

Modern Guerrilla Warfare: An Analysis of Hamas' Tactics in the Palestinian-Israeli Ongoing Conflict

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Abstract: Evidently, conflict has been a persistent and defining aspect of human history, shaping civilizations and influencing the course of events over millennia. This article examines one of the most relevant and enduring forms of conflict in history, Guerrilla warfare. It explores how guerrilla tactics, employed by weaker forces to counter superior military powers through unconventional means, have shaped historical and modern warfare. The analysis draws on the contributions of T.E. Lawrence and Mao Zedong to guerrilla strategy, emphasizing the importance of mobility, surprise, and psychological operations. The ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict is presented as a current example of guerrilla warfare, showcasing Hamas's use of tunnel networks, hit-and-run attacks, and improvised weapons against the Israel Defense Forces. The article highlights the psychological and international dimensions of the conflict, including the impact of propaganda and the involvement of allied groups. By examining these dynamics, the article underscores the persistent significance of guerrilla tactics in achieving strategic objectives against technologically superior adversaries, calling for continued academic interest in this form of warfare.

Keywords : Guerrilla warfare; Gaza; Hamas; Israel; T.E. Lawrence; Mao Zedong, Aqsa Flood; Genocide

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I- Introduction :

The science of warfare is often regarded as old as humanity itself, especially if we consider that certain cave paintings that date back thousands of years represent groups of armed men on a flanking manoeuvre. Many of civilization's greatest legends and triumphs are considered to have taken place in war, and no small number of our most honoured men were generals and leaders in times of conflict. War seems to be a persistent dimension in our civilized existence to this very day. It is a domain that incentivized and inspired arduous development in technology, discipline, and lethality that causes as much awe as terror.

The multifaceted and complex warfare landscape has repeatedly shown throughout history that weaker forces facing the overwhelming might of superior armies have had to adopt unconventional strategies to survive and emerge victorious. The need for this has forced many smaller, less well-armed groups to use creative and flexible approaches in combat that have managed to balance their shortcomings with a deep understanding of the terrain, agility, and the element of surprise. These tactics have now become synonymous with the term "guerrilla tactics" in asymmetric warfare, defining how weak sides can resist, even at times, overcome much stronger opponents.

A historical sampling of guerrilla warfare should claim more academic interest, for within the context of our contemporary era, more and more groups are adopting such tactics as it represents the ideal instrument for the realization of social-political-economic aspirations of underprivileged peoples. This is so patently true as to allow one to suggest that we may be witnessing a transition to a new era in warfare, an era as radically different as those which followed the writings of Sun Tzu, Machiavelli, Clausewitz, and Mahan (Asprey R. , 1994, p. x).

It seems that under today's threat of nuclear stalemate, even the more capable of military forces in the world have developed guerrilla-based units, like the Navy Seals or the Special Boat Service, in order to achieve their military goals. Additionally, many different terrorist groups and drug lords today have adopted such tactics because they proved to be very effective against the orthodox and conventional powers of the state.

Despite all that, and regardless of the negative connotations that lately stained guerrilla warfare, it has always been the traditional *weapon of protest* used to remedy real or imagined wrongs imposed on a people by either a ruling government or by a foreign invader (Asprey R. , 2024). Therefore, it has always been the go-to choice for most of the liberation movements in history.

Perhaps there is no bigger battlefield today to analyse and explore contemporary guerrilla warfare in a liberation movement theatre than the ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict. It is the modern incarnation of David versus Goliath clash. It is the liberation/allegedly terrorist (depends on the narrative you chose to follow) movement that is going head-to-head, albeit the limited resources and area of operations, with the strongest and most advanced army in the region.

Few men in history could measure up to Lawrence of Arabia's military genius or Mao Zedong theoretical framework for the guerrilla warfare. Winston Churchill acknowledged that among all the people he has known, "T.E. Lawrence and David Lloyd George [were] the most interesting and gifted" B.H. Liddell Hart said that Lawrence "was more deeply steeped in knowledge of war than any other general of the [Great] war," and Shelford Bidwell said that Lawrence can say "as much in one paragraph as Clausewitz says in a chapter". Lawrence's revolutionary approaches to the Arab Revolt of the Ottoman Empire are a textbook example of how the principles of guerrilla warfare can be adapted to entirely different environments and contexts (Cassella 2019).

On the other hand, Mao, in his seminal work *On Guerrilla Warfare* (1937) laid down a detailed theoretical framework. Mao then applied his theory, gaining success after success in

campaigns during the Chinese Civil War and the Second Sino-Japanese War. His emphasis on the blending of political strategy and popular support along with flexible tactics bequeaths timeless principles that have formed innumerable guerrilla movements all around the world.

By no means the contributions of these two men are the first nor the only when it comes to warfare in general and guerrilla tactics in particular. However, they are undoubtedly indispensable references especially for the modern guerrilla war. Therefore, we may have confidence in considering them as an authority on the subject. The article will attempt to provide an analysis of modern warfare tactics and strategies applied by Hamas in their ongoing conflict against the state of Israel. This analysis will be grounded mainly on Mao and Lawrence's contributions as they provide a solid analytic base essential to understanding and assessing the multiple modern complex dynamics of guerrilla warfare as they blend theoretical rigor with practical insight.

II- The History of Technology and Warfare:

The history of warfare dates back to the dawn of human civilization. Evidently, conflict has been a persistent and defining aspect of human history, shaping civilizations and influencing the course of events over millennia. Despite a profound desire for peace, humanity has experienced less than three centuries of uninterrupted peace throughout its existence. Historians B. Jongman and J. Van der Dennen believe that since 3600 BC, nearly all countries and nations have encountered war, with the world only knowing 292 years of peace. By the time they published their book in 1988, 14,531 wars had been fought, both large and small, resulting in the deaths of approximately 3,640,000,000 people (p. 197)

This stark reality underscores the persistent and pervasive nature of conflict that, despite the tremendous toll on human lives and resources, has continuously pushed the wheels of civil progress. From the ancient clashes of empires to the struggles of colonized peoples against their oppressors, and extending into our modern times, warfare has also progressed taking increasingly more and more deadly forms. According to William H. McNeill, no technology or a deadly form in the ancient times came close to the chariot. It was the most dominant instrument of warfare until the advent of nuclear weapons to the extent of calling it the superweapon of its day (McNeill, 1991, pp. 104-106). Other technologies like iron weapons, the stirrup, gunpowder, and the longbow to name a few have also significantly influenced warfare.

