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Israeli Foreign Policy Towards Iran 1948-1979:

Beyond The Realist Account

Efrat Shaoulian-Sopher

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DECLARATION

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work.

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ABSTRACT

Israeli foreign policy towards Iran in the period 1948-1979 has been generally explained through the Realist perspective, claiming that Israeli relations with Iran were established and developed due to converging strategic interests and common threats. This thesis argues that the existing literature does not fully appreciate the role that individuals, especially with their perceptions and misperceptions and human agency played in the formation and implementation of Israeli foreign policy. By not fully appreciating the role of human agency, the existing literature on Israeli relations with Iran has not fully explored the methods that made Israel's foreign policy with Iran a success. For instance, the existing accounts do not examine how the actions of specific Israeli diplomats in Tehran such as Ambassador Meir Ezri prevented attempts from groups in Iran such as the Iranian Foreign Ministry and certain religious clerics to stop Israeli-Iranian relations. For three decades, the relationship between Israel and Iran, though discreet and often kept secret, flourished within the context of the Cold War and the rise of Pan Arabism. Many covert joint operations yielded widespread collaboration in the areas of trade, civilian technology, oil, agriculture, and extensive military intelligence collaboration on areas such as Yemen, Iraq and the Kurds. That changed with a shift in Israeli personnel in 1973, and ended completely after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. If Israeli-Iranian relations did solely stem from converging strategic interests, relations would have been more likely to survive the 1979 Revolution. Rather, the Israelis' change in personnel in Tehran, their relationships with the Iranians, and their perceptions of world events greatly influenced the 1973 and 1979 shifts. This thesis concludes that any analysis of Israeli foreign policy formation and implementation towards Iran must include the multidimensional role of decision-makers, diplomats, and other foreign policy actors in order to complete the analysis presented by the existing Realist-leaning accounts. The thesis bases its argument on extensive International Relations-based examination of Israeli diplomatic history. Analysis of the role of prime ministers and diplomats such as David Ben Gurion, Tzvi Doriel and Meir Ezri; including their perceptions and misperceptions and human agency—forges a new understanding of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran from 1948 to 1979. Through the use of personal interviews, memoirs in Hebrew, English and Farsi, recently de-classified documents from the Israel State Archives, and unseen documents from private family collections, this thesis presents an argument that addresses the gaps in the existing literature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

'By astutely using her beauty, charm, and political intelligence, and by taking one well-placed risk, [Queen] Esther saves her people, brings about the downfall of their enemy, and elevates her kinsman to the highest position in the kingdom.'[1]

1.1   Introduction and Rationale

Every year, Jews observe the festival of Purim by reading the book of *Esther*. It tells the history of the Persian Empire and its Jewish community through the tale of the eponymous heroine, who saved her people from the evil Haman's attempt to commit genocide in order to rid the empire of its Jews. The queen pleads with her husband, the anti-Semitic King Ahasuerus, who gives the Jews the opportunity to save themselves. In modern times, the Persian and Jewish peoples—in the form of Iran and the State of Israel—have also been acquainted. The relations between Israel and Iran in the modern age have been equally legendary and enigmatic. They proved especially fruitful for both countries, albeit in secret.

This thesis argues that the convergence of strategic interests alone does not explain the closeness of the relationship between Israel and Iran between 1948 and 1979 and, therefore, is unable to fully explain the shift in 1979 from a once-flourishing relationship to a complete severing of that relationship. This thesis also demonstrates a pattern whereby diplomats on the ground in Tehran affected decision-makers in Israel

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[1] White Crawford, Sidnie. 'Esther: Bible,' *Jewish Women's Archive*. Retrieved 1 February 2017, JWA.org/encyclopedia/article/esther-bible.

[2] State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel October 1948-*

with respect to foreign policy formation, implementation and consolidation, as well as how, if the relationships had not been in place, the policy outcomes would have been different. This thesis organises the material along time periods that are in alignment with the major turning points in Israeli decision-making: the birth of the Peripheral Alliance Policy (1958), pre- and post-David Ben Gurion as Prime Minister (1963), the Six-Day War (1967), Post Yom Kippur War (1973), and the Iranian Revolution (1979).

Additionally, Realism has created a conventional wisdom around Israeli foreign policy towards Iran and my contribution acknowledges that the Realist account can mostly explain the impetus for setting up the alliance between Israel and Iran, and can account for its basis security cooperation and the decisions to face common threats, but the consolidation of relations cannot be understood without my analysis. Aspects such as trade and humanitarian aid were key to the consolidation of the alliance cannot be explained without the material contained within this thesis. In explaining the consolidation of the alliance around several spheres of foreign policy activity, not only those anticipated by Realism is highlighted as a key point in this thesis. Human agency was critical in consolidating the alliance during the time periods examined in this thesis as it existed.

This thesis contends that investigating human relationships, including perceptions and misperceptions and human agency, greatly enhance our understanding of complex decision-making processes that the Realist prism would not fully appreciate under the simplified rationale of streamlining all decision-making into one converging national interest. Personal relationships, if efficiently handled and under the right conditions, can actually outweigh the impact of the larger strategic interests of the state. Moreover, personal connections forge trust, an approach that bureaucracies (i.e., foreign ministries,

the Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of Defence) are institutionally incapable of by their inherent nature. The Israeli government establishment faced numerous obstacles to the formation and implementation of their policy towards Iran, such as objections to relations with Israel from the Iranian Foreign Ministry and certain religious clerics, which combined to hinder Israeli-Iranian relations. Like Queen Esther in the well-known Purim story, individuals such as Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and Ambassador Meir Ezri played a key role in overcoming these obstacles and smoothing the way for Israeli-Iranian relations to create global impact in the formation, implementation, and execution of Israeli foreign policy.

Israel and Iran co-operated and made progress in the areas of trade, military, and civilian technology, agriculture, and intelligence. One may ask, however, why did Israel and Iran forge their informal alliance, and how could they overcome the significant obstacles blocking their alignment? The answer to that question, as this thesis will argue, lies in the empirical evidence that despite two states' shared strategic interests, states or governments are unable to establish levels of trust, forge relationships, and supersede the personal impact of the role of the individual. It is by looking at the role of the individual, comprised of the role of human agency and perceptions and misperceptions, that one can see how individual action can indeed overcome foreign policy obstacles.

The initial policy-making rationale in the minds of Israeli foreign policymakers was a strategic one. Israeli policymakers began to contemplate a relationship with Iran as early as 1948.[2] Their general intention was to create an alliance system in the region whereby differences could be resolved with minimal negative involvement of the Superpowers,

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[2] State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel October 1948-April 1949* cable 130.10/2536/12 (Jerusalem vol. 2, 1984) p. 104.

the US and the USSR, or other regional actors; and limit Israel's perceived isolation in the region. Both Israel and Iran, above all, wished to counter threats from neighbouring Arab states. The strategy that Israeli decision-makers planned can be clearly seen first-hand in one of the first Israeli correspondences regarding Iran. On 27 October 1948, Y. Shimoni of the Middle East division cabled Abba Eban in Paris to inform him that the Foreign Ministry was considering approaching the Iranians and offering to explore the possibility of establishing relations. Shimoni called this, 'breaking through the walls of the East.'[3]

This thesis will explore the sophisticated use and ramifications of 'Clandestine Diplomacy' with respect to the formation and implementation of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran.[4] As Clive Jones illustrates:

> [C]landestine diplomacy can also encompass "signals", both of intent and capability, which can be used to send, discreet yet loaded messages over redlines that should not be crossed or, by contrast, opportunities that might be explored in lieu of more formal government approval. … We should not forget that while secret or discreet diplomacy might often have been subordinated or subsumed by security interests, secret diplomacy has also had an intrinsic value in its own right, not least that it comes into Israel's relation with the Jewish Diaspora.[5]

This thesis will examine how the secret or covert element of Israeli-Iranian relations affected the decisions made by policymakers and diplomats. Imaginative problem-solving methods employed by Israeli foreign policy actors materially affected the decisions, discussions, and outcomes between Israeli and Iranian foreign policy, and this thesis will examine the role of the individual and human relationships with respect to Clandestine Diplomacy. The Shah of Iran, an extremely powerful and unlikely player

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Jones, Clive and Tore T. Petersen, eds., *Israel's Clandestine Diplomacies* (London: Hurst & Company, 2013).
[5] Ibid, p. 4.

in the success of Israeli foreign policy with Iran, had unusual and unexpected close relationships with Israeli diplomats and Mossad agents.

The Shah of Iran believed that his country's interests would be best served by secret relations between Iran and Israel from both foreign and domestic perspectives. Iranian officials supported the secrecy preference of the Shah of Iran by assigning the management of the secret relations to the Iranian intelligence agencies: SAVAK (*Sazman-e-Ettelaat va Amniyat-e-Keshvar*) and Iranian Military Intelligence. On the Israeli side, the evidence will show that policymakers ultimately envisioned the relationship with Iran as fully formalised diplomatic relations. Nevertheless, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware of the sensitivity on the Iranian side and thus did not officially exert pressure on Iran to advance its bilateral relations.[6] Indeed, the Israeli government saw the necessity and merits of the clandestine approach to foreign policy. The Mossad established a formal Foreign Relations Division in 1958, headed by Ya'akov Caroz named TEVEL. The division served 'as a sort of parallel secret foreign ministry to create and maintain links with countries which could not or would not establish formal ties with the Jewish state.'[7] The Israeli intelligence services (Mossad, as well as Israeli Military Intelligence) played a unique role that is broader than the traditional contribution usually made by intelligence services to foreign policy. Mossad not only acted as an independent unit within the decision-making apparatus, but also as a facilitator for the scope of diplomatic relations that are typically addressed overtly in cases of formal relations. In addition, the Israeli Mission in Tehran discussed normalisation of relations unofficially and relied on its friends and allies within the

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[6] State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel: 1960* (Jerusalem vol. 14, 1997), document no. 391, p 610.
[7] Interview with Ya'acov Caroz cited in Ian Black and Benny Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars: A History of Israel's Intelligence Services* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), p. 182.

Iranian government and other prominent Iranians. Moreover, Israel lobbied externally in favour of its foreign policy and attempted to influence Iran via the United States, Canada, Germany, France, and Britain.[8]

Israel based its aims for relations with Iran on the 'Peripheral Alliance' policy, whose most steadfast initiator and supporter was David Ben Gurion. This was an alliance policy whereby decision-makers made efforts to form links with other non-Arab (peripheral) states such as Iran, Turkey, and Ethiopia (as well as connections with Sudanese and Kurdish groups) in the region in order to decrease Israel's isolation from the surrounding (core) Arab states. Israel's isolation and Iran's dependence on connections with the Arab world (which at a rudimentary first glance could be considered understandable because Iran is also a Muslim state) were thus reduced, and the relations acted as deterrents to regional threats. As Avner Yaniv explains: 'They forced the Arabs to commit their attention-and sometimes their forces-to areas that were far from Israel, thereby dispersing the Arab war effort and making it less dangerous.'[9]

This discussion leads to the following overriding question: how were difficulties and obstacles faced by Israeli decision-makers overcome? Demonstratively, Iranian government agencies that opposed the relations with Israel, such as the Foreign Ministry, were bypassed with the formation of direct links with the leaders of SAVAK and Military Intelligence. As the thesis will show, personal connections also played a major part in the relationship. The two heads of the intelligence agencies introduced the Israeli ambassador and visiting Israeli leaders to other government and Iranian regional leaders. Such personal connections evolved into cooperation on levels other than intelligence in

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[8] Ezri, Meir, Personal interview 26 June 2015, Savyon, Israel.
[9] Yaniv, Avner. *Deterrence Without the Bomb: The Politics of Israeli Strategy*. (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1987), p. 97.

a manner that affected both Israel and Iran positively and directly through the effective implementation of Israeli foreign policy.

1.2   Research Question, Argument and Contribution

The thesis examines the period from 1948, when Israel was formed, until 1979, the year of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. After 1979, the common strategic and geopolitical interests remained the same, however, the relations between Israel and Iran broke down because of the change of regime in Iran and subsequent personnel changes in both Israel and Iran that affected the human relationships which had caused the prior relationship between Israel and Iran to flourish. The research question for this thesis is: How does the inclusion of human relationships – consisting of perceptions and misperceptions – and human agency affect the Realist analysis of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran?

The inclusion of human relationships and other factors demonstrates the effects of the individual in:

1. Overcoming internal obstacles in Israeli decision-making structure.

Israeli decision-makers and field operatives such as diplomats and Mossad agents faced some internal opposition to forming and implementing Israel's foreign policy towards Iran in particular and the Peripheral Alliance policy in general. As I will demonstrate in this thesis, it is by including an analysis of relationships and the effects of the individual one can see how these internal obstacles were overcome.

2. Overcoming external obstacles in Iran and Arab world.

Israeli decision-makers including Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and field operatives such as diplomats faced numerous external obstacles to implementing Israel's Iran policy from outside Israel, namely, obstacles from Iran and the Arab world. I will illustrate in this thesis how by including agency and the role of relationships as well as their perceptions and misperceptions in the analysis, one can clearly see how these external obstacles were also overcome, enhancing Israeli foreign policy. The important role of foreign policy entrepreneurs will also be discussed throughout the thesis.

3. Influencing the internal shaping of Israeli foreign policy.

Israeli decision-makers and field operatives demonstrated their influence on the Israeli foreign policy decision-making process through agency and relationships. These individuals steered Israeli foreign policy by identifying opportunities to progress the broader Israeli foreign policy goals and objectives through Israel's Iran policy.

4. Influencing the external perception of Israeli foreign policy.

The personal relationships between Israeli field operatives in Tehran, decision-makers in Israel and Iranian decision-makers in Tehran and Iranian field operatives around the world shifted the external perception of Israeli foreign policy. I will demonstrate in the thesis how despite the Iranians' insistence on the secrecy of Israeli-Iranian relations, Israel was viewed differently, both within Iran, the Arab states, and around the world. It is by including the role of relationships, agency, and their perceptions and misperceptions into the existing analysis that one can see in greater detail how Israel achieved one of its major foreign policy goals towards Iran-decreasing its actual and perceived isolation internationally.

One of the contributions the thesis proposes to make to the existing academic literature

on Israeli-Iranian relations is to bring to light previously unknown materials that I

unearthed during my research regarding Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. Included in

this thesis are newly discovered and recently declassified diplomatic communiqués,

letters, and policy papers from the Israel State Archives, original personal interviews

with key diplomats, Mossad agents from that time, and recognised scholars who come

together to contribute to an argument not yet covered in the literature. My research

represents in many cases a broader perspective that enhances the Realist account and

brings to bear aspects of Israeli policy that have been under represented. The unique

characteristic of the secret alliance was that development of relations gained extensively

from personal connections between officials from the two states. This appears to have

spanned from diplomatic protocol to personal friendships. Using the new empirical

contributions examined in this thesis supported by the sources I have uncovered in

recently declassified Israel State Archive documents and through the examination of

Meir Ezri's private archives, my work both challenges, complements and enhances the Realist-influenced account in relation to the previous knowledge.

1.3   Survey of the Existing Literature and its Themes

The limited access to documentary evidence has significantly affected the analysis of Israeli-Iranian relations. Newly declassified and emerging information on Israel's Iran policy warrants a new study of the subject on its own merit.   Any survey of the traditional analysis of Israeli-Iranian relations should be conducted thematically, and also contextualised within Israeli foreign policy towards Iran and the Middle East more generally.   This is a necessary endeavour because of the way in which the limited primary materials available to researchers has influenced interpretations of the bilateral relationship. Moreover, consideration of contextual influences on these analyses – e.g., viewing the relationship through a Cold War prism – adds significant nuance to scholarly understanding.

From a theoretical perspective, the majority of the Realist-influenced literature that is more centred on power has focused on foreign policy formulation and outcome. However, it has omitted the crucial phase of executing and consolidating that foreign policy and the obstacles that arise in that context. The most striking obstacles that Israeli decision-makers and diplomats faced during policy implementation emerge from initial review at internal Iranian opposition, opposition to the relations from the Arab world, and the unpredictable Iranian policymaking process.

The themes below have dominated the extant Israel-Iran literature. These commonly appearing themes have been used by existing authors to describe and explain Israeli-Iranian relations by using some or all of the broad Realist assumptions. The first prominent theme in the literature on Israel and Iran is the common strategic threats faced by Israel and Iran, specifically from Soviet expansionism and Arab nationalism. Trita Parsi and Shmuel Segev argue that what brought Iran and Israel closer was a common security dilemma (where a state's defensive measures are seen as offensive by another state) in the form of two common threats.[10] The first threat came from the rise of Arab nationalism following the Egyptian Free Officers' coup of 1952 and the ensuing anti-Iranian policies. Shmuel Segev contends that what cemented the relationship was the wave of instability in the region in 1958 that made Iran focus on its relations with Israel due to the threat of instability.[11] From the Israeli perspective, a similar security dilemma stemmed from being surrounded by hostile Arab states.

The further threat came from the Soviet Union's involvement in the region and its very close relations to Egypt's Nasser.[12] Sohrab Sobhani explains that the need for the containment of Soviet and Sunni Arab hegemony (or dominance) of the Middle East brought Israel and Iran together.[13] He notes that '[w]ith the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, Iran recognized the potential of using Israel as a fulcrum to counter the Soviet and Arab influence in the Middle East.'[14] As one can see, Parsi, Segev, and

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[10] Parsi, Trita. *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007; Segev, Shmuel. *The Iranian Triangle: The Untold Story of Israel's Role In The Iran-Contra Affair* Translated by Haim Watzman (New York: The Free Press, 1988). Also please see the original publication in Hebrew: *HaMeshulash Ha Irani* (The Iranian Triangle). Tel Aviv: Sifriat Maariv, 1981
[11] Segev, Shmuel. *The Iranian Triangle: The Untold Story of Israel's Role In The Iran-Contra Affair* Translated by Haim Watzman (New York: The Free Press, 1988), p. 32.
[12] Ibid, p. 22.
[13] Sobhani, Sohrab. *The Pragmatic Entente: Israeli-Iranian Relations 1948-1988* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1989).
[14] Ibid, p. xx.

Sobhani describe a common threat perception shared by Iran and Israel. Sobhani also refers to the anarchic nature of the international and regional environments. He cites the problems encountered by the Security Dilemma (where a state's defensive measures are seen as offensive by another state) and geopolitical necessities that decision-makers from both states had to face. These realities, however, are ones that are faced by decision-makers throughout the international system. It is prominent Realist factors of common threat perceptions and mutual strategic interests that brought Israel and Iran together. An obvious gap in the analysis arises when one examines the newly available information that adds a completely new dimension to the analysis of Israel's Iran policy. It was individuals who identified the common threat that both Israel and Iran faced as well as the immediate need for *Aliyah* to save Jews in danger in the diaspora, and to prioritise these as foreign policy objectives. It also took those individuals to form relationships in order to implement those foreign policy objectives.

By contrast, Uri Bialer, whose work on Israeli foreign policy is the most detailed, suggests a contradiction to this Realist rationale at the outset of the relations. He states how 'from the Israeli perspective, the primary aim of connections to Iran [in 1949] was not strategic, not for intelligence, and even not economic. The overriding operative aim of Israel was to secure, via the connection with Iran, the establishment of a logistical infrastructure and a basis of operations for the illegal *Aliyah* of Iraq's Jews.'[15] One would therefore conclude from Bialer's argument that on the implementation level, strategic considerations were secondary to *Aliyah's* human considerations. This thesis examines how *Aliyah* was both a strategic matter and an emotive human matter within

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[15] Bialer, Uri, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," *Iyunnim BiTkumat Israel* Vol. 8, 1998, p.152.

Israeli foreign policy, where considerable obstacles were surmounted by Israeli field operatives in particular.

The second overriding theme in the existing literature on Israeli-Iranian relations in describing and explaining the relations is from the domestic perspective, namely the internal goings-on within Israel and Iran. Trita Parsi states that his 'is a book about foreign policy.' His focus is 'on the relations between these states and not on the internal developments that-while important-have little or no impact on their respective foreign policies.'[16] Parsi's focus on the relations under represents the vital importance of what occurred within the two states that directly shaped the relations between them. Even from a foreign policy analysis perspective, such domestic detail is discounted. Foreign policy is not made in a vacuum, despite the very convincing power machinations of the international system.

On the other hand, Sohrab Sobhani presents a more holistic perspective on the motivation behind Israeli foreign policy towards Iran; albeit without directly addressing international relations theory at all. Sobhani considers the domestic policy elements within Iran and Israel at certain points during his chronological analysis. For instance, he attributes Iran's ambivalence towards Israel from 1948 to 1953 to the resistance of Shi'ite clerics who disapproved of Iran's de facto recognition of Israel. It was not until after the Sinai campaign of 1956, when Mohammad Reza Shah of Iran consolidated the power of his government and was able to explore strategic cooperation with Israel.[17] Such consideration of the internal power machinations within Iran directly affected Iran's policy towards Israel and was therefore extremely relevant to analyse in greater

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[16] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance,* p. xii.
[17] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. xii.

depth, contrary to Parsi's analysis. This thesis argues that looking at a state's internal functioning of power is important also when analysing and explaining Israel's policy towards Iran throughout the time period examined. Internal developments in foreign policy formation had a knock-on effect on Israel's approach to Tehran.

The third overriding theme in the existing literature on Israeli-Iranian relations is that Israel's human, strategic, and ideological considerations of *Aliyah* (immigration to Israel) shaped Israeli foreign policy. Sohrab Sobhani hints that the factors that sparked the relations were not purely strategic. For example, during Israel's early years, 'although political and strategic concerns entered into Tel Aviv's calculations, efforts to establish formal diplomatic ties with Iran were motivated primarily by human and ideological considerations of immigration (*Aliyah*).'[18] However, within the Realist framework, the details of Israel's implementation of its *Aliyah* policy are lacking. It would be useful to explore this idea further and in more detail and from the perspective of the role of the individual within this thesis, and with more newly available primary Israeli documentary evidence.

Additionally, from a theoretical perspective, this thesis could also add finer nuances to the analysis that centres on the importance of power. Uri Bialer in his seminal article on Iranian recognition of Israel illustrates the detailed steps (as well as motives) to Iran's decision (through Israeli eyes) as part of Israel's efforts to lessen its political and economic isolation in the region.[19] Bialer provides the information on *Aliyah* that Sobhani relies on. He also uncovers many hidden motivations, such as initial trade and commercial 'bargaining chips' in negotiations in great detail. Bialer's article, however,

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[18] Ibid, p. xi .
[19] Bialer, Uri. "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-51," *Middle East Journal* 39, No. 2 (Spring 1985), pp. 292-293.

only covers the years of 1948-1951. In Bialer's article that focuses on Israeli-Iranian trade of oil between 1956 and 1963, he highlights the 'special circumstances' that enabled the relations between Israel and Iran and the strategic economic element in Israel's policy towards Iran.[20] Bialer highlights in great detail the role of economics in Israel's general foreign policy, the role of secret diplomacy, and the importance of personal-human relations to Israel's secret diplomacy.[21] The newly available information confirms the vital importance of various individuals within the sphere of Israeli foreign policy. Also confirmed are these individuals' senses of vision, history, and purpose that are addressed merely in passing in most of the existing literature.

Due to the relatively small volume of existing literature on the specific subject of the thesis, it is prudent to examine comprehensively the works of the authors cited in the thematic literature review above in order to identify the gaps left in the literature. In his book published in 1989, *The Pragmatic Entente: Israeli Iranian Relations, 1948-1988,* Sohrab Sobhani surveys the Israeli-Iranian relationship.[22] However, he also acknowledges that many of his questions '…have yet to be fully answered' due to the secrecy surrounding the relationship.[23] Sobhani first lists the main Israeli and Iranian motivations behind the formation of the relations by using Uri Bialer's analysis and adding Iranian sources. Sohrab Sobhani's elements of analysis originate from broadly Realist assumptions that filter the data that he relies upon, consequently removing the role of the individual. His broad-scope themes include: the anarchic nature of the international system, the Security Dilemma and geopolitical necessities, both states' relations with the Arab world, and common economic concerns. These realities, though,

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[20] Bialer, "Oil from Iran."
[21] Ibid, p. 151.
[22] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente.*
[23] Ibid, p. xv.

are ones that are faced by decision-makers throughout the international system. Another theme that Sobhani analyses, is the demographic component in Israel's foreign policy vis-à-vis *Aliyah* and Jews in the Diaspora.

However, as Uri Bialer states, the *Aliyah* of Iraqi Jews was initially a matter of life or death, which made a political relationship with the Iranian authorities a necessary policy goal.[24] Sobhani also asserts within Iran-Arab and Arab-Israeli relations that when Iran viewed Israel as the underdog in the Arab-Israeli conflict, ties between Iran and Israel became closer. In this study, I question whether this is the case, as evidence suggests that the Shah of Iran and other Iranian officials, on a personal level, respected the show of Israeli strength and expertise, especially following the 1967 Six-Day War. This positively affected relations between the two states. Sobhani's work provides a wide-ranging overview, but does not include the impact of individual decision-makers such as Mossad agents, ambassadors and Prime Ministers on Israeli policy formation, implementation and consolidation that this thesis analyses in detail.

The relations between Israel and Iran, according to Trita Parsi, are the focus, not the internal developments that had little or no impact on foreign policy.[25] My research demonstrates how the internal developments within Iran had a great deal to do with Israeli foreign policy formation and the way in which individuals successfully implemented those policies and consolidated the relations.

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[24] Bialer, "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-51," pp. 294-295.
[25] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. xii.

Robert Reppa published his book *Israel and Iran: Bilateral Relationships and Effect on the Indian Ocean Basin* in 1974.[26] It is a useful example of the information available to researchers at the time, which consists mainly of newspaper and media reports, as well as some available trade figures. The book provides useful information from a regional perspective (and within a Cold War framework) with analysis of the separate history, geography, economics, politics, population, and military of both Israel and Iran. Reppa then continues by discussing common interests and divisive factors between the two states including petroleum, security, religion, and relations with the Soviet Union. Reppa's insightful approach addresses many salient issues despite the lack of great detail on the bilateral relations between Israel and Iran.

Uri Bialer in his 1985 *Middle East Journal* article titled 'The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy-1948-1951' provides credible analysis of Israeli foreign policy regarding Iran from 1948 to 1951 by using documents from Israeli government sources such as the archives of the Foreign Ministry and Haganah.[27] Bialer illustrates the detailed steps (as well as motives) to Iran's recognition of Israel as a part of Israel's considerable efforts to lessen its political and economic isolation in the Middle East.[28] He also uncovers many hidden motivations, such as initial trade and commercial links, including a 'bargaining chip': Israelis willingness to release properties owned by Iranian families that fell under the rule of absentee by-laws.[29]

In my discussions of the shortcomings of the Realist account, it is my intention to enhance the Realist account, not refute it and to explain why including the human

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[26] Reppa, Robert. *Israel and Iran: Bilateral Relationships and Effect on the Indian Ocean Basin* (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1974)
[27] Bialer, "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-51."
[28] Ibid, pp. 292-293.
[29] Ibid, p. 301.

relationship angle explains why Israel's relations with Iran was so close and what ultimately led the dramatic shift during the Iranian Revolution. Bailer himself alludes to the importance of the role of the individual in his earlier works and provides clues to a greater understanding. In 1998 and 1999, Bialer's article in Hebrew for the *Iyunim Bitkumat Israel* journal, supports the inclusion of the role of the individual. [30]

Bialer, though very much a Realist in his assumptions, introduces the concept of the role of the individual as being important in foreign policy formation. This thesis builds on Bialer's approach and delves further into the role of the individual and their effect on foreign policy formation.

In the 2007 article by Uri Bialer, 'Fuel Bridge Across the Middle East,' we begin to see cracks appearing in the Realist perspective of Israeli-Iranian foreign policy. [31] The role of individuals and their perceptions is referenced by Bialer in the largely accepted Realist analysis of converging existential interests with respect to Israeli-Iranian oil connections: 'It also provides an analysis of the intricacies of the Israeli-Iranian dialogue on the subject, and uncovers some unknown elements of Tehran's and Jerusalem's complementary and conflicting perspectives.' [32] Bialer, in including the role of individuals and their perceptions, opens the door for further exploration of the impact of the individual on policy formation and implementation despite the restrictions imposed by the Realist paradigm. Both of these instances of inclusion of the role of human relationships, merely indicates the *possibility* of inclusion. However, this thesis

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[30] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963;" Bialer, "Petroleum from Iran-The Mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963 (Part II)," *Iyunnim Bitkumat Israel* Vol. 9: 1999.
[31] Bialer, Uri. "Fuel Bridge Across the Middle East-Israel, Iran and the Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline," *Israel Studies* Vol. 12 Number 3 (Fall 2007), pp. 29-67.
[32] Bialer, "Fuel Bridge Across the Middle East", p. 29.

concludes that the Realist perspective's inability to fully include foreign policy implementation and formation, as well as the vital impact the role of relationships had in affecting Israel's success and failure, which greatly enhances the Realist account of events.

R.K. Ramazani's article 'Iran and the Arab-Israeli Conflict' was published in the autumn of 1978.[33] He presents a pre-revolutionary analysis of Iranian foreign policy predominantly towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, and therefore indirectly Iran's policy towards Israel. The overriding consideration in analysing Iran's approach toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, according to Ramazani, is 'politico-strategic and concerns the improvement, or at least the preservation, of Iran's regional environment within the broader context of world politics that is perceived to be more conflictual than cooperative in nature.'[34] Ramazani situates his hypothesis firmly within the framework of the Cold War and the alignment of all the states of the region to one of the two Superpowers. He states: 'The cultivation of ties with Israel was seen from Tehran not so much as a means of forming a "discreet entente" against hostile Arab states, but as a way of creating an effective Irano-Israeli obstacle to the increasing Soviet power and influence in the Arab Middle East.'[35] Ramazani argues that Iranian *de facto* recognition of Israel depended on Israeli foreign policy nearing the United States and away from the Soviet Union, during a time when Arab nationalism was gaining ground. A domestic factor that Ramazani cites for the strengthening of Israeli-Iranian relations is that Iran had to wait for the fall of the Mosaddeq government in 1953. He provides the reader with useful insights into Iranian foreign policy, but provides no details of the relationship between Israel and Iran.

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[33] Ramazani, Rouhollah K. "Iran and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Middle East Journal* (Autumn 1978).
[34] Ibid, p. 414.
[35] Ibid, p. 416.

Marvin G. Weinbaum's article titled 'Iran and Israel: The Discreet Entente' was published in 1975.[36] His article discusses the common history of the Persian and Jewish peoples within the context of both ancient and modern history. Weinbaum discusses the issue of *Aliyah* and the Jewish community in Iran and gives a broad overview of the relationship within its Middle East context. He examines the 'discreet' element in the Israeli-Iranian relationship and quotes Mohammad Reza Shah of Iran as observing how 'Iran's relations with Israel are like the true love that exists between two people outside of wedlock.'[37] For example, Weinbaum discusses efforts to censor and keep information away from the media. A general analysis (with some specific details) follows that discusses many of the elements of the relationship such as trade, development, infrastructure, military cooperation, and oil. The sources in the article include information from publicised details in the Israeli and Iranian media, e.g. Kayhan International, *Haaretz*, and *Jerusalem Post*. Weinbaum presumably attempts to add as much detail as possible, so his study also provides the reader with a good indication of available information at the time.

Shmuel Segev in his 1981 book titled *HaMeshulash HaIrani* (The Iranian Triangle) provides in-depth journalistic anecdotal details of US-Israeli-Iranian relations.[38] Segev discusses in detail the effect of the Islamic Revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini followed by the benefits of the Israeli-Iranian relationship. Segev also addresses the Shah of Iran and the Arab-Israeli peace process, the effects of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Jewish community in Iran, Israeli actions in Kurdistan, and the (Iran-Iraq) Gulf war. Although Segev presents a fascinating and extensive journalistic exposé-style

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[36] Weinbaum, Marvin G. "Iran and Israel: The Discreet Entente," *Orbis* 18 (Winter 1975).
[37] *Jerusalem Post*, 31 December 1961, quoted in Weinbaum, "Iran and Israel," p. 1070.
[38] Segev, Shmuel. *HaMeshulash Ha Irani*. (Tel Aviv: Sifriat Maariv, 1981).

narrative, it lacks the rigor of a methodical scholarly study. The lack of theoretical framework makes for a great descriptive work, but does not lend itself to identifying patterns in Israeli foreign policy. It is therefore unable to draw generalizable conclusions about Israeli policy formulation and implementation. Additionally, the use of unofficial interviews and undocumented materials that are not widely available for review make the narrative interesting and valuable, but from theoretical perspective unable to be generalised for use in policy analysis. In contrast, my analysis rigorously analyses detailed empirical data in order to allow the systematic organisation of policy formation and implementation. As a result, this thesis offers policy lessons on the role of human relationships and the individual in impacting foreign policy.

My contribution to the literature is to provide a scholarly work with sufficient details about the formation, implementation and consolidation of Israel's policy towards Iran to enable a thorough and detailed analysis of the role of relationships between individuals in foreign policy. I do this by incorporating the best available documentary evidence, especially Israeli evidence from the Israel State Archives, into an argument that has been presented heretofore only incompletely by the overriding Realist account.

1.4   **Methodology**

The use of memoirs, interviews, and archives has been instrumental to this study. This is because it is vital to use them in order to paint a complete picture of events and explain the relations from an international relations perspective for the first time. I have interviewed Mossad agents, members of the Iranian Royal Family, key players and diplomats actively working during the time periods I investigated, as well as examined

personal correspondence between Israeli leaders and diplomats as well as ambassadors and intelligence agents, both from private collections and the Israel State Archives in Jerusalem.

Additionally, memoirs are an excellent resource for details and for a survey of the characters involved. However, a memoir offers a biased perspective that is liable to 'colour' facts in a particular way, as well as be affected by that individual's worldview, so such works must be used cautiously. Interviews also offer first-hand information that may not be available in written form. Both memoirs and interviews must therefore be examined while keeping their advantages and limitations in mind. In conjunction with memoirs and interviews, the most pivotal source of information has been recently declassified documents from the Israel State Archives. Additionally, the relevance of older documents previously examined by experts that were discarded become significant in relation to the recently declassified information, allowing greater conclusions to be drawn between old and new documents. The new connections and conclusions that reinforced my argument of the essential role of human relationships were enhanced and corroborated by recent personal interviews with key players from the time period, as well as private document collections made available to me.

By examining diplomatic communiqués and policy papers, the vital roles of Israeli individuals such as decision makers and field operatives and in turn their perceptions (and at times misperceptions) add significantly to this thesis' argument. As a result, the empirical analysis chapters include detailed examination of particular diplomatic opportunities and obstacles that Israeli decision-makers faced on a daily basis. They will be examined within the international context as relevant to Israeli foreign policy

towards Iran. In this way, the bilateral, regional, as well as global implications of Israel's Iran policy will emerge within the theoretical framework of this thesis.

1.5   Israeli Foreign Policy Objectives and the International Context

In order to analyse the evidence and material that I gathered by using my methodology, it is essential to examine Israel's foreign policy objectives within the international context in order to locate the evidence within the literature and in theory.

1.5.1 Israeli Foreign Policy Assumptions and Objectives

Aaron Klieman has identified Israel's five fundamental diplomatic and foreign policy goals since 1948 until the present day. The more specific policy shifts that affected Israeli policy towards Iran that occurred in 1958 and 1973 are discussed at length in the relevant empirical chapters:

>Achieving legitimacy, peace, and security.
>
>Developing commerce.
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>Winning foreign endorsement for its positions.
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>Forging constructive engagement in international projects.
>
>Strengthening links with and protecting world Jewry.[39]

Decision-makers have frequently faced existential threats since Israel's inception. Indeed, many books regarding Israeli foreign policy recount the mantra that 'Israel has

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[39] Klieman, Aaron S. *Israel and the World After 40 Years* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1990), p. 6.

no foreign policy, only a defense policy.'[40] Realism has been and still is by far the most dominant paradigm that shapes Israel's foreign policy perspective.   The Realist prism has also influenced Israel's strategic thinking in satisfying its national security interests and especially maintaining a special relationship with the United States. This has been explained in terms of 'bandwagoning,' 'the idea that states seek to optimize their position within the international system through a matrix of alliances with other, usually stronger states.'[41] Israel's strategic foreign policy objectives sought to rectify many clear and present threats while overcoming international isolation, particularly from the neighbouring Arab world.

According to Clive Jones, 'Israel perceives regional security relations as vertical-that is, exclusive, state-to-state, and biased toward maintaining a strong military posture-rather than horizontal, inclusive, or multilateral, effective deterrence remains the bedrock of Israel's strategic thinking.'[42] Deterrence has included both nuclear and conventional power. Such strategy has also encouraged efforts to form alliances based on power politics not only regionally but also further afield. The foreign policy debate in Israel is extremely lively from the highest policy echelons to lay individuals discussing the *matzav,* or the situation. The foreign policy premises remain fairly consistent, however. As one commentator notes: 'The debate in Israel is not about the goals themselves-ensuring the security of the state-but about the actual process of preference formation to achieve such goals among those charged with the implementation of Israel's foreign policy.'[43] This implementation debate permeates all levels of Israeli society. Bernard

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[40] Jones, Clive. "The Foreign Policy of Israel," in *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States.* Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami eds. (Boulder CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2002), p. 115.
[41] Ibid, p. 117. For a detailed discussion of alliances and balancing versus bandwagoning please refer to the Introduction.
[42] Ibid, p.119.
[43] Ibid, p.125.

Reich explains Israel's perceptions of its place in the world through a series of 'lenses' through which its decision-makers see threats and challenges. This is as any other state perceives threats and challenges, yet Israel's 'lenses' are unusual and numerous.[44]

Israel sees itself primarily as the homeland to Jewish people everywhere and welcomes Jewish immigration (*Aliyah*) based on Jewish ideology. David Ben Gurion saw the Jews in Israel and the Jews outside of Israel as indivisible. He declared, 'the two groups are interdependent. The future of Israel-its security, its welfare, and its capacity to fulfil its historic mission-depends on world Jewry. And the future of world Jewry depends on the survival of Israel.'[45]

The Law of Return passed by the Israeli Knesset in 1950 guaranteed Israeli citizenship to all Jews who make *Aliyah* to Israel. This is of both symbolic and practical importance cementing the importance of Diaspora Jews to the Jewish state. Israeli foreign policy has also displayed a unique sense of responsibility to Jewish communities around the world.[46] Israeli diplomats are deemed to have special responsibilities relating to the state to which they have been posted. It also follows that Israel feels duty-bound to assist Jews in distress internationally. In the Israeli-Iranian case, for instance, one of the first contacts between Israeli and Iranian officials came when Mossad agents helped smuggle Iraqi Jews out of Iraq and into Israel via Iran. The documentary evidence also shows that the Iranian Jewish community advised

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[44] Reich, Bernard. "Israeli Foreign Policy," in *Diplomacy in the Middle East: The International Relations of Regional and Outside Powers*. Ed. L. Carl Brown. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), p. 122.
[45] Brecher, Michael. *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 232.
[46] Israel's first director-general of the foreign ministry Walter Eytan described this unusual linkage: "It is a commonplace of our Foreign Service that every Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Israel has a dual function. He is Minister Plenipotentiary to the country to which he is accredited-and Envoy Extraordinary to its Jews. This has come to be accepted generally-by other governments in the 'free' world, by the Jews of the diaspora, and by everyone in Israel." Walter Eytan, *The First Ten years: A Diplomatic History of Israel,* pp. 192-3, Cited in Reich, "Israeli Foreign Policy," p. 124.

Israeli decision-makers on some of the best approaches to communicate and negotiate with the Iranian government.

Israel's foreign policy decision-making process is also relatively unique in its high level of 'individual executive authority' especially in a democracy during periods of 'dormant war.'[47] Israeli Prime Ministers are able to express their personal preferences regardless of politics or ideology. Because security concerns are paramount in Israeli foreign policy-making, the prime minister and the security establishment are pivotal to most decisions. Therefore, from a bureaucratic perspective, in theory, the influence of the Israeli Foreign Ministry is lower than the Prime Minister's Office and the Defence Ministry.[48] Within this hierarchy of influence, Israel's intelligence agencies play a special role in delineating Israel's core foreign policy interests. Please also refer to the discussion below on Israel's decision-making structure. Its unique role is conceptualised within the concept of clandestine or quiet diplomacy.

Together with the actors' personalities, the historical context is important to bear in mind as well as the vision of the individual actors. The period covered by this thesis was a time when Israel was a young state, at times facing existential threats. For instance, the role of Prime Minister David Ben Gurion (from 17 May 1948 to 26 January 1954 and from 3 November 1955 to 26 June 1963) as a foreign policy visionary was vital. Golda Meir's role as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister (Foreign Minister from 18 June 1956 to 12 January 1966 and Prime Minister from 17 March 1969 to 3 June 1974) and her insight, especially at diffusing crises, are examined in the empirical chapters. The two other contributing architects of the Periphery Policy were Reuven

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[47] Jones, "The Foreign Policy of Israel," p.126.
[48] Ibid, p. 128.

Shiloah and Isser Harel.[49] Shiloah was the head of Mossad from 1948-1952, then counsellor at the Israeli Embassy in Washington and political advisor to Golda Meir. His strength was strategic planning. Isser Harel followed Shiloah as head of Mossad in 1952. His strength was conduct of operations. The Israeli aims for relations with Iran were based on the 'Peripheral Alliance' policy, whose most ardent supporter was David Ben Gurion. Israeli decision-makers wished to form links with other non-Arab (peripheral) states such as Iran, Turkey, and Ethiopia (in addition to Sudanese and Kurdish groups) in the region in order to decrease Israel's isolation by the surrounding Arab (core) states. Israel's isolation would also be lessened by an oil pipeline from Eilat to the Mediterranean as an alternative to the Suez Canal.

Israel's Peripheral Alliance policy played a pivotal role within the circle model of viewing Israel's place within the international system. With Israel at its centre, it is surrounded by a system of concentric circles. At the core, Israel is small both in population and size. The first circle around Israel is the Arab world. Israel has been surrounded both geographically and conceptually by hostile Arab states. The six major Arab-Israeli wars have shaped this deeply rooted perception.

The second circle around Israel is the non-Arab states in the region with a focus on Iran and Turkey (including their Kurdish populations) in the North and Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda to the South.[50] The third circle relates more to Israel's involvement in international organisations and the Biblical-Zionist ideal of providing nations in need

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[49] Shlaim, Avi. *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2001), p. 193. As Shlaim describes Shiloah, "His long-term aim was to turn the State of Israel, with the help of world Jewry, into a major intelligence force in regional politics and to persuade the Western powers that Israel was a strategic asset." Shiloah was a master political planner who helped to found Israeli strategy worldwide. In his mind, the two most prominent factors in planning were Israel's alliance with the United States and the alliance of the Periphery.
[50] Reich, "Israeli Foreign Policy," p. 130.

with technical and development assistance, 'being a light unto the nations.'[51] Included

are states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well as developing and Non-Aligned

states (during the Cold War). Through this circle, Israel became an international actor

bilaterally and in international organisations, furthering its foreign and security goals.

The benefits from the third circle had fluctuating success. In the fourth circle are

economically advanced, industrialised, developed countries, including European states,

Japan, Korea, and Canada. Early on, the bilateral relationships with Germany and

France were extremely important to Israel. Fifth, and finally, is the circle of the

'superpowers' of the Cold War-era: the United States and Soviet Union. The Israeli-US

relationship remains vital for Israeli foreign policy. The Kennedy-Johnson and, later,

Nixon administrations established the 'special relationship' that exists today.

The rationale behind the Peripheral Alliance policy was to seek possibilities of

securing allies in the region. Israel realised that it could not unilaterally risk constant

military disputes with millions of Arabs.[52] In addition, the prospective relations with

non-Arab states could aid Israel in countering Soviet expansionism. This is because by

aligning with US allies in the region, Israel would appear even more like a US ally by

acting as a buffer to Soviet attempts to gain influence in the Middle East. This was also

connected to Nasser's nationalism because the Egyptian leader received aid from the

USSR. Similarly, Iran aimed to counter Nasserist nationalism and other threats to

Iranian influence in the region. Thus, relations under the Peripheral Alliance policy

served as deterrents to regional threats. As Avner Yaniv explains: 'They forced the

Arabs to commit their attention-and sometimes their forces-to areas that were far from

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[51] Ibid, p.131.
[52] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 34.

Israel, thereby dispersing the Arab war effort and making it less dangerous.'[53] At the same time, if Israel succeeded, it could also attract the positive attention of the United States as the leading state of a critical mass of non-Arab peoples in the Middle East. As Michael Bar-Zohar explains: '...Israel sensed that she had something to offer the Americans. She was no longer a small, isolated country, but the leader and connecting link of a group of states (one of which belonged to N.A.T.O. and two others of which were members of the Baghdad Pact) whose population exceeded that of all the Arab states together.'[54]

Strategically, relations between Israel and Iran also fit into the Cold War context of superpower rivalry for spheres of influence. The Eisenhower Doctrine formed the basis for the 'triangle' of connections among the United States, Iran, and Israel together with other pro-Western alliances such as the Baghdad Pact discussed above.   In turn, the United States felt that it was preventing Soviet expansionism into the Middle East through such alliance networks. President Eisenhower was initially sceptical about the Peripheral Alliance policy because his approach to Israel was less supportive than subsequent US administrations, although Israel saw its potential strategic utility to the United States. Eventually, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was persuaded by Abba Eban of the benefits of the policy, and Washington's approval was relayed to the Iranians.[55]   Indeed, it appears that it took two Israeli attempts to interest Eisenhower in the alliance.

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[53] Yaniv, *Deterrence without the bomb,* p. 97.

[54] Bar-Zohar, Michael. *Ben Gurion.* Trans. Peretz Kidron. (Weidenfeld and Nicholson: London, 1978), p. 262.

[55] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 35.

I argue that Israel did not have as much access to the US president as the Iranians perceived.   Army General and, later, Minister of Agriculture Moshe Dayan proposed suggesting the Peripheral pact to Eisenhower via Britain's Field Marshall Montgomery, who was then the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. Montgomery did not relay the message to Eisenhower.   Following the unrest in Lebanon and the Iraqi revolution, Ben Gurion wrote to Eisenhower to impress upon him the importance of the Peripheral pact.   Ben Gurion highlighted the dangers posed by Nasser and his Soviet supporters to the region that would have dangerous implications to the West.   Such implications would include 'the failure of France's efforts to solve the Algerian problem and to retain its friendly relations with Tunisia and Morocco; the breakdown of Libya's independence and of American and British influence there; the danger of a communist revolt in Iran; Egyptian and Soviet domination of Sudan; the endangering of Ethiopia's independence; a sweeping assault by Nasser of "Black Africa" with the intention of gaining control over that area.'[56]

John Foster Dulles was given the letter by Abba Eban and had the letter rushed to the President.   In response, Eisenhower did not suggest a meeting with Ben Gurion, as hoped by Israel.   He and Dulles remained cautious.   Eisenhower nonetheless expressed his gratitude for Ben Gurion's assessment of the dangers of the region and instructed Dulles to support the pact.   American interest in the Peripheral Alliance also encouraged Turkey and Iran to strengthen its ties with Israel.   David Ben Gurion explained his reasoning behind the Peripheral Alliance policy:

> The Middle East is not an exclusively Arab area; on the contrary, the
> majority of its inhabitants are not Arabs. The Turks, the Persians and

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[56] Bar-Zohar, Michael. "David Ben Gurion and the Policy of the Periphery-1958: Analysis," *Israel in the Middle East*, Edited by Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2008), p. 196.

the Jews-without taking into account the Kurds and other non-Arab minorities in the Arab states-are more numerous than the Arabs in the Middle East, and it is possible that though contacts with the peoples of the outer zone of the area we shall achieve friendship with the peoples of the inner zone who are our immediate neighbours.[57]

Ben Gurion's vision was that of a Realist, yet with a novel approach that creatively overcame constraints. His character as a decision-maker helped to influence and shape foreign policy in Israel's most formative years.

1.6 **The Israeli Decision-Making Structure**

In order to best examine Israeli decision-making, it is prudent at this point in the discussion to include a look at the traditional tilt toward the security network and the role of the Israeli Prime Minister in the Israeli decision-making process. Though the security establishment has a lot of sway within the decision-making process in Israel, it is important to examine the nuances such as the role and weight of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, and the role of the Prime Minister. When we examine the case study, it is important to see how much influence these Ministry heads and the Prime Minister really have. When one considers the role of the Ambassador who technically works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and under the Foreign Minister, one needs to establish how much influence that individual actually has in the decision-making process. The precise role and influence of the individuals discussed in the thesis, in relation to the Israeli decision-making structure, has not been examined at

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[57] Cited in Michael Brecher, *Foreign Policy System of Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p.171.

length by most of the existing literature on Israeli-Iranian relations. The dominant perception of Israeli policy towards its immediate external environment is the old mantra 'Israel has no foreign policy, only a defense policy.'[58]

Clive Jones illustrates the Prime Minister's role within the Israeli foreign policy structure: 'The structure of foreign policy making in Israel allows considerable latitude for the expression of personal preference by a Prime Minister, irrespective of political or ideological agendas. This degree of individual executive authority is perhaps peculiar to Israel, not because such patterns are never replicated in other democracies in times of crisis…but because it represents the very essence of Israel's foreign policy decision making process during the longer periods of "dormant war."'[59] The Israeli Prime Minister has a wide scope in which he or she can personally influence foreign policy decision-making even during non-crisis times.

In times of crisis, bias can be seen toward individuals with experience in the security and defence establishment, particularly when immediate and critical decisions arise. 'The bias in the decision making structure toward those individuals and bureaucracies with direct experience of and influence over security issues can also inhibit, if not negate, the executive authority of the premier lacking perceived grounding in or experience of security issues.'[60] Defence often had the final word in times of crisis, Golda Meir would often defer to Moshe Dayan even when her opinion differed from his and the rest of the cabinet members as she recognised that experience outweighs authority in the foreign policy decision-making process. Defence would get the final say because Meir recognised that a military setback could be fatal whereas a foreign policy

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[58] Jones, "The Foreign Policy of Israel," p. 115,
[59] Ibid, p.126.
[60] Ibid, p.127.

setback would not be and thus had less risk involved. In high-risk decisions with respect to security issues, she deferred to her military experts.[61]

Clive Jones explains the close decision-making structure thus:

> As such, foreign-policy decision making remains restricted by security concerns, and one in which strong personalities can emasculate the role of institutions charged with formulating and implementing foreign policy. David Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, and Yitzhak Rabin based their leadership in government upon highly stratified lines with relatively few people party to broad policy formulation beyond their respective "kitchen" cabinets. Nowhere is this demonstrated most visibly than in the role played by the ministry of foreign affairs. In the competition for influence within the Israeli cabinet, the views of the foreign ministry have carried less weight than either the views expressed by the prime minister's office or the defence ministry.[62]

Upon closer inspection, even generalisations can benefit from a more nuanced enquiry. For instance, Abba Eban, the Foreign Minister from 1966 to 1974 reflected in an interview when asked why the Foreign office had such limited influence on the foreign policy decision-making process in Israel:

> The fact that something is written in the press all the time doesn't make it true. The Foreign Office was predominant in making the official policy, but the Defense Ministry took no notice of official policy or of Cabinet consensus, or of the formulas that were adopted. In general, I would say that the formulations of Israeli policy were almost ninety per cent Foreign Office-oriented….I think that in the formulation and adoption of official policies, the Foreign Office was almost unchallenged.[63]

It is in the foreign policy implementation stage that the Ministry of Defence had the most influence and in general the Prime Minister's ear. As Abba Eban explains: 'When

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[61] Shlaim, Avi. "Interview With Abba Eban, 11 March 1976," *Israel Studies* Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 8.
[62] Jones, "The Foreign Policy of Israel," p. 127.
[63] Shlaim, "Interview with Abba Eban," p. 4.

a country's major foreign policy preoccupation is not to be wiped off the face of the earth, then of course security becomes a very important factor.'[64]

Since individuals in the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Defence carried influence in foreign policy decision-making, it is important to examine the different roles of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Defence, which often overlapped. Abba Eban explains how the Foreign Ministry (The Foreign Office) was meant to:

> Strengthen Israel's security by achieving a flow of arms, by achieving economic support, by achieving a minimal international understanding; but all of these are basically related to security. The distortion and magnification of this, however, arose from the fact that the Defense Ministry was more or less an independent government of its own.[65]

Because Israel's relationship with Iran involved utmost secrecy, the decision-making structure within Israel reflected that of most other sensitive relations with state (and non-state) actors. At the top was the decision of the Israeli Prime Minister at the time. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Defence Minister were involved as well as the head of the Mossad. This also reflected the influential involvement of the Israeli team stationed in Tehran. The ambassador (or formally the head of mission) played a pivotal role as the official eyes and ears on the ground. As soon as relations with Iran involved military and intelligence cooperation, the two other essential individuals were the military attaché and the chief of the Mossad station in Tehran.[66] The Israelis in Iran went to great lengths to understand the Persian language and Iranian culture. As Uri Bar-Joseph explains, 'Consequently, they accumulated excellent understanding of the

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[64] Ibid, p.7.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Bar-Joseph, Uri. "Forecasting a Hurricane: Israeli and American Estimations of the Khomeini Revolution". *Journal of Strategic Studies,* Vol. 36 No. 5 (2013), 718-742.

country and could cultivate close relations with key politicians, generals, and businessmen. They were the foundation on which the strategic cooperation between the two states was built.'[67]

One pivotal example is Mossad's role as the trailblazer in establishing contacts with Iran that pre-dated the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its connections. Specifically, Mossad used its own foreign relations division *'Tevel.'* The MFA had its own calculations and considerations including the constant pre-occupation of striving for public Iranian recognition, which was a prominent personal goal for David Ben Gurion as well.

The military, specifically the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) played a significant role in the relations with Iran. Military attachés and various officers helped facilitate training and the trade of military equipment. The Ministry of Finance played an instrumental role in Israel's connections with Iran on oil and general trade. The premise of trade and commerce (e.g. the first oil purchase from Iran in 1954) preceded the military connections (e.g. the exchange of military attachés in 1960). Under the general government umbrella, different Israeli ministries dealt with their Iranian opposite numbers in order to keep the relations covert as per the Iranians' wishes.

In summary, examining how decisions are made with respect to the role of individuals and their relationships, especially at the executive level where timing and severity is a factor, provides a much greater understanding of the key factors that influence the outcome of Israeli foreign policy.

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[67] Ibid, p. 722.

1.7   <u>Structure of the Thesis</u>

This thesis is structured to analyse the conditions and situations under which the role of human relationships, and their respective perceptions and misperceptions and human agency, can be shown to have a significant impact on foreign policy.

Chapter 2 will provide a detailed discussion of the theoretical framework underlying this thesis. I will also explain in depth why foreign policy analysis helps to transform the analysis of Israeli Foreign Policy towards Iran told thus far and highlight what Realism has not explained. In particular, I will explore the importance of looking at theories behind decision-making that focus on the individual. Chapter 2 will also address the use of clandestine diplomacy as a foreign policy tool.

In Chapter 3, I shall establish the basis for the entire thesis as the years between 1948 and 1955 laid the foundation and the basic structure for Israeli-Iranian relations in general and Israel's relations towards Iran in particular. Chapter 4 will examine the years between 1955 and 1963 where under the umbrella of the Periphery Doctrine, Israeli decision-makers continued to form, shape, and implement Israel's foreign policy towards Iran under the premiership of David Ben Gurion.

Chapter 5 examines how Israeli decision-makers continued to implement Israeli Foreign Policy towards Iran under Prime Minister Levi Eshkol from 1964 until 1967. This was the first period after the premiership of David Ben Gurion. Chapter 6, which covers the years 1967 until 1973, mark the golden years of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran under Prime Ministers Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir. Chapter 7 examines the years between 1973 and 1979 and investigates the shift of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran ending with the Islamic Revolution under the Prime Ministers Golda Meir, Yitzhak

Rabin, and Menachem Begin. Chapter 8 will conclude the substantive discussion with lessons for the future that can be learned from Israeli-Iranian relations immediately prior to and during the Islamic Revolution and Israeli relations with the Islamic Republic.

CHAPTER 2:THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN: KEY DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS FOR REALISM AND THE FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS APPROACH

2.1   Introduction

In some complex, constantly changing contexts, attempts to apply a single theoretical framework are likely to omit events that do not respond to or fit into that framework. In the Israeli-Iranian case, the analysis is better served by a framework that offers a more synthesised approach.   Such a synthesis of frameworks is of value to academics and policymakers because it has wide applicability to many foreign policy cases. For example, Xiaoting Li's study on China's use of force and the complex militarised worldview of China's leaders.[68]   Without such a synthesis of frameworks, theoretical analyses become susceptible to become rigid and miss a more complete analysis. Within the wider context of international relations, the current trend is moving in the direction of synthesising theories to explain and understand foreign policy.[69]

This trend of synthesising theoretical thoughts on foreign policy has not yet adequately explained the course of events with respect to the development of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran.   Not only is the eclectic approach effective on a macro level, but also the

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[68] Li, Xiaoting. "The Taming of the Red Dragon: The Militarized Worldview and China's Use of Force, 1949-2001." *Foreign Policy Analysis* (2013, 9) pp. 387-407.

[69] Thies, Camron . "Integrating Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations through Role Theory" (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1 January 2012). Retrieved 28 January 2017, http://fpa.oxfordjournals.org/content/8/1/1

theoretical approach that I present and use throughout the thesis fits exactly with the desired achievements of this thesis. This thesis argues that human relationships and their perceptions and misperceptions, along with human agency, must be included in the examination of foreign policy and historical events. It demonstrates how individuals such as Prime Ministers and field operatives including diplomats overcame internal obstacles within the state's decision-making structure, and external obstacles in the host state and the region as well as influenced the internal and external perceptions of one's own state's foreign policy.

The key research question driving this thesis is: How does the inclusion of human relationships, consisting of perceptions and misperceptions, and human agency, affect the Realist analysis of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran? It is the theoretical framework in this chapter that provides the necessary tools to answer the research question at hand most effectively. In the following sections I outline the theoretical framework underpinning this thesis that will be the basis of analysis in the empirical chapters. I will present the various relevant and appropriate theories and articulate my theoretical framework to act as a reference point for subsequent empirical chapters. I will explore the theories of Realism as they pertain to the research question and discuss where my evidence enhances their findings.

In developing the theoretical framework, this thesis examines how the inclusion of human relationships consisting of perceptions and misperceptions and human agency affects the Realist analysis of Israeli foreign policy toward Iran from 1948 to 1979. The key variables in my research include the world views of the leaders and diplomats involved, the private communication between the decision makers and key personnel, as well as the individual factors such as their personality, empathy and understanding of

said individuals. In reviewing the existing literature, a comparison and identification of those assumptions, I identified that the Realist assumptions and literature left unanswered questions about the formation and implementation of foreign policy during this time period, and I established that the Realist explanation was enhanced by my research.

In this chapter, I build a theoretical framework that includes the theories relevant to the aims of this thesis. This includes an extensive discussion of Realism and what analytical tools relevant theories within Foreign Policy Analysis add to Realism. I discuss why Neoclassical Realism, Constructivism, and the Bureaucratic Politics Model do not apply to this analysis even though at first glance they might appear to be relevant. I then highlight further tools that enhance the existing account theoretically. I discuss at length the importance of Backchannel Diplomacy and Clandestine Alliances and Ententes as well as Clandestine Diplomacy as valuable foreign policy tools.

Having established the foundation within the relevant theories, I focus on the human dimension of relationships, which is the most important point of foreign policy formation and implementation of Israeli policy towards Iran. It is the theories of Agency, Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs and psychological approaches that enable the understanding of decision makers and their impact on foreign policy that is the aim of this thesis. This also includes the bounded rationality of decision-making and the importance of examining perceptions and misperceptions of decision makers and diplomats as they affect policy.

2.2 <u>Definition of the National Interest</u>

A concept that is at the core of Realism in particular and international relations in general is national interest. The national interest is a tool for identifying the goals or objectives of foreign policy and as an all-embracing concept of political discourse used specifically to justify particular policy preferences.[70] For Hans Morgenthau, the concept of national interest is the acquisition and use of power, which is the primary national interest of the state.

> For Morgenthau, the idea of national interest defined in terms of power as the central motif of state behaviour has an objective and therefore discoverable reality. However, according to his emphasis on military and economic dimensions to the virtual exclusion of other factors lead to a reappraisal of the concept and a rejection of the presumption that it was synonymous with the pursuit of power.[71]

In contrast, the concept of national interest is seen as subjective by Christopher Hill: 'The idea of the national interest is inadequate as a guide to foreign policy goals is tautologous…..All politicians can be presumed to be pursuing their subjective versions of the national interests.'[72]

Hill then quotes James Rosenau: 'Which interests are deemed to be national, and why?'

Christopher Hill argues:

> Ideology, values, and private stakes all shape the competing views of how to define them. Thus, the national interest cannot just be objectified in terms of power, security, prosperity and independence, all of which can be taken for granted as high level goals but which lead to disagreements as soon as discussion become more specific. Rather, its real use is as a measure stick. On hand it enables us to judge whether a given policy is genuinely an attempt to serve collective *public* concerns, or whether it is serving instead a sectional interest flying under false colours. On the other, it should help us to see whether a goal or policy is really derived from an *interest*, in the sense of a

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[70] Evans, Graham and Newnham, Jeffrey. *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, (London: Penguin, 1998), P. 344.
[71] Evans, Graham and Newnham, Jeffrey. *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, PP. 344-5.
[72] Hill, Christopher. *Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century,* 2nd ed. (London: Palgrave, 2016), p.128.

stake which a given unit has in a problem, as opposed to being a value, preference or mere aspiration.[73]

My thesis focuses on more than state behaviour. It examines human behaviour and its effect on foreign policy. Christopher Hill's definition allows me to examine the concept of the national interest from a broader perspective as well as how those perceptions and other factors other than the pursuit of power can enhance the Realist analysis. Including human behaviour explains many of the actions and unexpected outcomes that the Realist prism simplifies and streamlines into converging national interests and the pursuit of power. Of great concern, is identifying the origin of a particular foreign policy goal whether it is from an interest or a value preference. In essence, it allows us to unpack and examine the origins of a foreign policy goal or action.

