence what is important both in "cool spirit" and in "cemented to one's mission" is the self-control needed to master a situation¹².

It is on the basis of this kind of reasoning, for example, that so much of military psychotherapy is focused on the debilitating effects of combat rather than on a variety of uncontrolled behaviors. Indeed, shell shock or battle fatigue are expressed in terms of lack of action or as lack of control over one's body and its appendages and therefore as hindering military performance¹³. The very terms "combat reactions" and "functional debilitation" (Gabriel 1987: 48, 74) capture the notion of the soldier's involuntary response to the firefight in terms of inability to contribute to the military effort.

A Key Schema: Combat

Let me relate these points back to the main line of my argument through the analysis of three short passages. The first is from the conversation I had with Ehud and is the one I began this section with. He had been speaking of his experience in Lebanon:

At that period I reached the apex of my competence in terms of activating six [mortar] barrels under conditions of pressure, night after night. Really, with successful hits, really excellent hits. And from that moment I went down in terms of my professional ability, in terms of the tension, in terms of everything.

The second passage is from an interview with Gili, an NCO. We talked of his war experiences when he said:

I found out that the limits of my ability, and I'm not telling you anything new here, are way beyond anything I could even imagine. My ability to withstand hardships...[means] that I could meet challenges (lhitmoded)... I learnt that whenever I think I've reached

my limits including mental limits, I can always make an effort to continue on to act.

The third excerpt is taken from Lieblich's book (1989:128) and involves the words of a medical orderly (he too is talking of the war in Lebanon):

That's when I saw severely injured men for the first time. I reacted... outstandingly. I was cool. Professional. A Leader in the situation. I acted as if I were a different person there, with a fantastic ability not to panic, to cope under stress. I think that never before or afterwards could I be that man.

Lieblich is interested, given her analytical focus, in the self-discovery of young men who underwent a kind of "peak experience" during the war. She is primarily concerned with the ways in which war and military service are a central part of becoming an adult man in Israel. Indeed, the texts from my project could be examined along similar lines. But what I would suggest is a shift of focus from the individual to the cultural level. More specifically, I argue that we may benefit by asking about the kind of cultural expectations that these peak experiences answer? Is there an underlying schema or scenario in terms of which this "peak experience" is actualized, interpreted and "made sense of"?

Let me now formulate this 'folk' model-- or to use interchangeable terms, key schema or prototypical scenario -- of combat: combat is a threatening situation of extreme stress and uncertainty (the chaos or "fog" of battle) in which units (combinations of soldiers, lethal equipment and drills) under the command of officers perform their assigned tasks by mastering their emotions. The four main elements of this scenario are those we have been discussing until this point: situation, unit, command, and emotions. The individual soldier is the juncture through which the four elements are expressed: he undertakes actions derived from membership in a machine-like organization, under extremely stressful circumstances, and masters emotions caused by the situation in order to carry out actions dictated by his commander.

Sounds simple? It is. A whole world of things -- actors, equipment, organizations, events -- are simplified in an expected manner for any military man (or woman). The folk model or schema of combat "works" by relating the different constituent elements together to create a more complex concept.

Now go back to the three descriptions of the "peak experience" of combat. While brief, these passages are understandable precisely because they assume a background knowledge which is familiar both to the speaker and to the person he interacts with. My point is simply that this knowledge is organized terms of the combat schema. What people do is to match things like "activating" mortars, "successful hits", or "conditions of pressure" with the main elements of the schema

which is available to them as members of the culture. While the combat model is relatively uncomplicated, it is itself comprised of more complex components (for example, the activation of mortars is itself a complicated notion of relations between men, machines, and drills)¹⁴.

To restate an earlier assertion, while all of this kind of understanding is obvious and simple (to members of the culture), it is our task to explain just how this obviousness is organized and what needs the simplification serves¹⁵. To put this matter figuratively, if one were to ask soldiers to put into writing the kinds of understandings at base of the three excerpts I have given before, they would fill volumes and volumes of notes and documentation. The combat schema thus allows one to encapsulate this large load of knowledge into simple and manipulable "chunks", which provide the tools for much more complex understandings and reasonings. Following Hutchins (in Quinn and Holland 1987:18), I would suggest that such models or schemas serve as "templates" from which any number of propositions can be constructed (for instance, to evaluate, judge, or interpret), and it is to these matters that I turn to in the next section.

THE SCHEMA IN USEEvaluating Soldiers: Professionalism

The first example has to do with what are seen to be 'ideal' or 'good' soldiers. The following is a passage from Ehud's interview (commander C company). Like most of the officers in the battalion -- and I suspect in the IDF as well -- Ehud formulates his answer in terms of military "professionalism" ("an able soldier is a professional"):

A good soldier is one whose equipment is in order, he has his web gear in order... He has all he needs: magazines, canteens, water in the canteens; his specialized equipment, like if he carries a communications rig then he has all of the antennas (short and long), and that they are secured to the rig... If he carries a light mortar then he has the proper ammo in order... Always to be meticulous about the weapons being clean, oiled... This is one side of being a professional soldier. The other side is that he be able to perform all of the drills like the right kind of movement, quietly and with control. Also basic discipline: not to talk while on the move, not to smoke, to move quickly, not to gripe, not to be afraid of water, and not be afraid of the sun, and not to be afraid of puddles and not of dunes. All of these things make a good infantry soldier.

While this picture of an exemplary soldier may apply to any situation -- small and large scale exercises or patrols, for example -- his desired traits and qualities are derived from the basic combat schema. The criteria for judging whether a certain person deserves or does not deserve to be labelled or categorized as a "professional" are derived from the schema. The underlying systematicity of this portrayal, in other words, is based on relating the machine metaphor and the metaphor of bureaucratic discipline to the metaphor of emotional control, and through these to military actions.

The next two excerpts concern not 'ideal' soldiers but real situations. The first example is from a slightly bemused report a medical orderly gave me of his conduct during one training stint in the desert:

We were in the midst of a long set of maneuvers and one of the company's soldiers lost lots of liquids. I had to give him an infusion there in the field and from that day on I had a name of someone who knows how to stick in an infusion... Any medic could have done that, but it does show a minimum of professional ability to function under those kinds of conditions.

The next passage is a characterization of a soldier that Omer,

commander of the support company, had under his command during the intifada:

He is a constant talker, he jabbers away incessantly (kashkeshan perae). But the reasons for throwing him out [of the unit] were not related to that but to his being irresponsible. He's the type where you can't anticipate his reactions: you go to a village and he suddenly begins to run after someone, and he'll disappear into some alley and he won't even think about the fact that he's endangering himself and that everyone has to look for him. Simply irresponsible... So I decided to get rid of him. He is excitable, has a higher level of excitability than others.

In both passages the link between responsibility, reliability and self-control is most explicit. In these cases themes derived from the basic scenario -- performance, emotional control and endangering situation -- are used to reason about and to evaluate soldiers in threatening situations. In the first instance this is related to the medic's performance under the tough conditions in the field. In the second, the appraisal is carried out by pointing to how the schema or scenario of 'proper' action has been disrupted. Both cases then, exemplify how the set of conditions and behavior posited in the prototypical scenario form a basis for evaluation of concrete instances.

The scenario can also be used in self-evaluation. The following words are from an interview with an ex-soldier. After many years of service in the support company he had become a driver and was explaining the advantages he brought with him to his new role:

I'm just trying to think of an engagement (hitaklut). In terms of my past, I was in three wars and I hope I haven't changed in terms of my ability not to run away. I don't really know. You would have to try me again now, but I begin from the assumption that a driver who has worked in a canteen all of his life and never experienced pressure, never had a tough experience like being under fire, will behave differently in a critical situation. Here [patrolling Israel's northern borders] the minute we find ourselves in an engagement I find myself a fighting soldier (lochem, lit warrior) and I have to man the machine gun.

To make the reasoning here explicit, through contrasting himself to other soldiers who have not been in battle, the driver's self-evaluation is also an assertion of his greater military importance. Here again, combat is the test -- in our terms the criterion -- of true soldiership.

