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**Rationalization of Terrorization:  
Analytical Investigation into the Israeli-Palestinian  
Political Communication (2008-2009)**

Mohammed El Hashash

Thesis submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
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## **Abstract**

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a contributing factor to Middle East instability for the last six decades. Both Israelis and Palestinians have practiced terrorization against one another and more so, have engaged in the rationalization of terrorization to justify their desired goals. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the political communication through which Israelis and Palestinians have used tools to rationalize their acts of terrorization. Drawing on Hobbes's (1985) rationality, James' (1971) morality legitimacy on conflict and diplomacy, and Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) critique of historic reason, this thesis looks into modern theories of classical political realism (Morgenthau, 2006), rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making (Snyder & Diesing, 1977), Orientalism (Said, 1994), Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), cultural representation (Hall, 1997a), and state and non-state terrorism (Jaggar, 2005) in order to investigate the Israeli-Palestinian political communication during the Gaza War of 2008-2009 and the subsequent release of the Goldstone Report. This thesis utilizes quantitative and qualitative online media content analysis as a methodological design with historical-comparative components through which a sample of the Israel Defense Forces, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, and Arutz Sheva (Israel) as well as the Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades, the Palestine News Network, and The Palestine Telegraph (Palestine) has been selected. Findings explore the components of the decision-making processes by both adversaries in order to politically communicate their rationalization of terrorization of one another. These components demonstrate the different decision-making processes of each adversary in selecting strategies of rationalization (e.g., Israelis rationalize in order to

defend themselves from eight years of Hamas rocket fire into Israel, while Palestinians rationalize as a means of seeking sympathetic support for their cause—with each adversary using different tools and tactics), resulting in unique patterns that can be applied to future instances of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Enemies: We first kill people with our minds, before we kill them with weapons. Whatever the conflict ... we're on God's side; they're barbaric. We're good, they're evil.

– Sam Keen (cited in Shaheen, 2008)

At this point in time, the internet [*sic*] is the most important medium in the communication field, providing the most accurate and current updates.

– Israeli Major General Yitzhak Gershon (Israel Defense Forces, 2007)

In September of 2009, judge Richard Goldstone and his United Nations (U.N.) team released a controversial report on behalf of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) pertaining to the 2008-2009 Gaza War. The Report sought to investigate “all violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law” (U.N. General Assembly, 2009) during the War. Its conclusions were straightforward: both the Israel Defense Forces and Hamas were responsible for committing war crimes and possible crimes against humanity (U.N. Human Rights Council, 2009). This thesis seeks to investigate the recent War between Israel and the Palestinians and its aftermath by investigating Israeli-Palestinian political communication of the rationalization of terrorization.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis focuses on rationalization and terrorization as a process since these terms are situated within the concept of political communication, which is also a process. Furthermore, this thesis looks at the constant engagement between Israelis and Palestinians in the recent War and its aftermath – exploring political communication as an interactive process between both adversaries. See *Terrorization and Rationalization within New Mediated Political Communication* in Chapter 2 for elaboration.

## **Tackling the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

In its simplest terms, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a land dispute in biblical Israel and historic Palestine between Israelis, predominantly Jewish, and Palestinians, predominantly Muslim. However, the conflict is not limited to the Holy Land and has had reverberating effects throughout the Middle East and other parts of the world (Friedman, 1989; Fisk, 1991; Chomsky, 1999; Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007), making it a newsworthy topic (Hawkins, 2002: 229).<sup>2</sup>

Both Israelis and Palestinians have been guilty of using terrorism (threats or violence against governments, groups, or individuals) as a tactic of coercion against one another in the six-decade conflict (George, 1991; Sterba, 2003; Dershowitz, 2004; Jaggar, 2005; Gilboa, 2006). Their ongoing terrorization has been covered by print, television, and (recently) online media from inside as well as outside the region. The coverage itself, depending on the region and news organization, has equally supported and/or scrutinized the primary actors in the conflict (Viser, 2003; Chang & Zeldes, 2006). In addition to the daily violence, a battle ensues within English-transnational media by players directly involved to win the hearts and minds of global audiences. For Israel, the goal is to deflect criticism for its violent actions (Liphshiz, 2009) and defend itself from Palestinians while for Palestinians the purpose is to garner sympathy for similar actions (Nacos, 2006; Pape,

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<sup>2</sup> Hawkins' study found that out of the six media content analyzed from Asia, the Americas, and Europe during the year 2000, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was the most-heavily covered conflict.

2006). Thus, transnational media act as rationalization tools for Israeli and Palestinian terrorization.<sup>3</sup>

Transnational media is defined as English-spoken and/or written media, based within the geographical area of study, which can be accessed by the global community (Karim, 2003; Benítez, 2006). The media's role in the conflict is not only to report the realities on the ground but also to communicate new realities in which transnational audiences understand the conflict. Moreover, the adversarial nature of journalism in democratic societies tends to wane in times of conflict (Fisk, 1991, Fialka, 1992, Kellner, 1992, Thompson, 1992, Macarthur, 1993, cited in Halliday, 1999; Calabrese, 2005) in which "the media revert to rallying around the flag" (Nacos, 1994; Peri, 2004: 92). According to Peri, security and terrorist-related issues affect the way in which media directly related to the threat report the events of the day. Additionally, the decision-making strategies used by actors (political and media) directly and indirectly involved in the conflict are part of political communication rationalization. It is within these contexts that this thesis seeks to explore.

### **Investigating Israeli-Palestinian Political Communication**

Within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, certain Israeli and Palestinian actors<sup>4</sup> such as governments, groups, individuals, and/or their respective English-Transnational media

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<sup>3</sup> Media do engage in sensational journalism, especially during times of stress (whether it be a federal election, a natural disaster, or war). Creating and maintaining controversy sells papers and attracts viewers to the television screens and readers to transnational online media. A major component in the political economy of the media, as any businessperson or communication specialty will agree, is the sale of advertising space based on the size of the audience. However, the media chosen in this thesis for content analysis does not necessarily rely on advertising dollars to stay afloat and hence, the impact of the "economic" variable to political communication is cushioned.

are intertwined when using political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. Political communication,<sup>5</sup> as a political tool and strategy in affecting human thinking and behavior (Graber, 2005), has been at the fore of propagation and persuasive techniques since World War II (Baran & Davis, 2006: 143-148; Smith, Lasswell & Casey, 1946, cited in Perloff, 2008: 169; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953 cited in Perloff, 2008: 169). Used by both democratic and non-democratic regimes (Ibid) and their respective media, the narrative within political communication (e.g., words used) can embody cultural divisions between warring groups (Said, 1994; Lefkowitz, 2004). Additionally, structuring political communication involves theoretical approaches of decision-making strategies (Snyder & Diesing, 1977).

Although Israeli and Palestinian media are on the daily offensive in the rationalization of terrorization, that is, justifying the process of their actions of extreme intimidation and murder, no coherent political communication exists that demonstrates the rationalization of terrorization from beginning to end. How do Palestinians rationalize their daily rocket attacks against southern Israeli towns? How do Israelis rationalize their daily bombings of Palestinian positions in Gaza? How does each party respond? And

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<sup>4</sup> This thesis ascribes the term “actors” to anyone directly or indirectly involved in the political communication of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. Unless specified, this generally includes governments, groups, individuals, and/or their respective English-Transnational media. Additionally, “actors” are synonymous with the term “decision-maker(s)” since actors act as decision-makers in their rationalization of terrorization through political communication. The subsequent chapters further explore these terms.

<sup>5</sup> Political communication entails the use of overlapping terms such as propaganda and persuasion (Graber, 2005; Baran & Davis, 2006; Perloff, 2008). The term rhetoric is also used when describing political communication methods and goals since, in its most generic understanding, rhetoric “refers to the manner in which symbols [and words] are used to affect, influence, and persuade people” (Tuman, 2003: 24). Additionally, rhetoric is “fundamentally communication as persuasion” (Ibid: 28). These terms are used interchangeably throughout this thesis as they refer to the general context of how Israeli-Palestinian political communication is used in the rationalization of terrorization. See Chapter 2, *Literature Review* for further analysis on political communication.

with what tools? Transnational media provide an outlet to actors to politically communicate the rationalization of terrorization process. Although it would seem that regional media report events as they unfold, a deeper analysis reveals a systemic pattern of constant rationalizations of actions and reactions of terrorization.

Political communication uses certain tools and strategies to achieve its directives. Whether to rationalize a tax hike or to rally support for war, a list of actions is implemented in order to achieve a given objective (or several objectives). British philosopher John Stuart Mill, for example, defended British imperialism at the time of Western imperial rivalry, arguing that despotism was a good way of ruling over British colonies (Mill, 1837, cited in Sullivan, 1983: 606). Sullivan observed “Mill justified this complex Empire on grounds that it served England's economic, cultural, and political interests” (Sullivan, 1983: 606).

Recent studies also point to a rationalization framework as grounds for persuasion in the invasion of Iraq by the second Bush Administration. Christie (2006) analyzes White House briefing notes, two major national/international newspapers, and a major television network's news coverage looking at the relationship between mass media and policy agendas. His findings point to similarities between the White House and mass media agendas on central issues of the war such as “terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and the assembly of a coalition to prosecute the war” (Ibid: 519).

Non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations implement similar tactics. Nacos (2007: 20) argues that when committing acts of terror, terrorists “strive for ... very specific media-dependent objectives” that include: attention and awareness by various audience members; recognition for their motives; respect and sympathy of their local

community; legitimate statues similar to those of their enemies.<sup>6</sup> Islam and Shahin (2001: 7) apply the rational agent model to terrorist objectives in which “terrorists respond to incentives, including media publicity, and the model predicts that when the net marginal benefit from one type of terrorist activity is diminished, terrorists will substitute into alternative modes of terrorism.” Parallel to Nacos (2007), Islam and Shahin (2001) postulate that terrorists use certain terrorism *means*, such as hijacking, bombings, and so forth, to achieve certain *ends*.

Of all cases described above, even Mill’s (Sullivan, 1983) staunch support for British imperialism, no current data exists that place the political communication of state actors vis-à-vis the political communication of non-state actors in the rationalization of terrorization within a major crisis. Christie (2006) describes the media tools used by the second Bush Administration in stirring public opinion in favor for war but does not compare it to that of Saddam Hussein’s political communication. This dialectic, or interactive political communication where actors respond to their enemy’s rationalization of terrorization during a crisis, is under-represented or largely absent from academic discourse. Therefore, this thesis explores within an area of research that does not yet exist – how adversaries in conflict (Israelis/Palestinians) politically communicate the process of rationalization of terrorization.

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<sup>6</sup> For non-state organizations engaged in asymmetrical warfare, media attention without censorship is preferred – albeit controlling the message remains a priority. Abu Iyad, the Fatah leader of the Palestinian terrorist group Black September remarked that the organization’s purpose was “to make the world feel that the Palestinian people exist,” (cited in Sterba, 2003: 8) referring to the 1972 Munich Olympic murder of Israeli athletes. According to an Al Qaeda training manual, attacking symbolic landmarks in the west would “generate intense publicity” (Hendawi, 2002, cited in Nacos, 2006: 213).

## Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the rationalization of terrorization through Israeli and Palestinian media's political communication.<sup>7</sup> Periods of aggression followed by periods of calm are a familiar staple of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This thesis looks at Israeli and Palestinian English-transnational media coverage in times of high and low stress in order to describe political communication. The case of the Gaza War (2008-2009) is chosen in union with the release of the Goldstone Report nine months later (U.N. Human Rights Council, 2009) to reflect high and low stress periods.

Countless studies have addressed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a communication perspective. Researchers have specifically addressed American, European, and Middle Eastern coverage of the conflict.<sup>8</sup> However, these past studies do not look beyond the wording of "victims" and "terrorists." For instance, in typical media content analyses, the researcher will sift through news items of a given newspaper and select the words that frame and carry the narrative. The researcher will then superimpose the frame over a given theory [such as Orientalism (Said, 1994)] thus demonstrating media bias. This thesis, however, takes a different approach. It not only addresses the wording in the media coverage, it also analyzes the terrorism tactics used; it looks at major themes present in the item; it notes the actions taken by terrorizers to rationalize

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<sup>7</sup> This thesis explores *how* Israelis and Palestinians use political communication in the rationalization of terrorization of one another. Its focus is more on the *how* process and less on the *why* process. As mentioned briefly, actors rationalize to either deflect criticism (Liphshiz, 2009) or garner sympathy for their actions (Nacos, 2006; Pape, 2006). Ultimately, exploring the breadth and depth of *why* they terrorize is suited for another research topic.

<sup>8</sup> Several studies have focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through content analyses of CNN, *The New York Times*, the BBC, and Al Jazeera, among other news media. See Hawkins (2002), Zelizer, Park, and Gudelunas (2002), Viser (2003), and Kuang-Kuo & Zeldes (2006).

terrorization; it measures the responses of the terrorized; it intertwines both political actors and their respective media in the rationalization of terrorization process; and it addresses the use of terrorism as a tactic by both state and non-state actors. Through this spectrum of analyses, the research is able to investigate interactive political communication in the rationalization of terrorization and the decision-making strategies behind such persuasive techniques.

### **Thesis Overview**

Investigating Israeli-Palestinian political communication requires a basic foundation on which to build. Chapter 2, the Literature Review, traces the epistemological and theoretical roots of philosophers and theorists in the field of the social sciences. Thomas Hobbes's (1985) philosophy on security and the state of man introduces instrumental rationality as a means of strategic decision-making. His ideas bring into fruition self-interest and survival of the state based on security. Morality is tossed aside as self-interest guides the decision-making process. William James (1971), a well-known pacifist, challenges the notion of a higher good – a great morality – in sending troops to war. He sees a clash between the security of the state and the rationalization for engaging in conflict. Wilhelm Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) adds the human bias to the rational decision-making process. He believes history and culture have a direct impact on reason and thus one cannot be reasonable without succumbing to their historic and cultural upbringing/surroundings.

Hans Morgenthau's (2006) classical political realism expands on Hobbes' (1985) notion of self-interest. He argues that international relations theory is guided by realism.

Yet he identifies with James' (1971) assertion that morality has nothing to do with conflict. Snyder and Diesing's (1977) use of rational actor theory and bounded rationality further explores how both decision-making techniques can help decision-makers achieve their goals.

With decision-making rationality tools discussed, the literature review turns to the context in which decision-makers operate. Edward Said's (1994) re-invention of Orientalism gives fresh insight on existing tensions between the West and the rest. His views on the West and Islam (the Other) draw a distinct parallel to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) provides a counter-thesis to Orientalism and argues that the Orient hold racist and stereotypical views of the West. Stuart Hall's (1997a) cultural representation elaborates on the processes in which culture is created and re-created. He believes media and language are key factors through which actors are represented. Finally, Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism expands the limited scope of the conventional definition of terrorism. Once described as a tactic used only by non-democratic despots as well as non-state actors, Jaggar applies terrorism to any actor – be it democratic or non-democratic – thought to be practicing extreme threats or violence toward others. Previous literature points to evidence of media bias where framing Palestinians as terrorists and Israelis as victims to be standard practice. Jaggar's definition, used in the research, equates both Israeli and Palestinian actions with terrorism, thus alleviating any controversy of bias that might arise when exploring political communication. The epistemological roots and theories are then applied to a theoretical framework to be used when exploring political communication through English-transnational online news and information media.

Chapter 3, the Methodology, describes the process of gathering data and conducting the media content analysis and historical-comparative research as a sub-component. It explores the scope of the research, the concepts used, and the levels of measurements applied to variables investigating political communication. Four central questions guide the overall objectives of the research. These include the topic of: rationality and decision-making, culture and representation, and terrorization within political communication.

A media content analysis is the main research design considered when gathering data. The analysis is conducted using six similar types of online transnational Israeli and Palestinian media. The types of media fall under the military, private, and independent rubric. The Israeli media include: the Israel Defense Forces (military), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (independent), and Arutz Sheva (private). The Palestinian media consist of: Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (military), the Palestine News Network (independent), and The Palestine Telegraph (private). These media are in turn compared and analyzed for relevant data when describing political communication. Non-probability purposive sampling is used to gather samples from Israeli and Palestinian media during the following period: November 2008 and January 2009 as well as between August 15, 2009 and October 15, 2009. The dates reflect the period leading up to the Gaza War as well the war itself. The second period of interest surrounds the release of the controversial Goldstone Report and its investigation of the war. The collected data is analyzed statistically through SPSS in order to identify significant relationships between variables. Components of historical-comparative research techniques are also used to draw links between times of high stress versus low stress by

looking at the Gaza War (Operation Cast Lead) and the Goldstone Report released nine months later.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings of this thesis. It is divided into three main sections. The first section is microscopic in nature and compares individual variables to quantitatively and qualitatively assess significant relationships through analyses. The second section is a macroscopic overview of the first section, grouping variables and making generalization to describe Israeli and Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. The final section discusses the most significant findings and addresses their relationship to the literature review's theoretical framework as well as the research questions.

Chapter 5 concludes by discussing the broad contributions of this thesis to the study of political communication, decision-making, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It provides an overview of the research problem and discusses the most significant findings. It acknowledges limitations of the research, which opens the door to potential future areas of study.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a multi-dimensional conflict that requires a unique approach in order to study its heavy saturation within academia. This thesis sets to accomplish the task of exploring the political communication of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization.

## Chapter 2

### **Literature Review**

Investigating political communication requires research in several areas of study. Certain political communication, such as those used in election campaigns, have a specific audience in mind with specific persuasive techniques and tools. Others require diverse concepts and theories in order to grasp the main driving forces as well as identify the nuances when differing cultures compete within English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization during times of crises and normal situations.

#### **The Philosophies and Theories of Modern Thinkers**

The literature review traces the epistemological roots of the following three modern philosophers related to the research topic: Hobbes (1985), Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004), and James (1971). It then discusses seven theories that build on the epistemological roots and are most relevant to the research topic: Morgenthau's (2006) classical political realism, Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making theory, Said's (1994) Orientalism, Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), Hall's (1997a) cultural representation, Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism, and political communication. Linked together, this thesis draws on the threads of knowledge above, creating a theoretical framework to investigate political communication that explains Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization.

## ***Rationality, Decision-Making, and Legitimacy for Conflict***

The literature review begins by exploring an epistemological root fundamental to understanding the process of decision-making and rationality. Thomas Hobbes' influential work, *Leviathan* (1985), describes the nature of man as “nasty, brutish, and short” (Ibid: 186). His prescription to end the conflict between man and his neighbor is to install a sovereign power to function as the state. Through social contracts, man would give up some freedoms in order to secure protection of the state from internal as well as external threats. To secure the state's role, Hobbes (1985) alludes to instrumental rationality, that is, the choosing of the best available means (fear, propaganda, coercion) to achieve desired ends (security for the self and the state) as part of the decision-making process.

The *Oxford English dictionary* – labeled as “The world's most trusted dictionar[y]” (2008) defines rationality as “on or in accordance with reason or logic [and] able to think sensibly or logically” rather than rely on “religious belief and emotional response” (Ibid: 1192-1193). Within this working definition, an underlying theme present in Hobbes' (1985) work is that “humans as a species are rational” (Van Mill, 2001: 81), making note that rationality is a capability of all humanity and not only a select few (Ibid). “Rationall [*sic*]” Hobbes states (1985: 81), “and most excellent worke [*sic*] of Nature, *Man*,” acknowledging that man as a whole is capable of rational thought, choices, and action.

Wilhelm Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004), the second epistemological philosopher, challenges the fundamental belief that rational decision-making is an objective enterprise. His philosophy ascribes the historical and cultural

biases of rationality. His *Critique of Historical Reason* (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) – reason being interpreted from rationality to the application of solving problems (Eid, 2008: 72-79) – complements Immanuel Kant’s (1961) *Critique of Pure Reason* (a foundation of scientific knowledge limited to the natural sciences) by adding the socio-historical sciences as an altogether separate method of ontological and epistemological investigation (De Mul, 2004: 1-2).

Dilthey made two critical revisions to his philosophy of the humanities in contrast to Kant’s criticism of human reason. Kant’s *Critique* (1961) “reduced humankind to a purely intellectual subject,” however Dilthey “brought the living, flesh-and-blood human being to the fore – that is, a human being who is guided not only by his intellectual powers but by his will and his feelings as well” (De Mul, 2004: 2). Dilthey’s second revision challenged Kant’s assumption that reason is pure and timeless and instead “placed the emphasis on the historical nature of reason and argued that fundamental philosophical investigation cannot be disassociated from historical investigation” (Ibid). This revision essentially tells the decision-maker to take into account the socio-historical influences on his/her rationalization. “The capacity of man” Dilthey (1914-1977, cited in Ermarth, 1978) argues, “[is] to know himself and the society and history which he has created.”

Supporting De Mul’s (2004) interpretation of Dilthey, Hodges (1974: xx) adds that Dilthey’s philosophy also entails “the thoughts, feelings, and purposes of human beings” within the sphere of the knowable. That is, contrary to Kant (1961) and additionally to Hobbes (1985), the sciences require not only empirical measurements but also the introduction of new variables such as the human psyche, which affect the

outcome of phenomena being observed. Hence a rational decision-making actor, weighing costs and benefits, performs based on the information at hand but is also influenced by their emotions, history, and cultural upbringing.

Hobbes (1985) believed in the use of instrumental rationality as an elementary tool in the decision-making process by state actors who sought to maximize their security and self-interest among other states in an anarchic geopolitical global system. Although contemporary states apply Hobbes' epistemological foundation of how they ought to act in this system, the rise of democracy and its moral aspirations limit a state's ability to act without constraints. A partial solution to this dilemma is William James' (1971) *The Moral Equivalent of War*, which sheds light on how nations attempt to morally legitimize the process of terrorization. According to James, a self-proclaimed pacifist and the third modern philosopher guiding the epistemological roots, states instill two forms of persuasion to attract men to a militaristic-oriented economy and culture. The first involves the use of patriotism to recruit soldiers to fight wars and engage in conflict in defense of one's country while the second involves drawing out high human qualities involved in the thrill of war and talk of peace (James, cited in Roth, 1971: xvi-xvii; James, 1971: 10-13).

Unlike past military excursions by ancient civilizations, whose motives in war and conflict were based on "[p]ride, gold, women, [and] slaves..." (James, 1971: 4), contemporary pretexts are necessary to rein terror on the enemy. The conquests of Alexander the Great, according to James (1971: 5), "was piracy pure and simple" and "nothing but an orgy of power and plunder" with "no rational purpose in it."

Contemporary society is no different in which man has inherited the history of war's irrationality (Ibid: 4).

James (1971) explores the tensions and contradictions that entice man to engage in conflict. To quote James at length:

It is plain that on this subject civilized man has developed a sort of double personality. If we take European nations, no legitimate interest of any one of them would seem to justify the tremendous destructions which a war to compass it would necessarily entail. It would seem that common sense and reason ought to find a way to reach agreement in every conflict of honest interests. I myself think it our bounden duty to believe in such international rationality as possible.

(James, 1971: 6)

James' points are noted in respect to Hobbes' (1985) argument. James (1971) believes rationality *should* play a role when attempting an honest brokerage in the cessation of hostilities between warring parties. As civilized man, self-interests are achievable through international rationality. Yet Hobbes (1985) argues quite the opposite, insisting on the natural anarchy of the geopolitical system and how rationality is used to further one's self-interested goals – through conflict and war, among other violent methods.

The second tension supports the persuasive measure described by James (1971: 10-13), above, of how states recruit men to fight. He believes the word "peace" is synonymous for "war expected" (Ibid: 6). Governments sincerely wanting peace, according to James (Ibid: 6), should never allow the word to be "printed in a newspaper" due to its "provocative" nature. Within this context, James acknowledges the role the media play during times of crises and/or the lead up to crises.

Hobbes' (1985) and Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophies represent the foundation of decision-making, rationality, and their socio-

cultural historic context while James (1971), a pacifist, critiques a state's supposed altruistic motives for engaging in conflict. The seven subsequent theories build on these philosophies by expanding their modern contexts to be applied to the research problematic.

### ***State and Non-State Rational Decision-Making Tools***

From the epistemological roots of Hobbes (1985), Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004), and James (1971), the literature review looks at the theories applied to the research at hand. Hans Morgenthau's (2006) theory of classical realism is derived from Hobbes' (1985) instrumental rationality – or rational choice theory in strategic decision-making. Realism, a dominant international relations political theory, is defined as rational actors working to achieve specific self-interested goals (Donnelly, 2005: 29-30). This type of rationality is used to formulate state foreign policy.

Morgenthau's (2006: 4-16) principles of political realism fall under the umbrella of rationality and decision-making, strategic interest, national security, and power. Specifically, Morgenthau's core argument is that "statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power" (Ibid: 5). He believes that men (modern states) make rational decisions to achieve this self-interested end. To understand political realism, it must be segregated from other schools of thought such as religion, ethics, and so forth. In this respect, state interests are defined in terms of power for "political man" as the morality realm is defined in terms of "moral man" (Morgenthau, 2006: 15).

Non-democratic and/or non-state actors also employ rational decision-making in when engaging in violence contrary to the traditional belief that irrational thoughts guide

their behavior (Ganor, 2005: 74; Nacos, 2006: 90-91; Pape, 2006; Enders & Su, 2007; Kunzar, 2007). Studies further suggest that decision-makers, from democratic states as well as non-state actors, differ in rationalizing violence due to competing factors and motives underlying their actions (Nacos, 1994; Pape, 2006; Downes, 2008). Moreover, according to Hobbes (1985: 81), *all* men are rational – noting that humanity as a species is capable of reason, and not only a select few (Van Mill, 2001: 81).

Pape's (2006: 64) research on suicide terrorism debunks the conventional wisdom of an irrational, religiously fanatical, mentally disturbed non-state actor/group with no logic or strategic motive behind his/her acts of violence. Shultz (1990, cited in Nacos, 2006: 90) too agrees that terrorism is "goal directed ... calculated violence." Similarly, within the realm of rational choice, Crenshaw (1998: 11) argues that "[t]errorism is likely to be a reasonably informed choice among available alternatives, some tried unsuccessfully." This decision-making process (Ibid: 24) is described further below with Snyder and Diesing's (1977) approach to optimum rational choices.

Enders and Su (2007) believe that rational terrorists<sup>9</sup> attempt to "restructure themselves to be less penetrable" by new counter-terrorism policies established in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. In using the rational-actor approach, the authors point to the rational and strategic allocation of a terrorist group's scarce resources in order to "maximiz[e] the expectation of ... attaining [its] shared goal" (Ibid: 35-36). Moreover, logistics, costs, and calculations are part of the decision-making process by non-state actors who wish to bring into fruition their desired objectives at optimum levels (Ibid:

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<sup>9</sup> The word "terrorist," according to several authors of the literature review, describes non-state actors engaged in the act of terrorism. This thesis takes a position that is neutral to the political bias word(s) associated with "terrorist" and any of its variances. See the literature review section on defining terrorism for elaboration.

37). Additionally, Kuznar (2007: 323) states that terrorism, as a form of risk taking, is a tactical tool used by “people, including terrorists,” to “exhibit the tenets of rationality, which include a full awareness of one’s preferences and resources, self-interested motives, and the conduct of cost–benefit analyses to maximize one’s satisfaction” (Ibid: 318).

