The Rightward Turn Of Israel: Public Opinion And Security In The Governments Of Menachem Begin (1977-1983) And Benjamin Netanyahu (2009-2014)

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ABSTRACT
This article aims to analyze the changes in Israeli public opinion linked to the policies developed by right-wing governments in the area of security. In 1977, for the first time, the right-wing Likud party assumed power in Israel and some aspects of foreign security policy adopted different spectrums, such as the adoption of the term Eretz Yisrael (a term that refers to the entire region now comprising Israel and the Palestinian Territories) instead of the State of Israel in official government speeches. However, the most significant changes can be observed in 2009, when Benjamin Netanyahu assumed the government after ten years of his first leadership of the Likud party and the Israeli parliament. To explore this new scenario, what emerges is a portrait of a country that enjoys a rare moment of relative peace with most of its neighbors, while experiencing the intensification of internal conflicts, with a swing of the government to the far right. The current government has emerged as the most right-wing administration in the history of the state, with tough policies in the area of security, increasing control and policing in the occupied territories of Palestine, as well as the expansion of settlements, a policy that refers to territorial expansion. Thus, the article aims to evaluate whether there has been a change in public opinion to accompany the changes in the government's security policies in the two proposed moments.
Keywords: *Israel; values; foreign policy; settlements; Palestine.*

I.   INTRODUCTION

Competing values are inherent in political debates. In recent years, the left and right sometimes referred to as conservative, have been replaced by the notion of diverse values at the center of a large-scale political belief system inquiry. Regarding the State of Israel, the same political party can be considered left, right, or center depending on the topic being discussed, whether it be security, social policies, or religion.

The crucial point of view is that there can be various sources for the structuring of these values. This line of research suggests that the political preferences of the masses are significantly structured by basic or central values. The notion of diverse values also draws attention to the conflict of these values in real-life situations. Focusing on values instead of a general ideology represents simultaneously a simpler and more complex view of belief systems. It is simpler in the sense of expecting or requiring people to develop composed and sophisticated belief systems. Instead, the focus is on discrete values that ideology can provide the vehicle to explain reality. These values serve as shortcuts or heuristics to guide the interpretation of a complex and changing world but can be connected and integrated. This view is at the same time more complex because it allows for value components to be in disagreement and suggests the need for compensating values and prioritization.

Another way in which people vary in a value's "valence" is the way they rank it when a value conflicts with other cherished values. In such situations, the order of priorities can become a point of dispute and be politicized. Furthermore, political situations often involve conflicting values and require trade-offs. These trade-offs are implicit in political decisions, even if politicians try to hide them for electoral reasons, they often arise when opinions must be established on various issues on the public agenda.

Value competition is, therefore, an important feature of politics and people's belief systems, and it is worth studying in terms of its consequences for politics. But tensions between values are more apparent and more relevant in certain circumstances than in others. We suggest that, in conditions of clear value conflict, people's value hierarchies - beyond their content - structure policy preferences. The more evident and acute this conflict of value, the stronger this correspondence. Our work, therefore, builds on and goes beyond current studies of mass belief systems, which tend to focus on the relationship between valuable content and people's attitudes.

We apply these notions to Israeli public opinion on security issues, mainly regarding the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank in two moments: the first Likud government from 1977 to 1983 and the current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government from 2009 to 2014. This is a context where

major values conflict and, therefore, provides an appropriate object to explore the impact of people's value hierarchies on their policy preferences. The fact that basic values in Israeli political culture and their Zionist roots are continually in tension has been extensively discussed by observers of the Israeli political scene. The basic principles that relate to our discussion are (1) Israel as a Jewish state; (2) Eretz (the land of) Israel; (3) democracy, and (4) peace. In principle, most Israeli Jews support these values if they are free of costs, but in reality, trade-offs must be made (SHAMIR; ARIAN, 1994).