Prescriptions for proper military behavior are based on a similar reasoning which links self-control and performance. For instance, soldiers are constantly being exhorted to restrain themselves in use of ammunition during exercises, or not to go wild with their guns (lo lehishtolel) during combat patrols, the intifada, maneuvers, or proof firing. Dan, commander B company,

talks to his troops before an armed patrol along the border:

We've been here many days and have only three more to go.
We will restrain ourselves, we will curb ourselves.

Again, in one session devoted to summing up a battalion exercise, the brigade commander (an officer belonging to the permanent force) commented about the machine gunners' performance:

You carried out your missions well but, pardon the words, every once in a while you seemed to be reaching an orgasm while firing. You neglected to take into account the situation like the fact that if this were a real battle you would be exposing yourself to enemy fire. Don't take leave of your senses because you can get killed.

Emotional control is thus figuratively linked to survival and to effectiveness. Perhaps an English equivalent of this notion is the danger of becoming too "trigger happy": that is, letting the exhilaration of firing lead to uncontrolled use of weapons.

Trust and Survival: Evaluating Commanders

We are now led to the place of commanders in the key scenario. The scenario depicts different (albeit overlapping and complementary) roles for soldiers and for commanders (primarily but not only officers). As in other armies (Boene 1990: 31), of the rank and file combatant a minimum amount of courage is expected, as well as a capacity to control fear in face of danger, discomfort pain or misfortune. Of the leader however, much more is expected: more composure, additional competence, greater self-control, and an ability to lead by inspiration, by example.

It is this kind of reasoning which is applied in the following passage in which Eran, deputy commander of the support company, appraises a platoon commander:

He is an officer, he has emotional maturity, and he knows how to lead people, how to give orders, and he knows to distinguish between what is important and unimportant... He isn't a little boy who will cry every time he has to go out on patrol like some of these other guys we have in the battalion.

Notice two points in regard to this passage. First the category of children: here and elsewhere children are invoked as the contrastive class of people one should not behave like. Along these lines, in a variety of situations soldiers are exhorted "not to act spoilt", and "not to behave like babies", or are advised before patrol that "summer camp is over, now is the army". Only rarely, and in strong contrast to the US Marines for example (Eisenhart 1975), is the contrastive category that of women. Categorizing someone as a child in the circumstances of the unit, allows the categorizer both to point to a desired set of behaviors and to negatively label the person being

categorized¹⁶. The second point is that implicit in this commander's words is not only an elevation of his ability to control his emotions like an adult (like the self-evaluation of the driver that I brought in earlier). It is also an implicit plea for the legitimacy of his position as a commander directing others. It is an implicit argument for his right to exercise power within the military hierarchy because of his personal qualities.

In their evaluation of commanders, soldiers use two similar criteria derived from the combat schema: professionalism (the machine and brain metaphors) and emotional control. Take the following rather typical example from an interview with Noam, a veteran NCO now a clerk. We were speaking about the 'ideal' officer and he said:

Yes well, it's his professionalism (miktso'iut): like how he moves the forces, how he navigates. If its a commander who can't find his way then you don't like being with him. I mean that in the end if your commander, and especially the company commander, is not professional then your feeling is not good, insecure; because you know that you may have to go out with him to war one day, a very bad feeling. We had one platoon commander like that with us in Lebanon. He was a nice guy but not very good professionally and in the end he was thrown out... I wouldn't go with someone like that to war, I wouldn't be calm (lev shaket, literally with a calm heart) like I was with Omri or Nimrod [two former battalion commanders], people that you feel are professional and know how to manage, and know how to give clear orders, and who will get you out of there alive.

A commander's ability to impart or inspire a feeling of security among his troops is a theme that came up time and again in the interviews. In this respect, officers must grapple with two kinds of emotional control: their own, and those of the soldiers under their command. Indeed, officers more than other soldiers, are typically thought of as directly influencing soldiers' abilities to control their emotions. For example, many soldiers spoke of the feeling of security they got when their commanders gave orders in a smooth way, without mistakes or hesitation. In their eyes, an officer's cool performance in itself helped them in the pressured situation. Accordingly, in a conversation we were having over coffee one day a machine gunner noted:

Do you remember Eran? He is cool (kar) and gives his troops a feeling of security. This is especially important when you're under pressure. During these periods its especially important that someone give you confidence (bitachon, also security), will calm you and direct you. Do you remember how Eran was in the ambush we laid. He waited until the terrorists were only a few meters from us before opening fire.

Again Ehud, a few days after our conversation said to me that he had been mulling over one of my questions and that the important

thing for a commander is "to instill (lintoa, lit. implant) a feeling of security among his soldiers".

The criteria used to appraise officers are not limited to firefights and are often employed in regard to more mundane matters. One company commander, in talking of the atmosphere his predecessor had created, used standards drawn from the combat model in order to underscore the predecessor's lack of success:

All those time-timetables [deadlines]. He didn't allow them to go home. He applied pressure all of the time as though there was a war going on... Too much pressure! He and the [platoon] commanders sort of went wild (mishtolelanim).

A few moments later in the interview he talked about a fellow officer in his company, and invoked the image of controlled use of weapons:

Well he tends to shoot from the hip when he's making decisions, while I tend to think before deciding, I shoot through the rearsights.

Officers are clearly aware of the criteria soldiers use in appraising their performance as commanders. Consequently they often consciously and intentionally present a certain military 'self' to their subordinates. Officers told me that they often felt that in stressful situations there arose a need to give the impression of being in control. At base of their reasoning was the assumption that by setting up an example of emotional control they would infuse their troops with a greater measure of certainty and security and therefor influence their emotions.

The following passage is from a discussion with a former company commander:

The professionalism of the company commander is very important for soldiers. They can tell you that you're a son of a bitch but if your professional then it's OK... It has a lot to do with [interpersonal] politics: how he [the company commander] presents himself and what he does. Like whether he's insecure or he shows that he is in charge is all a matter of politics, a sort of constant example for the men. If he shows that he's in charge in a forceful and controlled way the soldiers begin to accept all he says.

Another officer once observed that he was rather proud of himself and his self-control despite the fact that he was never really calm about matters (af pa'am lo shaket):

I never get angry do I? I try not to get emotional and to give orders in a clear way... Take the way to speak on the communications net: think before you talk. Don't start yapping away and get suddenly stuck. Think and then give orders shortly and curtly.

Given the various criteria derived from the combat schema

it may now be clearer how new members of the unit are appraised. Gathering a large amount of information on each new arrival is unnecessary (see Holland and Skinner 1987:105). All one need do is to check for a number of characteristics in terms of the potential performance of the new member under conditions of battle. Thus for example, all one has to say of a new officer is that he is someone who is liable to be pressured easily (lachtsan), for a whole set of connotations rooted in the scenario to be understood. Along these lines, when looking at a new platoon commander briefing his troops, commanding them in exercise, or simply making sure that they are on time for some activity, the company or battalion commanders may be running a sort of mental simulation model of how the new officer would behave under combat conditions. A few rather simple clues from his behavior are used as a basis for judgement.

The advantages of the cultural model lie in its facilitating communication: experiences, appraisals, or prescriptions can be rapidly communicated to other people because they are formulated according to shared conventions. Thus a few words exchanged during a meeting are usually enough to portray a situation or a person. The price of this cognitive economy however, is some rigidity in interpreting the world and a certain slowness in recognizing or learning new models (Holland and Skinner 1987:105). To put this by way of my case, while the shared schema of soldiering allows one to discuss and communicate about a highly complex world in manageable terms, the schema may impede the understanding and the ability to react to novel situations.

Training: Simulation of the Prototypical Scenario

Most soldiers, including those of the Israeli army, devote much more time to training than to participation in any sort of combat. Given the centrality of war preparation it is not surprising that training exercises are often simulations of the prototypical scenario of combat. Training maneuvers are designed with two interrelated purposes in mind: to enhance the "combat readiness" of units (Shafritz et. al. 1989:290), and as fabricated tests in lieu of the ultimate test of combat. Let us deal with each of these points in turn.