Early conflicts like today's conflicts are often driven by competition for resources, territory, and power. Ancient empires, such as those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, engaged in prolonged wars to expand their territories and assert dominance. The age of empires saw massive clashes between powerful forces. For example, the Persian Empire engaged in numerous wars to maintain and expand its territories, often clashing with Greek city-states and other regional powers. Similarly, the Roman Empire, expanded through a combination of military conquest, strategic alliances, and assimilation of conquered peoples. These wars were characterized by large-scale battles, sieges, and the use of emerging technologies like chariots, iron weapons, and fortified structures.

Another significant milestone in the history of warfare occurred during the medieval period, where warfare was heavily influenced by feudal systems and the rise of knightly orders. Conflicts such as the Crusades, the Hundred Years' War, and various feudal disputes saw the development of new military strategies and technologies, including castles, trebuchets, and early forms of gunpowder weaponry. Warfare during this time was often brutal and prolonged, with significant impacts on civilian populations.

The era of colonialism highlighted another dynamic side to warfare, characterized by the conflicts between colonizing powers and indigenous populations. European powers such as Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal sought to expand their influence across Africa, Asia, and the Americas. This led to numerous conflicts, including the Indian Wars in North America, the Zulu Wars in Africa, and the resistance of indigenous peoples in South America. These conflicts were marked by

asymmetrical warfare, with indigenous groups using guerrilla tactics to resist technologically superior colonial forces.

The 20th century witnessed the two most devastating conflicts in human history: World War I and World War II. These global wars involved unprecedented levels of mobilization, destruction, and loss of life. The scale and impact of these wars led to significant advancements in military technology and strategy, including the development of tanks, aircraft, and nuclear weapons. For the first time in history, humanity was gazing upon its own potential for complete self-destruction. The aftermath of these wars reshaped global geopolitics, leading to the infamous Cold War with its numerous proxy conflicts that showed that such war was actually never cold.

Similar to the era of colonialism, where technological superiority was a defining factor of most of the colonial wars, the 20th century and contemporary wars have shown unparalleled levels of mass destruction, lethality, intelligence, and logistics. These wars also introduced other pivotal technologies, such as tanks, jet aircraft, mustard gas, guided missiles, microwave radar, and the proximity fuse. However, nothing can be compared to the impact of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Until then, warfare meant death and destruction but on a limited scale compared to the atomic bombs, with a better probability of recovery and rebuild. The 6th of October 1945 marked the birth of the terror of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The arms race during the post-World War Two Cold War made the thermonuclear bombs dropped on Japan seem like toys in comparison. According to Statista, the latest version of a Russian nuclear warhead as of 2020 equals 800 kilotons of dynamite, while USA's is 455 kilotons. In comparison, the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were 15 and 22 kilotons, respectively (McCarthy, 2020).

It appears that Alfred Nobel's vision of the "ultimate weapon," a device so terrible that no one would dare use it, has come to fruition. Unfortunately, it has not succeeded in banishing the curse of conflict and war as he believed it would (Roland 2009). Despite the fact that there are currently nine countries possessing nuclear weapons, with their combined arsenal capable of destroying the Earth and all biological organisms 55 times over (Tiankan, 2003), war and conflict remain prevalent aspect of our civilization.

Even today, despite that USA and Russia hold approximately 88% of the world's total nuclear arsenal, they have struggled and continue to struggle in most post-World War Two conflicts they have been involved in, directly or indirectly. The conflicts in countries like Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, and Ukraine have demonstrated that technological and military superiority alone cannot determine the outcome of wars.

The most common theme in these conflicts is their asymmetric nature. None of the aforementioned counterparts had the level of military equipment, logistics, and intelligence deployed by USA or Russia. Yet, the results were often lacking or the success was indecisive at best. The adoption of improvised tactics that leverage the geographical landscape and neutralize the conventional superiority of the regular army by avoiding open and direct confrontation proved to be quite efficient even against the odds of the contemporary theatre of war.

III- Guerrilla Warfare:

As a term, 'guerrilla' is rather a new creation that stems from the duke of Wellington's campaigns during the Peninsular War (1808–14). The term is the diminutive word for "Guerra" which means war in Spanish. Guerrilla or *little war* was used first to describe the Spanish-Portuguese irregulars, or *guerrilleros*, who assisted the Duke to drive the French from the Iberian Peninsula (Asprey R. , guerrilla warfare, 2024). As a concept, however, Guerrilla warfare is perhaps one of the most significant and enduring forms of conflict since the dawn of written history. The Persian warrior-king Darius I, The Macedonian king Alexander the Great, and the Carthaginian general Hannibal all faced considerable guerrilla resistance during their reigns. Byzantium, Rome,

and the British Empire also faced such devastating tactics of a warfare style that proved to be as adaptive as can be in its continuous struggle to keep up with the advancement of the conventional and regular warfare (Asprey R. , 1994)

Guerrilla as an idea can perhaps be traced back even earlier to the ancient Hebrew Bible in the story of David and Goliath. While the story is not typically classified as *guerrilla* per se in academic literature, it can be analysed as an early example of unconventional tactics used by a weaker opponent to defeat a stronger adversary. Guerrilla warfare, in its broad definition, involves the use of non-traditional and innovative strategies to level the playing field against a more powerful foe. In this context, the David and Goliath narrative can be seen as a symbolic precursor to such tactics.

The story also symbolizes the other key feature of any guerrilla war which is the asymmetric nature of the conflict. David, representing the underdog, uses his agility, speed, and precision to overcome Goliath's brute strength and armour. This mirrors how guerrilla fighters operate, using mobility, knowledge of terrain, and surprise attacks to counterbalance the superior firepower and numbers of conventional armies. By comparison one could perceive guerrilla warfare, in the general sense of the term, as an asymmetrical warfare where small irregular groups of paramilitary use unconventional tactics to harass and hit weak points, avoiding direct confrontation at all costs.

Samuel Huntington attempts at giving a proper definition to the modern guerrilla warfare in the introductory section of Frankin Osanka's seminal book *Modern Guerrilla Warfare* (1962):

Guerrilla warfare is a form of warfare by which the strategically weaker side assumes the tactical offensive in selected forms, times, and places. Guerrilla warfare is the weapon of the weak. It is never chosen in preference to regular warfare; it is employed only when and where the possibilities of regular warfare have been foreclosed (p. xvi)

Perhaps this definition is a bit problematic when it comes to the matter of choice or the lack thereof to be more precise. In an age where a nuclear Armageddon is looming, it is quite an arduous feat to keep associating guerrilla warfare exclusively with the weaker side of the equation. As it is becoming more and more necessary to wage war using guerrilla forces for the superpower nations in order to achieve their military goals without scaling the conflict into a nuclear faceoff that could evolve into an irreparable destruction. After all, a lesson in history was learned from the reaction to the policy of Vice President Nixon when he threatened guerrillas with nuclear force. The absurdity of the threat led Liddell Hart ironically to compare it to using "a sledgehammer to ward off a swarm of mosquitoes" (Cassella 2019, 7). For him, guerrilla forces are impervious to this irrational approach of mass destruction. Therefore, guerrilla warfare, on one hand, is no longer the weapon of only the weak nor an imposed choice. On the other, such warfare clearly elicit the superpowers to respond by establishing their own version of irregular unconventional small armies; to fight fire with fire.