These four values are stated in the Declaration of Independence of Israel (KNESSET, 2017), which establishes the basic values of Israeli society. The right of the Jewish people to their homeland incorporates the Zionist justification for the establishment of the State of Israel. The value of Israel as a Jewish state is the most pervasive in society. The concept of Eretz Israel is referred to in the initial section of the Declaration, linking the notion of a national home to the land, and is a deeply ingrained value in the Zionist notion of national rebirth (SHAMIR; ARIAN, 1994).

Democracy in the broadest sense of political equality is also supported, at least in summary, with the courts reinforcing these rights in principle over the years. Peace is a common aspiration, reiterated by politicians and sung in popular songs. Being accepted among the nations of the world and, in particular, by the states in the region, has always been one of the main goals of Zionism and Israeli policy, and an important dimension of Israel's national interest. The issue of territories has become the foundation of the dispute in contemporary Israeli politics only because of the trade-offs involved.

For example, if it were not for the Palestinian population (demographic pressure), and international pressure, and if it were not perceived as an obstacle to peace, most Israeli Jews would prefer a larger State of Israel (beyond the post-1967 borders). However, if the country were to choose to expand its borders, it would have to restrict the political rights of the Arabs in the territories or face the possibility of a country without a Jewish majority. If it decides to prefer a democratic state with a Jewish majority, then the notion of maintaining the territories becomes less attractive. However, some support the denial of civil and political rights to the Arabs in the territories, while others believe that large-scale Jewish immigration will solve the issue.

The tensions and dilemmas surrounding these values are not new; they have accompanied Zionism from the beginning, starting with the discussions between Weizmann Zionism and Jabotinsky Zionism. But they were controversial only when political reality disturbed their status as dimensions of valence on which everyone could agree and forced politicians and the public to choose a position. After the conquests in the Six-Day War, these dilemmas became pertinent again, although it took years for the conflict over these competing values to dominate the public agenda (SHAMIR; ARIAN, 1994).

In this article, we examine the value priorities of Israeli Jews during the Likud governments of the 1977-1983 and 2009-2014 periods and their impact on political positions regarding the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. We argue that the trade-off approach to values used here is especially useful for studying the values themselves (since they can be better understood in terms of their competitive status in this specific context), as well as for mapping public opinion on specific political issues since mass opinion is largely structured by value priorities. The organization of the article follows this logic, with three brief sections: the value hierarchies of the Israeli Jewish public and the political and ideological coherence of these value priorities, followed by a section on the government of 1977-1983 and a final section on the government of 2009-2014.

II.   Values and Israeli Society

Analyses of Israeli society have emphasized the shift from universal principles to particularist, more traditional, tribal, and primary emphases, often related to religion and land, at the expense of secular civil culture. For example, in his article titled "Between the primordial and the civil definitions of the collective identity: Eretz Israel or the State of Israel?", Kimmerling (1985) suggests that "following the change of government in 1977 (the rise of Likud to power), Israeli leaders began to use the concept of 'Eretz Israel' for two main reasons: to demarcate the new physical limits of the collectivity and to define the identity of the collective as a moral community based on primordial symbols and ties" (p. 272). Thus, one would expect that Judaism would be the highest priority, and a territorially larger State of Israel would also be of great importance.

However, the value priorities of Israeli Jews correspond only partially to these expectations. The expansion of settlements was supported by 70% of Israelis in 1977 (MODI IN EZRACHI APPLIED RESEARCH CENTER, 1977), but in 1980 it lost the majority (CIA, 1980). As early as 2009, when asked the question "Should Israel agree to evacuate all settlements if a peace treaty with the Palestinians depends on it?", 53% of respondents said no (JEWISH LIBRARY, 2017). In 2015, according to the question "Do you support or oppose the dismantling of settlements in the West Bank?" 54% of respondents said they opposed it. Contrary to expectations, when forced to choose among the four objectives, a territorially larger Israel incorporating the occupied territories was not the priority value for the majority of respondents.