In the battalion, like any fighting unit, many drills are related to weapons and weaponry. By this I do not mean only the repetitive training designed to produce a conditioned reflex in weapons handling (field-stripping, aiming, or handling technical stoppages), but rather the inculcation of certain emotional attitudes towards weapons. It is through military instruments that you carry out missions, but these implements are in themselves dangerous. In a curious way then, weapons become extensions of the dangerous environment. Thus the problem becomes one of learning to feel secure with, and in charge of, the lethal instruments one operates. More concretely, there is much talk in the battalion about such things as the need to "master" guns and firearms (through repeated practice and firing of live ammunition) and about not being afraid of such implements (bitachon baneshek)¹⁷. This realization brings us to the next

point.

Training exercises, to put this briefly, become tests in which many of the criteria derived from the combat schema come into play: composure under pressure, the machine like operation of units and sub-units, or the ability to react and innovate in a changing environment. In this respect however, while the men are fully aware of the differences between real and simulated combat, exercises are more than rehearsals. Because maneuvers are carried out with live ammunition, mock (and at times real) casualties, irregular food and drink, and include conditions of fatigue and uncertainty, these events are taken to be "serious" in ways that rehearsals are not. Along these lines, the criterion officers and soldiers most often use in appraising these events is their similarity to real combat: the types and amounts of weapons used, and the length, physical difficulties, or complexity involved (see also Gal 1986:149).

One example of this point is the link soldiers and officers make between the seriousness, prestige, and attraction of an exercise on the one hand, and the kinds of weapons and ammunition used on the other. In the first place, the men draw a contrast between maneuvers carried out with live ammunition (dangerous, risky and challenging) and "dry runs" (targil yavesh)¹⁸. Then they evoke a contrast between exercises in which imitation ammunition (bullets, grenades and charges) that make noise and smoke are used, and those events where real ammunition is employed. Finally they discriminate between the diverse kinds of weapons wielded: for example, if there are tanks, anti-tank missiles or artillery involved it is more life-like and therefore more serious, interesting, and prestigious.

The type of ammunition (an extension of the similarity to combat) is often linked to motivation. One NCO told me that after a week of little or no sleep and general fatigue everyone nevertheless seemed to wake up toward the final battalion exercise which involved air support, artillery, and the participation of tanks. In a similar vein, the battalions's deputy commander said that a "real" exercise summons a great deal of excitement and tension in the troops who suddenly seem to find new strength and to enjoy their performance and the performance of the unit as a whole. Soldiers from their point of view, say that these large exercises are opportunities for them to express their professionalism, and often take on as much ammunition as they or their machines can carry.

Officers, often evaluate exercises according to criteria derived from the brain metaphor. Let me give one example. Ari the current battalion commander was slightly vexed with me when I suggested that the unplanned part of the battalion exercise (that is, the part where the reactive capacities of commanders are most fully tested) may be superfluous:

Are you kidding, this is exactly the most interesting part of the whole maneuver.

Plainly soldiers do not equate combat with training. But what happens when the unit has to engage in the "real" thing?

VI

COMBAT AND THE ENEMY

To use a current anthropological term, the military other, the enemy has been altogether missing from my analysis up to this point. In this section I will deal with three issues: a 'folk' categorization of enemies which is based on their perceived threat; the depersonalization of opposing forces; and the rhetoric of emotional control which saturates talk about relations with enemy civilians.

Enemies, Seriousness and Prestige

The major 'folk' categorization of enemies in the battalion -- that is, the way soldiers and officers classify different forces they oppose -- is derived from the combat schema. The criterion for categorization is the seriousness of the threat they pose to oneself, to one's unit, and to the performance of both. This standard is derived from the combat scenario because of knowledge that combat is a menacing, life-threatening situation. Enemies are thus arranged along a gradation of significance: regular armies, professional Palestinian fighters, knife wielders, molotov cocktail and stone throwers, tire burners and all the way to 'just' civilians demonstrating. The point is simply that a criterion derived from the key scenario allows the unit's soldiers to place different kinds of opposing foes on an ordered continuum.

The continuum is related to a classification that is found in the general security doctrine of Israel in which enemies are ranged along a gradient of threat to the state of Israel (see Gal-Or 1988). While most officers and soldiers may explicitly or implicitly "know" this official doctrine in the sense of being able to understand it if it were told to them, the 'folk' continuum I refer to here is analytically distinct, and used in separate ways from the more general scale found in the security doctrine. By analytically distinct I mean that there are certain interpretations and applications of the 'folk' categorization which are not addressed (or only peripherally addressed) in the formal IDF doctrine.

Let me mention three points in this regard. First, enemies' positions on the continuum are related to different types of knowledge about, and treatment accorded to them. In this sense, different prescriptions (for behavior) are derived from the various categories of enemies. For example, whether one shoots or arrests, or what kind of protective gear one uses are things that are dictated by the category of enemy you oppose in a specific locality. Some of these prescriptions are, of course, dictated by the central commands of the army, but given the variability and uncertainty of situations in which the battalion is deployed, many prescriptions are formulated "on the ground" as it were by officers, NCOs, and soldiers. It within this

"leeway for interpretation" -- in the specific circumstances in which soldiers must act -- that the folk knowledge of troops and commanders comes into play.

Second, the continuum is used as a measure of the importance of a specific kind of activity: the more dangerous and the more threatening a given operation, the more important it is. Thus a stint along international borders opposite regular armies or professional fighters is more serious and critical than patrols in the occupied territories. For example, during the Palestinian Uprising, Ari the battalion commander often stated that maintaining discipline, open lines of communication, and commanding are more important than all of the Intifada. While unstated, the reasoning behind these kinds of statements seemed to be that the unit's general military performance -- related as it is to missions against "more serious" opposing forces than civilians -- were its significant purpose.

Third, the categorization of enemies forms the basis for a scale of prestige accorded to an individual or a unit (within the IDF and in Israeli society in general). Accordingly, participation in combat is more prestigious than patrols along the borders (during "peacetime") which are in turn more prestigious than policing civilians in the occupied territories. When we were scheduled to be deployed along Israel's northern borders for instance, many soldiers saw this activity as more rewarding, and serious (retsini) than another stint in the Intifada. Again during this period at least two officers told me they felt the missions along the border were more "real" (amiti), or that they had a "dimension of military work" there.

But what are the implications of "working" on an enemy?

Depersonalization

As I went over my fieldnotes I was struck by the extent to which the "enemy" as a general category is discussed within the unit in terms of the machine metaphor. In briefings, planning meetings or any exercises the enemy is treated as a complex of equipment, men, and drills. During such occasions the number and quality of the opposing forces, the types of ammunition and support groups they have, or typical maneuvers which characterize them are described and analyzed. Similarly, in any situation where enemies are to be potentially engaged the problem, as the commanders see it, is usually one of simply finding the right means (emtsa'im) to treat (letapel, lit handle) them. For example, the issue is often deciding upon the right force composition, tactics, and ammunition for countering the perceived threat.

While a characterization of enemies as complexes of men and equipment is more than obvious on one level, I would argue that it is not a universal military trait. Let me illuminate this claim by placing my case (and that of the IDF) in a comparative perspective. In contrast to some armies -- or, to be more accurate, parts of armies in certain historical periods -- while

the definitions and categorizations derived from the machine metaphor are related to a dehumanization, or depersonalization of the enemy, I do not think that they express a demonization of the opposing forces. Antagonists, to be sure, become "objects", "things": so many targets to be hit, obstacles to be destroyed. or articles to be taken into account in the threatening environment. It is also the same language of objectification which undergirds the neutral terms used to talk about 'interaction' with the enemy: engagement (maga), incident (eru'a), or skirmish (hitaklut).

But if Fussell (1989), and Eisenhart (1975) and Shatan (1977) are to be believed this "objectification" is different from the dehumanization of enemy forces that went on in the American army during World War Two and in the American Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. In my unit -- and I would argue in most of the elite reserve forces of the IDF -- there is almost no organizational propagation of a view in which enemy forces are turned into 'evil' groups toward which some kind of special treatment should be accorded¹⁹. This situation stands in stark contrast to the American forces (Holmes 1985:366) where one finds an almost obligatory demonization of the enemy and his portrayal as the foe of civilization and as the opponent of progress.