2.3   **Realism Distilled**

From Thucydides and Machiavelli, Hobbes, Carr, Morgenthau, and Waltz,[74] Realist authors have built a rich tradition of examining world events through their conceptions of self-interest, the state, and power. The core assumptions of Realism provide a point of departure for this theoretical discussion and its effectiveness in particular foreign policy situations. This starting point is informative because the core assumptions of the Realist paradigm have formed the basis of explaining and understanding many critical

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[73] Ibid, pp. 128-9.
[74] Thucydides. *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Penguin Classic, Rex Warner Translation, 1954); Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince,* trans. George Bull (London: Penguin Classics, 1989);   Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan,* Reissue (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Carr, E.H. *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: St Martins Press, 1939);   Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, Seventh Edition (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2005); Waltz, Kenneth L. *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979)*.*

foreign policy decisions, for example, Thomas Schelling's analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis.[75] Realism's views on areas related to individuals within the state and their effect on foreign policy warrant observation in order to show the need for the synthesis with FPA.

Finally, it is important to consider Realism's views on the 'black box'- the state's internal workings. A Realist discussion would also not be complete without discussing the role of the international system and the positions of hegemonic powers at any given time. However, these analyses, as a great number of Realism's critics have noted,[76] overlook other important aspects that cause a state to act in a certain way such as a state's history and identity.

William C. Wohlforth, in his survey of Realism, generalises the key concepts of Realism in three useful assumptions, 'Groupism,' 'Egoism,' and 'Power Centrism.'[77] Other vital components of Realism are also included for an effectively distilled discussion of the theory.

The first of Wohlforth's key concepts of Realism is *'Groupism,'* where humans survive best within a group setting, most importantly for this case, the modern nation-state. Nationalism keeps a nation-state cohesive. The emphasis on groupism also highlights the state as a whole as a unit of analysis when looking at foreign policy formation. The emphasis on the state and groupism is primarily an emphasis most encouraged by Neorealists, also known as Contemporary Structural Realists. Structural

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[75] Schelling, T.C. *Arms and Influence.* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 96-176.
[76] Please refer to publications such as Rosenberg, Justin. *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of The Realist Theory of International Relations.* (London: Verso Books, 1994).
[77] Wohlforth, William C. "Realism and Foreign Policy." *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases.* 2nd ed., Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, eds.. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012), pp. 35-53.

Realists/Neorealists place prime emphasis on international anarchy and the role of the state within it.

In his seminal work on Neorealism, *Theory of International Politics*, Kenneth Waltz explains the role of the state within the international anarchic system in his definition of Realism:

> The state's interest provides the spring of action. The necessities of policy arise from the unregulated competition of states. Calculation based on these necessities can indicate the policies that will best serve a state's interests. Success is the ultimate test of policy, and success is defined as preserving and strengthening the state.[78]

Waltz also emphasises the centrality of testing policy as opposed to policy implementation, thereby omitting a crucial step within the foreign policy process. Waltz also covers within his discussion the basic Realist concept of the anarchic international system. In his view, such a system has no regulation apart from the natural regulation of states balancing their power within the international system. The saying 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'[79] has simply explained the broad explanation of two states aligning to balance against a common threat.

Second is *'Egoism.'* Egoism reflects self-interests that drive human behaviour. In a state setting, such egoism translates into the collective self-interest. Collective egoism outweighs altruism when pressure is high in real-world situations. Therefore, in 'real world' foreign policy formation situations it is assumed by Realists that serving the national interest is paramount.

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[78] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 117.
[79] Kautilya. *Arthashastra*: Book VI, *"The Source of Sovereign States,"* New York: Penguin Classics, 1992.

From the perspective of Classical Realists such as Hans J. Morgenthau who have also placed the greatest emphasis on human nature, they have summarised their reasoning in relation to political laws that are 'objective laws that have their roots in human nature.'[80] For instance, Hans J. Morgenthau in his discussion of his 'Six Principles of Political Realism' highlights that objective political laws are rooted in human nature.[81] The objective political laws are 'impervious to our preferences' and 'men will challenge them only at the risk of failure.'[82] The objective political laws are therefore absolute.

Realism also deduces what the objectives for statesmen might have been based on political actions and the 'foreseeable consequences of these acts.' Therefore, the motives are deduced from the foreign policy results. These results are foreign policy outcomes. The role of the individual and his or her relationships within foreign policy-making is therefore discounted. Indeed, Morgenthau states that:

> [t]o search for the clue to foreign policy exclusively in the motives of statesmen is both futile and deceptive. It is futile because motives are the most elusive of psychological data, distorted as they are, frequently beyond recognition, by the interests and emotions of actor and observer alike....Yet even if we had access to the real motives of statesmen, that knowledge would help us little in understanding foreign policies and might well lead us astray.[83]

The scepticism that is placed on examining of the individual leads to a blind spot within Realism, as the Realist analysis would not lend sufficient importance to analysing the role of the individual's motives and the impact of his personal relationships during policy implementation. Presumably, it is indeed possible to look at motives of foreign policymakers during implementation from communication such as policy memoranda and diplomatic communiqués.

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[80] Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, p. 4.
[81] Ibid, pp. 4-16.
[82] Ibid, p. 4.
[83] Ibid, p. 5.

Third, Realism is also based on 'Power-centrism' where power politics are a result of inequality of power. Those with most power are able to exercise control over others with social influence and have access to resources or material power to exercise that control or in extreme cases to coerce.[84] Power, whether military or economic, is seen both as an element in itself, and later with Neoclassical Realism, the *access* to power, which is explained more fully in the section below. Morgenthau defines political power as 'the mutual relations of control among the holders of public authority and between the latter and the people at large…Political power is a psychological relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised.'[85] Wohlforth connects his three general assumptions of Realism to FPA with his Realist checklist: 'look for where the power is, what the group interests are, and the role power relationships play in reconciling clashing interests.'[86]

According to Morgenthau, international relations are navigated best by the concept of 'interest defined in terms of power.'[87] This concept also imposes a discipline on the analysis of international relations and 'infuses rational order into the subject matter of politics' in order to facilitate a rational theoretical analysis.[88] Morgenthau sees this rational analysis applicable to the foreign policy actor as well. In this way, Morgenthau explains that national or cultural influences as well as ideological preferences are filtered out. Therefore, British, American, or Russian foreign policy would appear consistent and rational,[89] as the foreign policy actors would be following the same rational decision-making calculus.

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[84] Wohlforth, "Realism and Foreign Policy," p. 36
[85] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations,* p. 30.
[86] Wohlforth, "Realism and Foreign Policy," p. 37.
[87] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations,* p. 5.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

Neorealism views power within international relations as, 'The daily presence of force and recurrence on it mark the affairs of nations.'[90] Therefore, the concept of power is pervasive in international relations. Consequently, due to the pervasive nature of power within the international system, the work of statesmen in achieving 'security' meaning a less dangerous rather than a peaceful world involves decreasing, not eliminating, conflict.[91]

2.4   The Inadequacy of Neoclassical Realism and Constructivism

2.4.1 *The Inadequacy of Neoclassical Realism*

Neoclassical Realism is the most recent school of foreign policy named by some as the 'Fourth School' after *Innenpolitik*, Offensive/Aggressive Realism, and Defensive Realism. Neoclassical Realists' aim to strike a balance between theory and real-world case studies. To their credit, Neoclassical Realist seminal works have been case studies with detailed empirical accounts. Neoclassical Realist discussions are 'based on a deep familiarity with specific players involved in each situation, their history, culture, and collective mindsets.'[92] Neoclassical Realism goes further than classical Realism in explaining foreign policy with its intervening variables, but it does not go far enough in providing the tools to explain the evidence in this thesis. Also, the existing Israeli-Iranian centred literature originates broadly from a classical Realist angle and it is to that, that it is most prudent to add and to enhance.

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[90] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* p. 186.
[91] Donnelly, Jack. *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 10.
[92] Wohlforth, "Realism and Foreign Policy," p. 39.

Neoclassical Realism theorists argue that 'the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities.'[93] This assumption cements their connection to the Realist school of thought. What sets them apart is their belief that 'the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level.'[94] The two most prominent and relevant intervening variables that Neoclassical Realists discuss are first 'decision-makers' perceptions, through which systemic pressures must be filtered.'[95] The second intervening variable is 'the strength of a country's state apparatus and its relation to the surrounding society.'[96] Neoclassical Realists specify that distribution of power should be assessed based on the extent of a leader's access to the state's total material power resources. As such, Neoclassical Realists look inside the 'black box' of the state, examining domestic elements that would be studied by political scientists. A state's relative power is therefore the chief variable for Neoclassical Realists. They also assume that states seek to control their external environment. They also analyse systemic pressures according to both leaders' perceptions and the domestic state structure.[97]

Neoclassical Realists in comparison to classical Realists, give a more human face to decision-makers, or 'political elites.' They argue that, 'Structural imperatives rarely, if ever, compel leaders to adopt one policy over another; decision makers are not

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[93] Rose, Gideon. "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy." *World Politics* Vol. 51, No. 1 (1998) 144-172.
[94] Ibid, p. 146.
[95] Ibid, p. 157.
[96] Ibid, p. 161.
[97] In the grand scheme of International Relations theory Neoclassical Realists can be roughly placed between structuralists and constructivists.

sleepwalkers buffeted about by inexorable forces beyond their control.'[98] Decision-makers are fully aware of structural limitations both internationally and domestically. Neoclassical Realists see the state not as an impermeable unit, but see 'states respond (or not) to threats and opportunities in ways determined by both internal and external considerations of policy elites, who must reach consensus within an often decentralised and competitive political process.'[99]

The ultimate emphasis of Neoclassical Realism is on material power capabilities and the relative power of the diplomatic players and not on individual behaviour. At the same time, Neoclassical Realists believe that policy choices are made by state leaders and it is their assessment of threat that matters. State and societal elites have a 'different evoked set of concerns about an ascending foreign power.'[100] To quote Robert Jervis, 'the way people perceive data is influenced not only by their cognitive structure and theory about other actors, but also by what they are concerned with at the time they receive the information.'[101]

One of the critiques of Neoclassical Realism is the opaqueness of the connection between objective material power capabilities and the policymaker's subjective assessment of those capabilities.

> Precise theoretical development in this area would be helpful, explicating just how various psychological, ideational, and cultural factors may affect how political actors perceive their own and other's capabilities and how such perceptions are translated into foreign policy.[102]

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[98] Schweller, Randall L. "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing," *International Security* Vol. 29 No. 2 (Fall 2004), p. 164.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Lobell, Steven E. "Threat Assessment, the State, and Foreign Policy: A Neoclassical Realist Model," *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* eds. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009), pp. 56-57
[101] Jervis, Robert. "Hypotheses on Misperceptions," *World Politics,* Vol. 20, No. 3 (April 1968), p. 472.
[102] Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," p. 168.

While Neoclassical Realism provides a more nuanced approach from a broadly Realist perspective, it does not fully address the role of the Individual and human agency and their direct effect on foreign policy regardless of power capabilities. This thesis aims to bridge the gap between the Realist and Neoclassical Realist accounts and the effects of the role of human relationships and human agency, and their direct effect on foreign policy.

2.4.2 *The Inadequacy of Constructivism*

At first glance, one may consider Constructivism as a viable prism through which to examine the role of Agency and perceptions within the scope of Israeli-Iranian relations because of Constructivism's focus on shared ideas and identities. The use of norms and rules of communal identity and shared behavior as it relates to perceptions and misperceptions which is the basis of Constructivism is not the focus of my thesis rendering Constructivism inappropriate as a research modality. The focus of my thesis is how individual actions affect the formation and implementation of foreign policy.

According to one of the pre-eminent scholars on Constructivism, Alexander Wendt, the basic tenets of Constructivism are 'that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature.'[103] Constructivism evolved primarily in the 1990's and has helpfully been categorised into three varieties, systemic, unit-level and holistic.[104] All three varieties of

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[103] Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.1

[104] Behravesh, Maysam. 'Constructivism: An Introduction.' E-International Relations, http://www.e-ir.info/2011/02/03/constructivism-an-introduction/ accessed on 2 August 2017.

Constructivism share a focus on shared beliefs and belief communities that influence and are influenced by norms.

Systemic Constructivism, that the work of Alexander Wendt exemplifies, concentrates on "interactions between unitary state actors" which de emphasizes the role of domestic politics in constructing or transforming state identities and interests by looking at what happens between these state actors rather than what happens within these state actors.[105] Systemic Constructivism therefore follows Kenneth Waltz's neo-Realist "third image" level of analysis, hence the name 'systemic'. This focus on systemic interaction would overlook vital aspects of the evidence in this thesis in the same manner as the Realist perspective and would therefore neither enhance the existing literature nor do justice to sub-systemic aspects of the empirical evidence.

Inversely, unit-level Constructivist theory does focus on the sphere of domestic politics as exemplified by authors such as Peter J. Katzenstein.[106] Unit-level Constructivists, as Reus-Smit explains, look at states' national security strategies through 'the relationship between domestic social and legal norms and the identities and interests of states.'[107] This thesis does not focus necessarily on state identity.

Lastly, holistic Constructivists attempt to reconcile the divide between the domestic and the international in their explanation of the establishment of state identities and interests. Constructivist scholars such as John G. Ruggie and Friedrich Kratochwil integrate in

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[105] Reus-Smit, Christian. "Constructivism," in *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd ed. Scot Burchill and others (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), pp. 194-95; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.199.
[106] Katzenstein, Peter J., Robert Keohane and Stephen Krasner. 'International Organization and the Study of World Politics.' *International Organization*, Autumn 1998, Vol. 52(4), pp. 645-685.
[107] Reus-Smit, Christian. "Constructivism," p. 200.

their writings internationally steered social identities and domestically grounded corporate identities of states to form 'a unified analytical perspective that treats the domestic and the international as two faces of a single social and political order.'[108]

It is the case that the basis of Constructivism is broadly that of perceptions and misperceptions interpreted according to norms. However, this is not the focus of my research. My research focuses on how individual actions directly affect the formation and implementation of foreign policy. Constructivism studies how norms and rules of communal identity and shared behaviour affect perceptions and misperceptions, whereas my research focuses on the effect and role of the individual specifically on foreign policy formation and implementation. Constructivism studies communal identity and shared behaviours, whereas my research focuses on the effect and the role of the individual.

According to the Oxford Handbook of International Relations, Constructivists hold that the ideas shaping international politics are inter-subjective ones, shared between people and irreducible to the individual.[109] Constructivism is not an appropriate methodological tool to use in this thesis because it does not address the heart of the matter in my research, which is focused on the individual level, and the scope of constructivism is too broad. My evidence points to the relationship between the inherent characteristics of the individual level and their subsequent effect of foreign policy. As Walter Carlsnaes states:

> Although human interaction is essential for establishing and upholding
> these norms, ideas, and identities, constructivism is never the less a

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[108] Ibid, p. 201.

[109] Hurd, Ian. 'Constructivism'. In Reus-Smit, Christian & Snidal, Duncan (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

structural approach, since the explanation of the policy choices made by decision makers is in terms of the effect of social structures broadly defined on the individual actor rather than with reference to any innate characteristics of such actors.[110]

Critical Constructivists see an alternative way of looking at power and the national interest that contrasts with neo-Realist and neo-Liberal materialist views of power that consists of money and military equipment. For Constructivists such as Jutta Weldes, national interests and power are legitimised through social construction by a small elite group who create these ideas through discourse.[111] Other Constructivists argue that international social structures defined by the norms of international organisations are the building blocks of constructed national interests and their resulting behaviour by states.[112] Martha Finnemore has also been influential in examining the way in which international organizations are involved in these processes of the social construction of actor's perceptions of their interests.[113] These interests are constructed through social interaction.[114]

As quoted above, Constructivism assumes a group shared construct. This thesis focuses on the role of the individual. The argument that Constructivism is relevant to my research becomes impossible when one considers that decision makers create their own world in which they perform a particular foreign policy, that foreign policy is what decision-makers make of it, and that Constructivism as it relates to FPA as a subset of IR is dependent on the group construct of social construction that shapes national

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[110] Ibid. P. 121-2

[111] Weldes, Jutta. "Constructing National Interests," European Journal of International Relations, Vol. 2 Issue 3, 1996. Pp. 275-318.

[112] Finnemore, Martha. *National Interests in International Society*, (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[113] Ibid, p.2

[114] Ibid.

identity. Of central importance in this thesis is the specific role of individuals to affect that national identity and subsequent policy instruments and interaction.

After a thorough examination of Constructivism, it is apparent that the focus of Constructivism which is communal and shared identity and behaviours focuses on an entirely different strand of policy formation as my research concentrates on the role of the individual and individual perceptions.

2.5   **The Individual in Realist Policy**

The role and influence of diplomats and other field operatives is discussed throughout this thesis. Realist thinkers have not completely overlooked the role of diplomats within foreign policy. Hans J. Morgenthau, one of the fathers of modern Realism, covers and extensively and acknowledges the important role of the diplomat in international relations. Morgenthau sees diplomacy as an instrument to achieving peace.[115] It is important to understand the basic principles of Morgenthau's view on diplomats as it provides an insight into how he views the individual within international relations.

Morgenthau discusses the four tasks of diplomacy:

> 1. Diplomacy must determine its objectives in the light of the power actually and potentially available for the pursuit of these objects.
> 2. Diplomacy must access the objectives of other nations and the power actually and potentially available for the pursuit of these objectives.

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[115] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 539.

3. Diplomacy must determine to what extent these different objectives are compatible with one another.

4. Diplomacy must employ the means suited to the pursuit of its objectives.[116]

Morgenthau's emphasis is on hard power as capability but he does not include soft power capability such as the ability to weigh, manage and take risks, which is often a part of diplomatic decision-making.

Additionally, Morgenthau references the means of diplomacy at the diplomat's disposal, which are persuasion, compromise and the threat of force.[117] Morgenthau presents the example of the great power and its potential use of the means of diplomacy to illustrate them.

> Generally the diplomatic representative of a great power, in order to be able to serve both the interests of his country and the interests of peace, must at the same time use persuasion, hold out the advantages of a compromise, and impress the other side with the military strength of his country.[118]

Morgenthau's premise is a starting point for analysing foreign policy, but does not allow for the full scope of diplomatic behaviour. Diplomatic behaviour also includes forming human relationships that Morgenthau does not fully explore.

Morgenthau also discusses the two organised instruments of general diplomacy - the foreign office and diplomats. He explains:

> The foreign office is the policy forming agency, the brains of foreign policy where the impressions from the outside world are gathered and evaluated, where foreign policy is formulated, and where the impulses emanate that the diplomatic representatives transform into actual foreign policy. While the foreign office is the brains of foreign policy, the diplomatic representatives are its eyes, ears and mouth: its fingertips: and, as it were, its itinerant carnations. The diplomat fulfills

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid, p. 541.
[118] Ibid.

three basic functions for his government- symbolic, legal and political.[119]

When Morgenthau discusses the function of the diplomat and the importance of the diplomat's symbolic representation, Morgenthau views the diplomat as symbolic of his state and specifics that the actual identity of the diplomat is irrelevant[120] in fulfilling the symbolic portion of his role. Morgenthau's emphasis is that shaping foreign policy with the foreign office is the most important function of the diplomat, as well as the diplomat's awareness of all internal opinions within his own government and public opinions in his own state.[121] Morgenthau views the diplomatic mission as a form of a high-class spy organisation whose purpose is to evaluate the actual and potential power of the host state. In this way, diplomats provide the raw materials for their government for making decisions on foreign policy. Morgenthau explains that diplomats:

> Must make the people among whom they live, and especially of the mouthpieces of their public opinion and their political leaders, understand and, if possible, approve the foreign policy they represent. For this task of "selling" a foreign policy, the personal appeal of the diplomat and his understanding of the psychology of the foreign people are essential prerequisites.[122]

While exploring the psychology of the others, Morgenthau does not explore the psychology of the diplomat along with his own personal methods of charm, persuasion, and trust-building that ultimately make or break the foreign policy process. Morgenthau's principles are valid and sound as a starting point in examining the ability of a diplomat to exercise foreign policy formation and implementation on a larger scale however, he does not delve into the personal role of the individual, along with his or her

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[119] Ibid, pp. 541-542.
[120] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, p. 542.
[121] Ibid, p. 543.
[122] Ibid, p. 544.

individual characteristics which are prerequisites to fulfilling their foreign policy objectives. This thesis aims to complement and expand on Morgenthau's foundational explanation of the role of the individual and human relationships in foreign policy.

In establishing a more complete understanding of Morgenthau's thinking on the diplomats, it is important at this time to introduce his Nine Rules of Diplomacy reproduced from his seminal work *Politics Among Nations*:

Morgenthau's Four Fundamental Rules of Diplomacy:[123]

1. Diplomacy must be divested of the crusading spirit.

2. The objectives of foreign policy must be defined in terms of the national interest and must be supported with adequate power. (National interest is defined as national security.)

3. Diplomacy must look at the political scene from the view of other nations.

4. Nations must be willing to compromise on all issues that are not vital to them. (Compromise is seen as diplomacy's most difficult task.)[124]

Morgenthau's Five Prerequisites of Compromise:[125]

1. Give up the shadow of worthless right for the substance of real advantage. This essentially means do not be legalistic or propagandistic. 'The choice that confronts the diplomat is not between legality and illegality but between political wisdom and political folly.'

2. Never put yourself in a position from which you cannot retreat without losing face and from which you cannot advance without grave risk.

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[123] Ibid, pp. 559-562.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid, p. 565.

3. Never allow a weak ally to make decisions for you because the more powerful nation could find itself defending or compromising the interests of the weak ally instead of its own.

4. The armed forces are an instrument of foreign policy not its master. The armed forces are seen by Morgenthau as an instrument of war and foreign policy is an instrument of peace.

   Morgenthau explains 'in a society of sovereign nations, military force is a necessary instrument of foreign policy. Yet, the instrument of foreign policy should not become the master of foreign policy. As war is fought in order to make peace possible, foreign policy should be conducted in order to make peace permanent.'[126]

5. The government is the leader of public opinion, not its slave. Morgenthau states that public opinion is emotional and not rational.[127]

Relevant to this thesis, is Morgenthau's view on diplomatic practice, as opposed to military practice in achieving the diplomat's foreign policy objectives:

To bend, not to break, the will of the other side as far as necessary, in order to safeguard one's own vital interests without hurting those of the other side. The methods of foreign policy are relative and conditional: not to advance by destroying the obstacles in one way but to retreat before them, to circumvent them, to manoeuvre around them, to soften and dissolve them slowly by means of persuasion, negotiation, and pressure. In consequence, the mind of the diplomat is complicated and subtle. It sees the issue in hand as a moment in history, and beyond the victory of tomorrow it anticipates the incalculable possibilities of the future.[128]

Again, Morgenthau's eloquent and well-respected examination of the role of the individual diplomat and the method of persuasion used by the diplomat provides a strong foundation on which to further examine the individual elements that affect the practice and objectives of foreign policy. This thesis aims to expand Morgenthau's

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[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.

original discourse bringing a more complete understanding of the role of the individual in foreign policy.

Morgenthau's views on the role of diplomacy, especially his nine rules that in his view could revive diplomacy into the future, outline important foundational principles that demonstrate that Realist thinkers have at least considered the role of diplomats within international relations. This thesis expands on Morgenthau's foundation and uses foreign policy analysis tools in order to bridge the gap that the Realist discussion has left unfilled on the subject of detailed diplomatic practice.

2.6   What The Realist Account Has Not Explained

The Realist prism identifies the states, power structures, and alliances that were prominent in Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. However, that analysis fails to explain foreign policy behaviour in its entirety. During the research process, I identified that the predominantly Classical Realist account has not explained six aspects of Israel's foreign policy.

First, the Realist account does not fully explain foreign policy implementation that involves human behaviour.[129] Realism does not help with policy advice stemming from its general assumptions of the international system.[130] It is within Foreign Policy

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[129] Wivel, Anders. "Explaining why state X made a certain move last Tuesday: the promise and limitations of Realist foreign policy analysis," *Journal of International Relations and Development* Vol. 8, No. 4 (2005), pp. 355-380.

[130] Wivel also covers Neoclassical and Postclassical in his discussion of Realism's policy shortcomings by arguing that "they are unable to account systematically for the link between international structure and foreign policy." Ibid, p. 357.

Analysis where practical analysis and explanations for policy implementation can be found.

Second, Realism's important materialist factors - for example, power - are *perceived* and *interpreted* by human beings making foreign policy. They cannot be objectively measured.[131]

Third, Realism provides little guidance about the daily foreign policy-making decisions and details on daily foreign policy implementation. The Realist account effectively explains the theoretical grand strategies that states pursue but not the when and why of implementation.[132] This is important because grand policies and strategies of prime ministers and presidents are highly likely to be modified and shaped by politics, or even simply by daily constraints. On the macro level, the grand strategy may remain consistent, but implementation could affect policy outcomes.

The role of relationships between individuals in foreign policy analysis best reflects the power of effective foreign policy implementation. Brighi and Hill accurately describe such an interactive stage where they identify:

> the issue of the channels through which foreign policy aims are translated into practice, involving the often complex relationship between ends and means; on the other are the difficulties which states have in *operating* in what is literally a "foreign" and quite often a highly intractable world, and how they *adapt* their behaviour on the basis of the interaction with, and feedback from, that outside world.[133]

It is the focus on foreign policy actors' interaction with the outside world that is important to analyse when considering Israeli foreign policy towards Iran.

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[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid, p. 366.
[133] Brighi, Elisabetta and Hill, Christopher. "Implementation and Behaviour," *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*. 2nd Edition , Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, eds.. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 157.

The analysis of influence within FPA demonstrates foreign policy actions by individuals that enable each to gauge their own environment and circumvent obstacles under their own personal direction and discretion. Christopher Hill explains:

> In some circumstances we may need to trust in the intuition and emotional capabilities of our leaders, which goes against the grain of the cerebral, knowledge-based paradigm normally associated with the 'rational.' The modernity which the West has given to the world is distrustful of chance, superstition and fate, and puts a premium on the ability to control actions and the environment. This approach has many achievements to its name, but even in natural science breakthroughs often occur by short-circuiting recommended procedures.[134]

It is exactly in the foreign policy implementation stage where such 'short circuiting' occurs and where the existing literature leaves much unaccounted for with respect to the human impact on policy.

Fourth, Realism underrepresents the vital role of individuals in foreign policy implementation in two ways. It underrepresents the role of individuals smoothing the foreign policy process to change perceptions within the state. Realism also underrepresents the sensitivity of field operatives to the opposition within the host state and consequently bypassing the opposition through their connections to other key decision-makers.

Fifth, Realism underplays the role of history, including individuals' sense of history and emotions, in driving foreign policy. Individuals, including decision makers and field operatives often have a sense of their own role in the historical process that is larger than their own singular role.

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[134] Hill, Christopher. *The Changing politics of Foreign Policy,* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 124.

Sixth, Realism's reliance on interests does not explain drastic changes in policy when the same strategic interests remain constant. Realism also does not explain the manipulation of relations.

Seventh, for Realists, as explained by Hans J. Morgenthau, the 'nation-state [i]s the ultimate point of reference of contemporary foreign policy.' [135] The most clear shortcoming of Realism for this case becomes apparent-Realism's firm statism. The Realist account does not sufficiently look inside the state and the domestic impact on foreign policy. The most basic agent is man. Realism recognises man is an entity with the capacity to exert power; however, in the international arena, states compete with other states.[136] It is this narrow view of foreign policy that discounts the true effect of Agency and Perceptions and Misperceptions in the implementation, formation, and consolidation of foreign policy. My analysis demonstrates how imperative it is to consider the human condition within Agency and Perceptions and Misperceptions to attain a more complete understanding of a state's foreign policy creation, implementation, and ultimately, outcome.

The section above has listed the seven areas that I have discovered during research that an exclusively Realist analysis has not explained with respect to Israeli foreign policy. They will be discussed at length throughout the empirical chapters of the thesis by using examples to demonstrate how adding to the existing Realist-leaning analysis, a new, enhanced perspective emerges of Israel's Iran policy.

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[135] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations,* p. 13.
[136] Royo, Joseph. "Agency and International Relations: An Alternative Lens," E-International Relations 28 August 2012. Retrieved 2 February 2017, http://www.e-ir.info/2012/08/28/agency-and-international-relations-an-alternative-lens/.

2.7   Towards a New Analysis of Israeli-Iranian Relations

2.7.1 *Synthesising Foreign Policy Analysis and Realism*

The relationship between Realist theories and Foreign Policy Analysis is delicate and

fluid and there is a complex interplay that is best described by Margot Light:

> In some respects, foreign policy analysis is firmly within the Realist paradigm.
> It assumes a state-centric international political system, and, although it
> acknowledges there are other actors within that system, it primarily focuses
> on the transactions which take place between states or which concern, on one
> side at least, a government acting on behalf of the state. In other respects,
> however, FPA diverges from Realism. Realists, for example, assume that the
> relations between states are motivated by the pursuit of power.[137]

Light continues by making the precise distinction where FPA differs from Realism:

> Foreign policy analysts accept that power relations are important and that
> force [threatened, used, or simply implicit] is a major instrument of foreign
> policy. But they are also interested in other types of relations and in other
> policy instruments. Moreover, while Realists assume that the state is unitary
> actor, many foreign policy analysts open up the 'black box' of the state to
> examine the various units that make up the decision-making apparatus. They
> believe that policy can often be explained by the way the units relate to one
> another. Finally, Realists assume that the state is a rational actor, whereas
> Rationality is a contested concept in FPA. Indeed, a great deal of FPA
> research is concerned with seeking an explanation for seemingly irrational
> foreign policy decisions.[138]

In order to locate the new analysis of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran within the

theoretical scholarship, it is important to examine where my new analysis is situated

within Foreign Policy Analysis. It is therefore a good starting point to briefly map out

FPA in general.

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[137] Light, Margot. "Foreign Policy Analysis". *Contemporary International Relations: A Guide to Theory*.
A.J.R. Groom, and Margot Light eds., (Pinter Publishers LTD, London, 1994), p. 93
[138] Ibid, p. 93

Margot Light discusses the three categories of foreign policy analysis: domestic politics, middle range theory and comparative foreign policy.[139] Almost all FPA tendencies fall under one of these three categories, but some fall outside the spectrum identified by Light. My analysis sits fully within middle range theory. At first glance, one could assume that domestic politics/ bureaucratic politics could also potentially be applicable. However, I present the bureaucratic politics perspective and will later discuss if and where they are relevant to my empirical data and analysis.

The relationship between FPA and International Relations (IR) is also useful in the definition of FPA.

> While FPA is not contentious with IR, there could be no IR without FPA. It would be difficult, for example, to envisage an international *system* unless there were external relations. A system assumes more than units enclosed by a boundary; it also presupposes there are interactions between the units. And the official relations that take place between the units of the international system constitute foreign policy. FPA is the study of those transactions, the domestic circumstances that produce them, the effect on them of the system and its structures and their influence on the system.[140]

The FPA prism is a type of interdisciplinary umbrella that provides vital tools to analyse international puzzles in a precise and concrete manner. As Margot Light explains:

> As a subject of study, FPA is invaluable both because it is a bridging discipline, connecting together the diverse issues that students deal with under separate headings in other subjects, and because it translates abstract theory into concrete problems. Furthermore, by concentrating on the interface between the state and the state system, FPA links the micro level of politics with the macro level of the international system.[141]

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[139] Ibid, p. 93

[140] Ibid, p. 94.

[141] Ibid.

Having established that by using the tools provided by FPA the Realist prism can be greatly enhanced, I shall highlight which elements of FPA have been used to underpin my theoretical framework.

2.7.2   *Moving Beyond Bureaucratic Politics*

The bureaucratic politics theories potentially play an unusual yet important analytical role in explaining Israeli policy towards Iran, because superficially, different ministries within the Israeli decision making structure were involved in the formation and implementation of Israel's foreign policy towards Iran and could have potentially had differences in opinion and approach at times. The importance of looking at the Bureaucratic Politics Model for analysing Israel's Iran policy effectively is two-fold: theoretical and operational.

Theoretically, Realism's view of the state as a 'black box' overlooks theorising and learning from the bureaucratic process of foreign policy formation. The focus is on Bureaucratic Politics because different Israeli government ministries and agencies were involved with foreign policy towards Iran. Operationally, overlooking the details of Bureaucratic Politics may forego vital details of the Israel-Iran story. Israeli policy making on Iran (as on most foreign policy matters) was contemplated and made in the top levels of government and other government agencies assisted in carrying out the policy decisions. This was carried out in the utmost secrecy. Because of the operational secrecy of Israeli-Iranian relations, a minimal number of government agencies were actually involved in the policy making and in policy implementation. Therefore, the "pulling and hauling" of government agencies of the Bureaucratic Politics Model does not apply because a majority of the decisions pertaining to Iran were made by individuals or heads of Ministries and did not filter down to Ministry officials.

Consequently, Bureaucratic Politics theories could have shortcomings in being explanatory tools in this thesis.

In their seminal work on Bureaucratic Politics, Graham Allison and Morton Halperin define their Bureaucratic Politics Model (BPM) as the actions of:

> Many actors as players- players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra-national problems as well. Players choose in terms of no consistent strategic objectives, but rather according to various concepts of national security, organizational, domestic, and personal interests. Players made governmental decisions not by a single rational choice, but by pulling and hauling.[142]

The Bureaucratic Politics Model encompasses a number of theories that pertain to the domestic politics and their role as foreign policy determinants. It is these foreign policy determinants that bring about the synthesis between Realism and FPA. The Bureaucratic Politics Model enhances Realism seeing the state as a 'black box' into which it is not necessary to look in order to understand international relations.

Realist theories minimise a layer of foreign policy implementation by not looking into the state as part of their analysis. As Valerie Hudson states in her discussion of bureaucratic politics and FPA: 'No matter how influential or mercenary, a single leader cannot make and implement foreign policy by himself or herself.'[143] However, even if leaders have consolidated and secured their power, they must still have government representatives implement foreign policy. Such implementation does not happen in a vacuum.

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[142] Allison, Graham T. and Halperin, Morton H. "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications" World Politics. Vol. 24 Spring 1972 pp.40-79. Cambridge University Press Stable URL:http://www.jstor.org/stable/2010559.

[143] Hudson, Valerie. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), p. 65.

The large bureaucratic organisations that form the Bureaucratic Politics Model are useful according to Alden and Aran for three reasons:

First, they provide "outputs" that reflect the environment in which policy decisions are made by decision makers. For example, BPMs explain 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs) which are formal written rules that bureaucracies have and that individuals must follow. SOPs are very rigid rules that individuals obey.[144] However, what happens within bureaucracies of an extremely young state without years' worth of SOP's? It is possible this lack of concrete SOP's provides scope for more ingenuity and flexibility even from government bureaucracies. This is one reason why the Bureaucratic Politics Model may not be entirely appropriate for this thesis. Also, on highly sensitive foreign policy matters, decisions are made at the top echelons of leadership and executed by individuals on the ground.

A second reason why the Bureaucratic Politics model could be useful is that BPMs help to *frame the perception* that foreign policy makers have of foreign policy events or issues. BPMs frame these perceptions because decision makers on the bureaucratic level are still affected by their issue areas and interests. One example is a national security issue that requires a government decision. According to the BPM, the particular national security issue will be looked at through different prisms. For instance a particular issue will be analysed through a budgetary prism by the Treasury, a national security perspective by the Department of Defence etc.[145]

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[144] Hill, Christopher, *The Changing politics of Foreign Policy*, P. 93.
[145] Alden, Chris and Amnon Aran. *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*. (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), P. 33.

Christopher Hill offers a third reason for the inclusion of the Bureaucratic Politics Model. The BPM can be at its most useful when analysing foreign policy at the point where it helps to systematise information that may otherwise be labeled trivial politicking of politicians and be no more important than journalistic gossip.[146] However, if a policy is created and implemented in almost total secrecy, not a lot of scope exists for trivial politicking from the perspective of this thesis. The evidence suggests that when relations are secret, information (that could be politicized) is given on a 'need to know' basis. However, what is relevant is the criticism of Allison's BPM theory that claims the overstated influence of bureaucracy over human agency.[147] For example, In the Israel-Iran case while the different ministries were forming relations with the Iranians, David Ben-Gurion sent a personal emissary, Shmuel Ziama Divon, to see the Shah of Iran. Ben Gurion employed several tracks in Israel's Iran policy. This example illustrates one of the refinements of the BPM over the years, where the balance between the role of human agency and the influence of bureaucracy can be controlled from above at the leadership level.

2.7.3 *Shortcomings of the Bureaucratic Politics Model for use in this Thesis*

The Bureaucratic Politics Model has not been used extensively in this thesis for the following reasons:

First, authors such as Hollis and Smith strengthen the role of the individual within the bureaucracy. This is where their discussion focuses on the role of the individual, as is

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[146] Allison, Graham and Halperin, Morton H. "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," P.44.
[147] Alden and Aran. *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*, P. 44.

the focus of this thesis. Hollis and Smith argue that the roles of these individuals are dependent on their responsibilities and expectations stemming from their jobs. The role of the head of state (and his or her office); in relation to other bureaucracies within government is discussed by these BPM respondents. Steve Smith further refines the response to the BPM claiming that the rigidity of the BPM restricts its predictive ability towards foreign policy. He states how 'the actor has some freedom of choice whereas models that link policy preference to position imply that individual choice is determined by that position.'[148] Simply put, where one stands is determined by where one sits. The evidence suggests that the individual's impact far superseded the impact of the bureaucracy.

Second, the bargaining that occurs between the head of state and government bureaucracies affects the effectiveness of the BPM explanation. As Alden and Aran explain: 'Much depends on the extent to which these subordinates can muster support from outside the executive (parliament/congress) to support a view that may differ from that of the head of the executive.'[149] The structure of BPM does not allow expansion of the explanation of 'support from the outside' to have explanatory use, and does not go far enough in explaining 'support from outside'.

Support from outside the executive branch can also mean support from either non-governmental groups or another state's non-governmental and governmental groups, in which case the issue of gather support from outside the state to affect internal policy making is most likely attributed to human agency rather than bureaucratic entities. It

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[148] Smith, Steve. "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Bureaucratic Politics Approaches" in *Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach.* Eds. Michael Clarke and Brian White. (London: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1989), P.128.
[149] Alden and Aran, *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*, P. 37.

may be useful to explore the idea of the relationships among government bureaucracies, the leader of the executive (and its advisors) and another state. This could be an extension of analyzing the nature of such relations. The best way to illustrate is through an Israeli-Iranian example. In the Israeli case, in order to have a particularly adept military attaché appointed to the unofficial embassy in Tehran, the Iranians were asked to request that a military attaché corresponding to that particular adept candidate be appointed.

Lastly, the Bureaucratic Politics Model is not the most appropriate analysis tool because the relations between Israel and Iran were kept so secret. Because of the secret nature of Israeli-Iranian relations, the process by which foreign policy decisions are made according to the Bureaucratic Politics Model does not fully translate when analysing Israel's foreign policy towards Iran. As discussed in the next section, back channel diplomacy, also known as clandestine diplomacy or quiet diplomacy, has been a prominent feature in Israeli foreign policy in general. Israeli-Iranian diplomacy historically has been dominated by backchannel diplomacy as typified by Michael Bar Zohar:

> We must be forgiven our picturesque language: in this case, expressions like "under cover of darkness," "in dead secrecy," "ghost organization" are not at all extravagant. Even they pale in the presence of the actual circumstances which formed the backdrop for these events, and which would fire the wildest imagination.[150]

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[150] Bar Zohar, Michael. "David Ben Gurion and the Policy of the Periphery 1958: Analysis," *Israel in the Middle East.* 2nd Edition, Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz, eds.,) Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2008), p. 191.

2.7.4 *Bringing Back Channel Diplomacy Forward*

Uri Bialer illustrates how, 'Much of Israel's foreign policy, especially during its early years, was cloaked in secrecy and characterised by clandestine contacts and actions best carried out covertly.' [151] The Israeli-Iranian relationship was a form of clandestine entente as there was no formally recognised relationship between the two states, nor were there any formal agreements in place. It is important to consider how alliances and ententes have been explored by other foreign policy scholars in order to examine the policy options available to decision makers and the implications of those policies. Back channel and clandestine diplomacy is also referred to in the foreign policy field as quiet diplomacy.

Aharon Klieman coined the term 'Quiet Diplomacy,' of which Israeli policy towards Iran is a prime example. Klieman defines Quiet Diplomacy as:

> Veiled collaboration involving two or more international actors pursuing essentially peaceful high policy objectives, and which expresses itself in explicit communication, business-like exchanges, and tacit understandings or arrangements of such sensitivity as to preclude sharing these confidences with either domestic constituencies or other outside parties. [152]

Klieman emphasises that collaboration refers to constructive connection for peaceful ends rather than treachery, malice, and the like. The connection also includes constructive, conciliatory, strategic business-like negotiations free from posturing to the media. [153]

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[151] Bialer, Uri. "Between Rehovot and Tehran," p. 1.
[152] Klieman, Aharon. *Statecraft in the Dark: Israel's Practice of Quiet Diplomacy* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), p. 10.
[153] Ibid, p. 10.

Quiet diplomacy depends on strong-willed individuals who are willing to take risks and 'go it alone' without necessarily depending on, for example, cabinet instructions. This corresponds to Israel's decision-making structure, where very sensitive security decisions are made in the top 'inner circle' usually consisting of the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister.[154] Israel's policy towards Iran lends itself as an excellent example of quiet diplomacy as its clandestine nature enables leaders' personalities at the top of government to open channels of communication towards Tehran.

2.7.5 *Clandestine Alliances and Ententes*

The relations between Israel and Iran did not constitute a formal alliance. As the relations in the case study developed, they did form an unofficial alliance or entente. One of the most important aspects of this informal alliance or entente was its clandestine nature. The Iranians insisted on absolute secrecy and the Israelis obliged. It is therefore pertinent to look examine the theoretical discussion on clandestine alliances and ententes.

Ententes, as opposed to alliances based on treaties, involve 'stipulations' between at least two states. This definition contrasts with that of 'alliances' where formal treaties and obligations are signed. However, ententes usually do include agreements of spheres of influence. The two states agree implicitly or explicitly on the regions that are strategically most vital to their foreign policies. Ententes also traditionally include

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[154] Ibid, p. 45.

'orders concerning the disturbing of status quo of other weaker states.'[155]   Accordingly,

the states would implicitly follow similar policies regarding weaker states in the region.

The states involved would also clarify their positions regarding states outside the

entente; for example, strategically important neutral states.

One debate in alignment literature concerns whether states are more inclined to align

with other states on the basis of ideology, or rather counter threats in a situation of an

unequal power balance.   Stephen Walt explains that 'states ally to balance against

threats rather than against power alone ... [t]he level of threat is also affected by

geographic proximity, offensive capabilities and perceived intentions.'[156] He adds that

balancing is a stronger cause of alignment than shared ideology.[157]   Alignments

therefore appear to derive from predominantly pragmatic motives.   The evidence on

Israel-Iran relations, as argued in the following chapters, suggests that foreign

policymakers did base their policy decisions on strategic pragmatic reasoning.

Advocates of the Balance of Power argument claim that an '[e]xternal threat rather than

national strength or weakness, is the primary source of alliances.'[158] The authors

mention the Second World War US-Soviet-British alliance that formed because of

common interests and in spite of differing political structures, values, and institutions.

When decision-makers contemplate aligning with another state or states, they take into

account the benefits and obligations of prospective relations that may significantly

affect their status in the international community.

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[155] Granfelt, Helge, *Alliances and Ententes as Political Weapons: From Bismarck's Alliance System to Present Time.* (Bromma, Sweden: Fallbeck Foundation Publication, 1970), p. 15.
[156] Walt, Stephen M. *The Origins of Alliances* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 5.
[157] Ibid, p. 5.
[158] Ole R. Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and John D. Sullivan. *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* (New York: Wiley- Interscience Publication, 1973), p. 5.

George Liska clearly explains that, 'Alliances aim at maximizing gains and sharing liabilities.'[159] Leaders understandably wish to reduce the vulnerabilities of their state through forming an alliance. However, decision-makers may also see the prospective alliance as a gamble that would entail specific obligations and responsibilities. Consequently, they decide to align in a manner that would minimise the threats of obligations. In this study, the terms 'alignment' and 'alliance' will be used with the understanding that they have the same definition of two or more states engaging in close cooperation.

Alliances in general assume that the parties of the alliance will honour their commitments. However, because of the anarchic nature of the international system, respect for international laws and agreements (which cannot be enforced as easily as domestic laws and agreements) depends on the cooperation of other states. The advantage of secret alliances is that conclusive commitments do not have to be made, so the risks are lowered.[160] However, the large risks of non-compliance with informal agreements that are involved in secret alliances cause this policy tool not to be used in a large number of cases. In the long run, all parties are able to retreat from informal agreements easily unless the transaction is later formalised. Also, the party that reaps immediate benefits has an added advantage if it is only informally required to reciprocate the benefits in the future.[161]

Granfelt argues that 'in diplomacy ... the words are intended to conceal the real objectives and it therefore is of great importance to procure such information in other

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[159] Liska, George, *Nations in Alliances: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968), p. 26.
[160] Ibid, p. 52.
[161] Ibid, p. 53.

ways than those of customary diplomacy.'[162] Thus, a secret alliance is also an effective

policy tool for obtaining information about another state's policy objectives. Alliances

in general may also be used as non-military political threats. Granfelt explains that

when conflicts form, the 'powers' try diplomatic tools to resolve those conflicts. He

continues that '[t]he militarily superior state threatens the other state. Alliances are

used to make the threats more effective.'[163] One can therefore see that secret alliances

can, in some cases, be an effective defensive measure without appearing belligerent to

other states in the region, therefore preventing the spiral of the Security Dilemma.

In conventional alliances, gains can also be made on the domestic front. One advantage

of effective alliances is increased domestic legitimacy via increased prestige, and

increased prosperity. The newly gained benefits would be risked by forming another

alliance with a state that is an enemy of the first alliance state. A secret alliance enables

benefits to be gained from both conventional and informal alliances, especially with the

added flexibility in the secret alliance. Moreover, secret alliances and ententes enable

leaders to use relations with one state as a counterbalance. If the state is displeased with

relations with one state, it can secretly increase contacts with the other state.

Secret alliances and ententes are most effective when used under specific conditions.

Covert connections should be considered when forming new ties with another state.

Secret ententes can be used effectively as stages toward acknowledged normalisation of

relations, as formal normalisation tends to decrease suspicion in the international system.

Relations can be formalised if the secret stage proves successful and advantageous to

both parties. Secret relations can provide information or incomplete data regarding

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[162] Granfelt, *Alliances and Ententes as Political Weapons,* p. 268.
[163] Ibid, p. 267.

other states of interest. In addition, secret alliances could be used as a non-military threat (if threatening states know of certain elements of the relations) and leverage, whereby secrecy would be used to an advantage. Finally, secret relations can increase a leadership's perception of its own power during periods of regional instability.

2.7.6 *The Role of Intelligence Agencies and Back Channel Diplomacy*

Back channel diplomacy or clandestine diplomacy relies on intelligence agencies because they allow states to communicate secretly and to implement foreign policies that would be implemented without any formal recognition or public exposure. Christopher Hill explains the importance of intelligence agencies and their direct effect on foreign policy:

> The relationship between intelligence and politics is of crucial importance to the success of foreign policy, and although much routine information-gathering is a low-level business, ultimately the issues are played out at the highest level.[164]

The relative autonomy of the intelligence services is also unique. One pivotal example is Mossad's role as the trail-blazer in establishing contacts with Iran that pre-dated the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its connections. Specifically, Mossad used its own foreign relations division "Tevel". The MFA had its own calculations and considerations including the constant pre-occupation of striving for public Iranian recognition (a prominent personal goal for David Ben Gurion as well). The military, specifically the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) had an important role in the security perspective in the relations with Iran. Military attaches and various officers helped facilitate training and the trade of military equipment. The Ministry of Finance was

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[164] Hill, *The Changing politics of Foreign Policy,* p. 66.

instrumental in Israel's connections with Iran on oil and general trade. The premise of trade and commerce (e.g. the first oil purchase from Iran in 1954) preceded the military connections (e.g. the exchange of military attaches in 1960). Under the general bureaucratic umbrella, different Israeli ministries dealt with their Iranian opposite numbers in order to keep the relations covert as per the Iranians' wishes. More is discussed about the role of clandestine/secret diplomacy within Israeli foreign policy below.

2.7.7 *Clandestine Diplomacy as a Foreign Policy Tool*

Clandestine diplomacy has enabled Israeli decision-makers to pursue Israeli interests in a low-key imaginative way that would not be possible overtly mostly as those making connections with Israel would not wish to be identified as doing so. Israel pragmatically used covert or clandestine diplomacy as an instrument to develop relations with Iran to counter act Iran's reluctance to develop relations due to opposition from the Arab world and from within Iran.

Aaron Klieman illustrates how a small number of government ministries are heavily engaged in clandestine diplomacy. These are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, and the Mossad, answerable to the Prime Minister's office.[165] This is true in the Iranian case even to a greater extent than stated by Klieman. He explains first that the Foreign Ministry plays a secondary role where quiet diplomacy is concerned, as Israel may not necessarily have formal diplomatic relations with the states concerned. Also, clandestine relations mostly would involve security issues that would

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[165] Ibid, p. 46.

require as he says 'less institutionalized approaches.'[166] In the Iranian case, however, it appears that the Foreign Ministry played a pivotal part in coordinating contacts with the Iranians and enlisting other Israeli ministries in its clandestine diplomatic efforts.

Second, the Defence Ministry's role in clandestine diplomacy includes an assortment of military connections including military intelligence contacts, arms sales, and military training cooperation. Third is the Prime Minister's office, which includes the Mossad, personal advisors, and private emissaries. In the Iranian case, the Prime Minister's office appears to have worked with the Foreign Ministry and Defence Ministry in formulating and navigating Israel's foreign policy.   The Mossad, particularly earlier in Israel's history, worked in parallel to the Foreign Ministry until their concerted efforts later became more coordinated.   Finally, when looking at the use of clandestine diplomacy one cannot overlook another nuanced benefit. As Jones explains, clandestine diplomacy can also include signals of both intent and capability which can be used to send discreet, albeit loaded messages, over redlines that should not be crossed or in the case of opportunities that might be explored rather than using for formal government channels.[167]

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[166] Ibid.
[167] Jones, Clive. 'The Foreign Policy of Israel,' in *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States.* Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, eds. (Boulder: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2002), p. 4.

2.8   The Human Dimension of Relationships

2.8.1 Understanding Decision Makers

The worldviews of leaders and their ideologies are inextricably linked to the analysis of foreign policy formation, whether in a historical or current foreign policy discussion. As Fred Halliday explains, '[t]he emphasis of foreign policy analysis is on the 'external environment', regional, global, political, economic, and, very significantly where Middle East states are concerned, ideological.'[168] The subtle yet pivotal role of Halliday's ideological environment especially in the Middle East is woven into the empirical chapters when directly relevant to Israeli foreign policy.

Identity is distinguished from ideology in the following way: The definition and role of individual ideology have been debated in international relations. One definition of individual ideology is 'a set of beliefs about how the social system operates which is extensively propagated and widely believed.'[169] Realists discount the value of ideology in decision-making as they see decision-makers as having a universal set of beliefs about international politics. They see ideology as a disguise for the actual political forces behind them.[170]

On the other hand, identity has been fluidly defined within international relations as a core aspect of individual or collective 'selfhood,' a product of social or political action and a collective phenomenon denoting some degree of sameness among members of a

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[168] Halliday, Fred. *The Middle East and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 28.
[169] Little, Richard and Smith, Steve, eds. *Belief Systems and International Relations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 2.
[170] Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations,* p. 88.

group or category.[171] A precursor to the Israeli foreign policy 'story of becoming' is the sense of the individual's identity when policies are formulated and implemented. Identity is a very prominent part of the collective identity mediated through leadership.

Both values and beliefs, along with belief sets, comprise part of the decision-maker's identity and provide a filter by which information is interpreted and scanned. Just like identity, beliefs and values also form part of the decision-maker's process by which policy choices are made. Yaacov Verzberger in his analysis of the decision-maker explains that: 'within the network of the core beliefs relevant for political analysis and action, are the operational code beliefs and philosophical and instrumental ones, that have decisive diagnostic and prognostic roles.'[172] The belief systems set bounds within which interpretations are accepted or rejected. Values and ideologies determine what is desirable. As data comes in to the decision-maker, such as facts and figures, the data must be sorted and given a weight of importance in order for the decision-maker to make sense of the data and turn it into information that can support or refute his decision-making process. Vertzberger goes a step further and includes the role of values into the decision-making process.

> When decision makers have sufficient interest in the subject of the information, they relate their values to the information. Because of the importance individuals tend to attach to their core values, they do not superimpose them on information or objects unless they consider them important. The other side of the same coin is that the values in question must be sufficiently important to decision makers for them to utilize the values in judging and evaluating information.[173]

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[171] Brubaker, Rogers and Cooper, Frederick. "Beyond "Identity," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2000), pp. 1-47.
[172] Vertzberger, Yaacov Y.I. *The World in their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 123.
[173] Ibid, pp. 124-5.

Decision-makers' policy choices in both formation and implementation are weighted to their own personal values and as a result are more likely to be drawn to information and policy choices that support those personal values.

2.8.2 *Agents, Agency and Actors*

Michael Brecher, a theory specialist with an emphasis in Israeli foreign policy and FPA, demonstrates the importance of agents and agency within the Israeli context. He also highlights the importance of choice within the foreign policy decision-making process. As is emphasized by the evidence in this thesis, Michael Brecher supports the crucial role of human agency. Michael Brecher states:

> Contrary to conventional wisdom or myth, a decision is made by identifiable persons authorised by a state's political system to act within a prescribed sphere of external behaviour. In the Israeli system the Foreign Minister or Prime Minister or Defence Minster, or the Cabinet or its Ministerial Committee on Defence, or on rare occasions the *Knesset*, or a Foreign Office Committee or official(s) select(s) option *x* at point *y* in time, which leads to an action toward another state or states, international organization, etc. In short, *a decision is an explicit act of choice, which can be located precisely in time and space. It has definable sources within a setting.* These are related perceptions which predispose decision-makers to select a particular option.[174]

Christopher Hill expands on Brecher's initial discussion. In an effort to simplify the use of these terms in this thesis, the terms agency, agent, and actors must be examined and strictly defined for a greater understanding of how they related to foreign policy formation and decision-making. Christopher Hill explains:

> Agents are the entities capable of decisions and actions in any given context. They may be single individuals or collectives, and they may be characterized by conscious intention or by patterns of behaviour which at least in part are not strategic…. 'Actor' will be the term preferred here for autonomous and

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[174] Brecher, Michael. *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 1-2

purposive entities, with 'agents' used to refer to the bureaucratic entities at least nominally under the control of the primary political actors.[175]

> Agency means individual human beings taking decisions and implementing them on behalf of entities which possess varying degrees of coherent, organization, and power. Any analysis of this activity needs to focus first on the political dimension, then on the associated bureaucracies, which provides so much of the continuity and expertise which make action meaningful, and third, on the problem of rationality- or the capacity to pursue objectives in a logical manner in the particularly inchoate environments of international relations. Finally, foreign policy actions cannot be understood without an appreciation of the phase of implementation, given that outcomes are so often markedly different from original intentions.[176]

Smith, Hadfield and Dunne, in their Glossary of terms in their seminal textbook on foreign policy, best explain the use of the term 'actor' in foreign policy: 'Actor can be an individual but also a group, an organization or a collective entity such as the state, as long as such entities can be said to have agency.[177]

Christopher Hill clarifies further the positions of Realist and foreign policy analysis:

> Realists believe that the information thus generated about patterns of manoevering can explain a good deal of international relations, including the behaviour of individual states. That is not the position of foreign policy analysis, which is premised on the belief that we can fully understand what states do by looking at two further interactions: between the international position and their domestic context, and between the problem being faced and the nature of the decision-making process employed to handle it. What is more states now share the international space with other significant actors, most of which seek to side-step governments and sometimes to undermine them. It soon becomes necessary when focusing on an event or a particular actor's behaviour to break down the actions into its various levels and components.[178]

In summary, the term agency defines the individual's decision-making filtered through the individual's own personal lens. The term agent defines the individual's decision

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[175] Hill, Christopher. *Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century*, p.48.

[176] Ibid, p. 58.

[177] Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne eds. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases.* Second Edition. Oxford University Press, 2012. P. 486

[178] Hill, Christopher. *Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century*, p.58.

making filtered through an organisation's lens. And, the term actor can be an individual or group as long as their decision-making is filtered through agency, or the organisation's lens.

2.8.3 *Agency not Agents*

Christopher Hill clarifies how 'agents' does not mean 'agency.' Hill surveys the development of individual actions on behalf of the state after the arrival of industrialization and complex division of labour in Europe in the 19th century where modern systems of government and administration evolved. The apparatus of the state expanded with the dual doctrines of democracy and meritocracy. The evolution of democracy and meritocracy meant that politicians and bureaucrats were evaluated on their efficiency and were held accountable to their superiors and had to be technically competent- status was no longer enough.[179]

Hill explains how the role of government politicians and bureaucrats further developed:

> By the late 19th century it was becoming accepted that an official should serve legitimate political authority but also some higher notion of the national interest in the event that the former proved corrupt or particularly inept…The ideal type of the modern official as articulated by Weber was that of someone who had been trained to implement policy decided upon at the political level, without themselves becoming politicized.[180]

Christopher Hill goes on to elaborate more fully and clearly: 'This new class was to consist of reliable *agents,* in the sense of acting on behalf of others. But in today's terms, they were not themselves a site of *agency*, or independent actors.'[181]

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[179] Ibid, pp.87-8.
[180] Ibid, p. 88.
[181] Ibid, p. 88.

In examining the differences between agency and agents, agency is the human acting with intuition, insight and personal observation - using the individual's characteristics. Agents is the capacity of the human to enact and interact on behalf of the characteristics of a group or organization, not their own. Therefore, all humans have agency, but not all humans are agents.

As explained above, Agency is the capacity of individuals to act independently and make free choices. It is usually contrasted with structure i.e.: recurrent patterned arrangements that limit the available choices. As seen in the survey of Realism above, Realism is a structuralist theory which claims that Agents can only act in a manner that the structure determines.

In Walter Carlsnaes' article on the "Agency-structure problem in foreign policy analysis", he discusses at length the dynamic interplay between agents and structures. He argues that the structure has equal weight to agency.[182] The dynamic interplay that Carlsnaes illustrates deepens the understanding of foreign policy and demonstrates the different complex inter-dependent layers which at first glance seem very straightforward but are in actuality 'both constraining and enabling'.[183] He explains how 'Both domestic and international institutions are, if anything, structures constraining and enabling foreign policy actions; and they are certainly the outcome of human agency.'[184]

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[182] Carlsnaes, Walter. 'The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis'. *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Sep, 1992) pp. 245-270. P. 255.

[183] Ibid, P. 245.
[184] Ibid, pp. 245-270. P. 267

2.8.4 *Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs*

For the purposes of greater understanding, the term foreign policy entrepreneur is to be defined as it relates to this thesis. A foreign policy entrepreneur refers to a person who acts in a non-governmental capacity who organizes and manages an effort specific to the creation or easing of the implementation of foreign policy and foreign policy objectives with considerable initiative and risk. These individuals are often referred to as foreign policy entrepreneurs.

2.8.5 *The Bounded Rationality of Decision Making*

The concepts of rationality and bounded rationality are a logical point of departure for a discussion of the role of the individual or agency within FPA because we are examining individuals and their relationships along with the thought processes of the individual decision-makers.

Christopher Hill offers his clarification of the rational actor model and Realism:

> The classical rational actor model is too often blurred with realism, the historically dominant way of thinking about foreign policy and international politics. This is a mistake, for the two are logically distinct: realism privileges national security as the criterion for state decision-makers, whereas the 'rational actor' refers in this context to the idea of the state as unitary decision-maker - the actual criteria which the unitary actor might employ in foreign policy are left open.[185]

The Realist account leaves a gap between human nature and state motivation. FPA goes beyond the stricter calculus of rationality, and provides a starting point for discussion in order to explain the complexities of the relationships between Israel and Iran, including bounded rationality.

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[185] Hill, Christopher. *Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century*. Pp. 115-6.

In the textbook, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, the concept of bounded rationality is explained:

> Bounded rationality is an understanding of rationality which assumes that it is not possible for humans to attend to everything simultaneously or to calculate carefully the cost and benefits of alternative courses of action; attention is scarce resource. Organizational and group environments provide simplifying shortcuts, cues, buffers that help policy makers decide.[186]

Christopher Hill pragmatically discusses bounded rationality with actual patterns of behaviour. 'The idea of bounded rationality arises from the futility of trying to 'maximise' one's values. Instead, it is more realistic to *'satisfice'*, or accept, the outcome which approximates reasonably well to one's preferences.'[187]

The Realist perspective predicts that a state would act as a collective unitary actor and that its leaders make the corresponding rational choices in the self-interest of the state. As Morgenthau explains, states 'act, as they must, in view of their interests as they see them.'[188] Robert Keohane expresses what most Realists ascribe to 'the rationality assumption: world politics can be analysed as if states were unitary rational actors.'[189]

The Realist view of rationality is very neat conceptually and fits well into the theoretical structure of the Realist argument. However, the issue once again is in the real-world implementation stage. As Donnelly argues in his review of Realism, when as illustrated above, Morgenthau refers to the interests of states as they see them he leaves a major gap in not explaining *how* states see the interests. Donnelly goes a step further: 'Interests become interesting only when they acquire substance-which is provided not

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[186] Smith, Hadfield and Dunne, eds. *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases 2nd edition*, , pp. 485-486
[187] Hill, Christopher. *Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century*. P. 120.
[188] Morgenthau, Hans J. *Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Vol. I: *The Decline of Democratic Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 278.
[189] Keohane, Robert O. "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," *Neo Realism and its Critics*, edited by Robert O. Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 165.

by calculating, instrumental reason but by the passions (interests, desires).'[190] The Realist account therefore lacks the depth of concentration on a substantive view of the real connection between human nature and state motivation.

The laws of choice form the basis of rational choice theory when evaluating the process and results of foreign policy formation.[191] According to these laws of choice, actors and therefore states seek to maximise utility, meaning that 'a state first identifies and prioritizes foreign policy goals; it then identifies and selects from the means available to it which fulfil its aims with the least cost.'[192] This model underrepresents examining different decision-makers. Having calculated the 'rational' self- interest and how to maximise security and wealth, some theorists refer to game theory for individual negotiating scenarios and international situations. Rationality theories, however, do not fully explain why decision-makers select policies that are not strictly prudent economically or militarily. These decisions would not at first glance appear rational in the traditional sense; yet would form a part in successful foreign policy in the longer-term and would be considered a foreign policy gain.