Both state and non-state actors, including their media outlets, explore various forms of rationality in order to achieve a desired outcome. Rationality is broken down to its mechanical decision-making parts through Snyder and Diesing (1977: 340-418). The authors sift through decision-making theories, which include the rational actor or maximizing theory and the bounded rationality theory, when examining the anatomy of bargaining (Simon, 1957, March & Simon, 1958, Dewey, 1922, cited in Snyder & Diesing, 1977).

The rational actor theory “treats decision making as a process of maximizing expected utility” (Snyder & Diesing, 1977: 340) and is essentially guided by instrumental rationality. “The key assumption in this theory” the authors explain, “is that there exists a single homogenous good, utility, which is present in all other goods” (Ibid) or desired ends. Second, the decision-maker is expected to choose one of the assumed “well-defined and mutually exclusive alternatives” (Ibid). Thus, omniscience is a main feature of this theory.<sup>10</sup> To quote the third point at length:

[I]t is assumed that the decision maker is able to estimate the outcome and calculate the expected value of each alternative. Given these assumptions, the decision maker calculates the expected value of each alternative,

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<sup>10</sup> Snyder and Diesing (1977: 341) identify the work of Cross (1969) to support the argument that neither omniscience nor “extraordinary calculating ability” are necessary in the rational actors/instrumental rational theory. However in doing so, they acknowledge that it renders parts of the theory lacking its essential economic-mathematical calculating ability.

compares all alternatives, and chooses the alternative that maximizes expected utility.

(Snyder & Diesing, 1977: 340)

The second decision-making theory, bounded rationality (Snyder & Diesing, 1977: 342), is “an attempt to get closer to actual practice without losing theoretical simplicity.” The key assumption of this theory is that “one assumes first, the *heterogeneity of goods*, that is, the inability or at least a great difficulty of comparing the value of two different goods” (*emphasis in original*). To achieve one good, one would have to sacrifice the other good (for example, peace for security). Second, it assumes that decision-makers are not fully aware of the available alternatives at the onset of a problem, thus allowing decision-making to evolve or be modified as new information becomes available. Third, “even for the known alternatives, one is not able to calculate the probability of their achieving specific goods, except very crudely.” Ultimately this theory is used to find “an acceptable alternative, one that is ‘good enough.’”

Snyder and Diesing (1977) suggest the combination of both rational actor and bounded rationality theories during the decision-making process in order to maximize processes and outcomes. This involves using the rational actor theory as basic and bounded rationality as auxiliary. This implies that one first searches for the best alternatives but given that this is impossible since not all information is available to consider the best alternatives, “a decision maker may consider two or three that appear most obvious, reasonable, or promising” to achieve the most of various desired outcomes (Ibid: 345).

## *Cultural Discourses*

Theories of rationality cannot be accounted for without discussing the cultural and historical impact affecting decision-makers (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004). Edward Said's (1994) groundbreaking and highly influential work, *Orientalism*, criticizes Western (the Occident) perceptions of the East (the Orient/the Other) and establishes henceforth the relationship between both parties. The tension that exists between both the Occident and the Orient stems from Western imperial colonialism, exploitation, and the domination of the uncivilized (Hobsbawm, 1987: 58; Said, 1994) and is further exacerbated in contemporary post and neo-colonial society (Said, 1995; Said, 2003a; Said, 2003b; Said, 2004). This ideology is accredited to those, such as John Stuart Mill, who defended British imperialism at the time of Western imperial rivalry on grounds that it was economically, culturally, and politically good for England (Sullivan, 1983: 606). To quote Said (1994) at length:

One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of "the mysterious Orient." This is nowhere more true than in the ways by which the Near East is grasped.

(Said, 1994: 26)

Said (1994: 3) extrapolates Foucault's (1990) power/knowledge dynamic when describing Occident/Orient tensions within colonial and post-colonial ethos between the aggressor and victim. Foucault's paradigm "explores the contiguity of power and knowledge in order to explicate the ways in which knowledge transforms power" from central authority to a dispersing interconnecting force in the daily exchange of

information within society (Gandhi, 1998: 74). Said, on the other hand, believes knowledge can be transformed into a contaminant when it comes into contact with power (Ibid: 75).

As dense as the study of Orientalism is, competing theories, like that of Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), unravel a paradox present in colonial and post-colonial discourses. Defined, Occidentalism is the dehumanization of the West by the East based on a “cluster of prejudices” (Ibid: 5). Part of the same coin, Orientalism and Occidentalism are “two interrelated modes of ideological representation [and] powerful examples of the general problem of oppositional definitions” (Roth-Seneff, 2007: 450). Goody (2006) explores these competing ideologies by focusing on the hegemonic grasp of Western values and institutions from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards and criticizes Western exceptionalism, or Eurocentrism, predominant in Occidental as well as Oriental thought. Paradoxically, and along the lines of Gandhi’s (1998) and Warraq’s (2007) criticism of Said (1994), Goody (2006: 5) argues that post-colonialists and post-modernists fall into the trap of being Occidentalists in their criticisms against Eurocentrism and Orientalists since the *homogeneous* West is, in reality, a meshing of Eastern and Western values, beliefs, diversities, and similarities (Ibid). In contemporary discourse, Friedman (2009: 96) observes that Occidentalism is “embodied in a broad anti-Western mentality in large parts of the world,” in which “the rise of Islamism [recasts] the entirety of Western culture ... as dangerously decadent.” Occidentalism is then understood as the periphery attacking the hegemonic center (Ibid).

Historical and cultural influences affecting rational decision-makers (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) was a point of departure for Orientalism (Said,

1994) and Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005). A brief description of Hall's (1997a) notion of culture further explores the interconnectivity within these concepts. Hall elaborates on culture<sup>11</sup> through its production of meaning, language, and ultimately, its representation. Hall's model of the development of culture is as follows: culture is constructed through meaning; meaning is constructed through language; language is constructed through representation. Cultural representation is a cyclical process in which the steps above continually reinforce one another. To understand Hall's theory it is important to quote him at length:

culture is about 'shared meaning.' Now, language is the privileged medium in which we 'make sense' of things, in which meaning is produced and exchanged. Meaning can only be shared through our common access to language. So language is central to meaning and culture and has always been regarded as the key repository of cultural values and meanings.

(Hall, 1997a: 1)

Furthermore, language constructs meanings "because it operates as a *representational system*. In language we use signs and symbols – whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images ... to stand for or represent to other people our concepts, ideas and feelings" (Ibid, *emphasis in original*). In this case, new media would be a good example "which circulate meanings between different cultures on a scale and with a speed hitherto unknown in history" (Ibid: 3). Similar to Hall, Lewis (2005: 56) defines culture in the generic terms of a "way of life – a descriptor which emphasizes the symbolic, ritualistic and belief patterns of a given social group." Like Hall (1997a),

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<sup>11</sup> According to Hall (1997a: 2), "'Culture' is one of the most difficult concepts in the human and social sciences and there are many different ways of defining it." Lewis (2002a, Milner, 2002, Williams, 1981, cited in Lewis, 2005: 55) concurs in that culture "is a particularly efficacious term with a complex etymological history." Other specific forms of culture include high culture and popular (pop) culture. There are also examples of anthropological and sociological definitions of culture. Nonetheless, Hall provides a basic working definition of culture.

Lewis (2005: 56) believes that language and meaning are of great importance in conceptualizing culture.

A final aspect of representation is necessary. Stereotyping according to Hall (1997b: 257) is a “representational practice.” “Stereotyping” he states, “reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature.” Stereotypes are a basis of representation of racial differences as they work through construction of the Other and power.

### ***Terrorism and New Mediated Political Communication***

The influences of history and culture on rational actors account for the prejudices of decision-making. Terrorism is another term influencing the biases involved in decision-making. As so many scholars in the field try, terrorism is often a tricky and elusive word to define. Over 100 definitions of terrorism have been identified (Schmid & Jongman, 1988, cited in McCormick, 2003; Neumann & Smith, 2008) and hitherto the situation has yet to improve.

Terrorism itself is simply tactics of coercion (Jaggar, 2005; Pape, 2006) with the most common tactics being: bombings, assassinations, suicide missions, hijackings, kidnappings, missile attacks, and mass disruption/mass destruction<sup>12</sup> (Nacos, 2006: 126). However, divergent definitions of terrorism exist due to fundamental disagreements such as: actors who commit terrorism (non-state actors alone, or democratic states included?), whom it targets (civilians, military, diplomats?), why it is used (political, social,

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<sup>12</sup> Some literature focuses on less or more tactics but Nacos’ (2006) list is comprehensive to encompass overall modern tactics involved in the act of terrorizing.

economical, indifferent ends?), (Jaggar, 2005; Hoffman, 2006; Nacos, 2006; Pape, 2006, Neumann & Smith, 2008).<sup>13</sup> Jaggar's (2005)<sup>14</sup> take on terrorism addresses these questions and defines terrorism as follows:

Terrorism is the use of extreme threats or violence designed to intimidate or subjugate governments, groups, or individuals. It is a tactic of coercion intended to promote further ends that in themselves may be good, bad or indifferent. Terrorism may be practiced by governments or international bodies or forces, sub-state groups or even individuals. Its threats or violence are aimed directly or immediately at the bodies or belongings of innocent civilians but these are typically terrorists' secondary targets; the primary targets of terrorists are the governments, groups or individuals that they wish to intimidate.

(Jaggar, 2005: 209)

Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism is not the only area of study fuelling contentious debate. Political communication is the marriage of two continuously evolving fields that deal with persuasion, rationalization, and the struggle for power.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, assessing the shifting field of political communication, influenced by evolving new media and contemporary fragmented societies (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2000), creates new challenges in addressing political rhetoric.

Since the communication process is central to the delivery of political messages (Maarek & Wolfsfeld, 2003: 1), a broad definition is therefore necessary before

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<sup>13</sup> Its use became popular after the French Revolution and the Jacobins regime's *Reign of Terror* campaign that sought to terrorize those opposing the new rule of the bourgeoisie in Post-Revolutionary France (Hoffman, 2006; Jaggar, 2005; Nacos, 2006; Pape, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> Jaggar (2005) also provides literature on just war theory as well other accounts of what is and is not morally permissible in war. See Jaggar, Alison M. (2005). What is terrorism, why is it wrong, and could it ever be morally permissible? *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 36(2), 202–217 for extensive detail.

<sup>15</sup> Politics, in its simplest and broadest terms, is defined as the "use of power" (Larson, 2008). Dyck (2008: 7) believes that politics originates in conflict and thus defines it as "the struggle for power and the management of conflict." Hence, its general usage is within the spheres of power and conflict/struggle. Its specific use within the field of political communication is defined by Graber (2005) in the literature review, below.

continuing.<sup>16</sup> Another elusive term to define, communication is described as a “process through which messages, both intentional and unintentional, create meaning” (Metts, 2008: 23). Similarly, where intentions are concerned, persuasion is “a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince [others] to change their attitudes or behaviors regarding an issue through the transmission of a message in an atmosphere of free choice” (Perloff, 2008: 17). Moreover, propaganda,<sup>17</sup> another term overlapping persuasion and central to communication, is based on the following: mass influence through mass media; a covert method of persuasion; the complete control of transmission of information by one party; and the negative connotation the term carries when used by the perceived incumbent(s) (Ibid: 33). Communication, persuasion/rhetoric, and propaganda are key ingredients in political communication.

Political communication, according to Graber (2005: 479), “encompasses the construction, sending, receiving, and processing of messages that potentially have a significant direct or indirect impact on politics.” “The key element,” Graber (1993, cited in Graber, 2005: 479) states, “is that the message has a significant political effect on the thinking, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals, groups, institutions, and whole societies and the environment in which they exist.”

Theories of political communication embody works from various fields such as psychology, political science and communication (Graber, 2005: 487-490). Information processing theories, such as cognitive consistency theories, as well as media impact theories, such as the agenda setting theories, are used together to determine how political communication messages are understood by societies (Ibid).

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<sup>16</sup> See an intensive review of the literature on communication by Eid (2008: 12-19).

<sup>17</sup> See Baran and Davis’s (2006: 71-93) chapter on propaganda theories.

Political communication varies depending on context. Strategies used during election campaigns in democratic societies differ from those used by elected officials during a conflict/crisis and/or war.<sup>18</sup> However there remains a constant effort to manipulate the news media (Molotch, Protess & Gordon, 1996: 42). This is usually because the media is perceived to be “critical to both public attitude formation and to the policy process” (Ibid).

Four aspects identify the media in a democratic society as independent information providers: First, during election campaigns the news media’s superiority is evident through their ongoing organizational skills and full working capacity (Gurevitch & Blumler, 1977, cited in Kepplinger, 1996: 15). Second, the media “are part of an international information network that operates to a large extent independently of national and ideological frontiers” (Kepplinger, 1996: 15). Third, the media<sup>19</sup> are less dependent on governments because of their extensive financial means. Fourth, the “media enjoy legal privileges that make the acquiring of information easier” (Ibid: 15).

Political communication has been predominant since World War II when studies in communication research emerged as a result of persuasive techniques used during the war (Baran & Davis, 2006: 143-148; Smith, Lasswell & Casey, 1946 cited in Perloff, 2008: 169; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953, cited in Perloff, 2008: 169). It has evolved

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<sup>18</sup> Conflict is defined as “a state or quality of ongoing relationships among social entities, such as persons, groups or nations. It results from a lack of agreement over an issue and is expressed in words or actions.” (Arno, 1984); Crisis, defined by Snyder and Diesing (1977: 7), involves “the perception of a dangerously high probability of war.” Crisis communication, for example, is used during times of high stress as a crisis management decision-making function in order to “communicate with target groups and the public at large” (Eid & Fyfe, 2009: 7); finally, war is defined as “an act of violence” (Clausewitz, 1832, cited in Kunczik, 2003: 124). These terms are used interchangeably throughout this thesis since they all involve levels of disagreement between two parties (Mor, 1993: 3-4) and may/do eventually lead to acts of violence.

<sup>19</sup> Media, news media and mass media are used interchangeably since they refer to news agents covering a story.

over time with the advent of the television and the nightly news. With the third age of media abundance (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999), political communication has become increasingly important in contemporary society where fast-paced technological communication growth increases the competitive edge of contending narratives.

The relationship between political actors and the media is crucial in ensuring successful political communication. It is only fitting that actors and news media are migrating to the Web 2.0 since Internet user activity, especially in online newspapers, has increased in recent years (Nielsen NetRatings, 2008; Pierce & Boekelheide, 2009: 3; NADbank, 2009, cited in Krashinsky, 2010). The recent phenomenon of fragmented societies (Taras, 2001: 93-116) has caused traditional television viewing patterns as well as newspaper readership to shift. According to recent polls and trends (Nielsen NetRatings, 2008; Pew, 2009), newspaper readership has been on the decline as more people turn to the Web 2.0 for their information. With all the choices available to consumers “[p]olitical actors find themselves attempting to send messages through a multitude of channels each of which has its own set of demands and formats” (Maarek & Wolfsfeld, 2003: 2). On the other hand, where traditional media lack the power to reach a global audience, the new media, such as online transnational news and information websites, can disseminate vast amounts of information to anyone connected to the network.

The Internet as an ICT (Information Communication Technology) is included in what Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) refer to as the third age of media. Vedel (2003: 42-43) believes the pipeline of the Internet as an ICT may “affect political communication in

various ways” including the direct link between sender and receiver, bypassing gatekeepers, and lower costs of producing and disseminating information.

In the time of Blumler and Kavanagh’s (1999) work, the Internet had not yet fully matured to what it is today (in fact it is still evolving). In this transition, traditionally dominant media agents, their ideologies, and commercial interests have migrated to the Web 2.0 (Dahlgren, 2001: 74; Strangelove, 2005; Rohle, 2005). Nonetheless, alternative media do have a place online. According to De Waal (2007: 21), Web 2.0 is described as a social networking interface based on user-generated content and the linking of that content in several ways over the Web. Culture jamming and other forms of counter-hegemonic movements as well as copyright infringements are said to embody the freedoms offered by the Web (Strangelove, 2005; Christensen, 2007; De Waal, 2007).

Although media used within political communication is constantly evolving, the premise remains the same: to construct, send, receive, and process messages that may have a “significant direct or indirect impact on politics” (Graber, 2005: 479). Theories of political communication are incorporated in a theoretical framework below that includes the epistemological roots and theories described above.

### **A Theoretical Framework of Israeli-Palestinian Rationalization of Terrorization**

The foundational elements of the theoretical framework are drawn from the philosophies of Hobbes (1985), Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004), and James (1971). The framework is expanded by utilizing the modern theories of Morgenthau’s (2006) classical political realism, Snyder and Diesing’s (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making theory, Said’s (1994) Orientalism and its components,

Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), Hall's (1997a) cultural representation, Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism, and political communication theory in times of crises and low stress to investigate two separate new mediated transnational political communication of the rationalization of Israeli-Palestinian terrorization.

### ***Rationality and the Human Decision-Maker***

Hobbes' (1985) instrumental rationality, known today as rational choice (Van Mill, 2001: 75) or rational actor theory (Snyder & Diesing, 1977: 340), is used with theories of decision-making in contemporary realism (Morgenthau, 2006) in strategizing state foreign policy. Instrumental rationality differs from other forms of rationality because it takes a neutral position on *how* to achieve ends, rather than why these ends must be achieved. The same rationality-based decision-making theories are used when exploring Israeli and Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization.

Additionally, Hobbes' (1985: 81) work incorporates mankind as a whole when describing his ability to think and act rationally. Hence exploring political communication through the lens of state (Israelis) and non-state actors (Palestinians) as well as their respective media outlets is realized through Hobbes' assertions as well as newly refined research that identifies non-state actors as agents of rational decision-making (Ganor, 2005: 74; Nacos, 2006: 90-91; Pape, 2006; Enders & Su, 2007; Kunzar, 2007). For example, Pape (2006: 22) constructs a causal logic of suicide terrorism at the strategic, social, and individual level implemented by non-state actors such as the Palestinians who believe Israel occupies their land.

Instrumental rationality – rooted in Hobbesian (1985) philosophy – guides Palestinian actors' decision-making in terrorization (Crenshaw, 2001: 14). Similar to the logic involved in calculated violence by a state's military apparatus such as Israel, non-state organizations are "assumed to act on the basis of calculation" as well as the "costs of the attempt ... the consequences ... or the probability of success" when using terrorism (Ibid).<sup>20</sup> The rationalization of terrorization, as a logically instrumental choice, does not morally justify the actions in question (Crenshaw, 1998: 10). It does, however, raise the question of moral manipulation in an attempt to rationalize immoral actions (Williams, 1976; Bandura, 1998; Pape, 2006) through the use of political communication.

Therefore, two main components are used by Hobbes' (1985) philosophy in this thesis. The first is that rationality is instrumental ('rational actor theory' in its contemporary term) and the second is Hobbes' view that all mankind is capable of rational decision-making.

Morgenthau's (2006) political realism applies Hobbes' (1985) rational actor theory within the context of decision-making and state foreign policy in contemporary international relations. This thesis uses this realist approach when exploring Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. Evidence above show that both state (Israeli) and non-state (Palestinian) actors use rationality in decision-making in order to execute their strategic objectives and thus political realism is fittingly applied to both parties. Moreover, as a reminder, a notable difference between

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<sup>20</sup> The focus of this thesis is mainly describing how actors rationalize terror. Although theories of rationality in the literature review address the means-ends relationship, the lynchpin is the process (terrorization) within which the rationalization takes place. Although the means-ends relationship is not mutually exclusive, its separation allows investigation into political communication of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization.

state and non-state rationality is based on the objectives of the actors in question and the social and political forces in which they operate (Nacos, 1994; Pape, 2006; Downes, 2008).

Two shortcomings are accounted for from Hobbes' (1985) and Morgenthau's (2006) threads of knowledge. The first is the notion of the omniscient decision-maker. Since actors in this instrumental decision-making process are described as mere "omniscient calculators" (Lupia, McCubbins & Popkin, 2000: 8), they are assumed to have all information when making choices. This is not the case since omniscience is impossible (Ibid: 11) in the case of human beings. Due to these underlying factors influencing state and non-state decision-makers, this thesis adopts the combination of the rational actor and bounded rationality theory, as recommended by Snyder and Diesing (1977: 345), when exploring Israeli-Palestinian political communication. When combined, actors seek *maximization* in self-interested decision-making yet are *bounded* by their limits of available information.

Lupia, McCubbins and Popkin (2000: 9-10) express two shortcomings with the bounded rationality theory. The first is the incorrect presumption that the theory does not seek "non-maximizing and non-self-interest behavior." The second criticism states that the theory itself is undefined. The theory "offers little systematic guidance as to where the bounds of rationality are." Additionally, Williams (1976: 61-62) argues that the theory "oversimplifies the means-end relationship." However Lupia, McCubbins and Popkin (2000), as well as Williams (1976) agree that bounded rationality shares similarities with rational choice theory – making it a plausible rational decision-making

theory to work hand in hand with rational actor theory, thus marginalizing its shortcomings.

Used together, these theories provide a more realistic approach to decision-making since they incorporate what actors know at the time versus what they do not know and hence what they must predict and adjust based on incoming information as situations unfold. Likewise, Kuznar (2007) takes the rational actor and bounded rationality into account when addressing non-state actors' decision-making when dealing with conflict: "[t]he omniscience implied" in the rational-actor theory "is an overstatement of human capabilities" (Gigerenzer & Selten 2001, Klein, 2001, cited in Kuznar, 2007: 320) since "[i]ndividuals never have complete knowledge of everything they need to know to behave truly optimally." Hence the need of bounded rationality to function as auxiliary to the rational actor.

To put it into perspective, this thesis uses rational actor as primary, and bounded rationality as auxiliary in Israeli-Palestinian political communication. Thus, a decision-maker ideally sets his/her goal(s) to the highest optimum point then realistically reduces that point to an acceptable level making that the new optimum point as new alternatives and information become available.

The second shortcoming of Hobbes (1985) and Morgenthau's (2006) philosophy and theory is their sole focus on instrumental rationality and realism while alienating other fields in the social sciences, such as historical and cultural circumstances affecting decision-makers. For example, Hauptmann (1996: 4) criticizes rational choice theorists' conceptualization of *choice*. She argues that "an economic conception of choice to analyze politics leaves a great deal of politics unexplained, if superficially covered" (Ibid:

58). Moreover the notion that decision-makers lack emotions and morality renders them as omniscient robots once again. Therefore Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy is fittingly applied to add the human characteristic of decision-making.

It has been observed by Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) that reason is influenced by historical and cultural circumstances. These influences include culture, religion, and socio-political circumstances that are byproducts of their surroundings. In this thesis, it is argued that Israeli and Palestinian political communication are heavily influenced by historical and cultural circumstances and thus need to be included as *bias* in the decision-making process when investigating the rationalization of terrorization. Hence, political communication *differs* from state to state and actor to actor.

Criticism leveled at realism and Morgenthau's (2006) baseline arguments are similar to those Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) presents in his *Critique*. Cox (1986: 205) argues that distinction between the affairs of the state (the political sphere) with that of civil society can no longer be compartmentalized into separate entities because "proper attention" must be given to "social forces and processes" to understand the symbiotic relationship between both spheres (Ibid: 206). The marriage of "political man" and "moral man" (Morgenthau, 2006: 15), for example, is a necessity because "social and political theory is history-bound at its origin" due to historical conditions that created awareness to specific problems and issues (Cox, 1986: 207). Thus the idea that realism and its rational-thinking mechanisms operate within a

vacuum are necessarily false because they do not account for the socio-historic influences that have affected them in the first place and the continual changes within society.

Smith (2004), an academic in the field of international relations (which is guided by realism), poignantly engages in self-criticism of the discipline because it does not take into consideration other spheres of influence. His paper *Singing our world into existence* assigns himself and the field of international relations theory with the moral culpability of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> because the theory ignored or largely marginalized social factors that contributed to a world which made the attacks on the United States possible (Ibid: 504, 509). Factors, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are rendered mute in the aftermath of the attacks in which media and political scientists focused more on one sphere of thought, rather than a combination of issues, which contributed to the terrorist attacks (Abrahamian, 2003). The international system, as Hobbes (1985) and Morgenthau (2006) would agree, is based on rational choice theory, which “models behavior on the basis of fixed, and pre-given identities, and interests” and is “uninterested in history or culture or difference” (Smith, 2004: 502). Ignoring “ethical questions in the pursuit of value-neutral explanations” (Ibid: 513), realism and rational-choice theory (or instrumental rationality) masquerade as a moral force that seeks the approval of the general public and those who wish to join the battle against the state’s enemy.

Similar to the state apparatus, non-state actors do not operate in a vacuum and are hence influenced by socio-historical factors in their decision-making process when carrying out a terrorist attack. To this extent, the rational actor model alone cannot account for how non-state actors, such as the Palestinians, behave when engaging their Israeli enemy. For example, data from 1980 to 2001 suggests that suicide terrorism deals

with strategic, social, and individual logic (Pape, 2006). Similarly, another study enriches Pape's research by combining instrumental rationality and axiological rationality, which is defined as actions taken regardless of their consequences based on the commitment to certain belief systems embedded in a given culture (Tosini, 2009: 79). Thus factors such as religion and social networks are taken into account as axiological and instrumental rational modes of thinking guide decision-makers and/or those non-state actors carrying out a suicide attack (Ibid: 82).

Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy further addresses Hauptmann's (1996: 4), Cox (1986), and Smith's (2004) criticisms of the purely economic-based decision-maker. That is, Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) historical reason supports the notion that decision-maker do not operate in a vacuum.

### ***Historical, Cultural, and Social Tensions Underlying Israeli-Palestinian Relations***

The subsequent theories support the underling socio-cultural and historic tensions influencing the rationality of decision-makers. Where decision-making and rationality provide the technical framework of rationalization of terrorization, the following theories provide the *context* in which decision-makers operate.

The history of colonialism and representation of the Other by Western imagery and popular fiction expands on Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy. Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) theory on Orientalism constructs a modern-day colonialism through Israeli occupation and creates the rationalization and justification of brutalizing the Palestinians – hence the use of Oriental discourses as an

Israeli rhetorical tool in political communication. Moreover, neo-colonialism within Orientalism discourse provides the backdrop of dichotomizing the aggressor and the victimized.

Additionally, the power/knowledge dynamic (Foucault, 1990) Said (1994) explores within the Orientalism framework is fittingly applicable to Israeli-Palestinian tensions and the aggressor/victim dichotomy, which are especially illuminated by Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. Said warns “that systems of thought like Orientalism, discourses of power, ideological fictions ... are all too easily made, applied and guarded” by those in power and thus the knowledge of Orientalism itself is an actual “degradation of knowledge” (Ibid: 328). Hence, the knowledge of the Orient – that of an untamed barbaric people – is expressed by the West, in this case Israel, whose views are inherently biased due to their privileged position within the asymmetry of power through their military dominations and occupation of the stateless Palestinians.