A number of implications stem from this point. in the first place -- and this may go against some received scholarly wisdom -- images and concepts used in regard to oneself or one's unit can also be used for evaluating the enemy. Thus paradoxically, just as one can talk about "throwing out" a soldier from the unit as some kind of useless implement, so one can talk about casting aside people who are "in the way" during the intifada²⁰. It is a common image of people as things which underlies both conceptions. A related (if uncanny) stress on how the enemy is "like us" is evident when soldiers use the "unit as brain" metaphor to talk about opposing forces operating under their own conditions of uncertainty and with their own capacities for reacting to a volatile environment. The following assessment is by Omer, commander of the support company. We talked in my office at the Hebrew University a few weeks after our first stint in the Intifada:

Hebron's [a city in the West Bank] on the whole rather quiet. In the [surrounding] villages they're much more organized, and they get organized much quicker... They're also much braver in the villages... They perform (ovdim literally, work) much better. Perform with very good techniques, that is, they know every alley and every corner in the area. You come [into a village] and suddenly above you a whole lot of people will be throwing stones at you and suddenly they disappear... They will catch you at your weakest points.

Another example is taken from a conversation I had one evening with Ari, the battalion commander. The two of us were whiling away the time talking of a town near Hebron when he put himself in the other's place:

You know, the Arabs could wage an even more effective struggle than they do today. For instance instead of throwing rocks they could just line up in the main street of a village and do nothing. Just stand there. We as Israelis would find it much more difficult to react to such types of struggles.

But attributing such qualities to enemies -- a combination of machine-like things and brain-like organizations -- allows members of the battalion (like Israeli soldiers in general) to perceive and to act towards civilians as though they are professional or semi-professional soldiers. In this attribution, then, one finds a subtle conflation of the categories of civilians and soldiers into one class of enemy. This conflation does not create a strictly new class of foe, but rather allows the application of metaphors usually used in regard to regular soldiers to civilians. In this sense, the combat scenario, embodying what soldiering is about, comes to govern a variety of situations which are not strictly military in essence. As Gal-Or (1988:24) notes in regard to the IDF in general, the same basic knowledge that is applied in the IDF to regular armies is now utilized in 'engagements' with non-regulars and with civilians.

In the specific historical period during which I write, this knowledge has become an eminently practical matter for the IDF. It has become a practical matter because it is during the Lebanese escapade (1982-85), and even more so during the Intifada that the problematics of defining and reacting to "enemy civilians" arose.

Civilians and Emotional Control

A typical illustration taken from a period during which the unit served in the Palestinian Uprising may illuminate the peculiar kind of attitude fostered towards civilians (I have no comparable data on the Lebanese experience). The following words are a verbatim translation of a briefing by Ehud, commander C company:

So our missions define our activities [patrols and keeping road free of stones and roadblocks]. This means we don't come in contact with them too much. This means not to go wild with live ammunition. Don't shoot plastic bullets. We don't usually fire. We will not provoke them (nitgareh), won't throw anything at them.

As is evident from this passage, a heightened degree of emotional control is required of soldiers dealing with civilians. Along these lines of thought, using "undue force" against -- that is, hitting, pushing, beating, or shooting -- civilians is considered an aberration. It is an aberration not just because of the basic humanity or human values desired of the soldiers. No less importantly, these are aberrations because they indicate a lack of professionalism. Using "undue force", to make the reasoning here explicit, is taken to show a lack of control, and an

inability to master oneself and the situation. Eran (deputy of the support company) said of firing plastic bullets at Palestinians:

There was once when I shot two plastic bullets and this was my greatest failure during the last five years. I made a mistake in going into the village and then I had to shoot two bullets in order to get out of there. It is a mistake to shoot live ammunition of any kind, it shows lack of control and there is no need to put your finger on the trigger.

The following words are from the meeting held to conclude a stint in the territories. Ari the battalion commander is speaking:

I know of only two accidents (takalot) of opening fire during this stint. One was the guy who fired in the air, and the other was the soldier that fired during that night. I hope these were only irregularities (khariqot)... I don't think this should satisfy us because it still happens to us. As commanders these things keep happening and the responsibility is on us.

Let me be clear about my argument. I am not arguing that these things -- hitting and shooting civilians -- do not happen. They happen all too often. What I am arguing for is an awareness of the categorization of these acts as exceptions, and for an understanding of the organizational implications of this kind of reasoning. Soldiers who cannot control themselves, and commanders who cannot control their troops (and themselves) are considered to be inept or non-professional. Under the logic of the machine metaphor these men are labelled as some 'ill-fitting' or 'mal-functioning' parts of the unit. Thus all one has to do as a commander is to replace these men ("mechanical parts") so that the battalion be able to continue to perform.

Yet for all of the stress on the machine-like character of the unit, one must be wary of too simplistic a conceptualization to the men serving in the battalion. I now turn to deal with a number of issues related to motivation.

VII

MOTIVATION

There are two major 'folk' models of motivation that characterize the men of the battalion: a causal chain predicating need-fulfillment which serves to explain and justify why commanders (usually officers) serve in the battalion; and one predicating the creation of an 'atmosphere' among troops so that they serve willingly and effectively. While each model links individual incentives to performance in front line-units in a different way, underpinning both is the basic combat scenario.

Officers: Need-Fulfillment

Let me begin with officers. In his path-breaking essay about American reservists, Moskos' (1988:48) perceptively noted that viewing reserve duty primarily as a kind of "moonlighting" activity is to miss a basic point. It not so much economic or material benefits but other kinds of commitments that lie at base of the great deal of time -- some compensated, some donated, and all voluntary -- that men devote to their units²¹. In Israel economic considerations are, relatively speaking, even less important for the majority of soldiers because most of them are compensated by the government (through their workplaces) to the level of their monthly salary or income. Thus the Israeli situation bears a measure of similarity to the American one in terms of the non-material commitments which lie at base of personal investment in reserve duty. While this point is especially true of officers who are part of the chain of combat command, it also goes for some technical and administrative officers, and some senior and junior NCOs.

The battalion's officers often use phrases borrowed from the world of work to describe their future prospects in the unit. Many openly state that "they want to advance (lehitektadem)" or "that they are on the lookout for the promotion (kidoom)". What kind of assumptions lie behind such confessions? My assertion is that for a large number of officers in the unit -- and most certainly for many other Israeli reserve commanders -- military duty should be seen as a sort of parallel or coinciding career (Boaz Shamir, personal communication). By this conceptualization I mean not an alternative or optional professional career, but one carried out at the same time someone is pursuing his main (civilian) career. This model of careering is based on a 'fit' between the organizational requirements of the military and fulfillment of personal needs. Careering, for these men, thus consists of a progression into more authoritative positions while meeting certain challenges and fulfilling needs not met to a sufficient degree in their civilian lives.

I begin with the general contours of the model and then go on to spell out the specific types of needs that are said to be fulfilled in the army. At one stage of my interview with Yoel,

the former battalion commander, we broached the subject of ideology and personal needs. Yoel observed:

There were times when I didn't understand this process and I thought I was doing things [reserve duty] for the good of the country. Later I understood that its a personal need for me... Any beginner psychologist will tell you this. I know I'm putting it in an extreme way, but the whole 'going for the good of the country' is a rationalization, something around which there is a [national] consensus. I learnt this proposition about personal needs from that guy who is a psychologist in civilian life who was my supervisor (bakar) at that exercise... and at the beginning I argued with him because it all sounded so straightforward (boteh).

Like many folk understandings of motivations so Yoel's interpretation gains force, and is legitimized, by being identified with expert knowledge. As Quinn and Holland (1987:9-10) remind us, in many contemporary societies, explanations of human behavior that are devised by groups of socially designated experts -- in this case psychologists -- come to provide us with models for making choices in, and for making sense of, our everyday world. The fact that these models are rooted in, and often formulated with the concepts borrowed from, the social sciences does not make them any less models on the 'folk' level. This is an issue I shall return to later on in the report.