Theories that take human behaviour into account are more convincing at explaining the puzzles of many foreign policy decisions where theories of rationality fall short. Therefore, theorists that accept that rationality is limited by perceptions are more useful for the task at hand. Graham Allison's *Essence of Decision* appears to form a separation between the 'rational actor model' and his 'bureaucratic politics' models. The two models, Christopher Hill warns, are obscured with Realism. As Hill explains:

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[190] Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations,* p. 65.
[191] Alden Chris and Aran, Amnon. *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*, p. 15.
[192] Ibid, p. 15.

> In fact the two are logically distinct: Realism privileges national security as the criterion for state decision-makers, whereas the "rational actor" refers principally to the idea of the state as unitary decision maker - what kinds of criteria the unitary actor employs in foreign policy are left open.[193]

Valerie Hudson explains that from an FPA perspective, 'the source of all international politics and all change in international politics is specific human beings using their agency and acting individually or in groups.'[194]

Rationality in the theoretical sense is a good springboard for discussion because rationality is a concept that both the Realist perspective and FPA analyse from their respective philosophical perspectives. It would additionally be useful for an analysis in both the academic and the policy worlds, where a pragmatic approach is vital for identifying mindsets that lead to effective foreign policy formation. Placing an unrealistic rationality expectation would jeopardise the potential opportunities for creative solutions to international problems. It is exactly in the foreign policy implementation stage where Hill's 'short circuiting' occurs and where the Realist analysis under represents the impact of human relationships. Indeed, this 'short circuiting' goes beyond the definition of Realist rationality because these innovative policy short cuts do not exclusively occur to pursue the national interest. International relations are clearly not carried out in a vacuum. Foreign policy decisions are made by decision-makers, who are human beings. Human perceptions are also flawed. They have their own individual influences, prejudices, and perceptions.

The Realist paradigm underrepresents the role of individual decision-makers during its focus on the state as a unitary actor. Theoretically, it is wise to clarify the distinctions

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[193] Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 98.
[194] Hudson, Valerie M. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory*. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), p. 6.

of the issues pertinent to the research question at hand. FPA puts great importance on the individual, especially the roles of leaders and by using psychological tools including analysing the perception, personality, and cognition of individuals.[195] Therefore, within this area of foreign policy, its 'executives' or actors play a vital role that warrants consideration as 'that responsibility falls onto the shoulders of the small number of politicians with the special knowledge and flexibility to respond.'[196] It is therefore the roles (and backgrounds) of and interactions among actors that affect foreign policy are worthy of discussion to see if they affect the quality of policies advocated and put into practice. Relationships between actors such as the one between the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister reveal insight into policy formation. One would ask, for instance, how and to what extent a particular policy is affected when a number of ministers interact on it. Christopher Hill defines responsible leadership as 'not being lulled into complacency by the lack of daily domestic interest and in not confusing the processes of decision-making by elites with the structures of multilayered international politics.'[197] Hill elaborates that effective leadership takes a 'long view' and avoids military, political or economic crises (but not necessarily conflicts).[198]

Actors are also responsible for interpreting the state's national interests and needs which provides enormous scope for personal character. Snyder, for example, highlighted the 'definition of the situation' as seen by individual actors and he 'sought to capture …the centrality of decision makers-and with it their biases-in defining, assessing and

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[195] Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis,* p. 63.
[196] Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 57.
[197] Ibid, p. 70.
[198] Ibid.

interpreting foreign policy events.'[199] This definition lies at the core of international relations. Responsible leadership presumably also does not occur in a vacuum and would require a certain vision and sense of identity. It is indeed such a sense of vision that enables a long-term view of foreign policy that would serve the state's interests in a way that the Realist account would not gauge.

2.8.6 _Perceptions And Misperceptions_

Perceptions and misperceptions form the corner stone in analysing the individual decision-maker and the foreign policy carried out by him or her. Harold and Margaret Sprout offer a clear way of looking at the individual's perceptions of situations. First is the decision-makers' psychological environment, meaning how he or she sees/perceives the world. Second is the operational environment, which is the objective reality of events occurring.[200] FPA analysts therefore make the assumption that there is an objective reality that the decision-maker may not necessarily perceive accurately - this is, indeed, misperception.[201] Images are groupings of perceptions that decision-makers have based both on reality and their individual conditioning also based on their cultural and political background. Once formed, such images are very slow to change. It is necessary to discuss the issue of images during the empirical chapters and examine the objective reality and the decision-makers' analyses and assessments that are expressed in diplomatic correspondence. Perceptions when establishing ties with another state play a pivotal role in all parties concerned with those ties.

[199] Snyder, Gary and Diesing, Paul. _Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making and System structure in International Crises_ (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977) cited in Alden and Aran, _Foreign Policy Analysis_, p. 20.
[200] Sprout, Harold and Margaret. _Foundations of International Politics_. (Princeton, New Jersey: D.Van Nostrand Co., 1962), pp. 122-35, noted in Hill, _The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy_, p. 111.
[201] Hill, _The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy_, p. 111.

As discussed above, the concept of perceptions and misperceptions is an enhancement of Realist assumptions of rationality. An analysis using the Realist lens does not fully consider the effect of person's environment on their decision-making.

> The "facts" of a situation never speak for themselves-they have to be selected, ordered and given meaning. An individual's environment contains so many stimuli, so much potential information, that to operate at all, he or she will require some mechanism to discriminate between what is or is not important and to give order and meaning to what would otherwise be a discordant jumble of sensory data.[202]

Vogler contends that perceptions are simply seen as the image of objective reality in one's own mind. 'What matters in the process of policy-making is not conditions and events as they actually are (operational environment) but what the policy-maker imagines them to be (psychological environment),' he writes.[203] Misperceptions are likely to occur because 'there has been a tendency [throughout history] for the images held by decision-makers to misrepresent their operational environment.'[204] Foreign policy is especially susceptible to misperceptions because:

> [D]ecision-makers must operate in an environment that is not only highly complex and uncertain but which is also laden with threat and insecurity. The problem is compounded by the difficulties of communicating across cultural and linguistic boundaries where national self-images tend to draw sustenance from the portrayal of foreigners in a stereotyped and rather less than flattering light. Although the frequency of misperception in foreign policy may be debated, what is much more certain is the gravity of the consequences.[205]

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[202] Vogler, John. "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Psychological approaches," in *Understanding Foreign Policy-The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*. Michael Clarke and Brian White, eds. (Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1989), p. 135.
[203] Ibid, p. 136.
[204] Ibid, p. 136.
[205] Ibid, p. 137.

Decision-makers in Israel, Iran, and the United States held certain perceptions and beliefs that affected their worldviews. These worldviews influenced their policies and actions when interacting with each other. Christopher Hill states how 'the key issue is less the peculiarities of a leader's personality than the political space which might or might not exist to allow these [individual] qualities to impact on events.'[206]

The symbiosis of context and personality has been best explained by Max Weber's impression of charisma for leaders who have appeal that is semi-religious and magical starting with their own followers and when successful beyond their own followers. While filling a political or emotional vacuum within politics, the leader possesses qualities of emotional insight, brilliance, and strength.[207] Hill contrasts Egyptian leader Anwar el-Sadat's charisma to the dullness of his successor, Hosni Mubarak. In the Israeli case, for instance, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion realised Israel was in a unique position of isolation - he perceived and internalised that Israel was isolated and followed his vision to take steps to develop relations with Iran under the peripheral policy. His appeal and popularity as leader of the state was of historic proportions, and his policy of reaching out to the Iranians was novel.

Ben Gurion's charisma also aided him in garnering support from the United States for his peripheral policy dream when US administrations had been less interested before 1958. These individual attributes are connected to perceptions within the role of relationships because they reflect the individual's gauging of the situation they see themselves in, resulting in a call to action in forming relationships to advance foreign policy.

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[206] Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy,* p. 110.
[207] Ibid.

Robert Jervis highlights the importance of perceptions in international relations in his seminal article 'Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma.'[208] Jervis's discussions on perceptions of threat are very pertinent because when decision-makers perceive threat, they are likely to behave in a particular way. Similar elements of the perceptions of *threat* discussion can also be translated into a discussion of perceptions of *opportunity*. Robert Jervis defines the security dilemma (which is one of the problems within anarchical international politics) as a situation where 'many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others.'[209]

In other words, one state's defensive action may be perceived as offensive action by other states. One could ask whether alliances/ententes also pose a threat to third parties who are not participants or who are common foes of the aligned parties. For instance, Nasser perceived the secret ties between Israel and Iran as a potential threat. It could be argued that this could have been an intended consequence on Israel's part. Iran preferred relations to remain a secret, Nasser's Egypt nevertheless perceived a threat.

Jervis argues that very powerful stable states (or 'status quo powers') are more likely to trust other states and would not launch pre-emptive military strikes. 'States that can afford to be cheated in a bargain or that cannot be destroyed by a surprise attack can more easily trust others and need not act at the first, and ambiguous, sign of menace.'[210] This is because they do not need to enter into arms races with other states during times of peace. However, it could also be argued that states that cover their security requirements as best they can and beyond that have nothing to lose (meaning that they

[208] Jervis, Robert. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma." *World Politics* Vol. 30 No. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-214.
[209] Ibid, p. 169.
[210] Ibid, p. 172.

nevertheless face existential threats), are consequently more creative in their diplomatic endeavours. In the Israeli case, Israel was so isolated within the Middle East, that Israeli decision-makers explored all possibilities to lessen the state's economic and political seclusion.

Another element of analysis that is relevant to this study that Jervis discusses is the concept of subjective security demands because security is also a perception of the decision-maker, as is seen in the case study of this thesis. This is an extension of threat perceptions where '[d]ecision makers act in terms of the vulnerability they feel, which can differ from the actual situation; we must therefore examine the decision makers' subjective security requirements.'[211] Such requirements depend on two factors.

First is 'the price they [decision-makers] are willing to pay to gain increments of security.'[212] Second, is the perception of threat or 'the estimate of whether the other will cooperate.'[213] Where reliance on alliances is connected to subjective security requirements is the point where Jervis concludes that it is almost impossible for a state to defend itself against attack from several neighbours. This is where Israel presumably saw itself; or to be more precise, where Israeli *decision-makers* saw themselves. Jervis concludes that 'a state's expectation that allies will be available and that only a few others will be able to join against it is almost a necessary condition for security requirements to be compatible.'[214] While explaining the gains from cooperation and the costs of a breakdown of relations, Jervis illustrates a doubly positive situation where both parties see the benefits of cooperation and are pleased with seeing the other

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[211] Ibid, p. 174.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid, p. 175.
[214] Ibid, p. 176.

benefit.[215]   These are perceptions of security that extend beyond the state's conventional military security and territorial integrity. According to a French diplomat that Jervis quotes: 'It also means the maintenance of their economic interests, everything in a word, which goes to make up the grandeur, the life itself, of the nation.'[216]

The theories discussed above come together and can be used in unlocking how and why Israeli decision-makers and field operatives decided to form, implement and develop Israel's relations with Iran.

2.8.7 *Perceptions and Field Operations*

Another important factor FPA literature raises is the role of field operations, which are relevant to the case study of this thesis because field operatives played an integral role in Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. Ambassadors and their subordinates implement decisions in the field made by a President or Prime Minister. Because ambassadors are in the field, their perspectives on implementation could vary from instructions from the home capital. It is this interaction between the Prime Minister or his office and the embassy in the field that applies to this discussion of diplomatic politics.

Morton Halperin discusses the role of field operations, using the United States as an example. He explains how:

> [b]elieving that they are much more adept at dealing with the local government and understand its complexities, officials in the field feel that they should make policy decisions and that Washington should simply support them. They assume that Washington simply does not understand "the

[215] Ibid, p. 177.
[216] Ibid, p. 185.

problem" in substantive terms or the difficulty of running an embassy and dealing with the local government.[217]

It is important to be aware of the relationship between field operations and foreign policymakers in the home capital city in order to gain a richer understanding of foreign policy implementation.

2.9   Conclusion

Israel's foreign policy towards Iran evokes the image of intricate Esfahani mosaic tiles with pattern, detail, and colour. The existing works that have been written from the Realist perspective display symbolically this mosaic's pattern, but solely in black and white. It has been the aim in this chapter to add nuance and colour to the mosaic so that it can be appreciated in its entirety. This existing broadly Realist analysis covers important aspects such as the mutual strategic interests that enabled Israel and Iran to form their discreet entente. The Realist account on Israeli policy towards Iran casts light on some of the Iran policy but not on its entirety. Foreign Policy Analysis presents the most effective tools that help uncover the policy qualities that have not been looked at in sufficient detail by scholars looking through the Realist lens. Hence, the symbiosis of both the Realist account and FPA is the theoretical entry point of the thesis. By uncovering the records of Israel's relations with Iran from both a Realist and an FPA perspective, it becomes evident what exactly transformed a straightforward convergence of strategic interests into an informal but solid relationship between Israel and Iran.

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[217] Halperin, Morton H. *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974), p. 263.

This chapter has offered a theoretical framework for Israel's policy towards Iran. The extant Israel-Iran literature has concentrated on describing the relationship in a non-theoretical manner, but utilising firmly Realist assumptions of power politics, looking solely at the state as a unit of analysis, and acting in the Realist definition of the national interest. The Realist assumptions have highlighted some, but not all, the elements of Israeli policy towards Iran. Some of Israel's policy goals and constraints therefore have not been looked at adequately. The Realist account does not entirely capture what made Israeli policy on Iran unique and noteworthy. Fortunately, elements of Foreign Policy Analysis do capture the novel and unusual parts of the untold Israeli-Iranian narrative. However, they fail to examine the role of the individual, along with their perceptions and misperception, and the role of human agency. Finally, Israeli foreign policy is framed by the international context in which Israel's Iran policy evolved. For completeness, some of the most prominent Israeli foreign policy tools have been highlighted to display foreign policy implementation.

The chapter above has illustrated the intellectual premises of Realism and the individual level theories within in Foreign Policy Analysis along with bureaucratic politics. I have highlighted the relevant aspects of each approach and have emphasised where they have formed an underpinning in answering the research question of this thesis. The synthesised Realist-FPA theoretical framework that I have engineered will serve as an invaluable tool in understanding Israeli foreign policy towards Iran and will be addressed again in Chapter 8, the conclusion of this thesis.

CHAPTER 3: SETTING THE SCENE: THE GENESIS OF ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN (1948-1955)

3.1 Introduction

The period between 1948 and 1955 established the basic structure for Israeli-Iranian relations in general and Israel's policy towards Iran in particular. Scholars who have studied the relations hitherto argue that Israel-Iran ties were strategically straightforward[218]: They stemmed from numerous converging interests within the international system. Nevertheless, on closer inspection of the primary sources, it is evident that the puzzle of Israel's policy towards Iran has not been fully examined by the existing account. The obstacles that Israeli decision-makers faced, for example, have been underestimated. The existing accounts of Israel's foreign policy towards Iran from a lens that focuses on power, overlook the full range of actors, dynamics, methods, and foreign policy tools required to implement the Realist 'strategic vision.' This incomplete analysis leaves a significant gap in the Israeli-Iranian story and the key difference with my analysis is the inclusion of individual actions and personal connections which bridges that story rendering it more complete.

A Realist account effectively explains the process of foreign policy formulation. For example, the Realist perspective accurately identifies converging strategic interests of two states. My theoretical framework as illustrated in Chapter 2 serves as an approach to extend the story that the Realist account tells and what it does not. It is not the

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[218] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*; Segev, *The Iranian Triangle.*

intention of the thesis to refute the Realist viewpoint, but to synthesise Realism and individual- level FPA theories to gain insight into foreign policy behaviour. As illustrated in the theoretical chapter, a framework, from mid range theories within Foreign Policy Analysis, has been especially adapted to capture the aspects of Israel's policy towards Iran that go beyond a simple convergence of national interests.

The works of Uri Bialer set the stage for my analysis, but were limited by the documents available in his publication years of 1985 and 2012. The recent release of newly classified documents allows this thesis to delve deeper into the gap by broadening the time frames from 1948 until 1979 and the scope by including intelligence cooperation and additional historical elements. Uri Bialer has written about events leading up to Iranian recognition of Israel from 1948 to 1951,[219] as well as his articles on Israel's trade of oil with Iran in 1956-1963[220]. Bialer's work is of particular relevance to the time frame of the current chapter. The years 1948-1955 have been coined by Bialer as a '"diplomatic laboratory" in terms of assessing the risks involved in dealing with uncertain interlocutors where avarice as much as sound statecraft determined the patterns and modes of diplomatic exchange.'[221]

Israel's policymakers built on the experience gained during the 'diplomatic laboratory' years both in its dealings with Iran in subsequent years and in relations with other Middle Eastern states. Furthermore, a diplomatic laboratory is the antithesis to the predictability of Realist strategy and policy. As discussed in Chapter 2, Realist strategy and policy follow a strict calculus of objective political laws that are focused on serving

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[219] Bialer, "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy 1948-1951," pp. 292-315.
[220] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," *Iyunnim BiTkumat Israel,* Vol. 8, 1998.
[221] Bialer, Uri. "Between Rehovot and Tehran-Gideon Hadary's Secret Diplomacy," *Israel Studies,* Vol. 17, No. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 1-23.

the national interest. However, in the real world, human decisions are unpredictable. Experimentation with foreign policy implementation is possible and fruitful. Using my theoretical framework aided by the addition of the role of relationships and human agency within FPA mid-range theories, it is possible to synthesise the valuable theory and policy lessons that arise from the years of the 'diplomatic laboratory.'

Between 1948 and 1955 a number of prevailing policy objectives and constraints (especially, Iranian internal politics and the Arab world) affected Israel's policies towards Iran. First, was *Aliyah* (in Hebrew 'ascending,' or immigrating, to Israel) of Iraqi Jews via Iran to Israel. Second, gaining Iran's recognition of Israel. Third, is the effect of Iran's domestic/internal politics on Israel's policy options. This effect included the connection of Iranian domestic politics to recognition. Fourth, is the encouragement of trade in general, particularly in oil. All elements were affected by constraints from the Iranian government.

The obstacles that Israeli decision makers faced during the time period were: The delayed recognition by Iran, until its de facto recognition of Israel on 14 March 1950 because of internal opposition from some Iranian government ministries, and the Shah's need to balance the Arab powers who opposed Israel. The delayed recognition created obstacles in the *Aliyah* of Iraqi Jews to Israel via Iran who were deemed to be in great danger. Instability under Mosaddeq also constrained Israel's policy towards Iran. Yet, despite those constraints, relations developed favourably in many spheres. All of this occurred while Israeli decision-makers contemplated navigating the Iranian power structure and governmental culture. The international context will be explored first in order to present and frame the context within which Israel's Iran policy developed.

3.2   Israel's Foreign Policy Goals within the International System

Israeli policy towards Iran developed in relation to its neighbours and the political events of the era. This international context directly affected the development of Israeli foreign policy formation. It is therefore important to discuss the context in which Israel's policy developed. Gamal Abdel Nasser's rise to power following the Egyptian revolution of July 1952 served as another motivating factor leading to Israeli-Iranian alignment in both the Cold War and Middle Eastern contexts. Nasser turned to the Soviet Union in 1955 in order to counter what he saw as the imperialist West. The Egyptian leader also took steps to assert his power as an Arab leader in the Middle East and as a leader of Arab unity in general, and Pan-Arabism in particular. Nasser also coined the phrase 'positive neutralism' which formed a key component of Nasserism, the socialist-inflected ideology that was so attractive to the Arab masses.

As the Soviet Union quietly withdrew its tacit support, Israel's sense of isolation increased. The Soviet Union's move away from Israel was cemented in August 1955 when Egypt bought $200 million-worth of tanks, planes, and arms from Czechoslovakia and other communist countries. The Egyptian-Czech arms deal altered the attitudes of all leaders in the region. It was, in fact, a clear departure from the status quo. Arab nationalists throughout the Middle East saw the Egyptian-Czech arms deal as a significant triumph not only against Israel but also against 'Western Imperialism.'[222] Consequently, Nasser's prestige soared and, at the same time, Nasserism as an ideology gained momentum in the Arab world. Nasser soon emerged as a major regional leader. Therefore, the domestic and foreign policies that Nasser adopted served as examples to all Arab revolutionaries. Despite Nasser's

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[222] Peretz, Don. "Nonalignment in the Arab World," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 362, Nonalignment in Foreign Affairs (November 1965), pp. 36-43.

seemingly neutral foreign policy, he received significant assistance from the Soviet Union. As a consequence, the West regarded him as far from neutral. Nasser's growing influence as a leader and policymaker in the region, as well as his moves towards the Soviet Union, brought about a sudden and significant change in the balance of power on both the regional and Cold War levels. Both Israel and Iran took note of the regional and Cold War shifts and acted accordingly, searching for appropriate policies to counter both the Soviet Union and Nasser.

A major Israeli general foreign policy shift occurred in October 1949 when the Israeli Embassy in Washington strongly urged decision-makers back in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to reconsider Israel's nonalignment policy within the framework of the Cold War. This shift was significant because it was a clear indication of Israel's sense of position within the international system. The embassy in Washington recommended that Israel become more strategically valuable to the United States by becoming closer to Turkey and Iran. The international context that includes Israel's place within the international system is based on the classic balance of power dynamic. Israel's general policy outlook between 1948 and 1955 contained many fundamental characteristics that in turn affected its Iran policy. Israeli strategy regarding the Middle East in general can be seen even before the closing stages of the Armistice Agreements in July 1949 between Israel and the Arab states that ended the 1948 War of Independence. On 27 October 1948, Ya'acov Shimoni of the Middle East Division of the Foreign Ministry cabled Abba Eban in Paris to inform him that the Foreign Ministry was considering approaching the Iranians to offer the possibility of establishing relations with Israel. Shimoni famously called this, 'breaking through the walls of the East.'[223] Shimoni also

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[223] State of Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents of the Foreign Policy of Israel October 1948-April 1949* cable 130.10/2536/12 (Jerusalem vol. 2, 1984), p. 104.

mentioned that Iran was considering reopening the dispute on the border with Iraq on the *Shatt-Al Arab* River. The Middle East Division suggested approaching Iranian officials and telling them that Israel would support Iran 'morally and politically' in the event of a political dispute with any Arab state.[224] In addition, the reigning policy hope was to turn the Armistice agreements into formal peace accords with Israel's neighbours. Israeli policy-makers felt Israel was extremely isolated, considerably adding to their distress.

Considerable practical issues threatened to complicate Israel's establishment of diplomatic relations with Iran. As one Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) official asks in a diplomatic cable, 'How will Israel establish diplomatic relations with a state with which it doesn't have postal relations?' In reality, Israel's contacts with Iran in the early years depended on the work of the Jewish Agency, the Mossad, and the MFA, all of which worked closely with the Persian Jewish community both in Iran and in Israel.

Israeli decision-makers greatly doubted whether the Iranians would break rank with their fellow Muslim Middle Eastern allies and form relations with Israel, thereby risking the wrath of Arab states. Indeed, one of the major risks was that the Iranians might subsequently cooperate with the Iraqis in anti-Israeli operations. However, the Middle East Division acknowledged that Eban preferred not to align formally with anti-Arab actors so as not to upset possibilities for peace with the Arab states.[225] Within the context of the Cold War, Israel had declared a policy of non-alignment since independence in 1948. Yet, Israel had received political and military support form the USSR during its establishment. As Bialer explains, 'the fact that Israel was politically

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[224] Ibid.
[225] Ibid, pp. 104-105.

completely isolated in the region decreased its strategic value in American regional considerations. This approach saw a direct relation between intensification of the cold war and the worsening of Israel's political position in America.'[226]

A policy document written for the Israeli Foreign Minister in September 1950 clearly illustrates where Israeli policy and its constraints stood at the time. This document can be compared and contrasted with a 1955 memorandum. The 1950 policy document lists the most prominent achievements to date in developing relations with Iran.[227]

The goals in 1950 for relations with Iran were:

1 To open a special mission in Tehran to diminish Israeli isolation from Muslim states (in addition to Turkey) in order to counter-balance the Arab states. This could lead to relations with other Muslim states, such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, who come under the 'cultural influence' of Iran.

2 Recognition through an Israeli special mission would ensure the ability of bringing Iraqi Jews to Israel via Iran in the event that legal Jewish emigration from Iran is restricted again.

3 A trade agreement and more formalised relations could greatly ease the transfer of Jewish Iranian and Iraqi funds to Israel.

The biggest constraint from the Iranians was the status of approximately 120 Iranian refugees, mostly of the Baha'i faith, who fled from Israel to Lebanon during the 1948 war. The Iranian government demanded the return of the refugees' assets, houses, and compensation on their behalf. But in Israel's view, to change the law, return these Iranians to Israel, and relocate the new Israeli immigrants who had just been allocated these newly vacant homes, would have set a potentially dangerous precedent. The most

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[226] Bialer, "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy 1948-1951," p. 293.
[227] Israel State Archives (ISA). Ministry of Foreign Affairs document 2410/11 30.2/1/821 dated 7 September 1950 Uriel Hed (Middle East Department) to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Moshe Sharett).

pressing claimant was influential former Iranian Prime Minister Al'adin Tabatabai, whose ranch was damaged in 1948. The area of the ranch in the South of Israel was allocated to Egyptian control during the post-war armistice agreements. The former Iranian prime minister requested compensation greater than had been paid to him. The Israeli government recommended that additional compensation be paid so that visas to visiting Israelis would not be stopped. In order to further appease Iranian complaints, the Israeli government recommended that the relevant Israeli ministries be instructed to release Iranian assets more quickly, and that funds be allotted to house the Iranians who had already returned to Israel.

In a report written in September 1955 by E.A. Bayne of the American Universities Field Staff for Theodore (Teddy) Kollek of the Israeli Prime Minister's office, similar constraints were highlighted as well as the influence of regional and international factors. Bayne was asked to analyse the potential of 'revitalizing' Israel's ties to Iran.[228] According to Bayne, two aspects of Iran's situation affected the relations. First was the Shah of Iran's position of potential dictatorship and deferential opposition as well as the Shah of Iran's complete control of the army. The Shah of Iran's potential opposition was very weak as the Tudeh Party was crippled and Iran's landlords and clergy were internally split due to personality clashes. This consolidated the Shah of Iran's power to make policy decisions. Bayne states that the Shah of Iran thought favourably of Israel and the Jewish minority within Iran.

The second element that Bayne highlights is Iran's progress into Western, and particularly US, defence agreements in a more formalised manner. The Shah changed

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[228] ISA. Prime Minister's Office file 5570/6 430.7-988 E.A. Bayne to Theodore Kollek, Memorandum dated 15 September 1955.

the perception of Iran using the Baghdad Pact strategically demonstrating to the world an alliance with the United States. The Shah of Iran also sought further financial and military assurances from the United States. This appears to ring true as Israeli relations with Iran greatly improved towards 1958, when Iran joined the Baghdad Pact. The later Western financial assurances for the Shah of Iran offset the risks posed by Shia clergy in Iran and widespread Arab displeasure. If one compares the 1950 assessment to the 1955 communiqué, the former looks much more ripe for relations, yet Israel persisted and managed to achieve results despite the considerable constraints. The personal understanding of Iranian thoughts and feelings, and awareness of internal splits in the Ministries and within the Iranian population after the Mosaddeq coup affected Israeli foreign policy. The Israeli government took 'special measures' despite Israel's national interest to gain the confidence and appreciation of the Iranian people and their Ministers.

3.3   The Vision of David Ben Gurion

On the last day of the British Mandate on 14 May 1948, David Ben Gurion declared the independence of the state of Israel. That act, among others, has led to his recognition as the founding father of the state of Israel. Ben Gurion then became Prime Minister and Defence Minister, overseeing the establishment of the state's institutions as well as the creation of essentially Israel's entire original foreign policy. In the Israeli Declaration of Independence, he stated that the new nation would 'uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion, or race.'[229] Even in the formation of the Israeli Declaration of Independence, the distinction between social and political identities is clearly identified, supporting the individual's importance in

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[229] Friedman, Robert Owen. *Israel's First Fifty Years,* (Miami: University Press of Florida 2000), p. 181.

public doctrine.   For the next decade and a half, Ben Gurion governed Israel as Prime Minister and participated in the formation, and approval, of all foreign policy. One of the tests of the effectiveness of his foreign policy is to examine the longevity of his policy after his tenure ended, as well as comparing Israel's foreign policy before and after his tenure.

Ben Gurion resigned unexpectedly on 16 June 1963. In order to best gauge the effectiveness and longevity of his foreign policy, we can begin by dividing the time in the following chapters into two broader sections: first, time with Ben Gurion as Prime Minister (1948-1963), and, second, time without Ben Gurion as Prime Minister (1963-present). Levi Eshkol, the Finance Minister, was designated by Ben Gurion as his successor.

When discussing foreign policy during Israel's early years, it is inevitable to notice the influence of individual actors within Israel and on the international scene. The ideology of David Ben Gurion shaped Israeli foreign policy in a manner that was as bold as it was influential. Ben Gurion described the underlying principles within his role as leader as anything that would support the survival of the people of Israel. Ben Gurion's general worldview can be illustrated as follows: 'he had an almost reverent belief in the necessity for Israel to have a strong position in the eyes of the world, and especially in the United States.'[230] His perception of Israel's position in the world was: 'The fate of Israel depends on two things: on her strength and on her righteousness.'[231] Ben Gurion also had a distinct view towards Iran. Ben Gurion's approach to the Iranian policy was his vision of the Jewish people's historic special connections with Iran. For example, in

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[230] Shlaim, Avi. "Interview with Abba Eban, 11 March 1976."
[231] Quoted in Bar Zohar, Michael. "David Ben-Gurion and the Policy of the Periphery," p. 274.

1958, Ben Gurion wrote a letter to the Shah where he praised the goodness of King Cyrus of Persia towards the Jews.[232]

The strength that Ben Gurion strived towards included a vision that would make the state a 'chosen people' and a 'light unto the nations.' This vision encouraged Ben Gurion to forge Israel's ties with Iran and the other Periphery states. This was done despite initial advice from diplomats such as Abba Eban, who had misgivings about the viability of non-Arab states in the region at the expense of potential solidification of the Armistice Agreements and, perhaps, peace agreements.

By way of introduction, Abba Eban was an influential Israeli decision-maker, diplomat, minister, and advocate. Born in South Africa and educated in Britain, Eban initially did not want to jeopardise relations with the Arab world by establishing relations with Iran. In a 1976 interview on Israeli foreign policy, Abba Eban explained his view on world opinion: 'I very much followed Sharett's international line, but I found him excessive in his deference to what he called world opinion, or rather static and unwilling to accept that opinion could be changed.'[233]

Eban's perception of Israel's position in the world in comparison to Prime Minister Golda Meir reflected his nuanced view of Israel's neighbours:

> For Mrs Meir, there was something called 'the Arabs'- the adversary, the foe, the architect of our destruction. I felt the position was much more variegated; that there were currents in the Arab world; that together with those who still hoped to change the Middle Eastern map, there was developing a mood of reluctant fatalism. I wouldn't call it moderation….Once they [the Arabs] transferred the image of

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[232] Personal interview with Meir Ezri, October 2014.
[233] Shlaim, "Interview with Abba Eban, 11 March 1976," p. 1.

destroying Israel from the realm of political reality to the realm of messianic hope, I thought there was a way open for accommodation.[234]

Thanks to Ben Gurion's vision and perseverance, Eban saw the virtue and utility of establishing relations with Iran. As will be seen later in the thesis, Eban developed strong relationships with the Shah of Iran and other Iranian decision-makers.

Ben Gurion also pragmatically saw the value of the eventual support of the United States. He moved ahead despite the reservations of his advisors.[235] On the role of relationships, when considering the mind set of Ben Gurion it is imperative to recall his close link to the Jewish diaspora and to '*Aliyah*' (literally ascending, or immigration, to Israel). As Ben Gurion emphasised: 'Israel's only absolutely reliable ally is world Jewry.'[236] Therefore, the Jewish element was not merely strategic in a Realist sense, but also as the human value of a decision-maker with world-views and emotions who aimed to bring diaspora Jews to Israel. The Realist would argue that both Abba Eban and Ben Gurion would have arrived at the same foreign policy decision based on analysis of the national interest. However, Ben Gurion's staunch belief in *Aliyah* and links to the Jewish diaspora re-arranged the priorities of implementation when pursuing alliances and peace agreements in the Middle East.

Such emotive matters from the Jewish Diaspora reached Ben Gurion via leaders of the Jewish community in Tehran. An example of this is a letter from an Iranian community in southern Iran (Novbanadegan) near the city of Shiraz. It was relayed via the prominent former Iranian army officer Zion Ezri who, with his son Meir, was a staunch

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[234] Ibid, pp. 3-4.
[235] Bar-Zohar, Michael. *Ben Gurion*, pp. 262, 274.
[236] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 4.

Zionist and advised Israel informally. The letter (written in Biblical script in Biblical Hebrew) pleads with Ben Gurion and the *Aliyah* agency to save the community from persecution, the latest of which stemmed from the 1948 war and poverty. They had sold all their belongings in the hope of making *Aliyah* to Israel.[237] The community asked for assistance to move to Israel. Not only did communities which had little financial means to move to Israel wish to do so, but also 'middle class' or in modern terms 'middle income' Iranian Jews. They wished to know the procedure of moving to Israel and requested the establishment of a diplomatic mission in Tehran to assist them with visas and practical customs information.[238]

The letter to Ben Gurion from the Jewish community in rural Iran highlights the urgent plight in which the Jews found themselves. Their requests were relevant and reasonable on a foreign policy level as well. The requests were also relevant because they gave Israeli decision-makers further reasons to press for advancing relations as they emphasised the urgency of the Jewish community's situation. This rationale behind responding to the request with policy would not be addressed by a Realist analysis because there are individual actors with specifically cultural requests. At this point it is important to highlight the nexus between the role of relationships and its indirect connection to a strategic value. A positive outcome on *Aliyah* would be a win-win and not a zero-sum result. Israeli leaders would not only have helped fellow Jews but also would have absorbed foreign Iranian nationals who would have needed representation in Israel.

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[237] ISA. Prime Minister's Office file 333/13 43.0/11-301 Letters dated 6 June 1950 from the Jewish community to David Ben Gurion.
[238] ISA. Prime Minister's Office file 555/12 43.0/7-755 Letter dated 14 March 1952 from *Torah ve Avoda* Tehran to David Ben Gurion.

3.4   Role of Relationships in the *Aliyah* of Iraqi Jewish Refugees via Iran

Israeli policy towards Iran was shaped by the perception that Iranian recognition was vital and that this was dependent on Iran's internal outlook onto Israel. *Aliyah* in general has consistently been an important foreign policy value for Israelis rather than just another objective.[239]

Aliyah is also important strategically because it meant a life or death situation for Jews in the Diaspora and also demographically for Israel. Diaspora Jews have been not only emotionally connected to the Jewish state, but have also been pivotal advisors in carrying out Israel's foreign policy. When faced with Iran's reticence to advance its relations with Israel, Israeli policymakers listened to prominent Iranian Jews who knew the workings of the Iranian government and its officials and at times had connections to them. Indeed, the role of the Iranian Jewish community has been largely omitted in the literature hitherto. It is true that Iraqi Jews were in immediate need of evacuation from Iraq via Iran and otherwise. However, the role of the Iranian Jewish community and *Aliyah* from Iran also helped shape Israeli policy towards Iran in general.

Constructivism, as discussed at length in Chapter 2, could be useful at this point in the thesis in explaining the concept of *Aliyah*. The broad viewpoint of Constructivists, such as Alexander Wendt, would surmise that the ideas and actions connected with *Aliyah* and *Aliyah* as a concept in itself were determined on the whole by a shared Jewish yearning to move to and live in Israel. This was socially constructed rather than given by nature. As discussed in Chapter 2, all varieties of Constructivism share a focus on shared beliefs and belief communities that influence and are influenced by norms.

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[239] Michael Brecher (1972) cited in Jones and Petersen, *Israel's Clandestine Diplomacies*. P. 74.

Constructivism is a very useful tool in understanding thoughts and actions related to Aliyah, but not directly applicable to this thesis as a whole that focuses on human relationships and perceptions and misperceptions.

In the period covered by this chapter, one can see the synergy between perceptions and their effect on policy implementation in an additional *Aliyah* example: In August 1948, the Mossad sent Shlomo Hillel of the Institution of the Second *Aliyah* to explore the possibility of organising the *Aliyah* of Iraqi Jews by way of Iran. Hillel arrived in Tehran with a Moroccan-French passport in the name of Maurice Perez. He was unexpectedly delayed in Iran and had to arrange the immigration of Iraqi Jews by air to Haifa. As a result, the immigration of Iraqi and Iranian Jews became combined. Shlomo Hillel's perceptions of the situation in Tehran enabled him to take advantage of his environment to implement the Israeli foreign policy goal of *Aliyah*. Hillel made contacts with sympathetic Iranians, and Jews helped 'facilitate business' with the Iranian police and Ministry of the Interior, such as obtaining passports at cost.[240] In this way, Hillel gauged the local environment and mindsets while keeping his activities covert. Hillel successfully saved lives, made contacts, and established relationships with Iranian officials. Other officials, such as officers checking the identities of passengers boarding flights from Abadan to Tehran, were often bribed during the process.

Once the number of illegal Iraqi refugees became too large to hide in hotels belonging to Iranian Jews, a refugee camp was set up in the mortuaries and funeral chapels of a disused Jewish cemetery in the Northern Suburbs of Tehran until permission would be

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[240] Ezri, Meir. *The Legacy of Cyrus: My Iranian Mission,* (Or Yehuda: Hed Arzi Publishing, 2011) pp. 55-6.

received from the Iranian authorities. Over 12,000 Iraqi Jewish refugees over 18 months were housed in the Jewish cemetery complex on their way to Israel.[241] In total, approximately 47,000 Iraqi Jews were smuggled via Iran into Israel.

Obtaining exit permits was a complicated and dangerous operation. For instance, a Jewish travel agent arranged the flights of 'Iranian Airways,' which had French pilots. Under an agreement reached, the planes landed in Haifa or the Ramat David airbase instead of Italy or France.[242] In November 1948, the first large group of Iraqi Jewish refugees were smuggled from Iraq to southern Iran, where the two states were divided by the Shatt-al-Arab. The route took them from the southern Iranian towns of Ahwaz, Khoramshar, and Abadan to KermanShah of Iran, and on to Tehran.[243] The immigrants were then smuggled into Israel by land and air. At first, the smuggling project was kept from the Iranian authorities; with the activities of Mossad agents remaining covert. However, it is likely that the Iranian authorities knew the identities of the agents as smuggling activities increased. By June 1949, it was feared that immigrants who were caught and arrested would be deported back to Iraq, where they could face imprisonment or death as Iraqi officials insisted to the Iranians that the fleeing immigrants were Communist agents who should be extradited back to Iraq under the two states' extradition treaty.

The difficulty and jeopardy of the *Aliyah* process is demonstrated by the case of Michael Hallil and three other Iraqi Jews (two female) who were arrested at the

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[241] Carmel, Amos and Shlomo Hillel. *Baghdad Station Doesn't Answer* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Edanim Publishers, 1989).
[242] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 60.
[243] Ibid, pp. 50-52.

Khoramshar Railway Station on their way to Ahwaz and then onto Tehran.[244] As told to me by former Mossad agent Samuel (Sami) Moriah, the four youths were arrested and separated from each other, interrogated and tortured in prison until Zion Ezri, former Iranian Army Jewish officer, intervened because he personally knew the governing Colonel of the South of Iran and they engineered the release of the prisoners. Zion Ezri took possession of the four Iraqis and guaranteed the return of the Iraqis should the Colonel need them. If this had not happened, the entire smuggling network would have been discovered and tens of thousands of Iraqi Jews would have been in danger.[245]

In order to solve the Iraqi immigration problem, it was agreed between the head of the Iranian Zionist Federation and Zion Ezri that his son Meir Ezri would meet with Colonel Haj Ali Kia, the commander of the Iranian border police. During their meeting with Kia, Zion and Meir Ezri pointed to the 'cruel' Iraqi authorities versus the humane, enlightened, and hospitable Iranian government.[246] The Ezris were aware of Colonel Kia's perception of himself and Kia's views of Iraqis. Also, Zion Ezri and Colonel Kia spoke as retired officer to serving officer, and Kia assisted greatly in freeing the arrested immigrants and smoothing the path to immigration. In ways such as those illustrated above, Israel creatively transcended the constraints it faced in order to further Israeli policy goals. Connections were made with Iranian officials from officers checking identities to the high echelons of Iranian government ministers and the Prime Minister. This example illustrates foreign policy entrepreneurs' awareness of Iranian perceptions and their pivotal benefit to Israeli foreign policy.

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[244] Ibid, p. 59.
[245] Letter from Samuel (Sami) Moriah to Efrat Shaoulian-Sopher dated 20 November 2016.
[246] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 62.

The role of relationships, including the perceptions and misperceptions and human agency within them, are not only present but are also connected to reveal foreign policy where it would not usually be acknowledged. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Mossad Aliyah agents, members of the Iranian Jewish community and Iranian individuals such as General Ali Kia that the outcome of enabling Iraqi Jewish refugees to emigrate to Israel via Iran would be very different.

3.5   The Role of Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs in Gaining Recognition of Israel from Iran

Individual foreign policy entrepreneurs played an important part in implementing Israeli foreign policy towards Iran and overcoming the constraints that Israel faced when establishing relations with Iran.[247] This was especially true in this time period. As explained in the discussion on David Ben Gurion, principles governed the policy actions of Israel as it developed its policy towards Iran. Recognition was crucial in helping to facilitate the *Aliyah* of Iraqi and Iranian Jews to Israel. The recognition issue also clearly highlights instances of vital policy implementation on the role of human relationships that a Realist analysis would omit despite the overall 'strategic vision' of Israel's foreign policy goals at the time. On a strategic level, Iran had a number of reasons for recognising Israel, including Iran's on going issues with Arab states, Iranian property interests in Israel, and Iran's dependence on the United States since 1946 as a means of keeping Iran outside the Soviet bloc.   Israel was therefore able to lobby for

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[247] As defined in section 2.6.2 of this thesis, foreign policy entrepreneur refers to a person who acts in a non-governmental capacity who organizes and manages an effort specific to the creation or easing of the implementation of foreign policy and foreign policy objectives with considerable initiative and risk.

recognition through its ties to the United States. However, the documents from the Israel State Archives indicate that the Iranians had no sense of urgency in recognising Israel from 1948 to 1950.[248] Nor did the Israeli MFA see the recognition matter as pressing until the middle of 1949. That was when Mossad raised the matter of smuggling Iraqi Jews out of Iraq via Iran and the help that Iranian recognition would provide to the smuggling effort. A sense of urgency arose in Israel. At the same time, Iraqi diplomats were lobbying the Iranian government to close its borders to such smuggling.[249] One unexpected yet vital enabling action was the arrangement of payment by Mossad agents (through US intermediaries) of $240,000 under cover of a $500,000 trade agreement for de facto recognition in January 1950. It was the action of the US individual intermediaries (foreign policy entrepreneurs) who enabled the recognition negotiations. Recognition was finally granted due to the intensive efforts of Israeli diplomats and foreign policy entrepreneurs.

Recognition did not easily occur because of converging strategic interests as suggested by a number of accounts of Israeli-Iranian relations. In fact, it is only Bialer's original work that uncovered the facts that Israel's recognition was not solely connected to common strategic interests with the Iranians. The American intermediary was codenamed 'Adam' in the diplomatic communiqués. Bialer discovered the background and role 'Adam,' also known as Gideon Hadary, who was an American scientist working for the US State Department as an agricultural attaché and intelligence officer.[250] Hadary's role was pivotal in gaining recognition. Hadary had met Zion

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[248] Bialer, "The Iranian Connection in Israel's Foreign Policy 1948-1951," p. 299. Bialer states that Israel submitted two separate petitions to Iran for recognition in 1948 and 1949 and both were refused.
[249] Ibid.
[250] Bialer, "Between Rehovot and Tehran-Gideon Hadary's Secret Diplomacy," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 17:1 (Spring 2012), p. 16.

Cohen, an undercover agent for *Mossad le-Aliyah Bet*,[251] in Tehran on a previous visit to Israel, and Cohen introduced Hadary to Mossad pilots who flew Iraqi Jews to Israel after they crossed the border to Iran.[252] Hadary provided a very discreet and indirect route to Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Saed, whom Hadary knew through an Opium dealer who came from the same village as the Prime Minister.[253] Through the involvement and negotiation of Gideon Hadary, payments were made for the Iranian Prime Minister, over half the cabinet and for providing favourable publicity in Iran on behalf of recognition.[254]

As one can see, the actions of Mossad agents and foreign policy entrepreneurs directly affected the implementation and speed of implementation of Israeli foreign policy. In addition, such details of foreign policy implementation would not be deemed on the same level of importance as the strategic interests of the time. Yet, foreign policy was implemented due to individual action. De facto recognition was attained on 15 March 1950, following great efforts by Israeli policymakers and foreign policy entrepreneurs.

A Realist-leaning analysis would argue that Persian Jews had no impact on Israeli foreign policy because they were neither Israeli nationals nor diplomatic representatives. At worst, they would argue that the Persian Jewish community would not be qualified to engage in matters of state. Examining the role of relationships demonstrates that this argument could not be further from the truth, as seen in the documentary evidence. The

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[251] *Mossad le Aliyah Bet* in Hebrew means "Office for the Second Immigration," which originally referred to the illegal immigration to Palestine. It was out of this organization that later the Mossad, the Israeli secret service developed.
[252] Bialer, "Between Rehovot and Tehran-Gideon Hadary's Secret Diplomacy," pp.16-17.
[253] Ibid, p. 17.
[254] Ibid, p. 304. Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 10.

documentary and oral evidence also confirms that Persian Jews did not act as a 'fifth column' or act against the interests of Iran.

Zion Ezri relayed messages via his son Meir to the Mossad and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October 1953 (after the Shah of Iran was reinstated). With a deep knowledge of Iran and the Middle East, Ezri viewed Israel as surrounded by Muslim and Arab states most of which were pursuing a policy of outright rejection toward Israel. Ezri viewed Iran and its people as a great people with a magnificent heritage who were peace-loving and philanthropic, and thus offering a great potential for Israeli Relations with Iran.[255]

Ezri had connections to the Iranian Prime Minister General Zahedi. According to Ezri, it was time for Israel to develop more formalised diplomatic relations with Iran and the current government would be open to such a development. This was partly because of the rise of Said al-Iraqian, an Iranian parliamentarian and a friend of Israel, who was not active in the Mosaddeq government. Al-Iraqian was a rising star, as the Shah of Iran preferred him to Ayatollah Abul-Qasem Kashani. Kashani was the speaker of the Iranian Parliament and a Clergyman, a war-time sympathizer of the Nazis, a zealous proponent of oil nationalization and a spiritual leader to a generation of young clerics who wanted to replace secular rules with religious law. One of Kashani's admirers was Ruholla Khomeini.[256] It was therefore necessary to find a suitable Israeli diplomat to dispatch to Tehran. [257] Zion Ezri and Meir Ezri, as well as other individuals from the Tehran Jewish community who had links to the Iranian authorities, informed Mossad

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[255] Personal interview with Meir Ezri, June 26 2015, Savyon Israel.

[256] Cooper, Andrew Scott. *The Fall of Heaven: The Pahlavis and the Final Days of Imperial Iran*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company LLC, 2016), p.69.

[257] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821 memorandum from the Communications Office to the Director General dated 5 October 1953.

that now was the time to work on advancing relations with Iran based on their connections with Iranian officials.

De facto recognition of Israel by Iran in March 1950 made *Aliyah* via Iran permissible by the Iranian authorities. Iran therefore became a good alternate route to smuggle Iraqi Jews out of Iraq. The linkage between recognition and *Aliyah* cannot be stressed enough. Both were significant in their own ways as policy goals in order to achieve Israel's national interest, but the link between them had a knock-on effect on foreign policies in the region, such as Iraq. Therefore, it could be argued that from a strategic perspective, Israel's foreign policy actions served the national interest indirectly. For example, in February 1950, Iraqi Jews were briefly permitted to emigrate from Iraq. Bialer explains this most succinctly:

> Certainly the formal explanations given [for the Iraqi change in policy] cannot be taken at face value. The evidence in Israeli Foreign Ministry files points to, inter alia, two factors in particular: the Iraqi failure to prevent the illegal flight of Jews from Iraq to Israel via Iran, and the practical cooperation that developed between Iran and Israel that facilitated such immigration. It is therefore difficult to exaggerate the importance of Israeli activities in Iran regarding intertwined issues of diplomatic recognition and *Aliyah*. Certainly, the mass evacuation of Iraqi Jews to Israel via Iran can be considered one of the most remarkable achievements of the Jewish state in its formative years.[258]

In total, from 1947 until 1951, approximately 30,000 Iranian Jews immigrated to Israel and approximately 47,000 Iraqi Jews reached Israel via Iran.[259]

The discussion of the role of relationships has shown how the actions of individuals directly affect foreign policy implementation even though the overall strategy reflects Realist strategic thinking. These influential individuals include David Ben Gurion,

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[258] Bialer, Uri. "The Power of the Weak-Israel's Secret Oil Diplomacy, 1948-57," in Jones and Petersen, *Israel's Clandestine Diplomacies*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2013), p. 79.
[259] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus,* p. 71.

Gideon Hadary, Joseph Pot, and Zion and Meir Ezri. The perspectives and roles of these individuals would not be fully explained by the existing account thus far because their actions stemmed from ideology, and some were not official representatives of the Israeli state. Therefore, this approach enriches the analysis of Israeli policy towards Iran because it reveals more foreign policy determinants. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Gideon Hadary, Meir Ezri, and Iranian decision-makers including General Zahedi and Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Saed that the outcome of Iranian recognition of Israel and the continuation of *Aliyah* would be very different.

3.6 <u>Mossad and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Facilitating Recognition of Israel by Iran</u>

In the discussion, it is valuable to examine how the role of relationships, which can be seen as overcoming an obstacle, can in fact become the obstacle. In this situation, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion was charged with ensuring the national interest of Israel. The Mossad was charged with protecting Israeli citizens and Diaspora Jews. In this series of events, we can see how the individual personal beliefs of Ben Gurion with respect to bribes created an obstacle for the Mossad to overcome. Ben Gurion was opposed to paying bribes. The Mossad went against his wishes and used bribes to achieve their overall objectives. It can clearly be seen how complex the role of relationships can be as both something that overcomes obstacles and something that creates them. Classical Realists would argue that the role of relationships are important within the assumption that they would operate in alignment with satisfying the national interests and the end the justifying the means. However, it is important to note that the role of relationships could largely supersede the role of the national interest.

Ben Gurion's principles governed the policy actions of Israel when he envisioned his policy towards Iran. One of Ben Gurion's principles was for Israel not to pay bribes. However, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the help of the Mossad bypassed these principles in achieving one of its most important goals of gaining Iranian recognition. Recognition was crucial in helping facilitate the *Aliyah* of Iraqi and Iranian Jews to Israel. The payment of bribes for Iranian recognition of Israel was not widely supported within the closed Israeli decision-making circles. Israeli decision-makers had significant reservations regarding the transaction for several reasons.

The two most striking reasons were that the sum discussed was extremely large for the new state; and the practice of payments to individuals did not sit comfortably in the minds of Israeli decision-makers. This strategy also posed many dangers going forward. First, this was a large sum of money for the fledgling state. Second, as one Israeli intelligence official discussed in September 1952, the potential payment to the Iranian speaker (and reluctant ally of Mosaddegh), Mullah Kashani: 'There is no assurance that even if we would acquire Kashani to our side in exchange for payment-that he will not regret this after putting the money in his pocket and will say "no agreement ever happened."'[260] The presence of unofficial Israeli representatives as a result of de facto recognition enabled Israeli decision-makers to have 'ears on the ground' and have excellent and accurate information about Iran's internal political and social situation. In this way, novel policies were formulated to advance Israel's interests and strengthen ties with Iran. Iran's internal political and social state of affairs affected its policy towards Israel both privately and publicly. From the Israeli perspective, this was both a constraint and an opportunity to bypass the constraint by becoming closely acquainted

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[260] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," p. 155.

with the Iranian decision-making structure. That is not to discard entirely the usefulness of the Realist prism in foreign policy analysis. Indeed, such an approach can genuinely aid understanding, but it is not equally useful in every scenario.

3.7   <u>Clandestine Diplomacy and Israeli Policy Implementation in Iran During the Mosaddeq Era</u>

The Mosaddeq era in Iran was led by Mohammad Mosaddeq, an Iranian politician, who was the head of a democratically elected government, also held the office of Prime Minister of Iran from 1951 to 1953 until his government was overthrown in a 19 August 1953 coup d'état aided by the United States and the United Kingdom. The Mosaddeq era was a great obstacle for the Israeli government because the Iranian leadership changed abruptly, causing great uncertainty in Israel's position with the Iranians. The Iranian Consulate in Israel was closed in 1952 by the Mosaddeq government on budgetary grounds. The Mosaddeq government explained that the closure of the Iranian consulate did not mean an end to Tehran's de facto recognition of Israel. However, the closure proved popular with Arab states that, the Iranians hoped, would support Iran's oil nationalisation at the United Nations. Indeed, Arab states such as Egypt believed that Mosaddeq had withdrawn de facto recognition. Reports appeared in the Egyptian press that Mosaddeq had withdrawn Iran's recognition of Israel because it was obtained by 'the payment of vast sums.'[261]

Israeli policymakers hoped to advance diplomatic relations with the Mosaddeq government via the oil negotiations. In light of the Iranian political situation, Israeli

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[261] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821. Letter from Katriel Katz to the Advisor of Special Operations dated 26 April 1953.

decision-makers had to be mindful of Iran's relations with Britain vis-à-vis their oil relationship. The Israelis were promised a meeting with Mosaddeq himself to progress the oil deal. However, they were aware that a negotiation with Mosaddeq would not only create a dispute with the British, but would also disappoint the Iranians, who would think it was a ruse to obtain political concessions or, conversely, that Israel was under British and American influence.[262] This was indeed a formidable diplomatic route to navigate.

Israel used clandestine diplomacy as a foreign policy tool and continued to communicate with the Iranians under Mosaddeq via the Mossad and the Jewish Agency when needed. Therefore, different government branches were used as needed. It was also helpful that Iran had signed on to the Jewish Agency Charter in 1922 and was therefore obliged to cooperate with its members.[263] Israel received assurances via the Mossad/Jewish Agency connection and through Israeli-Iranian diplomatic meetings throughout the world that Tehran would neither sever relations and nor withdraw de facto recognition of Israel. Visas for Israeli journalists, merchants, and Jewish Agency officials were granted by the Iranian consulate in Istanbul and *Aliyah* would not be affected. At the same time, Israeli diplomats discreetly made it clear that they were aware that Tehran had closed its consulate in Jerusalem because of Iran's internal opposition to ties with Israel and Iran's rapprochement with the Arab world. However, Iran could not, for example, expect Israel's automatic support at the United Nations for its candidacy to replace Lebanon on the Security Council in July 1952.[264] Israel used a

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[262] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821. Memorandum from M. Comay to the Foreign Minister dated 22 September 1952.
[263] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821. Letter from Theodore Levite to Dr. Carlebach dated 20 July 1951.
[264] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/12 130.2/1/822. Memorandum from Yaakov Yanai in Ankara to the Middle East Division dated 27 July 1952.

micro-level, low-key approach to communicate clearly with the Iranian government on many levels. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the influence of personal relationships between the Mossad agents, the Jewish Agency officials and decision-makers in the Iranian government that the outcome of Iranian de facto recognition of Israel not being rescinded, and the continuation of Aliyah despite the overthrow of the Shah under Mosaddeq, would be very different.

3.8 Israeli Perceptions of Iranian Obstacles to Normalising Diplomatic Relations with Israel

Perceptions and misperceptions are prominent foreign policy determinants in the study of foreign policy because they pinpoint how decision-makers see or perceive the world. During the period of 1948 to 1955, perceptions and misperceptions come mostly on an interpersonal level. As relations between Israel and Iran developed, the perceptions and misperceptions of more officials become more widely documented. Israeli diplomats and Mossad agents operated in Iran and saw diplomatic implementation from a particular perspective.

From their perspective, the Israelis saw chaos, intrigues, and corruption in Tehran. Israeli officials coined this the 'Persian bazaar.' Israeli officials navigated the 'Persian bazaar' in different ways. For example, Recognition was vital for attaining, ensuring and expanding *Aliyah* and made the work of Mossad and other agents more straightforward. Several factors stood in the way of recognition. Both before and after recognition was attained, reciprocity was questionable. For instance, in March 1949, Israel granted permission for an Iranian diplomat to resume diplomatic duties in the

former Iranian consulate in Jerusalem. He was afforded almost all diplomatic privileges and looked after the interests of Iranian nationals in Israel. However, Israeli decision-makers noted in October 1949 that the Iranians did not reciprocate this move and requests for visas for Jewish Agency officials to visit Iran were ignored.

Post-recognition, the Jewish Agency obtained Iranian visas with Israeli passports. When Israel sent a similar request to Tehran on 17 May 1950, Tehran did not offer a clear reply. Israel tried to overcome the lack of reciprocity by sending David Ben-Gurion's personal representative Shmuel Divon to Tehran in July. Shmuel Divon obtained an agreement to an Israeli special representative to Iran, yet formal confirmation did not arrive and in the meantime the Iranian Foreign Minister had changed. Shmuel Divon was sent to Iran for a second time in August to gain approval for an Israeli representative with the new Foreign Minister. Therefore, Israeli decision-makers, diplomats, and negotiators approached negotiations with the Iranians with extreme caution and flexibility. Another way in which Israeli diplomats approached the 'Persian Bazaar' was with the assistance of the Iranian Jewish community.

In 1955 a group of Iranian Jewish leaders offered their analysis to the Israeli President that the British were fully in control of Iran, and that if Israel wished to develop its relations with Iran it had to do so via the British.[265] Also, a professional high-ranking and 'cultured' Israeli diplomat must be sent to Iran who is also familiar with Oriental personalities and who would be able to easily interact with British diplomats in Iran. The Jewish leaders also highlighted Israeli Foreign Ministry protocol faux pas when it did not send the Shah of Iran congratulations on

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[265] ISA, Ministry of foreign affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821 memorandum from the Director of the Office of the President to the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 4 March 1955.

the occasion of his birthday and condolences on the death of his father. These pieces of advice were taken into consideration in the Israeli decision-making process. On more practical matters, an economic society had been established of 10 of the wealthiest industrialists of Iran (six of whom were Jewish), all of who had been persuaded to support trade with Israel. Interestingly, Israel's first informal diplomatic representative to Tehran in 1956 possessed these qualifications—to the benefit of Israeli foreign policy-making.

3.9 Obstacles for Israeli Field Operatives due to the Lack of Formal Relations with Iran

Israel faced a number of constraints including Iran's *de facto* recognition of Israel in 1950, and the CIA-backed countercoup that reinstated the Shah of Iran (and deposed Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddeq) in 1953. The main obstacles that Israeli field operatives faced in 1953 in Tehran included having responsibilities as Israeli *Aliyah* representatives yet limited scope in which to act. A further obstacle was the blurred roles and responsibilities of the Israeli operatives. Finally, the Israeli operatives were not fully aware of the full scope of the relations. For example, the *Aliyah* operatives had no knowledge of the trade agreements that Israel made with Iran, and were therefore unaware of Israeli obligations.

A very detailed analytical memorandum from a Jewish Agency official David Omansky (dated 4 September 1953) who returned to Israel clearly highlights those constraints

along with a couple of potential advantages related to Iran's internal makeup.[266] It is important to note that the presence of Jewish Agency officials was a rather unique phenomenon connected to *Aliyah* since these officials were Israeli and were responsible for facilitating the immigration into Israel. However, they were not Foreign Ministry representatives. Such unique factors would be omitted in a Realist analysis, as would solutions to these constraints. Someone using the theoretical framework of this thesis, however, would be sensitive to such hurdles.

First, according to David Omansky, the Jewish Agency operated in Tehran through the 'kind auspices' of the Iranian authorities (i.e., bribes[267]) and not as a result formal relations between the two states. No signage indicated the presence of the State of Israel's Jewish Agency offices other than a small plaque in the waiting room at the *Aliyah* office. This meant that, for instance, on one hand the Jewish agency was criticised by the local Jewish communist press, yet officially to the Iranian authorities the offices did not actually exist. This put the Jewish Agency officials in a difficult predicament. They had perceived responsibilities to carry out in Iran but limited capacity within which to operate.

Second, the matter of blurred roles is significant. A blurred role, such as the lack of a formal embassy, allowed the advantage of no formal diplomatic responsibility and greater flexibility but afforded the disadvantage of no ability to rely on formal agreements and arrangements. Blurred roles enabled Israeli officials to create illusions and misperceptions that were good for some Israeli officials but not for others. In this example, Realists would assume that all Israeli officials would be affected by the same

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[266] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs document 2410/11 130.2/1/821. Letter from David Omansky to Walter Eitan dated 4 September 1953.
[267] Ibid.

broad strategies because all Israeli interests would be identical. In Tehran, it was not completely clear to the Iranians and the Iranian Jewish community what the exact roles of the Jewish Agency officials were (in the absence of formally, or even informally, designated Israeli diplomatic representatives). This is despite the Iranians being aware that they had not yet agreed to an official diplomatic representative. Therefore, an Israeli representative had not been appointed in the various informal negotiations between Jerusalem and Tehran.

Due to the lack of formal precise diplomatic relations, the Iranians approached members of the Jewish Agency as well. Likewise, members of the Iranian Jewish community asked the Jewish Agency for assistance on matters that were beyond the Agency's remit. Jewish Agency representatives were not qualified for their greater perceived role, as they were not privy to the diplomatic, trade, and policy information. This meant that they were not aware of the specific details of any agreements reached with Tehran. In turn, Iranian government officials became dissatisfied with the information from the Jewish Agency that jeopardised their visas to stay in Iran and carry out their designated *Aliyah* work.

Third, unrealistic expectations and parameters with trade also played a key role for the Jewish Agency representatives. The Jewish Agency representative reports that the Iranian partner in the trade agreement paid him a visit, describing exaggerated and unrealistic commitments that Israel had purportedly made, such as promises to lend Iran tens of millions of dollars. The Jewish Agency representatives were not aware of such details and could do no more than attempt to temper those expectations. This lack of knowledge jeopardised the granting of Iranian permission for direct El Al flights between Israel and Iran. The 11 June 1953 trade agreement between Israel and Iran

enabled initial trade between the two states and opened a credit facility for the purchase of goods. This agreement was seen by Israel as a gateway to realising political connections with Iran. The signatories to the agreement were the Iranian Bank Melli and the Israeli Bank Leumi. The Iranians were very wary of the publicity of such an agreement. According to Uri Bialer, Israel was in no great hurry to purchase Iranian goods.[268] While the 1953 agreement was an important milestone, it presented challenges.

