1 Introduction

In January 2002, former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated,

Our challenge in this new century is a difficult one: to defend our nation against the unknown, the uncertain, the unseen, and the unexpected. That may seem an impossible task. It is not. But to accomplish it, we must put aside comfortable ways of thinking and planning – *take risks and try new things – so we can deter and defeat adversaries that have not yet emerged to challenge us*. (qtd. in Rumsfeld, 2002a: 23, emphasis added)

What is striking about this statement is that it assumes that the United States is capable of successfully deterring threats of different types, even those that are yet unknown. Such a position demonstrates the extent to which deterrence has been institutionalized in the United States and how this limits consideration of whether this strategy is actually efficient in dealing with the threats the United States is (perceived to be) facing. In addressing this issue, this book elaborates on the attachment of states to the practices of deterrence and, more specifically, examines actors' attempts to enhance their deterrent posture through the actual use of force. Such attempts are somewhat puzzling for a number of reasons. As some scholars have recently pointed out, not only is it uncertain that using force actually contributes to creating a deterrent posture, but using force may play into the hands of provocateurs who would enhance their political stand by challenging actors that try to deter them. Moreover, taking such measures may indicate deterrence failure. It can be argued that repeated use of force to enhance the deterrent posture reveals the defender's inability to successfully employ this strategy, exacerbating the erosion of its deterrent posture.

I suggest that despite the range and depth of deterrence literature, it tends to downplay these issues. Most scholars examining this strategy focus on the conditions in which deterrent threats employed by defending countries dissuade opponents from carrying out attacks. This scholarship, originating mainly in studies of nuclear threats, has been extended to include conventional deterrence and, more recently, to deal with "new"

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threats, such as rogue states, terrorism, cyber warfare, and ethnic conflicts
(Lupovici, 2010).[1] However, while this scholarship contributes in clarify-
ing a number of empirical and theoretical issues, it gives much less
attention to the question of why actors adopt this strategy, and, more
specifically, why actors that experience a meaningful act of violence try
to deter by the actual use of force. I argue that the appeal and employment
of the strategy of deterrence, in particular the attempt to deter through the
actual use of force, cannot be taken as given but require careful
examination.

   We see reliance on the strategy of deterrence and the employment of
it through the actual use of force in a number of countries. For exam-
ple, the practice of deterrence continued to have considerable impact
on American strategic thinking even after the end of the Cold War
(Crawford, 2004: 688–9; Payne, 2005: 149).[2] Despite evidence of
a growing interest in defensive and preemptive strategies, the strategy
of deterrence has been implemented to address various threats since
the early 1990s: for example, terrorism (Presidential Decision
Directive 39, 1995; United States Commission on National Security,
1999: 54)[3]; rogue states (Department of Defense [NPR], 2002: 2);
and cyber-attacks (Department of Defense [Cyberspace Policy
Report], 2011: 2). During President George W. Bush's administration
(2001–9), deterrence remained a major theme in America's strategic
perspective; Condoleezza Rice (2000), for example, suggested that
deterrence should be America's first line of defense, and Bush (1999)
himself, before he was elected, declared that deterrence should define
the mission of the American military.[4] References to this strategy dur-
ing Bush's tenure were not just rhetorical, but had strategic operative
implications (Karp, 2004: 71, 76; Russell and Wirtz, 2004: 106;
Alexander, 2007: 46; Knopf, 2008). Even currently, the strategy of
deterrence continues to play an important role in shaping and justifying
American strategy toward Iran.[5]