Israeli Jews ranked a territorially larger State of Israel and a Jewish majority as the most important values, and they varied less in their ranking than the other values - particularly striking was the small number of

respondents who ranked them last (SHAMIR; ARIAN, 1994). The value least frequently mentioned as the first choice in the selected periods was democracy, but it was mentioned in second and/or third place. Eretz Israel was like democracy in its low number of first choices, but most often it was the lowest ranked value. The notion of the Jews' right to Eretz Israel may have acquired acceptance and legitimacy, but when choices had to be made, most Israelis opted for a Jewish majority over a territorially larger Israel.

These results underscore how superficial it is to portray politics in Israel as a struggle between one side that wants to maintain the territories and another side that is willing to abandon them, as a binary dispute. The picture that emerges from our analysis is of a population that strongly supports a Jewish majority in their state. Maintaining Israel with a Jewish majority is undoubtedly a valence dimension in Israeli politics. Peace is also, though to a lesser extent. The values of land and democracy are less important compared to the Jewish character of the state.

Although there is consensus on democracy as an abstract principle, and Eretz Israel may also be an agreed-upon objective, their collective priorities of lower preference and contemporary policies become the substance of debate and conflict. They have been transposed into divisive positional issues in Israeli politics. The difference between valence and positional dimensions is, therefore, not clear. These are not inherent qualities but depend on the political context. Consensus is associated with a widespread acceptance that implies a value will maintain a high ranking, though its order may change. On the other hand, a contentious value maintains a relatively more stable position.

III. The Arrival of Likud to Power (1977-1983): Public Opinion and Values

The 1977 elections for the formation of the ninth Knesset were described by some Israeli newspapers as an earthquake (PERETZ, 1977). It was the first election since the founding of the state in 1948 in which the Labor Party lost ground as the main party by several votes. The sharp decline of the Labor Party was accompanied by a remarkable increase in the strength of Likud, putting the latter in the leadership position, with the responsibility of organizing the first cabinet led by the right.

Few observers, from the most pessimistic laborites to the most optimistic Likud supporters, predicted the fall of the Labor Party. Most, however, predicted a moderate decline. The party had been declining in elections since the formation of the sixth Knesset, all to the detriment of an increase in votes for the right. But the decline from 51 seats to 32 was indeed a surprise. When Likud won 43 seats against the 32 of its opponent, it became clear that a new era was about to begin in Israeli politics (PERETZ, 1977).

The government was initially supported by a coalition controlling only 62 of the 120 seats in the Knesset, a fragile coalition since losing only two seats could cause the Knesset to disintegrate. The coalition was made up of Likud with 43 seats and two religious parties, the NRP (National Religious Party) with 12 seats and Aguda Israel with 4. In addition, former Labor Party member Moshe Dayan, former Minister of Defense, agreed to join the government as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Excluding Dayan's single seat, this was a rare case of a winning minimal coalition, in which the defection of either the NRP or Aguda Israel would eliminate the government's majority in the Knesset and open up the possibility of early elections (STINNETT, 2007).

This special coalition did not last long. Begin wanted to include the centrist MDC (Democratic Movement for Change) from the outset and, hoping that they could be induced to participate in the coalition in the future, left several ministerial positions vacant. The MDC became part of the government coalition in October 1977, giving the coalition an excess majority of seventy-seven seats, in which the departure of none of Likud's partners could bring down the government. Friedlander (1983) suggests that this agreement "began from internal constraints during a period of anticipated difficulties with the United States and Arab countries" (FRIEDLANDER, 1983, p. 39).

The coalition was perfectly balanced in terms of the parties to the right and left of Likud. The Orthodox religious parties on the right controlled sixteen seats, and the MDC and Dayan on the left also controlled sixteen seats. The MDC advocated for the advancement of negotiations with the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) and was willing to make territorial concessions. On the other hand, the nationalist elements of Likud and the religious parties, particularly the NRP, were strong advocates for the expansion of settlements in the occupied territories and were therefore reluctant to discuss territorial concessions (STINNETT, 2007). In the middle was Begin, who moved forward with settlement plans in the West Bank but was being pressured towards moderation by Dayan and the Carter administration in the United States.