The other potential opportunities for relations with Iran were the wealthy families in Iran's Jewish community and Israel's potential cultural ties to Iran's intelligentsia and 'Western front' political group along with Iran's socialists. These were, according to the Jewish Agency official, hindered by the lack of formal relations between the states. The presence of the Jewish Agency and its *Aliyah* work had a double role. First, the Jewish Agency facilitated *Aliyah* eventually in a semi-official capacity. That meant that Israel had a semblance of representation in Tehran. On the other hand, the presence of the Jewish Agency created an illusion of formal representation that the Israelis used to their advantage.

3.10 Human Relationships and Their Impact on Secret Oil and Trade Diplomacy Between Israel and Iran

Mossad, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked together to establish commercial relations with Iran as a channel for normalising relations.

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[268] Bialer, Uri. "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963,", p. 156. The trade agreement according to Bialer was signed as there was no urgency yet in 1953 to commit to purchasing Iranian oil.

Trade and oil were both Israeli foreign policy goals and the means to developing Israel's Iran policy. This was not as straightforward as the negotiation of common commercial interests would appear. Secret oil and trade diplomacy also played a prominent role. The obstacles and constraints that Israel faced in seeking its objectives, i.e. its interests, are also touched upon by Bialer in an article illustrating the role of Dr. Tzvi Doriel- Israel's first unofficial representative to Tehran between 1956 and 1963.

Doriel was a Russian-born career diplomat. Doriel made a very good impression on the Western diplomats in Tehran. Doriel believed that Israel in mid 1956 should seek political rapprochement with the Iranians as a key to trade and not the opposite. This was contrary to what the Israeli foreign ministry wanted to do.[269] Doriel's firm belief that forming active relations with Iran was a unique opportunity can be seen in his communiqué to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

> We have a conjecture and a good plan of events, and we must take advantage of it with every reasonable effort and before it passes. And yet, there is no policy but the taking of advantage of favourable circumstances objectively with subjective efforts. This is how we were taught in our youth by Machiavelli and Marx. Also, Persia is a part of the continent of Asia, but her outlook, her culture, her heritage and her economy lean towards the Mediterranean. Persia requires in these days a marked priority and a style of attention from the top of leadership, and not merely the attention of the foreign ministry during days of peace for example, relations with Bolivia.[270]

Doriel himself also recommended communicating between the summits of Iranian and Israeli leadership. Doriel references prominent political philosophers including Machiavelli; yet recommends going beyond the strategic opportunity of aligning with Iran. He deeply admired and appreciated Iranian culture and heritage. Doriel was

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[269] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," p. 178.
[270] ISA, Letter from Doriel to Levin, 23 September1956 ISA 3747/25.

interested in establishing a Chamber of Commerce with Iran and exploring oil cooperation with Iran. Doriel also believed that Israel should take advantage of the Shah's perception that Jews control world finance.[271] This is also a policy-related example of Israeli diplomats observing how they could make the most of Iranian perceptions and navigate beyond their actual power capabilities.

Bialer's 1998 article concentrates on the trade of oil between the two states. In his article, he discusses three overlooked tools used in Israel's policy towards Iran. First, is the role of economics in Israel's foreign policy making. Israel's relations with Iran developed through the economic sphere rather than the geo-strategic sphere. Second is Israel's unique use of covert diplomacy, which plays a vital role in Israel's foreign policy. Third and most interestingly, is the vital role played by the inter-personal, human side of Israel's covert diplomacy. It was these contacts, in fact, that most directly affected relations with Iran rather than the higher echelons of foreign policy decision-making. These covert contacts furthered the interests of the State of Israel in ways that are overlooked by traditional and Realist scholarship.[272]

After lengthy negotiations, on 11 June 1953 a bilateral credit facility agreement was signed for mutual purchases between Israel's Bank Leumi and the Iranian Bank Melli. This enabled Israel to set up a trading company named IRIS (the Iranian-Israeli Trading Company) in Tehran. The agreement also authorised Israel to purchase $500,000 in goods. Israel bought 2,000 tonnes of cotton seeds to keep the Iranians interested in the agreement. The commerce agreement presented problems of representation as well. The Iranians had the impression that the Jewish Agency representatives who were

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[271] ISA Letter from Doriel to the MFA, 18 September 1956, ISA 2565/24.
[272] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," p. 151.

responsible for *Aliyah* were representing Israel in all matters. The Iranians wished to discuss and interpret the agreements and the Jewish Agency representatives felt ill-equipped. As discussed above, the agreement presented both opportunities and challenges.

The problem that the Israeli negotiator, Joseph Pot, faced was to establish this 'modest' trade mechanism without committing Israel to purchasing oil at this stage.[273] One of the first agreements that facilitated overall trade between Israel and Iran was the June 1953 aforementioned credit agreement. The credit facility agreement took much time to be signed by the Iranians. Bialer explains that this was due to an internal disagreement in Iran between Mosaddegh and the minister of Trade and Industry, who were in favour of the agreement, and, on the other hand, the Iranian foreign minister, who opposed it. From the Israeli perspective, this was seen as a triumph for Iranian politicians who did not follow the pro-Islamic, pro-Arab foreign policy. The IRIS trading company also served as an effective commercial 'front' to Israel's clandestine relations with Iran. IRIS's running costs actually exceeded any profits made in trade, yet its political value was very high indeed. Israeli decision-makers had the foresight to implement a policy that could potentially reap benefits to Israel economically and strategically in the longer term.

By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Tzvi Doriel and Iranian trade and oil officials that the outcome of the Israeli-Iranian economic relations and oil cooperation stemming from the 1953 credit facility agreement would be very different.

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[273] Ibid, p.156.

3.11 The Role of Mossad in Securing Vital Iranian Oil Supply for Israel

One of Israel's main strategic foreign policy goals was to obtain a secure Middle Eastern oil supply that would be both cheaper to purchase and transport than the American continent alternatives that cost 30 per cent more than Middle Eastern oil.[274] In addition, Haifa's oil refinery plants, which had been constructed by the British, were purpose-built for refining the lighter Iranian crude oil. Israel established its oil company, Delek, shortly after its independence. After a plan for Delek to purchase Kuwaiti oil was vetoed by the British Foreign Office, oil to Israel was imported at very high cost from Venezuela.[275]

Israel's assessment of Iran's oil supply capabilities in 1951 was not optimistic in light of the imminent political and oil crisis. Iran's oil industry was dependent on the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). Consequently, Israel avoided making large commitments to purchasing Iranian oil and instead, in the short term, depended on Soviet oil supplies. In March 1951, just before Mosaddeq's rise to power in Iran (and the subsequent nationalisation of Iran's oil industry), the Israeli Foreign Ministry prepared a report on Iran's bitter dispute with AIOC.[276] Output of Iranian oil had increased significantly, and all refinery equipment belonged to AIOC. The report concluded that the Iranian government was in no position to independently run its oil industry. It did not possess the expert knowledge and the refinery equipment. The Iranians also did not have the capability to transport either refined oil or crude oil to refineries. Laying pipelines would take a long time according to the Israelis. The Israeli

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[274] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," p. 79.
[275] Bialer, Uri. "The Power of the Weak-Israel's Secret Oil Diplomacy, 1948-57," p. 80.
[276] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 4373/7 130.29/1.506 Memorandum from the Economics Research Division titled "The Dispute in Iran" dated 29 March 1951.

assessment accurately identified a unique opportunity where Israeli both could be needed and potentially benefit from finding a potential source of oil. During August and September 1952, the Mossad was contacted by official and semi-official Iranian oil representatives. They offered Israel the chance to purchase oil. This included EPIM (Ente Petrolif-euro Italia Medio-oriente), the private Italian oil company. The Mossad needed oil experts to advise them, but the experts encountered problems obtaining Iranian visas. When Mossad insisted, visas became available within two hours.[277] This was part of a bigger commerce deal. Iran needed cash, and Mossad reports insisted that Israel seize this opportunity.

Regionally, relations between the Iraqis and the Iranians were strained under the Mosaddeq government and this presented an opportunity to strengthen relations between Israel and Iran. This stemmed from the Arab world's lack of support for Iran. Israeli decision-makers remained cautious, however. At the time, Israelis believed that in the event of negotiations with Iran, the United States and Britain would need to be informed, particularly because the British would see this as a hostile act, and could attempt to sabotage the talks.[278] In November 1954 in London, Israel agreed to purchase its first Iranian oil via an oil company, owned by the Italian government, SUPOR. The Israeli oil market offered Iran the highest per capita consumption of oil in the region and presented Iran with an alternative oil transportation route to the Suez Canal. This was a very important first step in beginning negotiations.

The first direct Israeli-Iranian formal oil agreement between Israeli Delek and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) was signed on 12 June 1955. Israel was the only

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[277] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2410/11 130.2/1/821 Memorandum from M. Comay to the Foreign Minister dated 22 September 1952.
[278] Ibid.

state that signed with NIOC, as it only had a 12.5 % stake at the time and had no incentive to sell oil and no incentive to offer a discount. From October 1955 until 1956, Iran would sell 75,000 tonnes of crude oil via a straw company based in Geneva (Compagnie Petrole et Transport Maritime-CPTM) to avoid Arab detection and opposition. The only Israeli incentive was to create a precedent so that foreign oil companies would import Iranian oil to Israel. At the time, there were no other Israeli interests.[279] The Israeli calculus looked to the long-term advantage. Iranian oil was of higher quality than Soviet oil (and was more reliable as Soviet oil was subject to its own domestic consumption) and it was possible to make more petro-chemical products from Iranian oil by products.

By 1955, Iran was Israel's main oil supplier. Israel welcomed a number of oil companies to supply oil in order to dilute the potential opposition of Arab states. These included Shell, SOCONY Vacuum, and Esso.[280] The Suez Canal enabled efficient shipment of 76 per cent of Iran's oil. In 1956, the Suez Canal was temporarily closed, and the Soviet oil supply to Israel was halted. During late 1957 representatives from Israel and Iran secretly met in Israel and agreed that Iran would sell oil to Israel for $1.30 per barrel.[281] Consequently, an eight-inch pipeline was built in December 1957. The pipeline carried oil from Eilat to Beersheba, where Iranian oil was transported to refineries in Haifa. The refined oil was then transported to Europe. Supply of Iranian oil to Israel was doubled at the end of 1960 when a new pipeline was built.[282]

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[279] Bialer, "Oil from Iran-The mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963," p. 167.
[280] ISA. Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 192/14 93.2/2-454 Memorandum from Y.R. Koslov to M. Palagi dated 20 February 1955.
[281] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 41.
[282] Please refer to Chapters 4 and 5 of this Thesis.

Economic relations and oil negotiations served the national interests but were facilitated by relationships and human agency. Economic relations and oil negotiations are further explained through the role of relationships and its human agency in this case because the individual members of the Israeli negotiating delegations filled unconventional roles. For instance, the Mossad coordinated bankers, oil companies, and oil experts. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also worked with the Mossad. At times, the Jewish agency was a 'cover' for the negotiations and for the Israeli presence in Tehran.

3.12   Conclusion

During the beginning stage of its relations with Iran from 1948 to 1955, Israel faced many constraints in achieving its strategic objectives. The constraints that Israeli decision-makers and field operatives faced included difficulties in *Aliyah* of Iraqi refugees via Iran due to lack of Iranian recognition of Israel, internal Iranian opposition to relations with Israel also during the uncertain time under Mosaddeq, and obstacles in negotiating oil trade agreements. As demonstrated in the chapter, Israel used creative methods, to attain its goals, such as bribery and the role of the Jewish community (neither of which a Realist account would not deem as significant).

Israel's imaginative methods show that the main shortcoming of the Realist account was in not paying attention to the full scale of actors, dynamics, methods, and foreign policy tools required to implement Israel's 'strategic vision.' Israel's early strategic vision included *Aliyah* from Iraq and Iran, gaining Iranian recognition, and establishing economic and oil trading as a means to break its regional isolation. Israeli decision-

makers were mavericks at overcoming the conventional and unusual obstacles in their paths. They made use of the Israeli diplomatic network worldwide, and were hugely assisted by the Jewish community in Iran. Israeli decision-makers were acutely aware of Iran's internal political environment and learned to operate imaginatively within the system.

Israeli decision makers and field operatives established the framework for relations with Iran on the matters of *Aliyah*, recognition of Israel, commerce, and the import of Iranian oil with a view to expanding political cooperation with Iran. It was human relationships that surmounted the obstacles that the Israeli faced, for instance, Iranian vacillation, uncertainty and delay due to the Iranian internal opposition to relations with Israel. This all occurred while lives depended on the outcomes of cooperation on *Aliyah*, a dependable oil supply that were matters of great jeopardy for Israeli decision makers and field operatives.

CHAPTER 4: ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN

UNDER DAVID BEN GURION (1955-1963)

4.1   Introduction

Between 1955 and 1963, Israeli foreign policy formation, implementation and consolidation had a specialised Iranian focus that would become known as David Ben Gurion's Peripheral Alliance policy.   This chapter shows how Foreign Policy Analysis plays a vital role in explaining foreign policy implementation once a decision has taken shape. The implementation phase has been defined by Brighi and Hill as 'that in which actors confront their environment and in which, in turn, the environment confronts them.' [283] Implementation is the stage when a foreign policy actor reaches into the environment to transform his other objectives into outcomes. Individuals during implementation not only smooth the foreign policy process, but also drive policy itself and work towards outcomes with purely individual motives such as a heightened sense of place in history.

The year 1955 is pivotal in Israeli political history with regard to foreign policy because Ben Gurion's position and influence was consolidated. Thereafter, Ben Gurion became the driving force behind Israeli foreign policy, which prior to 1955 was split between his own followers and those of Moshe Sharett. It is natural to end this chapter's exploration of foreign policy at the point at which David Ben Gurion resigned as Prime Minister of Israel in the summer of 1963.

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[283] Brighi, Elisabetta and Hill, Christopher. "Implementation and Behaviour," *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases,* 2nd Edition, Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield and Tim Dunne, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 147.

From 1955, first with Ben Gurion becoming Defence Minister in February 1955 and then becoming the Prime Minister in November 1955, Israel's foreign policy orientation became more activist in nature. David Ben Gurion's biographer explains,

> Thus began the process of disengagement from the defence policy of Moshe Sharett which was based on restraints, efforts to communicate and attempts at mediation by foreign bodies - United Nations, the powers, Asian and African countries. From this process also emerged, to a large extent, a new line of policy: gradual turning away from the United States and drawing closer to France. France, which during those years turned into the great opponent of the Arab States, and especially of Egypt, also became Israel's principal arms supplier along the road to confrontation with the same Egypt. The new policy line-towards preventive war, towards leaning on France - crossed the previous policy lines, the line of restraint and of reliance on the United States. For a while, it was possible to discern in the foreign and defence policy of Israel both tendencies at the same time; at a certain stage, they came into an acute confrontation. But in the end, towards the summer of 1956, the activist line took hold which lead to the Sinai Campaign.[284]

This new activism not only affected Israel's military sphere, but also directly affected Ben Gurion's ability to earnestly reach out to states like Iran. This new orientation contrasted with Moshe Sharett's restrained and intellectual approach to foreign policymaking.

Moshe Sharett's general worldview was as follows: 'Sharett was a great believer in the necessity for strength as the foundation of our diplomacy.' With 'excessive deference to what he called world opinion, or rather static and unwilling to accept that opinion could be changed.'[285] Sharett's approach toward Iran was restrained because of his cautious intellectual approach to foreign policy making.

In 1955, Ben Gurion established the formal concept of a system of relations with non-Arab states in the region. After Sharett's demotion to Foreign Minister from Prime

[284] Bar-Zohar, Michael. *Ben Gurion: A Political Biography* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1977), vol. 3, p. 1153.
[285] Shlaim, "Interview with Abba Eban," p. 1.

Minster, Ben Gurion was able to assume a higher risk policy that included relations with Iran. When Ben Gurion became Prime Minister in November 1955, Sharett was sent back to his original role as Foreign Minister, effectively removing him from determining foreign policy approaches.[286]

Ben Gurion envisaged forming alliances with non-Arab states and groups in the Middle East region in order to decrease Israel's isolation in the Middle East and counter threats posed by Arab states in the region. The Peripheral Alliance policy also reflected the development of policy of a more established state as opposed to a policy of a state in formation. The formation of the policy, which included an alliance system and not merely bilateral relations, was indicative of a more established state's foreign policy and not that of a newly formed state. This occurred while Israel's foreign policy goals of achieving legitimacy, peace and security, developing commerce, winning foreign endorsement and recognition, forging constructive engagement in international projects, and protecting and strengthening world Jewry remained consistent.

Michael Bar Zohar explains in his illustration and discussion of David Ben-Gurion's Policy of the Periphery thus:

> We must be forgiven our picturesque language: in this case, expressions like "under cover of darkness," "in dead secrecy," "ghost organization" are not at all extravagant. Even they pale in the presence of the actual circumstances which formed the backdrop for these events, and which would fire the wildest imagination.[287]

It is between 1955 and 1963 when the significance of using the individual approach gains momentum within a more established (as opposed to a previously more ad hoc

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[286] Shlaim, Avi. "Israel Between East and West, 1948-1956," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 4, (November 2004), pp. 657-673.

[287] Bar Zohar, Michael. "David Ben Gurion and the Policy of the Periphery 1958: Analysis," p. 191.

and reactive) foreign policy. The individual approach within FPA provides help to isolate and discuss how Israeli foreign policymakers and practitioners implemented the Peripheral Alliance policy. The chapter argues that human relationships had a critical impact on the formation and implementation of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran, from Prime Minister David Ben Gurion at the highest level all the way down to the Iran-based Israeli diplomats and agents.

4.2   International Context and Israeli Foreign Policy

The particular international context offered a window of opportunity for connections with Iran, which impacted Israeli foreign policy formulation and implementation. A number of seminal events both within the Cold War and Middle East contexts shaped and shifted alignment within the region between 1955 and 1963. These alignments formed a part of the calculus of Israeli and Iranian decision-makers. For instance, Iran made overtures towards the West in 1955 by joining the US-sponsored Baghdad Pact, whose members were Iraq, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, and Iran. In particular, the revolution in Iraq in 1958 and the growing strength of pan-Arabism affected Iranian foreign policy, making it more amenable to cooperating with Israel.

In this way, the international context affected Israeli foreign policy at the time. Israel's relations with the United States in 1955 cooled somewhat as the United States did not want to be perceived as Israel's protector in the Middle East. Yet, Israel looked to the West for arms support following the Czech-Egyptian arms deal.[288] The United States

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[288] The Czech arms deal was an agreement between the USSR and Egypt that came to light in September 1955. The USSR agreed to supply Egypt at least $250 million of weaponry.

failed to provide security guarantees to Israel or to provide it with arms. Israel was therefore drawn to France, which also wished to counter Nasser because of his support for Algerian rebels in 1954. A de facto alliance was formed between France and Israel in September 1956.[289] The United States' involvement in the Middle East in general, and towards Israel and Iran in particular, was motivated by the desire to contain the USSR.

Support for Israel within the United States originated domestically, partly from the American Jewish community and partly from non-Jewish Americans who saw Israel as a young democracy surrounded by undemocratic reactionary regimes.[290] On the whole, Israel has been able to count on the United States for support. Although Israel has traditionally been able to rely on the United States, their 'special relationship' did not develop fully until the middle of the 1960s. Initially, Israel received minimal American military and financial assistance. Washington saw the world differently from Israel on a number of occasions, most notably during the 1956 Suez War.

The Arab-Israeli conflict represented the chief irritant to the US-Israeli 'special relationship.' American decision-makers often faced balancing support for Israel with keeping its oil interests secure. From a Realist analysis, it was clearly in the US strategic interest to have a strong link between Israel and Iran. Iran, together with Turkey, formed the *Northern Tier* that the United States feared was in the most pressing danger of Communist expansion. The United States reacted with the Truman Doctrine in March 1947, offering military and economic aid to both states, which were

[289] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 24.
[290] Quandt, William B. "America and the Middle East: A Fifty-Year Overview," in *Diplomacy in the Middle East: The International Relations of Regional and Outside Powers.* Edited by L. Carl Brown (New York: 1.B. Tauris, 2006), p. 61.

seen as threatened by Communism. Clearly, both regionally and strategically, the United States also had an interest in facilitating the relations between Israel and Iran in order to thwart Communist expansionism. However, the United States did not immediately take an active interest in Israeli-Iranian relations.

4.2.1 *The 1958 Revolution in Iraq*

The Iraqi revolution of 14 July 1958 shook the Middle East and its leaders. It led to the reassessment of various strategic alliances. The revolution affected Israel because the Iranians became more amenable to strengthening their relations with Israel, thus paving the way for future development of relations between the two states.

The Shah of Iran, who watched his contemporary in Iraq's removal from leadership, realised that the Shah himself needed to strengthen his own regime with stable allies such as Israel. Iraq's pro-Western Hashemite royal house, headed by the young King Faisal II, was overthrown by General Abdul Karim Qassem. Iraq's Qassem regime defected from the Baghdad Pact, thus bringing Arab revolutionism to Iran's border.[291] The Iranians did not understand how a pro-Western regime could be overthrown in a state that was the cornerstone of the Baghdad Pact. Therefore, internally, the Iranian security services began to watch all non-Iranians very closely. Members of the Israeli delegation in Tehran were no exception. At first, the Iranians erroneously suspected that Israel somehow played a part in the Iraqi revolution and that anyone connected to Israel was seen as undesirable.[292] However, the suspicions abated after a

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[291] Ramazani, "Iran and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," Middle East Journal, Vol. 32:4 (Autumn 1978), p. 416.
[292] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 85.

series of conversations between the SAVAK, Mossad, and Israeli diplomats in Tehran and Europe.[293]

4.2.2 *Israel's Benefit to Iran during the War in Yemen*

Israeli decision-makers were aware of Iran's sense of isolation due to the 1962 war in Yemen. Israel saw that it had an opportunity to cooperate with Iran and contain what both states saw as Nasserist expansionism. A group of Yemeni army officers grasped control of Sana in September 1962 and declared a republic. Nasser saw yet another opportunity to expand his influence. Egypt immediately supported the new regime led by Brigadier Sallal, while erroneously assuming that Yemen's young deposed monarch Imam al-Badr was no longer alive. In reality, monarchist tribesmen had taken the Imam to the hills in preparation for retaliation. Israel was also mindful that Iran saw Nasser's activities in Yemen as a threat to its vital oil export route that reached the Suez Canal or the port of Eilat through the Bab-al Mandab.

Indeed, Israeli assessment reports on Yemen were forwarded to Iran, deeply affecting Tehran's perception of the Yemeni coup. As if to underscore Iran's sense of isolation, the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister told the Israeli representative in Tehran that Iranian assessments of Yemen relied on Israeli sources of information. The Iranians relied on information supplied by the Israelis and by their unofficial representative in Israel (who was provided information by the Israelis).[294] Israel was aware that it was providing a benefit to Iran through intelligence assessments and tactical assistance. Israel also knew that Iran depended on Israel for critical strategic information. Egypt continued its deep

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[293] Connections began in 1957. See below on connections with Bakhtiar.
[294] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11. Letter dated 14 October 1962 from the Mission in Tehran to the MFA.

involvement in the Yemeni fighting through 1966. At this time, Saudi Arabia unsuccessfully tried to secure a cease-fire in August 1965 that would have had to be agreed with Egypt.[295]

Both Israel and Iran wished to intervene in Nasser's adventures in Yemen to prevent Arab unity against the two states. The means by which Mossad and SAVAK coordinated their activities was through an organisation called 'Trident.' Trident, or *Kalil* in Hebrew (meaning complete, or perfect) was a trilateral intelligence-sharing organisation between Israel, Iran, and Turkey that functioned between 1956 and 1979. Although the existence of Trident was never formalised on paper, it functioned with regular meetings between the three states' highest intelligence officials. The meetings were divided into two groups: one discussing intelligence, and the second dealing with counterespionage or security.[296]

Trident formally met twice yearly, but added meetings when necessary. Mossad and SAVAK representatives weighed their options in Trident meetings, and the means by which they could support the royalist forces. A SAVAK official was sent to Saudi Arabia to help facilitate the anti-Nasser campaign and other SAVAK officers were sent to North Yemen to provide military training and support. Ammunition was sent from Tehran on Iranian military aircraft to Taif in Western Saudi Arabia and then by lorries to Yemen. When more weapons were needed later on, Israel sent to Tehran Soviet-made weapons that had been captured in Arab wars. These arms had been re-numbered and repaired in Tehran before being delivered to Taif by plane. Israelis flew directly to Yemen over Saudi air space on a couple of occasions (with Imperial Iranian Air force

[295] Dresch, Paul. *A History of Modern Yemen* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 2000), p. 105
[296] Alpher, Yossi. *Periphery: Israel's Search for Middle East Allies* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), p. 11.

stickers on their aircraft), where Yemeni rebels received their ammunition by parachute. Only the head of Saudi intelligence knew the true identity of the aircraft flying over Saudi airspace, as well as SAVAK officials.[297] The cost to Nasser of Israeli-Iranian intervention in support of the royalist forces was great in both the political and military spheres. The campaign against Nasser showed that the Peripheral Alliance could effectively exert military, economic, and political influence in the region to both states' common interests.

4.2.3 *Israeli Oil Trade with Iran and Vital Oil Pipelines*

The purchase of oil from Iran was an Israeli foreign policy and strategic goal even before it was an attainable practical objective.[298] This goal became more attainable after Iran and Britain settled their oil dispute following the nationalisation of Iranian oil under the Mosaddeq regime in 1951. The coup of 1953 that restored the Shah of Iran to the throne also resulted in the denationalisation of Iran's oil industry. As a result of the August 1954 agreement, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) was established and Britain's monopoly position was transformed into an international oil consortium made up of a large number of companies. NIOC received 12.5 per cent of the total allocated to the international consortium.[299] Israel was therefore able to work towards securing an Iranian oil supply both with NIOC and the international oil consortium, particularly small oil companies called the IRICON group and others without ties to Arab states.[300] In the autumn of 1954, agreements were made regarding regular supplies of Iranian oil

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[297] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 45.
[298] Bialer, Uri. "The Power of the Weak-Israel's Secret Oil Diplomacy, 1948-57," p. 81.
[299] Ibid.
[300] Ibid.

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to Israel. The Suez Canal enabled Iran to export 76 per cent of its oil efficiently. At the time, Israel imported most of its oil from the Soviet Union.

In the mid-1950s, Israel saw the importance of purchasing Iranian crude oil not only because Iran was seen as a reliable supplier, but also as a means to increase Israel's political influence. When the Suez Canal was closed in 1956, Soviet oil supply to Israel was halted. Israel now needed to search for more permanent alternative oil sources. Consequently, one of the most advantageous outcomes of the Suez War for Israel was its new access to Gulf oil, especially from Iran, as its southern port of Eilat opened to Red Sea shipping.[301] During late 1957, representatives from Israel and Iran secretly signed a contract in Israel. According to the terms, Iran agreed to sell oil to Israel for $1.30 per barrel.[302] Consequently, an 8-inch pipeline was built in December 1957. The pipeline carried oil from Eilat to Beersheba, where oil was transported to refineries in Haifa. The refined oil was then transported to Europe. By 1957, Iran had become Israel's main source of energy.[303] Supply of Iranian oil to Israel doubled at the end of 1960 after a new pipeline was built. Overall, from 1957 Iran and Israel began more extensive co-operation on oil and intelligence matters.

4.3   Israeli Foreign Policy and The Qazvin, Iran Earthquake

Israel's foreign policy calculus went beyond 'hard power' interests to also include humanitarian motives.[304]   Israeli policymakers came to the aid of ethnic minorities within the Periphery states. Israeli leaders felt a kinship with a fellow non-Arab

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[301] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 25.
[302] Interview with Tzvi Dinstein, cited in Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 41
[303] Bialer, "The Power of the Weak-Israel's Secret Oil Diplomacy, 1948-57," p. 83.
[304] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 8

minority[305] in the Middle East as well as their overall intention of being 'a light unto the Gentiles.'[306] This included medical assistance to Kurds in Iraq and minorities in South Sudan. Israeli humanitarian aid also factored into its Iran policy. On 1 September 1962, a major earthquake struck Qazvin, north west of Tehran. The earthquake measured 7.1 on the Richter Scale. The temblor resulted in 15,000 deaths and many thousands injured. Aftershocks continued to be felt even after the Israeli ambassador and his staff arrived in Qazvin. The government of Iran made worldwide appeals for assistance, and many states raced to deliver aid to the quake-stricken country.[307]

Before Iran's appeal to the world, official Israeli agencies airlifted to Iran six tonnes of medicines, tents, and blankets, while Iranian expatriates in Israel raised large sums to help Iran.[308] The Shah of Iran and his Agriculture Minister, Dr. Hassan Arsanjani, decided that in Qazvin's reconstruction lay an opportunity to impose agrarian reforms throughout the region. They came to this conclusion even though Qazvin and the region were among the least suited for agriculture; approximately half the land was suitable for cultivation. Immediately after the earthquake, Meir Ezri, the Iranian-born Israeli diplomat in Iran, was invited to meet with Agriculture Minister Arsanjani. Arsanjani commended Israeli officials for the delivery of their urgently needed relief and promised to favour Israel over other countries in allocating tenders for reconstruction work in Qazvin.[309] Ezri in turn contacted the Israeli Minister of Agriculture, Moshe Dayan, and recommended that Israel take the initiative to help

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[305] Ibid, p. 53.
[306] David Ben Gurion, Speech in Jerusalem 30 January 1962. Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "Israel's Ideal is to Become a 'light Unto the Gentiles,' says Ben-Gurion." http://www.jta.org/1962/01/31/archive/israels-ideal-is-to-become-a-light-unto-the-gentiles-says-ben-gurion. Retrieved on 7 February 2017.
[307] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus,* p. 394.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid, p. 395.

Iran before other state representatives arrived with their own interests and objectives.[310]

Moshe Dayan visited Iran numerous times starting from his visit after the 1962 Qazvin earthquake as Minister of Agriculture, also later as Minister of Defence, and during important personal missions to see the Shah in 1977. His world-view towards Iran became more involved in the later years as his position meant that he became even more involved with dealing with Iran. Dayan was hailed as a hero by both Israel and Iran in his role of General during the Six-Day War. His worldview towards Iran was immensely favourable. In July 1977, Dayan as Foreign Minister was sent to Tehran to reassure the Shah that the new Israeli government's commitment to peace remained intact.[311] This is discussed at length in Chapter 7.

It is important to note that this foreign policy initiative of helping Iran would not have happened without the help of the diplomat on the ground who brought this notice to Israeli decision-makers. The information flowed from the boots on the ground to the executive branch of the Israeli government and aid commenced. Typically, Iran would have requested aid, but they were pre-empted by the Israeli diplomat in Tehran who requested the aid and put the wheels in motion for Israel to be the first to provide aid.

Meir Ezri convinced Arsanjani of Israel's experience and expertise in rural settlement. Arsanjani, who had visited Israel, concurred. David Ben Gurion and Dayan appointed Ariyeh Eliav to head the Israeli relief team. When the Israeli team arrived, they saw an area whose population was suffering from various epidemics. In addition, the quake

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[310] Ibid.
[311] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 97.

had destroyed the water system, leading to a water shortage.[312] The Israeli expert relief team acted under the aegis of Tahal (*Tichnoon HaMayim LeYisrael*, or the Israeli water-planning authority) experts.[313] The team included specialists in hydrology, ecology, urban planning, and water and building engineering. Many high-level Iranian government officials visited the sites with Ezri and other Israeli diplomats to see the work of the Israeli team.

Personal relationships between Israeli experts and Iranians after the 1962 Qazvin earthquake smoothed over formal foreign policy objections that served as obstacles to Israelis within Iran's decision-making structure. The talks and negotiations regarding Israel's involvement in the reconstruction and development of the destroyed areas of Qazvin were highly classified, subjected to a media blackout and executed in very few formal agreements.

The Shah faced internal opposition and would face public protests should it be leaked that he was hiring Israeli engineers and agricultural experts. Conversely, Israel faced its own fears and opposition due to cost, availability, and willingness of such experts and engineers to handle the rebuilding and development projects in Iran. Ben Gurion's policy objectives regarding Qazvin would test Israel's resources and require significant Israeli expertise to implement. Israel's Agriculture Minister, who visited Iran on an official visit before the earthquake struck, favoured reconstructing the destroyed villages. Israeli Ambassador Meir Ezri took the initiative[314] to meet with the Iranian

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[312] Eliav, Ariyeh Lova. "HaIran Haakheret," *Maariv* 12 December 1997, p. 10.
[313] During 1962, six Israeli experts advised the Iranian authorities. In 1964 the team included 20 experts, and 20 experts also formed the team in 1968. *Jerusalem Post*, 26 May 1969.
[314] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 396.

Agriculture Minister Hassan Arsanjani again to share Ezri's vision for aiding Iran in view of Israel's extensive rural settlement and construction programs.

An Israeli delegation visited Iran soon after, headed by Moshe Dayan, Director of Israel's Water Authority Aharon Viner, and Ezra Danin. Dayan met personally with the Shah and Arsanjani. The personal skills to overcome foreign policy obstacles can be seen in the following ways within the Israeli decision-making structure.

Moshe Dayan wrote to Meir Ezri in Tehran on 2 October 1962: 'I've been thinking to myself how much toil and trouble, patience and abnormal energy are needed to obtain these objectives, but you-and we- can rest assured that these efforts of yours have not been in vain.'[315] The following day, 3 October 1962, Dayan wrote again to Ezri and stated:

> I met yesterday with Ben Gurion (who had some complimentary things to say about you). He supports the idea of our involvement in the Persian project, on condition that our Ministry of Agriculture believes it has the resources for the task. He asked over and over again: Are we really up to the job? On Tuesday, after the government sitting I shall meet with Ben Gurion, Eshkol, Sapir, and Eban (acting Foreign Minister) to settle the issue. That's from our side of course. As for the Persians, you're the boss. I hope they won't backtrack. Viner [director of Israel's Water Authority] is preparing a draft contract, which will be sent to you. It's your job to make sure it gets signed by an authorised person. Otherwise the business will never be settled.[316]

The cooperation agreement that required such individual efforts to secretly negotiate was signed on 9 December 1962.[317] The cooperation agreement required significant private efforts and trust by Israeli decision-makers and diplomats to secure contracts in the Qazvin reconstruction projects which established a precedent for future Iranian

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[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid, pp. 396-7.
[317] Ibid, pp. 397.

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projects. If Morgenthau were to evaluate this situation according to his 'good diplomat discussion', he might say that it was very risky of Ben Gurion and his advisors to offer this help to Iran even though they were not absolutely sure that Israel had the capacity to deliver that help. This account highlights the importance of looking at the pivotal role of vision and individuals, notwithstanding the actual capability of the state itself.

Israeli reconstruction experts worked closely with Iranians in Qazvin. The presence of Israeli officials in Qazvin would have incited domestic disapproval, thus lowering public approval of the Iranian regime. Direct interaction between the Israelis, newly qualified Iranian engineers, and the local population served to dispel stereotypes. So much so, in fact, that trust and understanding began to develop between the Israeli delegation and the Iranian *Ulema* (religious establishment). [318] The existing ISA documents indicate that the work of Israeli individuals built confidence and trust within the Iranian populous and government.

The personal relationship between Meir Ezri and Iranian Agriculture Minister Hassan Arsanjani led to frank and candid discussions that overcame objections and established visible cooperation between Israelis and Iranians. During a lengthy discussion with Ezri, Arsanjani acknowledged Israel's assistance in agrarian reform and development. He also stated that Iranian trainees who returned from Israel arrived 'transformed' and ready to take responsibilities and help with development. Arsanjani also explained that he was initially against the idea of foreign expert advisors even though he was one of the first proponents of inviting Israeli advisors to Iran 'because he was sure that Israel

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[318] Eliav, Ariyeh Lova. *Tabaot Edut* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishers, 1984), p.149.

does this not in order to profit but to help Iran in true friendship.'[319] The Iranians recognised that the Israelis had the interests of Iran while implementing Israel's own interests.

The trust that developed between Israeli and Iranian individuals allowed cooperative efforts to flourish and change the minds of even the most sceptical Iranians.[320] The Ulema, the Iranian religious establishment, also shifted their perspective from anti-Israeli to pro-Israeli involvement after working with and experiencing the results of Israeli reconstruction efforts and development in Iran.[321] The shift in perception on behalf of the Iranians toward the Israelis was so significant it resulted in high-ranking Iranian military officers advocating for Israel to the Iranian Foreign Ministry - a group historically proven to be anti-Israeli. The shift in perceptions of each other by Israelis and Iranians as a result of the individual efforts on the part of the Israeli decision-makers and the Israeli engineers and experts on the ground allowed for historically evident ground breaking cooperation between two populations that had no formal political recognition and deep-seated ideological domestic mistrust.

While strategic factors continued to directly affect Israel's policy towards Iran, several methods that Realists would not see as pertinent continued to strengthen Israel's foreign policy goals. For instance, the Shah of Iran publicly took a stern position, as did the United States, after the Suez War and condemned Israel. Arab nationalism was gaining momentum. The Shah of Iran was considering ways to counter Egypt's influence and

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[319] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs document, file 93.52/1/132 7154/11. Memorandum dated 4 January 1963 from Meir Ezri to the Middle East Division attention Doriel.
[320] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11. Memorandum dated 30 December 1962 from the mission in Tehran to the Middle East division "Summary of a conversation with General Fakrowan on 22/12 at his home," p. 2.
[321] Ibid.

power and, as Sobhani argues, 'he could not but appreciate the strategic utility of Israel as a bulwark against Nasser.'[322] Israel acknowledged the Shah of Iran's newly found interest in Israel's strategic position as strategically useful within the international system. It is one thing to identify strategic utility, and an entirely different level for Israelis to take individual action on the ground and turn that strategic utility into foreign policy results.

After one year, the Shah of Iran visited a new Israeli-built model village. With these villages, Iranians were introduced to safer and more economically efficient building methods and advanced irrigation systems. Ariyeh Eliav presented the Shah of Iran with a report containing Israeli recommendations for future development in Iran.[323] The report was issued both in English and in Farsi. Relationships with the Iranians and the Israeli field operatives and the Israeli Ministers cemented the operation on Qazvin and allowed the best possible aid, methods, and systems to be deployed in Iran. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Meir Ezri, Moshe Dayan, Ezra Danin, and the Shah and Hassan Arsanjani, the outcome of the Iranian reconstruction and establishment of relationships with Iranian Muslim clerics would have been very different.

4.4   Israeli Policy Objectives and Intelligence Cooperation

From a regional perspective, Ben Gurion's Peripheral Alliance policy had produced positive results in the form of intelligence cooperation with Iran and Turkey. For instance, the end of 1958 saw the formation of 'Trident,' a covert cooperation alliance

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[322] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 26.
[323] Eliav, Ariyeh Lova. *Tabaot Edut,* p. 149.

between SAVAK, Mossad, and Turkey's National Security Service. Trident was a trilateral intelligence-sharing organisation that began in 1956 and ended in 1979. The existence of Trident was hugely symbolic, which mattered greatly to Israeli foreign policymakers as well as Israeli intelligence personnel.[324] Israel provided Iran and Turkey with intelligence information that was operationally very advantageous to Israel. Israel had the opportunity to shape perceptions and opinions through strategic information.

From the Israeli perspective, Trident's main advantage was to create the perception to the United States, the Arab world, and the Soviet Union that Israel was not isolated in the region.[325] It also served to project Israel's influence and viability. Even though Trident was a covert agreement, its presence was known in intelligence circles.

The individuals connected to Israel's foreign policy towards Iran between 1955 and 1963 influenced the creation and implementation of the policies to a vastly greater extent than the Realist explanation presents. As Michael Bar Zohar explains of Israel's foreign policy figures who worked to establish the Peripheral Alliance policy: 'Ben Gurion's many messengers took off for and returned from the capitals of the new allies. Special envoys, high officials, ministers and experts were all involved in the complex operation. The secret action encompassed different spheres, most of which have not been revealed to this day.'[326]

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[324] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 19.
[325] Alpher, Yossi. "Trident's Forgotten Legacy: When Iran, Israel, and Turkey Worked Together," *Foreign Affairs,* 7 May 2015. Retrieved 14 July 2015, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2015-05-07/trident-s-forgotten-legacy
[326] Bar-Zohar, *Ben Gurion*, pp. 191-192.

At the top level of Israeli decision-making, Ben Gurion was the visionary behind Israel's foreign policy towards Iran. Had it not been for Ben Gurion's personal lobbying of the US leadership, the Peripheral Alliance policy would not have gained the solidity at the time between Israel, Iran, and Turkey. Ben Gurion personally oversaw the drafting and delivery of letters to John Foster Dulles and President Eisenhower explaining the potential of the Peripheral Alliance policy. He also personally wrote to the Shah of Iran in 1958 when the Peripheral policy became a formal part of Israeli foreign policy goals. Ben Gurion reminded the Shah of Iran of the good works of Cyrus, the King of Persia, for the Jews of Persia.[327] However, as stated previously in this thesis, communication and Ben Gurion's use of historic symbolism between the Israeli and Iranian leaders paved the way for further mutual confidence building en route to greater cooperation. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationship between David Ben Gurion and the Shah of Iran and their shared sense of continuing history, the outcome of Israeli-Iranian relations would be very different.

Israel's official representatives in Iran were not initially aware that relations between the Mossad and SAVAK had already existed in utmost secrecy for some time. The only hint that the Israeli diplomats encountered came from a local Jewish-Iranian who immigrated to Israel and then returned to Iran. He told an Israeli diplomat in Tehran that he had seen two men, who he was convinced looked like European Jews, speaking Hebrew in one of Tehran's main roads. [328]

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[327] Ibid, p. 192.
[328] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 90.

David Ben Gurion explained the overriding objective for the Israeli diplomats in Tehran to Meir Ezri upon his appointment to Tehran in the autumn of 1957. Ben Gurion told Ezri when he asked what his role in Tehran would be: '… your role is quite simple. You are to do everything possible in the best interests of the Iranian people. What is good for the Iranian people-will be good for the Israeli people.'[329] The Israelis were to work with the *Iranian* national interest as a priority. Sobhani and Parsi would argue that this is acceptable within their worldview because of the convergence of Israeli and Iranian interests. As demonstrated in his conversation with Meir Ezri about his role, Ben Gurion's word choice indicated confidence building was a priority. Confidence building eased the Israeli-Iranian relationships as a direct result of Ben Gurion's policy objectives and helped realise Israeli national interests.

4.5   Overcoming Internal Iranian Objections to Relations with Israel

When one looks more closely at the events that occurred beyond the strategic prism, one can see how Israeli diplomats were able to surmount significant Iranian internal obstacles to relations with Israel and resulting in concrete agreements between the two states. This was due to pivotal personal relationships. General Ali Kia, the head of Iranian Military Intelligence, had a close, personal relationship with the Shah and had the ability to bypass the Iranian Foreign Ministry (which was wary of relations with Israel) in order to obtain military contracts - both formal and informal. Meir Ezri, in creating personal alliances in order to obtain formal and non-formal agreements worked diligently to create, maintain, and prosper a strong personal and working relationship with General Ali Kia. The result of their friendship and working alliance was numerous

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[329] Ibid, p. 80.

military agreements and contracts, introductions to important Iranian diplomatic players and most importantly supporting the direct relationship between Ezri and the Shah and facilitating private meetings between the two.

Prior to Ezri's diplomatic service to Iran, Dr. Tzvi Doriel established the first economic mission to Iran. Dr. Tzvi Doriel, Israel's representative in Tehran since 1953, was encouraged by Jerusalem to 'keep the fire burning.' This was interpreted practically by Dr. Doriel by making connections in Tehran and throughout Iran and representing Israel as an ally of Iran in a hostile region. Doriel was assisted by Meir Ezri, an Iranian who had immigrated to Israel before being sent back to Tehran for diplomatic service by Ben Gurion, who became the official representative to Iran in 1960. Doriel also established a working relationship with General Ali Kia of the Savak's counterintelligence unit. As a result, connections developed between Israeli and Iranian intelligence agencies. The personal connections between Ezri and Kia had far-reaching implications for policy implementation.

In each of their respective roles, Mossad, Ezri and Doriel identified the Iranian individual or individuals who exerted the most influence in allowing the Israelis to obtain their objectives within Iran. Once identified, Mossad, Ezri and Doriel built solid relationships built on trust, mutual respect, and understanding in order to achieve their goals. The first meeting between Ezri and Kia, (the commander of the 'Second Department,' which was military intelligence) occurred on 26 April 1958. According to Ezri, Kia was to be the 'Master key' that facilitated many connections between Iranian officials and Israel's representatives. In their first official meeting (Ezri had known Kia some 10 years previously), Kia told Ezri: 'I believe that Iran is surrounded today by a sea of enemies – Arabs, leftists and communists – and it's threatened by western

imperialism as well. Israel too has to face the hostility of the Arab states and is combating communism, while maintaining friendly relations with western countries. Cooperation between us will benefit both states.'[330]

On the Israeli side, Mossad perceived Taimur Bakhtiar, the Deputy Prime Minister and SAVAK chief, as 'all-powerful in Iran.' The Israeli Foreign Ministry identified General Kia as having the same type of influence. Individuals within the Mossad and the Foreign Ministry forged relationships with Iranian individuals that they judged as most beneficial for Israeli national interests. This analysis indicates that the role of individuals is on par with the fundamental focus of the Realist account, which is the national interest.

Iranian government agencies that opposed relations with Israel, such as the Foreign Ministry who were unwilling to jeopardise Iran's relations with the Arab world, were bypassed with the formation of direct links with the leaders of SAVAK and Military Intelligence, Generals Teimoor Bakhtiar and Ali Kia respectively. The two generals and their agencies introduced the Israeli ambassador, Meir Ezri, and visiting Israeli leaders to other government and regional leaders. Moreover, the two Iranian intelligence leaders met with their Israeli counterparts - the head of Mossad, Isser Harel, and the head of Military Intelligence, Chaim Herzog. Such personal connections evolved into cooperation on levels other than intelligence. For example, during Kia's visit to Israel during November 1958, Kia and then Commander of the Israeli Northern Command from 1956 to 1959, Yizhak Rabin, discussed mutual military, intelligence, and agricultural cooperation between the two states. Consequently, Kia personally

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[330] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 96.

supervised military intelligence exchanges. The Shah of Iran (and Kia, who in turn informed the Shah of Iran) was informed by sources from Mossad and other intelligence available to the Israeli Embassy in Tehran.[331] A further discussion on the Shah of Iran's sources of intelligence continues in the section below as the Israeli *and* Iranian foreign policy bodies had noteworthy internal struggles that Israeli foreign policymakers were aware of.

General Kia's visit to Israel from 5 November 1958 led to many personal relationships that moved Israel's Iran policy forward. Kia met General Yehoshofat Harkabi, the head of Military Intelligence, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, Chief of Staff Moshe Sasson, Foreign Minister Golda Meir, and, among others, Yitzhak Rabin.[332] One of the most productive conversations was that of Rabin and Kia on mutual military cooperation. In particular, Kia asked whether Israel would come to the regime's aid in the unlikely event of a coup in Iran. Rabin reassured him that, 'Israel would do its utmost to ensure a sympathetic regime in Iran.'[333] Iran clearly appeared perturbed by the political climate in the region and was seeking assurances from unlikely and loosely connected places such as Israel. The extent of individual influence helped to accelerate the implementation of Israel's wish to strengthen its links with Tehran.

Furthermore, individual influence of the Iranians helped accelerate policy implementation. For instance, Kia was very impressed by Israel following his visit to Israel, and he conveyed the same to the Shah of Iran and other Iranian high-ranking officials. The Shah of Iran appointed Kia in charge of all relations with Israel, and the

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[331] Interview with Ya'akov Caroz cited in Ian Black and Benny Morris, *Israel's Secret Wars: A History of Israel's Intelligence Services* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), p. 182.
[332] Before Rabin became Chief of the General Staff in 1964.
[333] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 107.

officials he met in Israel on his visit were invited to Iran including General Harkabi on intelligence matters and Ezra Danin on agricultural matters.[334] By analysing through the role of relationships, it is clear to see the formation of personal relationships and their role in implementing Israel's Iran policy.

Personal assurances and relationships were also vital to the relations between Israel and Iran following the '*Leil Habarvazim*' (the Night of the Ducks) affair in April 1959. The Leil Habarvazim affair was the diplomatic crisis caused when military call-up codes were announced on Israeli radio without clarification that it was only a drill. The call-up codes caused neighbouring Arab armies to go on alert and caused a diplomatic crisis. A great public political furore ensued, which alarmed the Shah of Iran and General Ali Kia. Harkabi wrote personally to Kia to reassure him that the affair had no connection to the relations between the two states.[335] It took reliance on discreet personal communication to reassure the Iranian leaders.

Brigadier General Chaim Herzog succeeded Yehoshafat Harkabi as head of Military Intelligence. Herzog made it clear to the Iranians that relations would continue as usual. Herzog swiftly arranged a visit to Iran in November 1959. In his memoir, Herzog explains that in meetings with the Shah of Iran and Kia, Iran wished to make relations with Israel public**.** The Shah of Iran himself did not apparently fear the Arab world's reaction and wished for the Arab states to know that Iran had an 'Israeli option' strengthened by diplomatic relations.[336] These personal face-to-face meetings with the Shah of Iran reassured him that Israel was a viable foreign policy ally. Consequently,

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[334] The agricultural connection was sparked when Kia visited Ezra Danin's family estate in Hadera where he bred fish and grew subtropical fruits, cotton, peanuts, and citrus fruit.
[335] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 112.
[336] Herzog, Chaim. *Living History: A Memoir* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1996), p. 119.

this was to the benefit of Israeli policy despite Iran's preference of keeping the relationship secret in the long term. The reassurance helped convince Iran to increase cooperation with Israel. As a result of the reassurances, a joint declaration was drafted. It indicated the states' 'common goals and ways for cooperation and reaffirmed a desire to establish normal diplomatic relations.'[337]

A second secret intelligence and military cooperation document was signed by General Herzog and General Kia on 22 December 1960. The agreement included a clause in which the generals 'expressed a hope of establishing normal diplomatic relations between the two countries … as a common objective.'[338] One can see that a policy investment in individual relationships paid dividends from a concrete foreign policy perspective. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Israel's Doriel, Ezri, Harel, and Iran's General Kia and Taimoor Bakhtiar that the outcome of Israel and Iran's intelligence cooperation would have been very different.

4.6   Israeli Diplomats Secure Meeting with Shah of Iran

Gaining international recognition within the international community was one of Israel's foremost foreign policy goals. But gaining recognition went far beyond the symbolism of Israel's prestige in the international arena. When the Shah allowed meetings with the Israelis, these audiences with him endorsed the cooperation between the two states and made collaborative efforts run more smoothly. On the international

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[337] Ibid.
[338] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 117.

level, recognition would also have shown actors such as the United States that Israel was not completely isolated in the region.

It is important to analyse the role of human relationships, and the perceptions and misperceptions within them, in implementing the goal of furthering Iranian recognition of Israel because these relationships have a great impact on that recognition. Israeli diplomats who appreciated the Iranian mindset chose a different approach to those diplomats who were not as connected to it. Israeli diplomats in Tehran were able to perceive Iranian reactions more accurately through face-to-face interaction than decision-makers in Jerusalem because they could gauge the objective reality and act accordingly. One example of the influence of individual actors came during the Shah of Iran's visit to Turkey in 1956. During his trip, the Shah of Iran had an audience with all members of the diplomatic corps representing their respective states in Ankara.

A meeting with the Shah of Iran in Ankara was an opportunity for Israel to progress its goal of further international recognition. Israeli policymakers also wanted the re-opening of the Israeli consulate in Iran to attend to the interests of the 45,000 Iranian nationals living in Israel after the consulate's closure under Mohammad Mosaddeq. Another reason for Iran to re-open its consulate would be to encourage the trade and import of Iranian goods into the Israeli market, which had not been happening due to the lack of a symmetrical level of consular relations.

The most compelling reason to strengthen the relations, according to the Israelis, was to balance the internal situation in the Middle East by 'clipping Nasser's wings.'[339]   One way of 'clipping Nasser's wings' was to offset Nasser's influence with stronger Iranian-Israeli relations. Israeli diplomats saw an opportunity of using their relationships with Iranian and Turkish diplomats in order to facilitate a meeting with the Shah. During the Shah of Iran's visit in May 1956, the Israeli representative was introduced to the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ardalan, by the Iranian ambassador, Mansour. According to the Israeli attaché, Fisher, the Iranians and the Turks worked extremely closely, especially on boosting support for the Baghdad Pact. The Iranian and Turkish world-views were almost identical, according to Fisher.

Fisher and the Israeli diplomats in Ankara requested an audience with the Shah of Iran through conversations with Ardalan and the Iranian ambassador, Mansour. Fisher raised the long-standing connection between the Jews and the Persians since Cyrus the Great, as well as Israel's admiration of Iran and Turkey. The Iranian ambassador raised Iran's internal sensitivities regarding re-opening the consulate in Israel. The Turkish Foreign Minister discussed the Baghdad Pact and Fisher raised the anti-Israeli rhetoric that surrounded it. The Iranian ambassador assured Fisher that more normalised relations would continue once the Baghdad Pact was strengthened.

It should be noted that Iran re-opened its consulate in Israel on 17 December 1958 while using facilities of the Swiss embassy. The Turkish foreign minister, Ardalan, also asked Fisher to urge the Israeli government to encourage the United States to join the Baghdad

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[339] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs document 130/2/1/822 2410/12. Memorandum from A. Ben-Horin to the head of the Middle East division dated 7 May 1956 "Instructions to the Attaché in Ankara for a conversation with the Shah of Iran or his entourage."

Pact. [340] Eventually, the Shah of Iran was called away from the diplomatic corps ceremony and Israel's Fisher received a handshake from the Shah of Iran in full view of the Arab diplomats. That handshake set an important precedent. Israeli diplomats used their personal relationships with Iranian and Turkish diplomats to gain more information on Iranian policy on Israel and to secure a public handshake that was comparable to public endorsement from the Shah. These relationships helped to progress the existing relationships because the handshake created the perception of the Iranian-Israeli relationship publicly and symbolically that the relations were close.

In contrast, when the Shah of Iran visited Ankara in 1962, the Israeli attaché was invited to an audience with the Shah of Iran, only for the invitation to be withdrawn by the Turkish Foreign Minister in a conversation with the Israeli Foreign Minister. His reason was that he was unable to invite the Israeli representatives since there were no formal relations between Israel and Iran. Meir Ezri in Tehran wrote to Iranian Prime Minister Asadollah Alam in Farsi a letter dated in the Persian calendar. Ezri referred to the meeting between the Shah of Iran and the Israeli representative in Ankara in 1956 among numerous other meetings between Israeli representatives and the Shah of Iran. Ezri voiced grave concern for the Iranian embassy's actions in Ankara and expressed hope in the Prime Minister's belief in the relations between Israel and Iran. [341] The Prime Minister was also asked (delicately) to rectify the political damage caused by the Iranian Embassy in Ankara in front of the Turkish government and the diplomatic corps. [342] As a result, Alam contacted the Iranian Foreign Ministry and intervened swiftly, thereby preventing a dangerous precedent of excluding Israeli diplomats.

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[340] Ibid.
[341] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7514/11 Letter in Farsi dated Aban 1341 (27 October 1962) from Meir Ezri to Asadollah Allam.
[342] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7514/11 Letter dated 28 November 1962 from The mission in Tehran to the MFA.

Subsequently, no Israeli diplomats were barred from seeing the Shah of Iran in this manner.[343] The intervention of these two individuals helped pave the way for the progress of Israeli-Iranian relations in a symbolic, yet significant, way.

4.7   Human Relationships Overcoming Internal Israeli Obstacles

An internal rivalry within the Israeli decision-making structure could have potentially affected Israel's policy formulation and implementation towards Iran. At times this was avoided by the role of individuals and relationships in Israel and in Iran (and Israelis and Iranians). As Haim Herzog explains: 'There was tension between the [Military] Intelligence Branch and the Mossad, and this interfered to a certain degree. Ben-Gurion supported the Intelligence Branch through thick and thin.'[344] One example is the appointment of Israel's first military attaché to Tehran.

The Israeli diplomats in Tehran — Doriel, Ezri, and General Herzog — supported the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel Yaakov Nimrodi. But they were vehemently opposed by the Mossad, who put forward one of their own men as a candidate. Ezri met with Isser Harel, the head of the Mossad, Chief of Staff Major General Haim Laskov, and Ben Gurion. Ezri lobbied for an individual with Nimrodi's qualifications and traits, such as a Middle Eastern appearance, a security-military background, and experience in Iran (Nimrodi had served on behalf of the Mossad in Iran). With the coordination of Nimrodi and General Kia in Tehran who also insisted on the appointment of an attache with those same traits, Ben Gurion appointed Nimrodi military attaché on 14 February

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[343] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 286.
[344] Ibid, p. 119.

1960.[345]   The appointment was made despite the objections of the Mossad and General

Laskov. The appointment demonstrated the influence of human relationships in Tehran

on appointment of Nimrodi against the establishment views from Israel.

This foreign policy decision is not only an example of an illustration of the role of

human relationships in foreign policy, but it also a potential example of Bureaucratic

Politics at play. As discussed in length in Chapter 2, the Bureaucratic Politics Model

explains how the jostling for position of internal government organizations, and the net

effect of that jostling, provide an output in foreign policy, rather than rational decision

making based on the idea of consistent views of interests and objectives.

As defined by Allison and Halperin in Chapter 2, players make decisions on behalf of

their government not by a consistent strategic objection or view of national security, but

by the pulling and hauling of governmental organisations with the organisations' own

sense of national security. In this example, both Mossad and Military Intelligence as a

group lobbied for Ben-Gurion to make the appointment of the military attache to Iran as

each saw fit from their own organisational viewpoint. There was an added external

element to the straightforward Bureaucratic Politics explanation. Israeli Military

Intelligence and the Israeli Ambassador to Tehran who sought the aid of Iranian General

Ali Kia, of the Iranian Military Intelligence, to influence Ben Gurion's decision who

subsequently against Mossad and supported the preferred choice of Israeli and Iranian

Military Intelligence.

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[345] Ibid, p. 115.

4.8 Human Relationships Smooth Intelligence Cooperation with Iran

Israeli diplomats discovered that the Shah of Iran did not keep all his domestic 'eggs' in one proverbial 'basket.' The Shah of Iran did not rely on one source of intelligence from Israel. At first, the Mossad-SAVAK connection was given preference in the eyes of Israeli leaders.[346] The Shah of Iran received his intelligence information from SAVAK, military intelligence and on occasion from the palace's own intelligence office and the Chief of Police independently. All these Iranian government bodies operated separately and competed for the Shah of Iran's attention. This rivalry included information from and about Israel.[347] General Ali Kia from Iranian military intelligence began receiving intelligence information from Israel (and relayed it to the Shah of Iran). Simultaneously, the Shah of Iran also received his own, more detailed intelligence information from the Mossad office. Ezri explains: 'It seems that the war between the services, which was then at its peak in Israel, was also being waged-only more intensively-between the SAVAK and Iranian Military Intelligence.'[348]

All intelligence exchanges that occurred between Israel and Iran were covered by a document of intelligence cooperation drafted by Yehoshafat (Fati) Harkabi, General Ali Kia, and Meir Ezri prior to Harkabi's private meeting with the Shah of Iran.[349] Thanks to individual Israeli efforts in Iran, the Supreme Intelligence Committee of Iran recommended to the Shah to move closer to Israel in all areas - militarily, culturally, and politically. It was recommended in 1958 to open an Iranian consulate in Israel to

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[346] Ibid, p. 97. Ezri explains that this was initially partly due to the close ties between Isser Harel (director of Mossad 1952-1963) and General Mordechai Makleff the IDF Chief of Staff between 1952-1953.
[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid, p. 108.
[349] Please refer to AUGUST 8 1980 *DAVAR* article titled "Meeting With the Shah of Iran" by Harkabi containing details of his meeting with the Shah of Iran.

signify this strengthening of ties.[350] The very favourable intelligence connections also

helped to facilitate non-intelligence-related cooperation. For instance, Iran was short of

foreign currency, and in March 1959 it was agreed that Israel would help Iran to

increase its oil sales worldwide. This decision helped bypass quotas set for Iran by

Western oil companies partly by setting up straw companies based in third countries.

At the same time as Israel's foreign policy implementation continued gradually, its

diplomats remained mindful of the delicate balance between pursuing Israel's interests

and antagonising Iranians by interfering in their internal policy matters. Israeli

diplomats in Tehran warned against the appearance of taking advantage of Iranian

internal politics. This was a matter that remained prominent beyond 1963. For instance,

Tzvi Doriel wrote personally to Y. Herzog (Chief of Staff to the office of the Foreign

Minister), explaining: 'It is known that the Shah of Iran conducts personal politics with

the different Iranian personalities here … we fear that if we pursue additional contacts

for this matter it will appear to the Shah of Iran as unnecessary tactless manoeuvring

and interference with his appointment of his own officials.'[351]

An example of both the role of relationships and the importance of their perceptions is

seen during a summary of a private meeting during December 1962 between the Iranian

Dr. Ali Abadi (a former deputy prime minister under Sharif Amami) and Meir Ezri of

the Israeli mission. Dr. Abadi came as a representative of Sharif Amami. The Iranians

knew that they were 'aware of our [Israel's] power and influence in Iran and the great

states of America England and France. He also knows that we helped pave the way for

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[350] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 110.
[351] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 7514/13 93.52/1 Z. Doriel (Tehran) to Y. Herzog. 29 May 1964.
Note: this communiqué lists other friendly channels available to the Embassy in Tehran that pertain to
secret operations.

Dr. Ali Amini to take the role of prime minister in Iran.'[352] According to Dr. Abadi, Israel then paved the way for Asadollah Allam to become prime minister on 19 July 1962 after Amini was unsympathetic to Israel. Dr. Abadi came to warn the Israelis about Allam, who apparently was unsuitable for the job. Abadi claimed that Amami and his supporters would have fully normalised diplomatic relations with Israel despite Arab protestations. Whether or not Israeli diplomats wielded that much influence within Iran, this suggests the perception of Israeli power within Iranian politics.