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[1] These, of course, are not new threats. What is new is the interest of deterrence literature in
studying them, mostly following the end of the Cold War and the 9/11 attacks.
[2] But compare Payne (2005: 138–40); Iklé (2006: 51); Litwak (2007: 138).
[3] See also Leffler (2003: 1053); Karp (2004: 75).
[4] See also the United States Commission on National Security (2001: 5–6, 13).
[5] For example, President Obama in an interview with Thomas Friedman (2015) defended
the negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program, asserting that "The notion that Iran is
undeterrable – 'it's simply not the case' . . . if in fact we can resolve these issues diplomati-
cally, we are more likely to be safe, more likely to be secure, in a better position to protect
our allies, and who knows? Iran may change. If it doesn't, our *deterrence capabilities, our
military superiority stays in place*'" (italic added). Likewise, senior officials such as former
Defense Secretary Robert Gates suggested that the sanction regime against Iran "when

Deterrence has similarly shaped many aspects of Israeli strategic think-ing, practices, and discourse. It is widely accepted as a key pillar in Israeli security thinking; scholars argue that Israel's strategic approach since the 1950s, endorsed by both political and military elites, is based on the combination of warning, deterrence, and military decision (Yaniv, 1987: 18, 57; Levite, 1989: 25; Bar-Joseph, 2001: 2). Although there is no single, binding document outlining IDF (Israel Defense Forces) doc-trines, deterrence is, according to Yaniv, "the be all and end all of Israel strategy. It is celebrated as a central concept in numerous statements on national security affairs by Israel politicians, officials and intellectuals, and professional officers alike." Furthermore, Yaniv (1987: 1) suggests that deterrence, the most commonly used term in Israeli strategic studies, is an "integral part of the vocabulary of the public debate" (see also Levite, 1989: 47). Deterrence practices remain prevalent and continue to affect Israel's contemporary strategic thinking. Israeli deterrence strat-egy has always aimed to dissuade a diverse range of challenges (Bar-Joseph, 1998), and in recent years a number of attempts have been made to apply it in addressing threats of rogue states and terrorism (e.g., Almog, 2004–5; Gozansky, 2008; Rid, 2012). One of the clearest manifestations of this strategy in recent years can be seen in Israel's dealing with the Palestinian uprising of the Second Intifada, which started in 2000. Israeli strategy was largely based on "cumulative deterrence" – "searing into the opponent's consciousness that aggression would not work" – a concept that became prominent in Israeli discourse (Shavit, 2002; see also Almog, 2004–5: 9). Furthermore, as discussed below in greater detail, deterrence strategy and the use of deterrence rhetoric to justify policies are significant aspects in shaping Israeli responses toward Hizbullah and Hamas, including in the round of violence between Israel and Hamas in the summer of 2014 (e.g., in Golov, 2014: 87; and in Heller, 2014: 81).

In both the United States and Israel, then, deterrence – which had been perceived as a key strategy in preventing major threats in the past (from the USSR and Arab states, respectively) – has significantly affected the rhetoric in the 2000s and, more significantly, was seen as an important measure in addressing contemporary threats. Furthermore, in both coun-tries the usage of force was closely related to the efforts to maintain, restore, or enhance the deterrent posture when facing meaningful

combined with other efforts have 'real potential' to deter the country from developing nuclear weapons" (Anthony, 2010). Rejecting the alternative of using force, was also framed through the rhetoric of deterrence. For example, both Obama and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta argue that attacking Iran "would not deter its nuclear ambitions" (Voice of America, 2011; Pileggi, 2015).

violence. While some see strategic advantages in applying the strategy of deterrence to contemporary challenges faced by the United States and Israel (e.g., Trager and Zagorcheva, 2005: 93–4; Lebovic, 2007: 26–103), other scholars are more doubtful – not only about the effectiveness of employing deterrence against threats such as terrorism and rogue states, but also about whether deterrence can in fact be achieved through the actual use of force.

Following these assertions, I argue that the employment of deterrence in both the United States and Israel is not self-evident, and it cannot be fully explained through "rational" calculations. Rather, the use of this strategy is also driven by the appealing power of the practices of deterrence and their prominence in the public, political, and strategic realms. I suggest, therefore, that the continuing implementation of this strategy raises a number of questions about how the strategy of deterrence is adopted, how it gains prominence within a state, and how this affects states' behavior. In this respect, a central question of this book is why some actors, after experiencing meaningful violence/major terror attacks, aim to enhance their deterrent posture through the actual use of force (while others do not).