Interestingly, Itai, the unit's deputy commander also elaborated on the theme of personal fulfillment:

Everyone has his own character, his own needs, I don't know how to define it, his own existential needs. I don't want to go into the psychological side of it because I never studied psychology, but I assume, a basic assumption without understanding psychology, that anyone who carries out a role in the army up from the level of deputy company commander, has a certain need. Ok? He does not do it [carry out the role] because he has no alternative. There is some sort of complementary relationship here between his personal needs and the needs of the army. These [personal] needs could be a lot of things like a need to control.

I asked him to be more specific:

The truth is that I enjoy using power (haphalat koach)... Look for example, when we went to that village: I had to prepare a plan, then you send the teams, you command them, you know what you want and what you get, a kind of finished product... Its the same with a complex company exercise: complex in terms of command and control and in terms of the number and variety of forces you have. In short, its a sort of integration of things and I enjoy these things.

While the general model of motivation that Yoel and Itai seem to be talking about is one of need-fulfillment, the specific need

both focus on is the need for control and management. Yoel elaborated this point when he talked of the challenges of commanding a battalion:

At the beginning there was more excitement (hitlahavut) from the battalion, more of a challenge and less of a routine. But after a while you've proved to yourself that you are able to control everything (lehishtalet).

A closely related need has to do with seeking what Csikszentmihalyi's (1975) has termed a "flow" experience: the focused attention on particular tasks that stretch one's abilities to the maximum. In less technical terms, this term refers to people who seek experiences in which their competence is tested to the utmost. Such experiences include mountain-climbing, car-racing or even chess. During these occasions, time seems to "stand still" and all of one's attention is concentrated on the task at hand. Thus Yoel noted of a highly successful manoeuvre:

Now to stand there on top of a hill with the planes bombing the targets, and then us attacking... And to stand there and to see that things are flowing and this really gives you a feeling that you are in charge of the situation and there is a payoff for all of your efforts.

The reasoning here has to do less with the managerial challenge of building a unit over time, than with the specific test of manipulating a highly complex exercise in which all of your expertise and abilities are utilized to their optimum. The excitement and satisfaction gleaned from meeting such challenges are complex, of course, because constructing a 'good' unit is a precondition for carrying out successful maneuvers. Itai phrased this in terms of the "absorption" provided by such military situations:

There's a kind of stimulus here. The stimuli here are complex. There is stimulus in the actual preparation and in the performance of things like in exercises or combat. You 'operate' (maphi'il) people and there are risks. So you see, I don't work for any ideology; its more on this level.

Other officers used such phrases as the "enjoyment of being able to actualize planning in reality", or "the fun of seeing things work", while the artillery support officer said that for him it boils down to looking for "personal excellence" in participation.

Another, closely related, kind of need fulfilled by army service is epitomized by talk about risk-seeking. Risk in this context, is not the risk involved in the sacrifices of the business world, but rather the danger of battle: loss of life, limb or health. As in the general model of need-fulfillment which utilizes psychological terms so too the folk schema of risk-seeking is phrased in 'scientific' terms: the flow of hormones engendered by the heightened excitement of hazardous situations. One officer spoke of engagements and battles as being "the most

exciting (meragesh), interesting and thrilling (meratek) game there is, and one in which it is perfectly legitimate to look for these things". A young platoon commander spoke of the envy he felt for those who had the chance of participating in an exciting engagement (hitakloot). Eran, the support company's deputy commander repeatedly spoke of the flow of adrenaline as something he looks forward to in engagements with the enemy and in other such dangerous circumstances.

While there is some scientific corroboration of these assertions -- in face of danger the autonomic nervous system comes into play and adrenaline flows to quicken the pulse and to heighten the senses (Clark 1989:84)-- what should be noted is not only the adoption of scholarly findings by "ordinary" people in the military world. What should be underscored is that in the folk model, the essentially descriptive and analytical thrust of the scientific theory is transformed into a normative or prescriptive force propelling military behavior²². While "objective" scientific findings are used to explain one's behavior, they are also subtly transformed into justifications for risk-seeking. It is perhaps in this light that the claim that for some men army service is a prolongation of youth should be seen. Front-line units, in other words, are legitimate venues for continuing to seek the risks and thrills of late adolescence.

One more type of need cropped up in the conversations I had with the unit's officers: the need for status recognition. I should state however, that while many men mentioned this point, all of them stressed that it was not the primary reason of undertaking their role as commanders and officers. The following passage is rather typical (Yoel is speaking):

In civilian life it quit complementary (machmi) to me that people know I am a colonel [uses English word]. Until this day the Turkish supplier at the factory calls me "Mister Colonel". Now this is not the main reason [for becoming battalion commander] but its certainly there.

Another officer referred to the "respect and status" (kavod vema'amad) involved in commanding men. A younger platoon commander referred to prestige as being "something extra, a related dimension" related to how his role in a combat unit is perceived by members of society.

This issue is something I mentioned earlier: participation in combat and risk-seeking behavior are related to social stratification. Most societies give special rewards to their warriors. In Israel as Horowitz and Kimmerling (1974) noted, contributing to the country's security represents a reward in itself because participation in the military defines the extent to which someone is in the "social-evaluative system of Israel". As my case shows, officers serving in front line units openly acknowledge this fact and relate it to their motivation for investing in reserve duty²³.

Gibush, Atmosphere and the "Ordinary Soldier"

A different model of motivation comes into play in regard to soldiers. Here causality centers on creating a certain social atmosphere or ambience which will induce soldiers to serve willingly and efficiently. In this part of the analysis I am aided by Katriel and Nesher's (1986) excellent explication of gibush, a mainstream cultural conception of sociality in Israel. Gibush -- which literally means crystallization but in connotation is closer to cohesion -- is part of an elaborate rhetoric of cohesion in Israeli society. While the ethic of gibush traces its historical roots to the communal utopia of socialist Zionism, it has been important in the formation of mainstream Israeli culture and is found in the dominant social ideologies of this day (Katriel and Nesher 1986:222). Thus the rhetoric is used in educational establishments, work groups, political parties, youth movements, sports teams, and even in informal friendship circles and families.

The gibush metaphor implies the stable integration of elements making up a crystal. In the social analogue, the internal strength and solidity of both the individual and the group flow from the unifying sense of belonging, of being securely together "in place". The "social ideal of gibush involves an emphasis on the undifferentiated collectivity -- on joint endeavors, on cooperation and shared sentiments, on solidarity and a sense of togetherness" (Katriel and Nesher 1986:224). Thus to talk of a cohesive school class or a megubash team is to imply their internal resilience and vitality.

In the army the metaphor is used in two related senses: one related to individuals and the other related to units as wholes. On the one hand, gibush is said to be a precondition for, even a cause of soldiers' willingness to continue belonging to the unit. On the other hand, gibush is explicitly linked to the performance of units: by creating a cohesive unit one creates the conditions for excellent performance. The end products of the schema of creating gibush are motivated individuals who want to be together and a tightly knit military unit characterized by egalitarianism, solidarity, strong boundaries and therefore capable of successfully carrying out missions.

The following passage is from a conversation I had with one of the oldest soldiers in the battalion (now a clerk). We were talking about the relations between a cohesive (megubash) unit and the performance of military tasks and missions. The soldier reminisced about the time he contemplated leaving his company, and linked gibush to the combat schema:

The company commander called me in and told me that he did not want to lose a soldier like me because it is around soldiers like me that other soldiers crystallize (mitgabshim). You have to understand this against the background of my performance. I think that in pressured situations etc. like in Lebanon I never succumbed to pressure, and carried out all orders and missions in a quiet and calm way and made sure that they were properly carried out.

But just how is gibush created? The underlying scheme posits certain circumstances within which (internal psychological) "forces" that will drive the soldiers will emerge. The crucial variable is seen to be the creation of a proper social atmosphere (avira) which will motivate the men. The reasoning is similar to the one Katriel and Nesher found in educational establishments: it is "social" activities outside of the army -- like parties or outings -- or within the army -- like celebrations or the ubiquitous coffee drinking -- that help engender the proper atmosphere. For instance one ex-company commander explained how he had "crystallized" his unit by doing things with his troops: "small things like giving them a night in town (after), holding a barbecue (al haesh), talking to them, inviting them to your home". All these activities, he explained, made them feel that they belong to a special group with a fate of their own.