Observing Said’s (1994) notion of Orientalism through the discursive prism of power and knowledge, critics<sup>21</sup> have pointed out his static nature of knowledge within colonial discourse. In this regard, “all knowledge – and the construction of any object of knowledge – must itself be condemned as appropriative and oppressive” since the Orient “is the product of colonial relations of power” (Grossberg, 1996: 95). However, this is not the case as the Orient existed *separately* from the Orientalist. Therefore, because “Orientalism involves actual material processes of colonization, travel, exploitation and domination,” the power/knowledge dynamic is based on “not creating something from

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<sup>21</sup> It is difficult to discuss all aspects of criticism lobbied at Said’s (1994) work within the constraints of the literature review. However, important criticisms that pokes holes in Said’s theory or reiterate his position with fresh insight are discussed.

nothing, but ... reducing something to nothing ..." (Ibid: 96) – in Said's (1994) case the arrangement of Arab diversity into a singular Other. This simplification of Palestinian diversity, or the linking of Arab ethos in general to the Palestinian case in particular, facilitates a unilingual narrative in Israeli political communication.

Orientalism's counter-thesis, Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), identifies the paradox in Orient studies in which proponents such as Said (1994) are guilty of homogenizing and stereotyping a supposed monolithic West (Buruma & Avishai, 2005). Thus, Said ironically falls into the trap of stigmatizing the Occident in a reverse stereotype: that of "the racist Westerner" (Gandhi, 1998: 79). By homogenizing the West, Said ignores self-critical Orientalists such as William Jones, who accuses the Europeans of "ignorance" on non-European matters (Jones, 1991, cited in Gandhi, 1998: 79).

A failed accommodation of competing Oriental/Occidental discourses (Gandhi, 1998: 79) expands the offensive against Said's pre-conceived notions of Western racism. Warraq's (2007: 333) assessment of nineteenth-century Orientalist art, for example, challenges those who follow in Said's footsteps when charging that Orientalist paintings are nothing more than an imperialist, racist agenda by the West. Instead of a free-thinking individual, who may love the people and land in which they depict, Orientalism follows that the painter and his painting represent nothing more than the Occident, "out to rape the submissive and backward Orient" (Ibid: 333-334).

Although the realities of asymmetrical power clearly favors state over non-state actors, the weaker party is also guilty of stereotyping their enemy. In this thesis, Palestinian rationalization of terrorization would also entail the grouping of Israel with the West as an imperial post-colonial power through Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai,

2005). While similar to Warraq's (2007) argument of the racist East, Occidentalism must be differentiated from Warraq's thesis for he plays on the power/knowledge asymmetry of East and West – falling into the category of an Orientalist, conjuring up recipes for war in order to emancipate the East from itself. For example, in claiming that past and present state-of-affairs between East and West are rooted in Islamic fundamentalism (not asymmetrical power/knowledge distribution), Warraq uses Middle Eastern historian Bernard Lewis' (2006, cited in Warraq, 2007: 276) opinion that “[T]he only real solution to defeating radical Islam is to bring freedom to the Middle East.”

Similarly, this philosophy is present in Israeli views of Palestinians – specifically of the Islamic group Hamas, who politically and socially control life in Gaza. As part of the theoretical framework, East and West are pitted against one another (Orientalism versus Occidentalism) as a discursive tool in the rationalization of terrorization through Israeli-Palestinian political communication.

Hence, what both theories share is the idea of Otherness. Israelis formulate the idea of Palestinians (whether Muslims or Christians) as the Other, from their privileged position (power/knowledge), which is a pre-cursor to Orientalism (Said, 1994). Palestinians in turn create the Israeli Other through Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005). This meta-analytical combination of components from both theories is adopted by this thesis and incorporated into the theoretical framework.

Hall's (1997a: 1) cultural representation through the construction of meaning and language further underpins the socio-historical and cultural tensions between Israelis and Palestinians and its subsequent impact on rational decision-making by both parties. Conceptualizing meaning, language, and representation are part of what constitute Hall's

model of culture and furthermore underpins the dynamic relationship applied in this thesis to Israeli and Palestinian societies. When Hall states that language “operates as a *representational system*” (Ibid) based on objects of information dissemination such as media, it can be argued that his mechanisms of identifying and dealing with culture and representation are also adaptable to Israeli-Palestinian political communication. Since culture plays a central role in distinguishing Israelis from Palestinians (and vice versa), the language of political communication operates within a system of representation. Hence, in the rationalization of terrorization, Israel must differentiate itself from its Palestinian enemy, while Palestinians must also do the same. It is through compartmentalizing two simplified homogenous groups that distinct narratives form to rationalize and politically communicate terror.

Like Said (1994), Hall (1997a) also utilizes Foucault’s (1990) power/knowledge asymmetry and adds that: “attempting to fix meaning is exactly why *power* intervenes in *discourse*” (Hall, 1997a: 10, *emphasis in original*). In the representation of power, Hall (1997b: 258) stresses that “*stereotyping tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power*” (*emphasis in original*). The asymmetry of power (predominately military) between Israelis and Palestinians plays a critical role on how both sides use political communication to represent the Self as well as the Other, be it through Oriental (Said, 1994) or Occidental (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) stereotypes.

James’ (1971) epistemological philosophy provides the transition from ancient rationalization of terrorization to its modern counterpart. As a self-proclaimed pacifist, James believes states rationalize war on the grounds of altruistic motives. Echoing James’ philosophy of military-oriented state morality, Morgenthau (2006: 12) argues “that

universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states in their abstract universal formulation” albeit “nations are tempted to clothe their own particular aspirations and actions in the moral purposes of the universe.” For instance, states tend to claim “God is always on one’s side” (Ibid). This thesis applies James’ (1971) philosophy to the rhetoric of Israeli-Palestinian rationality when terrorizing one another. The underlying sense of patriotic tones and national aspirations are fitting within the Israeli state’s proclamations and, to a lesser degree, Palestinian groups supportive rallies for independence.

More so, this propagandistic approach to rationalizing immoral actions is similar to the lexicon of “war” and “peace,” described by James (1971), used to recruit men for war. The terms “peace offensive” and “peace crusades,” as Morgenthau (2006: 108) concedes, “have become standard weapons of propaganda.” These “peaceful intentions are meaningless as references to the actual foreign policies perused” because “[t]hey tend to conceal the actual policies pursued behind a veil of professed peaceful purposes.” These terms often draw support “of men of good will everywhere” for state actions since “the preservation of peace” is an ardent desire (Ibid). While optimum rational decision-making by Israel’s realist approach to international relations trumps any moral and religious considerations when its survival is at stake, Israeli political communication include rhetoric of “war” and “peace” as a means to rationalize Israeli terrorization of Palestinians. Palestinians, on the other hand, use the same terms but within a different context since non-state actor rationality has separate goals in mind than state-actor rationality in the rationalization of terrorization.

## ***Terrorization and Rationalization within New Mediated Political Communication***

As described hitherto, the concept of terrorism (and terrorization) is an elementary aspect of this thesis and its rationalization is what fuels the research problematic. Contemporary society (both East and West) defines terrorism today in terms of Islamic fundamentalism – the marriage of Islamic religion and terror in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> (Abrahamian, 2003). This essentially marginalizes other forms of terrorism, such as state terrorism (Beinin, 2002), hence giving those in power a *carte blanche* to legitimize and inflict terror on others.

A purpose of this thesis is to apply the concept of terrorism (specifically the process of terrorization) to both state and non-state actors. This section will first explore the concept of terrorism before explaining its use within this thesis as a process (e.g., terrorization). The three types of actor-oriented terrorism are: state/state-sponsored, organizational, and individual (Stohl, 1984; Hoffman, 2006; Combs, 2006; Pape, 2006; Nacos, 2006). Contrary to conventional wisdom, states, including Western democracies, are also responsible for terrorization. According to a study by Downes (2008: 5), “[d]emocratic regime type by itself increases the likelihood that a state will victimize enemy noncombatants in warfare” thus debunking the myth that only totalitarian, fascist, and despotic regimes use terrorism to coerce their enemy.<sup>22</sup> Downes argues that pressure from the electorate to win a war as well as maintain low casualties among soldiers is part

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<sup>22</sup> The following works are among some that link democratic states such as the United States and Israel as actors and sponsors terrorism: Stohl, Michael & Lopez, George. (Eds.). (1984). *The state as terrorist: The dynamics of governmental violence and repression*. Westport: Greenwood Press; Stohl, Michael. (Ed.). (1988). *The politics of terrorism*. New York: Marcel Dekker Inc; George, Alexander. (Ed.), (1991). *Western state terrorism*. New York: Routledge; Sterba, James P. (Ed.). (2003). *Terrorism and international justice*. New York: Oxford University Press; as well as Chomsky, Noam. (1986). Middle East terrorism and the American ideological system. *Race and Class*, 28(1), 1-28.

of the rationale behind targeting civilians in war. Although targeting civilians is immoral and may also be considered irrational at the time, it may be the best choice to ensure a quick victory and a minimal loss of combatants – a decision-making argument strikingly similar to Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality theory.

Standard definitions of terrorism leave out certain crucial elements that conceptualize a sound definition. Hoffman (2006: 40), for example, defines terrorism as: “the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change.” This is only a semi-adequate definition since it ignores the target audience of terror and furthermore does not identify actors committing the act [albeit Hoffman does state throughout his work that terrorism is “perpetrated by a subnational group or non-state entity” (Ibid)]. State terrorism is considered, according to Hoffman, a war crime in which those responsible are brought to justice (Ibid: 28).

A look at Nacos' (2006: 32) definition also lacks substance. “*Terrorism*” Nacos contests, “*is political violence or the threat of violence by groups or individuals who deliberately target civilians or noncombatants in order to influence the behavior and actions of targeted publics and governments*” (emphasis in original). Nacos agrees that states are capable of similar political violence, but also refers to them as “war crimes, crimes against humanity, human rights violations, genocide, atrocities – and terror” (Ibid: 31). *Terror* for both Nacos (2006) and Hoffman (2006) differ from *terrorism*. Terror, oddly enough, is committed by states as well as insurgent groups (Nunberg, 2004, cited in Nacos, 2006: 31). Groups or individuals, on the other hand, commit terrorism.

Several inconsistencies and biases arise with Nacos (2006) and Hoffman's (2006) definition and their terror/terrorism distinction. Jaggar (2005) clears the air by explaining

the similarities of terror and terrorism. “Because terror is an extreme state of fear,” Jaggar explains, “induced by threats perceived as especially horrifying, minor threats or damage do not ordinarily count as terrorist” (Ibid: 208). These threats are “intended to create a state of fear that is acute and long-lasting enough to influence future behavior” (Ibid) thus differentiating subjective terror such as cruelty to animals, extreme humiliation, and so forth. Both Nacos (2006) and Hoffman’s (2006) definition are similar; yet conclude terrorism to be something different altogether since they believe it to be an ideology used by non-state actors. It would be morally haphazard to disassociate terror from terrorism when describing an act of violence that invokes a long-lasting intentional state of fear (Jaggar, 2005).

Two final points are noted. The first is the illegitimate targeting of “noncombatants” – a term adopted from the U.S. government by Nacos (2006) in her definition. These “victims” include “civilians, government officials, and military personnel ... not engaged in combat” (Ibid: 23). Jaggar (Murphy, 1985, cited in Jaggar, 2005: 207) on the other hand uses Murphy’s definition of legitimate targets to *include* these “victims” or personnel who issue orders up the chain of command.

The second point is the motives of the perpetrators. According to Nacos (2006: 22-23) and Hoffman (2006: 40), motives are political in nature. Jaggar (2005: 206) dismisses this since it ignores other possible motives that invoke long-lasting terror. She argues that feminist theorists may consider domestic violence a form of terrorism (Card, 2003, cited in Jaggar, 2005: 206). More so, some individuals may have both personal and political motivations in terrorizing their enemies (Jaggar, 2005: 206).

Sifting through the literature and identifying the shortcomings of Hoffman's (2006) and Nacos' (2006) parochial definitions, this thesis adopts Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism. Jaggar defines terrorism as extreme threats or violent acts committed by both state and non-state actors, targeting civilians as well as governments, groups, or individuals. Jaggar's take of terrorism broadens the scope of players complicit in the tactic of coercion to include state terrorism (as well as traditional non-state terrorism) – which is appropriate considering this thesis' focus on the Israeli state and the Palestinian Hamas organization. Jaggar redefines the inconsistent and bias definitions of terrorism, incorporating fundamental components such as state and individual terrorism, legitimate and illegitimate targets, as well as motives, in order to develop an all-encompassing definition applicable to a broad spectrum of intimidation and/or violent techniques. Terrorism is no longer limited to individuals and groups (Hoffman, 2006; Nacos, 2006) with Jaggar (2005) leveling the playing field between the Israeli state and Palestinian groups complicit in terrorization.

For this thesis, however, the topic deals with exploring the on-going process of terrorism as a communicative technique (Tuman, 2003) as well as a constant process used by Israelis and Palestinians. Because communication itself is a process (Eid, 2008), this thesis adopts the term terrorization as part of exploring Israeli-Palestinian political communication. Since “to terrorize” is to “create and maintain a feeling of terror,” its derivative, terrorization, is that ongoing process of maintaining that feeling (Oxford English Dictionary, 2008: 1489) through coercive measures as described by Jaggar (2005).

Similarly, rationalization is adopted by this thesis as part of the Israeli-Palestinian political communication process. Thus when exploring rationalization – “the cognitive process of making something seem *consistent* with or based on reason” (Dictionary.com, *emphasis added*) – this thesis takes the position that it is another means (besides news media tools) of communicating terror. Williams (1976: 60), for example, argues that rationality is the “application of reason to solving problems” (recall that rationality involves strategic goal-oriented objectives such as security, self-interest, or even steps taken in the rationalization of terrorization). For Stein and Tanter (1980: 20) “a comprehensive concept of rationality encompasses the efficiency of choice, the quality of learning and judgment, and the logic of argument.” Because definitions of rationality situate it as a necessary part of the decision-making process (Eid, 2008: 31-32), the very *act* of making and implementing a decision (such as what and how to report a news item) is to communicate an actor’s position to third parties (whether it be the enemy it is terrorizing or the global audience).

Within the same vein, Eid (2008: 21) argues that “[c]ommunication ‘involves’ or, even, ‘is’ a decision-making process.” Dennis and Ismach (1981, cited in Eid, 2008: 24) contend that choices (decisions) are made in news agencies as to what to include and exclude from news items that are ultimately communicated to a mass audience. With over one million copies sold, Zinsser’s *On writing well* (2006: 5) provides further evidence that writing is a form of communication that involves the process of decision-making before a final product is produced. Therefore, since “[t]he practice of communication by individuals and institutions is instrumental and goal-directed” (Mody & Lee, 2002: 381),

communication is said to be part of the decision-making process and furthermore, by default, makes rationalization a communication process as well.

Theories of political communication are the driving force behind Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. As a reminder, political communication is said to “potentially have a significant direct or indirect impact on politics” based on the “construction, sending, receiving, and processing of messages” (Graber, 2005: 479). “Those actors” Nacos (1994: 16) argues, “who manage to get their views and positions most often and most prominently covered by the mass media have the best chance to influence the perceptions of others” – hence the necessity in the rationalization of terrorization.

Recalling Kepplinger (1996), messages conceived by governments during times of peace are met with adversarial journalism since there exists an underlying tension between the news media and government in democratic societies. Although this may be true in peaceful times, the opposite is true during times of stress – especially when a state attacks or is being attacked by domestic/foreign enemies.<sup>23</sup> Tensions exist within a democracy (founded on moral principles) whose government’s purpose is to ensure its citizens security while simultaneously engaging in immoral actions (terrorization) against its enemies. The epistemological philosophy of James (1971: 8), for example, addresses the allure of war through the “fictions” grounded in morality by military-oriented states. A pretext of moral duty is communicated in the rationalization of the inevitable killing of others. This position taken by the state becomes a reality when its security is threatened.

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<sup>23</sup> Herman and Chomsky argue that regardless of context, the American news media in particular act as voices of state authority, reinforcing the status quo. They base their argument on four filters of the media. See Chomsky, Noam & Herman, Edward S. (2002). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media*. New York: Panethon Books.

Israel represents a prime example of a Western democracy that has to rationalize the inevitable killing of Palestinian civilians in an attempt to neutralize its enemy – the Hamas organization.

The news media's role, as traditional challengers of government policy and rhetoric, seem to legitimize "government perspective and narrative" in times of conflict/crises (Knightley, 1989, cited in Thussu & Freedman, 2003: 5), thus playing a central decision-making role in the rationalization of terrorization process. The news media also tend to be less adversarial in war times (Fisk, 1991, Fialka, 1992, Kellner, 1992, Thompson, 1992, Macarthur, 1993, cited in Halliday, 1999; Calabrese, 2005). Hence they tend to reinforce the dominant ideology, challenging Kepplinger's (1996: 15) position and rarely question the actions and reactions of governments embroiled in a conflict. Patriotic tones echo through the media as the narrative carries a pro-government bias.

Moreover, Kepplinger's (1996: 15) point on media access is void as the state wages an offensive/defensive war since press access becomes either limited or virtually non-existent. The press, therefore, rely heavily on state-fed information as the situation develops.<sup>24</sup> "During wartime" Kunczik (2003: 124, 125) argues, "the manipulation of the news media is a necessity ... [a]ny nation-state waging war has to find stories that justify and ennoble the cause." Kunczik offers three reasons why the manipulation of news media and censorship are necessary in war: "the morale of the soldiers; the morale of the

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<sup>24</sup> Vietnam is seen as a turning point in American news media coverage where restrictions on war reporting were heavily absent. Walter Cronkite's famous broadcast editorial on Vietnam where he demystified America's heroic war operations led to then President Lyndon Johnson to declare: "If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost Middle America" (Wicker, 1997; Winfrey & Schaffer, 2009; Tatge, n.d.). Subsequent conflicts had severe American media restrictions including Grenada and the 1990-91 Gulf War (Kellner, 1992, cited in Halliday, 1999: 128; *Enemy image*, 2005).

population; [and] world public opinion” (Ibid: 125). As a result, Israeli political communication is used as damage control when conflicts/crises ensue. It attempts to rationalize certain morally unpopular decision-making actions that tend to be frowned upon in the democratic Jewish state as well as the Western world that is carefully watching the crisis unfold.<sup>25</sup>

In some democratic societies such as Israel, cultural norms are more open to censorship legislation, including the practice of self-censorship by the media industry even during everyday situations. Public opinion polls in the past have suggested that legislation broaden censorship and reduce the limitations of the media as a means of maintaining national security (Seliktar, 1986: 193). Israelis have been generally receptive to the idea of censorship from the state’s infancy to its present context in what is referred to as its “culture of secrecy,” a tradition dating as early as the British Mandate (Ibid: 203). Acting as a deterrent, a paralegislative arrangement on invoking censorship laws in Israel reduces the likelihood that the media challenge the establishment when it comes to state interests and national security (Caspi & Limor, 1999: 212). According to Caspi and Limor, “[t]he media establishment, motivated by social responsibility, accepted” the Censorship Agreement and its “restrictions willingly” (Ibid: 218). Thus, although the rallying around the flag phenomenon (Mueller, 1985, cited in Nacos, 1994: 96; Peri, 2004: 92) is increasingly likely to occur in times of interstate conflict, security-related

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<sup>25</sup> If states condemn other state/non-state violence as war crimes or acts of terrorism, parties involved in the conflict may see a decline in the following: local morale, financial support, military/weapons support, and diplomacy. Moreover, sanctions imposed by international organizations, such as the United Nations, are possible. Case examples include the global outcry over the massacres of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon in which the Israeli defense minister Ariel Sharon was forced to resign; the banning of cluster munitions to Israel by the U.S. for its indiscriminate use; U.S. reduction of loan guarantees to the Jewish state after expanding illegal settlements in the Occupied Territories (Chomsky, 1999: 370-371; Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007: 39-40).

issues in general are reported from a pro-governmental, self-censoring perspective (Peri, 2004: 92-93). Government-censored and/or oriented political communication in this respect is part of the acceptable ethos in Israeli society and is thus taken into account in the media chosen for content analysis in this thesis (see Chapter 3).

In non-governmental cases, such as the Hamas organization, decision-makers use political communicative tools (such as the media) in the rationalization of terrorization as well. One major difference that is incorporated through theories of political communication and adopted for this thesis is to account for the varying ways in which non-democratic societies, such as the Gazans, use persuasive techniques during times of stress. Whether there is a need to consistently support the long-held notion of the “Palestinian cause” or whether draconian measures are enforced on the press by Hamas, the rallying around the flag phenomenon remains pervasive.

As described hitherto, political communication can be used in democratic and non-democratic societies in order to persuade a given constituency on the rationalization in using morally questionable coercive measures against an enemy. However the target audiences are not only local but also global citizens and governments. Therefore transnational media (English-language media) play a crucial communication role in sending a pre-packaged message to the global audience.

Following audiences to online media, communicative techniques of persuasion and propaganda have migrated to news and information items on the Web 2.0 platform. This thesis investigates political communication in the rationalization of terrorization through transnational English-language based news and information websites, which are

able to transmit messages from both Israel and the Palestinian Territories to anyone connected to the network in almost real-time.

Recalling the notion that the Internet's effectiveness within political communication entails the bypassing of gatekeepers<sup>26</sup> and the affordability of establishing and maintaining the network (Vedel, 2003), non-state actors such as Hamas and the Palestinian press have equal opportunities to communicate their position to the global audience. With the first point in mind, traditional media are bypassed and the ICT's (Information Communication Technology) direct communication capability may avoid gatekeepers that hold a bias when information is passed by certain Palestinian advocates (*Peace, propaganda, and the promised land*, 2004). For example, Strangelove (2005:181-183) believes the counter-hegemonic nature of online media challenges traditional commercial news narratives found in the reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Accordingly Hamas and other English-transnational Palestinian websites contest the dominant mainstream pro-Israel bias that is said to run through *The New York Times*, CNN, CanWest Global, and other predominant and influential television and newspaper news outlets (Evensen, 2007).

Vedel's (2003) second point is also valid within the Palestinian case since costs of producing and disseminating information are reduced to an affordable level. Palestinian websites, for example, may be setup as a means to politically communicate ones' position. With costs down, Palestinian news media (be it from Hamas or the general

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<sup>26</sup> Vivian and Maurin (2006: 21) stipulate that "[a]ny media person who can stop or alter a message en route to the audience is a gatekeeper." Gatekeepers can necessarily include actors dealing with established news media as well as less established, less known news media.

press) that cannot financially compete with their Israeli counterparts over traditional communication methods are able to do so through Web 2.0.

Problems or issues arising with the first point are the “risks of propaganda and lack of mediators able to play a critical function” (Vedel, 2003: 42) in the dissemination of news and information. However, this thesis acknowledges (as stated in theories of political communication) that propaganda is part of the process in the rationalization of terrorization. The second shortcoming involves information overload due to low costs to run the website. That is, unrestricted by the limited sound bytes in television and radio news, the free flow of information via Web 2.0 produces an abundance of information, making it difficult for consumers to digest all the information.

These are credible problems facing decision-making communication strategists from the Israeli and Palestinian camps. The acceleration of globalization, the dissemination of information, and the commercialization of old and new media (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2000) compel Israeli-Palestinian political communication to be constantly molding to evolving global societies. In protracted asymmetrical conflicts, such as that between Israelis and Palestinians, the shifting political communication landscape may help Palestinians who lack the proper channels, funding, and infrastructure to challenge the Israeli state’s communication propaganda apparatus.

### ***Theoretical Framework Overview***

The theoretical framework is based on the research problematic of exploring Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. This phenomenon is broken down into three parts: First, the protracted Israeli-Palestinian

conflict involves both state and non-state actors terrorizing one another; Second, both actors engage in the rationalization of terrorization toward their enemy; Third, they communicate their rationalization to the world. To explore this phenomenon requires the philosophical foundation of Hobbes' (1985) instrumental rationality (known as rational actor theory) as a decision-making process for all mankind (thus applicable to governments, groups, individuals, and their respective media outlets) and Morgenthau's (2006) theory of political realism within foreign policy decision-making. Because omniscience is impossible (Lupia, McCubbins & Popkin, 2000), Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor theory is used as a primary tool in the Israeli-Palestinian decision-making process while bounded rationality is used as an auxiliary to realistically account for incomplete information. Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophical foundation is furthermore applied to the rational decision-maker – grounding Israelis and Palestinians within their socio-historical and cultural biases, which ultimately influences their rational decision-making capabilities. Said's (1994) theory on Orientalism through Western racism toward the Other, victimization through post and neo-colonial society, and the power/knowledge dynamic, its counter-thesis, Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) (Eastern racism toward the West), and Hall's (1997a) cultural representation, enrich Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy on the human component biasing Israeli and Palestinian rational decision-makers. James' (1971) philosophy provides what he believes is a false context – altruistic motives – in which state actors attempt to legitimize terrorization. As a pacifist, James believes other non-violent rational methods of problem solving are possible. Theories of political communication during times of stress (high and low) underpin the

processes in which Israeli and Palestinian actors along with their media counterparts censor and propagate their rationalization of terrorization. The current platform of the Internet, Web 2.0., acts as the medium in which English-transnational news and information items are disseminated by Israelis in Israel and Palestinians in the Palestinian Territories to the global audience, while using traditional forms of political communication. Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism alleviates the partiality in the Western definition of terrorism of "always them, but never us" by applying terrorism as a coercive tool used by both state (Israel) and non-state actors (Palestinian groups). Because Israelis and Palestinians are consistently engaged in some form of low or high-intensity conflict (high and low stress), this thesis explores the rationalization and terrorization processes. Furthermore, beyond the rationalization of terrorization through online news media, the art of rationalization and terrorization are forms of communication themselves, including their decision-making components (Tuman, 2003; Eid, 2008), and thus are parts of Israeli-Palestinian political communication.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

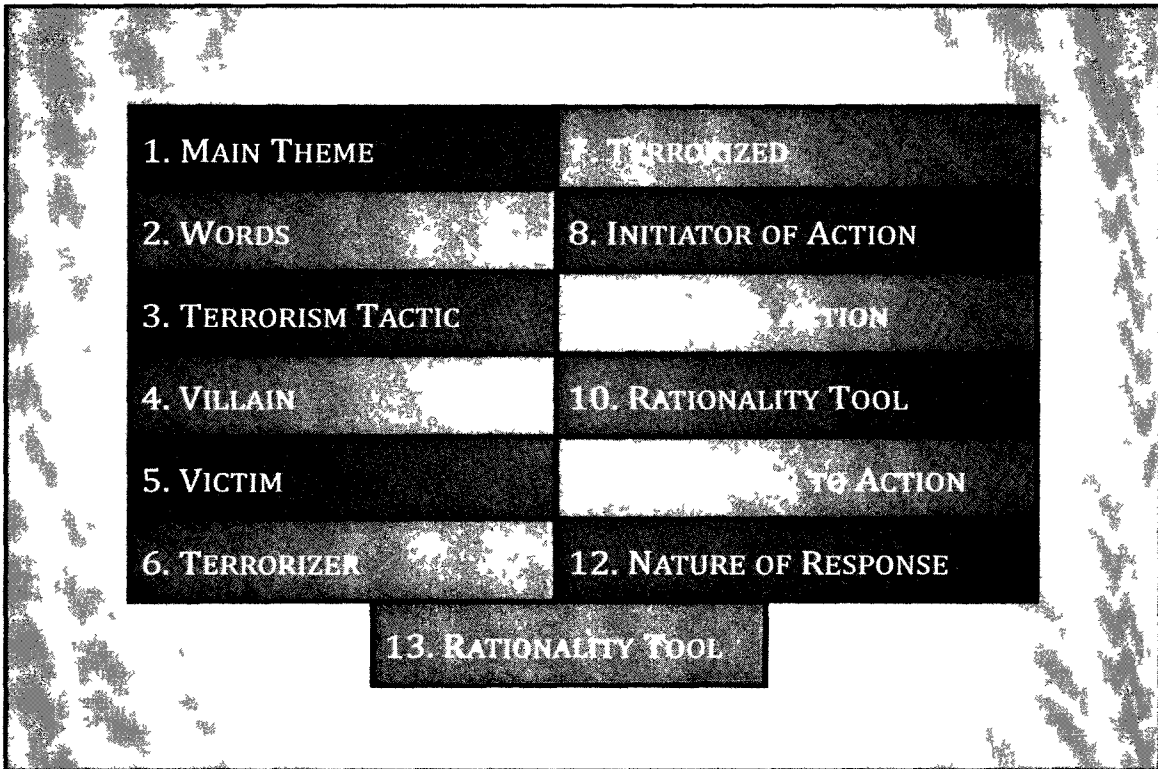
#### Concepts and Operationalization

Measuring validity for the quantitative portion of this thesis requires the operationalization of key concepts laid out in the theoretical framework. The following concepts are used to address the research problematic and other major themes within this thesis: transnational media, political communication, Orientalism, Occidentalism, cultural representation, security/self-interest, rationality/rationalizer, decision-making, terrorism, villainization, and victimization.