This question is intriguing on a number of fronts. First, along with the debate over the efficiency of deterrence strategies, a growing number of scholars challenge the wisdom of using force for deterrent purposes. Some question whether reputation affects the calculation of a putative challenger and claim that this is quite uncertain (Mercer 1996; Press, 2005; Tang, 2005; see also in Huth, 1997: 86–8). Moreover, some assert that using force to enhance deterrence posture may even have the effect of *increasing* the likelihood of future violence (Adler, 2010).[6] Nonetheless, and as Weisiger and Yarhi-Milo (2015: 477–8) assert, the question of why actors do use force in order to enhance their deterrent posture, despite the existence of these challenges, remains unanswered.

Second, most deterrence scholars accept and even assume the actors' need to preserve their deterrent posture as well as the need to employ forceful measures to attain this aim. However, I contend that this assumption is problematic if we accept the uncertainty of scholars over whether using force, in fact, contributes to enhancing the deterrent posture. In other words, because we cannot assume either the continued reliance on deterrence or that deterrence is enhanced through the actual use of force, these points require further examination. Such examination should consider how and why deterrence continues to be a necessary strategy for

[6] With regard to the Israeli case, see, for example, Evron (2007); and Nave (2007), who challenge the assertion that using force enhances the deterrent posture.

some countries (and not for others), and how and why using force is seen for them as compulsory in establishing deterrence. And finally, what magnifies the puzzle concerning this strategy is that deterrence is fundamentally about avoidance of violence (but see Yaniv, 1987: 275; Rid, 2012). Repeated usage of force to attain deterrence, rather than to enhance a deterrent posture, seems to demonstrate that deterrence continues to fail, thus providing the challenger with the ultimate indication of the defender's limited deterrent abilities.

The Theoretical Argument

In order to answer the research question and other related questions, I put forward a framework for rethinking the practices of deterrence (by punishment).[7] I contend that deterrence can be understood not only as a strategy or a theory but also as an idea. Thinking about deterrence in this way has a number of implications. Most importantly, it provides a framework for examining how deterrence can be institutionalized and how such internalization affects a country's policies. Furthermore, this point of departure allows us to study deterrence, and the attachment to it, not only at the level of the military or of policy making, but at the societal level as well – as the public may also come to support this strategy and the ensuing practices. My point of contention is that for actors who have internalized deterrence ideas (and following this have become attached to these practices), deterrence is perceived as much more than simply a means to advance "physical" security: because deterrence constitutes these actors' *selves* as deterring actors, the inability to deter becomes a threat to their identity.

I suggest that actors, like the United States and Israel, that have internalized deterrence ideas and over the years have adopted a deterrer identity and thus became attached to these practices tend, when facing meaningful violence, to perceive that they are obligated to retaliate in order to restore their "deterrent posture." By using force, they attempt to validate, both domestically and internationally, their identity as deterrer actors.

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[7] Scholars distinguish between two main types of deterrence: deterrence by denial and deterrence by punishment (Snyder, 1961). Basically, the former seeks to prevent the action by making the challenger understand that it lacks the capacity to execute the action because of the defender's capabilities. Deterrence by punishment, which is the focus of this book, seeks to persuade a potential challenger that the price it will pay for carrying out an undesired action will exceed any possible gain (e.g., George and Smoke, 1974). Usually, deterrence by punishment is based on threatening value assets of the putative challenger (i.e., population). For a very useful discussion of definitions of deterrence, see Morgan (2003: 1–2).