Another element in the creation of gibush involves weakening the rigors of hierarchy. When I asked whether there should be a separate table in the dining room for the company commander and the officers (when the company is in the field on its own), one platoon commander answered:

There is no reason in the world for a separate table. As a platoon commander I always sit with my soldiers. I do this very intentionally in the same way that I help to change a flat tire and all of those things that strictly speaking I don't have to do.

A soldier described how a previous company commander had succeeded in creating an "atmosphere" in the company:

It was pleasurable (hana'ah) to meet people, to go to parties in and out of the military, and to be together (beyachad)... He invested a lot in it, and I think it was important because he crystallized us (gibesh). So that even if there were problems with your [specific] platoon commander then you still wanted to come [to the parties] it created a sort of commitment (mechuyavut) and it was nice.

A platoon commander formulated the underlying schema rather explicitly:

The better the social circumstances a soldier has, the more his commitment to the NCOs and to the officers, the better the interpersonal relations, and the less the problems of not showing up to the army service will crop up.

Omer commander of the support company related gibush to the tasks to be carried out:

A company is something very dynamic.. The gibush is something that is determined over many years. Every time they [members of the company] are together they become more crystallized and this creates a sort of happiness (chedva, literally joy)... Everyone finds his place and his

friends and then they begin to want to be together and on guard together or go out on patrol together.

A moment later he said:

~~The minute you don't have a nice atmosphere, it begins to express itself in discipline problems: not going out on patrols on time, not performing the patrol the way it is supposed to be performed, or the same for a lookout mission or a roadblock.~~

Other soldiers talked of such things as the "comfortableness" (nokhoot), or of the "personal ties" (kesher ishi) fostered by being in a specific unit. Assaf a young platoon commander talked of "the need to turn a military framework into a social one". When I asked him why he answered:

So that soldiers will want to come to serve in the unit. To put it in one sentence, so that they will want to be with the boys (khevre). The bottom line of it is that when he [a soldier] talks of the state of Israel he isn't talking about the state of Israel but about his company. What links him here is not a tradition or Jewish identity but the feeling of being one of the boys.

I mentioned earlier that gibush seems to be a cultural theme particular to Israel and to the IDF. Let me clarify this point. First take the relative lack of hierarchical differentiation within infantry units. By this assertion I do not mean that the men do not recognize differences in rank and its associated responsibilities and privileges²⁴. But, as a long line of scholars have noted, comparatively speaking there is much less of an emphasis on rank and hierarchy in the IDF; moreover, this relative egalitarianism is seen as an ideal to aspire to and as a standard by which to appraise units and commanders. Take the following excerpt from a conversation with an Yehuda, an "ordinary" foot soldier:

We tend to constantly inspect the company sergeant-major and his deputy, the company clerk and the company medic in terms of how much they take on themselves, how much they help with the tasks assigned to the company. The first thing they are tested on is their contribution to the little things like bringing the food on time, like bringing clean clothes, like making a fair allocation of leaves, like taking turns in helping during guard duty, like helping to man the communications center.

The second point involves the cohesion implied by gibush. At first sight it may appear that gibush is the functional equivalent the 'buddy system' found in the American and Canadian armies (Moskos 1975; Kellet 1982:99) or the 'comradeship' of the British military (Richardson 1978:chap 2). In contrast both to the buddy system and to comradeship gibush is not focused on a dyadic tie. In the IDF one may speak of a squad, platoon or company that is 'crystallized', or occasionally of the NCOs of

a company or the staff officers of a battalion that have this characteristic. But one cannot properly speaking talk of a crystallized pair of soldiers (or in school of two pupils). If I were to look for a closer analogy in other armies it would probably be the general theme of 'camaraderie'. The point to note in regard to the IDF -- and again, this is a reflection of something in Israeli society is general -- is the ubiquity and the pervasiveness of gibush as a cultural theme. More than in other armies, gibush is seen by officers and soldiers of front-line units as essential to the performance of military tasks. To reiterate, all of this does not imply a lack of cohesion in other armies, but rather that in the IDF these matters are much more elaborated and explicitly used as criteria for evaluating military service.

VIII

THE FOLK MODELS: FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS

In the preceding pages I have presented the main part of my report. In this, the penultimate section it may be opportune to deal with a number of further issues related to the properties of military 'folk' models.

The Sharedness and Coherence of Folk Models

Scientific and folk models. With the popularization of science and with the spread of mass higher education, it is not surprising that scientific models are incorporated into the models people use in their everyday lives. In the unit for example, men borrow social scientific terms to talk about such things as need-fulfillment, risk-seeking, or the links between workplace atmosphere and job satisfaction²⁵. This borrowing however, is selective because popular versions tend to use only a small number of (often isolated) concepts taken from scientific models. Hence in talking of need-fulfillment, the men do not devise an orderly hierarchy of needs, nor are they explicit about the way needs can be fulfilled in different contexts. Moreover, unlike scientific theories, 'folk' models are unlikely to be tested systematically, nor to be stated in terms of clear lines of causality and isolation of variables. They are nevertheless theories of behavior.

In addition, unlike many scientific theories, folk models are used not only to describe, explain, or analyze, but also to evaluate, prescribe, and label. Here I do not deny that scientific theories carry their own biases and valuations, nor that common-sense knowledge can be developed, questioned, formalized or contemplated (Geertz 1983:76). I simply propose that in the realm of folk knowledge, the normative dimension is much more explicit. Because of the taken-for-granted quality of folk models there is usually much less structured reflectivity about their internal organization or systematicity, nor indeed about the normative assumptions which undergird them.

The coherence of folk models. Folk models need not -- indeed should not -- be thought of as presenting a coherent or globally consistent whole in a way that an expert's theory is designed to be (Quinn and Holland 1987: 10-1). Rather, they are shared schematizations that while being internally contradictory show is a certain thematicity in organizing a given body of knowledge. I stress the words "certain thematicity" in order to underline the fact that such schemas may be, at one and the same time, both internally inconsistent and evince some congruity.

One such example is the incongruity between the machine metaphor and the requisites of gibush: i.e., between soldiers as replaceable parts and that special quality of cohesive relations

between members of a unit. In part this contradiction is related to a wider inconsistency between the image of a machine as impersonal, non-feeling and uncreative and other dimensions of Israeli military service which includes innovation and initiative, and the closeness of soldiers. My aim in this project is not to clarify or resolve this contradiction but to point to the fact that it is part of the ongoing knowledge of military life. Thus, the existence of such inconsistencies is not (the desires of certain social scientists and military people to the contrary) a case of unclear thinking but rather the way practical thinking is organized. Indeed, in this respect we may be wise to accept Keesing's (1987:383) words of caution. We must be wary of attributing a more global or coherent model to our subjects than they themselves cognize. Contradiction is inbuilt into the model, it is not a weakness of the tools for uncovering the models themselves.

Explicitness of formulation. Some knowledge is probably more habitual and easily put into words than other knowledge. To put it another way, some knowledge is under conscious and voluntary control while other knowledge is less available for introspection and articulation. Thus for example, it is my impression that for the men of the unit, the combat schema is more easily formulated than the rhetoric of emotional control which underlies it. Moreover, most informants may not even have an organized view of the entire model. They may use the model but cannot produce a reasonable description of it. In this sense (D'Andrade 1987:114), the knowledge of folk models is like a well learned set of procedures one knows in order to carry out tasks (like riding a bicycle) rather than a body of related facts that one can recount (like a geography or history of some state).

In a similar vein, some people may be inclined to introspection or self-examination (or both) and thus be able to provide a more coherent view of the folk model than others. In most cases the men in my unit -- barring a few exceptions like Ehud, Yoel, and Itai -- were unlike "professional complicators" (Geertz 1983:89) like priests, poets, intellectuals, or social scientists (like me) whose business it is to reflect and contemplate. By the same token again, some situations may be more conducive to self-examination: interviews, private meetings, or musings for instance. The anthropologist must be aware of the peculiarity of these people and situations in re-constructing the folk knowledge of the culture she or he studies. This point leads us to take another look at methodology.