Since we can no longer associate guerrilla warfare solely with the weaker side, then our definition should be based on the other apparent distinctive points relative to the enemy which are size, equipment, and central strategy. All of these points would prove inadequate in the specific case of two regular armies pitting their own guerrillas against each other similar to what occurred under United States Secretary of Defence, Mr. McNamara back in the 1960s (Cassella 2019, 7). Perhaps then the fundamental characteristics for the modern guerrilla warfare should be mainly associated with being an asymmetrical conflict and the principle of *concentration in space*. If conventional and orthodox warfare is symmetrical and characterized by rigidity and concentration of forces in space, then guerrilla warfare should be identified as asymmetrical and fluid (Cassella, 2019, p. 10)

Both Mao Zedong and Lawrence arrived at the same conclusion. For the former: "Guerrilla strategy must be based primarily on alertness, mobility, and attack. It must be adjusted to the enemy situation, the terrain, the existing lines of communication, the relative strengths, the weather, and the situation of the people" (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 257). For the latter, guerrilla warfare was to be

turned away from any of the *concentrated methods*, but rather guerrilleros, the Arab forces in his case, should be more like a *gas*. He clarifies:

"Suppose we were (as we might be) an influence, an idea, a thing intangible, invulnerable, without front or back, drifting about like a gas? Armies were like plants, immobile, firm-rooted, nourished through long stems to the head. We might be a vapour, blowing where we listed... Ours should be a war of detachment. We were to contain the enemy by the silent threat of a vast, unknown desert ..." (Faulkner, 2010)

Lawrence gas metaphor is quite similar to Bauman's concept of *Liquid Modernity*. There are reasons for Lawrence to consider the states of matter as a fitting metaphor in illustrating the different aspects of modern warfare as they do appear similar. The *concentration in space* principle can be associated with how atoms behave in a solid state of matter. The kind of bonding that holds such atoms together tightly denotes the high rigidity and resistance to atom separation (Bauman, 2006, pp. 1-2). The same can be said when we describe the main features of a conventional army: highly rigid, tightly structured, and strictly shaped.

The remarkable property of gases, however, is their apparent lack of such rigid shape and tight structure. While conventional solids possess a defined size and form, gases lack them both. Because of their unpredictable and random movement, molecules that constitute gases tend to be relatively free of any bonds. Such is the depiction of a guerilla force, unpredictable randomly moving, generally autonomous in making "lightning decisions" (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 257), and freely dispersed in all over the place which implies both the existence or the lack thereof of such force in all times.

The ongoing hostilities between Hamas and Israel that have erupted into a full-fledged conflict since October the 7th, 2023, represents one of the latest and most significant escalating modern guerilla warfare fronts in the world. As the crisis unfolds, it has already drawn international attention to the dynamics of this asymmetric warfare and Israel's Defence Forces (IDF) failure in countering an adaptive and resilient adversary. Hamas has proved so far to be the embodiment of being a *gas* like guerilla forces that can appear out of the blue then disappear in thin air which is making the IDF running in circles.

IV- Hamas Phantom Warfare:

Following in the same pattern of consistent adaptation, guerilla warfare had to reach great strides in tactics in order to cope with the great leaps in modern military technology that have been introduced to the modern theatre of war. The fact that regular armies began to adopt some guerilla tactics and in the same time creating their own guerilla forces as a form of support and a countermeasure, pushed the underdog guerilla forces¹ to adapt even further or risk losing their wars.

For the first time, for instance, underdog guerilla forces found themselves at a great disadvantage when facing aerial dominance and superiority imposed by their foes like with USA in Vietnam and Iraq. The *guerrilleros* had to take the fight to another completely different sphere that probably would not be able to afford in the first place or to devise new measures to deal with the new threat of "Death from Above"².

¹ I have picked the term *underdog* from a list that contained other suitable expressions like insurgent, resistance, defiant, opposition, et. because I believe this term is more neutral and more suitable for the meaning I am aiming to address in this context which is to separate the conventional guerrilleros from those who are trained and formed to support a regular army.

² It is the English translation of the notorious Latin motto "Mors Ab Alto" which is used as the slogan for the 7th Bomb Wing. The latter is one of only two B-1B Lancer strategic bombardment wings in the United States Air Force. The motto was also reportedly used in WWII and Vietnam War by American Airborne divisions and troops.

During the exploration of the Hamas-Israel conflict, one could indeed hear the echoes of one of the most memorable wars of the 20th century, the Vietnam War. This conflict was not only a guerilla war that represents a story of struggle, adaptation, and triumph against all odds, but also a reference and a benchmark to analyse any contemporary guerrilla war against due to its recency and the plethora of tactics applied by both sides.

Laying down a comprehensive historical background of a conflict of such complexity as the Israeli-Palestinian one is no easy task nor can be done under the scope of this research. The conflict is often referred to as the "maze of conflicts," and this description is quite fitting given the intricate and multifaceted nature of the situation. The historical, political, and social dimensions are vast and intertwined, making it difficult to cover adequately within the scope and limitations of this research. However, a brief overview will be provided to contextualize the ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a long-standing and deeply rooted struggle, marked by a series of wars, uprisings, and ongoing hostilities. It began in the early 20th century with the conflicting national aspirations of Jews and Arabs in the region of Palestine. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent Arab-Israeli War led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, an event Palestinians refer to as the Nakba, or catastrophe (Aljazeera, 2017). This period set the stage for decades of conflict, characterized by territorial disputes, demographic changes, and mutual claims to sovereignty and self-determination.

The Six-Day War of 1967 further intensified the conflict when Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. The occupation of these territories has been a focal point of contention, with international debates over the legality and humanitarian impact of Israeli settlements and military presence (Tahhan, 2018)

The Oslo Accords in the 1990s, a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), aimed to lay the groundwork for peace by establishing Palestinian self-rule in parts of the West Bank and Gaza. However, the process faltered due to ongoing violence, mutual distrust, and political instability on both sides (Britannica, 2024). In the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections, Fatah³, which had dominated Palestinian politics since its inception in the 1950s, faced a significant defeat to Hamas⁴, revealing deep-seated dissatisfaction with Fatah's governance, often criticized for corruption and inefficiency.