This was an indirect result of Israeli diplomats' perceptions as well as implementation of Ben Gurion's Peripheral Alliance doctrine. This chapter has shown at length how the actions of individuals with their perceptions and misperceptions work in tandem to explain more fully than the existing Realist account the implementation of a more formalised foreign policy such as the Peripheral Alliance doctrine. By examining the sequence of events above, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Meir Ezri and Dr. Ali Abadi that the outcome of the perception of Israeli power within Iranian politics would be very different, and fewer policy options would have been available to the Israelis. The relationship demonstrates the closeness and personal dependence between Israeli and Iranian officials that converging strategic interests would not explain.

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[352] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 7514/11 93.52/1/132 Letter dated 12 December 1962 from M. Ezri to the MFA. Note that only page 1 of the letter is available in the archives.

4.9 The Role of Perceptions in Balancing Secrecy with Public Recognition

Perceptions and misperceptions precisely indicate how foreign policy decision-makers see the world around them. They are, therefore, very important foreign policy determinants. Recognition continued to be a foremost foreign policy goal for Israeli decision-makers. From the Israeli perspective, recognition or even the appearance of recognition would have made an immense difference to the implementation of Ben Gurion's Peripheral Alliance policy. At the same time, the Israelis were made aware that they had to strike a delicate balance between recognition and the secrecy of Israel's relations with Iran. Controlling perceptions, such as gauging the Iranian's comfort level for progressing relations, played a role in the Israeli dilemma between recognition and the Iranian insistence on secrecy.

Recognition by Iran was a legitimate Israeli foreign policy goal. Seeking to increase recognition had to occur within the acceptable parameters of the Iranian government. Foreign policy decisions based on Israeli perceptions and misperceptions are also important to analyse because Iranian responses to Israeli diplomatic advances vacillated greatly. Such vacillations occurred regardless of the strategic constellations that would build the Realist calculus. Indeed, the fact that Israeli and Iranian national interests converged did not necessarily mean that the Iranians would agree to specific cooperation. As one Israeli diplomat described an Iranian minister: 'As is known, the gentleman (the Information Minister) played with us a game of hide and seek, one minute he comes closer and retreats the next.'[353] Therefore, it is important to gauge the perceptions and misperceptions of the individual actors in order to gauge the foreign

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[353] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7514/11 Letter dated 13 August 1962 from M. Ezri to the MFA.

policy most effectively. The Israeli Diplomat's perception that his counterpart could change his approach at any given moment affected the Israeli Diplomat's trust of Iranian officials. Subsequently, the Diplomats, such as those mentioned in this document, exhibited behaviours that caused the Israelis to be more mindful in covering all eventualities and seeking constant assurances from multiple Iranian officials in order to minimize their foreign policy risk.

The *perception* of secrecy or publicity of the relations was a significant catalyst throughout the duration of the relations. The perception of secrecy is emphasised because at times various sources indicated that utmost secrecy was upheld, whereas at other times the sources indicate that Israeli-Iranian relations were an open secret in diplomatic circles and the market place. Secrecy enabled flexibility for Iran and Israel. In Iran, especially, secrecy was in its interests because it felt it would suffer fewer repercussions from Arab states for its friendly relations with Israel. Domestically, curtailing the publicity of the relationship meant that the ministries that were not supportive of the connections were less well-informed and could not protest against them. A constant theme that appears in the communiqués is the public versus private and covert. These play out between Israel and Iran almost like a very delicate diplomatic dance with every Israeli push towards public recognition of the relationship having a ripple effect on the Iranian side.

4.10   Securing Diplomatic Rights for Israeli Diplomats in Tehran

The matter of securing diplomatic rights for Israeli diplomats in Tehran was important to Israeli foreign policy both practically and symbolically and was tied to Israel's recognition objective. In January 1963 Meir Ezri sent a diplomatic memo to the Middle

East section of the MFA (and to Dr. Doriel) regarding a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Roham Alam.[354] Ezri thanked Alam for securing diplomatic rights for the Israeli mission. Foreign Minister Golda Meir had also passed through Tehran incognito for meetings on the ground. Alam expressed his gratitude for all the work of the Israeli experts in Iran, especially the help in Qazvin as told to him by the Agriculture Minister and the water authority. Ezri told Alam that he was aware of Iran's desire for close ties between the two states. Therefore, Israel expected that Alam would 'declare full diplomatic relations with Israel,' thereby boosting the status of the relations manifold. Alam replied that he would be happy to do exactly that, but due to internal domestic reasons, such recognition would do no good to either state. He continued that public recognition would strengthen the anti-government movement in Iran.[355] One can see how domestic Iranian disapproval of relations with Israeli were both a practical and symbolic obstacle to Israeli foreign policy.

Ezri emphasised that this lack of formal relations posed many practical obstacles for the Israeli mission, such as committing investors to back Israeli-Iranian ventures and trade. This was because Israel had no formal, public relations with Iran. Also, the issue of sending experts to Iran met with some difficulty for experts who did not work for the Israeli government, as there were no perceived safeguards in a state that has no formal relations with Israel. Such safeguards would have included a recognised diplomatic mission and other administrative safeguards that an employer might require. Furthermore, keeping the relationship covert was not an easy feat in an open, democratic state such as Israel. Israel has a free press, and it would be almost

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[354] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 7154/19 ID 93.52/1/140 "The Foreign Mission in Tehran-Persian-Israeli Relations" 1\1962 to 12/1963 Memorandum from Meir Ezri to the Middle East Department and Dr. Doriel at the Ministry of Foreign affairs, 17 January 1963.
[355] Ibid.

impossible to block the publication of any information. This was why Ezri requested that Iran base relations on the current *De Facto* recognition, as opposed to the vague status the relationship had at that moment. Ezri confirmed that this was legally possible with a number of prominent Iranian jurists to support him. Other examples were the British mission in Israel and the Greek diplomatic mission in Israel.[356]

The Israeli diplomats on the ground had to be aware of Jerusalem's perceptions and goal of recognition and temper their expectations when witnessing Iranian reluctance to deepen the relations too quickly. Israeli decision-makers were aware that the Iranians perceived Israelis as having far-reaching influence over the US leadership and public opinion. The Shah of Iran was also pre-occupied with his own image in the United States. To the extent that Israel could realistically come to Iran's aid from the public relations perspective concerning the United States, Israeli individuals worked with Iran. The director of the Prime Minister's office, Teddy Kollek, visited the United States from 27 July to 6 August 1962. His aim was to consult and cooperate on all aspects of tourism to Iran, '… But thanks to his personality and energy of the guest [Kollek] the visit assumed the character of an event in the relations between Iran and Israel and added a lot to our standing here in all the areas.'[357]

Kollek was invited to Iran by Asadollah Allam of the Pahlavi Institute when the tourism industry in Iran was in its infancy and 'as is customary in Iran, they did more in saying than by doing.'[358] Asadollah Allam was appointed Prime Minister two days prior to Kollek's arrival. The Tourism division in the Ministry of the Interior had 'no experts,

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[356] Ibid.
[357] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 7514/13 93.52/1 Tzvi Doriel: The Visit of T. Kollek Accompanied by Y. Tzuriel and U. Lubrani. A report to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs From the Tehran Embassy dated 7 August 1962.
[358] Ibid.

no budget and no support' so the Pahlavi Institute had looked to Israel once again. During his visit, Kollek briefed the Iranian Prime Minister about Israel's experience of promoting tourism. He also outlined what conditions must be fulfilled to improve tourism and what to do abroad. Cooperation with Israel, Turkey, and Greece was discussed. During Kollek's visit, the delegation dined at the home of the US Ambassador. General Holmes, where they discussed the recent Iranian government re-shuffle. There was also a dinner held at the home of Allam with the Israeli delegation and officials from the US embassy. The delegation also met the Agriculture Minister when they toured the north. This was following the new Iranian Reform law. Consequently, the Iranians considered agricultural training in Israel and were impressed that a farmer in Israel had risen to become the director of the Prime Minister's office.

Kollek did not forget the important matter of recognition when he met with the Iranian Prime Minister. He asked Allam for how long such an 'impossible' and 'abnormal' situation would continue because it was making further cooperation impossible. The stumbling block was Iranian officials making anti-Israeli speeches and voting in an anti-Israeli way in international organisations. Prime Minister Allam said that such actions would stop immediately. The reasons for the Iranians' actions, Allam explained, were not fear of Arab states. To the contrary, the hurdles came from within Iran from the religious Moslem clerics who could not differentiate between Islam and Arabism. They put their faith above their nationalism.[359] This statement was of major importance because it highlighted a huge sensitivity and blind spot within Iran's population and the way it related to Arab, Moslem, and non-Moslem states in the region.

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[359] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 7514/19 93.52/1 Doriel, 7 August 1962, p. 3.

Such an internal perception directly affected Iranian foreign policy, and more importantly for this thesis, Israeli policymakers and implementers were well served to be aware of that perception. Israeli sensitivity to Iranian opposition against the Shah of Iran was a recurring element in Israel's Iran policy implementation. By examining this sequence of events in this section, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Israel's Ezri and Iran's Foreign Minister Roham Alam; and Israel's Teddy Kollek and Iran's Prime Minister Asladollah Allam in overcoming the obstacles within Iran that the outcome of Israeli diplomats securing diplomatic rights and strengthening relations via public relations cooperation would be very different.

4.11   Oil Pipeline Negotiations and Iranian Unpredictability

The perceptions of Israeli decision-makers regarding traffic on the Suez Canal focused their minds on oil supplies from Iran, and eventually Iranian oil supplies via pipelines. The resulting oil agreements in 1954 and late 1955 paved the way for supporting Israeli energy and power, especially during the 1967 Six-Day War. Despite the important strategic value of these commercial agreements, negotiating the agreements were not straightforward commercial negotiations. The first oil agreements 'cost the State of Israel dearly' but were seminal for Israel's foreign policy and some would say vital for its survival.[360]

From an oil supply perspective, Uri Bialer explains Israeli perceptions: 'Israel perceived the increased demand for oil from the Persian Gulf as a significant factor in this general trend. In 1964, nearly 145 million tons of oil passed through the [Suez] canal-twice the

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[360] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.

quantity prior to the Suez Crisis.'[361] Forecasts predicted massive increases and Israelis estimated that 'a 40' pipeline from Eilat could carry up to 45m tons of oil a year, costing approximately $150m to build (only half that needed for adding to the cargo capacity of tankers bound for European ports via the Cape [of Good Hope].'[362] At the same time, NIOC would gain significant independence and become profitable economically.

Israelis perceived the nature of the Iranian oil negotiations to be capricious and unpredictable. As Bialer explains: 'it was clear to the Israelis from the outset that they [the Iranians and members of the oil consortium] were likely to renege from their commitments.'[363] The Iranian unorthodox manner of carrying out foreign policy and negotiation was expressed by Tzvi Doriel in the following way:

> Of course we would have preferred Persian courage to prevail and to act with us forthrightly, without all their schemes and tricks. But this style seems to suit the Iranians' double interests….the question therefore arises are we willing or able to accept the Iranians as they are, make the most of their position, to cooperate with them to a certain extent with their unique style or to give up. … But we are carrying out a certain policy and are not dealing with the altering of Persian ways and principles.[364]

The Israelis were aware of the limits and fully understood the Iranian negotiation method and appreciated how this suited the Iranian interest. The Israeli diplomatic relationships made this deep understanding of the Iranian negotiating style possible allowing the diplomats in Tehran to temper the decision-makers in Jerusalem and

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[361] Bialer, Uri. "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East-Israel, Iran, and the Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline," p. 36.
[362] Ibid.
[363] Bialer, Uri. "Petroleum from Iran-The Mission of Tzvi Doriel in Tehran 1956-1963 (Part II)," *Iyunnim Bitkumat Israel,* Vol. 9 (1999), pp. 128-166.
[364] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 2953/7168 Letter dated 17 April 1957 from Tzvi Doriel to Berthor.

manage their expectations. Consequently, oil negations continued and flourished into pipeline completion.

4.12   Israeli Perceptions of the Iranian Decision-Making Structure

The Shah permitted different government ministries and branches to select their own levels of relations with Israel. Israeli diplomats were aware that the Shah of Iran did not have a unified policy to normalise relations. As a result, the intensity of cooperation between Iranian and Israeli ministries also depended on the individual interests of the sub-state actors.   A window of opportunity opened to Israeli diplomats from 1956 onwards due to developing ties and the general international climate.

One of the most prominent obstacles to normalisation of the bilateral relationship was the reluctance of the *Vezarat-e-Omour-e-Kharejeh*, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to recognise the Israeli representatives in Tehran at diplomatic level. This was done despite the Iranian Foreign Ministry's knowledge of the growing security and economic ties between the two states. Therefore, the Iranians limited public interaction with Israelis in order to maintain a certain level of diplomatic deniability of the ties to Arab states in the region.

By examining foreign policy implementation on a micro-level, one can see that the individual action of diplomats using their own initiative and follow through, not only enhances the general instructions from above, but also could have an enhanced effect on overcoming obstacles internally both within the Israeli and Iranian decision-making systems. For instance, the grand Peripheral Alliance policy strategy remained consistent

in 1962. On the micro-level, Iranian Ambassador Ali Dashti, who was formerly ambassador to Cairo and Beirut, approached Israeli diplomats in Tehran. The Israeli diplomats were aware that Dashti also had excellent connections with Iran's intelligentsia and religious circles. Israel's diplomats also remembered how during the diplomatic feud with Egypt in 1960, Dashti attacked Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser in the press as well as supported Israel. Dashti asked the Israeli diplomats for a dossier on all aspects of the situation in Lebanon as well as the Shi'ite minority.[365] The Israeli ambassador Meir Ezri strongly advised in favour of writing the dossier for Dashti as it was preferable for Dashti to get the information from Israel than any other source and that there were rumours in Tehran that Dashti would be appointed head of resuming relations with Cairo and therefore should be prepared by the Israelis. Even though the Israeli foreign ministry was sceptical of this move, they listened to the Ambassador's request to help Dashti.

Israeli assistance to Ali Dashti helped to shape Iran's perception of Lebanon and Egypt as well as building trust and cooperation with a high-ranking Iranian official. One can see here the ripple effect of day-to-day foreign policy implementation. The Israeli diplomats not only changed understanding in Israel, but also in Iran, allowing the aid to be provided. Furthermore, Israelis helped to affect not only relations with Iran but also Iranian relations with two Arab states. A macro-level Realist account would have not explored fully the when and why of micro-level implementations and the subsequent influence on both Israeli and Iranian policy.

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[365] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11 letter dated 2 October 1962 from M. Ezri to the MFA "Conversation with Ali Dashti."

The Israeli diplomats and Mossad agents were able to overcome the obstacles they faced because of their connections to the Shah of Iran's ministers. For example, in 1963, Israeli diplomats saw that the new Iranian Foreign Minister Aram and his ministry were uncooperative with the Israeli mission and avoiding its diplomats. The Israeli diplomats identified a potential obstacle in Aram and bypassed Aram and met with Prime Minister Allam, who had previously cooperated with Israel regarding a vote at the United Nations and instructed Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ansari to meet and cooperate with the Israeli diplomats.

At the same time, the Iranian Foreign Ministry's intransigence was also neutralised through the Israeli military attaché's connections with the head of Iranian military intelligence, General Kamal, who gave instructions to the Iranian Foreign Ministry to 'not be foolish' and cooperate with Israel on the United Nations vote.[366] Not only did the Israeli diplomats bypass obstacles in the Israeli decision-making structure, but also the diplomats bypassed potential obstacles in Iran and in the international decision making body by affecting the United Nations' vote.

The Israel State Archive documents indicate that the relations between Israel and Iran were an open secret in the diplomatic corps in both states.[367] The two Israeli diplomats in Iran during this time period—Doriel and Ezri—were included in the functions and dialogues of the diplomatic community in Tehran.[368] Following pressure from Iranian nationals in Israel, the Shah of Iran, Iranian generals, and SAVAK leaders, the Iranian Foreign Ministry appointed the consular diplomat Ebrahim Teymouri on 17 December

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[366] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11 memorandum dated 10 January 1963 by Z. Doriel.
[367] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11 Handwritten memorandum dated January 1963 Middle East division to M. Ezri.
[368] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview.

1958. This was the first time that a formal Iranian representative was dispatched to Israel following the closure of the consulate under Mohammad Mosaddeq. The Iranian Foreign Minister Roham Allam extended full diplomatic rights to Israeli diplomats in Iran in January 1963.[369] The reopening of the Iranian consulate in Israel and the extension of full diplomatic rights to Israeli diplomats in Tehran were the most advantageous foreign policy outcomes that could have been expected by the Israelis in the Iranian and international climate at the time.

4.13 **Conclusion**

Starting in 1955, Israeli foreign policy goals towards Iran were confidence building, obtaining formal recognition, and securing the Iranian oil supply to Israel. The success of Israel's foreign policy goals rested heavily on the shoulders of Israeli individuals and their respective perceptions and relationships with the Iranians.

In examining the Qazvin earthquake, and the support provided by Israel to Iran, I have shown how individual exposure led to further cooperative action between the states that we would not have been able to understand if we had relied on analysing the convergence of national interests. It was the human relationships forged on the ground in Tehran between Israeli diplomats and the Iranian people and ministries that added pressure to provide aid despite the Israeli decision-makers' belief in Jerusalem that they were not able to provide such aid. Trust between individuals was proven to play a key component in the development of intelligence cooperation between the diplomats,

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[369] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1/132 7154/11 Memorandum dated 8 January 1963 from M. Ezri to Z.Doriel.

foreign policy actors, and personnel stationed in Tehran with respect to the local populace.

I have also demonstrated in this chapter how Israeli field operatives in Tehran were able to overcome internal Israeli obstacles by ensuring that further appropriate Israeli personnel were sent to Tehran when decision-makers in Jerusalem preferred sending other individuals who would have been less effective. The relationship and cooperation between Israeli diplomats and Iranian decision-makers in Tehran ensured that the constraints within the Israeli and Iranian decision making structures were overcome.

During Ben Gurion's service as Prime Minister, Ben Gurion himself had a strong personal relationship with the Shah documented through his personal correspondence and ISA documents. Also, the role of relationships allowed Israelis to circumvent and overcome the obstacles of Iranian domestic disapproval of Israel. The 'Master Keys,' General Ali Kia and Deputy Prime Minister and SAVAK Chief Taimur Bakhtiar employed the effective use of personal connections which relied on their specialised individual skills in order to ensure the success of Israeli foreign policy goals.

CHAPTER 5:THE CONTINUATION OF ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN UNDER LEVI ESHKOL (1963-1967)

5.1   Introduction

Between the years 1963 and 1967, Israeli foreign policy towards Iran continued to be implemented yet it was no longer under the leadership of David Ben Gurion. These years demonstrate the pivotal role of the human relationships of Israeli diplomats and agents who were active at the time. David Ben Gurion was a vital part of the formation of the state of Israel and, subsequently, the formation of Israel's foreign policy. His tenure, therefore, is the determinant for the period identified in this chapter.

Israeli decision makers and field operatives continued to surmount the obstacles to implementing Israel's Iran policy such as Iran's fluctuating approach towards Israel due to the Arab states' negative opinions of Israeli-Iranian relations as well as internal Iranian opposition to relations with Israel. Relationships were extended to Iran's religious leaders, while Israel also cooperated with Iran to assist the Kurds in Iraq thereby further implementing the Peripheral Alliance and extending Israel's reach in the Middle East thanks to Israel's Iran policy. This chapter ends in 1967 because the 1967 Six-Day-War marked a turning point in Israeli-Iranian relations. The Iranians saw Israel as a strong state that was there to stay in the region following the Six-Day-War. Following the Six-Day War, Israeli field operatives' ability to implement and work towards Israeli objectives was consolidated in Tehran. This chapter discusses the relationships that were necessary to develop the consolidation of 1967. These relationships were building blocks to ever further cooperation between Israel and Iran.

Looking at the impact of the relationships of the individuals on the foreign policy process within Foreign Policy Analysis provides help to isolate and discuss how Israeli foreign policymakers and practitioners implemented the Periphery Doctrine. These methods help provide a full analysis of foreign policy behaviour. Looking at foreign policy behaviour in this period also includes looking at the interaction between Israelis and Iranians—for example, an individual Israeli diplomat cultivating a relationship with a sympathetic Iranian minister in order to allay a diplomatic crisis while modifying, manipulating, or capitalising on perceptions within Israel and Iran. I argue in this chapter that the inclusion of the role of human relationships, is an essential characteristic that made Israeli foreign policy implementation with Iran successful.

Israel's Periphery Doctrine continued to be implemented between 1963 and 1967, well after Ben-Gurion's resignation. Foreign policy actors such as diplomats and intelligence agents continued to overcome obstacles they faced in Tehran and in international organisations using their understanding of Iranian decision-making culture. With Iran's fluid upgrading and downgrading of its relations with the Arab world, Israeli foreign policy agents counteracted these fluctuations with their knowledge of independent and inter-dependent reliance between the Arab states. Obstacles to extending Israel's relations with Iran were overcome with personal and relational methods such as establishing friendship connections with Iran's religious leaders and offering Iranians advanced medical care in Israel. Israeli connections with Iran's religious leaders depended on the shared culture and common language of particular Israeli diplomats with Iranian leaders in Tehran. Those links gave them a unique advantage in navigating power structures in the Iranian government.

Israel's continued implementation of the Periphery Doctrine extended to assisting the Kurds and is still seen as a success in Israeli foreign policy. Helping an impoverished minority in the Middle East required cooperation between Israel and Iran and can be seen as strategic, altruistic, religious, constitutional, and ethical. Realists agree on the natural convergence of national interests between Israel and Iran. Yet, upon closer inspection, these results were the dividends of inter-personal diplomacy and relationship-building measures. Such concrete measures that will be discussed in detail in this chapter include: providing Israeli experts in labour and agricultural policies, extensive cooperation with the Shah of Iran's development plan known as the 'White Revolution,' and convincing Iranian leaders that cooperation with Israel would not affect Iran's standing with the Arab world.

5.2   International Context

The international context during this period presented both obstacles and opportunities to Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. In May 1963, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser gave $150,000 to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for anti-government riots.[370] The Nasser-Khomeini alliance paved the way for Ayatollah Khomeini's propaganda campaign: Israel as a plotter against Islam.[371] This campaign slogan, heavily featured in the Iranian revolution as part of protests and justification, exploited the misperception of the Iranian people, ministries, and Arab communities. It also constrained the actions of Israeli diplomats in Tehran, as well as decision-makers back in Jerusalem creating huge obstacles in foreign policy between Israel and Iran. Khomeini manipulated the

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[370] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente,* p. 57.
[371] Ibid, p. 37.

public perception of Israel's assistance to Iran in the reconstruction following the Qazvin earthquake and positioned Israel in the eyes of the Iranians as co-conspirators with the Shah as opposing Islam.

Ayatollah Khomeini criticised the Shah of Iran's policy of land reform and blamed Israel for it, effectively making it Israel versus Islam. Khomeini stated in a speech in Qum in June 1963:

> How can we tolerate the disgrace of having our Islamic country turned into a base for Israel and Zionism?...Israel wants to take our economy in its clutches. Israel wants to destroy our trade and agriculture. Israel wants to destroy that which stands between them and domination. This buffer is formed by the ulama who have to be broken…In this was Israel gets what it wants, and in this way the government of Iran threatens us with contempt to achieve its base wishes.[372]

In response, Israel chose to reach out to Iran's Muslim clerics to assure them that this was not true. Israeli diplomats used inter-personal relationships to smooth over what could have created a combative situation.[373]

Israel's foreign policy calculus went beyond 'hard power' interests to also include humanitarian motives where Israel led the world after a massive earthquake in Iran.[374] As detailed in Chapter 4, Israeli foreign policy practitioners aided non-Arab minorities within the Periphery states, including assistance to the Kurds in Iraq and minorities in South Sudan.

The success of Israeli foreign policy's more unconventional angles can be measured in their own right as well as looking at concrete agreements of cooperation. These

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[372] Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini quoted in Bahram Alavi, "Khomeini's Iran: Israel's Ally," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (April 1988). Retrieved 20 January 2017, http://www.wrmea.org/1988-april/khomeini-s-iran-israel-s-ally.html.

[373] Personal interview with Meir Ezri, 14 October 2014.

[374] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 8.

agreements include supplying 40,000 'Uzis' to the Iranian police as part Foreign Minister Golda Meir's agreement with the Shah in 1964[375]. Israeli leaders such as Golda Meir were extremely worried that Iran would fall under the control of religious extremists and that the weapons supplied to the Iranians would fall into the hands of Israel's enemies.[376] Nevertheless, Israeli diplomats in Tehran reassured Golda Meir and continued to pursue the expansion of relations, such as signing an agreement in March 1965 to supply the Iranian Royal Guard with 'Uzis' as well. She chose to follow the assessments of Israeli diplomats and the weapons were delivered to the Iranians. These agreements were further expanded with much larger arms deals such as the November 1966 contract to supply Iran with mortars and Soltam shells. [377]

Despite the fact that Iran went to great lengths to keep its relations with Israel discreet in order to not antagonise the Arab states, these agreements indirectly fulfilled Israeli decision-makers' plans to make the relations public. For example, in December 1965 the Iranian Royal Guard greeted King Faisal of Saudi Arabia with the Royal Guard armed with the 'Uzis' supplied by Israel.[378] The impact of the individual is demonstrated by Golda Meir's personal misgivings about supplying weapons to the Iranians.

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[375] Beit-Hallahmi, Benjamin. *The Israeli Connection: Whom Israel Arms and Why* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), p. 11.
[376] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 146.
[377] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview, 14 October 2014.
[378] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 146.

5.3   Israeli-Iranian Policy Implementation Towards the Kurds

Israel's Periphery Doctrine also addressed connections with the Kurds. Israel's aiding the Kurds in Iraq also included human relationships with the Kurds and was partly made possible by Israeli cooperation and relationships with Iran. The Realist analysis would justifiably describe how another common ally to both Israel and Iran were the Iraqi Kurds in their struggle for autonomy against Baghdad. Another common interest would have been that cooperation to aid the Kurds would have been of great interest to the US Central Intelligence Agency via Trident (the intelligence-sharing organisation comprised of Israel, Iran, and Turkey).

Success for the Kurds would have meant a preoccupied and less stable Iraqi government that would have been advantageous to both Tehran and Jerusalem. However, beyond the Realist calculus, Israeli aid to the Kurds and the consequent cooperation with Iran also had strong emotional motives.[379] As Yitzhak Rabin (Israeli military commander, and later Chief of Staff and eventually Prime Minister) explained at the end of the Israeli-Kurdish cooperation in 1975: 'I presume our aid emerged from a desire to help a struggling minority … because we're Jews.'[380] It was empathy for a fellow repressed minority that also drove Israeli cooperation with Iran to help the plight of the Kurds. From 1963 until the early 1970s, Mossad sent medical aid, military instructors, and weapons to the Iraqi Kurds via Iran. To reciprocate, the Kurds gave Mossad agents intelligence regarding Iraq's military capabilities. All the while, SAVAK remained a very willing partner.[381]

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[379] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 51.
[380] Quoted by Shlomo Nakdimon, Introduction, *A Hopeless Hope: The Rise and Fall of the Israeli-Kurdish Alliance, 1963-1975* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Miskal Publishers, 1996).
[381] Melman, Yossi and Meir Javedanfar, *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran: Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and the State of Iran* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2007), p. 79.

The tangible effects of Israel's cooperation with the Kurds can be seen with the eventual varying levels of independence for the minorities in Iraqi Kurdistan and South Sudan. Yossi Alpher, a former Mossad agent, Israeli consultant, and author on Israel-related strategic issues who serves on the Executive Committee of the Council for Peace and Security, offers expert testimony on these effects. 'Despite the absence of a direct Israeli contribution to that more recent effort, Israel's generally selfless aid and support at a critical time in their struggle is recognized in both the independent state of South Sudan and the virtually independent entity of Kurdistan in Iraq,' Alpher explains.[382] One can therefore see that the human element in foreign policy formation and implementation affects geopolitical facts on the ground. Israel's decision to cooperate with Iran to help the Kurds was not only based on humanitarian imperatives, it was also formed and implemented by Israeli diplomats in Tehran who relayed the information to Jerusalem.

The American perspective is important to examine because we can gauge the impact of Israeli-Iranian cooperation in aiding the Kurds and the Kurds' marked improvement in fighting because both the cooperation and improvement raised the attention of the Americans. The Americans began monitoring Israel's involvement in the US Embassy in Baghdad towards the end of May 1965. US officials documented the Kurds' actual tactical improvement, because the Americans had previously viewed Kurdish fighters as inept. The Americans noted that since February 1964 the Kurds showed tactical improvement.[383] Bryan Robert Gibson quotes from a report from the NARA stacks, 'Unlike before, they [Kurds] now refused to defend flat areas, [had] let the government

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[382] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 52
[383] According to the NARA (United States National Archives and Records Administration) report cited in Dr. Brian Robert Gibson, *U.S. Foreign Policy, Iraq, and the Cold War 1958-1975,* Unpublished PhD thesis, 30 April 2013, submitted to the London School of Economics and Political Science.

move into the mountains … attacked army supply lines and [were] now apparently attacking bivouac areas … it now seemed clear … that the Kurds [were] getting some assistance, possibly even training from Israel.'[384]

The following American report substantiates the misperception of superpower influence on the relationship between Israel and Iran. The US misperception is relevant to this thesis because the United States' involvement in aiding the Kurds depended on the US perceptions and reasons behind the US choice to get involved in the Israeli-Iranian-Kurdish cooperation. The Americans viewed the relationships between the Israelis, the Iranians, and the Kurds as a cooperation to contain the Soviets, rather than as a way to contain the Arabs. The American perception of the Soviet containment strengthened the relations between the United States and Israel as allies against the Soviet Union.

Another question arises regarding the perceptions of uninvolved observer assessments by US officials: did the American author of the report from the NARA stacks cited above include the reason for the cooperation as Soviet containment, or was it because he perceived a common pan-Arabist threat? If the dominant perception of the writing of the document was cooperation for Soviet containment, the document would heavily weigh superpower interests over regional interests. If the dominant perception was the common pan-Arabist threat, then the document would heavily weigh regional interests over superpower interests. Changing this slight perception causes two very different outcomes. If, in reality, Israeli and Iranian officials placed more importance on the common regional threat (rather than rebuffing a Soviet ally), their cooperation worked

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[384] "Kurdish Revolution of 1961," 30 June 1965, NARA/RG59/CFPF/1964-66/Box2339/POL 13-3-Ethnic Minorities, pp. 14-15, 18. Quoted in Gibson, *U.S. Foreign Policy, Iraq, and the Cold War 1958-1975*, p. 151.

to their advantage by looking even more like US allies counterbalancing Soviet expansionism.

Two of the United States' closest allies, Iran and Israel, were at odds with US policy by aiding the Kurds.[385] The United States had been close to the Arif regime in Iraq. As Gibson explains:

> The U.S. was not blind to the danger posed by Nasser's potential domination of Iraq and the Gulf, but it saw the Arif regime as the best possible government in Iraq. This suggests that during 1964-65 the Johnson administration's policy toward Iraq reflected a Realist assessment in terms of the Cold War, while its closest allies viewed Iraq in terms of their own regional interests.[386]

Conversely, if Israeli and Iranian officials placed more importance on superpower interests of counterbalancing Soviet expansionism, they would not have gone against the American superpower that was close to the Iraqi Arif regime. The American report substantiated the misperception of superpower influence.

After the discussion of the US report and its reflection of American misperceptions, it is natural to discuss the human condition and relationships at play during this time. The first meeting between the Israelis and the Kurdish leadership was facilitated by personal connections, according to Meir Ezri. In Ezri's account, Israeli overtures were greatly assisted by the actions of Israeli representatives in Tehran and their personal connections with the Iranian establishment. General Haj Ali Kia, a close personal friend of Ezri, both helped the Israelis with links to Kurdish leaders in Iran as well as strengthened the ties between the Iranian government and the Kurdish factions on both

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[385] "Kurdish Revolution of 1961," 30 June 1965, (NARA/RG59/CFPF/1964-66/Box2339/POL 13-3-Ethnic Minorities, pp. 14-15,18. Quoted in Gibson, *U.S. Foreign Policy, Iraq, and the Cold War 1958-1975*, p. 155
[386] Ibid, p. 141.

sides of the Iranian/Iraqi border. Ezra Danin, Director of Israel's Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department, and Ezri met with General Kia and promised to make efforts to use their Israeli influence and connections with Kurdish leaders on the Iraqi side of the border to support Iran, which also suited Israeli government and political interests.[387] Additionally, though the Israeli diplomatic team was instrumental in creating the policy, it was the personal involvement of Danin and Ezri as well as the individuals detailed below that allowed the policy to flourish beyond shared strategic interests.

It was the Israeli diplomatic team in Tehran that laid the basis for Israel's information and policy on the Kurds. In late June 1960, Yaakov Nimrodi, Israel's military attaché to Iran, went on a reconnaissance tour of Kurdistan, met Kurdish leaders, and wrote a survey based on his findings. Based on Nimrodi's report, Ezri recommended to Moshe Sasson (a prominent Israeli official in the Middle East Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) on 13 August 1960 that the Kurdish situation warranted further exploration and review. Nimrodi's suggestions for improving General Kia's methods of operations in line with Israel's needs were presented by Kia to the Shah of Iran. The Shah of Iran approved all the suggestions and high-ranking Iranian officers were placed at Nimrodi's disposal to implement his plans for helping the Kurds.[388] The Iranians also encouraged the Israelis (Doriel and Ezri) to meet with Kurdish leader Daoud Jaf at General Kia's home so they would persuade him and other Kurdish tribes to follow a pro-Iranian path. Ezri notes, 'Jaf was surprised at our knowledge of what was going on in the Kurdish areas concerning their disputes, and at our acquaintance with all the

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[387] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 14 October 2014.
[388] Ibid.

Kurdish leaders. It is possible that he dreamed of using our services to attain his goal - his people's independence - but he was careful not to mention anything specifically.'[389]

Yossi Alpher explains how Israel's ambassador to Paris, Morris Fisher, introduced his old friend and exiled Kurdish leader Amir Badir Khan to Ben Gurion in Israel in 1963. Fisher had met Khan during the Second World War in Beirut when Fisher served in the Free French forces. Fisher was also a close friend of Dr. Tzvi Doriel (Israel's first trade representative and subsequently unofficial ambassador to Iran) and his wife. These pivotal relationships were documented in Alpher's book and corroborated by Ezri's memoirs and my interviews with Ezri in 2014. Through Dr. Tzvi Doriel, Khan also met Colonel Yuval Neeman (deputy head of Israeli Military Intelligence).[390] Khan explained to Ben Gurion why Israel should help the Iraqi Kurds who were led by Mullah Mustafa Barzani.[391] Khan requested arms, financial aid, and a radio station.[392]

Another personal connection occurred at a similar time in Paris between the new head of Mossad, Meir Amit, and Dr. Mahmoud Othman, who was a very influential civilian leader in the Kurdish uprising. An anonymous former Mossad operative in Iran describes: '"Dr. Mahmoud" described to Amit how the Kurds 'didn't even have enough money to buy tea and sugar.' Amit, shaken by the Kurds' humanitarian plight, convinced Foreign Minister Golda Meir to allot them $100,000.' [393] The emotional pleas of the Kurdish leaders evidently affected Ben Gurion's and Meir's decisions on Israeli foreign policy and of the allocation of funds. By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Meir Amit, Golda

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[389] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 343.
[390] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 14 October 2014.
[391] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 52.
[392] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 14 October 2014.
[393] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 52.

Meir, Ben Gurion, Doriel, and Ezri on the Israeli side, and Dr. Mahmoud Othman and Amir Badir Khan on the Kurdish side that the outcome of Israeli decision-makers deciding to aid the Kurds would be very different.

Israeli-Iranian cooperation in order to aid the Kurds was not as straightforward as would be assumed from the simple convergence of interests. Meir Amit, the Chief Director and head of Global Operations for Mossad from 1963 to 1968, and the head of SAVAK, General Hassan Pakravan, met twice a year to consolidate intelligence-sharing and overall assessments of world events. Israeli aid to the Kurds was discussed during their meeting in Paris on 29 June 1963.

The first documented meeting between the current Israeli and Iranian intelligence leadership was facilitated by Meir Ezri. Nassiri was sceptical that Israeli aid to the Kurds was a positive policy for Iran.[394] Ezri not only served as a translator, but also created a cultural bridge between Iranian Nassiri and Israeli Meir Amit (Chief director and head of Global Operations for Mossad), Meir Ezri, the Israeli ambassador to Iran, who was raised in Iran until age 25 and was fluent in *Farsi*, served as interpreter during the Amit-Nasiri meeting. Ezri explains: 'Since Nassiri knew no foreign languages … I could insert into the translation emphases and words spoken by Amit, which dispelled the fears of the Iranians - that Israel might be following its own agenda concerning the Kurds, using Iran to implement it.'[395] Meir Ezri was extremely aware of Iranians' hesitations and fears and could therefore affect Israel's policy implementation by gaining agreement from his Iranian counterpart. One can see how the outcome of Iran

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[394] Within two years of the Israeli cabinet reshuffle, chief of the Iranian State Intelligence and Security Organisation (the SAVAK) Hassan Pakravan was succeeded by Deputy Prime Minister General Nemat-Allah Nassiri.
[395] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 344.

agreeing to cooperate with Israel to aid the Kurds would have been very different without the personal relationships between Ezri, Amit, and Nassiri.

In order to start the operation on the ground, the Iranian SAVAK facilitated a meeting between Lieutenant General Tsvi Tsur, the Israeli Chief of Staff, and two other high-ranking Israeli Defence Ministry officials and Mullah Mustafa Barazani, the Kurdish Nationalist leader. The Israelis were flown from the capital Tehran to Rezaieh and were driven to the border town PiranShah of Iran. After changing into local clothes, the group walked over the border into Iraq, when after a two-kilometre walk, they were met by Mullah Mustafa Barazani and 200 of his men. The actions of changing into local clothes greatly affected the Iranians' and the Kurds' perceptions of Israelis, as well as demonstrating great cultural sensitivity with respect to safety. The Israelis and Iranians did not agree to conduct a guerrilla offensive. They did agree, however, to supply the Kurdish rebels with sufficient arms and training to instigate a full-scale offensive.

The Kurds trusted Israeli motives much more than the motives of the Iranians.[396] The Iranians, according to Meir Amit, considered Mullah Mustafa Barazani, a 'trouble-maker' who was planted by the Soviet communists. Amit explains 'The Shah of Iran told me in no uncertain terms: "I want the flame alive, [but] I do not want a fire."'[397] Israeli decision-makers therefore had to tread a fine line between aiding the Kurds and staying in line with their Iranian counterparts in order to facilitate cooperation. This meeting supports the importance of perceptions and misperceptions as the Israelis had to consider the Shah of Iran's comfort level, which was entirely based on both Israeli and Iranian perceptions of each other. The importance of individuals is demonstrated

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[396] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 53.
[397] Amit, Meir. *Head On* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Hed Arzi, 1999), pp. 162-167.

by the joint cooperative efforts of the Iranians, the Kurds, and the Israelis to accept, identify, and execute the needs of the Kurds balancing self-interest, mutual benefits, and humanitarian efforts.

In my interview with Ezri, it became clear to me that there was a third perception at play - that of the translator. The words he chose and the messages he crafted to facilitate communication could make or break talks between Israel and Iran. As the translator, one must quickly determine meaning and intent, along with a desirable outcome, in front of a group of people. Translators in these situations are individuals using their perceptions affecting foreign policy. The importance of individual perception on behalf of the translator is supported by the condolence letter sent to me upon Ezri's death by *Periphery* author Yossi Alpher: 'And let me take this opportunity to offer condolences on the passing of your grandfather, who was one of the giants of Israeli-Iranian relations well before "periphery."'[398]

Beginning on 18 July 1963, ammunition, arms, and advisors from Israel were transported through Iran with help from SAVAK.[399] Kurdish officers were trained by Israeli instructors, and when Iran's budget for its Kurdish project decreased, Israel stepped in financially with $500,000 per month[400] This demonstrates the importance of Israel's Kurdish policy.

After the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel supplied the Kurds with Soviet military equipment from the Egyptian and Syrian armies.[401] In return for this assistance, the Kurds gave

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[398] Personal note from Yossi Alpher to author, 11 September 2015. Author's personal collection.
[399] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 344.
[400] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 47.
[401] Beit-Hallahmi, *The Israeli Connection,* p. 19.

Mossad intelligence on Iraqi military capabilities, thus gaining an advantage.[402] This also demonstrates the importance of the Israeli Kurdish policy. Yossi Melman, an Israeli writer, intelligence, and strategic affairs correspondent, and Meir Javedanfar, an Israeli-Iranian Middle East analyst, explain that experts from Mossad and SHABAK (the Israeli domestic security and counter terrorism service) established and ran SAVAK's technological espionage units, including eavesdropping on the Shah of Iran's political foes.[403] Historically, the Kurdish assistance would be handled exclusively by Mossad, but with the collaboration of SHABAK, and allocation of both Mossad and SHABAK resources. Therefore, we can conclude that the Kurdish assistance was of great importance to Israeli foreign policy.

It is important to remember that both men quoted below were seasoned operatives in Mossad and later became heads of Mossad in their respective careers. Eliezer Tsafrir was a Mossad operative at the Kurdish headquarters in northern Iraq. Tsafrir infiltrated Iraq with the assistance of SAVAK. He explains: 'Whatever we asked in terms of assistance to our needs, SAVAK responded favorably.'[404] This cooperation made Mossad networks in Iraq possible.

Another member of the Iran-Kurdistan Mossad unit was Shabtai Shavit, head of Mossad in the 1990's, who started his intelligence career in Iran. It is Shabtai Shavit who commented on Israel's periphery connections in emphasising that '[t]he only beautiful aspect we displayed as Jews and Israelis [in the context of the periphery doctrine] was our support for the Kurds for moral reasons.'[405] Both men, clearly with a win-at-all cost

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[402] Melman and Javedanfar, *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran,* p. 79.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Ibid., p. 80.
[405] Alpher, *Periphery*, p. 54.

mentality, as demonstrated by their choice of professional career, could also recognise the value of moral reasons in the scope of his own profession.

5.4   **Limitations and Constraints of Israeli-Iranian-Kurdish Cooperation**

Limitations of Israel's Kurdish policy with Iran were the constraints placed by the Shah of Iran's stated beliefs towards aiding the Kurds. The Shah of Iran stated that Mullah Mustafa Barzani was a planted Soviet agent and was hesitant to unequivocally help the Kurds. From the Israeli perspective, Israel's policy was not helped by disunity among Kurdish tribes and leaders. A prime example of the continuing Kurdish disunity was the Barzanis' on going family disagreements and dissent. Barzani's own son opposed his father's Peshmerga (Kurdish) army and sided with the Baghdad regime.[406]

Another limitation was Israeli perceptions and expectations of actual Kurdish capabilities. The Israelis were frustrated by Kurdish inability to adopt Israeli fighting strategy. As Alpher explains, 'What Israeli military and strategic experts perceived as the Kurds' insistence on fighting, in effect, like Kurds, not Israelis.'[407] A former Israeli combat officer who trained the Kurdish forces on behalf of the Mossad explained: '[a]s long you're around, the [Kurdish] trainee wants to please you, and the minute you leave he will revert to being a Kurd in accordance with local character and mentality. It was naïve to think that we could create here a new type of Kurdish warrior.'[408]

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[406] Ibid, p. 53. The Kurdish faction that sided with Baghdad was headed by Jalal Talabani, who became Iraq's first president after the ouster of Saddam Hussein.
[407] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 57.
[408] Ibid, pp. 57-58.

Israel's cooperation with Iran in aiding the Kurds in Iraq ended with the Shah of Iran's agreement (Algiers Agreement of 1975) with Saddam Hussein, Iraq's de facto leader at the time (he was formally recognised as leader in 1979). The Thalweg line, the boundary between Iran and Iraq along the Shatt al-Arab, is the internationally recognised boundary line between Iran and Iraq. The boundary agreement has withstood both the Iranian revolution and the Iran-Iraq War.

5.5   Overcoming Perceptions of Israel's Public Image Affecting Iran

Individual actions by Israeli diplomats and their relationships with Iranian officials in Tehran continued to be pivotal in defusing the on going objections and hesitations by the Iranian Foreign Ministry to relations with Iran. In April 1965, Israeli Ambassador Meir Ezri met with a furious Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aram. Aram was angry because he perceived that Israelis' public activities were deliberately harming Iranian relations with the Arab states. During this meeting, Ezri needed to balance his own Iranian-Israeli influence along with the words of Ben Gurion, who stated to his diplomats that their mission was to work for the interests in Iran because pursuing these interests would also mean they were pursuing the Israeli national interest. The following historical events repeatedly demonstrate the effects of perceptions and misperceptions on foreign policy.

In his discussions with Ezri, as documented in the Memorandum dated 5 May 1965, 'The conversation with [Iranian] Foreign Minister Abbas Aram in his Office,' Abbas Aram fiercely attacked the Israelis' activities in Iran and their appearances in public that were, according to Aram, harming Iran's relations with the Arabs. Aram suspected that

this was a deliberate action by the Israeli government in order to scupper Iran's recent rapprochement with the Arab states. Aram continued that it was his responsibility as Foreign Minister to forge good relations with Arab states in order to contain Nasserist expansionism. Aram perceived that the Israeli mission's sole aims were 'publicity and sabotage.'[409] For instance, according to Aram, the Israeli mission invited 160 dignitaries over the Persian New year festival of *No Ruz* and even offered to pay over $20,000 US to introduce the delegates to the press and the radio. Aram also perceived there was a boycott against the Foreign Ministry, whereas the Israeli mission had cultivated deep ties with all the other ministries that formed the Iranian government.

Ezri requested to answer the foreign minister openly with a wish to separate between personal matters and policy matters. On the personal matter, Ezri replied to the Foreign Minister by saying that the minister's suspicions against the Israeli Head of Mission is a direct hit against the interests of Iran itself. This was because Israel's general national interest in the Middle East was a strong and thriving Iran with the Shah of Iran at its head. Israel, he stressed, considered the Shah a great friend. The work of the Israeli mission in Tehran, both on the personal and the mission levels, were dictated by this interest. The Israeli head of mission was the most important figure in the entire diplomatic corps who had never critiqued Iran.[410] When the Israeli ambassador welcomed foreigners and journalists to Iran, he showed them the good and bad of the Iranian lifestyle and conditions. Most of these important visitors also come into contact with the Israeli ambassador and were persuaded 'to see the lights and not just the shadows.' Ezri added that, from the standpoint of fairness and, most importantly,

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[409] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.17/6-676 1935/3, Memorandum dated 5 May 1965 from Meir Ezri to the Middle East Department titled: "The conversation with Foreign Minister Abbas Aram at his office on 29.04.65," p. 1.
[410] Ibid.

Iranian tradition, no guest in Iran, especially the Israeli head of mission, deserves such treatment in Iran.

On the policy matters, Ezri clarified to Aram that it was a grave mistake for the Iranian Foreign Minister to assume that Israel was interested in sabotaging Iranian-Arab relations. Evidence of this was that Israel strived towards peace with the Arab states. The opposite was true, according to Israel: Israel desired an influential Iran close to both Israel and the Arab world, which would encourage a stable and peaceful Middle East. Israel's friendship with Iran was given unconditionally. According to the memorandum, Israel did not perceive that the Arabs would ever be friendly towards Iran, despite Iranian efforts.

Israel's friendship with Iran obligated Israel's diplomats to inform Iran of all it knew about Arab efforts against vital Iranian interests. Ezri asked Aram if that was considered sabotage, 'Is it preferable that we keep quiet and hide from Iran important information that is directly connected to its existence?'[411] Israel's diplomats had not been in contact with the Iranian Foreign Ministry not because they were circumvented, but because every time they approached them Israel was rebuffed. Israel's relations with other Iranian government ministries served all Iranian interests as well as the individual ministries with very positive results. The Foreign Minister was invited to speak with Iranian groups who had returned from visiting Israel, more patriotic than ever. Aram's perception of inflated figures of Iranian official visitors to Israel was factually incorrect; Israel's maximum was 56 Iranian visitors per year, not 160.

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[411] Ibid, p. 2.

Israel's representatives had also consistently helped Iranian officials in international organisations. Israel had great difficulty with Iran's public condemnation. A case in point was the Iranian Industry and Commerce and then-Economy Minister Ali-Naghi Alikhani, who was a long-standing friend of Israel but who publicly condemned the state. According to the memorandum Ezri therefore could not help wondering whether Ali Naghi Alikhani was following the instructions of the Foreign Ministry or other government bodies.

The Iranian Foreign Minister also wanted to speak candidly. As quoted by Ezri, Aram did not have personal problems with the Israeli head of mission. Instead, perhaps Aram did not consider all sides of the situation and the Israeli head of mission actually deserved the gratitude of all Iranians for his loyalty and friendship to Iran. Using his language and cultural abilities, Ezri succeeded in transforming the Iranian foreign minister's perceptions of Israeli foreign policy and implementation. Aram repeatedly asked that the Israelis refrain from publicity but agreed to publicise cultural performances. He approved the six courses including engineering, agriculture and education of 20 to 30 students per course. He also clarified that he did not mean that intelligence information regarding Arab activities were acts of sabotage.[412] In his candour, Aram 'poured out his heart' and told Ezri that he wanted to be a successful Foreign Minister and that his main mission was to rally Arab states against Nasser.

The main difficulty for every Iranian Foreign Minister was the utmost secrecy of the position.[413] Aram also promised to help Israel in international organisations, albeit

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[412] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.17/6-676 1935/3, Memorandum dated 5 May 1965 from Meir Ezri to the Middle East Department titled: "The conversation with Foreign Minister Abbas Aram at his office on 29.04.65," p. 2.
[413] Ibid, p. 3.

indirectly and discreetly. Aram was about to accompany the Shah of Iran to South America and, in his absence, his deputy would be the contact person. Ezri and Aram would meet to discuss other matters of cooperation on his return to Iran. Ezri's approach was to relate to Aram on an individual level in order to influence his perceptions while understanding the Iranian mentality and having appreciation for Persian long-standing customs and traditions. At the same time, Israel's objectives were clearly pursued, but with an incredible human sensitivity that included Iran's interests as a factor in Israel's policies and implementation.

5.6   Perceptions and Secret Diplomacy

5.6.1 Introducing Prime Minister Levi Eshkol

On 16 June 1963, Ben Gurion unexpectedly resigned as Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. Ben Gurion appointed Levi Eshkol as his successor. When Ben Gurion resigned, Eshkol was elected party chairman with a broad consensus, and was subsequently appointed Prime Minister. Levi Eshkol's general world view can be illustrated as follows: 'The first impulse of the Israeli government, especially of Eshkol…was not to see how we could change the map, but how we could change the system of relations in the area.'[414]

In 1964, Eshkol made the first state visit of an Israeli Prime Minister to Washington, laying the foundation for the close rapport that has existed between the two countries ever since, and in 1966 he visited six African nations. But his most significant

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[414]Shlaim, "Interview with Abba Eban, 11 March 1976," p. 2.

diplomatic achievement was the establishment of diplomatic relations with West Germany, a process that had been initiated by Ben Gurion. He also secured military assistance from Germany, highlighting Germany's moral commitment to supporting Israel. After the Six-Day War, Eshkol initiated talks with Palestinian leaders in the administered areas, in an effort to promote a neighbourly relationship, and ultimately, peace.[415] Israelis' general perception of Eshkol is as follows: 'Seemingly lacklustre prime minister who knew every inch of every water pipeline in Israel, and who displayed piercing diplomatic shrewdness in his efforts to avert the Six-Day-War, yet readied the IDF for the fight of its life to win it.'[416]

Eshkol's view towards Iran in his own words as told by Segev is as follows: 'Eshkol noted that Israel had good relations with the U.S., Britain, and France, but that "the friendship with Iran derives from the depths of the heart and is as such more valuable."'[417]

5.6.2 *Conflicting Israeli Perceptions of the Shah's Secret Meeting with Eshkol*

The following historic events will demonstrate the effect of perceptions and misperceptions on Israeli foreign policy. Perceptions and misperceptions play a significant role in the secret between the Shah of Iran and Eshkol in 1964. Through Asadollah Allam, now the former Prime Minister of Iran, came cooperation with the Shah of Iran on his visit to the United States. On 19 May 1964, the diplomats from the

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[415] Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Levi Eshkol." Retrieved 26 January 2017, http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/aboutisrael/state/pages/levi%20eshkol.aspx.
[416] Avner, Yehuda. *The Prime Ministers: An Intimate Narrative of Israeli leadership* (New Milford: The Toby Press, 2010), p. xvi.
[417] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 67.

Israeli mission in Iran summarised their meeting with Asadollah Allam in anticipation of the Shah of Iran's US visit.

The Shah of Iran was most interested in Israel's assistance in highlighting the stability in Iran, and the interest and belief in the confidence 'that Iran deserves' in front of American and Western public opinion.[418] The Shah of Iran was interested in wealthy Jewish and non-Jewish individuals showing an interest in, and requesting meetings with, him regarding investing in Iran. It did not matter to the Shah of Iran whether or not they would actually follow through with the investments. What mattered to the Shah of Iran was influencing the perceptions of the Americans in showing them that he was more attractive and influential than he actually was. The Shah of Iran's aim was to have the publication of the 'show of support'[419] from established westerners demonstrating confidence in Iran with the prospect of investing in Iran.

Internally, Israeli decision-makers supported different strategies in their approach to the Iranians. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs Middle East division and the Mossad both believed that efforts to orchestrate a meeting in public between the Shah of Iran and the Israeli Prime Minister in the United States should not necessarily depend on coordination with Asadollah Allam. The Mossad and the Tehran embassy were instructed to lobby their other contacts in Tehran in Allam's absence.[420] Concurrently, the Israeli diplomats in Tehran warned against the appearance of taking advantage of Iranian internal politics. Tzvi Doriel (Israel's first representative to Iran) wrote

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[418] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Embassy of Israel to Tehran to Middle East division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 May 1964.
[419] Ibid.
[420] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Herzog (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to Z. Doriel (Tehran), 27 May 1964.

personally to Yaacov Herzog (Chief of Staff to the office of the Foreign Minister), explaining: 'It is known that the Shah of Iran conducts personal politics with the different Iranian personalities here … we fear that if we pursue additional contacts for this matter it will appear to the Shah of Iran as unnecessary tactless manoeuvring and interference with his appointment of his own officials.'[421] A secret meeting was also planned between the Shah of Iran and Prime Minister Levi Eshkol. According to the 1964 memorandum, the Israelis wanted the meeting to be public, but realised that this would be unlikely. Normalisation of relations was at the forefront of planning and Israel decided to raise normalisation in the Shah of Iran-Eshkol meeting. The Foreign Ministry was also aware that if the United States were to encourage normalisation between Israel and Iran, the Shah of Iran would overcome his fear of the Mullahs.[422] In this way, the Israelis were able to analyse internal Iranian opposition to relations with Israel as well.

According to my interviews with Ezri, who was present at the secret Shah of Iran-Eshkol meeting, there were differences of opinion within the Israeli diplomatic corps. Some felt strongly the meeting should be public, while others felt the meeting should be private. The Israelis were aware that the Iranians were resistant to such a high-level public meeting. Ezri, using his cultural understanding of Iranians, repeatedly smoothed over such discussions, allowing the meeting to eventually happen. The Iranian representative to Israel met with the Middle East Division head and requested that Israel not raise any changes to the relations as 'the time has not come for a change' as this would create internal problems in Iran and would scupper Iran's efforts to become

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[421] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Z. Doriel (Tehran) to Y. Herzog, 29 May 1964. Note: This communiqué lists other friendly channels available to the Embassy in Tehran that pertain to secret operations.
[422] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Embassy of Israel to Rome to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem, June 1964.

closer to Shi'ite populations in non-Nasserist states such as Iraq.[423] Most existing literature has failed to include and fully appreciate in their analysis the cultural, language, and personal relationships between the parties that are integral to the successful outcome of the meeting.

This thesis also demonstrates in detail how individuals and their relationships smooth the foreign policy process to influence perceptions within Israel and in Iran with the ultimate goal of implementing foreign policy. One prime example is the relationship between the Israeli Special Representative of the Prime Minister David Ben Gurion to Iran Meir Ezri and Iranian General Ali Kia (the head of military intelligence). The two were old family friends and developed a close rapport resulting in the transfer of private information directly affecting Israel's ability to create foreign policy decisions that were palatable to the Iranians.

One of the many occasions for cooperation was the information that Kia shared with Ezri. One document from the Israeli government archives describes how in 1964 Kia showed Ezri a classified Iranian document regarding Iranian-Iraqi negotiations.[424] Among Iraq's demands was that Iran stop aiding the Kurds and not upgrade its relations with Israel. Iraq also demanded that Iran stop the movement of Israeli intelligence agents to Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states via Iran. Iran, according to the memorandum, responded to the Iraqis that it would not discuss its relations with Israel and that Tehran saw the Kurds as Iranian citizens, and it was therefore its duty to aid the Kurds when necessary. Due to the relations with Kia,

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[423] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Y. Vered (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to Embassy of Israel to Tehran, 30 June 1964.
[424] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.0/6/60 memorandum dated 9 March 1964 from M. Ezri to the Middle East Division, MFA.

Israel's Ezri was able to reassure the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Israel that Iran would not sacrifice its relations with Israel in the negotiations with Iraq.

5.7   Use of Relationships with Iran's Religious Leaders to Shape Policy

Israeli field operatives were able to develop relationships with Shi'ite religious leaders in order to both affect Iranian foreign policy and to implement Israeli foreign policy while overcoming obstacles. Israeli Ambassador Meir Ezri used the strength of religious groups in Iran, specifically the Shi'ite leaders, to bypass and bend the Shah of Iran's bureaucratic excuse to not upgrade and normalise relations with Israel. Israeli representatives were aware of the influence of mainstream religious Shi'ite circles within Iran. Israeli diplomats were also aware of Shi'ite fundamentalist circles that opposed the Shah of Iran's programs of secularisation and alignment with the West.

The assassination of Prime Minister Hassan-Ali Mansour by a Shi'ite fundamentalist terrorist secret society on 21 January 1965 escalated the emotions and heightened uncertainty of the bureaucracies in Iran. Ezri could understand and relate to the bureaucratic uncertainties plaguing Iran at this time. Ezri, in response to the assassination, aimed to open discussions with Islamic centres and the Ulema (religious sages) for two reasons. First, the Shah of Iran had used the reason of religious groups being against contacts with Israel as one of his reservations for not fully normalising Iran's relations with Israel. Second, and more directly, Ezri aimed to hold direct and indirect (through mediation of friends) discussions with the Ulema to refute hate

propaganda against Israel by explaining Israel's policies and to emphasise their importance to Iran.[425]

General Ali Kia, head of Iranian Military Intelligence, was considered by Ezri to be the 'Master Key' to Ezri's relations with Iran.[426] General Ali Kia also helped to create bureaucratic alliances with Ezri and the religious establishments, such as Professor Badi Al-Zaman Foruzanfar, founder of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Tehran. Foruzanfar aimed to teach Islam as a modern religion, distancing it from feudalism and as a tool for foreign powers to manipulate.[427] Professor Foruzanfar introduced Ezri to Zahir Al-Eslam, who headed one of the most prominent mosques in Tehran. Al-Eslam was admired by the 'religious fanatics' as well as the Iranian establishment and was therefore extremely influential and useful.

The Shah of Iran, in order to remain in control, created an environment in which the Iranian bureaucracies were placed in competition with each other to fight for influence that created a desire for almost continual improvement. Concurrently, the bureaucratic alliances created by Kia for Ezri transcended personal, academic, and religious connections, allowing Ezri the ability to navigate existing Iranian bureaucracies and support the Shah of Iran's desire to modernise Iran. From a broad perspective, Ezri could see that the Iranian government had a 'blind spot' in acknowledging the actual power and influence of religious leaders: 'The Shah of Iran's regime underestimated the religious circles, and did not always show them signs of respect. The fact that religious leaders enjoyed enormous influence over many sectors - although the majority were

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[425] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 14 October 2014.
[426] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, Chapter 4.
[427] Ibid., p. 321.

illiterates, rustics, and wretched labourers-was negligible in the eyes of the regime.'[428]

Additional alliances with religious leaders, separate from Kia's introductions, were established by Ezri because of his Iranian origins and background.

The historic link cited by both Iranian and Israeli leaders was also used to support the alliances regarding the historic religious connection between King Cyrus the Great from the time of Babylon and the Jews. This bridge was used between history and modern policy in order to help with policy implementation. As one article in a religious Iranian publication was titled, 'An ancient-modern nation rebuilding its ancient homeland.' This is an image that Israel projected in Iran and this was being received with success in Iran. In this way, religious leaders, including Foruzanfar, became regular visitors to the head of Israeli mission's home during the Jewish holidays of Succot and Passover.[429] The professor was the key man to introducing Ezri to the 'lion's den' of the religious inner circles in Iran. Ezri explains: 'Some of them expressly abhorred any contact with us and avoided all dealings with us, while others asked for recompense for any step taken to help us.'[430] On the state level, Foruzanfar viewed Israel as protecting Iran against fundamentalist influences and negative Arab influence that were both increasing in power. When sermons criticising Israeli-Iranian relations were made by delegations in religious conferences, Ezri with the help of Kia (who was formerly on the Press Council) and with the agreement of Foruzanfar prevented the mass publication of the sermons.[431] Foruzanfar also advocated extending Iran's relations with Israel in front of the Iranian Foreign Minister, Aram, who vacillated according to how relations were advancing with Iraq and other Arab states.

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[428] Ibid., p. 317.
[429] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 June 2015.
[430] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 320.
[431] Ibid., p. 322.

In what could be considered as a humanitarian method, but by many others as a strategic alliance, Israeli diplomats established good relations with the religious establishment by offering state of the art Israeli medical treatment to key members of the Iranian religious and government establishment and their families. For instance, Israel provided medical help for the wife of a high-ranking religious Iranian leader. The wife was diagnosed and treated in Israel. During her two-month treatment, Ezri's brother, the head of Farsi broadcasting in *Kol Israel* (Israel government radio) looked after her. The installation of world-class medical treatment for Iranian high-ranking officials and religious leaders and their families created a no-lose situation for Israel, as any high-ranking Iranian who voted against Israel would jeopardise their access to world-class Israeli medical treatment. This is a risk no person would take, regardless of religion or country, when faced with a serious medical problem given the extremely poor availability of medical treatment, medicine, and supplies in Iran.

By examining this sequence of events, it can be seen how without the personal relationships between Meir Ezri and General Ali Kia and members of the Shiite Ulema, the outcome could have been very different. But thanks to these relationships, Israeli diplomats bypassed internal religious Iranian opposition to Israeli-Iranian relations and refuted and decreased anti-Israel propaganda as well as provided medical assistance to very ill Iranians.