Methodology

Our understandings of the world are founded on many tacit assumptions, assumptions that are often "transparent" to us (Hutchins in Quinn and Holland 1987:14). Once learned, this tacit knowledge becomes what one sees with but seldom what one sees. Technically this quality of folk knowledge is termed referential transparency; which means knowledge which is used but is usually left unquestioned by its bearer²⁶. Hence the methodological problem: how, and on the basis of what evidence does one

reconstruct the models people use but do not often explicitly reflect upon or articulate? We need a method which will aid us in uncovering the manner by which such naturally occurring tasks as categorizing, reasoning, remembering, or problem solving are done. Thus for example, it is not enough to know what kor ruach is, but to understand how it is used by soldiers in their sense-making of military life.

Let me begin with a rather concrete description of my work in order to answer this question. I began to analyze my data by making two initial reviews of all my fieldnotes and categorizing the data into a number of general categories. I then decided to focus on a few key interviews that seemed to me to be especially revelatory either because they were held with more introspective informants who were capable of formulating their thoughts, or because they seemed to be 'rich' in terms of the understandings which could be gleaned from them. Next, going over these five or six interviews I made lists of the metaphors the men used. I then began to see that these metaphors all divided along the lines of what I later understood to be the machine and brain metaphors and the rhetoric of emotional control. At the same time I systematically reviewed general studies of the armed forces and of the IDF and a number of works in cognitive anthropology. During the next stage I looked for a schema or scenario that could pull these diverse metaphors together and arrived upon an early version of the combat and motivation schemas. Finally, after writing a draft of the main line of my thesis, I returned to my fieldnotes to check whether my understanding was supported or not by other data. Here I especially looked for data elicited in contexts other than formal interviews (observations, casual remarks, or meetings for instance). I also went back to the variety of secondary sources about the IDF and other military establishments for the same reasons.

The manner by which I proceeded was a sort of circle of activities -- in the social sciences this is called the hermeneutic circle - which involved a movement between data, theory, provisional interpretation, data, theory, and reinterpretation. This kind of intellectual movement (Geertz 1983:69) is a sort of continuous dialectic between the most local detail and the most global structure, between the little phrase a soldier had used and my more general model of what he is talking about. The movement is based on bringing them into a sort of simultaneous view so that each may explicate the other.

Within this movement of analysis and corroboration I used two kinds of procedures. First I explicitly utilized my own native speaker's knowledge tested against independent observations within my unit and from the literature. For example, while I used my own insights as a native speaker of Hebrew and as a member of the battalion, as a starting point for examining such concepts as kor ruach, or lachatz, I was careful to verify these intuitions with other data. Second, I analyzed natural discourse as it occurred in various contexts in the battalion. For example I have tried to get at the key metaphors soldier use in talking about the military by looking at a variety of settings

within which they were used such as interviews, incidental conversations, or formal meetings. Other times I looked at additional types of discourse -- for example a narrative or story about the Lebanon War -- in order to understand what the narrator elaborated or left unsaid. The point underlying all of this effort was to come as close as possible to the uses of the men themselves of their folk knowledge.

Representativeness and Generalizeability

There are two problems in regard to the representativeness of my case: (1) the distribution of cultural knowledge within the battalion, or the degree to which the schemas characterize different kinds of soldiers and officers; and (2) the degree to which my unit is typical of others, or the extent to which the models I have been analyzing are characteristic of other IDF units.

In regard to the distribution of cultural knowledge, I made a clear and conscious effort to talk not only to officers but also to NCOs, 'ordinary' soldiers, and to administrative and technical personnel. What I found -- and at the time this contradicted my expectations -- was that there was a similar kind of organization of knowledge among almost all members of the battalion. While officers could, on the whole, formulate the general contours of the model in a more comprehensive way, most "ordinary" soldiers used it in describing and evaluating military service. In all fairness however, I should note that I did not examine the dissemination of this knowledge across and within ranks in a systematic way. I did not do so because I was interested less in the distribution of cultural forms across social positions, than in the internal organization of a certain kind of cultural knowledge.

The second question: to what extent are the models characteristic of the IDF in general, or of specific parts of it? On the one hand, I would readily admit that there probably are things which are unique to my unit. Only an extended comparative treatment will uncover these peculiarities. On the other hand however, the men enter the battalion after having served in other IDF units, and come into contact with other units (reserve and permanent forces) in the course of training and operational deployment. Therefore, it seems safe to assume that they share their models of military service with other parts of Israel's armed forces, and at the very least with other elite infantry units.

Both issues or problems involve what social scientists call generalization to populations, or statistical generalization. Another type of generalization however, is theoretical generalization. In this respect, I am generalizing from my case study to a population of models (Orum et.al. 1991:14-5): specifically to models of soldiering and combat. If my work merits attention, I believe it does so in these terms: its contribution to a theory of military folk models.

IX

CONCLUSION

Let me begin with a story. As my fieldwork progressed, and as I occasionally discussed my project with soldiers and officers, some men joked with me about feeling that I could somehow "peer into their minds". By these mild jibes, I take it, these men commented about the fact that I had somehow come to understand and to explicitly formulate their doubts and reasonings. Perhaps they seemed to be wary my "magical power" as an anthropologist, a power akin to the one psychologists have in the popular mind. From an analytical point of view, these kinds of reactions could be taken as an indicator of the validity of my findings: my discussions were a sort of 'natural experiment' in which I verified my interpretations.

Of course, I could not and was not peering into their minds (I still can't). Rather I attempted, as an anthropologist, to systematically look at the publicly shared symbols -- naturally occurring metaphors, images, or even comments -- they (and I myself) use to give meaning to military life. Beyond using my own native intuitions and perceptions, I attempted to systematically uncover the means (again, the words, tropes, and imagery) through which these men represent themselves to themselves and to others. At bottom, this is the analytical thrust of this report. As an anthropologist, I did not analyze doctrinal knowledge (of strategy or of tactics), let alone the expertise needed in drills and exercises. Rather, what I tried to uncover were the meanings of soldiering and commanding as they are expressed and used in the everyday lives -- in a taken-for-granted, common-sense manner -- of troops and commanders. I did this by systematizing these meanings, and by formulating them in terms of a number of basic models by which they are organized. The report thus exemplifies a way of looking at military knowledge and at the way this knowledge is related to such notions as "conflict" and "combat", and "soldiering" and the "enemy". By way of conclusion I underscore the main points of my analysis and briefly draw out a number of its wider implications.

The first point is that much of military knowledge is organized around what I have termed the combat scenario or schema. Rather than being a fully ordered and coherent model this schema is a set of basic themes -- some contradictory, some complementary -- which form bases for the definition and evaluation of soldiering and commanding. In other words, such scenarios operate to designate much of what is considered normal, proper and excellent in military life. Like all folk theories, so the combat scenario is not "believed" in the sense that conscious theories are believed, but rather is presupposed as the occasion of thought or communication demands (Linde 1987:362). To put this by way of example, it is the presupposition of enemies as objects which allows one to handle them (in certain situations) as obstacles in the way of a smooth running machine.

The power of this model, again like all folk models, lies in its summarizing nature: its reduction and encompassment of a great deal of information in a few simple themes and causal relations which are expressed in metaphors. Experience, as Ortony (1975) reminds us, does not arrive in little discrete packages but flows, leading us from one state to another. Metaphor allows the invocation of a whole chunk of characteristics in a word or two. It does this in an economical way that would otherwise entail listing long catalogs of characteristics. Thus metaphors of soldiering as they are organized in the combat scenario allow military people to evoke at a single stroke, in a single instance, a mass of characteristics related to service and performance. This quality of the model allows people to decide rather quickly and economically whether and how someone fits or does not the characteristics and attributes required of soldiers and commanders.

The power of these models also extends to their generative capacity: their use in explaining, and extending knowledge to, new situations. For example, we saw how the Intifada was defined (and reacted to) in the same terms military men interpret 'routine' situations where enemy forces made up of professional armies appear. In this sense the combat schema is a framework for interpretation and not a set of routines people automatically follow. While I have not dealt with this issue in the present report, let me add that it is especially in such new situations that the power of commanders to construct the reality of the units they lead is evident. These people have this power because it is primarily they who provide the terms through which the organization and its environment are understood.