The institutionalization of deterrence affects policy through three main mechanisms. First, it creates the context through which events are interpreted. Actors with a deterrer identity tend to interpret situations where they are not challenged as successful deterrence, and they see situations where they experience violence as a deterrence failure. Second, it limits strategic alternatives, as actors with a deterrer identity prioritize deterrence over other strategies and policies. Furthermore, at times deterrence even becomes an aim in itself and not just a means to enhance security. Third, this identity affects discourse and political rhetoric, and thus has instrumental effects. Because of the support this strategy enjoys, policy makers in these countries can justify policies, even contradictory policies, through a discourse of deterrence, suggesting, for example, that certain measures are required in order to preserve or enhance the deterrent posture. This rhetoric serves to further internalize the practices and ideas of deterrence. For deterrer actors, practicing deterrence is a source of pride and of security of the self.

Therefore, when deterrer actors perceive that their deterrent posture is challenged, they face not only a physical security problem, but a challenge to their identity. This results in the experience of emotions, such as frustration, shame, humiliation, anxiety (and nostalgia) – emotional responses that go beyond the purview of traditional deterrence scholarship. Using force is a way for deterrer actors to validate their identity, both internally and externally. To be clear, I am not suggesting that only deterrer actors use force when they are challenged. Rather, I posit that a deterrer identity creates mechanisms that aggravate insecurity and enhance perceived threats. Under these conditions, containing the attack becomes difficult. In such situations, using force is perceived as a necessary way for a deterrer actor to address its insecurity. On the international level, the actor aims through the use of force to regain its status of deterrer and the recognition of this role by other actors; in this way, the actor's sense of self is constituted and validated. On the domestic level, the use of force provides deterrer actors with the discursive means to reaffirm their identity and to attempt to tell themselves (and others) a coherent story of who they are; by minimizing the gap between their narrative and their behavior, they emphasize that they are deterrer actors and that they are taking measures to sustain this identity.

In order to establish these arguments, I further develop the notions of ontological security and of securitization – two promising constructivist frameworks that have not yet been implemented to explore the practices of deterrence. Ontological security concerns actors' need to preserve their

self (Giddens, 1991: 35–69)[8]; securitization concerns the process through which an issue is framed as an existential threat to justify taking extraordinary measures (Buzan et al., 1998).[9] I assert that the deterrer identity can be constituted through securitization moves. Once this identity is formed, the inability to deter evokes ontological insecurity and emotional reactions including anxiety.[10] In such situations, enunciators may further securitize the situation using "deterrence" arguments to justify the need to use force.

By combining the notions of deterrence, ontological security, emotions, and securitization, this book provides a more nuanced understanding of the practices of deterrence as well as a unified, general, and coherent framework to better capture these practices.

The Case Studies

I use this suggested theoretical framework to examine two main cases: the US response to the attacks of 9/11, and the Israeli response to Hizbullah's challenges in the summer of 2006. In the first case, I study the American "war on terror," specifically the war in Iraq. After the 9/11 attacks, the American forces (along with the UK, Australia, and the Afghan United Front) invaded Afghanistan (October 2001), a move that was followed by the American invasion of Iraq (March 2003). While, as Knopf (2008: 257) argues, the war in Afghanistan was "necessary to reduce the chances of further al Qaeda atrocities," the link between the 9/11 attacks and the war in Iraq is more questionable. Contrary to the implications made by the Bush Administration,[11] there were no direct connections between the two. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether the war in Iraq was an efficient way to deal with terrorism (e.g., Gunaratna, 2004: 97), as Crawford states,

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[8] On ontological security, see also Huysmans (1998: 242–4); Wendt (1999:131); Kinnvall (2004); Rumelili (2004, 2015a, 2015c); Mitzen (2006); Steele (2005, 2008); Zarakol (2010); Croft (2012); Lupovici (2012); Browning and Joenniemi (2013).

[9] On securitization, see also Neumann (1998); Hansen (2000); Bigo (2002); Williams (2003); Balzacq (2005); Balzacq (2011); Huysmans (2006); Stritzel (2007); Wilkinson (2007); McDonald (2008); Vuori (2008); Gad and Petersen (2011); Watson (2012).