The concepts above are operationalized as follows in order to be measured as variables: For transnational media and political communication, Orientalism, Occidentalism, cultural representation, security/self-interest, rationality/rationalizer, decision-making: Main Theme, Words (relevant to Terrorism), Nature of Action to Rationalize Terrorism, Rationality Tool for the Action, Nature of Response, Rationality Tool for the Response; terrorism, villainization, and victimization: Terrorism Tactic, The Villain, The Victim, The Terrorizer, The Terrorized, Initiator of Action to Rationalize Terrorism, Responder to the Action. The thirteen variables in *Figure 1* are broad enough to measure the main concepts as described in the theoretical framework and thus ensure the content validity of the quantitative data collection and coding analyses. This is furthermore evident by the nature in which certain variables (described below) are able to pull the key threads of knowledge described in the epistemological roots and theories

from the literature review and applied to the theoretical framework (Neuman, 2007b: 219).

**Figure 1: Variables**



Additionally, The Date, The Title of Item, and the Type of Item are identifier variables. The Date variable identifies the time in which the news item is reported. It measures high stress versus low stress – e.g. – intense terrorization versus sporadic low intensity terror. The Title of Item identifies the headline of the media sample. It is also counted in the Words (relevant to Terrorism) variable. The Type of Item measures news items, opinion pieces, and other types of articles predisposed to the six online media.

The Main Theme variable summarizes overarching themes present in each media sample. The Words variable looks for any words relevant to terrorism. These two

variables account for measuring several concepts that explore the rationalization of terrorization. The word “Operation” for example is identified as terrorist due to its context within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It acts as a propaganda vehicle aimed at persuading readers (see Chapter 4, *Analysis and Findings*).

The following variables are proactive as well as reactive in nature in that they measure how actors rationalize and respond to terror. The Nature of Action variable identifies actions to rationalize terrorism by those committing the act or those absorbing the blow. Examples include a press conference describing evidence of a school/mosque being used as training ground for terror activities or an interview explaining systematic house demolitions as evidence of ethnic cleansing. The Rationality Tool for the Action measures communication techniques behind the rationality of terrorist acts. For example, tools may include holding a press conference, or making a media statement, or even press speculations made by the media. The Nature of Response identifies responses to terrorism or responses to the Action to Rationalize Terrorism. The Response can be similar to Nature of Actions since they provide supporting evidence for the reaction to terrorization. However because they are responding to terrorization, responses can be violent such a retaliatory attack as well as attack descriptions. This may include evidence of illegal occupation, or evidence of rhetoric in spreading global Jihad. Similar to the Rationality Tool for the Action, the Rationality Tool for the Response can include media statements and press speculations. Moreover, because these variables are measuring responses to the Nature of Action and the Rationality tool of the Action, the media may be used as a secondary tool of response with retaliatory attacks being the primary response to terrorization. Furthermore, the Rationality Tool of the Response depends on

if the Nature of Response provided any evidence to support its response action. In sum, these variables represent the dynamic interaction of political communication. They also provide supporting evidence in contextualizing Words and Theme variables and underpin theories of rationality and decision-making (Snyder & Diesing, 1977; Hobbes, 1985; Morgenthau, 2006).

The final variables identify terrorism tactics and the actors guiding political communication. The Medium represents the major players in the rationalization of terrorization and identifies the six online media used in the case study: the Israel Defense Forces (military), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (independent), Arutz Sheva (private), Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (military), the Palestine News Network (independent), and The Palestine Telegraph (private). Terrorism Tactic describes the preferred tactics used by the terrorizer. Additional tactics not mentioned by Nacos (2006) are collected as well. However if tactics are not identified, then the variable is not counted in the media sample. The Villain and The Victim measure those described in the media sample as being villains or victims. If they are not identified then the variables are not applicable for the given sample. The Terrorizer identifies the state/non-state actor committing the attack. The Terrorized identifies actors being attacked. The Initiator of Action to Rationalize Terrorism is the actor not necessarily involved in the terrorization but the actor that initiates the action of rationalizing that terror. Similarly, the Responder to the Action is not necessarily the terrorized but can be the terrorizer or an actor outside of the conflict altogether. Both variables are only applicable if an initiator or a responder is present in the media sample.

For levels of measurements (Neuman, 2007b: 225-226), nominal-level is attributed to the 13 variables that require categorization and statistical analysis. For example, The Terrorizer may have several categories, which may include, but are not limited to, Israelis and Palestinians. It may be statistically analyzed if cross-tabulated by another categorical variable. Date, and Title of Item have no intrinsic categories and thus require no levels of measurement.

### **Research Questions**

Research questions are another major component driving the topic. The following questions incorporate the theoretical framework and the general theme of this thesis in an attempt to grasp Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization:

- RQ1:           What role does culture play in English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization?
- RQ2:           Do certain words and terrorism tactics affect political communication rationalization of terrorization since they are known to garner more media attention as well as elicit certain responses than others?
- RQ3:           What do the data reveal about the decision-making process in structuring Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization?
- RQ4:           What are the main rationalizations of terrorization components of Israeli-Palestinian political communication?

The first question uses the contextual circumstances in which decision-makers operate and explores the philosophy and theories of James (1971), Said (1994), Hall (1997a), and Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) to probe fundamental historic and cultural influences. The second question uses the Words and Terrorism Tactic variables as intervening variables from a microscopic approach in order to explore their impact at the aggregate level of political communication. The third research question draws on elements from the theoretical framework. It specifically addresses the root philosophies and theories of Hobbes (1985), Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004), and Morgenthau (2006). Moreover, it tackles the binary opposites of state and non-state rationality such as institutionalized logic versus individual logic. The fourth question addresses key components in rationalizing terror through a macroscopic level. It looks to describe Israeli-Palestinian political communication and give examples of elementary tools used by both parties in their communication strategies.

### **Media Content Analysis**

The research design chosen for this thesis is a media content analysis. It incorporates quantitative (online data collection/data counting and data coding) as well as qualitative (interpretation/meaning of online text to be coded as well as data results) (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 2007: 573). It also includes components from historical-comparative research design through cross-tabulation of certain variables when comparing the two main timelines, which are the focus of this thesis.

Conducting a content analysis is “an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings” (Neuendorf, 2002, Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, cited in Berg, 2007a: 247-

248). It has several advantages over other research designs. The following points provide the major criterion in using content analysis in the research: first, rather than having people produce texts, content analysis studies materials already in existence; second, unlike interviews and questionnaires, which “ask predetermined questions that limit respondents’ answers”, content analysis is able to accept “*unstructured material*”; third, “content analysis study the data as they appear in a *context*”, thus allowing the researcher to examine not only the content, but to make inferences within a given context in which the texts were produced (Krippendorff, 1980, cited in Frey, Botan & Kreps, 2007: 574, *emphasis in original*).

The media content analysis procedures are conducted as follows: Six online media outlets are first identified on the basis of being English-transnational in nature, with three outlets coming from Israel and three from the Palestinian Territories. Two dates were isolated for each medium in order to account for the period of high terrorization versus low terrorization. The second step is determining the words to be coded within each news item. The research problematic and the theoretical framework aid in determining which words are relevant to the research and which ones are not. Categories are then created to identify actors, terrorism tactics, actions and tools of terrorization and so forth. New categories are also created to reflect the recoding of the type of words collected as well as to get a general idea of the type of actors, terrorism tactics, actions and tools of terrorization and so forth. The next step is coding each unit by assigning numbers as identifiers of words, actors, terrorism tactics, or any other relevant categorical variables. The final step involves the analysis of data (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 2007: 575) through the statistical analysis software, SPSS. Frequencies, cross-tabulations,

and statistical significance testing of relevant variables are run to determine relationships between variables. Additionally, stability and equivalence reliability is enhanced if the procedures above are re-tested over different time frames (assuming the same six media are used again). Moreover, this can be tested by re-running similar statistical analyses (such as Chi-Square) to determine relationships and their confidence levels (for instance, contingency co-efficient) and then compare the new data to the original data.

Reliability/consistency is furthermore assured in the selection of the six media outlets due to non-probability sampling techniques (see *Sampling Techniques and Sample Size*). The six media outlets, three Israeli and three Palestinian, are chosen due to their distinct and consistent comparable characteristics (see *Data Collection* for details). For example, the selection of the media involved the identification of military, independent, and private media from both Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

A historical-comparative research design component of this thesis involves internal as well as external criticism techniques to ensure qualitative validity/authenticity within the selected news/information samples (Neuman, 2007a: 125). Because the samples are taken from trustworthy online media outlets, they are assumed then to be authentic to that website, unless otherwise stated (and noted in the *Data Collection* section of this chapter as well as Chapter 4). To account for internal criticism, the “language usage at the time and the context of statements within the document [news/information sample]” (Ibid) are considered and accounted for, if necessary, in the *Data Collection* section as well the *Analysis and Findings* chapter. Furthermore, to confirm external criticism as well as internal criticism of the media outlets themselves, an

analysis is conducted on each website, including Google and Wikipedia<sup>27</sup> searches, to determine if any controversies of authenticity surrounding the websites are listed. Media outlets whose external and internal authenticity could not be verified or whose content raised suspicion (if any), were discarded and noted in the subsequent section and Chapter 4, *Analysis and Findings*.

The research uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches when conducting content analyses (Berg, 2007a: 252). Words, themes, concepts and semantics are qualitatively examined then statistically expressed through SPSS frequencies and cross-tabulations. Moreover, both manifest and latent content analysis techniques are used to address surface and deep structured messages within the news and information item (Berg, 2007a: 252-253). Manifest structure refers to content “physically present and countable” (Ibid: 252) while latent structure refers to content with deeper meaning. Manifest and latent words are extrapolated for a deeper analysis by using the literature review and theoretical framework as Holsti (1969, cited in Berg, 2007a: 252) warns that understanding latent content requires “corroboration by independent evidence.” The conceptualization of terms further aids in avoiding ambiguity.

The historical-comparative research component of this thesis involves explaining “major societal processes” such as “terrorism, a nation going to war, growing poverty, sources of inequality, rising immigration rates, urban decay” (Neuman, 2007a: 107). This thesis focuses on media attention of the most-recent major crisis between Israelis and Palestinians as well as its aftermath. The Gaza War (Operation Cast Lead, according to

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<sup>27</sup> Wikipedia was used only to assess general information of each of the six media outlets sampled. Footnotes were analyzed at their source. If footnotes were not available to support any controversial claims about a given medium’s authenticity, then a Google search was conducted to establish the merit of these claims.

Israel and the Gaza Massacre according to the Arab World) took place between December 2008 and January 2009 and is a key historical event in the protracted conflict.

The repercussions of the war are also a point of analysis. The media chatter surrounding the Goldstone Report, released nine months after the war, is analyzed in order to compare media coverage in times of high stress (the War) vis-à-vis low stress (Goldstone Report) situations. The analysis draws on crosstabulating relevant variables, such as The Date variable and Terrorism Tactic, and so forth, in order to investigate how Israelis and Palestinians structure their political communication.

## **Data Collection**

### ***The Sample***

A total of six media outlets are used in the content analysis – three Israeli and three Palestinian. For the Israeli media, the research looks at: Israel Defense Forces (military), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (independent), and Arutz Sheva (private). The Palestinian media consist of: Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (military), the Palestine News Network (independent), and The Palestine Telegraph (private). Three equally comparable media types are considered for Israeli and Palestinian media. For example, the military medium represents the main players of terrorization for both actors. While Israel uses its state-run army (the Israel Defense Forces) to terrorize Palestinians,

the Hamas political movement<sup>28</sup> uses its military wing (Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades) to terrorize Israelis.

The second media types are independent media outlets. These consist of any non state-owned media as well as media that do not necessarily rely on advertising as their main source of funding. The Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center and the Palestine News Network fall under this rubric.

The final media types are private media. Guidelines considered in selecting these types of media include non-state run media as well as media run by private non-profit individuals. Maintained by Israel's pro-settlement<sup>29</sup> movement, Arutz Sheva is considered private media. The Palestine Telegraph represents the Palestinians' private media since it is not government owned and is a non-profit outlet that requires donations to stay afloat.

As a reminder, political actors and their respective media operate in unison when using political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. For example, Israeli actors, such as the government or members of parliament, use Arutz Sheva in persuading the global community in their rationalization of terrorization of Palestinians. Operating on the same side of the coin, Arutz Sheva use their own reports and news speculations, which may also include references to Israelis actors, in persuading the global community

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<sup>28</sup> Hamas won democratic elections in January 2006 in the Gaza Strip. However it violently seized full control of the strip from its Fatah political rival in 2007. As for the Gaza War, Hamas was considered Israel's main enemy over any other Palestinian faction in the Territories.

<sup>29</sup> Settlements and settlers refer to portions of the West Bank and East Jerusalem where Israelis current live and who are in favor of expanding the borders of the Jewish state to include these areas that are meant for a future Palestinian state (Abunimah, 2006: 26-31; Carter, 2006: 124-125; Gorenberg, 2006: 219, 372).

in their rationalization of terrorization of Palestinians. The same relationship holds true for Palestinians political actors and their respective media.

The parameters of the media selected remain inside Israel and the Palestinian Territories for the following reasons: first, the purpose of the research is to identify and content analyze transnational media that represent the primary and secondary players in the rationalization of terrorization (military media, followed by independent and private media); second, political communication may be affected if transnational media are selected outside the Israeli-Palestinian jurisdiction. For example if the research were to look at Israel engaging Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, political communication may differ since the Lebanese state acts as an intervening variable in addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>30</sup>

This thesis's focus on transnational media initially faced some difficulties in selecting the six media above because of the inconsistencies in finding comparable media from both sides of the conflict. More importantly, media from both Israelis and Palestinians have to fall under the definition of transnational media (media emanating from the Israeli-Palestinian territories that is accessible by the global audience).

One difficulty in selecting comparable media involves the lack of English-language news and information media. Most news websites were either in Hebrew or Arabic – but not English. English was the main language to be content analyzed because it represents the transnational language of the global reader. The majority of online active Palestinian websites were in Arabic language only.

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<sup>30</sup> A look into cross-border conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians in the region shifts the focus from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular, to the *Arab*-Israeli conflict in general.

Another difficulty is locating identical media types that exist for both the Palestinian and Israeli side. For example, if an online news agency exists for the Palestinian side, it does not necessarily exist for the Israeli side. However, if comparable news agencies were found, another problem would be the lack of updates to that website, and hence, the lack of data available for content analysis.

Location is another obstacle when selecting comparable media. Transnational media stipulates that the media be English-language based and transmitted from its national borders to the international audience. The Israeli think-tank, for example, cannot be compared to its Palestinian counterpart because the Palestinian think-tank is located in Britain. Under this context, media ownership played another factor. Privately owned commercial Israeli media do not have a Palestinian counter part, and vice versa.

If similar media types were identified, another difficulty would be the unavailability of data due to either the down time of a website, the lack of updates, or the lack of archived data. For example, Israel's foreign ministry website could not be compared to that of Hamas' because the Hamas website was almost always down.

Access to archived data is also a factor. Some websites require a fee in order to gain access to their archives while other sites give limited access, which produces an insignificant sample size.

Thus, the rubric for including the media above are based on the consistency of the language (English) – and hence its transnational communicative abilities – the fact that all media are accessed via the Web 2.0., the intensity of coverage during times of high stress and low stress situations, and that all media fall under the military, independent, and private categories. It was increasingly difficult to identify media that fell under this

rubric since it had to apply to both Israeli and Palestinian media. However the six media chosen comply with these guidelines and are representative of the scope of analysis undertaken by this thesis. For example, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center provides information on Israel's diplomacy before, during, and after the Gaza War as well as well as detailed coverage of what it described as Hamas' use of the Gazan civilian population as human shields. The Palestine News Network followed suit, albeit from a Palestinian perspective, providing details of the build up to the War, including the blockade of Gaza and the targeting of civilian infrastructure in Gaza.

### ***Sampling Techniques and Sample Size***

Non-probability purposive sampling identified the six media. This technique involves the selection of "unique cases that are especially informative" (Neuman, 2007c: 348).

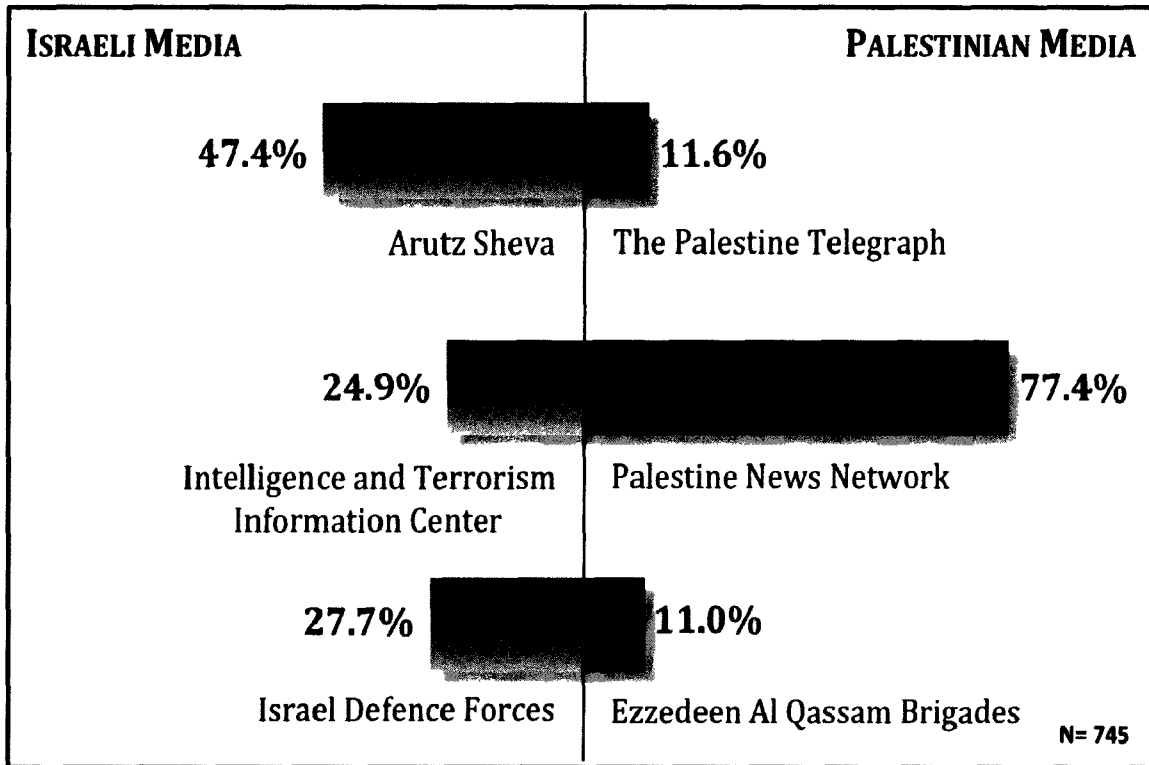
Neuman, for example, explains that content analysis can be used to study "unique cases" such as magazines with cultural significance (Ibid). Moreover, non-probability purposive sampling is also used to select media stories to be sampled. The criterion for inclusion involves media coverage of terrorization-related themes as defined by Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism (governments, groups, or individuals who use threats or violence against governments, groups, or individuals in order to achieve ends that are either good, bad, or indifferent) and Nacos' (2006) identification of terrorism tactics as well as other tactics not listed under Nacos' rubric. Not all news coverage during the time periods in question related to terrorization. During the Gaza War, for example, some samples focused on other states' positions, such as Iran and their link to Hamas. Other samples

covered non-terrorization related events, such as the Arts, and hence were eliminated from the sample.

The coverage in the lead-up to the Goldstone Report also yielded irrelevant data. Some samples discussed the Arts and Entertainment industry while others focused on business. Some politically oriented media coverage focused less on Israeli-Palestinian terrorization and more on U.S.-Israel relations. However any discussion of the Goldstone Report or any terrorization-related events were included in the sample.

The final sample size to be content analyzed is 745 cases chosen from the six media. The media breakdown, shown in *Figure 2*, is as follows: Israel Defense Forces (N= 70), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (N= 63), and Arutz Sheva (N= 120), Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (N= 54), the Palestine News Network (N =381), and The Palestine Telegraph (N= 57).

Figure 2: Israeli-Palestinian Media Coverage



**Timeframe**

The research looks at the following media content analysis timeframe: November 1, 2008 to January 31, 2009 and August 15, 2009 to October 15, 2009. November 1, 2008 to December 26, 2008 covers the months leading to the Gaza War. The Gaza War, declared on December 27, 2008, ended January 18, 2009, lasting a total of 23 days. The analysis continues until the end of January in order to establish media chatter in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. The Four media content analyzed for this timeframe are the Israel Defense Forces (Israel), Ezzedeem Al Qassam Brigades (Palestinian), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (Israel), and the Palestine News Network (Palestinian). Four media are chosen for this timeframe due to the intensity of media coverage during times of stress. The primary players of terrorization – the Israel Defense

Forces and Al Qassam Brigades – are chosen in the first timeframe to reflect their news and information reporting before, during, and after the time of stress. The remaining independent media, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center and the Palestine News Network, are chosen to conclude the first timeframe.

The second timeframe content analyzes the month before, during, and after the release of the controversial Goldstone Report, which was an investigation launched by a team setup by the United Nations Human Rights Council in order to investigate accounts of war crimes committed by both the Israel Defense Forces and Hamas during the Gaza War. August 15, 2009 analyzes the chatter one month prior to the Goldstone Report released on September 15, 2009. September 15, 2009 to October 15, 2009 content analyzes the chatter surrounding the Report. The Israeli and Palestinian private media, Arutz Sheva and The Palestine Telegraph respectively, are content analyzed during this timeframe.

A total of five months are chosen to content analyze the most recent Israeli-Palestinian outbreak of violence – the Gaza War (known as Operation Cast Lead in Israel and the Gaza Massacre in the Arab World). The timeframes are chosen to pinpoint trends before, during, and after crisis. The media content analysis purposively looks at times of high stress versus low stress situation in order to establish how media operate under varying circumstance and hence aid in exploring political communication in the rationalization of terrorization.

### ***Data Selection***

Three strategies are used in searching and downloading the samples from the six media outlets. The first involves using the search engine from the media's respective websites. The second strategy involves using Google's search engine. This means using Google's Options menu in order to enter a specific date range then entering the keyword in the search box followed by the website address. For example, a search for the keyword "hamas" on the Israel Defense Forces website appears as follows under the Google search box: `hamas site:http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/`. The third strategy involves scanning every news article archived by month. Not all websites produce the necessary hits when using each search method; hence the use of all three methods in order to retrieve the most accurate results. This method of triangulation ensures the least amount of errors (such as missing data) when collecting the data (Berg, 2007b: 164). The list below provides the website addresses for the six media analyzed:

1. Israel Defense Forces: <http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/>
2. Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center: <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/site/home/default.asp>
3. Arutz Sheva: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/>
4. Ezzedeen Al Qassam Martyrs Brigades: <http://www.qassam.ps/>
5. Palestine News Network: <http://english.pnn.ps/>
6. The Palestine Telegraph: <http://www.paltelegraph.com/>

For the Israeli media covering the November 2008 to January 2009 timeframe, the main keywords used in the search are “hamas”, “terror\*<sup>31</sup>”, “gaza”, “operat\*”, “cast”, and “lead.” For the media covering the August 2009 to October 2009 timeframe, the main keywords used are “hamas”, “terror\*”, “gaza”, and “goldstone.” For the Palestinian media covering the November 2008 to January 2009 timeframe, the main keywords used in the search are “hamas”, “gaza”, “israel\*”, and “zion\*.” For the media covering the August 2009 to October 2009 timeframe, the main keywords used are “hamas”, “gaza”, “israel”, “zion”, and “goldstone.”

This chapter described the methodological techniques used to explore the research problematic. It also accounted for ensuring quantitative and qualitative reliability and validity when outlining the steps of the media content analysis research design. The following chapter evaluates and analyzes the findings and tests variables through quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to investigate political communication in Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization.

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<sup>31</sup> The asterisks represent a wildcard word search. For example, terror\* may include any of the words’ variants such as terrorist, terrorism, and so forth.

## Chapter 4

### **Analysis and Findings**

The results of the content analysis reveal a great deal on the dynamics of Israeli and Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization as well as responses to such actions during times of high stress and low stress situations. Both parties rationalize their actions through their main terrorizers – the Israel Defense Forces and the Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades. Moreover, the Israeli state and Palestinian groups are aided in the rationalization through private and independent English-transnational online media. The following comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analyses surrounding the Gaza War and the release of the Goldstone Report incorporate these crucial media as well as their tools to explore Israeli-Palestinian political communication from both a microscopic and macroscopic perspective. The analyses henceforth explore the predominant narratives within the media samples. Manifest and latent meanings are analyzed with supporting data from the theoretical framework and the research questions.<sup>32</sup>

#### **The Rationalization of Terrorization in Israeli and Palestinian Media**

The microscopic nature of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization is addressed through the following research questions:

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<sup>32</sup> For example, themes (*Figure 7*) are divided by the predominant narrative within a given media sample. Hence, although attack-related themes can be associated to security-related themes, they are intentionally separated since the analysis is identifying the focus of each media sample. Simply put, some samples overwhelmingly describe attacks while others overwhelmingly describe security issues.

- RQ1: What role does culture play in English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization?
- RQ2: Do certain words and terrorism tactics affect political communication rationalization of terrorization since they are known to garner more media attention as well as elicit certain responses than others?
- RQ3: What do the data reveal about the decision-making process in structuring Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization?