Despite the strong Arab support for the Rakah party, there was little evidence of voting based on interest groups in the 1977 elections. Ethnic and class differences were blurred as Eastern Jews, laborers, and other major groups with distinct interests ultimately dispersed their votes across the spectrum. Nationalist militants divided their votes among all the major parties: Labor, Likud, MDC, and NRP (PERETZ, 1977).

Despite pre-election campaigns advocating for women's rights, including a special attempt by the Labor Party to increase representation and formation of women's parties, only eight out of 120 members of the Ninth Knesset were female. But the significant fact is that the Labor Party declined strongly as a political force in Israel,

and the trend was not an isolated phenomenon among Western social democratic parties. In the 1970s, worldwide inflation increased, unemployment rose, and Western economies decentralized, decreasing the influence of labor parties in Sweden, Australia, and other Western countries. In Israel, where the effects of global economic crises are exacerbated by special problems of spiraling costs in the defense area, the relatively low productivity of the Labor Party and the 30 years of left-wing government made its leaders lose popularity (PERETZ, 1977). These events, over which the party had no control, plus a corruption scandal that brought down Rabin, made losses inevitable for the Labor Party and the Israeli left.

The ethnic issue has always been a relevant element in Israeli elections, but in 1981 it emerged as the central theme during the campaign for the Tenth Knesset, more vocally than at any time since the first election in 1949, when a Yemenite candidate and four Sephardic candidates were elected. The continuing decline of ideology in political life also reflected a movement towards a two-party system in which personalities and campaign tactics are more significant than partisan ideological positions. The two-party system was marked by the capture of almost four-fifths of the Knesset seats by two political blocs that were almost ideologically equal (PERETZ; SMOOHA, 1981). The disappearance of several smaller left-oriented factions and the non-dramatic display of the radical right was even more evident, as was the division of the religious bloc and a movement across the political spectrum towards conservatism on internal issues, but mainly on external ones with clear direction towards the expansion of settlements in the West Bank supported by the legitimation of the Israeli Jewish population due to the construction of the national narrative.

While the "official" campaign lasted only one month, the political season began in January 1981, when the Knesset legislated for early elections on June 20 instead of November 13. This change was triggered by several government crises and growing popular pressure. The atmosphere of crisis culminated in the resignation of Finance Minister Yigael Hurvitz, and later the dismissal of Inspector-General Herzl Shafir by Interior Minister Yosef Burg for leading a new investigation into corruption allegations in the Ministry of the Interior. These events were only the trigger for several cabinet tumults of Menachem Begin that led to the resignation of Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman. The wave of resignations was accompanied by friction in Begin's cabinet coalition and a decline from 77 to 61 members in parliament, giving him only a one-vote majority in the 120-member parliament. A very serious blow was the erosion and collapse of the Democratic Movement for Change of Vice Prime Minister Yigal Yadin, and his decision to dissolve what was left of his party and withdraw from politics (PERETZ; SMOOHA, 1981).

Public opinion polls showed that the popularity of Menachem Begin's first government was very low, due to factors such as failure to fulfill most of the promises for domestic policy from the 1977 campaign, such as reducing inflation, as well as substantial reduction of jobs in the public sector to reduce the government apparatus. In 1981, four years of Likud resulted in an annual inflation rate of about 150%, unemployment had grown, and the country's external debt was the highest up to that point (ARIAN, 2000).

