Military Resilience in Low Intensity Conflicts: The Dynamics of Asymmetry as a Challenge and Response
France-Algeria, Britain-Ireland, Russia-Chechnya, Israel-The Palestinian Authority

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Presentation Outline

- Conceptual Framework
- A short critical survey on the state of the art
- Some paradoxical hypotheses
- Results

Low Intensity Conflict-General Features

- A LIC can be the continuation of a full-scale war, a separate episode that develops and evolves, and eventually may develop into full-scale warfare.

- Its combines non-violent actions, such as civil protest (strikes demonstrations and disruption of order); along with violent acts. Terms such as popular uprising, guerrilla warfare, terrorism, civil disobedience, a revolutionary war, a war of subversion possess common features and intend to achieve goals with strategic political significance.

- The forces participating are irregulars who do not belong to an organized military nor are they part of any regular army.

- The choice of a certain mode of action is made in accord with the measure of its contribution to achieving the goals of the conflict.

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Different motivations with common characteristics

- LICs have a political purpose, and their resolution is accomplished by a change in social awareness caused by long-term exhaustion- Psychological Warfare

- Political considerations are dominant while the military-operational consideration is secondary . The main outcomes are those of consciousness while the physical outcomes are secondary.

- Enduring conflicts

- The management of the conflicts is based on the ability to supervise the intensity of the friction.

- Possess a basic situation of asymmetry in the power of the opposing sides

Asymmetry – Basic Profile

1.   **Asymmetry in the basic national data-** territory (geo-strategy), population, resources, power and economic ability, status and location in the international arena.

2. **Asymmetry in the types of perceptions and interpretations** of phenomena, behaviors, expressions and types of national, social and political reactions.

3.   **Asymmetry in the data of status,** support, and international contacts, especially with dominant international bodies.

4. **Asymmetry in technology-** technologizing and computerization of national systems;

5. **Asymmetry in the amount of possible damage to the home front** and its resilience, in the measure of dependence and reliance on the home front for building and operating military force;

6. **Asymmetry in the human, personal and group military abilities and qualities-** Courage, discipline, willingness, readiness to sacrifice, battle spirit ; methods and capabilities of command and control, cohesion, professional skill, obligation, knowledge and intellectual-professional flexibility

Low Intensity Conflicts Asymmetry as a Challenge

- Dynamic problems for political and military decision-makers - deal with both the adaptability and the mobility of an enemy who is inferior in warfare power.

- The combination of relatively simple armaments and technologies that have media impact

- The framework of a strategy directed by cultural principles opposed to Western values are at the basis of the "problem of asymmetry"

- Unlike classical large-scale warfare, LIC represents a different warfare reality - beginning in the general rules of using force, unique operational perceptions in a unique arena and ending with problems of cohesion and motivation particular to this situation.

Resilience is a different challenge in different situations

A full-scale war places unique demands on the resilience of the military organization, and routine times has their own demands on resilience. Though the latter is not characterized with significant operative loads, it possesses challenges to military resilience.

- The objectives of warfare and training framework of regular armies correspond with the "rules of the game" of battle fields between state actors and regular armies. However, to fighters of irregular military organizations, the very concept of a front is not applicable; it is indistinct and is used in confusion with the concept of "home front."

- A non-state actor is not interested in resolution at the first stages of warfare, but rather, the opposite: indecisiveness. The objective of the fighting is to maintain their independent existence by adopting methods of warfare in installments, exhausting the enemy, wearying him, eroding his strength, attacking his weak points and accumulating small victories that will tip the scales in his favor.

- Thus, the constraints of fighting terror, to a great extent, challenge the abilities that emanate from the classic missions of an army.

Military Resilience- State of the Art of an Inter-disciplinary and Multi-disciplinary Concept

➢ **The MR Psychological paradigm-** Cognitive stress and PTSD
➢ **The MR Organizational parad**ig**m** – Organizational environment, stressful incidents and PTSD
➢ **The MR Sociological paradigm** – Culture and PTSD
➢ **The MR Psychiatric paradigm** – PTSD as a pathological psychiatric state

• All theoretical relationships focus on similar terms
➢ **tensions and pressures** posed by the military environment, the military operation, the conventional field of battle that involves extreme physiological demands etc.

• The level of analysis in addressing the resilience dilemma
➢ **tensions and pressures**, post-trauma, shell shock, coping resources

• The response conceptual level
➢ **Stress and tension prevention**: therapeutic strategies for the prevention of stress and resilience maintenance

Tensions, Pressures and PTSD are Insufficient for a Comprehensive Understanding of MR in LIC

- The concept of "stress" has been too greatly "stretched" to cover resilience as a holistic dilemma

- The resilience of the army represents its performance value on a structural, functional and mental level derived from the nature of the unique qualities of each military organization - Resilience clusters must be differentiated clearly for a specific situation- a low-intensity conflict.