Hamas's victory led to sanctions from Israel, the United States, and the European Union, all of which had designated Hamas as a terrorist organization. The Gaza Strip saw rising violence between the two factions, and a brief coalition government collapsed in June 2007 after Hamas seized control of Gaza, while a Fatah-led emergency cabinet assumed control of the West Bank. Despite calls from Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas for Hamas to step down from its position in Gaza, the territory has remained under Hamas's control (Britannica, 2024)

Since Hamas's attack on the 7th of October 2023, Israel has invaded northern and southern Gaza with mobilizing 40,000 combat troops, forcibly displacing 80% of the population, murdering over 37,000 people (most of them are civilians, women, and kids), and dropped at least 75,000 tons of bombs on the narrow territory of Gaza (surpassing the combined weight of bombs dropped on London, Dresden, and Hamburg in all of World War II). To the contrary of what would these numbers would suggest, Israel did not gain a foothold in this war; quite the opposite, Hamas, according to the measures that matter, is stronger than it was on the 7th of October (Pape, 2024).

³ Fatah, also known as the Palestinian National Liberation Movement, is a major Palestinian political party and the largest faction of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), historically advocating for Palestinian nationalism and resistance against Israeli occupation (britannica 2024)

⁴ Hamas, an acronym for Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Resistance Movement), is a Palestinian Sunni-Islamic fundamentalist militant organization and political entity. The movement started as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and created a military wing, the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, to pursue an armed struggle against Israel with the aim of liberating historic Palestine (Aljazeera 2023)

Once again, brute force proved inefficient in dealing with such situations. The Israelis could have learned the futility of using metrics of body counts, firepower, and tonnage of dropped bombs to measure success in a guerilla war from Vietnam. Defence secretary Clark Clifford admitted as much in 1969. Despite being a strong supporter for the escalation of bombing operations in Vietnam, he stated clearly that “bombing by itself would not stop the war.... WE had already dropped a heavier tonnage of bombs than in all the theaters of World War II” (Clifford, 1969). Robert Asprey’s in his over 1000 pages long mammoth of a book *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History* explained how the bombing had actually the opposite effect:

Not understanding basic tenets of guerrilla warfare, Vietnamese and American senior officers converted fatalities into "victories." This was a great mistake: Dead bodies do not mean destroyed infrastructure. Dead bodies, particularly those of innocent peasants, mean a strengthening, not a weakening, of the insurgent cause (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 737)

What it seems as the central flaw in Israel’s strategy is not a failure of heeding past lessons of warfare, it is actually the opposite. Whereas the logical and easy answer is that Israel is miscalculating and misunderstanding the situation like USA did with Vietnam, the long less popular point of view is that the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his generals are well aware of the guerrilla warfare they are part of, and they are acting according to that.

The fact that the IDF displaced 80% of the population in Gaza, in addition to brutally murdering over 38,000 people and injuring over 88,000, at the moment of writing this article, point us where they believe the strength of Hamas is coming from. Mao Zedong explored this particular point as he stated:

. . . What is the relationship of guerrilla warfare to the people? Without a political goal, guerrilla warfare must fail, as it must if its political objectives do not coincide with the aspirations of the people and their sympathy, co-operation, and assistance cannot be gained. The essence of guerrilla warfare is thus revolutionary in character. . . . Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and co-operation (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 255)

Mao has appropriately compared *guerrilleros* to fish, and their people to the water in which they swim and live. Therefore, without the support of the people, the guerrilla forces will choke and die. Accordingly, Israel’s ‘medieval’ policy of “scorched earth” in Gaza can be associated with the attempt to break Gaza people and thus turning them against Hamas. Yet, how can you break a resilient people which endured so much suffering already for decades? simply put, going even harder.

The Gaza strip is a 363 km² open air prison with a population of over 2.26 million (Britannica, 2024). Its population density would put it as the fourth highly crowded place in the world according to 2021 statistics (Dyvik, 2024). Since Hamas’ rise to power in 2007, Israel has severely intensified its siege that was already going for decades. The effect of the siege was devastating on Gaza’s economy to the extent that the UN has called it the “de-development” of the territory which led not merely to the hindrance of its growth but for its regress. About 56% of Palestinians in Gaza are under the poverty line, unemployment stands at 63%. The tightening of the siege meant shortage of basic goods and items like food, fuel, and water which, according to the UN, 95% of it is already unsafe for drinking. These are by no means the only issues faced by Gaza’s population as they have faced 4 military assaults (in 2008, 2012, 2014 and 2021), thousands of deaths, tens of thousands of houses, schools, and other buildings destroyed. All of this with little to no chance for rebuilding as construction materials were also barred from entering the strip. Unfortunately, by no means their troubles end there as these but few issues of a list of problems that is growing by the day since 2007 (Aljazeera, 2023)

Israel's top brass has always recognized that the situation in Gaza strip was like a time bomb that would explode at any moment. They have also believed that an attack is inevitable; a 40 pages long report code-named "Jericho Wall" was allegedly presented, at least one year before the 7th of October attack, to the higher ranks in Israeli military and intelligence leaders. The document outlined, point by point, a methodical attack designed and executed in a daylong training exercise by Hamas to overwhelm Gaza's fortification, take over some of the surrounding towns, and storm key military targets as well as a division headquarters. The officials brushed off these concerns as experts deemed that an attack of such scale and ambition was beyond Hamas' capabilities (Bergman & Goldman, 2023).

Raising the degree of violence by killing, bombing the hospitals, and artificially causing famine by closing all borders was their only option to attempt to break the people's spirit. The people of Gaza had been enduring significant hardships for a long time, yet they have shown great resilience. Consequently, and in order to send a strong message, Israel had to go for unconceivable lengths to inflict as much pain as possible on already suffering people to reach that threshold where Gaza's population would break and turn against Hamas.

The average observer of the latest news today could find himself/herself confused and empuzzled by the continuously contradicting updates of the Hamas-Israel war. 6 months into the war the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared on the 7th of April that they are near victory as the country pulled troops out of southern Gaza while keeping a "significant force" elsewhere all around the strip (VOA News, 2024). Watching all the killing and suffering in Gaza would logically give credit to his statement, yet it has been 4 months now since that statement and Israel is no closer to victory nor to end the war.

In an interesting 2004 article, Benjamin Valentino, Dylan Balch-Lindsay, and Paul Huth analysed the mass killing incidents in 147 wars during the period from 1945 to 2000. The data showed strong evidence of mass killing been a calculated military strategy used by forces attempting to crush and defeat major guerrilla insurgencies. They have found out that the higher level of active support guerrilla forces receives from the population, the significantly higher likelihood of mass killing to occur (Valentino, Balch-Lindsay, & Huth, 2004). Accordingly, all the unjustified mass killing in Gaza confirms that Hamas has been successful so far in its conflict against IDF as they wage guerrilla war and avoid direct confrontations as much as possible.