The deterioration of the economy, erosion of the governing coalition, and strong infighting within Begin's party did not discourage the Prime Minister, despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, from recapturing his popularity among the voting groups that brought him to power in 1977. Six months later, Likud emerged as the party with not only the largest number of votes but a greater percentage than it had previously achieved. Although the vote was close, with only a small difference between Likud and the Labor Party, Likud's 48 seats in parliament were more than it had won in 1977, making it Israel's largest political bloc. The most important aspect of the 1981 elections was the clear confirmation that Israel was entering the second generation of the State (PERETZ; SMOOHA, 1981) and that its political system had moved away from the alignment of forces that formed in the previous generation at the birth of the State and prevailed throughout the first generation. The Israeli political system was becoming practically bipolar, even though it was multipartite, only the Labor Party and Likud could lead a coalition in Parliament.

When Likud's popularity hit its lowest point in mid-July 1980, the party's leaders decided that an effort had to be made to improve this situation. Months later, they made choices on various basic issues that served to guide the party throughout the entire election campaign.

Because of the fluctuation of public opinion, the issue of holding early elections was repeatedly discussed by Likud leaders. On the one hand, they could allow the Ninth Knesset to continue until the end of its term. On the other hand, the government could submit a bill to the Knesset and organize early elections.

According to Ilan Greilsammer (1986), for two main reasons, this issue had been discussed very frequently in the party's leadership in the government. First, the possibility of new elections was a crucial issue in Likud's fight against the Labor Party. It was necessary to keep the latter in the dark about the date of the elections, leaving the party to start its campaign either too early or too late. Second, the Likud leaders truly opposed each other on this issue. Some of them believed that the later the vote occurred, the better it would be for the party, as they would have more time to work against the population's rejection. A late vote would give the government time to initiate several major projects, such as the renewal of poor neighborhoods, the construction of the Mediterranean-Dead Sea Canal, the massive construction of low-rent apartments, and the like. Finally, Menachem

Begin decided in favor of early elections, to be held on June 30, 1981. The official reason for this decision was that the Prime Minister did not want to govern with a smaller base.

One of Likud's central themes was chosen very early: the firm opposition to the Labor Party's "Jordanian option." Likud had worked hard in its first term to expand settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, supported by the emotional discourse of Eretz Yisrael and the Zionist maxim that Israel would be the safe home for all Jews and would not give up the effort made to the detriment of the Labor Party's proposal, which was to abandon Judea and Samaria, giving autonomy to Yasser Arafat's movement. In speeches, Menachem Begin said that Likud "is the only political force capable of blocking the path of the Labor Party, which is preparing the ground for a Palestinian state." The argument was summed up in the slogan "Save Eretz Yisrael from the Labor Party" (GREILSAMMER, 1986).

Likud's 1981 campaign was entirely based on the strong emotional appeal of the history of Zionism and the Jewish people, inciting fear in the population and rallying forces to reverse the low popularity that Menachem Begin's government had from 1977 to 1981. The party worked hard to defame Shimon Peres and exalt Menachem Begin.

Above all, Likud did its best to promote its "ethnic" image, which was that of a firm and uncompromising defender of Sephardic Jews. To achieve this goal, leaders made several decisions. First, David Levy's image - one of Herut's top leaders - was put in the spotlight. Levy, a Moroccan immigrant, was very popular among Jews who came from Arab countries and who could identify with him. Thanks to the strong religious and Zionist discourse, the support of religious parties was crucial for the campaign's growth (GREILSAMMER, 1986).

In summary, the campaign that gave victory to Likud, despite the low popularity of the party's first government, was based on emotional aspects of the Israeli population's imagination, from the opposition to the "Jordanian option" of the Labor Party to the alliance with religious parties and the ethnic character of the elections.

Even before the establishment of the State of Israel, the Zionists turned a blind eye to the presence of Palestinians. Thus, the Zionist slogan, "a land without people for a people without a land," was a deliberate false representation of the situation in Palestine. If someone reminded the Zionists of the very real existence of Palestinians, their response was to portray them as wandering Bedouins. In other words, the Palestinians were dispensable and/or disposable, if they even existed.