5.8   Perceptual Influence and Israeli Diplomatic and Economic Value

Israeli diplomats and decision-makers went to great efforts to sustain their relationships with Iranians and to remain visible and useful to Iran. According to Asadollah Allam, the newly appointed Iranian Prime Minister, the Shah of Iran did not travel with anyone from the Government or the Foreign Ministry. He only travelled with General Eyadi,

his personal physician and Dr. Ram the head of the development bank, which is part of the Pahlavi Foundation (a philanthropic organisation).[432] From the Israeli perspective, Israeli decision-makers were interested in the Shah of Iran's perception that he had full Israeli support in his struggle against Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Not only did the Israelis want the Shah to be reassured that Israel supported his struggle against the Egyptian President, but also they were aware that the Iranians perceived that Israeli decision makers had access to and influence with American decision makers and investors. According to the Israelis, the Iranians were convinced that the visit of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol to the United States had major significance because it came just before the 1964 American presidential election and therefore showed Israel's all-time strong influence in and on the United States. Consequently, if Israel was able to provide influential potential investors to meet with the Shah of Iran, it could strengthen Israeli-Iranian relations. The Israeli diplomats finally requested press clippings from Israel on coverage of the Shah of Iran's US visit 'for local use.' The clips were duly provided.[433] The diplomats in the Israeli Embassy in Washington saw the potential conflict of interest in the Shah of Iran's 'direct' approach to connections with the Israelis during his visit to the United States. According Yael Vered's memorandum dated 22 May 1964 Vered recommended including the Iranian embassy in the 'loop.' The Middle East Division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended to the Washington embassy to raise the matter with Allam who could decide to act as he saw fit.[434]

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[432] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Embassy of Israel in Tehran to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 May 1964.
[433] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Middle Eastern Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Embassy of Israel in Tehran, 20 May 1964.
[434] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Yael Vered (Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to the Embassy of Israel to Tehran, 22 May 1964.

The Israeli diplomats in Tehran also reminded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the Shah of Iran and the Iranians felt that all Iranian interests were being met under the current state of relations. According to the Iranians, Israel had no other choice but to have good relations with Iran. They recommended in the event of the meetings with the Shah of Iran to remind the Iranians of Israeli good will. Also, due to the covert nature of relations with Iran, Israel was limited in what it could to influence prominent Jewish and non-Jewish individuals and helping in Iran.[435]

During coordination meetings with Allam, the threat of Nasserism (a socialist Arab nationalist political ideology based on Nasser's thinking) was driven home by Israeli diplomats in Washington, D.C. The Israelis amplified Nasser's threat by discussing his interference in Libya, Yemen, Aden, Cyprus, and Algeria. The Israelis, in framing the Cold War context to the Americans, told the Iranians that Nasser also enabled Soviet expansion. As a result, Iraq's relations with the Soviet Union had improved. By framing it in this way, Israel could capitalise on Cold War-era fear of the Soviets. The Iranian diplomats were advised to stress Iran's anti-Soviet sentiments and highlight Nasser's pro-Soviet leanings.[436] This historical event demonstrates, through the manipulation of Cold War context, perceptions and misperceptions.

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[435] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Embassy of Israel to Tehran to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 24 May 1964.
[436] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 93.52/1-134 7154/13. Middle Eastern Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Embassy of Israel to Tehran, 29 May 1964.

5.9   Personal Relationships Clarify Israeli Decision-Makers' Perceptions

One of the most persistent obstacles to Israel fully implementing its Iran policy was Iran consistently balancing its Israel policy with Iran's relations with Arab states. Israeli field operatives had to rely on their relationships with Iranian officials in order to obtain a clearer picture of the objective reality. These personal relationships also enabled the Israeli field operatives to send a more accurate appraisal of the current situation within the Iranian government and to evaluate the existing rationale behind Iranian statements and actions.

When the Shah wanted to influence a particular Iranian position with Israel and the Arab states, he magnified the situations to leverage foreign policy in his favour. Israeli diplomats in Tehran were aware of the Shah's technique, and had to proceed carefully as to not further intensify the situation. Israeli field operatives consistently clarified reporting from Tehran to calm decision-makers in Israel who needed to know the actual specifics of the situation and not the Shah's inflated viewpoint. Personal relationships with the Iranian ambassador to Israel helped gauge the objective reality that contrasted heavily with the Iranian official government protestations.   Additionally, Foreign Minister Golda Meir spoke with the Iranian Foreign Minister and persuaded him to compromise on a mutually acceptable agreement to send clarification to the foreign embassies in Tehran that a current letter circulating was in a personal and not official capacity. Personal relationships overcame the obstacles of Iran's propaganda and inflationary communication tactics to achieve a mutually beneficial exchange.

The volume of diplomatic communiqués between the Israeli mission in Tehran and the MFA can reflect the importance of certain diplomatic events to decision-makers at the

time. The volume of communiqués also illustrated how Israeli diplomats responded to such events. One diplomatic incident in 1964 was a list sent to friendly foreign embassies from the Israeli embassy in Tehran. The list contained the names and roles of the personnel at the mission. Such lists are not, according to protocol, circulated by the diplomatic mission itself, but only by the protocol department of the host state's Foreign Ministry. The recipients of the diplomatic list contacted the Iranian Foreign Ministry requesting clarification. According to Sedarya, the Iranian representative in Israel, he was summoned to Tehran to tell the Israeli diplomats in Tehran to request the return of the diplomatic list from the recipients. Sedarya also informed the Israeli MFA that Abbas Aram the Foreign Minister was distraught by the publication of the relations in the Israeli press. This was despite the fact he was aware of the free press in Israel.[437]

The Israeli diplomats tried to counter act the Iranian Foreign Minister's shock and disapproval by clarifying the situation to their Iranian counterparts. According to the Israeli diplomats in Tehran, the diplomatic list was sent for the purpose of clarification and ease of reference, as many embassies requested this information from the Israeli embassy on a regular basis. This was because the protocol division at the Iranian Foreign Ministry did not circulate the Israeli diplomatic list. Furthermore, Sedarya was not summoned to Tehran especially because of the list, but to collect his family to return to Israel. The Israelis in Tehran also had a number of meetings with the Iranians since their list was sent out, and the Iranians did not raise the issue.[438] The separation of the actuality of the events as opposed to the situation illustrated by the dramatics allowed

[437] Y. Vered (MFA) to Embassy of Israel to Tehran. 30 June 1964. Found in file 7154/13 ID 93.52/1/134 "The Foreign Mission in Tehran-Persian-Israeli Relations 1\1964 to 12/1965.
[438] Z. Doriel and M. Ezri (Tehran) to Y. Vered (MFA). 1 July 1964. Found in file 7154/13 ID 93.52/1/134 "The Foreign Mission in Tehran-Persian-Israeli Relations 1\1964 to 12/1965.

for a clearer vision and thus allowed for appropriate action on the part of the Israeli decision-makers.

The Israeli MFA replied to this clarification by its diplomats in Tehran by reminding them that even states with friendly relations with Israel may not necessarily have an interest in encouraging the normalisation of Israeli-Iranian relations. For example, Yael Vered, head of the MFA Middle East Division raised the possibility that Britain could have approached the Iranian Foreign Ministry 'not only from curiosity, but perhaps with the intention to sabotage and interfere.'[439] British interest in Israeli-Iranian relations is documented in Foreign and Commonwealth Office memorandums and reports available from the British National Archives at Kew. No records regarding the diplomatic list incident can currently be found, but records from 1959 and 1970 do indicate that London considered the merits of interference or non-interference pre Iran's de facto recognition in 1950 and in 1970 when the warmth of relations was perceived by the British to be in doubt. The relevant documents reveal that in 1970 the conclusion was not to interfere.[440]

In an effort to resolve the diplomatic list circulation, Israelis enlisted the aid of protocol supervisor Dr. Djahanabni, met with him and suggested that in meetings with foreign embassy heads the letter will be explained and clarified by the Israelis. The Iranians wanted Israel to formally request the return of the diplomatic list. The request for return written communication is significant within the diplomatic community as it formalises the event and documents for future reference. The Israelis believed this request for the

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[439] Y. Vered (MFA) to M. Ezri (Tehran). 5 July 1964. Found in file 7154/13 ID 93.52/1/134 "The Foreign Mission in Tehran-Persian-Israeli Relations 1\1964 to 12/1965.
[440] Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Diplomatic Report no. 347/70, 15 June 1970. The National Archives Ref. FCO 17/1276-289441.

return of the diplomatic list from the other embassies would be a very undiplomatic and symbolic 'forcer la main.'[441]

The Israeli MFA continued its damage limitation efforts with the Foreign Minister Golda Meir speaking with Sedarya, asking him why the Iranians demanded that the letter be recalled. She argued that recalling the diplomatic list would have worse consequences. The Iranian ambassador recounted Israel and Iran's good relations throughout the years and his intention to develop relations in due course, but that at this time Iran cannot develop full diplomatic relations. Meir therefore showed surprise in the recall demand for the diplomatic list. Israel, after all, was working hard in Tehran for Iran's interests as well. She also reiterated that the letter (ie. The diplomatic list) was a personal letter sent by Israel's representative Tzvi Doriel to friends for social aims. A demand for the return of the letter would be a huge burden for the state of Israel and would not be done without the approval of the Israeli government.

Meir also said that another option would be to recall the entire Israeli delegation and leave just one low-ranking diplomat in Tehran. Sedarya praised the good relations between Israel and Iran and Meir asked why he had been making anti-Israeli speeches. How would the Iranians have reacted had Israeli ministers made anti-Iranian speeches? [442] Golda Meir's relationship with the Iranian Ambassador to Israel highlighted the benefits Iran gained from their relationship with Israel. Meir's relationship with Sedarya also overcame the obstacle of Iranian fear of Israeli-Iranian relationships being formally publicised. Meir's conversation allowed a balanced

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[441] Embassy of Israel to Tehran to Middle East Division, MFA, 6 August 1964. Found in file 7154/13 ID 93.52/1/134 "The Foreign Mission in Tehran-Persian-Israeli Relations 1\1964 to 12/1965.
[442] Middle Eastern Division, MFA to Z. Doriel, Embassy of Israel to Tehran. 10 August 1964.

perspective and her personal conversation allowed both states to preserve each state's positive reputation.

The Israeli diplomats further clarified why the Iranian acted in this manner. According to the Israeli diplomats in Tehran, the Iranian posture came from the Shah, originating back to the establishment of Hassan-Ali-Mansour's government on 7 March 1964. The Israeli diplomats believed that since a visit from the Iraqi infrastructure minister and King Hussein of Jordan, the Iranians were 'startled by their own bravery' and wished to take a few steps away from Israel. The Israeli perceived the Iranian position as an exercise to balance their pro-Israeli image.[443] The melodrama surrounding the diplomatic list was the perfect opportunity to do this. The Shah, according to the Israeli diplomats, was also very sensitive regarding Iran's oil situation and was suffering from the Shah's own damaged prestige. Furthermore, Iranian oil negotiations were coming up in the autumn and a solution to the disagreement had to be found as soon as possible in a 'respectable' manner and with good will.

As a result of close working relationships with Israel, it is significant to recognise that two prominent Iranian decision-makers, a general and a foreign minister, engineered a resolution for a point of conflict between Israel and Iran. General Nematollah Nassiri, the director of SAVAK who had a close working relationship with the Israeli diplomats Ezri and Doriel and the Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aram had debated the issue and displayed the internal differences in approach to Israel within Iran in general. Aram claimed that he was angered by the problems caused by the Israelis and that he and the Shah wanted to demand the return of the diplomatic list. Nassiri worked on a draft

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[443] Embassy of Israel to Tehran to Middle East Division, MFA, 13 August 1964, p. 1.

compromise with Aram. A letter would be sent by the Israelis to the embassies that were sent the letter that, 'The aim of sending the letter was to inform of the diplomats' personal professional titles as colleagues and it has no bearing or change in the relations between the two states. In the event that the letter was construed otherwise, it is requested that the letter be returned.'[444] This compromise between the two Iranians was similar to the Israeli proposed compromise. This compromise would frame the situation as a personal letter (and a personal error by Doriel) and not as a point of conflict between the two states. Consequently, neither state's prestige nor standing would be adversely affected. It is important to note that two Iranians worked out the compromise between and Israel and Iran: the head of SAVAK, Iranian Secret Service, advocated for Israel, and worked with his own foreign minister Abbas Aram and General Nassiri to resolve what could have been a point of conflict between the two states. It is impossible to cite converging national interest and thus it was personal relationships that engineered a positive outcome for both Israel and Iran.

In Tehran diplomatic circles, the diplomatic list disagreement and the reaction of the Iranians became a matter of much chatter within the foreign diplomatic community in Tehran; especially Iran's apparent over-reaction.[445] Eventually, the matter was settled with a similar letter to the compromise between Nassiri and Aram sent to the foreign embassies. The Israeli diplomats in Tehran were under the impression that the Shah approved of the compromise, yet the Shah through his emissaries issued such stern ultimatums at the outset because the Shah promised the Arabs to be sterner with Israel. Iranian Foreign Minister Aram was then instructed to explain to Israel that this

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[444] Embassy of Israel to Tehran to Middle East Division, MFA, 23 August 1964.
[445] Doriel and Ezri (Tehran) to MFA, 24 August 1964.

disagreement with the diplomatic list had no actual bearing on the relations between Israel and Iran.[446] Therefore, they requested Israel's cooperation in resolving the matter.

This account highlights how Israel's interactions with Iran were far from the straightforward convergence of strategic interest. Also involved were perceptions, misperceptions, and important personal relationships that clarified events for the Israelis so the Israeli decision-makers could proceed around the dramatic Iranian events to a successful outcome. The actions and impressions of Israeli diplomats on the ground in Tehran, as well as the clarifying information gleaned by their Iranian relationships, allowed decision-makers back in Jerusalem to proceed judiciously and not be swayed by the dramatic viewpoint reported from Iranian officials.

5.10   <u>Perceptions and Misperceptions of Israeli Foreign Policy and The White Revolution</u>

Israeli decision-makers and diplomats had a role in Iran's White Revolution (1963-1978) and Iran's consequent development efforts. The White Revolution was a development and reform programme enacted by the Shah of Iran in January 1963 that included significant land reform, the establishment of a literacy corps, and profit-sharing for industrial workers. The technical, engineering, medical, and educational assistance provided by Israel for the advancement of Iran as part of the White Revolution created good will for those Iranians intent on improving conditions in Iran. With the White Revolution, the Shah of Iran was also interested in gaining American

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[446] Embassy of Israel to Tehran to MFA, 2 September 1964.

support for his reform efforts that included pro-Iranian lobbying and visits to the United States.

An unparalleled historical achievement for Israeli foreign policy in Iran at this time was the Iranians' flying the Israeli flag at an international conference in Tehran. It made its alignment with Israel visible for the world to see. The historical event begins with the Iranian cooperation with Israel in an international organisation was at the September 1965 UNESCO Minedlit Congress.[447] Combating illiteracy was one of the Shah of Iran's aims under the White Revolution. This was a huge initiative in which he wished to use a percentage of UNESCO member's military budgets to fight illiteracy.[448] The congress included 600 delegates from 86 states, among them 39 Education Ministers. At the centre of the Congress was the visit of the Shah of Iran with his sister, Princess Ashraf. The event was marked by great adulation for the Iranian army's Literacy corps, which consisted of 13,000 teachers to fight illiteracy.

Israel's participation was headed by the Israeli Education Minister who was accompanied by the director-general of his ministry, two educational experts, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a diplomat from the Israeli mission in Tehran. In his speech to the Congress, the Israeli Education Minister emphasised the historic connection between Israel and Persia, and Israel's willingness to help other states in need of eradicating illiteracy. Other than the Jordanian delegation's attempt to politicise the conference and the Arab representatives leaving the conference hall when Israeli delegates spoke, Israeli decision-makers were pleased

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[447] World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, Tehran.
[448] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.17/6-676 1935/3, Memorandum dated 22 September 1965 from the deputy director of the Division for International Cooperation to the office of the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs titled: "UNESCO Conference on the Eradication of Illiteracy in Tehran (MINELIT)."

with the outcome. They felt that the symbolism of Israel's participation in such a conference in Iran was important. In addition, the Iranians were pleased that Israel was able to participate without a complete boycott from the Arab states. Israeli participation gained praise from Western and African delegations. The Israeli diplomats were pleased with their symbolic position in the conference hall in the first row next to the Iranians. This was also seen as extremely important and encouraging to the Jewish community in Tehran. Conference delegates then toured the Qazvin area that had been devastated by an earthquake just a couple of years earlier.

Israeli education and agriculture experts made presentations about their work in rebuilding Qazvin. The arrival of Israeli delegation was announced on loud speakers in front of 100,000 guests in the celebrations of 25 years of the reign of the Shah of Iran. During the celebrations, two verses of the Bible were read out in Hebrew. As one Israeli from the delegation commented: 'For a while, the delegation rose from the underground in Iran, and the flag of the state was flown in a central place in national events and locations.'[449]

Through participation in the literacy conference, Israeli diplomats were able to implement Israel's foreign policy goal of gaining recognition publicly (during the conference and following Iranian national celebrations). Israeli individuals were also able to use their historic links to Iran to affirm its policy of cooperation.

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[449] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.17/6-676 1935/3, Memorandum dated 22 September 1965 from the deputy director of the Division for International Cooperation to the office of the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs titled: "UNESCO Conference on the Eradication of Illiteracy in Tehran (MINELIT)."

Not only were Israel's broad foreign policy objectives pursued and implemented in the conference, but decision-makers from Jerusalem could also see the day-to-day work of the Israeli diplomats in Tehran. The deputy Director of the Division for International Cooperation said of his visit: 'Meir Ezri found the way to open before me not only the "tallest windows" of the Iranian government, but also his opinions on all aspects and problems of what I have become accustomed to call 'the Persian challenge.'[450], The role of relationships can be seen in Ezri 'opening the tallest windows' at the Minedlit Conference in Tehran; the change of perceptions and misperceptions, can be seen in the open flying of the Israeli flag at the conference.

5.11 Conclusion

By looking at the role of individuals and their relationships, it is the argument of this chapter that David Ben Gurion's policy was indeed both influential and long lasting. It was after his resignation from office that the influence of Israel's diplomats and intelligence agents continued in implementing his original vision. I have shown throughout this chapter evidence of the importance of individuals and their influence on foreign policy formation and implementation as omitted by the Realist paradigm. Individuals and their perceptions, greatly affected the formation, implementation, and continuation of Israeli foreign policy. Both before and after Ben Gurion's tenure as Prime Minister, Israel's policy towards Iran played an extremely important role within the framework of Israel's foreign relations. As Eshkol told Iranian Chief of Staff General Bahram Ariana during his visit to Israel in December 1966, Israel's relations

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[450] ISA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs file 130.17/6-676 1935/3, Letter dated 30 September 1965 from Tzvi Brosh, MFA to Dr. Tzvi Doriel (Tehran).

with Britain, France, and the United States were good, but 'the friendship with Iran derives from the depths of the heart and is as such more valuable.'[451]

I have also shown how a foreign policy determinant in Israel included variances in the human condition as well as the mechanics of the Realist calculus. That indicates that both specific tools within middle range theories in Foreign Policy Analysis, as well as the Realist paradigm are necessary in explaining the success of Israel's relations with Iran.

I have demonstrated in this chapter the support of my hypothesis for the period of 1963 to 1967 that human relationships and the human condition as analysed using my theoretical framework be attributed to the success of Israel's relationship with Iran. It is the contribution of the individual and the use and manipulation of perceptions and misperceptions that made Israel's relations with Iran especially successful. I have demonstrated where the existing predominantly Realist leaning literature under represents the investigation and inclusion of human relationships as they relate to both the impact of the individual, with their perceptions and misperceptions.

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[451] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 67

CHAPTER 6: THE GOLDEN YEARS OF ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN(1967-1973)

6.1   Introduction

The years between 1967 and 1973 were the Golden Years of Israel's foreign policy towards Iran. During this period, trade, military and intelligence, and oil cooperation were at their highest. Additionally, Israeli influence within the Iranian decision-making framework involved very close but clandestine cooperation between Israeli prime ministers, foreign ministers, and diplomats with the Shah of Iran himself. By exploring the Golden Years and specifically analysing the relationships involved in the formation and implementation of Israel's foreign policy we can begin to understand what made those policies so successful. This is also because Israeli and Iranian common strategic interests were more or less consistent between 1948 and 1979. The high point era between 1963 and 1967 of exceptional cooperation warrants examination.

Even during the Golden Years, Israeli decision-makers and field operatives continued to face obstacles from the Iranian side such as Iranian fluctuating during negotiations on oil cooperation, and Iranians resisting to making monies available to finance oil cooperation. The Golden Years also reflect how relationships enabled Israeli foreign policy towards Iran to move from strength to strength and created an intimacy greater than the impression given by the existing literature. The Golden Years predicated the strength of the individual human relationships between Israeli and Iranian decision makers and diplomats in forging trust. Israel's unofficial ambassador to Iran, Iranian born Meir Ezri, also proved critical to the basis of future supply of oil to Israel both

from Iran and elsewhere through his cultivating relationships with Iranians and Western foreign policy entrepreneurs who assisted in providing crucial oil to Israel. It could also be argued that these relationships proved relevant in Israel's securing oil from states other than Iran.

This chapter concludes in 1973 this year was a significant turning point in Israeli foreign policy in general and Israeli foreign policy towards Iran in particular. In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, Israeli foreign and defence policies underwent complete re-evaluation as will be discussed in Chapter 7. Also in 1973, Israel's unofficial ambassador to Iran, Meir Ezri who was instrumental in developing Israeli-Iranian relations, ended his mission to Iran, and another diplomat was dispatched. As is explored at length in Chapter 7, yet introduced in this chapter, Israel's foreign policy shift in 1973 indicates misperceptions on the part of Israeli decision-makers. Israeli decision makers did not fully appreciate the value of particular individual relationships with the Iranians and as a result, Israel did not completely play to their strengths.

This chapter will explore the formation, implementation and consolidation of Israel's foreign policy towards Iran during this time frame as well as the negotiations surrounding the pivotal events leading to the Oil Agreement of 1968 and including the 42-inch Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline completed in 1970. This chapter also addresses three major events. These events are: the pipeline negotiations, the relationships with the Iranian monarch in easing obstacles, and the role of foreign policy entrepreneurs in obtaining an oil supply for Israel during and in the immediate aftermath of the Yom Kippur War. Human relationships proved instrumental in affecting the outcome of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. I have chosen to contextualise the evidence within

the sections of this chapter, rather than offering an international context section as organised in previous chapters.

Prime Minister Golda Meir was central to Israeli foreign policy towards Iran during the Golden Years. Before delving into Golda Meir's role as Prime Minister – she was elected 17 March 1969 and resigned 3 June 1974 - it is helpful to introduce Golda Meir's views. Although Golda Meir's dominant worldview was that Arabs were a monolithic and implacable enemy,[452] she held out for cultivating extensive relations with Iran, while staying mindful that Iran's sympathetic regime might fall, which explains her continued caution. Her perception of Israel's position in the world and two core foreign policy priorities as described by Yaacov Vertzberger were: 'the existence of the Israeli state and its security in a basically hostile world.'[453] Golda Meir visited Iran on many occasions and was well acquainted with the Shah and many of his ministers. As previously stated in this thesis, Meir initially worried that Iran would fall into the hands of religious extremists which is why she had concerns in the early 1960s about supplying Iran with weapons in the 1965 arms agreement. Her personal relationship with the Shah spanned more than 20 years and she viewed the Shah as a great ally.[454]

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[452] Shlaim, "Interview with Abba Eban, 11 March 1976," p. 3.
[453] Vertzberger, Yaacov, *The World in their Minds* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 124.
[454] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.

6.2   The Mystery of Iranian Oil Supply During the 1967 Six-Day War and Subsequently the 1973 Yom Kippur War

This section examines how Iranian oil kept flowing to Israel in 1967 and 1973. The two wars have been grouped in this section together due to the scarcity of declassified details regarding the oil flow during the two wars. In addition, the common element of human relationships was critical to Israel's securing of oil supplies during both wars. The Arab oil embargoes of 1967 and 1973 raise the indirect question of what happened to Israel's oil supply from Iran during those time periods. Israel's ability to defend itself without the critical flow of oil would be impossible. Suspicions arose during the course of research for this thesis because that almost all relevant documentation was deemed classified, and sections of Ezri's book and other authors were silent on this oil flow issue. However, subsequent interviews with a Mossad agent at the time, a personal assistant to Ezri, and one author began to solve the mystery of Israel's oil.

Why the Shah of Iran did not cut off the oil flow to Israel during the Six-Day War that would have crippled Israel's ability to defend itself remains an enigma. Why did the other Arab countries not pressure the Shah of Iran to stop the flow of oil to Israel remains a mystery as well, as most, if not all of the documents pertaining to this period remain classified including the final 1968 oil agreement itself. Iran enjoyed the money generated from the flow of oil to Israel, but was not dependent on that income for its survival, so why did it not tip the balance of power to the Arab countries fighting Israel by cutting off the oil supply? The only publicly documented reason was the influence of Meir Ezri.

How the Israelis could continue to fight in both the 1967 and 1973 wars in the face of multi-state embargoes remains not investigated. According to author Yossi Alpher, in

the Yom Kippur War, Iran shut off the oil to Israel and joined the OPEC Embargo.[455]

However, Tarshish Eliassi, Ezri's personal assistant for four decades, said Iran sent

tankers to the port of Eilat and the oil kept flowing.[456] Israel obtained oil through John

Farber, the Jewish-American businessman, who purchased 150,000-200,000 barrels at

the Israeli oil price. That oil was then diverted to Israel, thus easing the 1973 crisis.[457]

'As long as Meir Ezri was there, all including oil, went smoothly. The Iranian's held one

of their hands with our hands and used their other hand to criticise Israel publicly,'

Eliassi said in an interview.[458] It is evident that oil flowed to Israel from Iran either

directly or indirectly which affected the outcome of both wars. It could be argued that

Iran acted against is own national interest, risking the balance of power in the Middle

East, by clandestinely providing oil to Israel.

In an interview dated 21 March 2016, former Mossad Agent Nachik Navot, who served

in Tehran from 1969 until 1972 and then again from 1978-1979, confirmed that both in

the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War Iranian oil kept flowing to Israel.

'During both the 1967 and 1973 war, Iranian oil continued flowing to Israel. Because

of the 2016 on going litigation between Israel and Iran regarding the pipeline, most vital

and relevant information is kept classified,' Navot said.[459] In an interview dated 15

March 2016, Eliasi confirmed that Israel continued to receive oil from Iran both during

the Six-Day War and the Yom Kippur War. In the latter case, tankers carrying Iranian

oil continued to arrive at Eilat uninterrupted until the Islamic Revolution in 1979.[460]

This is corroborated in Samuel Segev's *The Iranian Triangle,* which contends that

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[455] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 15.
[456] Personal interview with Tarshish Eliasi 15 March 2016.
[457] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 470.
[458] Personal interview with Tarshish Eliasi 15 March 2016.
[459] Navot, Nachik, Personal interview, 21 March 2016.
[460] Eliasi, Tarshish, Personal interview, 15 March 2016.

Iranian oil still flowed to Israel during the Yom Kippur war even though Iran also provided Egypt with 600,000 tonnes of oil.[461] Ben-Hur Ezri, Ezri's brother and member of the Israeli delegation in Iran, further confirms that 'the flow of Iranian oil to Israel during the 1967 and 1973 wars depended on the personal relations between Meir Ezri and [Iranian oil Minister] Manoucher Eqbal - they were kindred spirits - otherwise the [Israeli] state would have been doomed.'[462]

For both wars Israel had enough oil to sustain itself and even fuel its military jets. Because of the nature of classified documents and the censoring of this topic both in printed research publications and Internet indexing, it is of significant importance that the interview with Navot be documented. The only explanation of how Israel kept functioning as a nation, much less fuelled military jets and equipment during war, would be with Iranian oil since there were no other major shipments of oil into the country. The Shah of Iran was very private in his allowance of the oil flow and great care was taken even until the time of this writing to ensure that the flow of Iranian oil to Israel both in 1967 and 1973 was kept secret, classified, and censored from current publications.

On going censorship and the rendering of documents as classified by Israeli law continues on both Israeli and Iranian sides because each has a vested interest in keeping the oil supply to Israel on the part of Iran secret. It is evident that Israel received oil from somewhere, enabling it to win, or at least survive, both wars. The mystery had been the origin of the oil. With first-person accounts of my sources provide available proof that Iran continued to supply Israel with oil in both 1967 and 1973. Additionally,

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[461] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 82.
[462] Ezri, Ben Hur. Personal interview, 27 March 2016.

Yossi Alpher offers insight into both the oil flow and the perceptions of Iranian oil flowing to Israel during those times:

> I do recall that Israel had to make more oil purchases around that time on the Rotterdam spot market. Our energy economy was small enough that this could work, though the oil would have been more expensive. This was a minor issue when seen against the overall trauma in Israel from the 73 war. In any event, at the clandestine level there was more concern in 73 over the Shah muzzling Barzani and preventing him from mustering troops against Iraq than over the oil embargo and this may tell us that the oil kept arriving. Certainly intelligence cooperation continued.[463]

This is relevant to perceptions and misperceptions as the Shah of Iran directly manipulated the perception of the other oil producing states. Had Arab nations discovered Iran's continued flow of oil to Israel in both instances, an imbalance of power as well as instability would have been formed in the oil-producing nations. The Shah of Iran understood that he had to preserve this delicate balance. However, he continued to clandestinely provide oil support to Israel through the pipeline, and through indirect sales to both Israel and John Farber. The release and control of sensitive information about oil flow during this time was heavily monitored and restricted. The net effect was to keep up the façade – the perception – to all other countries except Israel that Iran was not supporting Israel in both wars.

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[463] Email correspondence with Yossi Alpher, 10 November 2016.

6.3   The Revitalisation of Israeli-Iranian Relations Following the 1967 Six-Day War

The Israeli victory in June 1967 breathed new life into oil negotiations with Iran. Indeed, author Uri Bialer emphasises that the 1967 'war was a seminal event in Israeli-Iranian oil relations.' Before the 1967 war, the Israelis perceived that:

> The Shah of Iran had developed misgivings over partnership with us in the plan. He apparently felt … [that] partnership with Israel in the plan guarantees nothing in the way of Iran's national interest, [and] on the other hand [was liable] to interfere with the Shah of Iran's political plans in the region-forming an anti-Nasser front drawing closer to Iraq, and separating [Iraq] from the Arab nationalist camp.[464]

In stark contrast, following the war, Israeli diplomats in Tehran understood how the closure of the Suez Canal and Israel's proven security stability dramatically changed Iranian perceptions. In private, unofficial talks with Fatollah Nafici, one of the heads of NIOC and the official in charge of contacts with Israel, conveyed to the Israeli diplomats in Tehran that mid-June 1967 was a 'now or never' moment for cooperation on a 42-inch pipeline.[465] According to the Israelis, the Iranians understood that there was justification for running the existing oil pipeline at full capacity for export to Europe and set a valuable precedent of oil transport through Israel.[466] The Israelis perceived a great opportunity for expansion, which 'could serve us well in negotiations over the big plan.'[467] The careful control of public information allowed the Shah of Iran the ability to manoeuvre with Israeli diplomats in private meetings. These private meetings, which could jeopardise his standing in the Arab states, helped to illuminate the Shah of Iran's real perceptions and his true view of the results of the Six-Day War, and his changed perception of Israel after the 1967 victory.

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[464] Ben-Haim to Eban, 10 May 1967, ISA 5256/4.
[465] Legation to MFA, 13 June 1967, ISA 8437/6.
[466] Bialer, "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East," p. 44.
[467] Israeli Legation to Tehran to MFA, 17 June 1967, ISA3165/3.

This is clear from a personal and private meeting in the Shah's summer palace with only Abba Eban, the Israeli foreign minister, and the Shah on 11 September 1968 (translated from Hebrew): The Shah of Iran also excitedly told Eban in the same September 1968 meeting: 'You did our dirty work' [meaning that Israel's success in the 1967 Six Day War] Had it not been for Israel's success in June of 1967, [Nasser's] subversive influence would have conquered the whole region. Now it is essential and important to fortify your government's successes in order to assist the helpless Jordan.[468]

During the Six-Day War, Iran conducted a few anti-Israeli actions to show the world and create the perception that it supported the Arabs. In private, the Shah was very much in favour of the Israelis. As a prime example, the Shah of Iran blocked Australian Jewish volunteers from reaching Israel via Iran. These actions, though public, were effectively meaningless to the outcome of the war and Israel's success. The fundamental components of Israel's relationship with Iran remained intact - especially the flow of oil. These very public acts had little or no effect on Israel but led to a perception that the Shah of Iran was not supporting Israel. In fact, however, if he had really wanted to affect the war and cripple Israel, he would have shut off the oil. The fact that he did not do so showed his true support of Israel, but only from behind the scenes.

The Shah of Iran needed to maintain his standing with the Arabs. If he was seen supporting Israel publicly, he would have faced massive internal opposition and from Muslim countries around the world. He needed to control the perception of the world as

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[468] ISA Eban to Golda Meir, 11 September 1968, ISA 5256/4 130.2/14-58.

seeing him not support Israel and manufactured a global misperception through the few ineffective acts of non-support to Israel. A Realist would say that this was the Shah of Iran following a simple cost-benefit analysis and doing what was necessary to increase Iran's standing, influence, and power within the Arab community. While this may still have been the case, and been his logic, in fact the Shah of Iran's actions on the ground demonstrated how he went against what many Iranians would have seen as the Iranian national interest in supporting Israel.

Though the Shah's actions were clearly publicly not supporting Iran, these carefully chosen public responses created a perception when the reality was that cutting off oil to Israel would have given Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Syria the advantage they needed to win the war. When Eban and the Shah discussed Iranian-Israeli relations, the Shah of Iran said that it was necessary to strengthen the connections between Israel, Iran, and Ethiopia, but Ethiopians were ignoring this. However, the Shah fell silent when Eban told him that Ethiopia had its own ambassador in Israel. The Shah had not known that Ethiopia had good relations with Israel. The Shah expressed that he was surprised and impressed with Israel's strong international diplomatic reach. This created a perception in the Shah that not only was Israel strong militarily, but it was also influential diplomatically.

This change in perception on behalf of the Shah, related to his hesitance to have fully normalised and public diplomatic relations with Israel. Since Ethiopia had a full ambassador in Israel, it raised the awareness in the Shah that he needed to consider his relationship with Israel. The perception that Eban created with his conversation with the Shah was that Israel was far more entrenched in the region than the Shah originally thought and forced him to give careful consideration to Iran's public support of Israel.

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This analysis in and of itself may not be directly applicable to the Shah's own perceptions and misperceptions, but it undoubtedly demonstrates the role of perceptions and misperceptions in the analysis of Israel's relationship with Iran and surely the difference between Israel winning and losing the Six-Day War.

The Shah fully understood the need as a tool for controlling public perception and the use of misperception with respect to foreign policy creation and implementation. He told Eban in their closed-door meeting in late 1968 that, 'Israel had to understand that if the choice is between a shape without contents and contents without shape, then the second choice is preferable.'[469] This passage highlights that the Shah did not want to antagonise the Arabs in the region and he did not want internal opposition from very religious Muslims in Iran who related more to their Arab Muslim 'brothers' than with Israel. The Shah effectively was creating the perceptions of both his governmental employees as well as the peoples of Iran and Israel by withholding the public view of normalised relations between Israel and Iran.

The Shah created the perception that there was nothing formal between the countries, when in fact he was working on normalising that relationship only in private. At the end of the Eban-Shah meeting, the latter expressed how important such a thorough conversation was to Israeli-Iranian relations. He also pointed to the television set in the room. 'I see a lot of you here and enjoy it,' he said. The shah was referencing Eban's public coverage on in the international news. Because the Cambridge-educated Eban had a very polished, English gentlemanly appearance and manner, this created a perception of confidence, competence, and trustworthiness that helped lay the

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[469] ISA Eban to Golda Meir, 11 September 1968, ISA 5256/4 130.2/14-58.

groundwork for the Shah's future support of Israel. Eban's positive public image and positive diplomacy helped form the perception of Israelis in the public mind, which only supported the Shah's future goals of supporting Israel. Abba Eban's diplomacy strengthened the Shah's confidence in supporting Israel, if only privately. There was a deep mutual respect between the Shah and Eban. This respect was supported by Eban's careful and methodical execution of positive diplomatic and public expression of Israeli interest supporting the Shah's perception that Eban could be trusted. Iranian national interest at the time was publicly anti-Israel. The Realist prism would indicate there was no need for this meeting or that such a meeting would endanger Iranian interests. Yet, they met regardless, which suggests there was a compelling reason beyond what the Realist calculus would predict.

The Shah and his feelings, Eshkol and his beliefs, and the Israeli diplomats in their understanding of Iranian negotiation philosophy also greatly affected oil foreign policy. All of these elements had nothing to do with a formulaic rational calculation of the national interests as would be argued by Realists. It is therefore evident and proved by my research that an additional imperative layer of analysis be applied to fully understand Israeli foreign policy creation and implementation, as well as circumventing human, political, and contextual obstacles. Vogler helps to clarify the role of perceptions and misperceptions by explaining that, 'One of the consequences of adopting a decision-making approach which focuses on the behaviour of the decision-makers themselves in that we must confront the difficult problem of how they perceive their environment.'[470]

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[470] Vogler, John. "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Psychological approaches," *Understanding Foreign Policy-The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*. Michael Clarke and Brian White, eds. (Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1989), p. 135.

6.4 The Israeli-Iranian Oil Agreement of 1968

The role of human relationships played an important role in the success of the Oil Agreement of 1968. In order to aid understanding, we need to examine the history of the oil talks between Israel and Iran. These negotiations began in the autumn of 1954 and accelerated after the Suez War in 1956, when the Soviet Union broke off relations with Israel. The first 8-inch pipeline completely contained within Israel was built in December 1957 and the second 16-inch pipeline was completed at the end of 1960. Both pipelines were completely contained within Israel and were designed to enhance the ability for Iran to transport its oil into Europe. These pipelines also ensured a vital, reliable and dependable source of oil for Israel. For Iran, it reduced dependency on the Suez Canal for oil transport and allowed independent oil sales to the European Economic Community.

For the reasons mentioned above, the negotiation and agreements leading to the Oil Agreement of 1968 are central to the study of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. The time frame within which the pipeline was completed, with the available machinery and technology at the time, demonstrated the effectiveness of the landmark cooperative efforts and ability to overcome obstacles between Israel and Iran.

6.4.1 *Agency*

Uri Bialer begins to demonstrate how the role of agency was instrumental in the foreign policy of Israel towards Iran. More details follow below. The cultural, political, and educational experiences of Ezri and Tzvi Doriel allowed them to seamlessly navigate government, military, and personal organisations to achieve the greatest possible

outcome for their efforts. Additionally, Iraqi-born Yaacov Nimrodi, Israeli military attaché to Tehran, made great use of his multi-national cultural experience, as Bialer explains:

> Israel made wise use of a number of clear-cut advantages during the negotiations. At their outset, Israel had already managed to chalk up a decade of experience in its circuitous, yet richly rewarding, relations with NIOC. In the late fifties, Tzvi Doriel, who initiated and cultivated the Israeli-Iranian connection, was joined by two other envoys, Tehran-born Meir Ezri, who smoothly entered Tehran's high society and the Shah of Iran's court, and Yaacov Nimrodi, who had the same success with Iran's military and secret service. This helped detect fluctuations in Iran's political-economic pulse and the meanderings of the pipeline negotiations so that accurate messages could be relayed to Jerusalem.[471]

In a large number of diplomatic correspondence and policy memoranda found in the Israel State Archives in files of both the relevant Prime Ministers and MFA files, it can been seen how Doriel, Ezri, and Nimrodi overcame significant obstacles in the negotiation process by using their cultural and educational knowledge to smooth the transactions and allow for a successful outcome.

In the foreign policy implementation stage, short-circuiting explains more fully the series of events that leads up to the outcome and what the existing conventional Realist account omits. In examining the same outcome, one can see how the diplomats used relationships to bypass existing policy constraints and overcome obstacles in a more efficient manner. Such short-circuiting can be seen throughout the time period of this chapter that included ground-breaking talks on intelligence, military, and oil cooperation.

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[471] Bialer, "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East," p. 54.

Additionally, personal assurances and effective communication as part of inter personal relationships was another important way in which Israeli diplomats achieved shortcuts and overcame obstacles during the oil negotiations of 1968. The impact of Israeli agents using personal relationships to influence the oil negotiations to build a 42-inch pipeline from Eilat to Ashkelon and overcome obstacles can be seen during the negotiations. The Israeli representative to Iran, Meir Ezri, accompanied Finance Minister Pinchas Sapir to a meeting with the Shah in Tehran on 12 September 1967. The Israelis' objective was to persuade the Shah that the new 42-inch pipeline would transport oil to the Mediterranean and bypass the Suez Canal that had been closed since the Six-Day-War to supply Iran's customers in the Mediterranean basin.[472] During the Shah-Sapir-Ezri meeting, Sapir argued that not only would the pipeline change the world's oil distribution map and would involve complementary development as a result such as oil tankers, terminals, pumps, and infrastructure.[473] Sapir also appealed to the Shah's regional ambitions by suggesting that Iran could become a world-class oil power and overtake Western and Arab cartels. As Meir Ezri explains: 'Sapir reminded the Shah that a man takes out life insurance not because he is eager to die, but because he wants the assurance of knowing that his loved ones are provided for.'[474] As a result of this meeting, the Shah agreed to the 42-inch pipeline in principle.

Other obstacles continued such as financing the pipeline and internal Iranian resistance. After the joint efforts of Israel's Dr. Tzvi Doriel and NIOC's Fatahollah Nafisi, and much negotiation, a foreign lender was secured after much searching, Deutsche Bank. The Israeli diplomats were needed once again to smooth over issues in the negotiations in December 1967. Meir Ezri, while on a visit to the United States and Britain, was

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[472] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 464.
[473] Ibid, p. 465.
[474] Ibid.

summoned immediately back to Tehran by Israeli Finance Minister Sapir in order to resume the talks that had met obstacles and stalled.

When the draft agreement was finalised in the spring of 1968, Iran demanded that Israel pay for the oil above the market rate and Israel refused. Sapir refused to pay more than the market rate and stated that Iran enjoyed a monopoly of supplying oil to Israel, as Israel had no alternative source of supply. The Shah personally intervened following Sapir's standpoint, and Israel and Iran came to a mutually agreeable outcome. [475] Utmost secrecy was also upheld due to Iranian insistence when on 25 July 1968, the Israeli government restricted any publicity connected with the Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline including information about investments in installation and investments in operating costs of construction work, the sources of the oil and the uses to which it was put, and sales to foreign entities. [476]

'The Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline, 42 inches in diameter and 260km in length, capable of transporting 60 million tons of crude oil per year, was laid in a few months, and in its first year of operation shifted 10 million tons-more than the annual needs of the State of Israel. The concession was to last for 49 years.' [477] The pipeline was constructed by the Mekorot Company, beginning in June 1968 and ending in December 1969. The oil flowing through was meant not only to meet the needs of Israel and of Iran's customers in Europe, but also there was a surplus left at Israel's disposal, to be sold, as required, to other countries. [478] The Israeli-Iranian partnership became formalised on 25 February 1969 and titled Trans Asiatic. A lavish celebration was held at the end of the

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[475] Ibid, p. 466.
[476] Ibid, p. 467.
[477] Ibid, p. 466.
[478] Ibid, p. 467.

negotiations in Tehran. All was not smooth even after the agreement. More obstacles arose and further personal intervention was required in order to overcome the obstacles.

Another example regarding the use the use of personal relationships to overcome obstacles can be seen in 1970 when the financing was secured for the oil tankers that transported the oil from Iran to Israel. A problem occurred within the financing procedure, and it was Meir Ezri's friendship with the Iranian Court Minister Asadollah Allam who used his influence with the Shah to give the approval for the launch of the tanker company. Each state had 50 per cent of the shares for the tanker company. The Israelis were in a hurry to get the tanker company up and running while the Iranians favoured a slower approach. 'We were prepared to take on any conceivable loss, while the Iranians just seemed intent on enjoying the profits.'[479] The tanker company was finally launched in the spring of 1970 when Dr. Tzvi Dinstein visited Tehran and met with the Shah and Allam. As a direct result of Ezri's urgings to Allam, the tanker programme was pushed forwards.

The Iranians continued to insist on absolute secrecy with respect to the oil flow from Iran to Israel. As a result, Israel needed to take extra steps and establish 'false fronts' by using the services of private individuals such as Israeli businessman Yaakov Meridor and Norwegian entrepreneur Fred Olsen of Fred Olsen Shipping. Olsen and Meridor were also members of the board of newly formed Israeli-Iranian tanker company which met infrequently in Oslo. Ezri explains the uniqueness of the geographical constraints and the gravity of the oil flow between Israel and Iran:

> At the time of the outbreak of the Revolution, we had a contract with
> the Iranians allowing for free-flow of oil and also the use of three

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[479] Ibid, p. 468.

supertankers which only a few ports could handle - including the oil
ports of Eilat and the terminals of Kharq Island. A relay of
supertankers brought the oil to Eilat, and it was exported from
Ashkelon in smaller tankers. Even when the Suez Canal was reopened,
the biggest tankers could not pass through it - laden or empty - but
they could reach Eilat.[480]

Such direct and personal involvement by Israeli diplomats and ministers not only

surmounted the obstacles, but also ensured a more than satisfactory resolution to the

negotiations: the conclusion of an agreement in 1970 for the purchase of oil tankers and

partnership with Iran.

While the negotiations proceeded and before they were finalised, Israeli Minister of

Finance Tzvi Dinstein took extreme measures to be in constant contact with Israeli

construction and material-suppliers. These proactive measures by Dinstein,

accompanied by great financial and personal reputation risk, ensured that the moment

the pipeline negotiations were finalised, construction could commence immediately.

Dinstein bargained his reputation in exchange for material preparation and supplies

even though he could not control the outcome of the negotiations and could only

influence his suppliers. This demonstrates the immense power of agency. The human

conditions of trust and instinct were at play with the suppliers who believed Dinstein to

be a credible and reliable predictor of the outcome.

Bialer highlights the importance and scale of Israeli-Iranian oil relations:

The partnership with Iran, from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s, was the
"golden key" to its oil supply - over 90% of Israel's import came from Iran. It
also guaranteed Israel first rights (in the 1963 agreement) to oil produced by
Iran's national oil company - NIOC (National Iranian Oil Company) whereby
Israel is committed to purchase 50% of its oil from NIOC.[481]

[480] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 468.
[481] Bialer, "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East," p. 30.

The construction of the 42-inch diameter pipeline in the late 1960s from Eilat to Ashkelon was one of the greatest accomplishments of Israeli policy towards Iran during that decade.

In a communiqué, Ezri writes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

> Dr. [Tzvi] Dinstein raised the subject of the letters and the different subjects of contention in a most insightful way. There can be no shadow of doubt that Israel not only expressed a number of times in the past its readiness to form a partnership in the field of oil transportation in its containers, but also presented memorandums to the heads of the Iranian state and also to Dr. [Manoucher] Eqbal and Dr. Rezah Fallah personally. The intentions of Israel were rebuffed by NIOC and the Iranian government claiming the presence of urgent problems on Iranian security matters that prevent the availability of monies for a partnership with us... and he, Dr. Tzvi Dinstein, is ready to offer his services to the relevant Iranian authority to persuade the owners of the tankers to come into partnership with NIOC. He emphasized and allayed their doubts and finally persuaded them with the blessing of Dr. Eqbal. We signed the agreement which is attached. This speaks for itself.[482]

Ezri's letter clearly demonstrates the power of agency, relationships, personal assurances, and communication. Dinstein's offer of personal participation was enough to overcome Iran's resistance. As a matter of fact, he never met with them but his offer of involvement was enough. Personal influence is not directly related to national interests and is not investigated fully within the Realist framework of analysis. In my extensive archival research relating to the oil negotiations, this example is just one of many additional documents in Hebrew housed at the Israel State Archives that support the role of agency in Israel's policy formation, implementation and consolidation.

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[482] ISA MFA 5256/4 130.14-58 Letter dated 8 March 1972 M. Meir Ezri to MFA. NIOC is the National Iranian Oil Company, headquartered in Tehran and established in 1948. It currently ranks as the world's third-largest oil company.

The immediate short-term gains of the pipeline were very small but the negotiators could see how the longer-term gains of the pipeline greatly served the Israeli national interest. In an interview shortly before his death in 2015, Ezri explained the importance of agency in the pipeline negotiation. 'Our negotiators were determined to complete an agreement even though it cost Israel dearly even though I said to Tzvi Dinstein that the oil was worth less than water,' he said. The Iranian oil was refined in Israel.[483] Any agreement with the Iranians would have meant greater recognition from Iran and greater cooperation with Iran. Ezri and Dinstein recognised the long term value which fulfilled two of Israel's highest policy goals towards Iran: recognition and securing an oil source.

One of the vital components of Israel's policy towards Iran was to secure a regular flow of Iranian oil to Israel. This involved many years of negotiations in which Iran, as the oil supplier, had an advantage. It was the responsibility of the Israeli negotiators to deliver an agreement. However, as several Israeli diplomats from the time have stated, the terms negotiated did not represent a prudent rational outcome. Israel paid dearly for the agreement, both individually and financially, while having to maintain utmost secrecy for the Iranians to remain in the negotiations. The focus was not only on the negotiation, but also on the building of the oil pipeline. Israeli diplomats and negotiators surmounted technical obstacles as well. The Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline was completed on 5 February 1970 at the cost of $136 million and represented a complex and collaborative engineering success and step forward in Israeli-Iranian relations.

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[483] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.

6.4.2 *Human Relationships and Risk*

During the spring oil negotiations of 1968, the tireless activity of Pinchas Sapir, Israeli Minister of Finance, stood out because of his complete involvement from high-level negotiation to ensure that all levels of pipeline production, i.e. supply of manufactured steel, were ready and available. This attention to detail meant that the Eilat to Ashkelon pipeline was built in a relatively short time beginning June 1968 and completed in December 1969. The oil negotiations of 1968 were pivotal to Israel's energy needs as well as pivotal to Israel's Iran policy. The completion of the oil negotiations on the 42-inch Eilat to Ashkelon pipeline also meant that the oil that flowed through the pipelines not only met the oil needs of Israel and of Iran's European customers (supplies to Europe were delivered indirectly through the Italian port of Trieste). There was a surplus left at Israel's disposal that could be sold to other countries.[484]

In an interview, Ezri explained the importance of perceptions and misperceptions with respect to Sapir:

> I admit: I saw Sapir's actions as a dangerous adventure, since he was taking the entire responsibility for the project on himself, having no guarantee that the Shah would keep his promise. Even if he did keep it, there was a danger that his minions would throw a spanner in the works and try to sabotage the whole deal. But Sapir's enthusiasm, commitment and decisiveness removed all our doubts. He said to me: "Meir, I shall be at your disposal all day and every day, whenever you need me." He kept his promise, and his aides were no less reliable.[485]

If Ezri persisted in viewing Sapir's actions as a dangerous adventure, he could have hindered the ability for the pipeline to be completed as quickly as it was. Ezri perceived Sapir's enthusiasm, commitment, and decisiveness as something positive, thereby

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[484] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.
[485] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 466.

negating his earlier misperceptions. Any deviation from his positive perception of Sapir would have limited Sapir's ability to get the job done. Ezri trusted Sapir despite his earlier misperceptions.

Ezri stressed the importance of perception with respect to both Iran and Israel in relation to the pipeline negotiations. He emphasised the importance of perception because even though both Israel and Iran shared mutual interests in cooperation, it was the Iranians' perception of Ezri as both an Israeli and an Iranian patriot that made his position tenable. 'Surprising as it may seem, my involvement in the management of these companies, was actually on behalf of the Iranians: the executives of NIOC saw me as one of their own and were sure that I would act in their best interests ... my own appointment was explained by Dr. Eqbal of the board of NIOC when he said, "Mr. Meir Ezri is an Iranian patriot no less than we are. He will protect our interests, and as a loyal representative of Israel too he will ensure that this is to the advantage of both sides."'[486] According to Ezri, at numerous junctures in his tenure in Tehran numerous Iranian government ministers, as well as the Shah of Iran, offered him prominent positions within the Iranian government at the end of his tenure with Israel.[487]

It is most likely that a perspective that is more centred on power would have not fully appreciated the unique position of Ezri being able to orchestrate Israeli foreign policy within NIOC solely because the Iranians perceived and trusted him as a loyal Iranian subject. The ability of Ezri to seamlessly interact with both Iranian and Israeli leaders due to both their perceptions as advocates of each of their sides illustrates the power of perception in creating, implementing, and executing foreign policy with respect to the

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[486] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 469.
[487] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 9 October 2014.

pipeline and other ventures with NIOC.   Though Realists would say this was a convergence of national interests, it is clear that without both Iran and Israel concluding that Ezri would work in their own countries' interests, the pipeline would not have developed as quickly as it did. Ezri's Iranian upbringing helped immeasurably.   His ability to see Israeli foreign policy through the Iranian prism allowed him to bridge the cultural and language gap between Israel and Iran. That allowed him to engineer policy that was almost immediately acceptable to both states.

6.4.3 *Perceptions and Misperceptions*

The awareness, control, and manipulation of perceptions and misperceptions by Israeli diplomats and decision-makers directly affected the successful outcome of the oil pipeline negotiations and surmounted the many obstacles put in place by beliefs, culture, and competing national interests. The gravity of the results of misperception in foreign policy as it relates to the oil pipeline examined in this chapter could determine its construction or non-construction, having far-reaching effects both for Iran and Israel, and the overall economic and strategic effect of the pipeline oil supply. In 1968, there was a perceptual difference between the Western legalistic view of Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and his diplomats in Tehran, who understood the necessity of including the Iranian cultural strategy of negotiation. Interpreting events solely through a Realist lens would validate this Iranian strategy, but would restrict this decision-making solely to the calculus of the national interest. In fact, the inability of the Israeli Prime Minister to see the necessity of including Iranian cultural considerations in the negotiations almost led to a breakdown in the negotiating process. Such a result would

have prevented the creation of the pipeline, effectively jeopardising the supply of vital Iranian oil to Israel.

My first examination begins with Eshkol's misperceptions of negotiating with Iran that could have ruined both the oil negotiations and oil supply to Israel as well as the entire oil deal. Eshkol wanted Israeli diplomats in Tehran to complete the deal. Their interpretations prevailed, leading to conclusion of the deal, signed by NIOC President Manoucher Eqbal and Israeli Finance Minister Pinchas Sapir on 29 February 1968 in Tehran. One week before the signing of the oil contract, the Iranians placed a huge obstacle in the way of negotiations by issuing an ultimatum that would end the pipeline process Iran then sent a draft detailing the financial matters which they posed as an ultimatum - Israel was asked to sign the contract or to see the deal as null and void and return to square one.[488] The ultimatum was that the only financial guarantee that would come from the Iranian side would come only if the Israeli-Iranian pipeline companies' assets and income could not cover commitments for repayments of the loan from the pipeline's German creditors.[489] Tzvi Dinstein was only able to manage the situation upon arrival in Tehran. Dinstein appreciated that this could have potentially ended the negotiations and prevented the flow of Iranian oil via Israel.

Eshkol's misperceptions and the potential harm to the oil negotiations were mitigated by the Israeli diplomats in Tehran by dissuading Eshkol from raising the counter-ultimatum, which would have broken the talks. The Prime Minister thought the negotiations would be a straightforward transaction with Iran selling oil and buying for hard currency. His calculus only allowed him to see the money that could be saved and

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[488] Bialer, "Fuel Bridge Across the Middle East," p. 49.
[489] Ibid.

the strategic value of oil to Israel. When the negotiations became complicated by the Persian negotiation philosophy that involved mixed messages and ultimatums by Iran threatening to 'see the deal as null and void,' the Prime Minister responded with a legalistic response that involved a counter-ultimatum: that 'Israel's financing commitments through an intermediate loan would also not be binding if Iran suspended the export of oil through Israel.'[490] This counter-ultimatum seemed straightforward in a legal context but not in the specific context of an Israeli oil negotiation with Iran.

According to Israeli government documents,[491] the Israeli diplomats in Tehran recognised that Eshkol's counter-ultimatum would put the entire oil negotiation process at great risk. It also raised a 'red flag' to warn decision-makers in Jerusalem of Iranian perceptions and of Israeli potential misperceptions. Doriel and Ezri clearly explained to decision-makers at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the counter-ultimatum was 'overtly political and would be rejected by oil businessmen'; the request would involve a lengthy Iranian bureaucratic process; the Shah of Iran was 'liable to be offended by perceiving it as an expression of lack of integrity'; and liable to induce the Iranians to present their own counter political conditions.[492] Not only were Doriel and Ezri aware of Israeli standing within the negotiations, but they were also acutely aware of the perceptions of the Iranians during the oil talks. This awareness of perceptions meant that the Israelis were able to negotiate effectively in creating proposals that would be more palatable because they understood the Iranians' issue with vulnerability. Thus, they did not create counter-proposals that might escalate obstacles but, rather, removed or minimised them. Doriel and Ezri controlled the Iranian misperception and minimised their risk.

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[490] ISA Meir Ezri and Tzvi Doriel to MFA, February 24, 1968, ISA 6822/1.
[491] Ibid.
[492] Ibid.

Without a detailed examination of the real powers that directed the negotiations it is incomplete at best to attempt to analyse the formation and implementation of foreign policy. During a major crisis just before the signing of the agreement, Tzvi Doriel and Meir Ezri informed Eshkol of what they constantly heard in private conversations, that the Iranians felt that they were 'taking a risk in pursuing a deal' with Israel a country that was 'under a perpetual threat of war,' with Arab oil and communist states, which were among Iran's foremost clients, while all of Iran's assets and investments would be in Israel under her 'exclusive management.'[493] Doriel and Ezri were aware of Iranians' negative perception of Israel exclusively managing their assets and investments under the 'perpetual threat of war' so they specifically crafted their arguments during the negotiations in a way that would reassure Iranian negotiators that the risk would be minimised or eliminated.

This manoeuvring around the Iranian perception eased the tension and allowed the talks to move forwards. Without this awareness and careful consideration of the Iranian perceptions, the arguments for the pipeline could be eclipsed by the Iranian fears. Negotiations would stall. An interpretation through the Realist lens would present that Doriel and Ezri were acting in the strategic, economic, and national interest on behalf of Israel. The Iranian negotiators tasked with looking out for Iran's best interests were swayed by Doriel and Ezri to minimise the fears behind Israel managing Iran's assets and investments. As a result, they were no longer acting in Iran's best interest, thus challenging the Realist theory that all negotiations simply are a function of competing national interests.

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[493]ISA Meir Ezri and Tzvi Doriel to MFA, February 24, 1968, ISA 6822/1

6.5   The Impact of the Individual in Practice

Earlier in the Chapter, I discussed the puzzle of the continued Iranian oil flow to Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur war. In order to see further the impact of the individual in Israel's foreign policy towards Iran, this section demonstrates the direct and critical role of foreign policy entrepreneurs and Israeli diplomats during the 1973 Yom Kippur war and its aftermath. In this way, the cumulative impact of individuals also becomes clear.

6.5.1 *The Role of Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs in Securing a Vital Oil Supply to Israel*

Foreign policy entrepreneurs, people who were not related to Israel, Iran, or indeed any government, helped Israel achieve one of its foreign policy goals: attaining a secure source of oil. That this was possible offers yet more evidence of the significance of the role of agency. Foreign policy entrepreneurs proved instrumental in helping alleviate the oil shortage experienced by Israel following the 1973 Yom Kippur War. In doing so, these individuals helped progress the Israeli national interest as well as policy towards Iran. Moreover, such entrepreneurs successfully overcame hurdles obstructing Israeli foreign policy implementation. In short, foreign policy entrepreneurs played a vital role helping Israel obtain the oil it needed.

Dr. John Farber, an American Jew and also a foreign policy entrepreneur is a good example. He approached Ezri in December 1973. He had with him numerous letters of introduction from the Israeli government. As a known and trusted NIOC customer, he was allowed to buy 150,000 to 200,000 barrels of oil at the same price as Israel. Having obtained oil himself according to this quota, he then diverted it to Israel via Ezri. This could not have come at a more opportune moment; Israel, like many other countries, was hit hard by the 1973 oil crisis. Ezri accompanied Farber in all his meetings with

NIOC.[494] During the war and the oil crisis that followed the actions of Ezri and the actions of Farber ensured that extra Iranian oil flowed to Israel under the cover of sales to an outside party.[495] Ezri's relationship and cooperation with Iranian government and NIOC officials, as well as his connections with foreign policy entrepreneurs such as Farber, demonstrates how Ezri served as a hub and arguably also opened up future options for Israel to obtain oil from Israel and further afield.

6.5.2 _The 1973 General Ali Kia Letter to Golda Meir_

When analysing the role of agency in foreign policy, it is imperative to look at the impact of the individual as a whole during his or her entire service in a position. A letter acknowledging the important role of relationships was written about Ezri by General Ali Kia. In 1973, Ezri's tenure as Israeli ambassador to Tehran came to an end. This is significant because he was the longest-serving Israeli diplomat to a single-host state in Israeli history. Upon hearing about Ezri's retirement, on 11 June 1973 Kia wrote the following in English to Meir: 'I cannot hide the feeling of several thousands of intellectuals in Iran and myself about our sorrow by missing him and in the same time our sympathy and appreciation for what he has done in the past for both our countries.'[496]

Kia was commander of the second department - military intelligence - at the Army General Star Headquarters. Ezri and Kia had constant contacts from their initial meeting on the 26 April 1958 until his dismissal on 1 April 1961 and beyond. He was

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[494] Ezri, _The Legacy of Cyrus_, p. 470.
[495] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.
[496] ISA 6896/20 43.4/98-125 General Ali Kia to Golda Meir dated 11 June 1973.

considered the 'Master Key' to the Iranian government and helped Israel on several levels including political, military, intelligence, social and agricultural.[497] Ezri explains that Kia was the 'Master Key' because he capable of opening any door, although occasionally the Israeli ambassador was instructed to limit, or 'cool down,' the link with Kia because of disputes between the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the Mossad.[498] 'In these contexts, Kia showed himself a guide and a motivator of inestimable worth,' Ezri said in an interview. 'He arranged meetings between me and every one of the heads of these organizations, introducing me to all with true oriental exaggeration, till it seemed to them I represented a state of great power in the region, perhaps capable of influencing events in their home country.'[499]

In response to Kia's letter, the Prime Minister made several preparatory notes and drafts, which can be found in the same Prime Minister's Office file. One such preparatory hand-written note indicates the significance of Ezri's contribution from the Prime Minister's perspective. Realists would assume that Ezri's fulfilment of his mission would have automatically consisted of striving toward maximising Israel's power and influence within the national interest. That would have been sufficient fulfilment of Ezri's mission. From the Realist perspective, 'warm friendship' would have been irrelevant as long as Israel's interests were pursued. However, as can clearly be seen in the translation of the Prime Minister's hand written letter below, it was the 'warm friendship' between Ezri and Kia, and consequently Israel and Iran, that enabled Israel to implement Israel's policy in an effective and efficient manner. Translated from the original Hebrew from the Israel State Archives:

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[497] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.
[498] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview 10 October 2014.
[499] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 98.