### ***A Culture of Terrorizers and Terrorized***

The main players involved in terrorization and its rationalization from a cultural lens aid in answering the first research question: “*What role does culture play in English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization?*” Derived from the theoretical framework, it addresses James’ (1971) philosophy on a state’s culture of war and the moral legitimacy of terrorization as well as James’ pacifism as a rational alternative, Said’s (1994) theory of Orientalism through post and neo-colonial victimization through the Self and the Other and the power/knowledge dynamic in asymmetrical conflicts, Occidentalism through the Orient’s hatred of the West (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), Hall’s (1997a) theory of cultural representation through language, and Jaggar’s (2005) definition of state, group, and individual terrorism. The above philosophies and theories operate within Dilthey’s (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) cultural circumstances.

There are five actors involved in the rationalization of terrorization: Israeli and Palestinian media; the terrorizer, the terrorized,<sup>33</sup> initiators; responders. As discussed in Chapter 3, the media represent the main players of both sides of the conflict as the analysis derives data from these central actors. Additionally, the political actors themselves (e.g., governments, groups, and/or individuals) play an integrated role within their respective media in politically communicating the rationalization of terrorization.

The Israeli media consist the Israel Defense Forces (military), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (Independent), and Arutz Sheva (private). Their respective counter-parts in the Palestinian media are the Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigades (military) (the Hamas group's military wing), the Palestine News Network (Independent), and The Palestine Telegraph (Private). The second variable, terrorizers, looks at Israeli and Palestinian actors. This is also the case for the third variable, initiators – actors that initiate the rationalization of terrorization. The fourth variable describes actors being terrorized. The final variable, addresses responders to the action of rationalization of terror, or responders to the terrorism tactic itself.

*Figure 3* looks at the relationship between the media and terrorizers, initiators, and responders during times of high stress and low stress situations. The percentages offered in the figure are for comparing two variables, some with three categories. For

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<sup>33</sup> The villain and victim variables were added to this thesis to distinguish any difference between terrorizer and terrorized. After an analysis involving villains, victims, terrorizers, and terrorized, the results revealed that both villain and victim were synonymous with terrorizer and terrorized. For instance, if the terrorizer was Israel, then the villain was also Israel. The Palestinian case was the same. If Palestinians were terrorizers then Palestinians were always coded as villains. [A Chi-square test revealed a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 70.7%]. Victim and the terrorized gave similar results. When Israelis are being terrorized, they are almost always likely to be victimized. [A Chi-square test showed the confidence level to be at 99.9% while the strength resting at 70.2%]. Since villain/terrorizer and victim/terrorized are synonymous, any analysis henceforth looking at givers and receivers of terror will focus only on the terrorizer and the terrorized variables.



detail). Their physical and mental displacement by an occupying power, Israel, by default situates Palestinians within the victim/villain dichotomy described by Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) post-colonial Oriental discourse. Thus, the occupied represents the Self through a sympathetic lens so long as it is the weaker party in the conflict. Moreover, the data describes Israel as the predominant terrorizer in accordance to Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism and the terrorization process. For example, when Israel engages the Palestinians, the description of its tactics falls under Jaggar's rubric of terror. Similarly, if Palestinian media avoid describing their tactics of terrorization and opt for focusing on Israeli attacks, then it is only fitting (as the data show) that Israel is the main terrorizer (see subsequent figures for additional analyses).

Israeli media are more likely to have Israelis as initiators (69.5%) in the rationalizations of terrorization (N= 251). Controlling the message is fundamental during times of crises in order to sway public opinion – in this case the English-transnational audience. As the dominant power in the conflict – power described by Said's (1994) power/knowledge dynamic of reducing Palestinians to the Other – Israel is at an advantage in vying for audience sympathy through the “us versus them” dichotomy [the fruits of playing with Israeli and Palestinian dichotomies through Said (1994) and Hall's (1997a) theories are further explored in subsequent figures]. Additionally, Palestinian media's depiction of Israel as terrorizers is shown through Israeli initiators (46.3%) being cited 10.0% more than Palestinian initiators (36.6%). Furthermore, according to James (1971), states are increasingly prone to rationalize their terrorization, and thus act as communicative initiators in a prelude to war, or in this case, the build up to and including the offensive on Gaza as well as its aftermath. As non-state actors, Palestinians do not

initiate the rationalization of terrorization but instead focus on Israeli terrorizers and initiators as part of the Palestinian political communication. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 27.0%].

Within the same vein, the terrorizer, in over half the cases, is also the initiator (N=245). Israel is more likely to initiate the rationalization of terrorization when they are the terrorizers (68.6%) compared to Palestinians (19.1%). Similarly, Palestinians initiate the rationalization of terrorization (80.4%) as terrorizers more than Israelis (17.6%). [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 47.2%].

The data for the Palestinian media coverage of respondents to terror reveal a well-known facet of the conflict – other actors such as human rights groups, advocacy groups, foreign media sources, and other state leaders speak on Palestinians' behalf (47.4%) (N=498). This is fitting since Palestinian refugees and their living conditions in the Occupied Territories are a key issue in resolving the conflict. There are several local and international human rights groups who have been addressing humanitarian problems for over four decades and hence, their knowledge of the conflict have de facto made them key players in political communication that respond to terrorization. However Palestinian actors are not voiceless and come a close second (46.9%) as responders to initiators of terrorization as described by Palestinian media. Israeli media, on the other hand, report the most on Israeli responders (55.5%), while other actors, such as human rights groups, are pushed to the margins (13.7%). These groups tend to be smaller in numbers when coming from established democratic states where elected government represents the voice of its citizens. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 49.7%].

**Figure 4: Terrorizers in the Israeli-Palestinian Media**

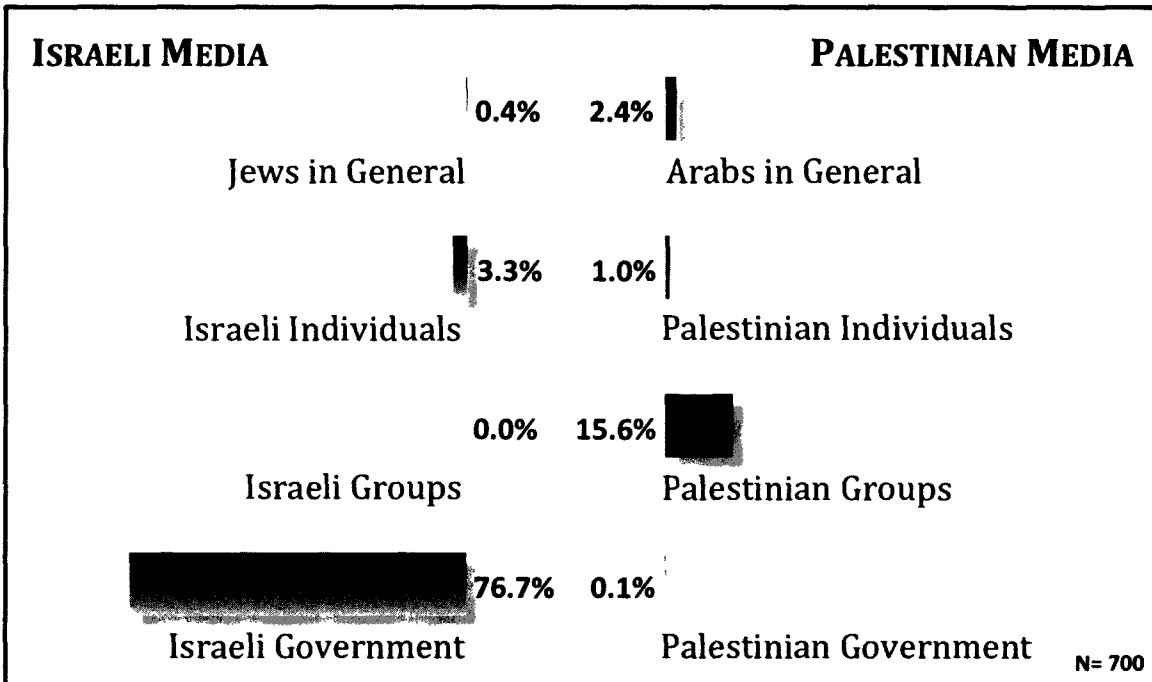


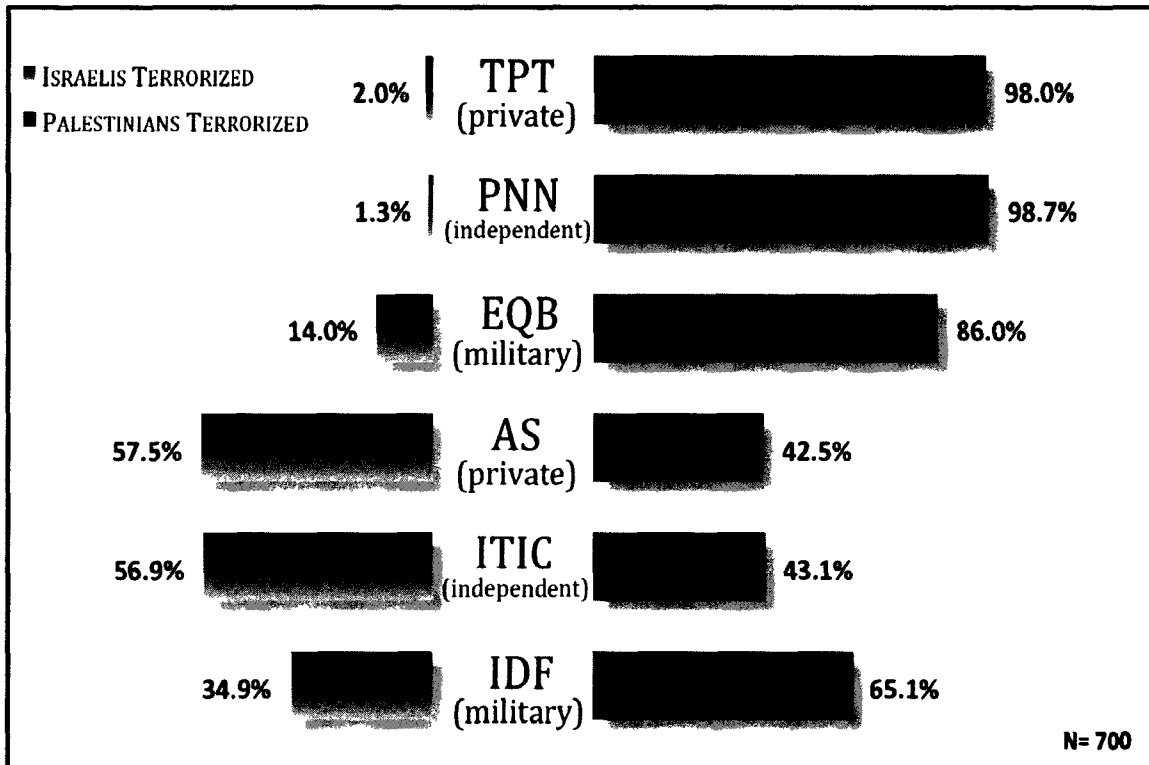
Figure 4 supports the data that the Israeli government (76.7%) is most frequently mentioned as terrorizer. The government is represented by its military, the Israel Defense Forces. The next most-frequent terrorizer, as reported by all media, are Palestinian groups (15.6%) that include organizations such as Hamas, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as well as other armed Palestinian groups. As stated previously, Palestinian victimization, as reported overwhelmingly by Palestinian media and supported by Israeli media, contributes to the high frequency of Israeli terrorizers (see figures 3 and 5). Nonetheless, the frequency shows the main players involved in the terrorization process – the Israeli government (represented by the Israel Defense Forces) and Palestinian groups (mostly the Hamas group’s Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigades). Unlike the Palestinians who resort to organized groups to carry out

their terrorization, Israel is a developed state who uses its standing army as the main sponsor of terror (not Israeli groups or individuals).

The revelation that Palestinian media, in *Figure 3*, focus on Palestinian victimization is confirmed in *Figure 5* through Palestinian media's Palestine News Network (PNN) (98.7%), The Palestine Telegraph (TPT) (98.0%), and Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (EQB) (86.0%). Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (ITIC) (56.9%) and Arutz Sheva (AS) (57.5%) offer a more balanced account giving Palestinians more victimization credit than Palestinian media for Israelis.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) media, the main terrorizers, are more likely to describe Palestinians being terrorized (65.1%) than their own citizens (34.9%). The Israel Defense Forces media are more likely to report attacks against Palestinians since they are the main player in Israeli terrorization and are hence more focused on sending the message that they are "getting the job done" in defending Israel. For Palestinian's Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades media, they fittingly ascribe Israelis as victims (14.0%) more so than other Palestinian media since they represent the main terrorizers on the Palestinian side. As a reminder, this thesis looks at the military media reporting before, during, and after the Gaza War (a three month period beginning November 2008 and ending January 31, 2009). Thus heavy terrorization is attributed to this timeframe as illustrated through the Israel Defense Forces and Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades' media.

**Figure 5: Israelis and Palestinians Terrorized According to the Media**



The Israeli military rationale of attacking Palestinian positions underpins James’ (1971) philosophy on nations’ legitimacy for war. Subtle references such as the one above (“getting the job done”) reinforce the necessary culture of war James ascribes to nations he believes rely on altruistic motives to rationalize their terrorization. The Ezzedeem Al Qassam Brigades media, on the other hand, invoke the role of victim through Said’s (1994) Orientalism and thus create and perpetuate their own culture of villain and victim as a rationalization tool. Thus, cultural representation of the Self and the Other (Hall, 1997a) is attributable to both Israelis and Palestinians and is explored the subsequent sections.

The chatter surrounding the Goldstone Report (August 15, 2009-October 15, 2009) is a contributing factor in describing Israelis and Palestinians terrorized during the

Gaza War. As a reminder, the Report concludes that both Israel and Hamas are accountable for war crimes during the Gaza crisis because of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. A comparison between Israeli and Palestinian private media – Israel’s pro-settler media, Arutz Sheva, and The Palestine Telegraph respectively – demonstrates how both actors use the Report’s findings in differing ways to rationalize their terrorization. Arutz Sheva, for instance, refers to the incessant rocket attacks by Hamas *prior* to Israel’s Operation Cast Lead – a partial account for Israelis terrorized. Another account, as stipulated in the U.N. backed Report, are Hamas’ indiscriminate rocket fire on Israeli towns during the War, causing damage, injury, and/or death. A final account of Arutz Sheva’s (57.5%) media portrayal of Israelis being terrorized are Arab attacks against Israelis in Israel proper and against Israeli settlers in the Occupied West Bank. However, in describing Israel’s response to rocket attacks, Israel’s private media *de facto* labels the terrorization of Palestinians (42.5%) (Jaggar, 2005).

The Palestine Telegraph focuses less on Hamas rockets and more on reinforcing the social injustices it claims are being committed by Israel. It uses the Goldstone Report as a tool to contextualize Palestinian victimization (98.0%) in the bombardment of civilian infrastructure during the “Gaza Massacre.” Coinciding with evidence from the Report, The Palestine Telegraph explains that the majority of Palestinians killed in the War were civilians. Furthermore, The Palestine Telegraph situates other news items within the broader context of Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and Israel’s self-imposed economic “siege” of Gaza as well as. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 51.9%].

Similar to the military media, Israel's Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center and Palestinians' Palestine News Network are analyzed within the Gaza War timeframe. Although labeled as independent media actors, the data show a relationship between their description of the terrorized and that of private media's description. While analyzed at different time periods, media consistency show, at least from a microscopic lens, where Israelis and Palestinians distribute the data of those being terrorized (subsequent sections elaborate on the rationality of such decisions). Furthermore, looking at military, independent, and private media confirm the culture of terrorizers and terrorized and reinforce Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy that culture, history, and social forces shape how actors interact within their given contexts.

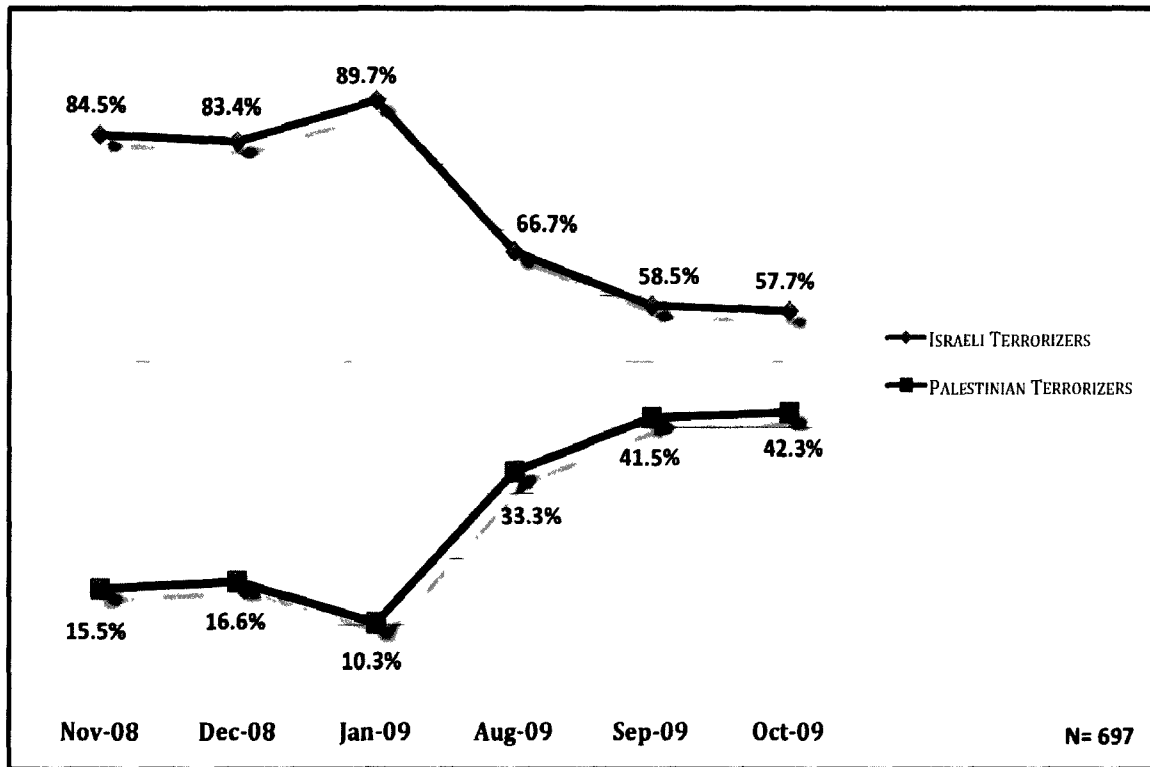
The data for figures 4, 5, and 6 are major departure points of Said's (1994) theory and James' (1971) philosophy. More so, components of decision-making materialize from the actors above who are placed at the crux of a culture of terrorizers and terrorized. Using components of Said's (1994) theory, such as villains and victims in Palestinian post-colonial society as well as the power/knowledge dynamic, which favors Israel, demonstrates a rationalization component of Palestinian political communication. Likewise, Israeli rationalization is revealed through their control as *initiators* of rationalizing terror through their political communication and James' (1971) philosophy on cultures of war and moral legitimacy in perpetuating conflict. Building on the analyses above of actors and their terrorization during both the Gaza War and the Goldstone Report, data below exploring times of high stress and low stress situations further

suggests Israeli-Palestinian divergent rationalization nuances in their political communication.

### *High and Low Intensity Terrorization*

*Figure 6* complements *Figure 5* by breaking the Israeli-Palestinian media into juxtaposing timeframes. It explores the terrorizers by revealing the highest (and lowest) peaks of terrorization committed by both parties and addresses the relationship between times of high stress and low stress situations. From November 2008 leading up to the Gaza War, Israeli terrorization averaged to approximately 84.0%. The number peaked in January (89.7%) as the terrorization campaign intensified with Palestinian terrorization declining (10.3%) at the same time. The data also show Palestinians terrorization (15.5%) through the massive barrage of rockets fired from Gaza *before* the Gaza War. As a reminder, the data is not indicative that Israelis are committing more terrorist acts, but it reports on how many times they have been described in this event by the Israeli and Palestinian media as terrorizers. Additionally, while collecting the data, the terrorizer is labeled as such when they fall into the following two categories: when described by the media sample as the main terrorizer; and/or when the sample describes actions that fall within Jaggar's (2005) definition of terror (governments, groups, or individuals who use threats or violence against governments, groups, or individuals in order to achieve ends that are either good, bad, or indifferent).

**Figure 6: Israeli-Palestinian Terrorizers in the Timeframe of Analysis**



As a prelude to the release of the Goldstone Report on September 15, 2009, descriptions of Palestinian terrorization increases between August and October 2009 (33.3% to 42.3%), as Israeli terrorization decreased (66.7% to 57.7%), bringing both actors closer in frequency of terrorization. A look at both Israeli and Palestinian private media (Arutz Sheva and The Palestine Telegraph respectively) within this period reveals the following trends: first, during low stress situations Israeli media focus more on Palestinian terrorization (see *Figure 5*) due in fact to the absence of an Israeli-initiated stress situation (Operation Cast Lead); second, discussions of the Goldstone Report by Israeli private media focus less on Israel’s offensive and more on Hamas’ rocket fire; third, Palestinian media continued to stress the plight of the Palestinians; fourth, because data for both Israeli and Palestinian private media was unavailable between November 2008

and January 31, 2009, it can be concluded to be part of their rational decision-making process (see *Decision-Making Outside the Vacuum* section below). [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 28.6%].

Arutz Sheva, the Israeli pro-settler media introduces the narrative of Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) during the low stress timeframe. Islamic hatred of the West's progressive ideals is described in media reports and speculations that “[a]t Hamas summer camps, kids learned to wage war against Israel and were indoctrinated with Islamic ideology” (Kay, 2009). Moreover, in addition to “learning about Islam and studying the Koran at Hamas summer camps, children also learn to fight in the Jihad against Israel ... as well [use] explosive belts for suicide missions” (Ibid). Similar examples include the description of racist Arab lynching of Jews in which “[t]he cruel violence we have seen in recent days has no place in a civilized society in general, and in Israel specifically” (Julian, 2009) – an allusion to the civilized West and the “barbaric” Arab.

The case of Arutz Sheva reporting on Palestinian terrorization reveals the practice of two elementary theories: that of Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) and that of Orientalism (Said, 1994). Simply stated, Arutz Sheva's typical media report explains how Arabs hate Jews (Occidentalism) and in response, how the West is better than Arabs (Orientalism). For instance, while the private Palestinian media (The Palestine Telegraph) report riots in Jerusalem to protest illegal Israeli settlements and the economic blockade of Gaza, Arutz Sheva refer to the same riots as a platform for Islamic extremists' call to “Global Jihad.” In addition, Arutz Sheva media speculations and reports are filled with analyses questioning the legitimacy and legality of the Goldstone Report and focusing on

the Report's account of Hamas rockets fire into Israel. Finally, Arutz Sheva ran concurrent stories of Palestinian terrorization through the ongoing saga of the abducted Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, and efforts to return him to Israel by his Hamas captives.

Contrarily, The Palestine Telegraph during times of low stress, report less on Gilad Shalit and more on the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. Their reportage focus on multilateral institutes and humanitarian organizations, such as the U.N. and Amnesty International respectively, that are pivotal in representing what The Palestine Telegraph refer to as victims of Israeli-Zionist aggression and therefore carry the traditional narrative of Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) victimization in post-colonial societies (for an elaboration on Palestinian libertarian themes, see *The Language of Cultural Animosity* section below). Stories surrounding the Goldstone Report focus on Israel "[committing] the biggest massacre of the century" with findings amounting to war crimes committed by Israel. Palestinian disunity was also a topic of discussion in which the Palestinian Authority (government regime in control of the West Bank) dismissed the Goldstone Report, resulting in a lack of cohesive goal-directed strategies such as defending Palestinian existence in Jerusalem from the "Judaizing policy" (see *Decision-Making Outside the Vacuum* section below). Other reports of Palestinian victimization and Israeli terrorization include the dire sanitation situation in Gaza after the War, the expansion of Israeli settlements, and the lack of enthusiasm in Gaza during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan because Gazans "haven't fully recovered from the war" and "need more time to heal and forget."

In placing Israeli-Palestinian cultural actors within both times of high stress and low stress situations, it becomes increasingly clear the divergent topics discussed through

Israeli-Palestinian reporting. Furthermore, a shift is revealed in labeling Palestinians terrorizers in times of regular stress versus the high frequency of Israeli terrorizers in severe stress. Additionally, decision-making strategies are brought to the fore in the absence of private media data during times of high stress. A detailed analysis of the language and themes, below, uncover core elements of political communication within cultural animosities.

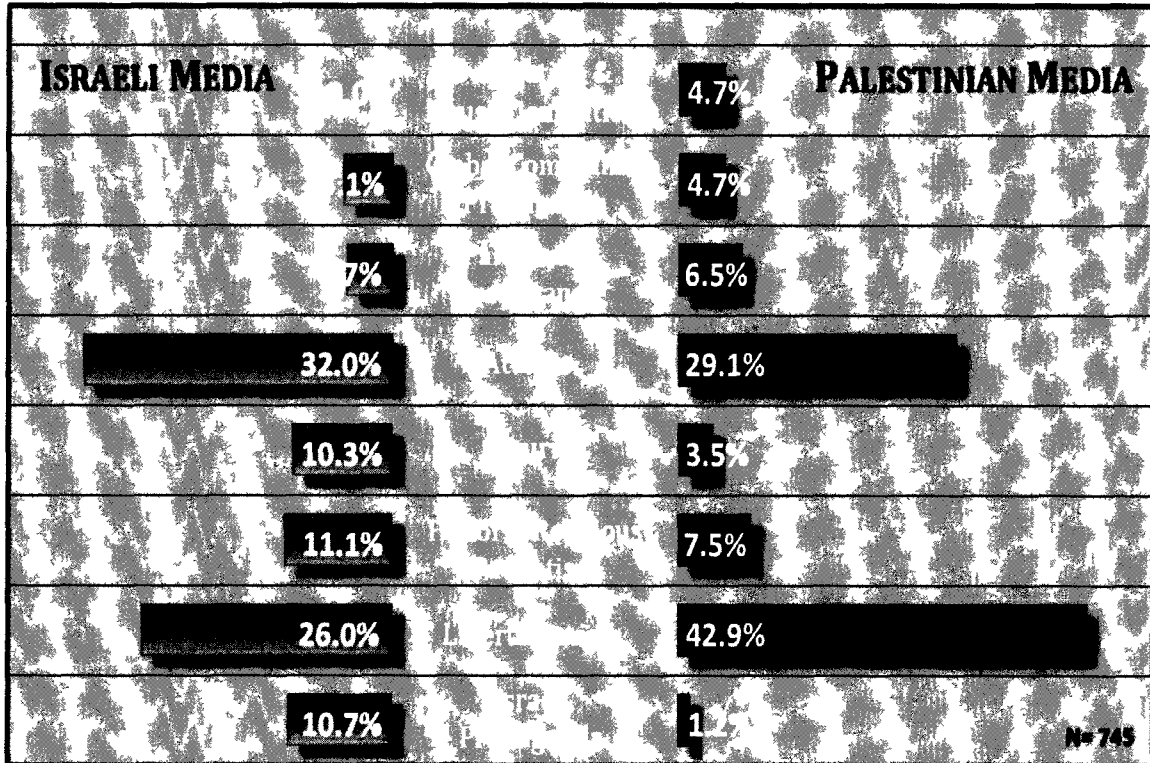
### *The Language of Cultural Animosity*

The cyclical nature of cultural victimization described hitherto is represented through the communicative language (Hall, 1997a) of Palestinian media. A grasp on themes provides insight on the general narratives prevalent in each media and aids the cultural representational framework, described by Hall, necessary for political communication of the rationalization of terrorization. All data within this section, whether related to Israeli or Palestinian media, operates within Hall's theory of cultural representation. That is, culture is constructed through meaning, which is constructed through language (themes and words) and language is part of the cyclical cultural representational system.