As more and more Jewish settlers arrived in Palestine, it became obvious to some of them that the Palestinian Arabs were very real and unwanted. This, however, was a minority view whose supporters advocated for a binational state in Palestine. After the partition of Palestine and the establishment of the State of Israel, the Zionists, and the new Israelis worked to remove, or at least diminish, the presence or trace of Palestinian identity.

Within Israel, hundreds of Palestinian villages were completely eradicated and the names of many others were changed. The Palestinians themselves were called "Arab refugees." After the 1967 war, the suppression of Palestinian identity became a major goal of the Israeli authorities, especially after the government of Menachem Begin came to power in 1977.

For most Israelis, Palestinians have become "invisible," and when Israelis did see Palestinians, they often viewed them as inferior people whom they did not wish to associate with. In a TIME magazine survey (1971), for example, it was found that:

Among Israelis, 23% said they would be uncomfortable if an Arab sat next to them in a restaurant, 26% if they had to work closely with one, 49% if an Arab family became their neighbor, 54% if their children had an Arab teacher, 74% if their children became close friends with Arabs, and 84% if a friend or relative married an Arab (TIME, 1971).

The same survey found that Israelis thought that Arabs were lazier than Israelis (53%), more cruel (75%), less courageous (80%), more dishonest (66%), less intelligent (74%), and inferior (67%). Former President Jimmy Carter noted that Prime Minister Menachem Begin's government "tends to treat Palestinians with contempt, to see them almost as subhuman and to rationalize their abusive attitude toward them by categorizing all Palestinians as terrorists" (CIA, 1980).

This attitude toward Palestinians is also reflected in attempts to find a solution to the conflict. Thus, when Israelis were asked in 1980 whether it would be possible to reach a peaceful agreement with the Arabs without resolving the problem of Palestine, the majority percentage said no. However, when they were asked in the same survey, "Do you agree or disagree with the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza as a condition for a complete and final peace treaty?" only 19% said yes, and 4% said "depends," while 68% said no. These attitudes, with approximately the same percentages, were also held in 1982 (GALLUP RESEARCH CENTER, 1980).

Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Israelis have always refused to accept it as the representative of the Palestinians. For example, in 1980, only about 20% of the Israeli public would consider, under certain circumstances, Israel's recognition of the PLO. At this time, in response to the question, "Do you think we should conduct peace negotiations with the leadership of the PLO?" 17.9% said yes, and 8% said yes, under certain circumstances (GALLUP RESEARCH CENTER, 1980).

It is reasonable to assume that the greater readiness to recognize the PLO and conduct negotiations with it was largely a consequence of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the evolution of Israeli attitudes toward the war in Lebanon as criticized in large demonstrations in Israel against the Begin government. The impact of the war was also felt among Jews outside of Israel, as many of them began to reconsider their commitment to an Israeli state that did not represent traditional Jewish values.

IV.   Benjamin Netanyahu's Second Administration (2009-2014)

The fragmentation of the Israeli political system, technically based on a highly proportional representative parliamentary structure, produced another deadlock. The roots of the problem lie in the institutional structure of the Israeli political system, as well as in the type of challenges faced by each coalition government in the country. Israel's institutional structure with its strongly proportional representative system was a product of the immediate need to integrate various groups of immigrants into the nation-building and state-building process.

Once Israel gained independence, David Ben Gurion, the founder of the state, and most of his followers unsuccessfully attempted to make the system more majoritarian by subdividing the country into electoral districts.

The real dilemma of the Israeli political system is that its highly proportional representative structure, which generates unstable multiparty coalitions, makes it unable to make the necessary decisions to advance the peace process, particularly concerning Palestine, on issues such as the dismantling of settlements in the West Bank, in East Jerusalem, making the city a capital of two states, and the return of Palestinian refugees. And the tensions and instability generated by the intense Arab-Israeli conflict prevent the necessary conditions for political system reform. This vicious circle needs to be broken in both directions.