- All resilience, whether human-biological and/or organizational may be harmed consciously and rationally, without necessarily developing a post-traumatic stress **disorder. A gap between reality and expectations might challenge resilience reflected** in a deliberate disruption of continued functioning. This disruption is not a result of stress, but rather a rational calculation resulting from the non-congruence between beliefs, ideas or values and expectations.

Going from Therapeutic Strategies to Crisis Management Cycle

- Psychological and psychiatric research for the most part relates to fighters who usually no longer belong to warfare forces whereas military resilience should adopt a strategic policy orientation for its daily sustainability.

- The operative definition is based on the assumption that discussion of military resilience in a low-intensity conflict bears normative value - **a challenge to military resilience in a low intensity conflict might evoke a challenge to the management of resilience in a large scale conflict**

- Any discussion on resilience has an implicit demand *for continued proper and stable functioning.* This is the essence of resilience against the backdrop of environmental and temporal challenges. This "essence" must be expressed as a salient component in its definition, as well.

- All resilience require a holistic crisis strategy management cycle:
- ➤ From prevention and mitigation measures (risk assessment, awareness, etc.)- to Preparedness (planning of resources)-Response and Rehabilitation.

Military Resilience Definition Preserves the Psychological Element, yet a Damage to Resilience is not necessarily a Mental Crisis – Differential Diagnosis

The proposed definition attempts to point out most of the challenge to resilience:

"A measure of stability in the effective implementation of missions over time, while maintaining the Building of Force, Unit Resilience, the Military Framework, Significance in the Realm of Military Spirit, and Significance in the Realm of Operational Fitness".

➢ the **"measure of stability for effective implementation of missions":** does not only imply effectiveness in the evaluation of results, but also demands a consensual basis between political and military ranks, which does not diverge from the goals determined by the political rank.

➢ **"missions"** imply that general missions must be included, that is, missions such as building force for the long term, alongside specific missions in conducting a enduring low intensity conflict.

Military Resilience Clusters

A. Building of Force

- The extent of fitness, training, and the quantity of units in training.

- The capability of long-term preparation.

- The ability to utilize resources and strength building abilities by the units.

- The framework of the training.

- Utilization of professional expertise

- # **B. Unit Resilience**

- **The ability to maintain the organic framework, in a way which either harms or maintains the identification and the internal cohesion.**

- **Coping with the burden of activity which leads to fatigue.**

- **Organization of unit belonging and identity**

C. The Military Framework

- **The ability to carry out the orders and procedures of a professional army.**

- **Maintaining channels of internal and external organization (orders, procedures, messages, intentions)**

- **Maintaining learning systems for encoding and distributing internal and external organizational information.**

- **Managing the tension between what is important and what is urgent in the realm of operational routine.**

D. Significance in the Realm of Military Spirit

- 1. Expressions of fear and anxiety, exhaustion etc.

- 2. Questions about the significance of the mission.

- 3. Assembling candidates for officer positions.

E. Significance in the Realm of Operational Fitness

- 1. Activating technological methods, which create dilemmas in the realm of maintaining service norms and fitness, that is, use of technological methods when they are not congruent with the service norms, and the readiness to act accordingly.

- 2. The number of accidents and operational mishaps.

- 3. Defining required fitness which derives from the tension which exists in preparing for a high intensity conflict in relation to a low intensity conflict.

- 4. The large gap in assembling fighting support and in the readiness to sign up for long-term military service.

Determining the Level of Damage to MR

- **Great Damage**- Identifying damage to one element or more in at least two clusters.

- **Light Damage**- Identifying damage to one or more elements in one cluster

Proposing New Independent Variables Affecting Military Resilience

- **The Military Model** - encompasses three different epochs to allow a flexible comparison to the different countries and periods

- **The Warfare Strategy-**reflects maximal components of low-intensity conflicts and allows to trace warfare transformation

- **The Political-Military Relations** aims at basic conventions suitable to all political systems at war

A Trilogy of Paradoxes

I. **Structural, functional and social-mental factors of the military model affect the resilience of the army**.

- The more the military model is post-modern, the greater are the chances of harm to resilience

- This hypothesis is based on the characteristics of the post-modern model

II. **Warfare strategy in a low intensity conflict affects the resilience of the army**.

- The farther warfare strategy is from the army's defined mission and from formal military warfare training, the greater the chance that military resilience will be harmed.

- The more the warfare is managed as small-scale terror-guerilla warfare, the greater the chance of harm to military resilience.