[10] On the emerging scholarship of emotions in International Relations, see Crawford (2000); Bleiker and Hutchison (2008); Sasley (2011); Solomon (2012); Hutchison and Bleiker (2014); Ross (2014).

[11] For example, President Bush asserted that "Iraq is now the central front in the War on Terror" (Bush, 2003b). Likewise, Rumsfeld, referring to Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, claimed, "Since Sept. 11 we have seen a new means of delivering these weapons – terrorist networks" (Garamone, 2002).

[T]hose who suggest that the rush to war in Iraq had little to do with the war on terror are both right and wrong. There was, as President Bush admits on occasion, no proven link between the 9/11 attacks and Iraq. On the other hand, the link between Iraq and the global war on terror was the logic of fear and moral certainty. (2004: 703)

I suggest that these points invite a discussion of why the Americans took these forceful measures and how the use of force was, in fact, connected to the terror attacks of 9/11, as officials in the administration stated. The theoretical framework of this study will shed light not only on how the deterrer identity affected American policy and involvement in Iraq, but also on the contradictory statements of senior officials regarding the necessity and feasibility of deterrence in the context of this war.

More specifically, I assert that during the Cold War, practicing deterrence provided the Americans with both physical security and ontological security. This practice was seen as a way to address the fears of a nuclear war, and at the same time it provided the Americans with pride, certainty, and predictability. Thus, being a deterrer actor provided meaning for them, answering the question: "Who are we?" However, this identity also aggravated the ontological insecurity that was felt after the attacks of 9/11. The powerful impact of these ideas stemmed, to some extent, from the juxtaposition of the situation in 2001 with the (mythological) past of the Cold War in which deterrence allegedly successfully worked. This juxtaposition emphasized not just physical insecurity but ontological insecurity as well, as the United States could not validate its deterrer self. From this point of view, it is not surprising that the 9/11 attacks evoked anxiety and humiliation on the one hand and a nostalgic yearning for the Cold War on the other.

The second case studied is the Israeli policies vis-à-vis non-state actors in the first decade of the 2000s, mainly including the Israeli–Hizbullah war in Lebanon in 2006 and Operation Cast Lead in the winter of 2008–9.[12] The events that led to the war in Lebanon started on 12 July 2006, when Hizbullah fighters infiltrated Israeli territory and, under the cover of artillery and Katyusha fire, killed three Israeli soldiers and captured two others. Following these events, Israel initiated aerial bombardment, which was expanded to a ground operation. However, the extensive means Israel employed during the war did not prevent Hizbullah from launching rockets over Israel. In fact, these means –

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[12] It should be noted that I complement this discussion with a consideration of Operation Pillar of Defense (November 2012) and Operation Protective Edge (2014). However, since much less information is available about these cases, I consider them less systematically and use them mainly to shed light on a number of lingering aspects that were evident also in the war in Lebanon and in Operation Cast Lead.

whose aim, among other things, was to restore deterrence – further escalated the violence, as Hizbullah expanded the range of rockets launched over Israel. Moreover, specific operations and orders given during the war aimed to provide "victory images," rather than (simply) to "win" (Ben-Ari, 2007: 24; Harel and Issacharoff, 2008: 311, 331, 409; Winograd, 2008: 90, 568). These, I argue, are somewhat puzzling moves as, for example, a realist view would expect a maximization of strategic utility rather than an attempt to gain public approval. I assert, therefore, that the suggested framework of this study allows us to reconsider these events and explain how the institutionalization of deterrence shaped Israel's behavior and rhetoric during the war. In short, Israel faced onto-logical insecurity following the events of July 2006 – events that evoked humiliation, frustration, and anxiety. The use of force aimed to address this challenge externally and internally: that is, by attempting to designate a deterred other and by solidifying the deterrer narrative in order to be able to tell a more coherent story about the Israeli deterrer self.