Hamas as a guerrilla force owes their success against the IDF to the innovative and unconventional tactics and strategies they implemented since day one in the war. Starting with a regular army policy of "shock and awe", and then moving back to pure guerrilla tactics like "hit and run", "point-blank" combat, ambushes and boobytraps, improvised and recycled explosives, sniping, and mainly tunnel warfare are but a few of the tricks up their sleeves.

Shock and Awe:

It's Saturday October the 7th, 2023, a day that coincides with the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, and one day after the 50th anniversary of The Yom Kippur or the Ramadan War in which Egyptian and Syrian forces launched an assault against the State of Israel during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur back in 1973. Around 6:30 in the morning local time, barrages of thousands of rockets started to hit several Israelian cities including Tel Aviv, Rehovot, Gedera and Ashkelon. The silhouette of the hardly seen hardly heard Mohammed Dief made an exception that special morning. The head of the Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, announced the start of "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood". By 7:40 am, it was clear that the rocket barrage was not the bulk of the attack, it was a cover for an unprecedented multipronged infiltration (Seljan, 2024, p. 83). The defensive systems including the Iron Dome were successfully overwhelmed allowing the Hamas soldiers to slip almost unnoticed. Through 80 breaches along the security fence, between 800 and 1,000 armed Hamas soldiers succeeded in breaking the siege and flooding the surrounding areas around Gaza strip (Corera, 2023). The attack, as Mao puts it, " . . . Cause an uproar in the east,

strike in the west. (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 257) represented the hallmark of guerrilla tactics of deception and surprise.

The scale and sophistication of the surprise attack has shocked Israel and toppled its entire security concept of invulnerability. It did not just follow the hallmarks of guerrilla tactics, but it was an exemplified instance of *shock and awe*, a concept architected by Harlan K. Ullman and used in the 2003 Iraq War by a regular and conventional army. The basic tenets of such strategy meant that the attack should be massive, swift, and surprising by which the enemy would be “stunned, confused, overwhelmed, and paralyzed” (Correll, 2003). The state of perplexion was apparent as the IDF activated the Hannibal controversial military “anti-abduction” Directive. Yehuda Shaul, a former Israeli army soldier declared to Al Jazeera that under such protocol: “You will open fire without constraints, in order to prevent the abduction” (Aljazeera, 2024). He further added that the use of force is permitted even at the risk of killing the captured soldier. The problem is that the Israeli started making decisions with very limited and unverified information. The central command issued the order to apply the doctrine even on possible civilian captives which led to many friendly casualties in a desperate attempt to not let a single vehicle return to Gaza (Aljazeera, 2024).

The 7th of October indeed instilled a deeply profound psychological trauma that made the Israeli people feel hopeless and impotent as nearly half a million Israelian citizen (7% of the Jewish population) has left after October’s attack (Sio, 2023). The significance of this *shock and awe* attack can be summed up in the fact it has revealed the huge gap between reality on the ground and the idealistic rhetoric coming from Tel Aviv. It has without a doubt destroyed any sense of security the state of Israel has been cultivating over the last few decades especially around Gaza strip.

However, such massive attack took years in the making and could not be replicated again. Therefore, Hamas has prepared for another phase in the war with other tactics that proved effective in dealing with the ongoing retaliation of the IDF.

Hit and Run:

Dubbed as “terror tunnels” or “Gaza Metro” is a labyrinthian network of deep underground tunnels of at least 500 kms of length that took years and years of unrelenting effort became the heart and soul of all Hamas’ operations. Eado Hecht, an Israeli analyst specialised in underground warfare states that there are:

Three different kinds of tunnels existed beneath Gaza, smuggling tunnels between Gaza and Egypt; defensive tunnels inside Gaza, used for command centres and weapons storage; and—connected to the defensive tunnels—offensive tunnels used for cross-border attacks on Israel”, including the capture of Israeli soldiers (Sherwood, 2014)

The reach and degree of sophistication of the underground network has taken Israel's political and military leadership by surprise even back then. 10 years later, the tunnels got even better. Hamas fighters utilize them to move undetected behind enemy lines to pop up, hit, and then run and disappear in thin air before any counterattack can be organized.

According to an Israeli security think tank that goes by the name of The Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs: “Tunnel warfare provided armies facing a technologically superior adversary with an effective means for countering its air superiority.” (Halevi, 2014). In similar fashion to Vietnam war, the tunnel guerrilla warfare has shifted the balance of power in Gaza as it succeeded not only in greatly reducing the Israeli Airforce technological superiority but also in adding another warfare front to the equation, providing strategic entry and exit points, storage facilities, concealing missile launchers, and even communication hubs.

This strategy aligns closely with the "hecastic"⁵ aspect of warfare as described by T.E. Lawrence, which emphasizes the role of chance and the unpredictable elements in combat. Due to the limited and constraint surface space and their limited ability to challenge the Israeli air superiority and surveillance, Hamas had only one way to go, underground. By leveraging their tunnel network, Hamas introduces significant uncertainty and unpredictability into the battlefield, making it challenging for the IDF to anticipate and counter their movements. The hit-and-run tactics facilitated by these tunnels disrupt the conventional military planning of the IDF, especially forcing them to adapt to an ever-changing and elusive threat. This hecastic element creates a psychological drain on the Israeli forces, who must remain vigilant against attacks that can emerge suddenly and seemingly from nowhere, thereby amplifying the strategic impact of the tunnels far beyond their physical presence.

Point Blank Combat:

During their sorties, Hamas's dispersed forces strategically attempt to impose point-blank range combat tactics against the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in Gaza, utilizing the dense urban destroyed environment to their advantage. These tactics often involve ambushes and close-quarter engagements, where Hamas fighters can exploit the element of surprise and the proximity to inflict maximum casualties on the IDF with limited exposure to air bombardment. According to various reports, Hamas fighters have managed to kill multiple Israeli soldiers at point-blank range during these confrontations. For instance, a recent engagement in the Brazil neighbourhood southeast of Rafah city resulted in the death of two Israeli soldiers, highlighting the lethal effectiveness of these close-combat tactics (Monitor Middle East, 2024).

The consistent casualties resulting from these point-blank encounters underscore the intensity and danger of urban warfare in Gaza for both. However, it was very crucial in levelling the playing field for Hamas fighters as they lack the highly advanced military equipment, arsenal, and logistic backup the IDF soldiers enjoy.