III. **Relations between the political-military ranks in a low intensity conflict affect the resilience of the army.**

- Lack of consensus between the political and military ranks regarding the objectives of the conflict and/or the means to manage the conflict increases the chance of harm to military resilience.

The Military Model
Western Armies Shift from Modern to Post-modern Military Models

3 different periods characterized by different trends in different models

Military Model Variables	Modern 1900–1945	Late Modern 1945–1990	Post Modern (since 1990)
Perceived threat	Enemy Invasion	Nuclear war	Sub-national and non-military
Major mission definition	Defense of homeland	Support of alliance	New missions, e.g. peace-keeping, humanitarian
Public attitudes towards military	Supportive	Ambivalent	Indifferent
Media -military relations	Incorporated	Manipulated	Courted
Conscientious objection service	Limited or prohibited	Routinely permitted	Subsumed under civilian
Force structure	Mass army, Conscription	Large professional military	Small professional military
Dominant military profession	Combat leader	Manager or technician	Soldier statesman, soldier scholar

The more the military model is post-modern, the greater are the chances of harm to resilience

- **Threat perception based on sub-national** and non-military threat whose structural dimension is based on the concept of an advanced technological professional army- **a gap between the perception of threat and military traditional training-mission.**

- Managing **sub-national threats** is inconsistent with the **force structure** (based on advanced technology and specialization).

- Requires constant dynamic adaptation of **the military structure to threat perception**- prolonged adaptation erodes the building of force, unit resilience, the military framework, significance in the realm of military spirit and operational fitness.

Tailored Technology and Specialization to Post-modern threat Perception should not be Taken for Granted:

- **Targeted technological developments possess an "ad-hoc" character** (and for the most part is prevented by business considerations) and ranges from technologies to identify suspicious military objects to abilities to neutralize explosives or explosive-laden individuals.

- **Non-lethal weapons** are limited to specific situations, when a terrorist group attack zone is physically defined and less elusive. The scene of the battle against terrorism is usually not characterized by these qualities at its preliminary stages.

- **Tailored technological developments** are still limited in their ability to be utilized in civilian populated areas.

- The analysis of **asymmetry profile** emphasizes the limitations of a **force structure** based on advanced military technological sophistication.

The Post-Modern Military Model is not "friendly" to Military Resilience in Managing a Low-Intensity Conflict

- Erosion factors and the exhaustive duration of low intensity conflicts do not get their support from the post-modern military model:

- Indifference in public attitudes towards the military

- Challenges on social resources, national resilience and cohesion - Weak social environment support

- Critical media that are no longer communication mobilized for national goals and or given to maneuver

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- A conscientious objection service that might impact combatants posing moral challenges.

Warfare Strategy in Low Intensity Conflict

- **The geographical conflict is characterized by blurred borders** - the front line is indistinct and not applicable

- **Fluidity of close contact** - instead of emphasis on maintaining contact, terrorists and/or guerillas aim for instability -short-term and unstable contact, prefer to cut off contact and keep their advantage in the initiation of future hostilities.

- **Emphasis on the human factor** in the realm of Man-Machine

- **Professionalism as opposed to non-professionalism**—Involvement of civilians

- **Asymmetry in the coping methods**—Asymmetry between the sides in the means of warfare management, parallel to tactical maneuvering with little fire, sometimes without mobility.

- **Low-intensity conflict** – a mixed warfare strategy: terror tactics against a force whose power is on a conventional level, using sophisticated means of warfare management that enable an overwhelming fire power, strategic maneuverability and wide tactical mobility.

Warfare strategy in a low intensity conflict affects the resilience of the army

- Mainly dominated by expressive rather than instrumental mode:

- Expressive aspects such as:

- the presence in a civilian area,

- emphasis on the human factor in fighting rather than the mechanical factor,

- fighting at close quarters, etc.

- These creates a blurring in the identity of the soldier-citizen; mental dissonance challenging the areas of corps spirit, unit resilience and others, that is, *a disruption in the stability of the effective implementation of the military alignment*.

Political-military relations in a low intensity conflict affect the resilience of the army.

- Relations measured by: consensus/lack of consensus in conflict goals, by justification of means of conducting the conflict (political and/or military) and by the type of warfare methods employed

- Represent legal and moral legitimacy to the goals and means of all operational modes of conduct. Regarding the level of the individual soldier: leadership consensus supports the internal persuasion of each soldier regarding the justice of the conflict's objectives and of the means to conduct it.

- Lack of consensus impacts senior military command – high risk to significant harm to military resilience in higher military ranks reflecting upon lower ranks.

