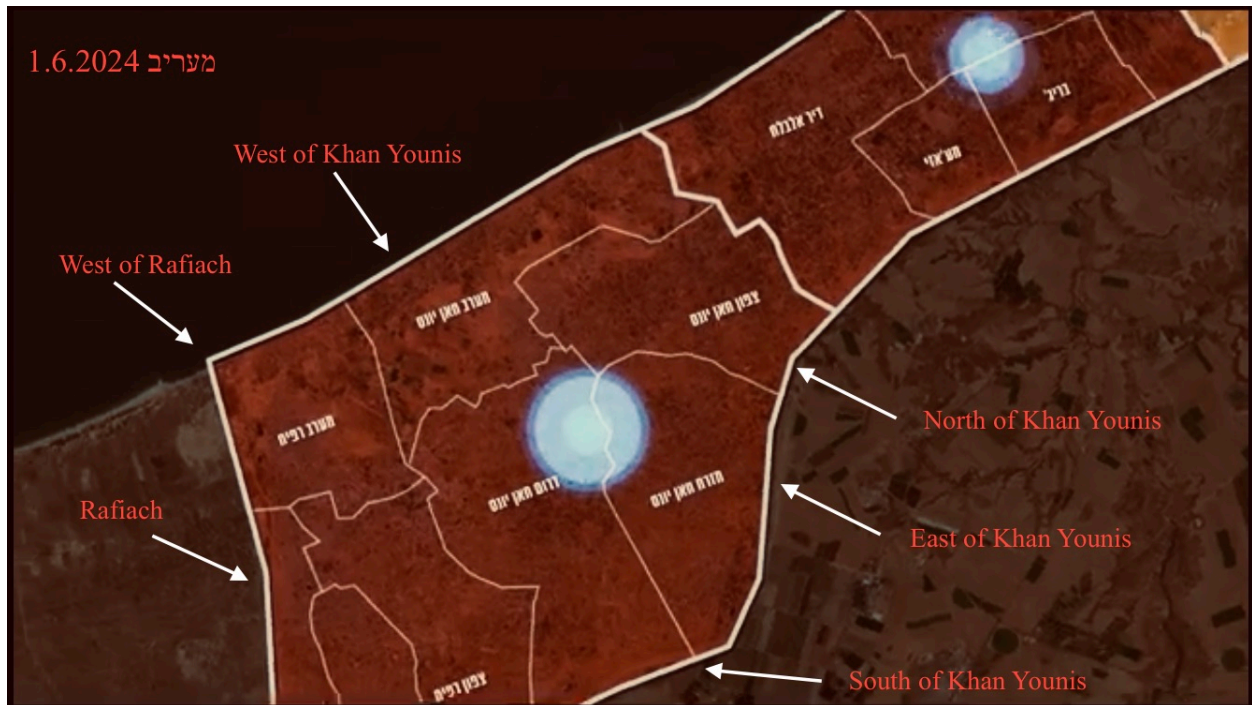


The Battle of Khan Younis: I

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1. The battle still raging in Yahya Sinwar's southern stronghold of Khan Younis marks a decisive turning point in Israel's war on the Gaza Strip.
2. No sooner had Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on December 31st, 2023 [1] the

successful completion of the second phase of his multi pronged three part approach to the war in Gaza than Hamas militants began publishing new videos detailing the destruction of Israeli tanks, four of which Hamas militants destroyed in



two neighborhoods from the northern city of Gaza (i.e., (حيي التفاح و الدرج [2]). The loss of these four Israeli tanks, amounting to more than 24 million dollars within the span of less than two days, indicates the staggering cost of the war in both materiel as well as manpower “after **approaching** what [Israel] described as operational control in the north.” [3] Without any mention of casualties on either side, the Netanyahu regime reports its projected total combined losses from the war in the Gaza Strip to amount to no less than 200 billion, as noted by one of Israel’s economic newspapers, the Economist (i.e., כלכליסט). [4] The amount is projected at more than 10% of Israel’s Gross Domestic Product this year.



3. The Arab language newspaper, Middle East (i.e., شرق الاوسط), noted that just as Israel announced the “dismantling” of “the structure of Hamas militancy” in northern Gaza, the IDF reported the loss of a high ranking member of its military there, raising the number of dead Israeli soldiers to 176. [5]

4. These incidents, both in northern Gaza, signify how far from the eradication of Hamas or its militancy Netanyahu truly is, despite the fact that Netanyahu’s stated goal appears to vacillate from the eradication of Hamas militancy in the Gaza Strip to that of the entire political movement itself, an impossibility.