When comparing Israeli and Palestinian media (*Figure 7*) two major opposing themes dominate the narrative. Palestinian media are heavily saturated by libertarianism themes (42.9%). This includes any news item in which Palestinians and international humanitarian organizations, through nonviolent protests and rallies, seek an end to what they concede as Israeli belligerence. Calls for boycotts, invoking international conventions, and investigations into Israeli crimes dominate this narrative. Conversely, Israeli news items with this theme (26.0%) focus on Israeli medical as well as food aid to

Gazans during the War. More so, Israeli items before the War reported on Israel's humanitarian assistance to their self-imposed blockade on the coastal Gaza strip. Israeli media also described the blockade as a result of Palestinian belligerence.

**Figure 7: Israeli-Palestinian Media Themes**



Media chatter surrounding the Goldstone Report between August 15, 2009 and October 15, 2009 also falls under the libertarianism umbrella (as stipulated in the analysis above) and in part account for libertarianism being Israel's second main theme. Both parties had opposing views to what the Report concluded was a gross violation of humanitarian law by Israel and Hamas during the Gaza War. The Report elicited dialectical debates between Israelis and Palestinians. Palestinians, for example, received the Goldstone Report with optimism while Israel accused it of being biased against the Jewish state.

Generally speaking, Israeli media frames the majority of its narrative through attack-related themes (32.0%). These themes focus more on terrorism tactics such as Hamas using the Gaza population as human shielding, rocket fire, and attacking Hamas' terrorism infrastructure (da'wah). Hence not only does the narrative identify with Israelis attacking Palestinians but it also includes instance of Palestinians attacking Israelis. Thus, in describing both proactive and reactive actions enables Israel to rationalize terror under the guise of self-defense (Hobbes, 1985; Morgenthau, 2006). Furthermore analyses show that attacking terror infrastructure dominate Israel's rationalization of terrorization because English-transnational audiences identify with preserving security through self-defense, especially in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 and the invasion of Afghanistan and later Iraq (more on this point below).

The re-occurring trend of Israeli media describing their attack themes in terms of Hamas' terror infrastructure serves several functions in answering the first research question and addressing the theoretical framework: First, defending its citizens is an obligation of the state and involves the application of instrumental rationality as an international relations component in achieving this goal (Hobbes, 1985; Morgenthau, 2006); Second, the moral/altruistic argument (James, 1971) is evident in the patriotic duty of Israel to defend itself against Hamas rocket fire and thus the only rational response are attacks, which fulfill the steps necessary to reinforcing a culture of war; Third, this moral duty is pushed a step further by the West's fight against Islamic terrorism in recent and contemporary history, which provides the context of aligning Israeli ethos with is that of the West since Israel includes itself as Western state and ally – Said's (1994) Us versus Them dichotomy in Orientalism discourse; Fourth, targeting of Hamas' terror

infrastructure, by default, includes almost all of Gaza's infrastructure – including civilian homes, places of worship, and buildings housing humanitarian supplies (see *Figure 10*).

Collective punishment by de facto, falls under the Orientalist rubric of grouping Palestinians into a hostile Other (Said, 1994). By claiming, through attack-related themes, that the Islamic group Hamas is Israel's only target translates into an Israeli component of rationalization of terrorization. It sustains the framework of culturally representing the Self (Israel) as a culture of war through its moral legitimacy (James, 1971), and the Other (all Palestinians in Gaza, since they are affected by Israel's military actions) through the stereotype of an Islamic terrorist entity (Said, 1994; Hall, 1997a; Hall, 1997b).

Attack themes cannot be disassociated from Israel's second (libertarianism) or even third theme (historic-religious patriotism) since the rationalization of terrorization is inextricably linked to maintaining Israel's role in the Middle East as the beacon of democracy while simultaneously terrorizing Palestinians through spectacular and physiological terrorism (see *Figure 9*). Whether the proclaimed ends are security in nature, or expansionist by design, the means of rationalizing terrorization, like that of Palestinian terrorization, are linked to humanitarian and ethno-cultural differences.

While Palestinian media overwhelmingly focuses on humanitarian and civil society as its number one theme, its secondary narrative focuses on the attacks (29.1%) themselves. Looking at both libertarianism and attack themes it can be concluded that Palestinian media paint the Palestinians as victims more so than victimizers. Libertarian themes coupled with reports of Israelis attacking Palestinians make little to no mention of Palestinian terrorization. The re-occurring theme of victimization places Palestinian rationalization of terrorization under the rubric of cultural representation (Hall, 1997a).

The Palestinian narrative is repeatedly re-constructing the culture of victim through the shared meaning of language – “language [being] the privileged medium in which [Palestinian media] ‘make sense’ of things, in which meaning is produced and exchanged” (Ibid: 1). Recalling Dilthey’s (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy that rational decision-making actors do not operate in a vacuum, the production and exchange of meaning does not only occur between Palestinian media and Palestinian society, but also between Israeli and Palestinian media/society (see *Figure 12* for how Israeli and Palestinian media use their media counterparts to politically communicate the rationalization of terrorization).

Historic, religious, and patriotic-related themes are third in Israeli (11.1%) and Palestinian (7.5%) media narratives. Historic land claims invoked by God’s preference of one religious group over another and fused with patriotism have been major themes of the protracted conflict (see Chapter 2). For Israel, this theme carries a cultural underdone of anti-Semitism through Occidental discourse (Buruma & Avishai, 2005). Occidentalism, the Other’s hatred of the West and its values, is a concept used by the pro-settler’s movement as a means to align itself with Western values of freedom while simultaneously advocating the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Arab East Jerusalem – an annexation of Palestinian land not recognized by the international community. For instance, Arutz Sheva, the private Israel pro-settler media, describes Arab mobs lynching Jews (Jewish settlers in the Occupied West Bank) as well as attacks against Jewish civilians in Israel proper by Arabs. Thus victimization is a rationalization technique not limited to Palestinian political communication and is a

supportive strategy of Israeli decision-makers (subsequent sections further explore Israeli victimization at the hands of Hamas rocket attacks).

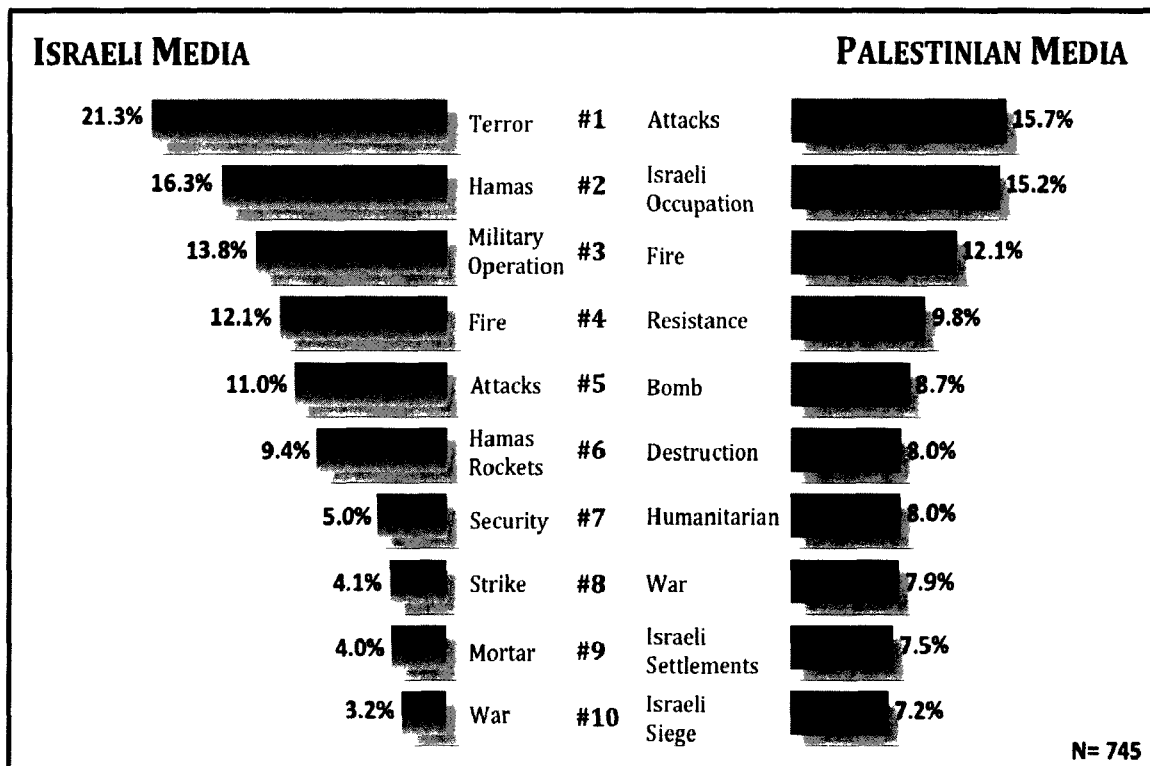
Conversely, Israeli media respond to Arab Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) with Orientalism (Said, 1994) and how the West portrays the Other. Arutz Sheva, for example, tends to refer to Israeli Arabs as simply “Arabs”, denoting a distinct ethnic division between Arabs and Jews, with “Israelis” being synonymous with “Jews” (as specified in *High and Low Intensity Terrorization*).

As a rational actor in a volatile region, it is logical to assume security to be Israel’s top priority. However, security related themes fall fifth in dominating the Israeli narrative (10.3%). Nonetheless, it cannot be concluded that Israel’s security in general is a marginalized topic. Coupled with Israel’s top ten words (see *Figure 8*), security-related words serve as a reminder of Israel’s declared objectives in Gaza. It is noteworthy to mention that acts proclaim to be responses to what Israeli media deem as eight years of rocket fire by Hamas, directly serve the security dilemma the Jewish state faces on a daily basis within the Arab world. More so, Israel’s number one theme, attacks, describes Israel’s targeting of Hamas’ terror infrastructure as its main priority (see *Figure 12*), thus deducing the *security* threat posed by Hamas. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 30.3%].

As described in Chapter 3, the first ten words related to terrorism were counted in each sample (N= 745). Of all words counted, *Figure 8* plots the ten most-frequently used words by Israeli and Palestinian media and addresses the first research question: “*What role does culture play in English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization?*” The analysis also acts as a precursor to the second research question: “*Do*

certain words and terrorism tactics affect political communication rationalization of terrorization since they are known to garner more media attention as well as elicit certain responses than others?”. Similar to themes, these words paint a vivid picture of their latent and manifest use in the rationalization of terrorization vis-à-vis both parties.

**Figure 8: The Top 10 Words in Israeli-Palestinian Media**



A major theme in Israeli-Palestinian media’s words is their descriptive nature of terrorization. “Military Operation”, “Fire”, “Attacks”, “Security”, “Strike”, “Israeli Occupation”, “Resistance”, “Humanitarian”, “Israeli Settlements”, all describe actions of terrorization *without* using the word “Terror” or any of its variant. Their usage in the context of terror is part of the decision-making strategy in politically communicating the rationalization of terrorization. “Israeli Operation” (13.8%), for example, is a process of

carrying out an organized act or action. One would not assume coercive measures, such as terror, as the act or action being carried out by using such a generally un-loaded word – hence the ambiguity of such terms. That is where the ingenuity in choosing these terms lies. Similarly, “Resistance” (9.8%) is the Palestinian’s fourth most-frequently used word. Its variant includes “Non-Violent Resistance”, “Armed Resistance”, and “Islamic Resistance Movement.” “Resistance” is also a reference to any groups or individuals attacking or defending themselves from Israelis terrorization – thus using terror tactics without specific mention of the tactic itself. Thus, political communication is increasingly persuasive when words masquerade as something other than what they truly represent.

Other descriptive words like “Attacks”, which is Palestinian media’s most-frequent word (15.7%) and Israeli media’s fifth most-frequent word (11.0%), are presumed to cause harm to someone or something. Its variant used in the media samples includes “Attacking”, “Attacked”, and “Attacker.” This word can easily be taken out of context since it is a purely descriptive verb with often supporting evidence of what is being attacked. However with the support of other actions (such as Tools that Rationalize Terror), “Attacks” and its variant are fittingly applied to rationalize terror. From an Israeli perspective, “Attacks” is used to describe Israel Defense Forces’ targeting of Hamas infrastructure. From the Palestinian perspective, “Attacks” and its variant is mostly describing Israel’s offensive in the Gaza War. Hence both parties use “Attacks” to describe the War, with Israelis using the term outside the terrorism definition parameter while Palestinians use the term fittingly within the context of being terrorized by Israelis.

The conceptualization of “Israeli Siege” (7.2%), on the other hand, differs from the Palestinian perspective than it does for Israelis, who use “Blockade” to describe the

same phenomenon – the Israeli-imposed economic blockade on Gaza. Although “Blockade” is not one of Israel’s top ten words, its use in the Israeli media is conceptualized as a neutral term. However, “Israeli Siege” used by the Palestinians conceptualizes an increasingly violent form of attack against the people of Gaza.

Other words not used by Israel include “Israeli Occupation” (15.2%) and “Israeli Settlements” (7.5%). These words are commonly used by Palestinians and Palestinian advocates in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and hence, their use here in Palestinian rationalization of terrorization is not surprising. “Occupation” and “Settlements” are commonly used in the Palestinian narrative along with “Resistance” to describe a means/end relationship. For example, according to the Palestinian narrative, the *means* to *end* the “Israeli Occupation” and “Israeli Settlements” is through “Resistance”, the fourth most-frequently used word by Palestinians (described above).

Hall’s (1997a) cultural representational system is reflected in the construction of meaning through the language of colonial discourse in Palestinian media. Words such as “Occupation”, “Settlements”, and “Resistance” drive cultural representative systems and create distinct dichotomies between the Occident (the oppressor) and the Orient (the oppressed) (Said, 1994). For example, “Nonviolent Resistance” and “Nonviolent Demonstrations” draw comparisons to British colonial times in which Gandhi used “Nonviolent” means to “Resist” and end British “Occupation” and “Settlements” of indigenous Indian land. Moreover, James’ (1971) philosophy as a pacifist and advocate of rational discourse in solving conflicts diplomatically is applicable within the Palestinian media narrative of nonviolent forms of resistance. Ultimately, these terms carry a culturally and morally negative attitude toward Israelis and push a passively

sympathetic tone with Palestinian suffering. Language, which carries meaning, helps create and shape a culture – in this case an aggressively oppressive Israeli society (Hall, 1997a: 1). Therefore, constructing and reinforcing a culture of the Israeli villain mirrors a culture of Palestinian victimization.

“Humanitarian” (8.0%) and its variant uses (“Humanitarian Crisis”, “Crimes Against Humanity”, “Humanitarian Catastrophe”) in Palestinian media provide an emotionally charged context for readers. It targets the ethical and moral obligations states, organizations, and individuals should have for victims and those suffering under what Palestinians refer to as “Israeli Aggression.” This term is also widely used by humanitarian organizations such as Human Rights Watch, The Red Cross, and Amnesty International when describing the situation during the Gaza War as well as the chatter surrounding the release of the Goldstone Report, nine months later.

Another most-commonly used word in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is “Terror” (21.3%). Like “Israeli Occupation” and “Israeli Settlements”, which are used only by Palestinian discourse, “Terror” (Israel’s number one word) is largely absent from the Palestinian narrative. This word is a fundamental tool used in Israeli political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. However its use raises the question of Israeli double standards. Simply put: How can the Israeli narrative use Palestinian “Terror” as a defense rationale to *rationalization Israeli terrorization* of Palestinians? The inherent contradictions in this narrative of course point to the necessity of sophisticated political communication.

The focus on “ Hamas Rockets” (9.4%) and “Mortars” (4.0%) was Israel’s initial justification behind Operation Cast Lead. It is thus fitting that its seventh mostly-used

word is “Security” (5.0%). In terms of its general media content, Israel advocates believe their state has the right to defend itself against the terror of Hamas and its rocket and mortar *fire*.

This rhetoric bodes well with Israel’s use of “Fire” (12.1%), which falls fourth in the top ten words used in the Israeli media. It also falls third (12.1%) for Palestinian media. “Fire” and its variants (“Fired”, “Firing”) are used by both adversaries in the context of being terrorizers and terrorized. For example, “Israel ‘Fired’ on ‘Hamas’ (16.3%) operatives and ‘Terrorist’ infrastructures while Israeli troops met Hamas ‘Fire’ along the Gaza/Israel border.”

Likewise “The ‘Resistance’ ‘Fired’ on ‘Zionist’ troops in ‘Occupied’ Palestine while Israeli ‘Bombardments’ (8.7%) of Gaza set ‘Fire’ to a U.N. school.” Three important words and their conceptualization are noted from the above: (1) “Hamas” within the Israeli context is synonymous with “Terror” – due mostly in part to how “Hamas” is described within the news item; (2) “Strike(s)” (4.1%) and its variant uses (“Striking”, “Struck”) is similar to “Fire” and is used half as much by Israel when describing their attacks on Gaza; (3) “Bomb” (8.7%) followed by “Destruction” (8.0%) are a stronger set of words used in the Palestinian narrative to describe Israeli “Strikes” on Gaza.

The analysis above constructs components of the Israeli and Palestinian cultural framework of representation (Hall, 1997a). From a microscopic analysis, this component represents a context in which decision-makers operate, which is an extension of a broader philosophy that actors are affected by their socio-historical surroundings in their decision-making process (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004). Macroscopically

speaking and beyond the words and themes used in the media, it reveals the communicative decision-making strategies used in the selection of these words and themes in politically communicating the rationalization of terrorization.

A final worthy note of the word “War” is important here in order to differentiate its use within the Israeli (3.2%) and Palestinian (7.9%) media. While Israel declares “War” on “Hamas”, Palestinians often describes the Israeli “War Machine” or the Israeli “Warships” and “Warplanes” “Attacking” Gaza. As noted by James (1971) the discourse of “War” is often used by military-oriented states in their rationalization of terrorization. Its marriage by Palestinian discourse to “planes”, “ships”, and “machines” underpins James’ observation and further drives the point that Palestinians are dealing with a destructive machine, and not a state defending its citizens (as Israel would argue). Furthermore, looking at the top ten words alone creates a narrative that facilitates a simple understanding of Israeli and Palestinian media rationalization and communication of terrorization.

Trend data from figures 3 to 8 reveal a major component of Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization: the cultural undertone in which decision-makers operate as stipulated by Dilthey’s (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy on actor-oriented rational decision-making. They answer the first research question: *“What role does culture play in English-transnational media in the rationalization of terrorization?”*. Actors, specifically the military Israeli Defense Forces media, reinforce the Jewish state’s culture of war (James, 1971) in the rationalization of terrorization of Operation Cast Lead (the Gaza War) under the guise of self-defense and moral duty. Rational alternatives to war such as non-violent protests and rallies guide components of

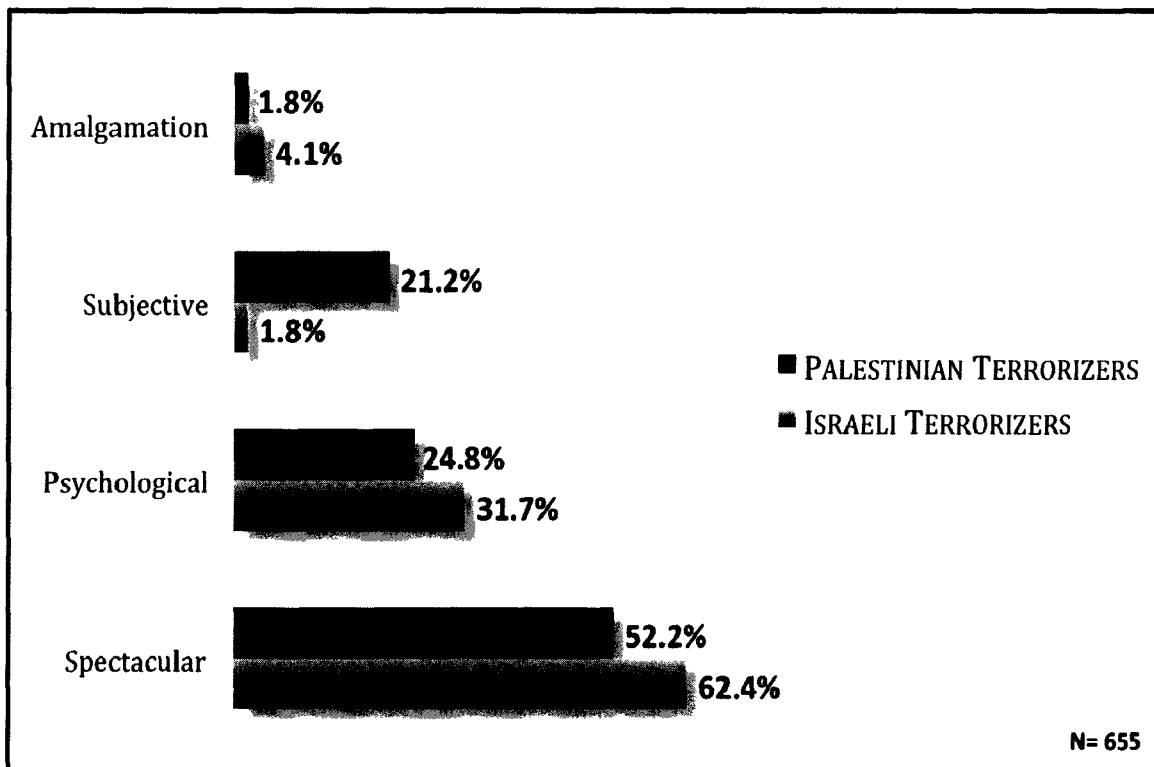
Palestinian culture. Under Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) Orientalism umbrella, Palestinian media actors enforce post and neo-colonial victimization by the majority of reporting stressing Israeli terrorization and Palestinian victimization. The Self and the Other are represented by Israeli media's (specifically Arutz Sheva) grouping of Hamas with all Palestinians and reporting under the framework of Israel as the civilized West battling Hamas and barbaric Islam. The power/knowledge dynamic is latent through both Israeli and Palestinian media report of Israel's military might. Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) manifests itself primarily through Israel's pro-settler private media, Arutz Sheva. Descriptions through historic-religious and patriotic themes carry the narrative of Arab and Muslim hatred of Israel, Jews, and the West and is depicted in Arab attacks against Jews and riots in Jerusalem calling for global Jihad. Conversely, these descriptions reinforce Orientalism (Said, 1994) in Arutz Sheva's labeling of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs as Arabs and Muslims – hence, the Other. Hall's (1997a; 1997b) culture of representation and stereotyping are underpinned through Israeli-Palestinian media's language and is manifested through attack, libertarian, and historic-religious and patriotic themes, and words related to these themes such as "Occupation", "Settlements", "Resistance", "Hamas", "Terror", and "Strike."

### ***Tactics and Tools of the Trade***

The latent and manifest meaning behind themes and words used by Israeli-Palestinian media are an attempt to persuade and propagate each player's position in times high stress and low stress situations. Terrorism tactics, on the other hand, are the coercive methods inflicted on the terrorized. *Figure 9* compares the tactics used by each terrorizer.

Generally speaking, spectacular terrorism was used most-often by both Israelis (62.4%) and Palestinians (52.2%). This tactic includes bombings, mass destruction of infrastructure, projectile attacks (rockets and mortar shells), mass death due to mass destruction, and genocide.<sup>34</sup>

**Figure 9: Israeli-Palestinian Terrorism Tactics**



Psychological terror is secondary for both parties but is a common tactic of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It includes cyber-terrorism (hacking), psychological propaganda such as media spots glorifying the slaughter of Jews, sporadic rocket and mortar shells fire, the blockade on Gaza, settlements, occupation, and house demolitions. Traditionally

<sup>34</sup> “Genocide” is the term used by Palestinians when describing Israel Defense Forces action in Operation Cast Lead. Israelis also use “genocide” in past and future contexts to describe Nazi crimes of World War II and to warn other Israelis on Hamas’ ultimate goal for the Jewish state.

speaking, this tactic would garner less media attention than large-scale terrorization.

Periods of stress, such as the Gaza War, however garner increasing English-transnational media attention, which makes political communication essential during this time period.

Subjective and amalgamation terror tactics were used less frequently. Subjective tactics typically involve kidnappings, stabbings, and the use of other weapons between individuals. Palestinians were also more likely to terrorize Israelis through subjective terror (21.1%) such as stabbings and beatings compared to Israelis (1.8%) who rely heavily on their army to carry out spectacular and psychological terrorism.

Amalgamated terror is a combination of other tactics and can include instance of spectacular and psychological trauma. Depending on the media, for example, projectiles such as rocket and mortar shells fired at Israeli towns were described as psychological trauma by Israeli citizens being interviewed. Israelis also point out the fact that not knowing if or when a rocket would hit their homes was a cause of increased psychological trauma with some Israelis moving out of these towns. These tactics tend to have a lower death rate than spectacular and psychological terror. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 31.5%].

The victimization narrative and the power/knowledge dynamic (Said, 1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) is also a focal point in Palestinian post-colonial society – a point driven home by both Israeli and Palestinian media through the asymmetry and monopolization of violence by Israeli terrorization tactics. For instance, Palestinian individuals are increasingly prone to using subjective terror tactics such as stabbings, beatings, and setting Israeli houses on fire compared to Israelis who rely on the state military to conduct most of Israel's terrorization.

Comparing mass destructive bombing tactics of Israel to that of Palestinian rocket and mortar projectiles underscores this narrative, which is an extrapolation of Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) work on the power/knowledge dynamic of post-colonial discourse. To understand the difference between projectiles and mass destruction, one must look at the devastation left behind the aftermath of a terrorist attack. Projectiles include missiles, mortar shells, rocket-propelled grenades (RPG's), as well as rockets. These weapons do not cause the same destructive force caused by similar projectiles launched by Israeli warships, helicopters, tanks, and fighter jets. Israeli media describe houses damaged by Palestinian projectiles while both Israeli and Palestinian media describe the massive infrastructure damage and full collapse of buildings due to Israeli projectiles.