When mission produces meaning

- Gaps between mission of various military units and the operational demands set for these units in fighting a non-state actor – damage to MR
- Conduct of ongoing operative activity different from the role designated for unit forces in wartime and has been their defined official mission.
- Parameters for military mission to produce meaning:

- a. Activity must be perceived as unique, with quality, necessary and perceived as such that a chance of fire contact should be higher.
- b. The fighters need to feel that the activity is estimated both by elements of the military and outside the military.
- c. Activity should be seen as dynamic, and as such that contains elements of constant motion.
- d. Activity should be seen as successful and contributes to the overall effort to thwart terrorism.
- As long as the fighting takes place according to these parameters, there exists among fighters a sense of meaning, and impacts on events that in turn affects their morale and motivation. However, when fighters are required to defensive activity characterized by markedly passive security such as checkpoints and ensuring communities, their motivation level goes down as well as their ability to cope with fatigue, erosion and low morale.

The Relationship between Political-Military Relations and Military Resilience in Low-intensity Conflict

- In a LICs the two ranks are closely linked in an extensive cooperation in various areas on daily basis - the boundaries between them become blurred towards militarization of politics and politicization of the military.

- **The relations between the two ranks in the post-modern era place additional structural and functional challenges to MR :**

➤ **The profile of top military officers in the post-modern army** - New tasks led change in the person of the commander, both in the public eye and from the perspective of the military organization.

➤ The "manager" or the "technician" officer" do not give way to the "diplomatic" officer or to "rescue worker soldier," but rather complement them.

➤ In Preparing an army for a humanitarian mission or peacekeeping mission in distant countries - A commander is no longer just "combat leader" that look at the data to the battlefield to achieve victory, but also "Commander-Diplomat," "Commander communication," The "soldier statesman"- increase tension and friction between the two ranks.

Selected Results

- **France-Algeria - 1954-1962**
- **Britain-Ireland - 1969-1994**
- **Russia-Chechnya - 1994-2000**
- **Israel-The Palestinian Authority - 2000-2004**

- Lack of consensus between the political and military ranks regarding objectives of the conflict and/or the means to highly harm military resilience.

- Strong validity even when the lack of the consensus is only on the level of means (British case) - great damage to military resilience.

Different Impact on Different Military Ranks

- High damage to resilience at the military command: , the senior military command is closer and more accessible to the political ranks (The case of the putsch in France and the refusal to carry out orders of the political ranks in Russia illustrate this point).

- Impact linkages between the military model and MR because **Political ranks** :

➢ play a central role for the design of the model, its integration into security doctrine, and the updated security perceptions.

➢ plays a central role in the framework of relations between the center and the periphery with an impact on relations between the military and society, and between the military and the media

- Affects linkages between warfare strategy and MR: military strategy is derived from the strategic political goals and/or the broad strategy set by the political ranks

Political-Military Resilience Crucial Role

- The logical conclusion is that all rehabilitation and preservation of military resilience depends on political-military relations.

- In a situation in which this resilience suffers a blow from the military model and/or from warfare strategy, rehabilitation is almost impossible if there is no consensus between the two ranks on the objectives and means for LIC management.

Warfare Strategy Impact on MR

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- warfare strategy has been found to particularly affect the resilience of the warfare systems in practice, that is, the soldiers who are involved in warfare and who are witnesses to its results, rather than on those who planned the strategy. (Quite often, this aspect is greatly addressed by senior military ranks who request the political ranks to reconsider re-evaluate suitable warfare methods and means to rehabilitate the morale of their soldiers.)

- Senior military command, which is naturally closer, more sensitive and attentive to political ranks reveal more resistance. Thus, it is possible to have a situation in which military resilience, at this level is maintained while the resilience of the junior military command is damaged.

- On the other hand, damage to resilience at the level of senior military command followed with damage to the resilience of the junior military command.

Shifts in Warfare Strategy Preserves all MR Clusters

Training-mission connection: Shifts in warfare (France, Britain, Russia, Israel) utilizing field conditions to the fullest, with fewer tanks in an area of civilian population, more professional commando and air force units, improvements in intelligence abilities, and destruction of objectives from afar safeguard MR.

From Asymmetry to-Relative symmetry

- Asymmetry reduction evoked by the dynamic evolution of a non-state actor evolving to a semi/state actor transforms warfare strategy towards the adoption of conventional military warfare mission.

- **Borders and even virtual barriers placed by the 4 armies involved a number of consequences:**

- Dealing with the problem of **mixed civilian and military aspects** and its effect on the feelings of the citizen-soldier.

- Relevance of building conventional deterrence between the sides and creation of a "fairer" environment for the use of conventional military force, if deterrence fails.

- **Shift to the resolution stages of an enduring conflict** – from conflict management to conflict resolution.