The operation in Gaza (Cast Lead) started on 27 December 2008, when Israel retaliated against the rising number of rocket missiles launched by Hamas over southern parts of Israel. This occurred after the expiration of a shaky ceasefire between Israel and Hamas when the parties could not agree upon the terms to extend it. The attack – which included massive aerial bombardment and later a ground operation – enjoyed strong support from the Israeli public (Ben-Meir, 2009: 26–7). During the operation, Hamas not only continued to launch rockets, but extended their target range. The operation ended when Israel declared a unilateral ceasefire that became effective on 19 January 2009 (Evron, 2009: 80; Shapir, 2009: 51; Fletcher and Keshawi, 2009; Harel and Issacharoff, 2009a).[13] In discussing these events, I refer to Operation Cast Lead not only as another demonstration of the effects of the deterrer identity on Israeli policy, but as a consequence of the perceived effects of the war in Lebanon on Israel.

I contend that in the cases of both the United States and Israel, forceful measures aimed to validate the deterrer identity, which had been chal-lenged by meaningful violent acts experienced by these countries. These forceful measures aimed to validate the identity not only by defining a deterred *other*, but by providing the opportunity for use of a discourse of deterrence to justify these actions. Acknowledging this need to validate the identity, I argue, helps to explain i) the connections between the experience

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[13] While estimates vary, it is widely approximated that about 1200 Palestinians were killed in the conflict (of which half were civilians) (Harel and Issacharoff, 2009c: 3).

of violence and the use of force; ii) the amount of force that was used; and iii) the accompanying, and even contradictory, discourse on the matter.

I will also briefly explore in the concluding chapter of this book a third case: Spain, a country that does not hold a deterrer identity. I suggest that such an actor responds in a different manner to experiences of meaningful acts of violence, as evident in the Spanish reaction to the terror attacks it faced in 2004 (see also Adler, 2009: 101).[14] The attacks were interpreted by the media, the public, and key opinion formers as a punishment for the Spanish troops' participation in the war in Iraq. In the elections that took place three days after the attack, the socialist party that opposed this involvement gained the most votes (Neumann, 2010: 238).

This case raises a number of intriguing questions: Why did the Spanish not forcefully respond to an attack that was affiliated to al Qaeda? Likewise, why did the Spanish not feel the need to maintain and show resolve in order to prevent future attacks? It should be noted that at that time an attack against al Qaeda would have been easily justified and legitimized as part of the global war on terror. Furthermore, not only did the Spanish *not* retaliate, but in fact the Spanish response to the terror attacks can be seen as an immediate relinquishment. This is somewhat puzzling, as a common rhetoric and behavior often seen in other countries, such as the United States and Israel, especially shortly after terror attacks, is that of "we shall not surrender to terror."

I suggest that the three cases chosen for this book offer a number of advantages. First, the events of these cases are considered to be significant, both internationally and within each of the explored countries. As Taliafarro (2004: 18) argues, following Van Evera, "Other things being equal, scholars of international politics and foreign policy should prefer to study significant events rather than trivial ones."[15] Furthermore, these cases are important since while both the United States and Israel adopted a strategy of deterrence decades ago, it still continues to play a significant role in their strategies. Closely examining these countries

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[14] On March 11, 2004, terrorists blew up, almost simultaneously, thirteen improvised explosive devices (IED) on four trains in Madrid. In these explosions, 191 people were killed and around 2000 wounded, a large number of them suffering from severe injuries.

[15] All these cases had tremendous effects on domestic politics. Both in Israel and Spain, how the countries responded to the meaningful violent acts significantly affected the identity of successive governments. In the United States, the intervention in Iraq not only led to a great expenditure of resources, it also entailed an extensive political debate. In addition, the American war in Iraq and the Israeli–Hizbullah war have both international and regional effects. The American intervention in Iraq has affected the stability of the Middle East, with regard not only to states in the region but also to non-state actors such as the Kurds. The Israeli response to Hizbullah has also affected domestic politics in Lebanon, and influenced interactions among actors in the region, including between Iran and Israel.