The aftermath of an attack is obvious; one party causes more damage to his foe. How this party (Israel) rationalizes destruction on a massive scale has an influence on both the terrorizer (Israel) and the terrorized (Palestinians) political communication. Hence, the asymmetry of power through terrorization tactics is a manifestation of the power/knowledge dynamic, in which the powerful actor has cultural, and in this instance, coercive influence over his weaker foe. And more importantly, the weaker Palestinians are victims of the devastation caused by Israel's sophisticated and state-of-the-art military machines. Palestinian media response actions and tools further fuel the victimization narrative (see *Figure 10*, below).<sup>35</sup>

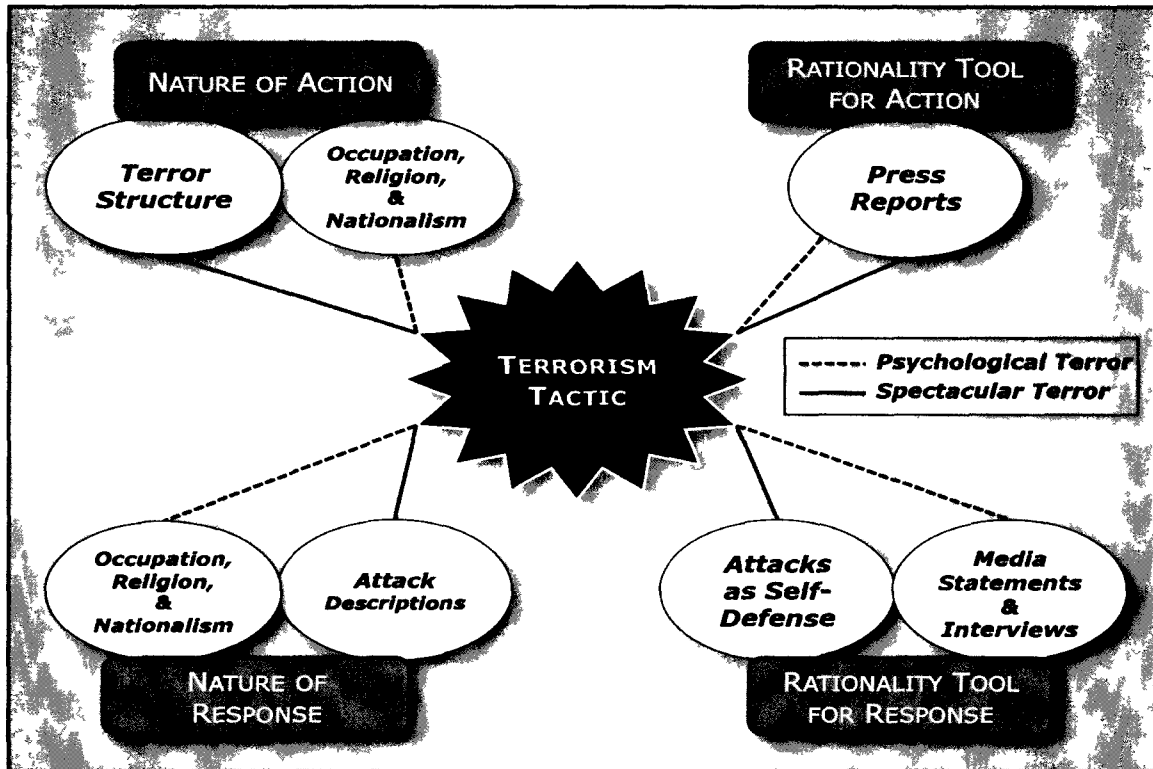
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<sup>35</sup> The victimization narrative is not necessarily false; that is to say, the Palestinians are not simply crying wolf. Palestinians are clear victims of Israeli terrorization [terrorism as defined by Jaggar (2005)] with clear evidence of asymmetrical warfare. However, in terms of rationalizing terrorization through political communication, this narrative becomes a useful tool in rationalizing *Palestinian* terrorization of Israelis.

The top two terrorism tactics (spectacular and physiological) plotted vis-à-vis Israeli-Palestinian actions and reactions shed light on the microscopic nuances of media rationalization of terrorization and Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making strategies. *Figure 11* breaks down how media respond to such tactics and furthermore reveals if and how each tactic affects the outcome political communication. Additionally, these rationalization strategies provide evidence of the type of persuasive wording (described in *Figure 8*, above) used and are therefore useful in answering the second research question.

Nature of actions and nature of responses give evidence in the rationalization of terrorization. Attacking terror structures, for example, are used to rationalize spectacular terrorism tactics (N= 217). [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 55.2%]. Hamas's da'wah, according to Israeli media, is considered a legitimate target since its social infrastructure supports terrorist activities. Weapons caches, rocket-launching sites, and smuggling tunnels are also part of the terror structure ensemble. Mass destruction and bombings only seem fitting to use against terror structures since these spectacular tactics are aimed at causing damage on a massive scale in an attempt to cripple or hinder any form of rebuilding by Hamas.

**Figure 10: Terrorism Tactics, Actions, and Responses in Israeli-Palestinian Media**



Moreover, civilian houses, mosques, and U.N. humanitarian buildings are also targeted, according to Israeli intelligence, because they house Hamas' weapons' cache. As described previously, Israel's mass destruction of the Hamas infrastructure can be seen as a form of collective punishment on the entire Gaza population [the Other (Said, 1994)] who rely on the Hamas-led government for civilian social programs, medical aid, and work opportunities. For example, the targeting of the local police force (run by Hamas) is considered part of Hamas' terror infrastructure.

Essentially, Israeli rationalization involves the grouping one enemy category into an entire Other – described by Said (1994) as the crux of Orientalist thinking. Hence Israeli media-used words, such as "Terror" and "Hamas", are associated with spectacular

terrorism, which is linked to attacks on Hamas' terror infrastructure (e.g., the entire Gaza infrastructure/population).

Another fitting link between tactics and nature of actions are that of occupation, religion, & nationalism as a tool to rationalize psychological terrorism (N= 217). Examples of this tool include declaring global jihad by Palestinian groups and individuals in the Palestinian Territories, settlement expansion by the Israeli government, resistance to occupation by Palestinians, destruction of Israel and establishment of a Palestinian state by Palestinian groups such as Hamas, Israel's ethnic cleansing of Palestinians as described by Palestinians, and so forth. This action encompasses anything related to the conflict in general – that is, two religious and ethnic groups engaged in a protracted conflict over the same territory.

Hence, psychological terrorism, as a rationality terror tactic, is used over time to suppress the morale of a given population and ultimately change the reality on the ground. This nature of action in the rationalization of terrorization also provides a strong relationship between psychological terror as a tactic and Palestinian-used words such as "Occupation", "Resistance", "Humanitarian", "Settlement", and "Siege."

Nature of responses to spectacular terrorism includes descriptions of attacks (N= 452) such as Operation Cast Lead – Israel's codename for its offensive in Gaza. Statistics of civilians killed in the operation are used to shed light on the destructive nature of spectacular terrorism. [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 64.6%]. Other responses within the attack rubric include statistics of missile attacks on Israeli towns by Hamas, and the Israeli blockade of Gaza (or "siege", according to Palestinian media). It is increasingly clear that certain tactics elicit certain

actions, and reactions. In this case, spectacular terrorism as the initial tactic is countered with evidence of the disastrous *outcome* of that tactic.

Similar to the nature of action, psychological terrorism evokes occupation, religion, and nationalism (N= 452) as the *outcome* of that tactic. Thus, the response action gives examples of psychological trauma felt over a prolonged period of time. Victimization through Oriental (Said, 1994) discourse is a common trait shared by Palestinians who are victims of psychological terrorization. Resurrecting the past through the Nakba (the Palestinian catastrophe), explaining the present with evidence of illegal Israeli settlements, and focusing on the future of a less-than-viable Palestinian state all share a common trait of psychological terrorization within the Palestinian cultural ethos of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Rationality tools act as support beams for natures of actions and responses. When psychological terror tactics, such as eight years of Hamas rocket fire or the ongoing Gaza blockade are used, the rationality tool for the action are media reports and speculations (N= 233). [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 34.5%].

Similarly, when spectacular terror such as mass destruction is used, the same rationality tool remains the overall media choice of each party – media choice referring to the three Israeli and three Palestinian media. Media reports and speculations can take on any form such as opinion pieces and media analysis of unfolding events. However these reports tend to be more subjective than objective, giving Israeli-Palestinian media the opportunity to have more control over the storyline. Most-often the narrative carries a

bias since the media make their own speculations and pass it off as objective news coverage.

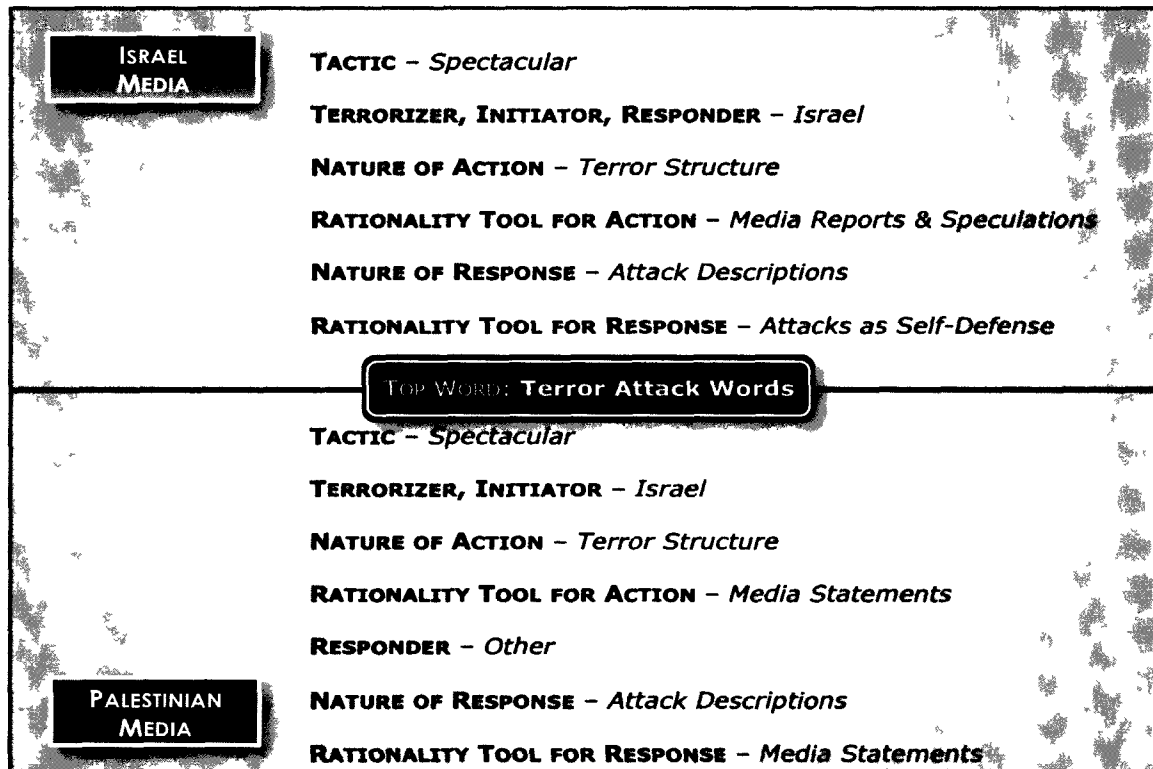
As a reactionary variable, the rationality tool for responses differs from action tools that rationalize terror. Psychological terror, for example, elicits non-violent responses such as media statements and interviews (N= 477). [A Chi-square test reveals a 99.9% confidence level with a strength level of 42.4%]. These types of response tools differ from media reports and speculations in that they involve the responses of the main players in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not their media representatives. For instance, the media may still spin a story but statements, interviews, and at times, bulletin communiqués, have a powerful reactionary action that allow actors to speak for themselves as oppose to media speculations. Some statements by Palestinians include a call to Jihad against Israelis while others call for an end to the Gaza economic blockade and the expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.

Spectacular terror, on the other hand, elicits a violent reaction. Attacks as self-defense from bombings and mass destruction are reported as the rationale in responding to immediate threats and uses of terror. Psychological terror tactics such as occupation and house demolitions tend to be protracted and have long-lasting effects on a population – hence the logic behind making media statements as a response tool. However if a tactic causes immediate harm to the individual, the natural *reactionary* response in this case would be attacks *labeled* as self-defense.

The following analysis explores the influence of the number one type of word used in Israeli-Palestinian media – terror attack words – as an independent variable and its relationship with dependent actors and actions variables in the rationalization of

terrorization (*Figure 11*). Words under this rubric describe terrorization through “Attack”, “Rocket”, “Siege”, “Fire”, and so forth. It was noted previously that most words described terrorization without using “Terror” or any of its variants. As in themes, both Israeli and Palestinian media uses terror attack words in divergent contexts.

**Figure 11: The Top Israeli-Palestinian Media Word and its Actions and Reactions**



A resurging pattern when analyzing Israeli media reveals terror attack words and Israelis dominate as terrorizers, initiators, and responders to terrorization. Hence according to Israelis media, Israelis acts as the main driving force behind the rationalization of terrorization. They attempt to control the message through media narratives to strategically communicate their position.

Looking at actions, another common pattern with respect to Israeli media reveals the link between terror attack words and the following: the main tactic used is spectacular terrorism; the nature of action to rationalize terrorism are Hamas terror infrastructures; the rationality tool for the action are media reports and speculations; the nature of response to the action or terror tactic are attack descriptions; the rationality tool for the response are attacks as self-defense. As a reminder, media reports and speculations can include opinion pieces and media analysis. Moreover, these reports tend to be bias due to in-house speculations of unfolding events. Terror attack words, like “Operation”, are used to rationalize attacking Hamas’ da’wah (Arabic for “social infrastructure.” Israel considers the da’wah to be a terror infrastructure, making all of Gaza the primary target of Operation Cast Lead).

Terror attack words are most-frequently used by Palestinian media and the following actors: Israel as terrorizer; Israel as initiator to rationalize terror; other actors such as human rights and advocacy groups as responders to terrorization or the nature of response. Humanitarian and other organizational responders to Israeli terrorization of Palestinians is a re-occurring theme reported in Palestinian media. Unlike Israeli media, who cite Israeli actors in an attempt to control the narrative, Palestinian media use international libertarian and humanitarian communities at their disposal as a communicative weapon in *responding* to terrorization.

Moreover, actions also differ for Palestinian media when terror attack words are most-frequently used. The terrorism tactic – spectacular terrorism – remains the same, as it is the number one tactic described by all media. For actions, the following is noted: the nature of action to rationalize terror are terror infrastructures; the rationality tool for the

action are media statements and interviews; the nature of response to the action or terror tactic are attack descriptions; the rationality tool for the response are again media statements and interviews.

It is increasingly clear through the Palestinian narrative that Palestinian media play the role of victimization at the hands of Israeli aggression. The terrorizer, for example, is Israel (unlike Israeli media where the terrorizer can also be Israel) with the responder being the international community. Israeli tools for response are attacks as self-defense whereas Palestinian response tools are media statements – hence a clear distinction between violent responses by Israel and non-violent responses by Palestinians. Palestinians, as the underdogs of the conflict, use their de facto *disadvantaged* position to their *advantage* through victimization of the Self (Said, 1994) in their political communication.

Trend data from figures 8 to 11 reveal how certain words and terrorism tactics affect political communication. They answer the second research question: “*Do certain words and terrorism tactics affect political communication rationalization of terrorization since they are known to garner more media attention as well as elicit certain responses than others?*” and also shed light on decision-making strategies by English-transnational media actors. Israel’s tactics of mass destruction during the Gaza War, for example, are known to garner negative media attention. The use of political communication to deflect criticism from the international community is expressed through use of attack words such as “Operation”, “Terror”, “ Hamas”, “Rockets”, and “Security.” More so, Israeli media rationalize mass destruction as means of targeting large intricate structures in Gaza such as tunnels, a university, a U.N. school, and

mosques, which are supposedly linked to terror activity. Finally Israeli media reiteration of Hamas rocket and mortar attack statistics over the last eight years acts as a justification for Israeli spectacular terror as well as psychological response to Hamas terror.

Psychological terror as described by Palestinians, for example, are the regulations of goods imposed on entering Gaza. While Israel claims the blockade diminishes weapon smuggling by Hamas, Palestinians argue that the “Siege” is the cause of a “Humanitarian Catastrophe” in Gaza. Similar to Israeli media, Palestinian media focus less on Hamas tactics of rocket fire and more on Israel’s tactics of mass destructions – producing a dialectical relationship between each actors’ tactics, filling the void of the failure for each media to report on their own tactics used.

### ***Decision-Making Outside the Vacuum***

Incorporating the microanalyses of all figures hitherto, demonstrates a clear distinction in the use of Israeli-Palestinian decision-makers, their rationality tools (Hodges, 1974; Snyder & Diesing, 1977; Ermarth, 1978; Hobbes, 1985; De Mul, 2004; Morgenthau, 2006), and the context (James, 1971; Said, 1994; Hall, 1997a; Buruma & Avishai, 2005) in which they operate. Beyond the scope of media rationalization tools, such as media reports and speculations and media statements, the rationalization of terrorization is expressed through the following analysis on decision-making and its communication as a rationalization component. Hence, in addressing the third research question, “*What do the data reveal about the decision-making process in structuring Israeli-Palestinian political communication in the rationalization of terrorization?*” is to explore state and non-state rationality – institutionalized logic versus individual/group logic while keeping

in mind Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) philosophy that decision-makers do not operate in a vacuum. The data reveals Israeli rationalization to be increasingly pragmatic in terms of what the Jewish state sets to accomplish – the crippling of Palestinian terror infrastructure in Gaza. The approach for a long-term security strategy reinforces Hobbes (1985) and Morgenthau's (2006) instrumental rationality and rational choice theory as well as principles of political realism such as self-interest. Israel's focus on Hamas' terror infrastructure as their nature of action to rationalize terror strikes a cord with a post-9/11 world in which any action (specifically terrorization) related to the theme of fighting terror becomes increasingly acceptable.

As part of their long-term rationalization, Israeli media, specifically the Israel Defense Forces and Arutz Sheva, are increasingly likely to use certain philosophies and theories more so than other media. The military media, for example, rationalize their terrorization by using James' (1971) argument of military-oriented altruistic motives (e.g., the greater good, a theme etched in post-9/11 rhetoric). Arutz Sheva, on the other hand, relies heavily on Occidental discourse (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) in which "Arabs" are constantly attacking "Jews" as part of a bid to declare global Jihad on the West.

What further anchors Israel's long-term goals is their rationality tool for terrorization. Media reports and speculations tend to reinforce the government position with a push toward generating speculations rather than referring to first person sources. This cohesive monolithic political communication creates a systematic and pragmatic approach in the rationalization of terrorization.

Israel's number one used word, "Terror" and its variants, coupled with its third used word "Military Operation" and seventh used word "Security" creates a trend in how

media rationalize terror. Words can carry manifest as well as latent meanings. Certain words supplanted within a given context help shape political communications through their psychological effects (Graber, 2005: 487-490). A key to successfully rationalizing terror, as noted previously, is to carry out acts of terror without using the word “Terror” or any of its variants. This gives the illusion that terrorization is not taking place – “Attack” and “Operation”, for example, are used by Israeli media when describing the terrorization of Palestinians and their infrastructure. Hence an all-encompassing definition of terrorism is necessary in order to link latent wording with acts committed by state, non-state, and individual groups against civilian targets (Jaggar, 2005).

Past conflicts demonstrate what world opinion will not tolerate when a military power reduces a stateless society to rubble, often causing large death counts.<sup>36</sup> Learning from historical miss-steps allows Israeli decision-makers to choose the best alternatives in rationalization terror based on a few obvious choices, and then increasing the bounds of those choices as new information becomes available (Snyder & Diesing, 1977: 345). A textbook example of Snyder and Diesing’s rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making tools lie in the relationship between terrorism tactics and nature of actions and responses to terrorism (recall *Figure 10*). Spectacular terrorism, specifically Israel’s mass destruction tactic, is used when rationalizing attacks on Hamas terror structures. Consequently, to gage Palestinian response as well as world public opinion,

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<sup>36</sup> For example, Israel’s infamous offensive in July 2002 on the Palestinian refugee camp, Jenin, received negative press coverage with Palestinian claims of a massacre committed by Israeli troops. Although subsequent reports revealed, according to Israel, that no such massacre took place, the negative press coverage had political, economic and diplomatic fallouts for Israel (Goodman & Cummings, 2003).

media reports and speculations are the rationality tools applied within the bounds, or limited information, of Israeli decision-makers.

Although trend data has shown patterns of the most-frequent outcomes of past Israeli engagement of Palestinians, not all scenarios are similar. More so, with the increasing proliferation of light-speed communication and increased user activity through the Web 2.0, expanding bounded rationality increases exponentially, keeping terror rationalization decision-makers on their toes. Thus in choosing media reports and speculations over media statements (Palestinians' favorite rationality tool), Israeli political communication is able to contract and expand based on new information. This flexibility enables Israel to maintain a cohesive mass communicative rhetoric of terrorization rationalization.

Non-state group rationality, on the other hand, is less pragmatic as the data show. The Palestinian rationality faults at two junctions: (1) short-term results (primary objective: end the Gaza War; secondary objective: end the economic siege on Gaza and the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem); (2) lack of cohesion. Where Israel falls under the category of a developed state, the stateless Palestinians do not necessarily have the luxury of strategic pragmatism. Research has shown that non-state actors can and do act rational in goal-oriented situations (Nacos, 2006; Pape 2006; Enders & Su, 2007). However, the multifaceted dimensions of Palestinian political communication through the many differing voices of the "Palestinian cause" can lead to a breakdown in rational decision-making and strategic implementations of those decisions.

An example of communicatively divergent goals is located in the Palestinians' nature of action. Self-defense, riots, and demonstrations are attempts to rationalize and

respond to terror. Using Snyder and Diesing's (1977) suggestion of rational choice decision-making as primary and bounded rationally as auxiliary, it seems evident that Palestinians try various tactics at rationalizing terror, including that of victim under Israeli occupation and aggression (Said, 1994). For example, their main theme of libertarianism, their choice of words ("Occupation", "Resistance" and so forth), their description of Israelis as terrorizers and Palestinians as victims, all fall under the victimization narrative. However, the short-term disjointed actions and media statements reveal – although rational – a less pragmatic and conflicting approach at rationalizing and responding to terrorization.

Unlike the Israeli media, which uses media speculations as a flexible tool to constantly update its strategy, Palestinians' decentralized actors, actions, and tools put further strains on the lack of social cohesion within the Palestinian Territories (Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem). This is shown time and again in both Israeli and Palestinian media reports on statements made by Hamas, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Fatah, the Palestinian Authority, and other warring factions. These parties, who have been at opposite ends of the spectrum in agreeing to what is in the best interest of the Palestinian people, were making the attempt to unite as one voice during the Gaza War. Additionally other actors (humanitarian organization) can initiate and respond to terrorization.

Conflicts between some of these parties were evident in the lead-up to the War as well as during the release of the controversial Goldstone Report. Less shocking is Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas' statements and retractions that supported Israel's initial bombardment of Hamas facilities – a brief position held at the time, which sought

to oust or weaken Abbas' Hamas rival and their stronghold in Gaza. More so, Abbas' brief delay of pushing the Goldstone Report to the U.N. Human Rights Council after its release in September of 2009 further exposes fragmented Palestinian political communication during times of low stress. Ultimately, divergent goals, decentralized Palestinian representation, and short-term results are ingredients for a less-than long-term pragmatic Palestinian political communication.

Looking at Israel's historic and geographic position, it is only logical that historical and cultural influences (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) affect Israeli decision-making. U.S. strategic rational decision-making during the Cold War is a case and point in stark comparison to Israeli rationality. Geographically, the U.S. lies oceans apart to major hot spots influenced by the Soviet Bloc. Only when American security was threatened close to home (Latin America and Cuba), were decision-makers altering their strategies in face of communist threats. The geopolitical situational threat facing Israel is a daily reality (as it is for Palestinians as well).

Not only is Israel situated in a complex Arab/Muslim cultural and tribal region, its Western appearance and Jewish religion are viewed as a threat to states in the region. Several wars between Israel and its Arab neighbors as well as proxy wars between Israel and Iran (fought on behalf of Lebanon's Hezbollah) are key factors in what Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) calls the historic and cultural implications of rational decision-making. Thus the narrative of Israeli security and the decision-making behind rationalizing terrorization is omnipresent with Israel's existence as a Jewish state at the western corner of the Arab world.

Palestinian decision-making is specifically less pragmatic, not necessarily as a result of Palestinian disorganization but as an outcome of historical circumstances, which are inextricably intertwined to that of Israel and the Arab world in general. Hobbes (1985) believes rationality is not limited to certain types of men or states, but to all mankind. Dilthey (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) promotes the human subject as a bias in his/her decision-making when plotting out rational goal-oriented scenarios. Palestinians, as well as Israelis, occupy both spheres of these modern philosophers' worldview on reason. The victimization role carried out by Palestinians and the discourse surrounding Orientalism (Said, 1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) and post-colonialism as a method of rationalizing terror all fit under Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) umbrella of humanity as a non-omniscient being only capable of maximum efficiency based on his/her historical and situational circumstances.

An additional brief commentary on private media is necessary to understand their decision-making rationalization. As stipulated previously (*Figure 6*), data for *both* Israeli's Arutz Sheva and Palestinian's The Palestine Telegraph were unavailable for the three-month period surrounding the Gaza War. Data was only available surrounding the chatter of the Goldstone Report. Because both Israeli and Palestinian private media had this unique feature, it can be concluded to be part of their decision-making in the rationalization of terrorization. Public access to archival data is an important tool when addressing such phenomena. If only present data is available, one assumption can be the strategic rationality behind presenting only the most-recent news and information.<sup>37</sup> For

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<sup>37</sup> The Arutz Sheva news media website is part of a greater television media network and should have the financial means of archiving and providing users with old news samples. However this is not the case.

instance, inconsistencies may arise between previous and current media reports and analyses. Although all Israeli media in thesis follow coherent long-term rationalization goals, hiccups may arise in previous and contemporary reporting and thus the only means of avoiding this is to focus on present news and information items while limiting available data from past news and information items. Although disjointed and less cohesive, Palestinian decision-making rationalization follows the same logic – at least for their private media.

### **Israeli and Palestinian Political Communication for the Rationalization of Terrorization**

Microscopic analyses of Israeli-Palestinian political communication expands to a macroscopic view by generalizing individual components of the first section through qualitative and quantitative analyses and groups variables in order to explain political communication for Israeli-Palestinian rationalization of terrorization at the aggregate level. The holistic analysis addresses the fourth research question:

RQ4:           What are the main rationalizations of terrorization components of Israeli-Palestinian political communication?

For Israelis, the rationalization of terrorization is communicated through their three online media: the Israel Defense Forces, the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, and Arutz Sheva. For Palestinians, Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades, the Palestine News Network, and The Palestine Telegraph make up their online media. *Figure 12* plots the nine variables relevant in communicating and rationalizing political terrorism. As a

reminder, beyond the scope of media rationalization tools, such as media reports, speculations, and statements, it is the six media’s decision-making strategies on what and how they report events, that communicate their rationalization of terrorization through political communication.