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> Meir Ezri from the time of his deployment was instrumental in the warm friendship and we hope that it will continue in the future. Meir Ezri fulfilled his mission in an excellent manner and this is greatly appreciated. With thanks, The Prime Minister [500]

The inclusion of Prime Minister Golda Meir's personal correspondence to Iranian General Kia regarding Ambassador Meir Ezri and obtained from the Israel State Archives, demonstrates the impact and significance of their relationship and agency, as well as their importance to Israeli foreign policy-making history. At the same time, however, these documents – unlike many other files on Israeli-Iranian relations – have been declassified. The Shah of Iran was Ezri's most significant point of contact during his 'glory days' after 1968.[501] The Shah of Iran's confidence in Israel was clear as he personally intervened whenever obstacles arose with respect to Israel-as can be seen from the Israeli perspective below:

> As for us, as long as there are complicated situations for us in Iran - both of the results of misunderstandings or of abuse - we immediately turned directly to the Shah of Iran or via government figures, and each application was always answered with the Shah of Iran's support and an order from him to our advantage.[502]

As a point of contact, the role of relationships plays an important role because if the parties did not like, respect or trust each other, the channelling of information in order to overcome obstacles would break down.

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[500] ISA Prime Minister's Office 6896/20 43.4/98-125 Hand written note by Golda Meir on a memo dated 1 July 1973.
[501] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 261.
[502] Ibid.

Ezri was the point of contact for the Shah on behalf of Israel. In his last documented meeting with the Shah of Iran, prior to the completion of his tenure as Israeli Ambassador, is described in the following meeting summary memorandum:

> The Shah of Iran said to Meir Ezri how extensive ties were made between the two countries that was unprecedented and Shah of Iran did not know how Meir Ezri could acquire for himself and for Israel, such numerous friends in all levels of the public. The Shah of Iran added that Meir Ezri created for himself so many friends who love him and admire him and that the Shah of Iran did not know any other Iranian that attained such great success. The Shah of Iran added that Meir Ezri should be overjoyed that what exists between the two states no other formal ambassador has been able to attain. The Shah of Iran said that he knows what Meir Ezri did for Iran and he appreciates it greatly.[503]

The Shah of Iran's sentiments were echoed by Amir-Abbas Hoveyda, the former director of NIOC and the longest-serving Prime Minister in Iran's history. Hoveyda was surprised that the Shah of Iran remembered Ezri. Hoveyda, who worked closely with Ezri in NIOC, told him in 1974 that the Shah of Iran asked what he was doing after his post completed. 'In Iran, one cannot remember a foreign ambassador who received as many decorations from the Shah of Iran and the government as you did during your mission,'[504] Hoveyda recalled.

6.6   Cumulative Impact of Human Relationships on Israel-Iran Relations

Integration into the local community, influence on the local population, facts on the ground and becoming a source of reliable intelligence allowed the role of relationships to contribute and make a cumulative impact on the formation and implementation of

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[503] ISA MFA 5256/4 30.2/14-58 Memorandum from M. Meir Ezri to the MFA dated 25 June 1973.
[504] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 291.

Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. I have discussed and demonstrated in individual instances how foreign policy agents, in the form of decision-makers, ministers, or diplomats, influence foreign policy. It is useful to also examine the cumulative effects of agency when a diplomat assesses his or her approach and actions once they have left their position. This provides a useful tool with which to measure and examine the diplomats' actions over many years with the benefit of hindsight.

Ezri returned to Israel following the completion of his service in Iran. Shortly afterward, he submitted a report summarising his decade-and-a-half-long tenure for Prime Minister Golda Meir and other decision-makers in Jerusalem. In the report, dated July 1973 and addressed to Meir and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ezri emphasised that Israel's goals were achieved through the day-to-day actions of the Israeli diplomats. They were able to do so thanks to their integration and their creation of facts on the ground in the various aspects of Israeli-Iranian relations. The majority of these situations were achieved in reality as opposed to in the abstract despite the disapproval of the Iranian authorities. Ezri continued to explain that the Israeli diplomats were aware that the Iranian government would be uncomfortable in formalising Iran's relationship with Israel so the Israeli diplomats had to circumvent that issue by making friends with Iranian decision-makers to enlist their aid in overcoming their resistance. These relationships enabled the Israeli diplomats to implement Israel's foreign policy despite no formal agreement in place.[505] The obstacles that the Israelis overcame were surmounted using human conditions such as relationships, trust, and friendships, whose effects permeated every level from the day-to-day operations to the final signing of foreign policy documents. This is something that Ezri continually emphasises in his

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[505] ISA Prime Minister's Office 6896/20 43.4/98-125 "Fifteen Years of Tenure in Iran 1958-1973," July 1973, pp. 17-18

book, interviews and diplomatic communiqués from the time period: Iranian individuals cooperated with the Israelis despite the difficult situation and environment in which they found themselves.

Another attribute of the cumulative effect of human action and behaviour can be seen very clearly in the reputation that Israeli diplomats built in Tehran in the unofficial Israeli embassy. The facility, which was structured and functioned exactly like a traditional working embassy, was known as the best-connected embassy in Iran, according to Ezri. All other foreign embassies with contact in Iran turned to Israel's facility both to understand the inner workings of the Iranian government and to use Israel's personal relationships with government officials to assist their political and economic efforts. The de facto Israeli embassy was unparalleled in its influence, understanding, and ability far above any other foreign embassy.[506] Lord Alliance corroborates the ISA document from 1973. 'The one who contributed most to Israel's relations with Iran was Meir Ezri, there's no doubt. There wouldn't have been anything if there was no need for the relations but Iran is now the loser because relations were ended.'[507]

Foreign embassies that were under the impression that they had access to valuable information as well as vital connections and influence within Iran were not the only ones to come to the Israeli Embassy in Tehran for assistance such as reliable intelligence and information. Remarkably, Iranian government officials also turned to Ezri and the embassy for the same reasons. According to an Associated Press article dated 6 June 1969, the Israeli Embassy in Tehran was the only reliable centre for

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[506] Ibid, pp. 16-17.
[507] Personal interview with Lord David Alliance, 18 July 2016, London.

obtaining up-to-date information, covert or overt, from the entire Middle East – as well as within Iran itself.[508] Ezri's influence was pervasive and effective in driving forward Israeli policy in Iran: 'The Iranians believed that the embassy and I [Meir Ezri] personally, could secure them promotion in the governmental and public hierarchy, thanks to Israel's good relations with all Iran's governments and its ministers and with the Shah of Iran.'[509]

The role of friendships helped forge alliances, partnerships, and agreements that ensured the success of the foreign policy despite economic and national divergence of interests in both conflict and the oil pipeline.

6.7   Israeli Misperceptions in Shifting Their Iran Strategy

Egypt forged a closer relationship with Iran after the Six-Day War. The Suez Canal was dredged and prepared for International shipping and, subsequently, in May 1974 Egypt was granted a loan from Iran to widen the canal and to lay a pipeline from the Egyptian cities Suez to Alexandria. As a result, the Eilat-to-Ashkelon pipeline became less important to NIOC as an export route to Europe. Consequently, Israeli decision-makers were worried because the existing oil arrangements were extremely beneficial to Israel and the Egyptian pipeline would jeopardise the importance of the Israeli pipeline.

As a result of an Israeli change in strategy, Prime Minister Golda Meir listened to Eban's recommendation to appoint Uri Lubrani in 1973 to head the Israeli Embassy at the end of Ezri's tenure. Uri Lubrani was a seasoned diplomat, an advisor to both Prime

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[508] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 187.
[509] Ibid, p.188.

Minister David Ben Gurion and Bureau Chief Levi Eshkol. Israeli decision makers at that particular time misperceived that the relationships between the Israeli diplomats and their Iranian counterparts were simply strategic and did not fully appreciate that the relations depended also on the relationships between particular Israeli diplomats and their Iranian counterparts.

As a part of the new Israeli strategy, Israeli decision-makers welcomed the change in ambassadors in order to try a new approach and to make Israel's position more public in Iran. Up until this time, Iran's recognition of Israel had *de facto* status and therefore Israeli diplomats did not present their credentials to the Shah of Iran as in typical diplomatic protocol from around the world. However, Lubrani took with him to Iran a letter of credentials from the President of Israel, Ephraim Katzir, as if following traditional diplomatic protocol of two states with normalised relations.[510] This is an example of Israeli misperceptions and how the change in individuals left misperceptions unchecked.

Golda Meir listened to Eban, who was under the misperception that Iranians would suddenly agree to full normalisation of relations by accepting the President of Israel's letter of credentials for Lubrani. As soon as Lubrani arrived in Mehrabad Airport in Tehran, he discovered that Eban and Meir's expectations were mistaken. No one from the Iranian Foreign Ministry came to meet him, which is customary when new ambassadors arrive for their postings. The Iranians were very aware of this diplomatic protocol and the non-welcome of Lubrani sent a strong message to Israel that Iran was in no way ready to normalise its formal relations.

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[510] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 83.

In contrast, Ezri was welcomed and met with the Shah of Iran. But the Shah of Iran refused to meet Lubrani. Lubrani asked Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Ali Khalatbari to arrange an audience with the Shah of Iran as was customary to bring greetings from the Israeli Government. In breach of Iranian cultural courtesy, Lubrani continued to request meetings with the Shah of Iran over a period of several months. Though advised to be patient by Khalatbari, Lubrani persisted and was summarily refused.[511] Lubrani was unable to cross the cultural and political barrier Ezri enjoyed.

6.8   Conclusion

The analysis of human relationships and perceptions and misperceptions provides vital information on foreign policy not explored by the Realist prism during the time period covered in this chapter. I have shown how agency, along with the manipulation of perceptions and the reaction to misperceptions, has shaped both overt and covert foreign policy. We have seen over and over from the Shah of Iran to Eshkol to Ezri to Meir, and to many others how the human conditions of friendship, fear, and an understanding of cultural relations allowed foreign policy to flourish despite the many obstacles of the time.

I have demonstrated in this chapter that impact of the relationships between individuals must be attributed also to the success of Israel's relationship with Iran. The major events that include the pipeline negotiations leading to the Oil Agreement of 1968, the Israeli relationships with the Iranian monarch that bypassed obstacles, and the role of

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[511] Ibid., p. 84

foreign policy entrepreneurs and other individuals in securing a vital oil supply to Israel during the 1967 and 1973 Wars demonstrate the impact of the relationships between individuals in allowing the success Israeli foreign policy. It is evident that individuals and their perceptions, greatly affected the formation and implementation of Israeli foreign policy.

I have also shown how a foreign policy determinant in Israel included variances in individual behaviour as well as the mechanics of the Realist calculus indicating that – examining the role of interpersonal relationships, as well as the Realist paradigm - are necessary in explaining the success of Israel's relations with Iran. I have shown how the individuals overcame the obstacles in the negotiations in order to serve the national interest.

Even during the Golden Period of the two states, the obstacles faced by Israeli decision-makers were complicated and many, without the influence of the personal relationships between the operatives on the ground in Tehran and the Iranian locals and decision-makers the outcome of the oil supply, pricing, and delivery systems would have been very different. I have also clearly demonstrated how the actions of one individual affected the supply of Iranian oil to Israel during times that oil was critically needed.

CHAPTER 7: THE SHIFT OF ISRAELI POREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN(1973-1979)

7.1   Introduction

In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, Israeli foreign policy in general, and towards Iran in particular, evolved from a robust, interactive, and productive relationship to one characterised by strain and complexity. The surprise attack that kicked off the 1973 war shocked Israeli decision-makers, and led to a further foreign policy shift from a focus on quantity to quality of Israeli defence. Two objectives consistently emerged in Israeli foreign policy during this period: a closer relationship with the Superpowers, especially the United States, and the normalisation of diplomatic relations with other states. The pursuit of a peace agreement with Egypt's Anwar Al-Sadat was pivotal to Israel's normalisation goals in the region. The ascension to power of Likud in 1977 marked the first time in Israeli history that the country was not led by the Mapai Party, which had merged into the Labour Party in 1968. The new Likud government inherited strong, yet informal, diplomatic relations with Iran.   However, Iran and the international community waited to see the effect of the Likud government on Israel's regional policy, as well as its foreign policy more broadly. The eviction of all Israeli nationals during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which resulted in a complete rejection of further Israeli foreign policy efforts towards Iran, marked a further shift from the robust, interactive, and productive Israeli-Iranian relationship and towards one characterised by strain.

Three dominant factors changed the regional context and Israel's relations with Iran. The first factor, the Algiers Agreement of 1975, was a peace accord between Iran and

Iraq that unexpectedly halted Iranian aid to Iraqi Kurdish insurgents. Israel had previously cooperated with Iran in aiding the Iraqi Kurdish insurgents. One of the consequences of the Algiers Agreement was that the Israeli government was no longer able to help the Iraqi insurgents on their own because Israel needed Iran's cooperation to do so. The second factor, the Tzur Project, made Iran Israel's closest strategic friend after the United States. The Tzur Project reached its peak in 1977-78. The $1.2 billion project was based on an exchange of Iranian money and oil for six Israeli planned weapons systems. The third factor was the negotiating process that led to the 1978 Camp David Accords, which paved the way for the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in 1979. It marked the first peace agreement between Israel and an Arab state. Collectively, these three factors, along with additional smaller events and factors, formed the basis for Israel's regional view during the period.

The obstacles presented to Israeli decision-makers at this time that also formed the basis for Israel's regional view were: The Algiers Agreement, the threat of Iran's rapprochement with the Arab States, a change in Israeli government, and negotiations leading up to the Camp David Accords leading to peace with Egypt.

The departure of Meir Ezri, the Israeli ambassador to Tehran in 1973, marked a significant change in the way that Israeli foreign policy was delivered and received in Tehran because the Iranian-born Israeli ambassador could manoeuvre easily in Iranian foreign policy decision making circles. After the departure of the Israeli ambassador, the relationship, information flow, and negotiations between the Shah of Iran and subsequent Israeli ambassadors became less frequent and more formal. That indicated a shift away from the original relationship, which was fluid, uncomplicated, and straightforward. Personal reassurances to the Shah of Iran by well-known Israeli

decision-makers created a shift in foreign policy. These contacts ensured the continuous flow of Iranian oil to Israel—which had been in jeopardy—and later influenced the Shah's acceptance and tolerance of the new Likud government. The role of relationships in human behaviour greatly influenced the foreign policy objectives, creation, and implementation of relations between Israel and Iran.

Perceptions and misperceptions significantly influenced relations between Israel and Iran. After 1973, Iranian-born Israeli ambassador Meir Ezri had left Tehran, so was no longer able to control perceptions and prevent misperceptions between the states. Indeed, he could no longer use his cultural influence and understanding to smooth communication between the decision-makers. Israel's desire to control perceptions and prevent misunderstandings was vital to the overall success of the mission. The efforts to influence perception continued, but not to the same degree as prior to 1973. Jerusalem decision-makers perceived that Israel was still isolated in the region and no other state was willing to come to Israel's aid. This perception of isolation also made concessions with Egypt more difficult. Israel perceived itself as isolated and exposed even though the rest of the region, including the Shah of Iran, and the world viewed Israel as a great regional power. Perceptions and misperceptions played a key role in the volatile period leading up to and during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, where every potential perception and misperception had the unique and powerful ability to alter the course of history.

7.2   International Context

The shock of the Yom Kippur War left lasting consequences on Israeli decision-makers. After the war, Israel was 'a small, psychologically exhausted country'.[512] However, Israel now faced a policy agenda both domestically and internationally that was bigger, more complex, and of a type typically associated with a world power, not a tiny developing country. Because of prior military success, Israel had an inflated view of its overall capability as a military power. The Israeli military was overconfident and did not fully recognise the severity of the Arab threat. The Defence Minister said that, 'the 1967 war was the last of wars … after which there is nothing left for the Arabs but to plead for mercy.'[513]   Dayan's words offer a glimpse of the Israeli military's mind-set prior to the surprise attack in 1973, and explain why he and his colleagues felt such shock. Even though Israel conclusively won the war, and fared better than the Arab offensives, the war nonetheless 'came as a blow to the people, they expected something easier and better,' as Dayan later stated.[514] The combined factors of Israeli lack of preparation, underestimation of the Arab threat, and the full realisation of their country's vulnerability left Israeli decision-makers in a state of shock.

Following the Yom Kippur War, Israel entered a new 'era of complexity' that included a decision by Israel's leaders to expand and provide a nuclear option for Israel emphasising quality over quantity. Foremost in Dayan's mind was the vision that, 'Quality and imaginative solutions can preserve [Israel's] edge over Arab quantity, not the current [under the Rabin-Allon-Peres team during 1974-1977] attempt to compete

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[512] Yaniv, *Deterrence Without the Bomb,* p. 191.
[513] Badri, H, Magdoub, T & Zohdy, M. *The Ramadan War, 1973* (Virginia: T.N. Dupey 1978), p. 203.
[514] Embassy of Israel, *October War* (Canberra: Press and Information Bureau, 1970), p. 70.

with our adversaries quantitatively.'[515] It appears that this strategy was universally applied to Israeli-Iranian relations. Thus, Israel urgently sought to formalise and intensify its relations with Iran, but Tehran did not reciprocate. Israel's active pursuit of nuclear weapons also shifted attention from quantity to quality of Israeli defence. As a result, Israel sought to cooperate with Iran on developing new avenues for Israeli, and consequently for Iranian, defence. Israel's new foreign policy objective of wanting to develop and not just sell weapons to Iran heightened the importance of the relationship and changed the Israeli strategy. Israel privately discussed Dayan's new deterrence policy with the Shah.[516] The Israeli decision-makers' focus on quality over quantity shaped foreign policy objectives and created new avenues of growth towards Israel's defence development.

An additional major factor within the international context was Israel's pursuit of closer ties to the United States. Following the 1973 war, many Israeli decision-makers, especially those who appreciated the great military and economic aid that came from the United States, found the concept of a formal alliance increasingly attractive.[517] From an international viewpoint, the Soviet Union moved away from Israel following the 1967 War because it saw Israel as something akin to a colonial power. Israel no longer sought either an informal or formal relationship with the Soviet Union and certainly did not seek aid from Moscow. Even though a formal written alliance was never achieved, Israel continued to pursue ever-closer ties to the United States.

Israel continued trying to decrease its sense of isolation by persistently pursuing formal normalisation and public recognition internationally and regionally as an important on

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[515] Quoted in Yaniv, *Deterrence Without the Bomb,* p. 195.
[516] Ramazani, *"Iran and the Arab-Israeli Conflict,"* p. 421.
[517] Yaniv, *Deterrence Without the Bomb*, p. 196.

going foreign policy objective. In the period between 1973 and 1979 Israel pursued its foreign policy objective of establishing, sustaining, and expanding peaceful relations with the Arab states and the wider Middle East.[518] At every possible opportunity, Israeli decision-makers pursued formal diplomatic recognition by other states. This pursuit of recognition was most eagerly directed towards Iran because it would have sent a message to the Arab world, the United States, and the Soviet Union that Israel was not alone in the Middle East. The public recognition of Israel, with full formal diplomatic relations with other states, was a prominent factor in Israel foreign policy within the international context.

The Algiers Agreement of 1975 was a further pivotal challenge in the framework of Israeli-Iranian relations on several levels. First, Israel was completely taken by surprise because Israeli decision-makers were not informed prior to its signing. This agreement was an agreement between Iran and Iraq to settle their border disputes and conflicts and served as a basis for the bilateral treaties signed on 14 June and 25 December 1975. The biggest repercussion of the Algiers Agreement on Israeli-Iranian relations was the cessation of Israeli and Iranian cooperation in aiding the Kurdish rebellion. A discussion of the effects of the Algiers Agreement on Israeli foreign policy towards Iran follows below.

The pursuit of a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt constituted the key effort in Israel's goal of normalising its relations with its neighbours. The agreement between Israel and Egypt signed 26 March 1979, which stemmed from the 1978 Camp David Accords, was the first treaty of its kind between Israel and any of its Arab neighbours.

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[518] Reich, "Israeli Foreign Policy," p. 125.

This agreement would not have been possible without pressure from the Shah of Iran towards both Anwar el-Sadat and Menachem Begin. The negotiations that preceded the Camp David Accords affected Israelis directly, as the Shah of Iran placed direct pressure on Israeli decision-makers. These negotiations took place in the summer of 1975, preceding the Camp David Accords. Sadat was satisfied in the summer of 1975 with the negotiations, and he agreed to a three-year ceasefire with Israel in exchange for a partial Israeli withdrawal and the evacuation of the Abu-Rudeis oil fields. As part of the final negotiations for the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, Iran agreed to guarantee Israel that it would make up the difference for any oil supplies lost as a result of Israel's handover to Egypt of the Sinai Peninsula, from which Israel had been extracting oil. This was done in order to produce concessions from Israeli leaders in peace talks with Egypt.

Yitzhak Rabin was Prime Minister from 1974 until 1977. Rabin was known as a conceptualiser with a highly structured and analytical mind. He was IDF Chief of Staff during the Six-Day War, and later Ambassador to Washington (1968-1973) and Prime Minister (1974-1977). Rabin's worldview was that of an American-leaning centrist and strategist, and was considered a Realist.[519] Rabin saw Iran as an extremely important strategic ally to Israel. In 1975, when Israel's strategic importance to Iran was waning, Rabin was able to reassure the Shah and achieve a much needed oil supply agreement with the Shah following direct talks with him.[520]

Yitzhak Rabin as Prime Minister was only satisfied with the Iranian oil supply guarantees after he personally met covertly with the Shah in Tehran on 16 August 1975,

[519] Avner, Yehuda. *The Prime Ministers,* p. xviii.
[520] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 88.

two weeks prior to the signing of the oil supply agreement. The Shah's personal and direct reassurances made the agreements possible.[521] The Shah of Iran also worked through the United States to exert indirect pressure on Israel. The pursuit of peace as well as the peace agreement between Israel and Egypt was one of the most prominent driving factors of Israeli foreign policy within the international context.

With the election of the Likud Party on 17 May 1977, Israeli political philosophy shifted from sociological objectives to territorial objectives. The Likud Party was a right-wing political party in Israel founded by Menachem Begin. Begin's perception of Israel's position in the world directly influenced his view of foreign policy. His worldview has been characterised as:

> "secular realism" and "religious messianism" and underpinned by a deep rooted perception of pervasive anti-Semitic hostility from Arabs in particular, and above all the PLO, reflected in a foreign policy doctrine characterized by two main tenets. First, liberation of *Eretz Yisrael*, which for Begin meant the territory comprising Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, in addition to Israel's international borders which marked the said territories as Palestinian.[522]

Begin is an additional example of the complex manner in which a leader perceives the world and the lens through which he or she sees their surroundings. This is an indication of the added benefit of looking at individual leaders because there is more to the story than a perspective that centres on the balance of power. As a Begin biographer

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[521] Ibid, p. 87.
[522] Delgado, Magdalena C. "A Constructivist analysis of religion's role in foreign policy: The cases of Israel, Iran and Saudi Arabia under the leaderships of Menachem Begin, Ayatollah Khomeini and Fahd bin Abdulaziz" (Unpublished PhD Thesis submitted to the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2016), p. 114.

explains: 'For Begin, reality genuinely existed on two levels - one ideological, and another resting on the rationality of political realism.'[523]

Begin's view towards Iran was extremely positive. He saw Iran as the key to stability in the Middle East in general and the Persian Gulf in particular.[524] Iran was extremely important to Begin and the Prime Minister met secretly with the Shah in February 1978 in Tehran. A first-hand account of Begin's impression of the Shah describes how,

> He was very impressed with the Shah's personality and his wide horizons. Begin later told his aides that the Shah was an excellent monologist. Of the four hours of their meeting, the Shah had spoken for three hours and forty minutes. Begin said it was extremely interesting to listen to him.[525]

The Likud Party was the first right-leaning party to form an Israeli government and remains in existence at the time of writing. As author Shlomo Avineri coined, the new 'territorial school' 'clearly focused on the historical Land of Israel, the term does not advocate indiscriminate territorial aggrandizement.' In contrast, the Labour 'sociological school' placed greatest emphasis on the internal structure of Israeli society, not necessarily the extent of its territory.[526] This shift in Israeli political philosophy created an unknown with the Shah of Iran, as Sohrab Sobhani observed:

> The election of Begin on a territorialist platform, therefore, was a disappointment for the Shah of Iran. Iran's relations with Israel were established and flourished under the leadership of the Labor Party, with whom the Shah of Iran and his advisors had a good working relationship. The geopolitical and economic views of men like Dayan and Begin were very similar to those of their Iranian counterparts.[527]

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[523] Sofer, Sasson. *Begin: An Anatomy of Leadership* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 99
[524] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 96
[525] Ibid, pp. 105-6.
[526] Avineri, Shlomo. "Ideology and Israeli Foreign Policy," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 37 (Winter 1986), pp. 4-6.
[527] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 99.

Likud's victory changed the landscape of Israeli-Iranian relations. It created uncertainty on behalf of both Israeli and Iranian decision-makers because, although he did not know Likud's political philosophy, the Shah understood that it was different from what he had grown accustomed to from Israel.

7.3   The Shift in Relationships due to Israeli Personnel Changes in 1973 and 1974

The relationship between the Shah of Iran and Israel continued to deteriorate after the resignations of Israeli Ambassador to Iran Meir Ezri in 1973 and Prime Minister Golda Meir in 1974. During his 15-year tenure, Ezri met frequently with the Shah of Iran—much more often, in fact, than the Shah of Iran met with his own ministers.[528] On 1 May 1972, Ezri reported back to the Israeli Foreign Ministry that the Shah would be happy to meet with Prime Minister Meir in order to coordinate Israel and Iran's stance on the Middle East before US President Richard Nixon's visit to Iran. In a memorandum from Meir to Dayan regarding the Shah of Iran, Meir referenced their meeting using terms that were indicative of a personal relationship between Meir and the Shah: 'What is your view of my affair with the Shah? I think that it is too good (humor).' Dayan replied to her: 'It's better that it is too good than too bad.'[529] The close relationship between the Shah of Iran, Meir, and Dayan is illustrated by their ability to joke about their closeness as well as indicative of the high level of trust between the parties. Relations after 1973 depended more on the Israeli Prime Minister to the Shah contact level and needed constant reassurance through leader to leader contact, when

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[528] Israel State Archives Newspaper article clipping, "Our Man in Tehran." Retrieved 16 May 2012, www.archive.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/aoF5D4AD-61F9-42BA-BoO8F-F3DooBD95C42/0/GoldaShah3.PDF. Interview with Meir Ezri 26 June 2015, Savion, Israel.
[529] Israel State Archives Memorandum with handwritten notes titled "Conversation of the Prime Minister With the Shah on 18.5.1972." Retrieved 16 May 2012, www.archive.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/aoF5D4AD-61F9-42BA-BoO8F-F3DooBD95C42/0/GoldaShah3.PDF.

prior to 1973 the relations did not depend entirely on leader to leader contact because the daily contact of the Israeli and Iranian diplomats and decision makers in Tehran resolved most issues.

Conversely, when the Israeli approach and Israeli personnel in Tehran changed during 1973, the Shah of Iran refused to meet with Lubrani, the new ambassador to Tehran (with Lubrani's hope that the Shah would accept his credentials), over a period of three and a half years, which sent a strong message of displeasure to the Israeli government about the change in personnel.[530] Lubrani took with him a formal letter of credentials signed by the President of Israel but the Iranians refused to accept it and the Shah of Iran refused to meet with him. In the words of Samuel Segev, 'It was clear that, for the time being at least, the Shah of Iran was not interested in meeting an Israeli representative and that his credentials would remain filed away in the embassy as silent testimony to the complexity of Israel-Iran relations.'[531] It is clear that the change in personnel had a meaningful effect on the shift of the relationship because the relationships and the individual connections prior to this period resulted in covert meetings and secret agreements based on mutual trust and respect.

The refusal to accept the credentials and meet with the Shah of Iran is a clear indication of a shift in trust and mutual respect. A letter of credentials represents formal, normalised relations, which is what Lubrani and the Israeli President were trying to force onto the Shah of Iran. Ezri never pushed formal relations on the Shah of Iran. Instead, he worked within the Shah of Iran's comfort level and created mutual private

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[530] Lubrani, Uri. "Yigal Allon in the Palace of the Shah of Iran: August 1976: Memoir," *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, pre-1948 to the Present*. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.), (Waltham Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2008), p. 357.
[531] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 84.

agreements between the countries resulting in the pipeline, intelligence, and weapon sales agreements, and development contracts.[532] In an interview, Ezri emphasised that his non-threatening approach and sensitivity to the Iranians' comfort level was something that he continuously had to emphasise to Israeli decision-makers who continually made efforts to publicly normalise the relations between Iran and Israel.[533] Every attempt to formally normalise relations up until the revolution resulted in no formal action, but rather place a strain on the existing relationships.

The perceptions and misperceptions of the Israelis regarding the Shah of Iran greatly affected the formation, implementation and consolidation of Israeli strategy. Some authors, such as Sobhani, have argued that Dayan did not trust the Shah of Iran following the 1975 Algiers Agreement. For example, as well as the shuttling to receive reassurances from the Shah of Iran, Dayan travelled to and from Tehran in 1977 and insisted on public and de jure recognition of Israel.[534] It could be argued that Dayan's shuttling was a result of his decreased trust of the Shah following the Algiers Agreement.

7.4 Behavioural Instruction to Israeli Foreign Ministers and Diplomats Prior to Service in Iran

In preparing the Israeli foreign ministers and diplomats for their service in Iran, the Israeli government distributed a document that instructed foreign policy actors on how to handle visitors coming to Israel from Iran. With the aid of the document, Israeli decision-makers and diplomats would be better equipped to overcome obstacles from

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[532] Personal interview with Meir Ezri, 26 June 2015, Savion, Israel.
[533] Ibid.
[534] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, pp, 26-27.

the Iranian side. Israeli decision makers were aware that effective communication was also a pivotal element in Israel's dealings with Iran. Some of the instructions given to Israelis regarding their dealings with Iranians were:

'DO's'

1. Speak positively about the Shah, his care of his people both economically, but in developing the country as a whole;

2. Let them know how much we appreciate the religious tolerance in Iran to the Jewish community and that the Iranian expats are treated the same in Israel.

3. Speak about Israeli-Iranian relations as almost normalised and how there is extensive trade between the countries emphasising Israelis $70 million in exports to Iran annually. ElAl continues to operate six flights daily between Israel and Iran.

4. The Shah appreciates the difference between economic, trade, and political agreements. Emphasise how the shah did not agree with the OPEC embargo as a political tool against Israel.

5. Emphasise how Israel helped Iranian agriculture efforts by training 600 Iranians to improve growth.

6. Finally, Israelis were advised that Iranians were very sensitive to compliments and that Israelis needed to be helpful, polite, and speak with a soft voice in deference to Iranian gentler communication styles. Finally, Israelis were advised to show proficient knowledge of Persian art, history, and culture, and demonstrate a positive impression of knowing Iranian history by heart.

'DON'TS':

1. Don't get dragged down in political arguments that are likely to cause friction such as discussing the Middle East conflict.

2. Don't compare Iranians to Arabs. The average educated Iranian would be offended by such a comparison. Don't mention the words 'Ajamim,' which is an Arab insult towards Persians.

3. Don't criticise directly or indirectly, the Shah, his personality, his idiosyncrasies, his way of governing in Iran or anything negative against the Persian Nation.

4. Don't put down the Iranians because of their style of negotiating and conducting business for commerce. Especially with respect to the way they handle themselves in the Bazaars. And don't call them devious.

5. Do not cause arguments or problems between Iran and the Arabs. If an Iranian brings up this matter, it is better that you listen politely and let him express himself without your reaction.

6. Don't divulge that Iranian petroleum is sold directly to Israel, despite this being an open secret. Let the person you are conversing with say it first.

7. Don't divulge to the person you are speaking with who you know, which Iranians you know in connection with the military cooperation between the two states.

8. Avoid highlighting our special relationship with the Baha'is in Israel. It is better to generalise that we respect all religions and minorities and enable them free expression.[535]

The document clearly demonstrates the desire on the part of the Israeli government to shape public opinion in Iran by Israeli diplomats and foreign policy actors during the pursuit of the national interest with one not being viable without the other. This document also acknowledges the potential Israeli perceptions of the Iranians and sought

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[535] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs 6820/13 130.2/46.221 Memorandum "Do's and Don'ts," dated 9 September 1975.

to counteract any negative biases that any Israeli decision-makers could hold. This is important because any demonstration of such negative biases could have completely derailed Israel's relations with Iran due to acute Iranian sensitivities.

7.5   Overcoming Obstacles Post 1973 in Previous Oil Agreements

An obstacle faced by the Israelis was when the Iranians were in breach of a 1972 oil supply agreement (related to the 1968 Oil Agreement discussed at length in the previous chapter) and did not supply Israel with 1000 tonnes of oil because of problems with production. Meir Ezri insisted vehemently on the cancellation on a debt of $10 million that the Iranians imposed on the Israelis as a surcharge due to price rises that had taken place since the original delivery date. The Iranian pleaded force majeure and said that they terminated the 1972 agreement and were not going back to it. The Iranians said they could supply this oil in the second half of 1974 because the rest of the oil was already earmarked for someone else. When Ezri intervened, the Iranians admitted that Israel had paid an inflated price - $17 a barrel - but pointed out that the price was now $20 a barrel.[536]

Meir Ezri explains in his own words in detail the convoluted and constantly changing terms and conditions of the sale of Iran to Israel in 1974. As explained at the beginning of this chapter, Ezri left Tehran in 1973 but he continued to consult the Israeli government and continued to communicate with Iranian leaders on behalf of the Israeli government.

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[536] Ezri, *The Legacy of Cyrus*, p. 472.

In 1974 Israel bought a total of 4 million tons of oil from Iran, for its own needs. We wrote a fairly stiff letter to Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda, protesting at the especially high price that we were asked to pay in the first half of that year for Iranian crude - when Israel had no access to other oil suppliers in the region and was dependent exclusively on oil imports from Iran, on the basis of long-standing agreement between Israel and the Iranian Empire. Israel, I pointed out, was perhaps the only state in the world where half of the oil that it needed was supplied at a considerably higher price than that laid down at the oil conference in Tehran in December 1973.[537]

Ezri reached out to the Iranian Prime Minister and the Iranian Court Minister directly:

We asked for the Prime Minister's intervention in getting a substantial discount in price for the second half of 1974, and also put the court minister, Asadollah Alam, in the picture. We mentioned the long-standing and productive relationship between the two countries in all matters relating to the oil business, and went on to describe how - for technical reasons - those 129,000 tons of light oil that we were supposed to be buying at $4.5 per barrel, had not been delivered. Now we were expected to pay $15 per barrel (prices had quadrupled after the Yom Kippur War). We also asked for longer termed credit, and all this - to compensate us for the new prices which were doing severe damage to our country, and the losses incurred by the suspension of the Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline during the Yom Kippur War and sometime after it. [538]

Meir Ezri's personal connections with the Iranians, as well as being raised and educated in Iran, gave him particular insight and personal connections that allowed him to influence the oil prices set by Iran:

Dr. Palah, Eqbal's deputy, advised us to tell the policy shapers in his land that the Iraqis were selling similar oil to the Syrians for only $3 a barrel, and asked for similar consideration for Israel. My efforts and those of my friends, eventually ironed out the difficulties. Israel was a customer which - even in peak times of the buyer's market in oil - was taken seriously, and whose opinions counted.[539]

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[537] Ibid, p. 472-473.
[538] Ibid, p. 473.
[539] Ibid.

Ezri was using the advice of one Iranian on how to gain the best advantage on influencing the Iranian leadership to affect the price of oil. Without his personal relationship and personal experience within the Iranian community, there would most likely not have been a shift in the oil price or, if there were, the discount would not have been as steep.

7.6   Perceptions from Israel of Iran and the Middle East post-1973 and their effect on the Iran Policy

Despite the Israeli foreign policy successes discussed in the previous section, Israeli perceptions of Iran and the Middle East after 1973 highlight the atmosphere and context in which Israeli individuals approached policy towards Iran and the Middle East in general. Examining these dominant perceptions is extremely important to understand the time period. In November 1977, a communiqué was drafted from Israel to the Israeli ambassador in Tehran, to prepare the Israeli ambassador in light of Dayan's talks with Iranian decision-makers in Bonn, West Germany. The communiqué clearly illustrates Israeli decision-makers' perceptions of the Middle East and the United States, as well as the Soviet Union.

> The United States isn't just a mediator between the sides but is involved in a very obvious way which was expressed in its clear warnings to the Soviets in 1967 and 1973, and it was also expressed by action … the last [1973 war] was difficult and nobody lifted a finger as long as it appeared that we (the Israelis) are ready. Only when we crossed the Suez Canal the _____ [redacted wording] was called into action. Nobody was ready to offer us significant help … what would have happened if the 1973 war would have started from pre-1967 borders.[540]

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[540] Israel State Archives, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 445/5 93.52/1-63. Memorandum dated 30 November 1977. A part of this memorandum was redacted.

Had this happened, the extra territory that Israel gained in 1967 would have been more difficult to defend than the smaller territory in 1973. The communiqué continues, 'Egypt is quite powerful and advanced and could choose peace or war without the support of the other Arab countries, however the other Arab countries are not powerful or technological enough to go to war without Egypt's cooperation.'[541] When addressing the Geneva Peace Talks with Israel with regard to the Middle East, decision-makers in Jerusalem observed that, 'our perception of peace is not identical with that of Sadat. And despite this, the Egyptians did not say that if Israel will not accept Egypt's terms there will be nothing to discuss.'[542] The Israeli decision-makers' observation that they wanted to convey to the Iranians demonstrated the defensive perception of decision-makers in Israel that they were still alone in the region and that no other state was willing to come to Israel's aid. It also demonstrated that the Israelis perceived that the concessions they were being asked to make were monumental and filled with risk. Israel wanted this point to be made clearly to Iran, especially as the Shah of Iran perceived that Israel was being inflexible in its talks with Egypt.

Israel perceived itself as isolated and exposed even though the rest of the region and the world viewed Israel as a great regional power. Israel's worldview of isolation and exposure gave them great urgency in pursuing the Tzur project and maintaining the oil flow while gaining as much recognition on a global level as possible. Iran also thought Israel was very influential in the United States but in reality Israel could perceive how little sway Israel truly had in Washington. At the same time, the Shah of Iran began to show an aggressive stand towards Western countries who continued to function under

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[541] Ibid.
[542] Ibid.

the previous system where Western countries supplied Iran with services and equipment in exchange for Iranian oil. He wanted Iran to be independently successful on its own and not dependent on foreign support or trade. Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yigal Allon met with the Shah of Iran in August 1976 and made a presentation on changing foreign policy, emphasising a removal of the traditional practices.

Yigal Allon was aware of the Shah of Iran's position, as confirmed by Lubrani's assessment. Lubrani explains, 'In light of this, the delicate position of the Israelis on this visit to the Shah of Iran must be understood, for our relationship with Iran was more complex and complicated than that of other states.'[543] The Shah of Iran had strong ties with Egypt and Jordan, especially through his publicly documented friendships with Egypt's Sadat and Jordan's King Hussein. In comparison, the Shah of Iran's historic relationship with Israel was comprised of covert meetings and undocumented agreements. The convergence of national interests was not straightforward, because when the Israelis visited, the Shah of Iran was wavering on his policy towards Israel. Allon's argument was that a fundamental convergence of interests between and Iran and Israel made it essential to maintain the existing relationship.

The Shah of Iran had reservations about aligning with Israel with respect to oil because he had found more efficient ways to transport oil through the Suez Canal and was taking advice from his ministers, who took only economic considerations into account. This was because Iranian relations with Israel were carried out in secret. As Allon

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[543]Lubrani, "Yigal Allon in the Palace of the Shah of Iran," p. 359.

explained to the Shah of Iran, his Iranian economic advisors were not 'sufficiently aware of the real essence of common interest.'[544] Allon recommended that the Shah of Iran should ignore the economic interests of Iran. Allon knew that the Shah of Iran, with his secretive dealings, underestimated the impact the Suez Canal oil trade would have on Israel. 'Allon even implied - and one must know how to hint to Orientals without insulting them - that the continuation of relations with Israel might be a bother to Iran now, but tomorrow the tables might be turned so it was as well to base the relations between the two countries on firm principles rather than on a passing inference of events,' Lubrani recalled.[545]

The individual approach that Allon and Lubrani took showed two aspects regarding Israelis' perceptions and policies. First, the Israelis perceived that the relations were deeper than mutual interests and, in fact, involved common principles. Second, Lubrani and Yigal Allon were approaching the Shah of Iran as an 'Oriental.' 'Oriental' can be seen as culturally insensitive or as referring to the point of view of the individual but in a way that demonstrates a complete cultural and social unawareness on the part of Allon. His objective in the meeting was based on short-term thinking: Keep the oil supply flowing from Iran to Israel, maintain the status quo, and forgo any discussions about oil flow in future agreements with the Shah of Iran. With respect to Perceptions and Misperceptions, it can be clearly seen by this quote in the meeting recorded in the Shah of Iran's palace, that Allon and Lubrani viewed the Shah of Iran as an 'other.'

Allon, born in the lower Galilee region in Northern Israel, studied philosophy at St. Anthony's College in England. In contrast, Ezri was born in Esfahan, Iran, and raised

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[544]Lubrani, "Yigal Allon in the Palace of the Shah of Iran," p. 361.
[545] Ibid.

and educated in Tehran. That experience gave Ezri a clear command of the language and a fluent cultural understanding. Those advantages helped Ezri establish a mutually beneficial and successful relationship with the Shah of Iran. Allon did not have these cultural advantages in dealing with the Shah of Iran. Even though the Israeli decision-makers were commending themselves on fulfilling the short-term objectives of maintaining current Iranian oil supply to Israel, they were unable to secure oil for the future. They managed only the bare minimum and did not appear to have achieved the full potential of Israeli-Iranian relations. The quality of relations changed and circumstance were very different after 1973.

7.7 Misperceptions and Effects on the Rise of Khomeini and the 1975 Algiers Agreement

Israeli and Iranian intelligence analysts overlooked one far-reaching fact.[546] When Israeli and Iranian intelligence analysts overlooked or dismissed the potential influence of Khomeini, Iranian leaders allowed him to order Mosques in Iran to be used to preach his doctrines and propagandise to the people of Iran. This is an example of misperception. Additionally, the Shah of Iran also overlooked Khomeini's importance when liberalising relations with Iraq. As a repercussion to the Algiers Agreement of 1975, the joint oversights of Iran, Israel, and the Shah of Iran paved the way for Khomeini to return to Iran for the revolution. Khomeini lived in exile in the holy city of Najaf, Iraq, for more than a decade. Under the provisions of the Algiers Agreement,

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[546] Alpher, *Periphery,* p. 59.

thousands of Iranians were allowed to freely visit the sacred Shi'ite centres in Najaf and Karbala.[547]

Because of the free-flow of Iranian pilgrims, Khomeini and his supporters were able to distribute their cassette recordings of Khomeini's revolutionary sermons, increasing the perceptions and misperceptions of thousands, if not millions, of Iranians. As Alpher, who was a Mossad analyst at the time, reflects: From Najaf, Khomeini and his son Mustafa built up a network of Islamic revolutionary cells. Every mullah in Iran was called upon to turn his mosque into a command and propaganda centre to preach Khomeini's doctrines and bid the people to prepare for revolutionary tasks: demonstrating, striking, protesting, and propagandising. If the Shah of Iran's treaty with Iraq made this possible, a similar warming of relations initiated by Syria in late 1975, included 'student exchanges' in both directions, which helped grease the wheels of the Islamic revolution.[548] Khomeini capitalised on the oversight and misperceptions of how the Shah of Iran, Israel, and Iran created the free movement of Iranians to and from Najaf. This movement could have been halted had the intelligence analysts not overlooked the potential power and influence of Khomeini. The Realist perspective in this analysis did not include the effects of the human condition and human behaviour surrounding mistakes. But, in this case, the analysis is imperative, because this was a misperception that changed the course of history. This section has demonstrated the broader repercussions of the misperceptions surrounding the 1975 Algiers Agreement. The following section examines how the Algiers Agreement specifically affected Israeli foreign policy towards Iran with a particular emphasis on Israeli decision makers and how they viewed their relationships with the Iranians.

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[547] Ibid.
[548] Alpher, Joseph. "The Ayatollah Khomeini International," *Washington Quarterly* (Autumn 1980) Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 73.

7.8 The Algiers Agreement 1975 and the Effect of Relationships on Israeli Foreign Policy towards Iran

The Algiers Agreement had a profound effect on Israeli policy towards Iran and was a significant contributing factor in the shift of foreign policy effectiveness during this period. The Algiers Agreement of 1975 was an agreement between Iran and Iraq to settle their differences. It served as a basis for the bi-lateral treaties signed on 14 June and 25 December 1975. The Algiers Agreement was pivotal within the framework of Israeli-Iranian relations on several levels: First, Israel was completely taken by surprise because Israeli decision-makers were not informed prior to the signing of the Algiers Agreement. The agreement was meant to end the disputes between Iran and Iraq along the borders in the Shatt Al Arab waterway and Khuzestan. For Iraq, the chief reason for the agreement was to end the Kurdish rebellion in its north because Iran had been assisting Iraqi Kurdish rebels.

The second and biggest repercussion of the Algiers Agreement on Israeli-Iranian relations was the cessation of Israeli and Iranian cooperation in aiding the Kurdish rebellion. The two states had cooperated closely on sensitive matters, such as aiding the Kurds in Iraq and generally collaborating to support the Kurdish rebellion. 'From the Israeli vantage point, by not informing Israel of his decision to enter into a peace agreement with Iraq, the Shah of Iran had created the impression that links with the Jewish State had become more expedient than imperative,' Sobhani notes. 'Indeed, the closure of the Iran-Iraq border to the Kurdish rebels fighting the Baathist Regime of Bagdad was a severe blow to Israel because it lost access to that area of Iraq.'[549]

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[549] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 108.

The Shah of Iran tried unofficially to reassure Israel and explained to Israeli Ambassador Uri Lubrani that, 'Iran will be attacked by Iraq, and the question is not if but when.'[550] This statement was intended to bolster the Israelis' belief that the Shah had primarily signed on to the Algiers Agreement to extend time between conflicts with Iraq, rather than to alienate Israel. Realists could argue that the Algiers Agreement created an environment where the Iranian government no longer required cooperation with Israel, and its unilateral termination of the partnership resulted in the abandonment of the Kurds in favour of making peace with Iraq. Realists could miss the point that the Shah of Iran reassured Moshe Dayan that he saw this new alliance with Iraq as a temporary measure and it would only be a matter of time before Iraq would attack again.[551] The Algiers Agreement effectively set the stage for change and contributed to the shift of Israeli policy towards Iran.

A very indicative image of Israel's perceptions of the Algiers Agreement is shown by Eliezer Tzafrir, the Mossad bureau chief in Iraqi Kurdistan from 1965 until 1975, when he has just hours to escape from Iraqi Kurdistan. Tzafrir describes how: 'The Shah had sold the Kurds out, like Chamberlain in Munich … we were in a big hurry to burn papers. I had to get out of there before the Iraqi army turned me into a kebab.'[553] Israelis were clearly taken by surprise and their perceptions were affected by Iran's sudden action.

If one examines the Algiers Agreement at face value, one would miss the point that the Shah of Iran reassured Dayan that he saw this new alliance with Iraq as a temporary

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[550] Interview with Uri Lubrani, cited in Ibid.
[551] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 108.
[553] Tzafrir, Eliezer, Quoted in Lazareva, Inna, "The Kurds: Israel's not so Improbable Allies," *Standpoint*, October 2014.

measure and it would only be a matter of time that Iraq would attack again.[555] This transfer of information between the Shah of Iran and Dayan was only made possible by their personal relationship with each other. It highlights Dayan's cultural awareness that he recognised the threat that the Shah, and most Iranians, felt. As a result, Dayan's ability to push the Tzur project forward in 1977 was greatly enhanced. This personal relationship also enabled Israel to get a more nuanced picture of the Shah of Iran's vulnerabilities and therefore also to push the Tzur project forward in 1977 using that angle that only Dayan could know from having an intimate, personal, and trust-filled relationship with the Shah. A dedicated section in this chapter discussed Dayan's role at length.

If one looks at the Algiers Agreement from an international perspective, the Realist analysis would indicate a shift in the Iranian national interest, but this was only part of the story. By signing the Algiers Agreement, the Shah of Iran was attempting to defuse a huge potential Middle Eastern conflict with global ramifications. That decision was in the Shah's own national interests, but the collateral damage of that decision was to greatly affect Israel's trust in him, and thus Israeli and Iranian decision-making. Iran did indeed cease cooperating with Israel in assisting the Kurds, and trust with the Israelis was affected despite the Shah of Iran's reassurances. Trust is an issue that had policy implications for Israeli decision-makers, such as Israel's oil supply from Iran and other policy implications, such as making concessions readily on the peace talks with Egypt. Iran played a part as guarantor oil supplier to Israel. It also took personal connections and assurances from the Shah of Iran to explain to Israeli decision-makers

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[555] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 108.

the rationale behind the Algiers Agreement and the Iranian rapprochement with Iraq. As Segev writes:

> The Israeli government was now worried that Iran might sever all its ties with Israel. While the oil was still flowing, the Shah of Iran had frozen military cooperation and had stopped buying arms from Israel. For several weeks, it was difficult even to maintain a minimum level of communication. Top Iranian officials did not hesitate to tell Uri Lubrani that, as long as the talks with Egypt were deadlocked, Israeli relations with Iran would be frozen.[556]

The repercussions of the Algiers Agreement on Israeli policy could be summarised as follows: after the signing Israeli decision-makers became increasingly aware of Iranian vacillations in threat perceptions, as well as the need to be prepared and tread carefully with further relations. The stress and strain on the relationships continued to deepen with the introduction on further discussions on oil. Oil discussions became interlinked with the Shah's pre-occupation with Israeli-Egyptian peace talks due to the Shah's increasing closeness and personal friendship with Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat.

7.9   The Tzur Project Explained

The Tzur Project, the Israeli-Iranian scheme based on the exchange of Iranian money and oil for six Israeli-planned weapons systems, was a mid-1970s breakthrough that was facilitated by General Hassan Toufanian, and established a base for Israel to join the world as a military power. It shifted the balance of power in the Middle East and had global ramifications. Secrecy was paramount to the project's success. A framework

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[556] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 87.

agreement was the beginning of the Tzur Project. Uri Bar-Joseph explains the Tzur

Project:

> By the mid-1970s, the cooperation between the two states deepened
> and yielded an intensive Iranian-Israeli military and intelligence
> cooperation. Senior Israeli policy makers, including Prime Ministers,
> Ministers of Defense, and Chiefs of Staff, frequently paid secret visits
> to Tehran. This cooperation reached its peak in 1977 to 1978 when the
> Shah of Iran authorized the Iranian signing of a secret $1.2 billion
> project "Tzur" ("Rock") with Israel. It was based on Iranian financing
> of six Israeli planned weapon systems, including the "Arie" ("Lion")
> Fighter Plane, a new generation of the Jericho ballistic missile, and a
> long range "Perach" ("Flower") anti-ship missile. This project turned
> Iran into Israel's most strategic ally except for the USA.[557]

The scope, magnitude, and global consequences of the Tzur Project were so great that

Israeli decision-makers made every effort to maintain the utmost secrecy surrounding it.

The Israelis were concerned that the Shah of Iran would inform the Americans of the

full details of the contract for Tzur-A, which at the time of writing remain classified.

Ambassador Lubrani expressed his concerns to his counterpart, General Toufanian.

Lubrani hoped that confiding in Toufanian would help them build a firm personal

relationship or an *'Ozen Kashevet.'* [558]

The magnitude, secrecy, and time sensitivity reflected the speed at which Israeli

decision-makers wanted to implement the Tzur Project, and it significantly affected

their foreign policy towards the Iranians both personally and politically.

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[557] Bar-Joseph, Uri. 'Forecasting a Hurricane: Israeli and American Estimations of the Khomeini Revolution,' *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 36:5 (2013), p. 722.
[558] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs-445/5 93.52/1-63 Memorandum from Lubrani to Ben Yoseph, dated 14 December 1977. '*Ozen Kashevet* - a listening ear' or loosely translated from Hebrew to 'a confidant.'

7.9.1 *The role of Human Relationships and the 'TZUR' Project*

The lack of trust resulting from the Algiers Agreement evidently did not affect Israeli perceptions of Iran on the security procurement front. Israelis continued to pursue high-level cooperation with Iran. The agreement was meant to end the disputes between Iraq and Iran on the borders in Shatt al-Arab and Khuzestan, but the main reason for Iraq was to end the Kurdish rebellion. The idea of building nuclear power stations in Iran arose in an international scientific conference that took place in Israel at the beginning of the 1960's where Iranian scientists also attended. 'Shimon Peres, when he served as deputy Minister of Defence, met with the Shah of Iran in Tehran, and offered him Israeli assistance in building a power station in Bushehr,' Ezri recalled.[559] Nuclear power in Iran would have freed up large quantities of oil and gas for export. These nuclear energy contracts were eventually awarded by the Shah of Iran to Germany's Siemens and French energy companies. Before these stations were completed, the Islamic Revolution broke out and work was halted in 1979.[560]

Israeli Defence Minister Shimon Peres had known the Shah of Iran for many years, dating back to the early 1960s when he served as Deputy Minister of Defence. From a regional perspective, in the 1970s Peres was a noted hawk who had deep reservations about territorial compromise with the Palestinians. He also supported settlement-building and the building up of Israel's military strength. By the 1980s, Peres had begun to move from the political position he occupied towards the peace camp. As a protégé of Ben Gurion, Peres was involved in the secret planning of the Suez offensive

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[559] Ezri, Meir interviewed in Gad Shomron, "The Israeli Past in Nuclear Iran," *Maariv,* 9 February 2007.
[560] Shomron, "The Israeli Past in Nuclear Iran," p. 3.

with Britain and France in alliance against Nasser's Egypt.[561] Shimon Peres worked hard to preserve Israel's position in Iran immediately on becoming Defence Minister in 1974. As Shmuel Segev explains:

> He voiced the opinion that, despite the opening of the Suez Canal to international shipping, and despite the reduced importance of Israel's pipeline, it was possible to strengthen Iran's interest in cooperation with Israel by laying a basis for technological cooperation between the two countries….The marriage of Israeli knowledge with Iranian capital could offset Israel's reduced political importance to Iran.[562]

Peres fully appreciated the deep historical, cultural, and geopolitical ties between Israel and Iran as well as being well respected by the Iranian establishment. He also greatly appreciated the Iranian people.[563] As a Director General of the Ministry of Defence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Peres had been involved in the establishment of Dimona, the research facility also at the centre of Israel's nuclear weapons program. As previously mentioned, during the early 1960s, Peres as Deputy Minister of Defence and the Shah held talks on nuclear energy and nuclear power stations. Even though those contacts did not develop into anything, they built a certain degree of trust and rapport that made current policy possible.[564] Peres, as Minister of Defence, flew to Tehran in September 1976 and, according to author Samuel Segev, 'The Shah of Iran also knew that Peres was considered [Israeli Prime Minister] Ben-Gurion's most prodigious student, and he wanted to see whether there were any similarities between teacher and pupil.'[565] After this meeting, the same connection between the Shah of Iran and Ben-

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[561] Beaumont, Peter. "Shimon Peres, Nobel winner and giant of Israeli Politics, dies at 93," *The Guardian,* 28 September 2017.
[562] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 89.
[563] Personal interview with Shimon Peres, 26 June 2015.
[564] Ezri, Meir. Personal interview, 26 June 2015, Savyon, Israel.
[565] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 92.

Gurion was passed on to his 'most prodigious student,' Peres, lending a familiarity and creating the base for a promising relationship.

With this meeting and his relationship with the Iranians, Peres achieved concrete results and it could be argued that these results were based on the individual traits of Peres. The Shah of Iran confirmed that he received very positive and important reports from Iranian Vice Minister of War Toufanian, who had developed close personal ties from the early 1960s with the previous ambassador to Iran, Meir Ezri, and previous Military Attaché to Iran, Ya'akov Nimorodi.[566] Evidence of the close relationship can be demonstrated by the Ezri-Toufanian connection from the 1960's, when Iran purchased Uzis, mortars, and other military equipment that aided in the expansion of Israel's military industries. More than mutual interests, the relationship developed based on trust and familiarity, easing the negations and transactions and allowing for a fruitful partnership.

This fruitful relationship between Peres and the Iranians also translated into the mid-1970s breakthrough when Toufanian was indispensable in easing the relations between Israel and Iran. The Shah met with Israel Defence Minister Shimon Peres in September 1976 and informed Peres that the Shah had received a very positive report from Iran's Deputy Minister of Defence, Hassan Toufanian, and the Shah agreed that Israel and Iran could gain a lot by working together. However, the Shah said that he was fearful that Iran's closer relations with Israel would complicate relations with Arab countries, the United States as well as opponents within Iran who would oppose relations with Israel.

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[566] Ibid, p. 66.

Prior to the meeting with Peres, the Shah was unsure about pursuing closer relations with Israel. 'He feared, however, complicating his relations with the US and the Arab countries, and he also had to consider the reaction of his internal opposition.'[567] The influence of the personal relationship between Peres and the Shah eased the Shah's concerns and allowed the project to move forwards. 'A few hours later, came confirmation that his impressions were correct. Toufanian told Peres that the Shah had been extremely satisfied with the conversation, and that he himself now felt that it was possible to expedite the negotiations for a "framework agreement" between the two countries.'[568]

The close personal nature of the relationship between Lubrani and Toufanian is best illustrated by the repeated reference in the original Israeli State Archive document not as Toufanian but the more familiar and personal 'Tofi.' Lubrani met regularly with his Iranian security contact Toufanian regarding the Tzur Project. The Israelis were concerned that the Shah of Iran would inform the Americans of the full details of the contract for Tzur-A. At the time of writing this thesis, the details remain classified. Lubrani expressed his concerns to his counterpart, Toufanian. Lubrani hoped that confiding in Toufanian would help them build a firm personal relationship. Lubrani also appealed to Toufanian's special concerns about secrecy by suggesting that the Tzur contracts would be considered highly, highly classified, and these documents remain classified as of this writing. The agreement would remain a state secret between the Shah of Iran and a limited number of Israelis. This was very important for Toufanian to hear. It gave him great confidence and the ability to further the conversation with the Shah of Iran about Tzur- B, which also remains classified at the time of this writing.

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[567] Ibid, p. 94.
[568] Ibid, p. 95.

This personal connection in turn reassured the Shah of Iran that it was safe for Iran to proceed in its military dealings under the Tzur project. Iranian lawyer Hamid Sabi has corroborated the secret nature of the Tzur contact. In an interview, Sabi confirmed that the $750 million that was transferred to Israel from Iran under the Tzur Project, part of which was codenamed Project Flower, has never appeared in any contracts or documents that were found by the new Iranian regime. There is no record of the transfer and the sum has never featured in any claims again Israel.[569]

In his communication with Toufanian, Lubrani also brought up the time element: that it was not possible for both parties to wait. 'It is hard for the Shah of Iran to decide because of his special personality and the complications that are likely to grow for Iran because of them.' Lubrani continues, 'The Shah of Iran wants and doesn't want the missiles and we must give Tofi [Toufanian] time in order to relay the message to the Shah of Iran conclusively.'[570] This back and forth with the Shah of Iran and Toufanian is another continuous reminder of the vacillating Israeli negotiations with the Iranians and reflects that negotiations were not as straightforward as they appeared. It took individual initiative and personal relationships to fully implement Israeli objectives. Both Toufanian and the Israeli negotiators needed to convince the Shah of Iran to cooperate with Israel regarding the Tzur project. The personal relationships between key diplomatic decision-makers helped greatly to overcome the obstacles that Israeli decision-makers faced while attempting to reach an agreement with the Iranians on the Tzur project in particular, and implementing foreign policy towards Iran.

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[569] Personal Interview with Hamid Sabi, London, 26 May 2016.
[570] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs-445/5 93.52/1-63 Memorandum from Lubrani to Ben Yoseph, dated 14 December 1977, p. 2.

7.9.2 *The Influence of Moshe Dayan on the 1977 $1 Billion Oil for Arms Tzur Agreement*

After Menachem Begin was sworn in as Israel's first Likud Prime Minister on 20 June 1977, he chose Moshe Dayan to be Foreign Minister and Ezer Weitzman to be Minister of Defence. Dayan flew to Tehran on 7 July 1977 to reassure the Shah of Iran that the new government, which had previously been the opposition, remained committed to peace. It was a powerful and effective strategy to send Dayan because he was elected from the Labour Party. Because the Labour Party had governed Israel since independence, the Shah of Iran was both comfortable with the ideology and familiar with their policies, knew many of the members, and had a good rapport with those members. During the 7 July 1977 meeting, the Shah of Iran explained to Dayan that cooperation on the Tzur Project would be frozen, and the $250 million advance would also be delayed until the Shah knew more about the new Israeli Prime Minister's intentions. As Samuel Segev explains:

> After hearing Dayan's exposition of the Begin government policy, the Shah of Iran said that he was willing to reconsider his decision, but until he did, the program would remain frozen. It seemed however, that Dayan's presentation impressed the Shah of Iran. Even before Israel had a chance to consider the meaning of the freeze, the Shah of Iran sent Deputy Defense Minister Toufanian [same as General Hassan Toufanian discussed above] and the joint project manager, Entezami to talk with Dayan and Ezer Weitzman.[571]

The existing literature on the subject has not fully appreciated the impact that individuals and relationships—and their personality traits, cultural understanding, and reputation—had in overcoming obstacles and facilitating Israeli-Iranian relations. Dayan, for example, was a decorated war hero with an international reputation. He was

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[571] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 98.

also from the Labour Party and was well respected by the Shah of Iran, who was impressed with his performance in the Six-Day War. The personal connection and awareness of ability and prior success of Dayan influenced the Shah of Iran enough to mitigate the extreme risk of facing internal opposition and extreme criticism from the Arab world regarding his cooperation with Israel in unfreezing the Tzur Project.