5. There appears to be much confusion over the actual strategic objective of Netanyahu’s war in the Gaza Strip with much confused reporting. At times it appears as though Netanyahu’s stated goal is the latter, while at other times

the former. The Spanish language instance of the German channel, *Deutsche Welle*, for instance, reports that Netanyahu “insiste en que Israel asumirá el control de la Franja de Gaza, sin reconocer a ninguna autoridad palestina, tras la *eliminación del grupo terroristas Hamás.*” [6] The Spanish newspaper *El País*, however, writes that “Netanyahu insiste en que la guerra no se detendrá hasta que todos los rehenes sean liberals y sude *erradicado el poder militar islamista.*” [7] While the difference is slight, these two goals relate to entirely different aspects of the Hamas terrorist organization in the Gaza Strip. The Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (i.e., كتائب الشهيد عز الدين القسام), for instance, is Hamas’ militant wing, whereas Hamas itself is a political party with

offices in Turkey, Qatar, and Lebanon.[8]



Debate over “Centers of Gravity” in Arabic Press

6. In addition, there is a significant debate occurring within Arabic speaking political news agencies regarding the feasibility of Netanyahu’s plans, be it one or the other.

7. On the Turkish news station, TRTWorld, for instance, an Arabic speaking commentator speaking with a female newscaster dressed in the traditionally Turkish style of Hijab reminiscent of Erdogan’s wife’s own way of





8. The speaker explains that based on the theory of the “center of gravity” Netanyahu’s attempt to lay siege to Khan Younis, as he claims, is a “blunder” (i.e., “ارتباك”). While the speaker mentions Clausewitz, the speaker provides few, if any details, about what he means exactly in regards to Khan Younis. It appears as though the speaker claims that the center of gravity for a political party like Hamas cannot be a city. [9]

9. In opposition to this speaker’s point of view, Al-Jazeera (i.e., الخزيرة), offers an alternative point of view. A military analyst, who appears on the show almost everyday, claims that Khan Younis is “a point of fundamental concentration” (i.e. “نقاط الاتركز الاساسية”) for Hamas.[10]
10. Whereas the Turkish speaker is undoubtedly influenced by NATO preconceptions of warfare, the speaker from the Qatari news channel is not. He views the situation in the Gaza Strip primarily from a political

rather than a purely military point of view.

11. These debates in the Arabic speaking press of the Middle East are a reflection of a much deeper debate currently underway in the immediate aftermath of the Ukraine war within America's military intellectual elite regarding the proper way to interrupt Clausewitz's understanding of a *Schwerpunkt*.



12. An American military academic, Echevvaria, for instance, published an article in 2003 entitled, "Clausewitz Center of Gravity," where he argued against distinguishing between "tactical, operational, or strategic centers of gravity," defining the concept "holistically" rather than by way of a "level of warfare." His work is coming into prominence as

way to facilitate how best to understand the abysmal failure of Ukraine's armed forces during the Ukrainian "Spring" counteroffensive. In contrast with Echevvaria's conceptualization, one must remark that Clausewitz's thought on war derives almost entirely from a deeply Machiavellian concept of politics where war is considered to be its *continuation*. Ecchevvaria makes no mention of Clausewitz's definition of war in his discussion of Centers of Gravity as "structures"; he makes no mention of Machiavelli's *Prince*. In opposition to "structure," Clausewitz's wording recommends a *continuum*. A continuum differs from an "entire system (or structure) of the enemy," since the enemy is