As a result of the failed attempt in the 1990s to create a majoritarian system by electing the Prime Minister directly, the tendency to personalize the political system increased to the point where many voted for leaders - not parties - in a system where parties control everything, including the election of leaders. This created a kind of negative populism whose main characteristic is that each leader (or main candidate), as was the case with Livni, Netanyahu, and Barak in the last elections, has to invest much more time and energy in defending against attacks rather than proposing action plans to solve the country's main problems (SZNAJDER, 2010).

The long-term pattern shows that participation in Israeli elections has steadily decreased from 80%, two decades ago, to slightly above 60% in the first decade of the 21st century (SZNAJDER, 2010). Corruption and personal scandals that affected central political figures, such as Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, contributed to politicians losing prestige and low voter turnout.

The international financial crisis of 2008, which had significant repercussions in Israel during the months leading up to the elections, was seen as one of the main political issues. The acting Finance Minister, Roni Bar-On of the Kadima party, was the target of much criticism, especially from Netanyahu's Likud party.

The relationship between Israel and the dominant power in Gaza, Hamas, had never been good but quickly worsened after the ceasefire ended on December 19, 2008. The Israeli population in the Negev desert areas surrounding Gaza was constantly targeted by small rockets and mortars. In 2008, the Palestinians began firing longer-range and more destructive rockets, hitting the city of Ashkelon on several occasions. Israel responded to these attacks by targeting launchers and attack sites considered to be ammunition depots or military bases. Violence increased in the middle of the election campaign. Coalition government members knew that no one could face the elections without seriously addressing the issue.

These were the factors that eventually led to Operation Cast Lead, launched by Israel against Gaza in late December 2008. It would be unfair to say that this military operation was instrumentally decided by the incumbent government, which included two of the main candidates to govern the country, Livni and Barak, to improve their chances in the elections. However, we can conclude that for these leaders and their political formations, it was practically impossible to face elections while Hamas intensified its attacks on the civilian population in southern Israel. Meanwhile, the Likud claimed that its leader, Benjamin Netanyahu, was the only candidate capable of confronting Hamas firmly and ending the crisis, while the incumbent government was presented as indecisive and weak.

This leads to a very paradoxical conclusion: one of the main factors in the Israeli elections of 2009 was, in fact, Hamas (SZNAJDER, 2010). By increasing pressure on the Israeli government, they were provoking a military reaction with all the changes in electoral results that this could produce. In addition, by strongly resisting or not resisting the Israeli attack and exposing the Palestinian civilian population to military invasion, with all the terrible consequences that these attitudes would imply, Hamas and other extremist groups in Gaza were playing into the hands of the Likud government.

The rising star on the Israeli political horizon was Avigdor Lieberman from the Yisrael Beiteinu party. Lieberman emphasized four points: the first was the slogan of his campaign, "No citizenship without loyalty" (BEITEINU, 2017), which meant loyalty to Israel as a Jewish state. He stated that the Arab population of Israel - Israeli citizens of Palestinian nationality - constituted a fifth column and should be deprived of civil rights if they did not declare and demonstrate their loyalty to Israel; the second point emphasized secularism and attacked the

position of Israeli ultra-Orthodox parties, demanding the opening of criteria that determine who is Jewish. This is a very attractive point for immigrants - and also for secular Israelis - who would like to have civil matters resolved outside rabbinical courts and allow civil marriage; the third point was a peace plan with the Palestinians based on a territorial-demographic exchange in which Israel would maintain the main concentrations of settlements in the West Bank while receiving two large concentrations of Israeli Arabs in return; the fourth point was the reform of the electoral system from parliamentary to presidential, thus creating the government's ability to solve the country's major problems, as well as eliminating the influence of Jewish Orthodox parties (BEITEINU, 2017). The growth of his popularity in the 2009 elections, as well as the Likud's victory, runs counter to the value scale discussed in the first session of this article; for most Israelis, the Jewish character of the state is first in importance, often at the expense of territorial expansion.