This leads me to a comparative note. Soldiers the world over, must be socialized into a role that has rigid parameters for control of individual expressions of aggression and violence (Katz 1990: 459). Thus one could suppose that a rhetoric of emotional control is central to all contemporary armies. What I have shown is that while this universal theme is undoubtedly present in all military contexts, there remain things which are peculiar to specific armies such as the IDF. Accordingly, in the Israeli context, to give two examples, one finds a greater stress on the initiative and innovation expected of ordinary soldiers (as epitomized in the image of the "large head"), and the special significance of the gibush metaphor as underlying the social cohesion of units. In this respect, my approach may allow us both to further delineate the general contours of the combat scenario, and certain elements which have to do with the wider cultural milieu within which an army operates.

Notes

1. Parenthetically it should be stated that this is still a rather synchronic model and that a full fledged analysis would take into account both the Moskos' and Harries-Jenkins' stress on understanding the historical circumstances surrounding the development of any model of the military.
2. To a surprising degree as much as war and military service are a significant part of Israeli life, published academic works on the IDF are not very numerous (Lieblich 1989:142). Studies of the Israeli army have, in ways resembling much of the research carried out in regard to the armed forces of other industrialized societies, been characterized by a preponderance of macro-sociological discussions. These studies include, for example, analyses of the relations between the military system and the economic (Mintz 1985), political (Peri 1981; Lissak 1984), or social (Horowitz and Kimmerling 1974; Kimmerling 1984) systems, or appraisals of policy-making (Luttwak and Horowitz 1975; Gabriel 1984). Research which has been carried out on the micro-sociological level has tended to focus on the individual soldier from psychological or social-psychological perspectives: motivation (Gal 1986: chap 4), combat effectiveness (Amir 1969; Shirom 1976), leadership (Gal 1986: chap 7), or cohesiveness (Greenbaum 1979). Closely related to this literature are reports which deal with the treatment of stress or breakdown (Breznitz 1983; Lieblich 1983; Milgram 1986).
3. Privacy is a rare commodity in the army and thus our conversations were often held in relatively private spaces like the commander's office (when he was away), synagogue, infirmary, or private cars. Topics ranged from past career or motivation for serving and through to more intimate things like fear in combat, going AWOL, or moral stances towards the Intifada.
4. Paradoxically, it may well be that it is precisely during stints of army service -- that is away from the "usual" limits and constraints of civilian life -- that it may be possible for men to be more truthful about these matters.
5. As James Fernandez (1986) tells us, like soldiers, metaphors (and the images they evoke and the folk models they predicate) can carry out a variety of missions.
6. This notion also implies that I continuously verify my native understandings with other sources and frame my interpretations in ways that will allow a confrontation between them and other assertions found in the literature on the military.
7. This point has been sorely missed by many students of the armed forces. Reserve soldiers are not passive "recipients" of socialization by members of the permanent forces who train them. They are often themselves quite active socialization agents for

regulars.

8. From the perspective of the social scientific study of Western armies my case carries with it an added advantage. As Moskos (1988:47) astutely notes, the bulk of social science literature on the armed forces has focused on the active-duty, or permanent forces. In this sense the my work may shed light on a hitherto little studied, or understudied aspect of the contemporary military, the reserves.

9. Square brackets in the text signify my own additions and explications.

10. A corroboration of this point is found in Katz' (1990:466) explication of how US Army drill sergeants talk of feelings. According to her, these men expressed feelings in terms of body states: "My feet don't move", or "My muscles tensed and I was sweating all over". The men mentioned only those parts of the body such as muscles, eyes, bones that were directly related to action and role performances, and not the usual parts used as metaphors for emotions like the heart or digestive system.

11. I think it is no coincidence that Keegan chose to entitle his book (1976) "The Face of Battle". The title evokes the lack of control soldiers have over their perception of combat, and the consequent need they have of dealing with the stressful situation.

12. One can find a certain analogy for this situation in the kind of poise and composure one is thought to need in such situations as mountain climbing or car racing.

13. The fact that a majority of soldiers never fire their guns in action may be related to this point.

14. It may well do to add a comparative note at this point in order to show how common this model is to contemporary military organizations. While the following passage is not a verbatim report of a natural conversations it does give one a sense of the things I have been talking about. This is a summary of Greehouse's (1989:56) research among Vietnam veterans:

These soldiers did not go to war in anger, they did not kill Vietnamese because they hated them; they fought as the artists of war they had been trained to be. The veterans' accounts to me were of the discipline of war: the ability to bear danger, to shoot without being able to see one's target, to be able to repair any machine without adequate tools, to be able to master fear and grief and revulsion. War demands perfection, an war is a mighty judge, since mistakes cost lives.

15. The reasons for this kind of simplification have to do with the limits of our cognitive capacities. In technical terms the organizing principle here is one of prototypy (Keesing 1987:385; Quinn 1987). These cognitive schemas tend to be composed of a small number of objects -- at most seven plus or minus two -- because of the constraints of short and long term memory among human beings (D'Andrade 1987:112). An example from the world of commercial exchange may clarify this point. To judge if some event is an instance of "buying", the person making the judgement must decide if there have been a seller, a buyer, merchandise, an offer and an acceptance and a transaction. The point is that since all of these criteria must be held in mind simultaneously to make this judgement with any rapidity, the criteria cannot exceed the limits of human memory. Furthermore, just as in the combat schema so here, the elements comprising the "buying" model are in themselves complex images.

16. This does not mean that there is no place for childlike behaviors to be expressed. One medic told me that because of the overall pressure of military service he often feels the need for some self-indulgence like buying many chocolates.

17. Many scholars have noted the strong stress on automaticity found in military training. Keegan (1976:70) for instance, notes how given the essentially chaotic nature of combat, the conduct of war has been reduced to a set of rules and a system of procedures in military education. Holmes (1986:42) observes that within the stress of the firefight "drills help minimize the randomness of battle, and give the soldier familiar point of contact in an uncertain environment, like lighthouses in a stormy sea".

18. Thus by extension, one can say as one company commander did during operational deployment that things are "dry", to mean boring, lacking all interest.

19. Perhaps a more suitable case for comparison with the IDF would be British soldiers in Northern Ireland and the kinds of relations with their civilian foes that have evolved there.

20. Compare this to the words of a British soldier during the Falklands War: "I felt neither hatred nor friendliness towards the Argentineans... I simply thought about the job in hand, and they happened to be in the way of getting the job done" (quoted in Holmes 1985:371).

21. Moskos' (1988:50) object of analysis are career soldiers who have decided to stay on in the reserves: "At a certain point, retirement benefits become a key incentive. But not to be underemphasized is the attraction of having an added non-civilian and non-routine dimension to one's life: the camaraderie of the unit, the outdoor life of annual training, and the challenge of leading young people. For a few career reservists, moreover, reserve training is a way to recapture part of one's youth or an acceptable way for breaking the monotony of family life. Very important, patriotic and service-to-country motive are openly and

frequently expressed by career members of the reserves".

22. Notice the similarity of my case to the kinds of motivations people cite in regard to participation in the nearly universal sports and games of danger. In all of these activities there is a strong element of playing -- i.e. meeting a challenging and highly engaging activity -- with risk. All over the world, for little or no material gain, people walk into cages of wild animals, walk tightropes, climb steep mountains, jump from airplanes or dive in shark infested waters (Clark 1989:83).

23. A matter which bears upon this claim is but which is clearly beyond the scope of this report is related to the growing individuation of Israeli society. The point I would make is not so much that there is more individualism in contemporary Israel (there probably is) but rather that at his period it is more explicitly talked about, and more a part of mainstream folk models that Israelis use to explain, evaluate and justify their behavior.

24. As Michael Gal (1973) notes the dividing line is Israeli elite units is between officers and soldiers. There seems to be much less of a special group of NCOs in the IDF.

25. To be fair it should be stated that much of sociology, anthropology and psychology reflect -- and we well may add systematize, cohere and elaborate -- common sense cultural models of action and thinking (see D'Andrade 1987:139 ff.).

26. Geertz (1983:87) terms this quality of commonsense knowledge, the "of-courseness" of things.

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