Israel was also mindful of the utmost secrecy of the Tzur Project, and therefore did not divulge the plans at the time even to the United States.[572] Concrete agreements were achieved when these special personalities were involved. They managed to get the Shah to agree; otherwise, the Tzur Project would have remained frozen. Realists would argue that it was prudent for the Shah to agree on the Tzur Project with respect to national interests within the regional climate. But the Shah's repeated hesitations were overcome by the personal influence of Israeli decision-makers with whom he had an excellent relationship.

7.9.3 *Secrecy and Security of the Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline and the Tzur Project*

In February 1975, the threat of Iran no longer using the Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline was Israel's biggest concern with regard to Iran. Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon was sent to Tehran also in disguise with a wig and thick glasses for secret talks with the Shah of Iran. Yigal Allon's view of Israel in the world in his own words is as follows: 'Whereas the Arab states seek to isolate, strangle and erase Israel from the world's map,

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[572] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 99. The CIA received reports of the meetings between the Israelis and Iranians in Tel Aviv from Toufanian or another Iranian who was present, as evidenced by the documents from the American Embassy in Tehran seized by Iranian students.

Israel's aim is simply to live in peace and good relations with all its neighbours.'[573] Allon's view towards Iran, according to Lubrani, was firmly grounded: 'Allon had a simple manner and approach toward Iran, "The Iranian's continuation of relations with Israel might be a bother to Iran now, but tomorrow the tables might be turned and so it was as well to base the relations between the two countries on firm principles rather than on a passing inference of events."'[574]

The Shah of Iran had previously met with Yigal Allon, (whereas he had not previously met with Lubrani). For the three and a half years between ambassadorial visits with the Shah of Iran, Lubrani met only with the Shah's relevant ministers, not the Shah himself, creating a further distance in communication between Iran and Israel. Allon visited the Shah three times while Lubrani was in office.[575] As part of the peace talks with Egypt, Sadat demanded that Israel hand over the Abu-Rudeis oil fields. As a result, the ability of Israel to agree to any peace accord with Egypt depended on guaranteed continuation of oil from Iran.

The Shah played a key role in facilitating Israel's ability to accept the terms of Egypt's peace agreement, by ordering NIOC to continue cooperating with Israel on matters concerning the Iranian oil flow to Israel's refineries through the Eilat-Ashkelon pipeline. Iranian Deputy Prime Minister Ne'matollah Nasiri, who was also the head of SAVAK, was designated to greet all of the Israeli visiting diplomats and personalities. Nasiri was able to bypass any potential problems posed by internal opposition to Iranian relations with Israel by laying down ground rules to ensure that he was the first to meet visitors

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[573] Allon, Yigal. "Israel: The Case for Defensible Borders" *Foreign Affairs*, October 1976. Retrieved 30 January 2016, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/israel/1976-10-01/israel-case-defensible-borders.
[574] Lubrani, "Yigal Allon in the Palace of the Shah," p. 361.
[575] Ibid, p. 357.

from Israel. This meant that even the Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Ali Khal'atbari was not aware of Allon's visits to Iran prior to 1976, demonstrating the secret nature of the previous relationship with the Shah of Iran and how he controlled the public view of the Iranian-Israeli relationship.[576] Secrecy between the two countries was pivotal in getting any unofficial agreement or unofficial policy in place.

The Shah started Iran's nuclear programme under the auspices of the Tzur Project, which involved the Israelis, in an effort to deter the threat from Iraq. Unofficial Acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres offered the Iranians their assistance on nuclear power.[577] This program later became part of the Tzur Project. The following passage from the Nuclear Threat Initiative in Washington, D.C. (headed by Vice Chairman Lord Desmond Browne,) highlights a meeting held on 18 July 1977 between the Iranians and the Israelis:

> The Iranian Deputy Defense Minister General Hassan Toufanian, a former commander of the Iranian air force and responsible for military procurement in Iran's defense establishment, holds a meeting to discuss the joint Israel-Iran missile project, code-named 'Tzur.' Project 'Tzur' will increase the range for surface-to-surface Jericho missiles. Iran will provide the funding and the test ranges and Israel the know-how. Iran will later purchase ready-made missiles from Israel. Israelis present at the meeting are Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, defense officials, and Uri Lubrani. Weizman has invited Toufanian to view a launch of the Jericho-2 missile. After the meeting, the deal is signed and Iran provides large advances of capital to proceed with the project. Large numbers of Israeli experts will go to Iran to begin preparations for the project.[578]

Because of the extensive coverage of the Tzur Project in this chapter, it could be construed that the Tzur Project was not very secret at all. In reality, only a few facts regarding the Tzur Project have emerged to the time of this writing. The discoveries in

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[576] Ibid, p. 358.
[577] Shomron, "The Israeli Past in Nuclear Iran," p. 3.
[578] "A brief history of Iran missile technology," *Live Leak*, 9 June 2007. Retrieved, http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=6a6_1181429741.

this chapter are primarily from personal interviews with and memoirs of Mossad agents and Iranian facilitators from the time period and people who participated in the program at some level: ministers, agents, diplomats, assets and specialists.

In January 1977, the situation within OPEC had become critical. Oil prices, along with the drop in the value of the US dollar, virtually wiped out any financial gains made in 1973. Saudi Arabia insisted on a six-month price freeze to continue its supply of cheap oil to the United States while the rest of OPEC charged Europe and Japan higher prices, resulting in an instability in the region due to conflicting oil prices. [579] After the Algiers Agreement, Israel no longer trusted the Shah of Iran because he did not notify Israel of Tehran's treaty with Iraq as part of the Algiers Agreement, and also because the agreement was in Iran's best interest but not Israel's. Israel had a concern that without a steady supply of Iranian oil, Israel could not afford to hand over the Sinai oil fields under the terms of a peace agreement with Egypt. Without the Sinai oil, and the continuous oil flow from Iran, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was concerned that the oil refined in Israel would drop to 700 barrels per day, endangering Israel's oil supply.[580] Israel's agreement to return the Egyptian Sinai oil fields to Egypt was a result of Rabin's spring 1975 personal visit to Tehran to secure from the Shah of Iran personal assurances that Iran would substitute with its own oil any oil that would have originated from the Sinai.

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[579] Farmanfarmian, Manucher. *Blood & Oil: A Prince's Memoir of Iran, from the Shah of Iran to the Ayatollah* (New York: Random House, 2005), p. 430
[580] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 118.

7.10 The Role of Human Relationships with Iran and the Likud Government Post-17 May 1977 Elections

With the election of the Likud party on 17 May 1977, Israeli political philosophy shifted. The Likud Party is a right-wing political party in Israel founded by Menachem Begin. As author Shlomo Avineri coined, the new 'territorial school' that 'clearly focused on the historical Land of Israel, it does not advocate indiscriminate territorial aggrandizement.' That stands in contrast to the Labour 'sociological school,' which placed most importance on the internal structure of Israeli society, not necessarily the extent of its territory.[581] This new shift in Israeli political philosophy created an unknown with the Shah of Iran, as Sohrab Sobhani observes: 'The election of Begin on a territorialist platform, therefore, was a disappointment for the Shah of Iran.'

Iran's relations with Israel were established and flourished under the leadership of the Labour Party, with whom the Shah and his advisors had a good working relationship. Even Sobhani, who argues that Israeli-Iranian relations were based solely on common strategic interest, confirms that the Shah was disappointed to lose his relationship with Israeli decision-makers and diplomats from the Labour Party. This was so even though members of the new government, such as Begin and Dayan, held views similar to those of the Shah.[582] The personal relationships of the Shah of Iran with Israeli decision-makers and diplomats actually were more important than the geopolitical, economic, and ideological common ground that the Shah of Iran would have held with the Likud-led Israeli government. The discussions in the Tzur sections of this chapter have demonstrated how instrumental the relationships between Dayan and other Israelis with their counterparts and the Shah of Iran were in reassuring the Iranians following the

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[581] Avineri, Shlomo. "Ideology and Israeli Foreign Policy," pp. 4-6.
[582] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 99.

elections in Israel and continued Israel's policy towards Iran despite the obstacles they faced. The continuation of the Tzur project following the Israeli elections was a testament to human relationships between the Israelis and the Iranians ensuring continuity of foreign policy.

7.11 Israeli Perceptions and Misperceptions Leading up to the Iranian Revolution

The perceptions and misperceptions of Israeli decision-makers between 1973 and 1979 were instrumental in affecting their actions and, at the end, their reactions to the Islamic Revolution. Some perceptions reflected the Israelis' insightful observations that helped to foresee the coming Islamic Revolution sooner than other foreign decision-makers. This, for example, helped with the safe, expeditious, and effective evacuation of Israeli decision-makers on the ground and other Israeli contractors living in Tehran at the time.

Conversely, it can be argued that the Israeli decision-makers in Tehran near the time of the Islamic Revolution were not sufficiently attuned to the Iranian opposition and therefore could not act in an informed and strategic way when opportunities arose. First, they simply missed the signs. Second, while the revolution was unravelling, Khomeini did not consolidate his power right away, and as a result the reports from the Israelis were not as accurate as they could have been preventing them from taking appropriate action until it was too late. Another contributing factor was that the Israelis were not as aware of all the opposition groups within Iran as they could have been, which meant that they missed opportunities to prevent the overthrow of the Shah when asked to act by new Iranian officials who asked for Israel's help. The Shah appointed Shahpour Bakhtiar as the interim Prime Minister. Bakhtiar gave the request to Mossad to kill

Khomeini. However, Mossad officials were reluctant, as were the CIA, and refused because they were not sure who would come after Bakhatiar.[583]

7.11.1 *The Effect of Individual Instinct and Communication on Israeli Policy Implementation in the Events Prior to the Islamic Revolution*

Personal and individual characteristics affected the analysis of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran by enabling rapid policy response and policy implementation. The very fluid communication and rapid response of Israeli decision-makers allowed foreign policy implementation to be carried out easily and effectively by the additional decision-makers and Israeli diplomats as well as Mossad agents on the ground. Because of the nature of the Israeli decision-making structure, Israeli diplomats and intelligence agents on the ground were able to speak directly to leaders to get authorisation.

Intelligence agents were able to communicate with the head of Mossad directly. The diplomats on the ground were able to communicate directly with the Israeli Foreign Minister. When the Israeli Foreign Minister was engaged in the Camp David talks, the Deputy Foreign Minister was empowered to make decisions in his absence, thus creating an open, fluid dynamic that allowed a rapid deployment of decisions and implementation. As Uri Bar-Joseph explains: 'Both [ambassador to Tehran Uri Lubrani and Mossad's Tehran station chief until 1978 Reuven Merhav] emphasized in their interviews, experience, and additional tools that allowed them to conclude at a relatively early stage, that the Shah of Iran's role might end soon.'[584]

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[583] Yossi Alpher, 'Periphery Nostalgia in Israel,' Lecture at the University of Haifa conference on Israel and Iran, 11 April 2016, Haifa, Israel.
[584] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," p. 739.

The Israeli lines of communication, decision-making apparatuses, and processes, and the implementation of those decisions, were simpler and more efficient. The ambassador to Tehran met regularly with the Mossad station chief, the military attaché, and other Israeli state and private representatives in Iran. In these meetings, whether formal or informal, information and estimates were exchanged freely. Such free communication between Tehran, Tel Aviv (Mossad headquarters), and Jerusalem included the very effective analysis of seemingly small details such as graffiti slogans that were sprayed on the ElAl offices in Tehran. A Mossad report outlines the meanings behind the slogans as well as their implications, for example, whether the slogans are religiously derived and for tracking the rising anti-Israeli slant to the protests.[585]

> Lubrani (and later Harmelin) could also communicate directly to the Foreign Minister, as did Merhav and Tsafrir with the Mossad chief. The decision to begin preparations for emergency evacuation was taken in a meeting between the Deputy Prime Minister (the Prime Minister was in Camp David) and the Mossad chief. The evacuation implementation was carried out by the Mossad with the assistance of other agencies. An important element was the informal relationship within this group.[586]

These personal and individual elements—intuition, open and fluid lines of communication, and personal experiences—are not included in the Realist analysis. As well as intuition and fluid lines of communication, personal relationships between Israelis and Iranians (both non-Jewish and Jewish) helped greatly from an operational perspective gathering information and speeding up the evacuation process.[587] 'When it came to the evacuation of Israelis, sometimes under very risky conditions, the

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[585] ISA Prime Minister's Office 281-8 43.5/1-192 Mossad Report to Military Intelligence, Prime Minister's Office, and the Foreign Ministry, dated 26 December 1978.
[586] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," p. 740.
[587] Navot, Nachik. *Tevel Umloa: One Man's Mossad* (Or Yehuda: Dvir Publishing House, 2015), pp. 99-103.

organizers in Tehran knew the pilots' names, and in most cases, knew them on a personal basis,' Bar-Joseph writes. 'In this sense, the rather cohesive nature of the group that dealt with the developing crisis enabled a high level of cooperation, improvisation, and trust.'[588] Mossad agents also relied on Iranian friends, from whom they received intelligence information. As Mossad agent Nachik Navot recalled:

> In May of 1978, student rioting started in Tehran. Despite the fact that the riots were not taken seriously at the start, an Iranian friend warned me that something is going to happen. During an Israeli independence party at the house of the Director General at the Prime Minister's office, I took advantage of the opportunity to approach the Prime Minister and to relay a message to him. 'There are signs of noise in Iran,' I told the Prime Minister, 'I recommend that you warn Kissinger.'[589]

This demonstrates the ease with which Mossad agents could contact the key Israeli decision-makers. That, in turn, enabled action. It also indicated that the decision-makers at the top were able to dispatch the right individuals and resources to carry out whatever was necessary for the mission. For example, Navot, who himself warned the Prime Minister, was sent back to Iran at the end of 1978 to evacuate from Iran all Israelis on special EL Al Flights. Navot was also dispatched because he had lived and served in Iran from 1969-72. He was experienced with Iran and also spoke Persian. The value of language and cultural skills on the part of the individual became very clear, according to Bar-Joseph: 'With the exception of the 33 Israelis left in Tehran when the revolution took over, the course of events described here shows that Israel was well prepared for

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[588] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," p. 740.
[589] Navot, *Tevel Umloa: One Man's Mossad*, p. 99.

the revolutionary change once it took place,' he writes.[590] As Bar-Joseph further explains:

> The ability of Israeli key estimators to speak Farsi and their acquaintance with Iranian history and culture enabled them to grasp at a very early stage and in a far better manner than their American colleagues, the gravity of the situation. Their ability to communicate with their Iranian counterparts in Farsi, created an intimate atmosphere in which the Iranian officials exceeded the official line and expressed their own concerns and personal estimates. They could, moreover, read the local papers and listen to the local media as well as to Khomeini's cassettes with no translations. They could even participate in the demonstrations disguised as local protestors. [591]

This can also be seen clearly in Mossad communiqués during the tumultuous month of December 1978, when Mossad agents in Tehran analysed the protestors' slogans and what they conveyed.[592] The ability for seamless communication, which includes an understanding of nuance and body language, is innate when one speaks the language, and immediately helps understands the culture. As Bar-Joseph explains:

> These skills allowed the Israelis to <u>sense</u> (rather than systematically analyse) the revolutionary atmosphere as well as to grasp how disconnected and unpopular the Shah of Iran was, far earlier than the Americans. Indeed, when asked about the causes for their success, all interviewees ranked these skills as the most important ones. To this one should add the various sources of information that the Israelis maintained, mainly, but not exclusively, within the local Jewish community.[593]

In support of Bar-Joseph's findings, a 2016 interview with former Mossad agent and author of *Periphery* Yossi Alpher illuminates the fluid nature of policy implementation within the ranks of foreign policy actors and how that fluidity positively affected Israeli policy during that time period. Alpher explains:

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[590] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," pp. 737-38.
[591] Ibid, p. 739.
[592] ISA Prime Minister's Office 281-8, 43.5/1-192 Mossad Report to Military Intelligence, Prime Minister's Office, and the Foreign Ministry, dated 19 December 1978 .
[593] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," p. 739.

> Someone in the field can send a cable to a very senior person based on a judgment call, obviously in an emergency or due to the sensitivity or importance of a report. People in the field are trained and expected to use personal judgment and act independently. There is a minimum of bureaucratic infighting and backbiting. … I think we had better reporting on the Shah of Iran's final days and better analysis, probably due to better intuition and more of a 'sense' of what Iran was about.[594]

Further confirmation, provided by R.K. Ramazani, is also evident from the Iranian perspective, where he confirms that Israel's information network was also aided and supported by the Israelis' connection to the extensive Jewish population within Iran. Ramazani, author of *Revolutionary Iran*, confirms how, 'The Israelis enjoyed an information network that was second to none [in Tehran] as a result of the large colony of 80,000 Jews in Iran who penetrated into almost every aspect of Iranian life.'[595] Both Israeli and Iranian writers and decision-makers from that period agree that the information network available to Israelis through the informal Iranian Jewish network as well as within the ranks of Mossad gave the Israeli decision-makers a decided advantage.

Again one can see the vital role of foreign policy entrepreneurs, this time within the informal Iranian Jewish network. Lord David Alliance, an Iranian-British industrialist and foreign policy entrepreneur, played a pivotal role in speaking with Iranian Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar. Thanks to Lord Alliance, Bakhtiar allowed the Israeli national airline El-Al to fly evacuation flights out of Tehran during the revolution, saving countless lives. These flights happened without air-traffic control, members of which were on strike, thus posing great risk to the pilots, the passengers and crew, and

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[594] Yossi Alpher, E-mail communication with author, 13 June 2016.
[595] Ramazani, R.K. *Revolutionary Iran*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 245.

even the airplane itself. These flights landed and took off under the personal direction of Navot.[596]

The Jewish population in Iran proved a tremendous resource to Israeli decision-makers. The Jewish community's linguistic abilities allowed its members to glean information from local media and clerics, and their cultural understanding enhanced the Israelis' sense of events on the ground. The information passed on enabled Israelis to manoeuvre quietly, yet effectively, at a time of great instability. There were three overriding advantages that Israeli decision-makers were aware enough to use. These advantages are not given due importance within the Realist prism.

The Iranian Jewish community had the advantages of native language and cultural understanding, as well as fluid lines of communication up and down the lines of the Israeli hierarchy. These three factors allowed Israeli decision-makers to respond quickly and decisively because the information at hand had been collected from the native language documents. The access to the Iranian Jewish community must be included as a valuable, vital, and powerful advantage not typically found in a country with non-formalised diplomatic relations, demonstrating the uniqueness of the situation not included in an analysis predominantly using the Realist lens.

7.11.2 *The role of Relationships, Israeli Decision-Making and the Islamic Revolution in Iran*

If the Realist account would be entirely accurate, the relations between Israel and Iran should have continued despite the Islamic Revolution. However, the relations met a

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[596] Personal interview with Lord David Alliance of Manchester, 18 July 2016, London.

spectacular collapse and the importance of the role of agency and perceptions is evident when Israel's foreign policy towards Iran met the abrupt end. The strategic calculus and the role of individuals were two sides of the same coin that made the Israeli-Iranian relations untenable after the revolution. What hasn't been covered up until now is how the revolutionaries in Iran had a different perception of Iran's national interest and that perception enhances the explanation of why relations met such a dramatic collapse.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Christopher Hill's definition of the national interest includes the perception of the individual of the national interest, whereas in contrast, the Realist definition of the national interest is in terms of power - a narrower definition. The individuals changed, and therefore their perceptions of the Iranian national interest changed if we use Christopher Hill's definition, which resulted in the new Iranian revolutionary leadership following a different foreign policy for Iran. They viewed the Iranian national interest differently and therefore the Israeli policy was no longer viable. In contrast, the perception of Israel's national interest did not change because even after Israel evacuated its embassy, Israeli representatives stayed in Tehran in case the revolutionary regime continued relations and did not change its foreign policy with Israel.

In demonstrating how dramatic the change in policy was during the revolution, we turn to Samuel Segev. As Samuel Segev explains:

> In the midst of this chaos, [February 1979] the Israeli mission in Tehran was attacked and looted. A crowd of demonstrators, among them several dozen Palestinians, battered down the stone wall surrounding the building, climbed up to the roof, pulled down the Israeli flag, and burned it. Crying 'Death to Israel, long live Arafat,

> Israel get out' they raised the Palestinian flag over the gate of the building. The Islamic Republic, it was clear, would have nothing to do with the Jewish state.[597]

The very visual storming of the unofficial Israeli Embassy, which was one of the biggest embassies in the region, and the public burning of the Israeli flag after being replaced by the Palestinian flag was covered by the media and reported globally. The Ayatollah Khomeini was aware of these actions, as was the rest of the world. Khomeini and the other Iranian revolutionary leaders sent a powerful and symbolic message by doing nothing to stop the Palestine Liberation Organisation's overthrow of the Israeli mission: Iran would no longer have any relationship, recognised or unrecognised, with Israel.

The Realist perspective, shared by the Israeli leadership, would argue that Israel, in protecting its national interest in Iranian oil, would remain in spite of an Islamic overthrow. Additionally, it would suggest that Israel would maintain relations with Iran even amid the threat of the Islamic Revolution because it remained a regional ally and because Israel felt an obligation to protect the Iranian Jewish community. The relationship could have continued in its bare bones in order to align with Israel's national interest, but it did not and the revolutionary Iranian leadership ejected the Israelis from Iran.

The Israeli perception of the national interest remained the same, but all the original Iranian decision-makers were removed in the revolution, so the Israeli policy was no longer viable. The role of the individual, meaning the Iranian Mullahs and Khomeini,

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[597] Segev, *The Iranian Triangle*, p. 109.

who now ruled Iran, perceived the Iranian national interest differently. That perception ultimately led to the demise of Israeli diplomatic relations with Iran. It can be argued that the stability of Israeli-Iranian relations was dependent upon other elements, such as the role of agency and perceptions of the national interest.

A Realist interpretation of the Iranian national interest defined by power would view Iran as being a country that faces multiple potentially threatening neighbours from the Soviet Union, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iraq, all of which wanted various combinations of Iran's oil and influence. Before and after the Islamic Revolution, the same threats faced Iran and, according to the Realist perspective, the threat to Iran remained the same. However, with the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, the entire perception of the new Iranian decision-makers could not have been more different. Khomeini and his advisors perceived the Iranian national interest differently. This demonstrated the influence of perceptions of the national interests of both states and their repercussions on the international system.

Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, rendered impotent by Khomeini with respect to Israeli-Iranian relations, was no longer able to pursue any constructive Israeli policy with Iran. Begin, with attention to Israeli national interests, was prepared in the event that Iran cut off the vital oil flow to Israel. 'Israel moved quietly to stockpile a six-month reserve (four million tons) of oil in the Negev desert storage facilities. At Lubrani's urging, long-term supply arrangements were established with Mexico, Nigeria, Gabon, and the North Sea producers before the Shah of Iran's departure from Iran in January 1979,' Sobhani writes.[598] The roles of powerful individuals, such as the

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[598] Sobhani, *The Pragmatic Entente*, p. 119.

Shah of Iran, Khomeini, and Begin, greatly affected the ability of both states to pursue their respective national interests. The role of influential individuals, such as the Shah of Iran, Khomeini and Begin greatly affected the ability of both states to pursue each nation's national interest.

The strategic calculus and the role of agency and perceptions in the interpretation of the national interest were two sides of the same coin that made Israeli-Iranian relations untenable after the revolution. What has not been examined fully until now is how the revolutionary leaders in Iran held a different perception of Iran's national interest and that change in their perception enhances the explanation of why relations met such a dramatic end.

7.11.3 *Perceptions and Misperceptions of Iranian Government Stability*

Israeli perceptions of the Iranian government's stability and the subsequent Islamic Revolution affected Israel's Iran policy and ability to mitigate its losses once the revolution led to the sudden severing of relations. Israel's being taken by surprise was relatively less so than the shock of other states. As former Mossad agent in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution, Eliezer Tzafrir explains in an interview:

> We were caught by surprise in Iran, but our mistake was less than others-even [less so than] the mistake of the Shah and the United States…A CIA report published by the New York times at the time looked forward to 15 years more for the Shah in power, and it took only six months for the Shah to fall.[599]

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[599] Tzafrir, Eliezer. Interview on i24 News, 30 June 2014.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXdJJ2kCNUM, retrieved 5 February 2017.

As early as 1977, Reuven Merhav, the Mossad Station Chief in Tehran, was concerned about the Iranian regime's centralist structure. Merhav, an Israeli-born Mossad agent whose family emigrated from Germany, had previous extensive intelligence experience in Ethiopia and Kenya. To him, the system seemed similar to that of Ethiopia, another Periphery doctrine state with which Merhav was familiar. Indeed, Iran's system encouraged conformity and obedience, and would not be sustainable amid that country's rapid economic and social modernisation.[600] As Bar-Joseph writes:

> Merhav was particularly worried about the possibility that the modern ballistic missiles that Israel promised to sell Iran would fall into hostile hands in the likely event of a regime collapse. In March 1977, Merhav held a talk with the Mossad Chief, Major General (Res.) Yitzhak Hofi, and warned him about it. Hofi raised the issue with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Defense Minister Shimon Peres, who were reluctant to give up Iran's financial support to the project. [601]

Merhav's experience with Ethiopia raised red flags for individuals who had spent time in other periphery countries. His assessment was correct. He saw that the Shah of Iran's governing structure was unsustainable given the high speed of social and economic development. However, Merhav lacked the ability to influence the outcome.

The views of two Mossad agents, Nachik Navot, who served in Iran and Kurdistan from 1969-1972 as well as 1978-1979 and eventually became Deputy Head of Mossad and Yossi Alpher, who served from 1978-1980 as an Intelligence Agent on Iran after serving 12 years with Mossad, allows us to examine two individual viewpoints and perceptions of what was happening at the time by two active-duty decision-makers. According to Navot, Israeli decision-makers always had an evacuation plan in place,

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[600] Bar-Joseph, "Forecasting a Hurricane," p. 727.
[601] Ibid, p. 728. Paraphrased published interview with Reuven Merhav in Ronen Bergman, *Point of No Return: Israeli Intelligence Against Iran and Hizbullah* (Hebrew) (Or Yehuda: Zmora-Bitan, 2007), pp. 34-35.

indicating the Israelis always questioned the stability of the Shah's regime. In demonstrating the scope of Israeli thinking, Yossi Alpher spoke about warning signs as well. Alpher, a Mossad agent at the time, also spoke about the red flags that were raised with respect to the stability of the Shah of Iran's regime and the reluctance of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence to take notice of these warnings. When asked about these red flags, Alpher mentioned the importance of personnel and their influence under the Israeli decision-making structure:

> The PM's Office created policy, and the policy was executed primarily by the Mossad and the Ministry of Defence (arms sales, etc.). When there was a particularly talented and well-connected ambassador in Tehran during that period, like Lubrani, he was of course very much a participant in consultations, but almost in an ex officio capacity. At any rate, during the last years of the Shah of Iran when I was in the picture, I don't think the identity of our foreign minister was a factor. Having said that, Dayan as foreign minister and Weizman as defense minister were influential in pushing for arms deals with the Shah of Iran until very close to the time of his removal. In retrospect this was of course a mistake, but I don't recall anyone asking me for an opinion at the time.[602]

From an operational perspective, Navot, who served in Tehran for Mossad from 1969-72 and then again from 1978-79 (when he oversaw the evacuation of Israelis and Jews from Iran), highlights how even earlier on, there were no illusions or grand misperceptions on the part of Israelis in Iran of the possibility that a revolution may happen and the Shah of Iran may fall. He explained:

> I was involved in the drafting of a document that considered this [the fall of the Shah of Iran], and the fact is that in the desk drawers of the Israeli embassy in Tehran there was placed an extensive emergency evacuation plan in the event of the fall of the regime, an extensive plan for evacuation of all the Israeli representatives in Iran, and most of the large Jewish community.[603]

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[602] Yossi Alpher, Personal communication with author, 16 May 2016.
[603] Navot, *Olam Umloa: One Man's Mossad*, pp. 98-99.

The US Embassy in Tehran also issued 1,400 visas to the United States to Iranian Jews, who composed 35 per cent of the total refugee visas issued in Iran.[604]

I have demonstrated clearly the importance of perceptions and misperceptions of Israeli decision-makers between 1973 and 1979 and how they were instrumental in affecting the actions and non-actions of Israeli decision-makers and diplomats, and at the end, their reactions to the Islamic Revolution when Israel's active engagement with Iran came to an end. When the perceptions of the Israelis were on target, their reactions and strategies were appropriate. However, when they were not, such as in offering assistance to Iran in preventing the overthrow, the course of history was changed.

7.11.4 *Mitigating Loss by Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs and Israeli Field Operatives During the Iranian Revolution*

During the period leading up to the Iranian Revolution, Israeli diplomats underestimated the political changes happening in Tehran. Their misperception of the overthrow and its ramifications led to the downfall of Israel's clandestine foreign policy with Iran. In a recent interview with Jewish Iranian attorney Hamid Sabi, who represented an international client base including Israeli and Iranian clients and practised law in Tehran during the revolution, he stated that the Israelis' naïveté contributed to the breakdown in relations between Israel and the future Iranian Government. Sabi, a foreign policy entrepreneur, had extreme value to the Israeli military industry in finding a location for their operations in Tehran. Sabi, a graduate of Tehran University in 1970 and Dundee University Law School in Scotland, was the son of a prominent lawyer practising in

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[604] ISA Prime Minister's Office 281-8 43.5/1-192 Report from Gilboa (Tehran) to Yael Vered, dated 7 December 1978.

Tehran. Sabi's law practice had close ties with Israel. In a covert and undocumented move, the Iranian military industries transferred $750 million to the Israeli military industries as part of operation codenamed Tzur. The $750 million was not included in Iran as part of this operation claim for reparations during the oil arbitration due to the fact that there was no record at all available to prove this monetary transfer.[605] In June 1978, Sabi contacted Israeli authorities at the behest of the opposition groups to the Shah, to establish a rapport between them and Israel. The first reaction was positive, and arrangements were contemplated for a meeting, but on 8 September 1978 Iranian Army troops opened fire on civilians protesting the Iranian government gathered in Jaleh Square, what was later to be called the Jaleh Square Massacre, Israeli decision-makers withdrew from these contacts.[606]

Sabi was given the funds by Israel to purchase a large building on Shemiran Road in East Tehran that was heavily fortified and used by Israeli military industries. During the revolution, Sabi was arrested and jailed by the Iranian revolutionaries. Despite the mass executions and incarceration in Iran at the time, Sabi's life was spared and he was released from jail and left the country. 'My ability to communicate and relate with my jailers speaking the same language and understanding the culture allowed me certain benefits with respect to my captivity. Combined with the efforts of my law partners, my life was spared and I was released,' he recalled.[607] The location of the military industrial building was within the jurisdiction of local Committee #3, which was run by

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[605] Personal interview with Hamid Sabi, 26 May 2016, London. The oil arbitration involves Iran's claim for the Swiss court that ordered Israel to pay Iran $ 1.1 billion as compensation for oil debts over the sale and shipment of the Islamic Republic's oil. Israel has declared that it will not pay a $1.1bn (£650m) debt to Iran over the sale and shipment of the Islamic Republic's oil. The Swiss court found that Israel had not compensated the Islamic Republic for a pre-1979 Islamic revolution deal that involved the sale and shipping of Iranian oil through an Israeli port. http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/israel-rejects-swiss-court-ruling-pay-iran-1bn-oil-debts-shahs-era-1502249
[606] Email correspondence with Hamid Sabi, 24 January 2017.
[607] Personal interview with Hamid Sabi, 26 May 2016, London.

Ayatollah Motahari. According to Sabi, Motahari was a strong and sophisticated Israeli opponent.

Ayatollah Motahari was in charge of the 'Co-operation with Palestine' Committee and, among others, was investigating Israeli military ventures including the Tzur Project with Iran. However, due to extreme caution exercised by both Israeli and Iranian parties, Motahari was unable to extract any information. Sabi's office was raided but yielded no useful information. At the time General Entezami, who was the Project Manager for the Tzur Project, was appointed as the head of Iran's defence industry by the Iranian Revolutionary Government and had refused to provide any information to Motahari. Motahari was assassinated in August 1979 by an Islamic extremist group named 'Forghan.' General Entezami was executed for his relations with Israel in 1980.[608]

Because the military industrial building was so heavily fortified, the Iranians erroneously thought that political prisoners were being held inside by Israelis. During the revolution, the revolutionaries headed straight to that building to rescue prisoners they thought were there and they fired almost 1,000 rounds at the gate and stormed the building only to find it empty, with only a janitor present.[609] The Israelis clearly had created a profound misperception within the Iranian revolutionary organisations. This building also reflected the high hopes that the Israelis had for the continued cooperation with Iran. Indeed, the ISA archives available from the Mossad indicate that Israeli companies were still operating in Iran, such as El Al, and that construction and engineering companies continued to operate as late as December 1978. For example,

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[608] Email correspondence with Hamid Sabi, 24 January 2017.
[609] Personal interview with Hamid Sabi, 26 May 2016.

the Israeli corporation for engineering services signed contracts with the Iranian Navy worth $40,000 USD per month in December 1978.[610]

The complexity of foreign policy entrepreneurs cannot be denied. With respect to the Realist prism, an agent or actor should have the direct national interests at the forefront. However, as can be seen with Sabi and Lord David Alliance helping Israel was arguably in Iran's best interest. However, with the revolution, national interest according to the Realist perspective was put into question. In these cases, and others like them, pursuing the national interest is subjective and does not tell the entire story. During times of extreme political and geographic instability, defining a country as well as agreeing on one overriding strategic and national interest becomes impossible. The Realist perspective that neatly ties motives and directives under the category of national interest is impossible to apply when the nation itself is vying for identity between warring factions.

7.12 **Conclusion**

I have demonstrated how the Realist account is enhanced by including the role of the individual, as well as perceptions and misperceptions, in fully understanding the dramatic breakdown of Israeli-Iranian relations during the Islamic Revolution. Furthermore, a change in Israeli personnel also affected the speed and depth of relations in comparison to pre- and post-1973 with respect to the change of Israeli ambassador to Tehran and other Israeli personnel.

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[610] ISA Prime Minister's Office 281-8 43.5/1-192 Mossad report to Military Intelligence and the Prime Minister's Office, dated 19 December 1978.

The Realist explanation would explain the slowing down of the positive relations between the two countries as Iran's strategic interest of turning toward the Arab world. Israeli decision-makers were consistently aware that even when the Shah of Iran and his government publicly criticised Israel and condoned anti-Semitic incitements within Iran, he still mistrusted the Arabs and saw Israel as a strong and essential asset.[611] The Shah's belief system in which he mistrusted the Arabs demonstrated the role of relationships in crafting the national interest with respect to foreign policy creation overtly and covertly between Iran and Israel.

Israeli decision-makers were acutely aware that the Shah almost exclusively dictated Iran's foreign policy, so that when he was forcibly removed from office, what had been the Iranian national interest became an entirely different national interest under the new regime. From the Israeli perspective, their own changes in personnel contributed to the strained relations between Israel and the reduction of positive interactions, while the national interest remained the same. The role of human relationships in both Iranian and Israeli decision-makers contributed greatly to the demise of the strategic relations between both countries that is not included in the Realist analysis.

It was when familiar personalities such as Shimon Peres was sent to Iran to speak with and reassure the Shah of Iran that Israeli foreign policy gained momentum again and the Shah of Iran agreed to work together on the Tzur project. We can see the importance of the individuals who were most aware of the Iranian mindset and as a result were able to implement Israeli foreign policy much more successfully by forming close personal relationships with important Iranian decision-makers.

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[611] ISA Ministry of Foreign Affairs 6120/13 130.2/45-279 Survey of Israeli-Iranian Relations, dated 18 September 1975.

Relations with Iran between 1973 and 1979 mostly included trade rather than political developments, although the Shah of Iran's personal involvement in the peace talks with Egypt were instrumental from an international perspective. Throughout the period of this chapter, the Israeli mission in Tehran remained open despite evacuations and continuous attacks from PLO supporters. Israeli decision-makers feared that if the mission would close, it would not open again. Another poignant reason is that the presence of the Israeli mission gave reassurance to almost 50,000 Iranian Jews who remained in Iran. Interviews with key players from the period, along with recently released Israeli State Archival documents, allow us to gain intimate and insider knowledge that fills out the picture of events. Indeed, it greatly aids the analysis of the roles of the individuals and their perceptions and misperceptions. Taken together, a fuller picture emerges of a pivotal period in both Iranian and Israeli history.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

'By astutely using her beauty, charm, and political intelligence, and by taking one well-placed risk, [Queen] Esther saves her people, brings about the downfall of their enemy, and elevates her kinsman to the highest position in the kingdom.'[612]

8.1   Discussions and Research Findings

This thesis began with a reference to the Book of Esther, which tells the history of the Persian Empire and its Jewish community through the tale of Queen Esther, who saved her people from the evil Haman's attempt to commit genocide in order to rid the empire of its Jews.   The queen pleads with her husband, the anti-Jewish King Ahasuerus, who gives the Jews the opportunity to save themselves. In modern times, as I have shown in this thesis, the Persian and Jewish peoples—in the form of Iran and the State of Israel—have likewise been acquainted. The relations between Israel and Iran in the modern age have been equally varied and legendary. They proved especially fruitful for both states, despite them being covert. Like Queen Esther in the famous Purim story, human relationships played a vital component in overcoming the obstacles and facilitating Israel's foreign policy towards Iran and Israel's global impact.

Queen Esther is symbolic of the work of such leaders and field operatives such as Golda Meir, Meir Ezri, David Ben Gurion, and others cited in this work to influence and use their cultural, language, and personal skills to advance the foreign policy goals and objectives of the modern State of Israel toward modern Iran.   In order to fully

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[612] White Crawford, Sidnie. 'Esther: Bible,' *Jewish Women's Archive*. Retrieved 1 February 2017, JWA.org/encyclopedia/article/esther-bible.

understand the roles of these Israeli individuals, this thesis set out to investigate how the inclusion of human relationships – consisting of perceptions and misperceptions – and human agency complement the Realist analysis of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran between 1948 and 1979.

By including the role of human relationships and human agency, we saw in this thesis four distinct patterns of influence that changed the direction of foreign policy between Israel and Iran that are largely under-explored in the existing Realist account. The four distinct patterns that add to the Realist account are:

1.   **Overcoming internal obstacles in the Israeli decision-making structure:**

Israeli decision-makers and field operatives faced internal opposition to implementing the Peripheral Alliance policy. As explored in Chapter 4, the internal conflict between departments in sending the military attaché, such as in 1960 when both Mossad and Military Intelligence each wanted to send their chosen military attaché to Tehran, became an issue internally for the Israeli decision-making structure. In this example, I also explored the explanatory potential of the Bureaucratic Politics Model as illustrated in Chapter 2. The actions of Israeli diplomats in Tehran and their relationships with Iranian officials in Tehran that enabled the appointment of the military attaché that the Israelis and Iranians in Tehran felt would be most effective. It was these personal relationships in Tehran that allowed for a great understanding in the needs of the internal Israeli departments in Jerusalem and allowed for the best possible decision, which was to send the desired military attaché. Another example explored in Chapter 5, was Foreign Minister Golda Meir's hesitation in

selling 40,000 Uzis to the Iranian Police in 1964 and that she had to be reassured by the Israeli diplomats in Tehran that these weapons would not fall into the hands of the religious extremists in Iran.

2.   Overcoming external obstacles within Iran and Arab world:

Israeli decision-makers and field operatives faced obstacles to implementing Israel's foreign policy towards Iran from outside Israel as well. These external obstacles originated from within Iran as well as the Arab world. The external obstacles that Israeli decision-makers and field operatives faced in Iran were challenging and numerous and have not been sufficiently explored by the existing literature. For example, in Chapter 3, the great jeopardy of *Aliyah* is examined, specifically the transport of Jewish refugees from Iraq via Iran to Israel who would face dire consequences if discovered.

Though Uri Bialer touches on the Aliyah in his research, he only skims the surface and does not examine in depth the jeopardy faced by the refugees and those assisting in their transport. Another Realist leaning author, Sohrab Sobhani also discusses how important foreign Jewish communities were to Israeli foreign policy and that 'Iran took a central importance as an alternate route for Iraqi-Jews fleeing to Israel.'[613] That, Sobhani explains, made relations with Iran an important policy goal for Israeli decision makers. The existing literature minimizes the jeopardy and the consequences and the logistical skill in implementation that made this foreign policy possible and the policy has little to do with converging national interests and is thus unexplained in the Realist

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[613] Sobhani, *Pragmatic Entente*, p. 5.

account from the period. What the existing literature also underrepresents is demonstrating how the extradition of such illegal immigrants would result in additional political consequences for the people and governments involved in the illegal transport of Jewish refugees. It was the skill of Mossad agents and field operatives on the ground in Tehran, along with assistance from the local Jewish community and relationships with sympathetic Iranians, which made the movement of thousands of Jewish Iraqis safely to Israel possible.

My discussion adds to the existing literature in ways that elaborate on policy implementation: the amount of coordination between Israeli officials and the locals required, the role of the Jewish community and foreign policy entrepreneurs, the jeopardy of the entire operation of many entities, and demonstrates a fundamental piece of Israeli foreign policy through a different lens. The Realist account would attribute this to building the population in Israel and does not examine the decisions made along the way or the inclusion of the Jewish community, locals in Iran, Iraq and Israel and foreign policy entrepreneurs in depth.

The hesitance of Iranian foreign ministers in consistently objecting over time to fully normalising relations with Israel for fear of Arab retaliation is explored throughout the thesis. This dynamic is demonstrated by their anti-Israeli speeches, as well as their continual votes against Israel and the normalisation of Iranian-Israeli relations. The consistent expertise and effort of Israeli government ministers and diplomats to use their personal relationships with sympathetic and influential Iranians to overcome obstacles are explored throughout this thesis. The details of these personal relationships and

consequently their impact on Israeli foreign policy towards Iran are under-examined in the existing literature. For instance, author Trita Parsi discusses how Iran kept its relations with Israel secret, and that under the Shah's orders, the Iranian intelligence service made contact with the Israeli intelligence agency in order to keep the relations secret even from the Iranian Foreign Ministry.[614] Missing in Parsi's analysis are implementation details of how these intelligence contacts were made between the heads of the Iranian SAVAK and Military Intelligence and the Israeli Mossad, Military Intelligence and Foreign Ministry. Furthermore, the Realist account does not specify that the Iranian Foreign Ministry was actually aware of relations with Iran and that it was relationships with Israeli diplomats—and with an Iranian born Israeli ambassador who appealed to the Foreign Minister's Persian sensibility and reasoning that enabled a number of Iranian Foreign Ministers to soften their stance towards Israel. It is these crucial human relationships that complement the story that the Realist account introduces.

I also addressed the importance of examining the relationships between Israeli field operatives such as diplomats and Mossad agents and opponents of the Iranian government. Realist leaning authors such as Sobhani identify the Iranian opposition to the Iranian central government's relations with Israel, but do not explore how the opposition was dealt with by either Israelis or Iranians. Sobhani states 'For Iran, the connection with Israel proved to be a liability for the central government, which was under attack by religious interest groups and the Arab world. Nevertheless, the Shah and his advisors were not oblivious to

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[614] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 26.

the potential advantages of ties to the Jewish State.'[615] Sobhani, even though he mentions internal opposition in Iran, concludes that Iran continued its relations with Israel because of Iran's self-interest; yet does not delve deeper into how Israeli diplomats reached out to the opposition and allayed their resistance to relations with Israel through human relationships.

It has been pivotal to go beyond the Realist account here for two reasons. First, the Iranian government pointed to the opposition as a reason that it could not normalise relations with Israel. Second, the opposition was used as a catalyst for the Iranian Revolution. Awareness, both of the opposition and the change of key players in the decision-making authority, played a key role. For example, following changes in personnel, some Israelis' awareness directly before the Islamic Revolution does not appear to have been as sensitive to Iran's internal opposition.[616] In contrast, prior to 1973, Israeli diplomats in Iran kept a close eye on the internal Iranian opposition partly because the opposition was used as a reason not to deepen Iran's ties to Israel.[617] Such sensitivities to internal opposition (within Iran) overcame significant obstacles.

3.   **Influencing the internal shaping of Israeli foreign policy**

Israeli decision-makers and field operatives demonstrated their influence on the Israeli foreign policy decision-making process through relationships and agency. These individuals steered Israeli foreign policy by identifying opportunities to progress the broader Israeli foreign policy goals and objectives through Israel's Iran policy. An example explored in Chapter 4 was when David Ben Gurion

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[615] Sobhani, *Pragmatic Entente*, p. 13.
[616] Lecture delivered by Yossi Alpher, 11 April 2016, University of Haifa, Israel.
[617] Personal interview with Meir Ezri. Savyon, Israel

expanded his vision of the Peripheral Alliance Policy as a means to counteract Israeli perceptions of isolation in the Middle East. Specifically, this vision guided the formation and implementation of Israel's policy toward Iran. Ben Gurion pursued this despite objections and resistance from his own advisors such as Abba Eban that such a relationship between Israel and Iran would somehow jeopardise Israel's potential relations with the outside and Arab world. An example explored in Chapter 4, was when Tzvi Doriel encouraged using his personal relationships with decision-makers in the Prime Minister's office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take advantage of the opportunity for Israel to develop its commercial relations with Iran as a means to developing Israel's political relations with Iran.

In Chapter 4, the internal influence shaping Israeli foreign policy can be seen with respect to the 1962 Qazvin Earthquake and diplomats on the ground in Tehran pushing Jerusalem to place Israel as a first responder to the aid, when decision makers in Jerusalem were unsure whether they could provide the assistance and resources that the diplomats in Tehran requested from Jerusalem. The aid eventually translated into reconstruction contracts for Israeli companies working in Iran, the saving of countless lives and the shift in perception within the Iranian community of the value of Israeli-Iranian relations. In contrast, Sobhani recounts the aftermath of the Qazvin earthquake and the development projects that followed- yet summarises it in Realist terms by stating " As Iranians, they [Iranian beneficiaries of the Israeli aid] welcomed the Israeli assistance and cooperated because it was the most pragmatic entente for Iran, given the difficult circumstances of the mid-1960's and the requirements of

development."[618] The analysis that I have provided in Chapter 4 regarding the human relationships that were required to establish the cooperation with Israelis coming to aid the relief effort as well as the Iranians in the Iranian government and *in situ* in Qazvin complements and enhances the explanation that Israeli-Iranian relations were simply the product of a 'pragmatic entente.'

4.   **Influencing the external perception of Israeli foreign policy**

Despite the Iranians' insistence on the secrecy of Israeli-Iranian relations, Israel was viewed differently, within Iran, the Arab states, and around the world. As a result, the personal relationships between Israeli field operatives in Tehran, decision-makers in Israel and Iranian decision-makers in Tehran and Iranian field operatives around the world shifted the external perception of Israeli foreign policy. For example, Israel was no longer considered as isolated. This was because Israel had a fairly consistent and robust Iranian oil flow, even during the 1967 and 1973 wars, resulting from the efforts in the personal relationships connected with the oil cooperation with Iran as demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6.

Additionally, Israeli decision-makers and field operatives spotted opportunities, either political or economic, in which to overcome internal and external Iranian constraints. For instance, the Shah of Iran perceived Israel to wield unrealistic power, access, and influence in the United States through prominent Jewish Americans. Israeli officials knew of this misperception. Iran asked the Israeli government for assistance in public relations in the United States and requested

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[618] Sobhani, *Pragmatic Entente*, p. 56.

that Theodore 'Teddy' Kollek (the Director-General of the Prime Minister's office) meet with Iranian officials in New York. Israeli officials availed themselves of the meetings despite the knowledge that there would not necessarily be an immediate result (other than goodwill) from the meeting. This grew from perceptions of opportunity and of 'soft power' cooperation, and in the hope of further developing the relations with Iran. Eventually, the cooperation paid greater dividends in terms of access to, and cooperation with, the Shah of Iran and his government.

Realist authors map out the strategic interests of Israel and Iran and state how fearful the Israeli leaders were after 1973 and that the main issue for them was the continuation of the flow of oil. Parsi illustrates, "Israel had good reason to worry about its ties to Iran. After the [Yom Kippur] War, Iran started exploring opportunities to reduce its dependence on Israeli pipelines for exporting oil to Europe. The Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline had somewhat outlived its strategic usefulness because it was originally built for Iran to circumvent territory controlled by Nasser's anti-Iranian government."[619] But Parsi, does not discuss further the human relationships between Yigal Allon, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres and the Shah. Parsi outlined how Israel was less strategically important after 1973, when in reality the relationships between Allon, Rabin and Peres with the Shah also contributed towards the foreign policy outcome. The Realist account minimizes the relationships between these individuals that enhances the picture of Israeli foreign policy implementation and keeping the cooperation in place. I discuss at length in Chapter 7 how the personal

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[619] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 51.

relationships were important, impactful and complex and included very different, very personal and very intrinsic characteristics pertaining to each individual. It does the analysis and the scope of actual events a disservice by grouping these individuals together when exploring and explaining the implementation and outcome of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran.

As discussed throughout this thesis, understanding the impact of perceptions and misperceptions on foreign policy adds vital nuance to analysing foreign policy. This is a nuance that the Realist account omits. Parsi outlines the negotiations to build the Eilat-Ashkelon Pipeline, "The deal, which took several days to conclude, was brokered in the suburbs of Tel Aviv in the summer of 1957 during the secret visit by a representative of the national Iranian oil company. The pipeline was laid in a record breaking 100 days and came into operation in late 1957…the pipeline was later upgraded to a 16-inch pipe after direct negotiations between Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and the Shah in 1958."[620] Parsi indeed outlines the negotiations very broadly and does not fully analyse the impact of the personalities involved and their perceptions, misperceptions and dynamics during these intimate and private negotiations due to the secrecy restraints of the unrecognized relationship between Israel and Iran. In addition, Uri Bialer analyses in great depth the negotiations with the Iranians within multiple oil, finance, and negotiation meetings, but contains his discussion throughout the time periods discussed in this thesis to non-personal impact. Bialer acknowledges the awareness and experience of Israeli negotiators and decision-makers, along with a surface mention of agency, perceptions and misperceptions, however without delving in to the individual personal impact on Israeli-Iranian foreign policy. My thesis complements the Realist

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[620] Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 23.

account by providing enhanced analysis that further explains the components that came together behind the scene painted by the Realist account and gives a further nuanced examination of the roles of individuals who impacted the outcome of the foreign policy from these time periods discussed in the thesis.

The overall aim of this thesis was to analyse Israeli foreign policy towards Iran and add depth where the Realist account has underrepresented the influences of human relationships on foreign policy creation, implementation and consolidation. The inclusion of the influence of personal relationships offers a more nuanced perspective on Israeli foreign policy. Specifically, the examination of agency, as well as perceptions and misperceptions, allows for a wider scope of analysis of Israeli policy towards Iran. Looking at foreign policy implementation, in the words of Chris Alden, 'adds a more nuanced position in where agency resides.'[621] As my empirical chapters have argued, the Realist analysis of Israeli foreign policy formation and implementation towards Iran must include the multidimensional role of human relationships in order to be complete.

The multidimensional elements examined include: cognitive and behavioural processes, background, personal characteristics, beliefs, and motives vital for understanding foreign policy behaviour with respect to its creation, implementation, and continuation. I have argued that including the role of relationships can greatly enhance the understanding of complex decision-making. Particular focus has been applied to the individuals who demonstrated the most influence in their time in Israeli-Iranian foreign policy formation and implementation: David Ben-Gurion, Tzvi Doriel, Meir Ezri, Golda Meir, Levi Eshkol, Shimon Peres, Moshe Dayan, The Shah of Iran, General Ali Kia,

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[621] Alden, Chris. 'FPA and the Resurgence of the State in a Globalized Era,' Lecture at the London School of Economics and Political Science, 23 January 2017.

Manoucher Eqbal, and other foreign policy entrepreneurs discussed in the previous chapters.

I have argued and shown that the examination of the role of human relationships, as well as perceptions and misperceptions must be included along with the Realist perspective to glean a deeper understanding of the significant impact upon decisions made during these critical periods in Israeli history. The individual's experience, background, ideology, beliefs, culture, language, and personal characteristics greatly influence the way information is processed at every level of communication, and therefore can be said to influence decisional outputs.

As the empirical chapters, chapters 3 through 7, have shown, the role of relationships has been a key determinative factor in Israel's foreign policy formation and implementation. At some points, leaders played a pivotal role in Israeli foreign policy as evidenced by the actions of Ben Gurion and Meir. At all points, the roles of Israeli diplomats and intelligence agents served as the key components to an effective Israeli foreign policy. The periods covered in Chapters 3 and 4 examined the effect of foreign policy direction from Ben Gurion, while examining foreign policy decision-making towards Iran. Israeli foreign policy decision-making during these time periods came in the context of great jeopardy for the state of Israel. For example, the lives of a large number of Iraqi Jewish refugees depended on and posed a great challenge to Israeli decision-makers and thus affected policy determinants. Concurrently, Israel had to be mindful of their dependency on their relationship with Iran to sustain a viable and necessary Iranian oil flow to sustain the Israeli economy and military.

Chapters 5 and 6 examined how Israel's policy towards Iran continued to be implemented despite the change in Prime Ministers. These chapters demonstrated the benefits of Israeli cooperation with Iran in aiding the Kurds. During these time periods, Israeli field operatives continued to overcome the consistent obstacles placed by the Iranian government. Chapter 6 demonstrated the Golden Years of Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. Even during the Golden Years, Israelis had to overcome and gauge the fluctuations of Iranian willingness to engage with Israel. Israeli decision-makers and diplomats were able to come to a vital oil agreement with Iran.

The shift in defence strategy following the Yom Kippur War and its effect on Israel's policy towards Iran was examined in Chapter 7. Once Israel's policy was envisioned in 1958, it did not change drastically in aim. Israel's broad strategic change in 1973 affected the general approach to Iran, but it was the change in personnel in 1973 that shifted Israel's Iran policy under Golda Meir and Abba Eban. In that period, policy was implemented by new Ambassador Uri Lubrani, who took a much less nuanced approach to navigating Israeli interaction with Iran.

This thesis contributes to the existing literature because it brings to bear previously unknown materials that were unearthed through archival research and personal interviews. Indeed, this part of the longer story of Israeli-Iranian relations has not been featured from this perspective because much of this information has been classified for the past five decades. From handwritten notes by Prime Minster Golda Meir to interviews with the dominant diplomatic players of the day, my research represents in many cases a new perspective that enhances the Realist account and brings to light aspects of Israeli policy that have been unknown.

In analysing the role of relationships in all of the periods, it can be clearly seen how the Iranian-born foreign policy actors or agents, diplomats, and entrepreneurs for Israel overcame larger obstacles and achieved greater outcomes vis-à-vis Iran than other foreign-born nationals. Imaginative problem-solving methods employed by Israeli foreign policy actors materially affected the decisions, discussions, and outcomes between Israeli and Iranian foreign policy objectives, and this thesis has examined the role of relationships with respect to public and clandestine diplomacy. The understanding of the nuances in language, the ease with which one can blend in with cultural customs, and the ability to convey a sense of trust through familiarity cannot be overstated. In almost every instance, the transactions, from the oil pipeline negotiations to the execution of covert operations and the rapid evacuation of all Israeli nationals, I have clearly shown how the role of relationships is vital to any foreign policy analysis and the success or failure of those foreign policy objectives.

In contrast to the existing account, which focuses on strategic interests and its view of the state as an opaque black box, it is useful to analyse a key diplomatic player who was born and raised in a country, chosen to align with his new country, and then is expected by the Realist perspective to only act in the strategic and national interest of the new country. However, my analysis demonstrates that the convergence of national interests in many cases is only part of the explanation of why Israel's foreign policy towards Iran was so effective. For many of these agents, diplomats, and foreign policy entrepreneurs converging national interests worked in their favour. Yet, this perspective only illustrates a portion of the decision-making process and omits the powerful influence of human relationships and agency.

Moreover, by examining human components, I was also able to explore in depth the way foreign policy actors overcame numerous obstacles that would not necessarily have been identified by the assumptions of the Realist account, particularly beyond the convergence of national interests. By including human relationships and agency and their impact on Israeli-Iranian policy formation and implementation, I have demonstrated how future foreign policy studies could also benefit from conducting a more complete analysis that includes the role of human relationships, perceptions and misperceptions, and agency.

Ben Gurion, the most influential Israeli Prime Minister, envisioned the Periphery Doctrine. He also showed foresight when he appointed a highly effective, Iran-born individual, Ezri, to represent Israel in Tehran. Ben Gurion also had the vision to appoint Tzvi Doriel and Yakov Nimrodi, who established commercial relations and acted as the commercial and military attachés respectively. Ben Gurion also appreciated and used the Jewish community in Tehran to further the goals of the State of Israel. Subsequent Israeli Prime Ministers continued Ben Gurion's vision. They carried out this work effectively, even though future and replacement personnel neither had the depth of understanding of the initial diplomatic team nor were they as educated in cultural sensitivities. The initial diplomatic team for Israel trained the embassy staff so completely that they were able to operate effectively despite the fact that no formal recognition of that embassy was attained. On the other hand, the foreign policy actors that replaced the initial team were not as well trained in cultural awareness and understanding, thus jeopardising the entire operation and contributing to the shift in relations between Israel and Iran. Still, the Mossad team that was sent to Tehran when the revolution was imminent did have a certain degree of awareness and understanding

that contributed to the overall success of the evacuation of Israeli nationals and vulnerable Iranian Jews.

In conclusion, including the role of human relationships, as well as perceptions and misperceptions, in the analysis unearths a richness and influence with respect to foreign policy formation, implementation, and overall enduring success that is not included within the Realist account. Ben Gurion's vision was not solely that of breaking Israel's regional isolation in the simple realpolitik strategic Israeli national interest. It was also the coming together of two ancient civilisations in an effort for both of them to become better.

The Israeli foreign policy-making structure was centralised. However, various government agencies voiced their different policy opinions that would contradict a Realist's view of a domestic hierarchical structure. At the same time, Israeli relations with Iran included countless uncertainties, disjointed agreements, and murky Iranian power structures. Such detailed historical facts are best analysed through an FPA analysis of Israel's diplomatic relations with Iran. Through the conceptual framework and FPA tools, it is possible to enhance the story that Realism tells while doing justice to the foreign policy successes that were achieved in light of the obstacles that they faced. The gaps in the untold story were illustrated in this thesis by using diplomatic cables, interviews, and memoirs to frame the context and to demonstrate the importance of the parts of the story that lacked detail in the existing account, such as the seemingly irrational actions of Israeli foreign policymakers.

The evidence has shown and confirmed that policy-makers ultimately envisioned the relationship with Iran as fully formalised diplomatic relations. Although the Israeli

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was aware of the sensitivity on the Iranian side because of its diplomats in Tehran, the MFA decided not to officially exert pressure on Iran to advance its bilateral relations. The Israeli government saw the necessity and merits of the clandestine approach to foreign policy. The Israeli intelligence services, Mossad, and Israeli Military Intelligence, played a unique role that is broader than the traditional contribution usually made by intelligence services to foreign policy. Mossad not only acted as an independent unit within the decision-making apparatus, but also as a facilitator for the scope of diplomatic relations that are typically addressed overtly in cases of formal relations. In addition, the Israeli mission in Tehran discussed normalisation of relations unofficially and relied on its friends and allies within the Iranian government and other prominent foreign policy entrepreneurs, emphasising the role of human relationships within foreign policy.

Throughout the research process of this thesis, I uncovered in the Israel State Archives and in Meir Ezri's private collection released to me shortly after his death, many documents that had not been examined with respect to the formation, implementation and consolidation of Israel's relations with Iran as well as the surrounding Arab states. Because of the recently released documents made available to me during the research process, a new lens emerged allowing me to examine Israeli foreign policy towards Iran. The authors of the existing accounts of Israeli-Iranian relations viewed the available data to them within a particular context and from a different lens. Therefore, this thesis has been less of a critique of previous authors, and more of a reflection of the results of a new focus made possible by the recently uncovered documents allowing the situations to be examined in their entirety, using a more holistic analytical approach.

One avenue of further research to be considered is to conduct further study of the role of human relationships within international relations in order to complement the existing tools available in the literature to analyse foreign policy. If the study of the role of human relationships is not included, we run the risk of a piece of the foreign policy puzzle to be missing or incomplete that may not be discovered in any other way. It would be beneficial to also examine the role of human relationships in other case studies of Israeli foreign policy in general and in particular with respect to other Peripheral Alliance countries.

With the current available documents within the Israel State Archives at the time of writing, along with some of the legal gags pending from current oil litigation regarding reparations from pipeline revenues, as well as the large volume of documents from 1948 to present day remaining classified, research is largely determined by the release and availability of the research material. Because relations between Israel and Iran are extremely strained as of this writing, it is even more important to examine the perceptions and potential misperceptions of Israeli decision-makers and field operatives in the present day.

In this thesis, I have presented the documents newly released and available to me by using a wider lens and to formulate different analysis results. Perhaps, in the future, more documents from the Israel State Archives could be viewed in this manner. As a result, it would be possible to bring to study of the role human relationships and personalities into the context in which they were written in official documentation with respect to Israel's relations with other states. Because of the concealed nature of the existing documents, and the limited availability of surviving members from that time period, it is vital that we continue examining the available material with a wider lens

and a broader scope of evaluation to fully understand the key components at play in the development and implementation, as well as the success and outcomes of foreign policy.

The time period 1948-1979 presented many opportunities as well as many obstacles. The opportunities seen by Israeli decision-makers and field operatives went above and beyond the Rationalist calculus that Realist authors continue to emphasise when discussing Israeli-Iranian relations. While this Rationalist calculus may have been present and used by decision-makers, a much clearer picture appears as a result of this thesis by including the role of human relationships, as well as agency along with perceptions and misperceptions, of the nature, scope, and scale of opportunities and obstacles the Israeli decision-makers and field operatives faced. The friendship between Meir Ezri and General Ali Kia, for example, allowed for intelligence sharing, agricultural cooperation, access to the Shah and an ability to overcome internal Iranian obstacles including a hostile Iranian foreign ministry and opposition from Iranian clerics as well as the vital access to Iranian oil.

I have argued and demonstrated how in modern Israeli foreign policymaking, as in the Book of Esther, it was the actions of individuals and their relationships that paved the way for policy formation, implementation and consolidation, and elevated Israel's relations with Iran beyond that of converging national interests.

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