Boobytraps and Ambushes:

As the urban skirmish rages, Israeli forces and Hamas militants are waging war on an increasingly complex battlefield. Despite the deployment of 21st drones and robots by the IDF, Hamas's old tactics of surprise and ambush stirred confusion and fear amongst their soldiers. Tunnels entry points, IDF military convoys and camps, abandoned weapon factories and military bases are potential scenes for deadly ambushes and boobytraps. Additionally, deceptions made out of mannequins and recorded voices of weeping people who speaks Hebrew were arranged to lure and snare IDF soldiers into a previously prepared boobytrapped "kill zone". Kobi Michael, a senior researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University further states that these deceptions "also meant to create confusion, chaos, anger and frustration." (Booth, Stern, & Balousha, 2023).

Hamas's deception may lose some effectiveness over time, yet it continued to be used to serve as a provocation, according to Kobi's statement. "It's as if they're saying, 'See, you are mighty forces, but we continue to taunt you'". Israeli soldiers, already facing the intense stress of close-quarters combat, are likely "already fatigued and frightened," he noted adds complexity to

⁵ The algebraical (or hecastics), addresses the fixed conditions of war such as space and time, topography, climate, railways, airports, and technical weaponry, as well as whether a region is landlocked or coastal. T.E. Lawrence, during his period of confinement to bed, extensively contemplated these principles. The hecastic encompasses Clausewitz's physical, mathematical, geographical, and statistical doctrines (Cassella, 2019, pp. 8-9)

Hamas's deception which further increases their vulnerability to being taken by surprise (Booth, Stern, & Balousha, 2023)

IDF spokesmen claim that such wear and tear situation is what led to the three hostages been shot and killed by Israeli soldiers on December the 15th, 2023. The three Israeli hostages made every effort to show they were not a threat. They were shirtless, carrying a makeshift white flag, and had a crude sign nearby that read "SOS," the internationally recognized distress signal, with "Help! 3 hostages" written in Hebrew below it. A preliminary IDF investigation suggests that the message was written by the hostages themselves. However, Israeli officials have not provided an explanation for why it was ignored. Rights activists argue that the deaths of the hostages indicate that some IDF soldiers are too quick to shoot. Even the father of one of the deceased captives questioned why the soldiers did not aim to wound his son in the leg instead (Booth, Stern, & Balousha, 2023).

Vantage Point Snipers:

Hamas has strategically deployed snipers in vantage points equipped with the locally made Al-Ghoul heavy caliber sniper rifles to target officers and IDF soldiers in Gaza. These snipers utilize elevated and concealed positions in urban environments to maximize their field of vision and impact, making it extremely challenging for the IDF to counteract effectively. The Al-Ghoul sniper rifle, known for its high accuracy and powerful rounds that can easily penetrate helmets and bullet-proof vests, enables Hamas to strike targets at long distances that can reach 2000 meters with lethal precision. According to a report by the Middle East Monitor, sniper attacks by Hamas have resulted in significant casualties among IDF personnel, with over 20 Israeli soldiers reported killed in 2023 alone. (Defence Security Asia, 2023)

The significance of Hamas's sniper tactics lies not only in the physical casualties they inflict but also in the psychological impact on IDF troops. The ever-present threat of being targeted by an unseen sniper creates a constant state of anxiety and stress among soldiers. This psychological warfare element can lead to increased fatigue, impaired decision-making, and a heightened sense of vulnerability, which in turn can affect the overall morale and operational effectiveness of the IDF. The use of Al-Ghoul sniper rifles has also highlighted Hamas's capability to develop and deploy advanced weaponry despite the ongoing blockade and restrictions imposed on Gaza since 2007 (Press Tv, 2024).

War of Improvisation:

Hamas has demonstrated significant resourcefulness in improvising and innovating, innovating, and recycling weapons and explosives to target Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) in the Gaza Strip. Among the notable innovations is the Yasin 105, a locally produced anti-tank weapon derived from the RPG-7. The Yasin 105 has been specifically adapted to penetrate Israeli Merkava tanks, one of the most advanced armoured vehicles in the world. Reports indicate that this improvised and locally made weapon have been used effectively in several engagements, significantly damaging or destroying these tanks. Around one month into the war, Abu Obeida, the spokesperson for the Qassam Brigades released an audio message in which he states that their fighters had succeeded in striking at least 160 Israeli armoured vehicles in just the first two weeks of Israel's ground operations in Gaza (Elmer, 2023)

Additionally, Hamas has developed and deployed a range of other improvised weapons, including the Al-Ghoul sniper rifle that we have already spoken about, the homemade 114 mm short-range "Rajum" missile system, Zawari kamikaze drones, and the Red Arrow anti-tank guided missile (ATGM). The Al-Ghoul sniper rifle, named after a Hamas engineer, has been utilized effectively in long-range engagements, causing significant casualties among IDF personnel. It is well-known that the bulk of Hamas' firepower is attributed to their massive arsenal of different

types of rockets and launchers; in the 7th of October, however, Hamas decided to unveil their Rajum missile system, a modern short-range system that fires rapid barrages of 114 mm missiles which symbolizes the manufacturing capabilities of Hamas. According to Hamas' military arm, Zawari kamikaze drones were deployed in the opening offensive. The drones that were named after their designer, the assassinated Tunisian engineer Mohamed Al-Zawari, were also deployed during the opening offensive. They were equipped with explosive charges and designed either to detonate themselves in a kamikaze fashion or to drop the charges over IDF positions, soldiers, and equipment (Shaar, 2023)

The latest unveiling of Hamas' strategic weapons is the anti-tanks guided missile ATGM dubbed as the Red Arrow. A variant of the Chinese-developed HJ-8 ATGM, the Red Arrow used to attack an armoured personnel carrier that is based on an older Merkava battle tank. Despite being reportedly lighter than the original version, to facilitate deployment and reassembly of course, it maintains its great armour-penetration capabilities as it is demonstrated in the video of the attack released back in Jun by Hamas (Halawi, 2024).

In a documentary film aired in September 2020, Al Jazeera revealed that the Al-Qassam Brigades have managed to mitigate the impact of the Israeli-led blockade on Gaza, which aims, in part, to hinder their ability to produce weapons. For the first time, Hamas permitted filming inside its arms factories. The documentary depicted Hamas operatives recycling shells discovered in two sunken Royal Navy warships. The explosives from these shells were tested, found to be still usable, and then repurposed into the warheads of Al-Qassam's own rockets (Middle East Monitor, 2020).