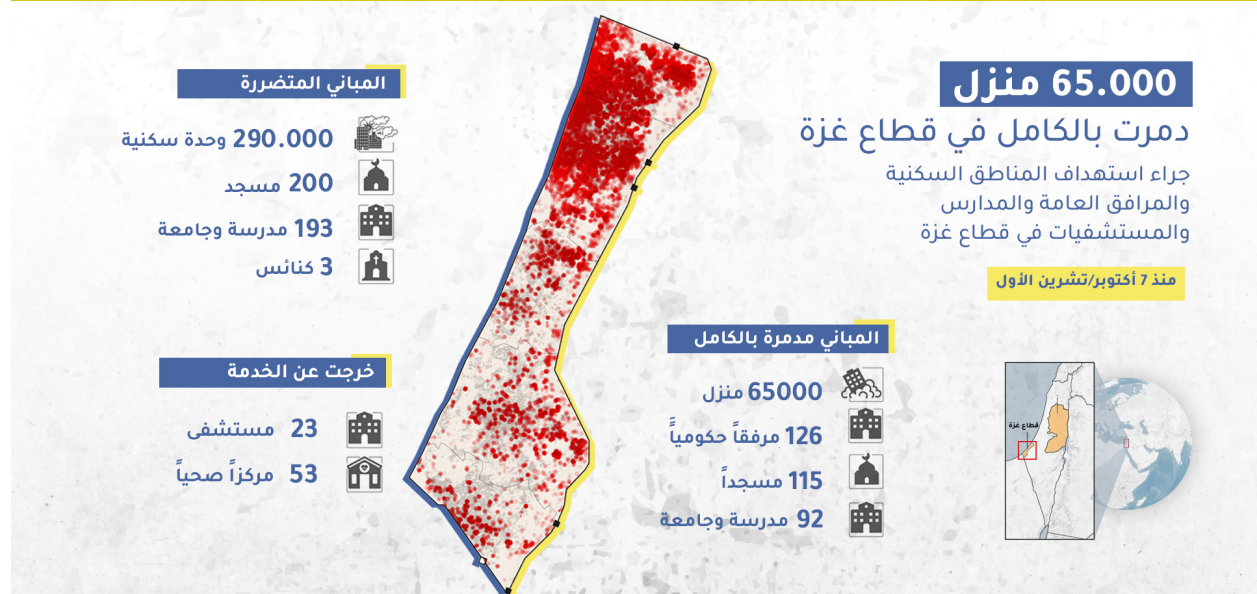
fundamentally *political*, a force

emerging from a history of decision making. It is not merely a matter of “characteristics, capabilities, or locations from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight” but the decision making processes or politics of the interacting parties to a war. The CoG gains its significance not within an “entire system (or structure)” of the enemy” but only insofar as the enemy may act towards the fulfillment of the *Prince*’s will. (c.f., Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 1: “Der Krieg ist also ein Akt der Gewalt, um den Gegner zur Erfüllung unseres Willens zu zwingen.”) The identification of a Center of Gravity is therefore bound up primarily with the desire to *shift* the enemy politically from one position to

another (i.e., from an advantageous position where the enemy may dictate to a less than advantageous position where he or she *now* becomes *subject* to the *Prince*’s dictates). This is the key to understanding the Centers of Gravity in Clausewitz’s works.

13. Herein lies the significance of the battle of Khan Younis. The discussion about “the day after” (i.e., “יום אחר”) is a discussion about the nature of the political organization that is to arise from the war. [11]
14. Netanyahu’s self-declared aim is not to strike at a center of gravity. Netanyahu’s aim—to the extent that he is able to articulate one consistently and clearly—is an attempt to ensure that the political organization that arises from the day after the war performs in accordance with

حصيلة الدمار في قطاع غزة: القصف يطاول المنازل والمدارس والمستشفيات



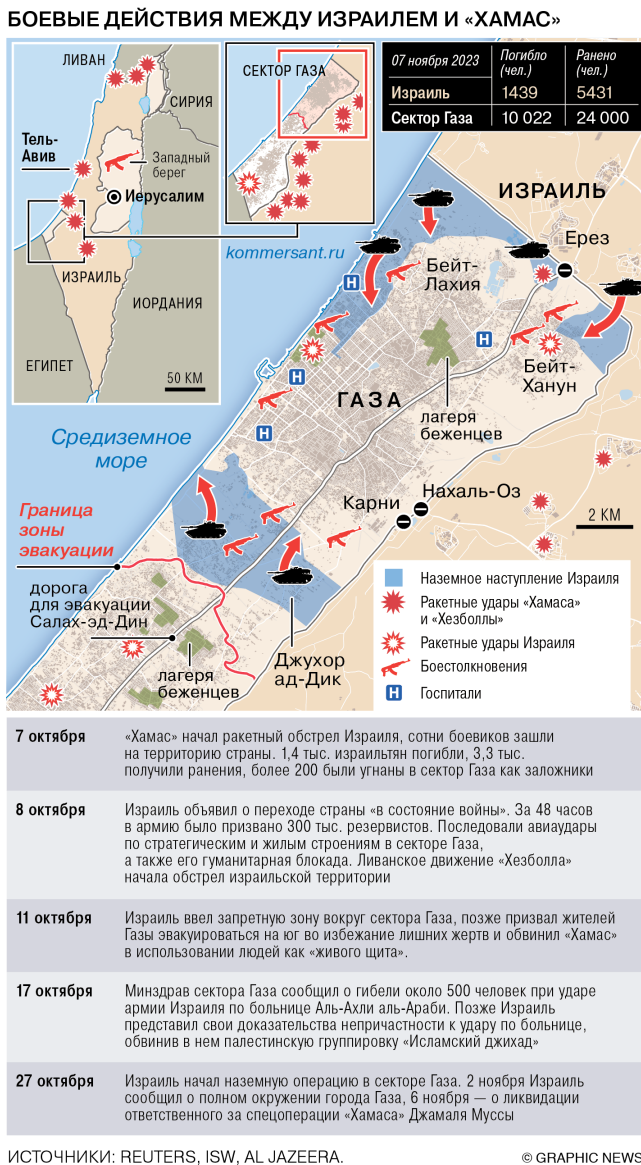
Netanyahu's will. There is, however, no military basis for the realization of Netanyahu's aim, notwithstanding the fascinating debate over Clausewitz's thought it inspires in the Arabic speaking press in Turkey and Qatar.