In 2009, as in 1977, there was a political shift to the right in Israel associated with the conflict between Israel and Gaza, and to a lesser extent with Iran, which strengthens the present feelings of an existential threat relationship. The ambivalent attitudes of the left and center-left - Meretz and the Labor Party - towards the Gaza military operation - initially offering complete support and later morally criticizing and demanding that the operation be stopped - projected confusing images that cost these parties many votes.

In a system strongly based on proportional representation, possible political coalitions are no less important than the total number of votes obtained by each party. This was proven again in 2009, with Tzipi Livni of Kadima achieving the first majority in the Knesset by electing 28 representatives. Netanyahu of Likud came in second with 27 representatives and Lieberman of Yisrael Beiteinu in third place with 15. Barak of the Labor Party only managed to get 13 representatives. President Shimon Peres consulted with political leaders to decide who would lead the formation of the next government coalition, and the right-wing bloc led by Likud had better chances than Livni. Lieberman became the pivot of the coalition formation, supporting Netanyahu (KNESSET, 2009).

Finally, Netanyahu formed the 32nd Israeli government, becoming Prime Minister for the second time. It was a strong coalition government of 30 ministers that was supported by 69 members of the Knesset. The ruling coalition was formed by the Likud, led by Netanyahu, Yisrael Beiteinu, led by Lieberman as Foreign Minister, the Labor Party, led by Barak as Defense Minister, the Orthodox Shas Party, led by Eli Yishai as Interior Minister, and smaller parties such as HaBayit Hayehudi and the Yahadut HaTorá party (KNESSET, 2009).

Regarding public opinion regarding the values addressed in the first part of this article, according to surveys conducted in 2009, regarding the question "Do you support or oppose the dismantling of most settlements in the West Bank as part of a peace agreement with the Palestinians?" 49% of respondents said they would support it (JEWISH LIBRARY, 2017). When settlement expansion is related to peace, the majority of the population supports an end to the occupation. When not conditioned on peace, the population tends to support the continuation of settlement construction.

In 2010, regarding the question "Which of the following steps should Israel take regarding settlement construction?" 39% of respondents said that construction should continue only in regions that will remain under Israeli control in the future, while 31.3% responded that it should continue indiscriminately; 23.3% freeze completely, and 6.3% did not know (JEWISH LIBRARY, 2017).

In 2013, in the survey "What is the impact of continuous settlement construction on the security of Israel?" 27% of respondents said it helped security, 42% said it harmed, 23% said it made no difference to security, and 8% did not know (JEWISH LIBRARY, 2017).

V. CONCLUSION

There is growing literature arguing that the mass public is less ideologically naive than previously suggested. We sought to add to this literature by showing that when values conflict, people's value hierarchies structure their policy preferences to a significant degree. Furthermore, we showed that people's value priorities are not random, but are politically and ideologically structured and that certain combinations of values are more prevalent and more enduring than others.

A significant amount of variance in political positions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict was explained by people's value priorities regarding peace, Eretz Israel, democracy, and a Jewish majority. These value priorities represented significant portions of the variation in political positions, as well as changes in political positions. The data analyzed, though preliminary, allow us to further explore the conditions under which chosen values become increasingly important.

Election campaigns provide political stimuli that seem to strengthen the relationship between value preferences and policies: they sensitize people to their value priorities and conflicts between values, as well as between values and policy positions, resulting in more constraints. Although these results are only exploratory, they suggest the need to study value hierarchies and political positions under different circumstances, to specify in more detail when value priorities are more important and more powerful in structuring political positions. Our analysis points in the direction that political contexts that accentuate value conflict, such as wars and election

campaigns, are particularly salient. In the more general sense, we suggest that the more salient and acute the value conflict, the greater the correspondence between people's value hierarchies and their political positions.

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