To their surprise, Israeli officials realized that Hamas could salvage Israeli-made weapons and explosives. The scope of this operation had their weapon experts and diplomats startled. Decades of periodic bombing in addition to the latest extremely heavy bombardment of Gaza strip have littered the region with thousands and thousands of unexploded ordnances. A single unexploded 750-pound bomb could be recycled by Hamas to become hundreds of missiles or rockets. Israeli authorities also found out that their armouries were actually vulnerable to theft. A military report in 2023 clearly stated that thousands of bullets and hundreds of guns and grenades had been taken from poorly guarded bases. "We are fuelling our enemies with our own weapons," strikingly read one line of the report (Abi-Habib & Frenkel, 2024)

In addition to the aforementioned hecastics element of war, T.E. Lawrence identified two other crucial components that are linked to the human nature of war: the bionomic and psychological factors of warfare. The bionomic, or biological, element primarily concerns the breaking point of an army, the life and death of its soldiers, or more colloquially, the wear and tear. This aspect encompasses the emotions and physical presence of the troops, making it both numerical and emotional. Lawrence, in his Britannica Encyclopaedia entry, stated that "the war-philosophers had properly made [war] an art, and had elevated one item in it, 'effusion of blood,' to the height of a principle. It became humanity in battle, an art touching every side of our corporeal being." This means that the humanity of battle involves the individual spirits and bodies that compose the bionomic factor, which is inherently sensitive and illogical (Cassella, 2019, p. 10).

Hamas' tactics of Hit and Run, boobytraps and ambushes, snipers, and improvisation are efficient in raising the wear and tear of IDF soldiers. The constant possibility for an attack or a trap kept the soldiers on their toes preventing them from recuperating any time soon. The overexposure to war stress would eventually lead to lack of discipline and decreased military performance. Due to the shortage in manpower these issues would exponentially increase especially amid those soldiers who are set to be released but were ordered to serve another 4 months (Times of Israel , 2024)

The bionomic or biological effect of Hamas' guerrilla tactics is even more profound. Now that the war cabinet needs more soldiers, they had to go to desperate measures. Conscription, however, is a highly controversial topic, given that the ultra-Orthodox community has traditionally been exempt from military service. They often protest or refuse draft orders, striving to legally secure these exemptions. Many within the Haredi community see military service and broader

integration into secular society as threats to their religious identity and the preservation of their community traditions. For many years, ultra-Orthodox lawmakers have been advocating for legislation to formally establish their community's exemption from military service. This has been one of the most divisive issues in society over the past two decades as most of the Israeli people believe that the Haredi should share the burden with the rest as they represent about 13% of the population (Times of Israel , 2024)

Electronic Intifada:

Hamas has strategically employed propaganda to wage a psychological war against both the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and the Israeli populace, echoing Mao Zedong's assertion about the critical importance of propaganda materials for guerrilla warfare. Mao emphasized that "Every large guerrilla unit should have a printing press and a mimeograph stone. They must also have paper on which to print propaganda leaflets and notices. They must be supplied with chalk and large brushes" (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 257). In a similar fashion, Hamas began to utilize the modern propaganda tools. Instead of printing presses, leaflets, and notices, the fighters carried body cameras, and sometimes they bring with them a designated camera man to record their operations.

The videos will be then edited and disseminated to the global public through several social media platforms like Facebook, telegram, and YouTube. In order to influence public opinion, boost morale of the supporters, and demoralize the adversaries, these media pieces often highlight the effectiveness of their improvised weapons and tactics, aiming to portray the IDF as vulnerable and to undermine the perceived invincibility of the Israeli military. For example, footage of rocket attacks, sniper operations, and other guerrilla tactics are widely circulated to demonstrate Hamas's resilience and operational success. This not only serves to embolden Hamas fighters and instil fear and uncertainty within the Israeli population and military ranks, but also to document their engagements, so there will not be any chance for Israel denying them for obvious reasons.

Additionally, Hamas leverages social media to spread its narrative and counter Israeli accounts of the conflict. This approach allows Hamas to attempt to shape international perceptions and garner sympathy for their cause, while simultaneously refuting misinformation and false claims that Israeli media outlets are spreading in order to criminalize Hamas and in the same time to justify their ongoing genocide in Gaza strip.

For Mao "The enemy's unity would be destroyed by 'propagandizing his troops, by treating his captured soldiers with consideration, and by caring for those of his wounded who fall into our hands. Compare between the released prisoners and hostages and you will see the difference and the effect of such elements on morale" (Asprey R. , 1994, p. 256). Whether it was due to Islamic teachings or for propaganda purposes, the released Israeli captives back in February looked in a fine condition.

Yocheved Lifshitz, an 85 years old captive who was released on the 23rd of October 2023 for health reasons, said the Hamas fighters, whose group is deemed as a terrorist organization in the U.S., were "very kind" and "took care of all of our needs" as they made sure that she and other captives with her are well-fed, clean, and even the toilets they used are clean also (Smith, 2023).

On November the 24th, an Israeli mother and daughter were released as part of a temporary ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel, allowing them to reunite with their relatives. Before departing Gaza, Danielle Aloni wrote a letter of gratitude to Hamas, stating, "I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your extraordinary humanity shown towards my daughter, Emilia". The Qassam Brigades shared the letter on their official Telegram account on November the 27th. The letter, originally written in Hebrew, was posted along with an Arabic translation and a photograph of the mother and daughter. In her handwritten letter, Danielle expressed that her daughter felt as though she was treated exceptionally well, saying, "She (Emilia) acknowledges feeling like all of you are her friends, not just friends, but truly beloved and good". Aloni appreciated the care

provided to hostages in Gaza, writing, "Thank you for the many hours you spent as caregivers." (TRT World, 2023)

In stark contrast, reports on the conditions of Palestinian prisoners released by Israel often detail the mistreatment and torture Palestinians go through in prisons. A traumatized Palestinian detainee Badr Dahlan describes torture in Israeli custody as a living nightmare. In just one month, the 30 years old young man was physically and psychologically tortured inhumanely (Aljazeera 2024). Badr's traumatizing experience was not the exception, it was the rule. A shocking CNN report that was published this May on YouTube investigates a shadowy detention centre that is eerily similar to Nazis detention centres back in 1930s. The Israeli military whistleblowers kept their identity hidden as they detailed the atrocities Palestinians are exposed to on a daily basis inside the centre (CNN, 2024)

In addition to the fact that these reports when put side to side next to the released reports about the Israeli captives are indeed punching holes in the credibility of the Israelian narrative, Hamas' released videos created a new symbol of resistance that spread like fire through social media platforms. The inverted red triangle of death is a controversial symbol that has been displayed at pro-Palestinian university encampments nationwide in support of Hamas and Gaza people. The symbol has been featured in videos by the Al-Qassam Brigades, to mark Israeli military targets, such as tanks, in Gaza during Israel's ground invasion. This symbol has also appeared in caricatures mocking Israeli soldiers and is prevalent in many pro-Palestinian social media posts. Additionally, the symbol has been observed on signs, graffiti, and at global protests, where it is often regarded as a representation of Palestinian resistance, akin to the slingshot and portrayed in a way to show how such resistance developed from throwing stones to blowing up Merkava tanks. It also echoes the red triangle in the Palestinian flag, which signifies Arab unity (Stechyson, 2024).