**Figure 12: Israeli-Palestinian Political Communication of the Rationalization of Terrorization**



The first variable plotted is terrorism tactics. Israel’s most-used tactic is weapons of mass destruction. These weapons’ superiority and sophistication, to that of the Palestinians and their firepower, are able to reduce city infrastructures to rubble. They include arsenal from naval power to air power and land power generally available to any strong military. Tank shells, precise-guided missiles, and artillery shells are but some bombing tactics

used against civilians and the Gaza infrastructure. These tactics are responsible for Palestinian injuries and deaths on a massive scale.

Palestinians' favorite weapons of choice are projectiles. These include rockets, scud missiles, and mortar shells. Although not as powerful as Israel's arsenal, Palestinian projectiles are able to reach deep into southern Israel and often damage civilian infrastructure. According to the Israeli media, eight years of projectiles launched at Israel have injured and killed civilians and have made it difficult for Israelis to lead a normal life due to psychological stress.

The Israeli government is considered the main terrorizer through its military, the Israel Defense Forces. Similarly, Hamas is considered the main terrorizer through its armed-wing, the Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades. Appropriately, the Israeli government is considered the initiator to rationalize terror. Although the Israeli Defense Forces press officers as well as distinguished figures inside Israel are known to initiate the rationalization process, their voices merely echo the official government position. Likewise for the Palestinian people, Hamas are the main actors to initiate the rationalization of their terrorization.

Israel's nature of action to rationalize terror is its overwhelming references to Hamas' terror infrastructure. Israeli media identify schools, mosques, police headquarters, and civilian housing as part of this infrastructure. Palestinian media, on the other hand, rationalize terror through claims of self-defense, riots, and demonstrations. Palestinian media reported on the Palestinians' self-defense against Israeli aggression through forms of resistance (violent and non-violent) and gave examples of resisting the occupation, the Gaza siege, and Operation Cast Lead. Rioters at the temple mount in

Jerusalem were calling for a third Intifada (an uprising) while Palestinian faction groups were organizing their own riots and demonstrations against the Gaza War. These actions were also evident in the time period between August and October of 2009 when the controversial Goldstone Report was released – however they occurred less frequently than in times of crisis.

Within the Israeli narrative, the media tend to use reports and speculations as tools to rationalizing mass destruction. Opinion pieces, observations, and analyses by experts are passed off as news more frequently than first-person accounts. For example, Arutz Sheva news items explain why Israel launched the Gaza offensive, media descriptions of preemptive attacks against Palestinians due to imminent threats, and analyses by the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center.

For Palestinian media, they refer to the latter – media statements made by officials directly related to the conflict. These include statements by Hamas officials and other Palestinian factions, Ezzedeem Al Qassam Brigades claiming responsibility through the Web 2.0., Palestinian individual statements directly affected by the Gaza War, and statements by human right organizations calling an end to Israeli belligerence.

Palestinian citizens are the focus of Israeli terrorization and are considered the terrorized. Conversely, Israeli citizens are terrorized by the Palestinian Hamas. However unlike the similarities between terrorizers and initiators, responders to Israeli aggression are Hamas and human rights movements. Common to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, human rights organizations provide a secondary voice to that of established Palestinians parties (whether it be the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the past, the Palestinian Authority in the present, or in this case, the current elected Hamas government in Gaza).

Because of the protracted humanitarian situation affecting the Palestinian people in Gaza and the Occupied Territories, human right organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency have been providing health, nutritional, educational, and institution building assistance to the Palestinians for over four decades. It is only fitting that these groups, as secondary actors, respond to Israeli terrorization through political communication techniques and transnational media in order to shed light on the humanitarian situation within the content analysis timeframes.

The Israeli government and the Israel Defense Forces are considered responders to Hamas terrorization of the Israeli people. Both the government and the Israel Defense Forces military are key players in political communication through their rhetoric as reported by the media.

For the nature of response, Israeli attack descriptions are the rationalization method most-commonly reported by the media. These descriptive responses include the targeting of Hamas infrastructure such as weapons caches, rocket launching sites situated atop buildings and in close proximity to civilian infrastructure, and smuggling tunnels between the Gaza and Egypt boarder, which Israel claims is a sophisticated network for bringing in weapons to use against Israeli civilians.

Other descriptive attacks include how Arabs target Jewish civilians with beatings, setting houses ablaze, and lynching Jews in both Israel proper and settlement blocks in the West Bank. The former attack descriptions were centralized in the building-up to and including the Gaza War. The Latter descriptions of ethnic violence were predominantly covered surrounding the release of the Goldstone Report. However the media were quick

to remind readers of Hamas' terror infrastructure and eight years of rocket fire as the rationale behind Israel's offensive war. The media also reported sporadic skirmishes between Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades and Israeli soldiers.

Attack descriptions, riots, and demonstrations are Palestinians' nature of response to Israeli terrorization. Unlike Israeli attack descriptions, whose focus on 'terror' infrastructures and ethnic violence toward Jews establishes the building blocks of Israeli cyclical terrorization, Palestinian attack descriptions focus on Islamic places of worship, education facilities (U.N. school), and civilian housing. The media also include riots and demonstrations as the nature of response by Palestinian factions and Israeli and Palestinian civil society and human rights organizations. As part of Palestinians' political communication, attacks by Hamas and Arabs toward Jews are rarely mentioned. The absence of this is a finding in itself when investigating Palestinian rhetoric since it is what the media *do not* say becomes a cursory of Palestinian cyclical rationalized violence.

Media statements tend to be the staple of Palestinian action and response tools of Israeli terrorization. Similar to the rationality tool for the action, response tools include militant press statements asking for unity between warring Palestinian factions in the "Occupied" Territories in order to cohesively respond to the Israeli assault on Gaza, Palestinian leaders in the West Bank calling for cessation of hostilities, and Islamic, Christian and human rights groups making statements to the media on the civilian death toll and increasing humanitarian crisis, before, during and after the Gaza War.

Israeli response tools differ from that of the Palestinians. While Palestinians use the media to make public statements, Israelis engage in targeting Hamas infrastructure as

self-defense in order to change the security situation in southern Israel – including putting an end to eight years of Hamas rocket fire. More so, the Israel Defense Forces are described as defending themselves by returning militant fire with their border patrol units.

## **Wrapping Up**

The proactive and reactive Israeli-Palestinian political communication and its decision-making strategies explored above are a main component of this thesis. They provide the anchor in which all other micro-nuance issues of the conflict build upon in the rationalization of terrorization.

Several re-occurring trends shape the contexts in which decision-makers operate. Culture plays a predominant contextual role as decision-makers rationalize terrorization. Israel is de facto labeled as the main terrorizer for the following reasons: First, due to Israeli media's descriptive accounts of attacks on Palestinians, Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism is applicable to Israeli actions; Second, Palestinian media's focus on victimization, shying away from describing their attacks on Israelis, creates the atmosphere of Israeli aggression. Said's (1994) Oriental discourse on post-colonial victimization acts as a cultural representational system (Hall, 1997a). A Palestinian culture of victimization is thus reinforced through Palestinian media reportage.

Oriental discourse (Said, 1994) is further driven by Israeli rationalization on attacking Hamas' terror infrastructure. The targeting of Hamas and Hamas-related buildings (nearly every infrastructure in Gaza) makes every Palestinian living in the Gaza Strip a legitimate target. Grouping the Islamic Hamas "Terrorist" group with the entire

Gaza population amounts to stereotyping the diversity within the Palestinian community as the Other.

The Israeli government (Israel Defense Forces) is the number one terrorizer followed by Hamas's Ezzedeen Al-Qassam Brigades. As the main terrorizer, the Israeli government also initiates and responds to the rationalization of terrorization. Under these circumstances, James' (1971) philosophy on states' legitimization of war is applicable. For Palestinians, responders to Israeli terrorization underline James' philosophy. These include human rights organizations and Palestinians themselves whereas Israeli responders are mostly Israelis (due to the fact that Israel as a democratic state speaks on behalf of its citizens while Palestinians are aided by international human rights bodies because of their stateless status).

Words and themes provide further evidence of the circuit of cultural representation by both parties' media coverage. For Israel, defining its attacks on Palestinians serves the state's role in its patriotic duties and self-defense (James, 1971; Hobbes, 1985; Morgenthau, 2006). Additionally, its first and second choice of words is "Terror" and its variant and "Hamas." This discourse situates Israel with West in fighting terrorism – e.g., the Islamic group Hamas – and thus fits under Said's (1994) Orientalism framework. Palestinians underpin this discourse when using such words as "Occupation", "Humanitarian", "Resistance", and their variants.

Spectacular terrorism tactics such as mass destruction, bombings, and missile attacks, are the number one tactic described by all media followed by psychological terrorism. These two major tactics affect the nature of actions and responses as well as their rationality tools in the rationalization of terrorization. Spectacular terrorism, for

example, evokes a reactionary and violent response, while psychological terrorism (prolonged psychological strain) evokes media statements and interviews as a response tool. Moreover, they reveal components of decision-making strategies due to each tactic's varying response. Therefore using spectacular terror over psychological terror, elicits different responses by each party.

Data retrieved from private Israeli-Palestinian media surrounding the chatter of the Goldstone Report revealed Palestinian terrorization to be increasing in the months after the Gaza War while Israeli terrorization to be decreasing. An account for this is Arutz Sheva, Israel's pro-settler private media, which focuses more on Palestinian terrorization.

Times of low stress also pointed to divergent rationalization topics between Israeli and Palestinian media such as Arutz Sheva's reportage of Arab attacks against Jews, Arab calls to global Jihad, details surrounding the abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit by Hamas, and defending against the Report's war crimes accusations. The private Palestinian media, The Palestine Telegraph, deals with topics surrounding the accuracy of the Goldstone Report, Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, illegal Israeli settlements, and victimization at the hands of Israel through the War and the economic "siege" on Gaza. Israeli libertarianism themes are centered on the core arguments of the Goldstone Report – that both Israel and Hamas were responsible for committing war crimes during the Gaza War. Palestinian media, however, focuses their libertarianism themes around the War itself and the contents of the Report and what they describe as Israel's gross violation of Palestinian human rights. In addition, the Palestinian-led government in the

West Bank put forth motions to reject the Report while Palestinians in both the West Bank and Gaza embraced it.

In addition to media-used tools of rationalization, such as reports and speculations, general decision-making strategies by both parties on what and how to report are contributing communicative components to political communication in the rationalization of terrorization. Using Hobbes (1985), Morgenthau (2006), and Snyder and Diesing's (1977) decision-making models, Israeli media decision-makers are increasingly strategic in their long-term objectives while Palestinian media's rationalization (due to competing voices) are short-term and less cohesive. The Israel Defense Forces media operate within altruistic rationalization (James, 1971) as part of their decision-making strategy while Arutz Sheva invokes Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) as a means to identify Arab/Muslim hatred of Jews and the West. More so, *both* private Israeli and Palestinian media limited archival access and presented only contemporary news and information items for cohesive purposes.

At the aggregate level, based on qualitative and quantitative analysis, each party's political communication of the rationalization of terrorization tools varied. Nine variables were chosen as the main components of communicating rationalization and were supported by their microscopic analysis.

This chapter explored the most significant findings in the qualitative and quantitative media content analysis coupled with components of historical-comparative analysis of Israeli-Palestinian communication of rationalization of terrorization. The nine most-relevant variables were discussed in terms of investigating political communication in order to describe Israeli and Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. Israeli-

Palestinian persuasive techniques were taken a step further and explained how receivers of terror also responded through actions and media discourses. The final section brought the relevant components of the literature review and methodology together and put into perspective the multi-dimensional issues prevalent to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Chapter 5 deals with the implications of Israeli-Palestinian political communication and the overall research findings to the contribution of knowledge and future research prospects.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

#### Significant Findings and Discussion

Israeli and Palestinian political communication differ from one another in their rationalization of terrorization. Beyond the apparent tactics used by Hamas (projectiles) and the Israeli government (mass destruction), Israel's overwhelming use of media reports and speculations compared to Palestinian tools of media statements, attacks, riots, and demonstrations to justify their acts of terror, provide a window into the rationale used by both parties. Relying on second person accounts (media speculations) give the Israeli media ample room to maneuver as part of their dynamic political communication.

Palestinians, on the other hand, prefer sourcing statements made by various Palestinian advocates. Moreover, decision-making strategies of what and how Israeli-Palestinian media report events, gives additional insight on the communicative rationalization of terrorization. A pitfall of the Palestinian political communication exposes the divergent voices used in the rationalization of terrorization. In doing so, Palestinian rationalization is delegitimized and influencing the perception of the global audience becomes increasingly difficult.

Another finding contributing to Palestinian divergence are the major themes of human rights, justice, and non-violent actions and responses to terrorization. It is no surprise then that libertarianism is the major theme in Palestinian media reporting, as they are the weaker player in the conflict. Their reports focused on civil society movements and international laws and conventions, which are aimed at ending Israeli aggression in

general. The role of non-aggressive resistance and victimization, as described by James (1971) and Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) philosophy and theory, further aids in driving the perception of David versus Goliath. This in turn constructs and reinforces a culture of Palestinian victimization through Palestinian media representation. However, these contributing factors to rationalizing terror only demonstrate Palestinian media's ability to focus on its short-term strategy of terrorization rationalization. When observing the protracted conflict from a macroscopic perspective, Palestinian self-interest (for example, achieving their expressed goals of ending the six decade occupation) is less evident than Israel's pragmatic goals, as described in their terrorization.

Attack-related themes, for example, constitute Israeli media reporting since Israel's goal was to eradicate Hamas' terror infrastructure. Because Israeli media rely heavily on in-house speculation as well as generalizations from very few experts, their political communication is able to adapt to real-time changes on the ground. Coupled with the unifying voice described by Israeli media as well as the media content (themes and words) Israel is able to provide a cohesive strategic pragmatic outlet of terrorization rationalization. This in turn is more likely to garner sympathy from the international community and therefore reduce criticism of Israel's actions, thus allowing them to continue their terrorization of Palestinians. This is evident in Israel's media content in which Israel's predominate use of the word "Terror" and its variants elicits sympathy with the West – who's share of terror related events have been a pressing issue in a post-9/11 world. More so, words such as "Military Operation" and "Security" reinforce the notion of a Western state doing its part to rid the world of terrorism. Clever enough, Israeli political communication uses these words to rationalize *its terrorization* without

direct reference to terrorizing Palestinians – except for the Gaza infrastructure, which Israel argues is a Hamas terror infrastructure.

The research questions provide the path in which to understand, explore, and extrapolate from Israeli-Palestinian political communication. Said (1994, 1995, 2003a; 2003b; 2004) and Hall's (1997a) theories identify with Palestinian post and neo-colonial discourse through narratives of "Occupation", "Settlements" and "Resistance," thus reinforcing the long-held Palestinian position of the victimized struggling for statehood against the oppressor. Hobbes (1985), Morgenthau (2006), and Snyder and Diesing's (1977) philosophy and theories are applicable to both Israeli-Palestinian political communication, but are increasingly applicable to Israel's political communication whose efficiency is described by its long-term, flexible cohesive strategy. Within this rubric, the Israel Defense Forces media described altruistic motives for its terrorization, reinforcing James' (1971) philosophy of military-oriented states' moral rationalization for terrorization. Israeli and Palestinian political communication gives an overarching view of how English-transnational media attempt to persuade the global audience. Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality model were evident in the decision-making strategies comparing spectacular and psychological terrorism to responsive actions.

Israeli media reports differed in times of high stress compared low stress situations since the Israeli media focused on describing Israeli terrorization during the Gaza War. Chatter surrounding the Goldstone Report had Israeli private media increasingly focusing on Palestinian terrorization through Arab attacks on Jews and calls to global Jihad by Muslims in the Israeli-Palestinian territories – Arutz Sheva consistently

invoking Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) as a means to identify Arab hatred of Jews and the West. Additionally, the absence of archival data by *both* private Israeli and Palestinian media (Arutz Sheva and The Palestine Telegraph, respectively) for the Gaza War indicates the necessity to maintain a cohesive narrative and avoid inconsistencies in news reporting and information by focusing only on contemporary news items.

Returning to the diverging Palestinian positions, when comparing times of high stress versus low stress situations, some Palestinian positions (specifically the Palestinian Authority, which controls the West Bank) rejected the Goldstone Report at its release in September of 2009 – further eroding the relationship between them and Hamas and segments of the international community who supported the Report’s findings. These positions further support the political tensions between Hamas and its West Bank rivals during the initial bombardment of Gaza in which Mahmoud Abbas’ (Palestinian Authority leader) supported the Israeli offensive. The diverging ideas between Palestinians during times of high stress and low stress situations affect Palestinian political communication of rationalizing terror in its lack of a monolithic cohesive continuing narrative through its decision-making strategies of what and how to report on news items. Mending the fragmented Palestinian narrative is increasingly important during the second timeframe (August 15, 2009-October 15, 2009) since a significant finding revealed Palestinian terrorization to be on the rise while Israeli terrorization was on the decline.

## **Thesis Summary**

The purpose of this thesis was to explore Israeli and Palestinian political communication of the rationalization of terrorization. The research problematic sought to explain *how* these warring parties (specifically the Israeli government and the Palestinian Hamas group) were able to engage in the rationalization of killing others in light of the increasing media attention surrounding the protracted conflict. Aiding governments and groups in the rationalization of terrorization were individuals and their respective media outlets. This thesis' focus involved the lead-up to and including the Gaza War of 2008-2009 as well as the chatter surrounding the release of the Goldstone Report in September of 2009.

The literature provided themes, concepts, and philosophical roots coming from Hobbes' (1985) instrumental rationality, James' (1971) moral reasoning toward conflict, Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) critique of historical reason. Theories included Morgenthau's (2006) classical political realism, Snyder and Diesing's (1977) rational actor and bounded rationality decision-making theory, Said's (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004) Orientalism, its components, and its counter-thesis, Occidentalism (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), Hall's (1997a) cultural representation, and Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorism. These ideas were synthesized into a theoretical framework and incorporated into the research questions.

Hobbes' (1985) belief of instrumental rationality guiding state and non-state decision-making as well as state foreign policy was underpinned by Morgenthau's classical realism (2006) on international relations theory. Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) introduction of historic and cultural circumstance

affecting decision-makers gave rationality the human perspective. James (1971) provided the moral legitimacy backdrop in which states argue as the rationale to arms. Moreover his philosophical position on rational minds seeking diplomatic solutions and his support of pacifism supported the persuasive ways in which Israelis and Palestinians rationalized terror. This thesis adopted Snyder and Diesing's (1977) recommendation that rational actor and bounded rationality be combined to provide a realistic approach to unknown information and the dynamic enterprise of decision-making.

Said's (1994) *Orientalism* (the negative way in which the Orient is grasped by the Occident) and Hall's (1997a) theory of cultural representation provided a foundation by which Israelis (and Palestinians) use in the rhetoric behind political communication – especially with the asymmetrical power/knowledge dynamic through post neo-colonial aggressor/victimization. More so *Orientalism's* (Said, 1994) counter-thesis, *Occidentalism* (Buruma & Avishai, 2005), provided the backdrop by which Palestinians use to generalize the West. Hall's (1997a) cultural representation assisted in identifying how language is the driving force behind defining and reinforcing a culture.

The theoretical framework adopted an all-encompassing definition of terrorism provided by Jaggard (2005). The definition was able to judge Israeli and Palestinian actions by the same standard, regardless of the nature of those committing the act (one democratic state versus a non-democratic group).

The methodology used in exploring the research problematic was quantitative and qualitative in nature. It involved the use of media content analysis as the main research design. Historical-comparative design components were used where necessary, such as assessing the reliability and validity of the samples collected as well as addressing high

stress (Gaza War) and low stress (Goldstone Report on the Gaza War) situations in the case study. The first ten words directly and indirectly relating to terrorism were coded into the SPSS statistical analysis software. Cross-tabulation and statistical testing was then run to identify statistically significant data, relationships, and relationship strengths.

With the help of the theoretical framework, concepts were operationalized and defined as variables in order to be measured. 17 variables were created with 13 measurable at the nominal-level. Non-probability purposive sampling was used to collect and analyze six online English-transnational media: the Israel Defense Forces (military), the Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center (independent), Arutz Sheva (private), Ezzedeen Al Qassam Brigades (military), the Palestine News Network (independent), and The Palestine Telegraph (private). The nature of the media (English-transnational) was required in order to explore how Israelis and Palestinians, from their respective territories, rationalized terror to the international community through online media. Each media had a representative counter-part. For example, three Israeli media were military, independent, and private in nature while the same criteria was used in selecting the Palestinian media. This thesis content analyzed 745 samples from the six media in times of high and low stress situations, looking at both the Gaza War timeframe (November 1, 2008–January 31, 2009) and the chatter surrounding the Goldstone Report timeframe (August 15, 2009–October 15, 2009).

With the aid of the theoretical framework, four research questions were generated in order to better grasp how Israelis and Palestinians rationalize terror at the microscopic level. Moreover it shed light as to what the data may reveal about the protracted conflict in general.

The findings revealed two distinct Israeli-Palestinian political communications – one for Israeli rationalization of terrorization and one for Palestinian rationalization of terrorization. From a macroscopic perspective, the Israeli political communication was revealed to be more rational and pragmatic in an attempt to secure long-term results while Palestinian political communication was found to be short-term and lacking a unifying cohesive voice. Each actor used varying terrorism tactics but Israel relied specifically on its military arsenal, using mass destruction bombings of Palestinian infrastructure while Hamas used rocket and mortar shell projectiles, targeting northern Israeli towns.

Action and response tools varied for both groups, with Israeli media focusing on its speculations that are passed off as news while Palestinian media referred to statements made by various Palestinian advocates. Humanitarian efforts and civil society dominated Palestinian media themes with references of victimization at the hands of the Israeli government and Israeli settlers. These themes evoked underlying concepts present in James (1971), Said (1994; 1995; 2003a; 2003b; 2004), and Hall's (1997a) philosophy and theories.

Data for Israeli media revealed the use of Hobbes (1985), Morgenthau (2006), and Snyder and Diesing's (1977) concepts of rationality and decision-making. Moreover, Oriental (Said, 1994) and Occidental (Buruma & Avishai, 2005) rhetorical discourses were present in both political communication words sampled and action and reaction tools as well as part of Israeli private media's decision-making factor. James' (1971) philosophy was also utilized within the Israeli military media's decision-making strategy as part of an altruistic rationale for Israel's terrorization. Dilthey's (Hodges, 1974; Ermarth, 1978; De Mul, 2004) historical and cultural philosophies and their affect on

rational decision-making was evident when investigating Israeli-Palestinian political communication due to in part to the content and the way in which each player structured their strategies. Additionally, the decisions involved in how and what the media reports was part of the communicative rationalization of terrorization.

Comparing stress (the Gaza War) and low stress (the Goldstone Report) situations found that Israeli media were more focused on Palestinian terrorization during low stress. Palestinians and Palestinian advocates were communicating competing messages. The lack of Palestinian cohesion, expressed through the media and political communication, created a situation where it was difficult to rationalize terrorization, specifically when data revealed Palestinian terrorization on the rise while Israeli terrorization on the decline. More so, to maintain a cohesion narrative, *both* Israeli (Arutz Sheva) and Palestinian (The Palestine Telegraph) private media did not give access to archival data (the Gaza War), allowing access only to contemporary news items and information.

### **Limitations and Implications**

There are a few limitations of the study to consider. One such limitation is the high volume of Israeli terrorization [stipulated in accordance with Jaggar's (2005) definition of terrorization]. However, a possible explanation in understanding this limitation is the period content analyzed. From December 27th, 2008 to January 18th, 2009 Israel launched Operation Cast Lead in hopes of weakening Hamas rule in Gaza as well as changing the security situation at the Gaza-Israel border. This opens the door to other areas of research such as past instances of terrorization. For example, during the second intifada, Palestinian suicide terrorism was on the rise. Comparing Israeli data from the

Gaza War to the Second Intifada may demonstrate useful when looking at high levels of terrorization from both parties.

The selection of certain media over others may also limit the scope of Israeli political communication. If, for example, the *Jerusalem Post* (conservative Israeli newspaper) replaces (or in addition) an Israeli media, the Israeli political communication may look different. If *The Voice of Palestine* ( Hamas news media) was to replace or was to be added to the Palestinian media, then perhaps the victimized would become the victimizers.

Moreover the second timeframe of the study is unique because it looks at the discourse surrounding a controversial report by a respectable (Israeli) Judge living in South Africa who accused both Israel and Hamas of war crimes during Operation Cast Lead. Applying these political communications to future instances of terrorization would have to look at similar timeframes in which similar actors engaged in terrorization. High stress situations (another War) would be have to be accounted for vis-à-vis low stress situations (U.N. backed report investigating the War).

However as a general rule of thumb, a crisis within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is usually followed by an investigation by a U.N. led body (Finkelstein, 2008). For example, the recent crisis in which a humanitarian aid flotilla ship, bound for Gaza, was attacked by Israeli forces (Israel argues the crew attacked first) is now being reviewed for a U.N. led probe. The probe, supported by Palestinians, Turkey, other nations, and human rights organizations, is an attempt to bring those responsible for the deadly attack to justice. Although there are some notable differences between the aid flotilla crisis and the Gaza War, it is nonetheless plausible to look to Israeli-Palestinian political

communication in the rationalization of terrorization. With this said, the purpose of this thesis' findings is to predict future instances of rationalization of terrorization through Israeli-Palestinian political communication. Its contribution to knowledge is twofold: First, this thesis explores something that does not yet exist (e.g., exploring how adversaries in conflict use political communication to engage in the rationalization of terrorization); Second, should such a similar high and low stress situation ensue in the near future, readers and researchers can refer to this thesis' findings on the political communication to be used by Israelis and Palestinians in the rationalization of terrorization.

Future research may try to build the political communication explored in this thesis into models based on their decision-making and cultural components. Additionally, future studies could include expanding Israeli-Palestinian strategies to incorporate how receptive the transnational audience is to the rationalization of terrorization. Is the audience influenced or persuaded by Israeli-Palestinian political communication? Does it elicit change in how the audience views the conflict in general? How can Israeli-Palestinian political communication be improved in order to ensure they have a positive attitude on readers? Are more security-related themes and humanitarian words necessary to ensure approval by the international community? Is playing the victimization card by Palestinians working in wining the hearts and minds of readers? Will wining the hearts and minds elicit change? Is an array of Palestinian voices beneficial to the cause or do these voices drown out those who are actually suffering from daily violence? Another expansive approach to the research would be to explore how the secondary tactic of

psychological terror affects overall political communication in general by looking for changes or similarities within rationality tools.

An additional future implication of the findings falls within the sphere of game theory. This thesis provides an important first step before one looks at the application of game theory as a strategic decision-making tool in tackling the Israel-Palestine subject. A researcher may raise such questions as: “Is it rational to use such tactics?” or “What are the ethical and financial implications of Israeli-Palestinian tools of rationalization of terrorization?” In order to tackle these questions, a researcher must investigate the political communication explored in this thesis.

Based on this thesis’ research and findings, there lies a strong possibility that Israelis and Palestinians will use similar political communication in the rationalization of terrorization in future crises. What is even more certain is that both groups will continue down the path of terrorization rationalization until a solution can be found to the long-standing conflict.

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