In an intriguing development, the German *ASB Zeitung* website reported on Thursday July the 4th, that the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) have submitted an urgent motion to impose a ban on the triangle symbol. According to the outlet, the motion was able to secure the majority of parliament votes, and it is scheduled to be presented to the Berlin senate, seeking a nationwide ban on the symbol. It calls on Berlin's senate to implement a federal ban on the symbol across Germany, prohibiting its public display and making its use punishable in the context of the Middle East conflict and Hamas "as it poses a direct threat to the people" (Fatima, 2024)

The adept use of propaganda by Hamas in their psychological warfare against Israel illustrates the significant impact of media in modern conflicts. By leveraging contemporary digital platforms, Hamas effectively shapes perceptions, influences public opinion, and bolsters the morale of its supporters while undermining the confidence of the Israeli populace and military. The positive presentation of released Israeli captives as being well-treated contrasts sharply with reports of mistreatment of Palestinian prisoners by Israel, a dichotomy that Hamas exploits to discredit Israeli narratives and highlight its own moral high ground.

Furthermore, symbols like the inverted red triangle have become potent icons of resistance, widely adopted in pro-Palestinian demonstrations and social media campaigns. The symbol's ban in Germany underscores the perceived threat of such propaganda tools, reflecting their effectiveness in rallying support and spreading the message of resistance. The media's role in these psychological operations cannot be overstated, as it proves to be a critical element in the ongoing conflict, shaping the narrative and influencing the global perception of the struggle.

The psychological warfare brings us to T.E. Lawrence's third element of warfare, the diathetic. Lawrence defines this element as "the adjustment of spirit to the point where it becomes fit to exploit in action". Firstly, the psychological element involves the collective reflection within an army. The high command must align the minds of their soldiers as they have aligned their own. Broadly, this process should not be limited to their own forces. The diathetic must also aim to influence the minds of the enemy. Additionally, the diathetic should work towards shaping the

perspectives of the supporting nation, the enemy's nation, and any neutral onlookers (Cassella 2019, 11).

10 months into the war and Hamas' military hierarchy is still intact and highly efficient despite the great losses and ongoing genocide in Gaza strip. The Lebanese militia Hezbollah has shown support for Hamas by engaging in military actions. It has consistently launched missiles, mortars, rockets, and explosive drones into northern Israel almost daily, leading Israel to open another front and retaliate with its own attacks. The Houthis have maintained their months-long campaign of attacks related to the Israel-Hamas war, targeting ships in the Red Sea corridor. This has disrupted the flow of \$1 trillion worth of goods passing through annually and has also triggered the most intense combat the U.S. Navy has experienced since World War II (Gambrell, 2024).

On the other side of the war, 7th of October military failure, inability to rescue captives, Netanyahu's corruption trial, war cabinet divisions, captives' family demonstrations, lack of manpower, economic crisis, conscription and the Haredi issue, evidence of committed war crimes, and rising costs and casualties are but a few of the diathetic elements that are influencing minds and perspectives of Israeli people, their allies, and the global opinion.

IV- Conclusion:

The ongoing Hamas-Israel conflict illustrates the persistent relevance and adaptation of guerrilla warfare in modern times. Rooted in historical precedents, guerrilla tactics have been employed by weaker forces to counter superior military powers, leveraging agility, terrain familiarity, and the element of surprise. This approach, often associated with liberation movements, reflects a strategic evolution that continues to shape contemporary conflicts.

Examining the Hamas-Israel conflict through the lens of guerrilla warfare reveals the significant influence of historical figures like T.E. Lawrence and Mao Zedong. Lawrence's innovative strategies during the Arab Revolt and Mao's theoretical framework for guerrilla warfare provide essential insights into the tactics used by Hamas. These strategies emphasize the importance of mobility, flexibility, and psychological warfare, which have been effectively employed by Hamas in their operations against the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

Hamas's use of guerrilla tactics, such as tunnel warfare, hit-and-run attacks, and psychological operations, underscores the enduring relevance of these strategies. The extensive network of tunnels, known as the Gaza Metro, has allowed Hamas to mitigate the technological superiority of the IDF, introducing uncertainty and unpredictability into the battlefield. This hecastic element, as described by Lawrence, disrupts conventional military planning and forces the IDF to adapt to an elusive and ever-changing threat.

The bionomic factor, focusing on the wear and tear of troops, is evident in the psychological and physical toll on IDF soldiers. Hamas's tactics, including booby traps, ambushes, and sniper attacks, have created a constant state of vigilance and stress among Israeli forces. This relentless pressure contributes to decreased morale and effectiveness, highlighting the impact of the bionomic element on the battlefield.

Psychological warfare, or the diathetic element, plays a crucial role in shaping the perceptions and morale of both combatants and civilians. Hamas's strategic use of propaganda through modern digital platforms has effectively influenced public opinion and bolstered the morale of its supporters. The dissemination of videos showcasing their operations and the humane treatment of captives contrasts sharply with reports of mistreatment by Israeli forces, furthering their psychological advantage.

The international dimension of the conflict, with support from groups like Hezbollah and the Houthis, complicates the dynamics and extends the reach of guerrilla warfare. These alliances and the subsequent actions, such as attacks on shipping routes, amplify the impact of the conflict,

drawing global attention and influencing international perceptions. The challenges faced by Israel, including internal divisions, economic strain, and the controversial issue of conscription, reflect the broader diathetic struggle. The inability to decisively counter Hamas's tactics and the rising human and financial costs of the conflict underscore the limitations of relying solely on conventional military strength.

Evidently, the Hamas-Israel conflict exemplifies the enduring relevance of guerrilla warfare in the modern era. The adaptive strategies employed by Hamas, rooted in historical precedents but innovatively improvised to suit the 21st century warfare demonstrate the continuous effectiveness of unconventional tactics against superior military forces. On the basis of the current sociopolitical situation, the conflict can last beyond 2024 or even longer which would mean that the outcome of such war will cause ripples globally. Therefore, it deserves more and more attention especially with the escalation of skirmishes between Hezbollah and IDF in the southern borders of Lebanon, the use *Lavender* and *where's daddy* AI systems that form kill lists and bomb them, and Abu Obaida's promise of revealing soon more about the 7th of October attacks.

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