Salah-a-Din Causeway

15. On December 26th, 2023, the *Journal* reported that Israel is still "in the process of establishing operational control over [Khan Younis's] main routes," [12] even though Israel entered the city at the beginning of its expansion of the war into a territorial invasion of the entire Gaza Strip, the first phase of its multi-prong operation. By "main routes," the *Journal* means the vital, historic crossway of Salah-a-Din.
16. The Salah-a-Din causeway is a centuries old trade route. After the Sykes-Picot agreement, the British built a railway parallel to the strategic Salah-a-Din causeway, connecting Egypt in the African Maghreb with Syria



- in the Levant, a major trade route, that formed a link from the south of the redivided Ottoman Empire to the north. The Israelis disbanded the railway after the establishment of the State of Israel, severing the railway from the Maghreb to the Levant.
17. The IDF are currently engaged in pitch battles to establish control over the important thoroughfare, which still remains a major road stretching from one end of the Gaza Strip to the other, attacking from several



directions in neighborhoods located in the north eastern sector of the southern Gaza Strip. These neighborhoods are, *inter alia*, Al-Qarara, Az-Zeyna, Ashaan Al-Jadida. In addition, Alghad (i.e., قناة الغد) reported fierce clashes between Palestinian and the IDF in the

- neighborhood of Shraab-Al-Assal on January 5th, 2024. [13]
18. The most recent video published by the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (i.e., كتائب الشهيد عز الدين القسام) depicts a Hamas militant destroying an Israeli tank with a Yaseen 105 mm artillery round. The video is visible from the discussion of Centers of Gravity in the TRT news broadcast from 9:03 to 8:46.
 19. A much earlier video published on December 29th, 2023 depicts a Hamas militant striking several tanks in Khan Younis. [14] Reported by the Al-Araby channel on YouTube, the Hamas militant fires a Yaseen 105 mm artillery round with a distinct twang sound. The Yaseen 105 is a Hamas modified Russian Tandem II rocket, with which Hamas militants have leveled the playing field in the asymmetrical, urban warfare of the Gaza Strip.
 20. On December 31st, Maariv (i.e., מעריב) announced that Israel is deepening its siege of Khan Younis without details on the depth of penetration. [15] The most recent death toll from January 6th, 2024 witnessed the death of no less than 7 people with dozens of wounded from Israeli air raids with *Deutsche*

Welle reporting from its Spanish channel that “Israel intensifica otra vez el asedio sobre Gaza.” [16] The next day no less than 63 civilians were reported dead again from Israeli air raids. Despite the air raids, Israel has not yet established control over the historic Salah-a-Din causeway.

21. The air raids appear to be targeting Hamas targets on the side west of the historic Salah-a-Din causeway, facing the sea. On Saturday the *Journal* reported that “[in] the southern city of Khan Younis, the Israeli military said it struck several launchpads used to fire rockets on Israeli territory.” [17] Hamas’ ability to continue firing rockets from the Gaza Strip into Israel undermines any claim that Netanyahu may have to control over Hamas, let alone its militant wing, in the southern Gaza Strip. It is clear that the IDF has not yet established control over the area to the east of the Salah-a-Din causeway, let alone the west, facing the sea.
22. In contrast to the battle of Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip near the Erez crossing with Israel (i.e., from October 27th, 2023 to December 18th, 2023) [18], the battle of Khan Younis is

now the longest running battle of any of the battles in the Gaza Strip. With the first stage of the battle of Khan Younis continuing to be a struggle to assert dominance over the Salah-a-Din causeway or, as the *Journal* notes, the “main routes” into the city of Khan Younis, the battle of Khan Younis is a reflection of the breakdown in the geopolitics of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of WWII.

Netanyahu Regime & Israeli Losses

23. Netanyahu’s announcement to move south comes well after the war enters its third month. During that time, Israeli Defense Force have lost a combined total of 825 units of armor within this period of time, according to the latest tallies by major sources of Arabic news media.
24. Israel has lost more soldiers to fighting in the Gaza Strip than to any previous conflict, signifying a grim milestone in the history of Israel. These figures are according to Al-Jazeera (i.e., الخزيرة).
25. According to the Arabic daily in the United Kingdom, Al-Araby (which is different from the

news channel on YouTube with an identical name), the figure is 720 units of armor. Both of these news stations rely upon the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (i.e., كتائب الشهيد عز الدين القسام) to generate a tally for the most recent count.

26. Based on the number of lost Israeli armor, Al-Ghad has described the Gaza Strip as “a graveyard for Israeli tanks.” [19] At least one source noted that Israel lost 20 units of armor in a single day. [20] According to an Israeli journalist, Gideon Levy, Hamas, not the IDF, is now emerging as the strongest political force in the 2024 Israeli war.

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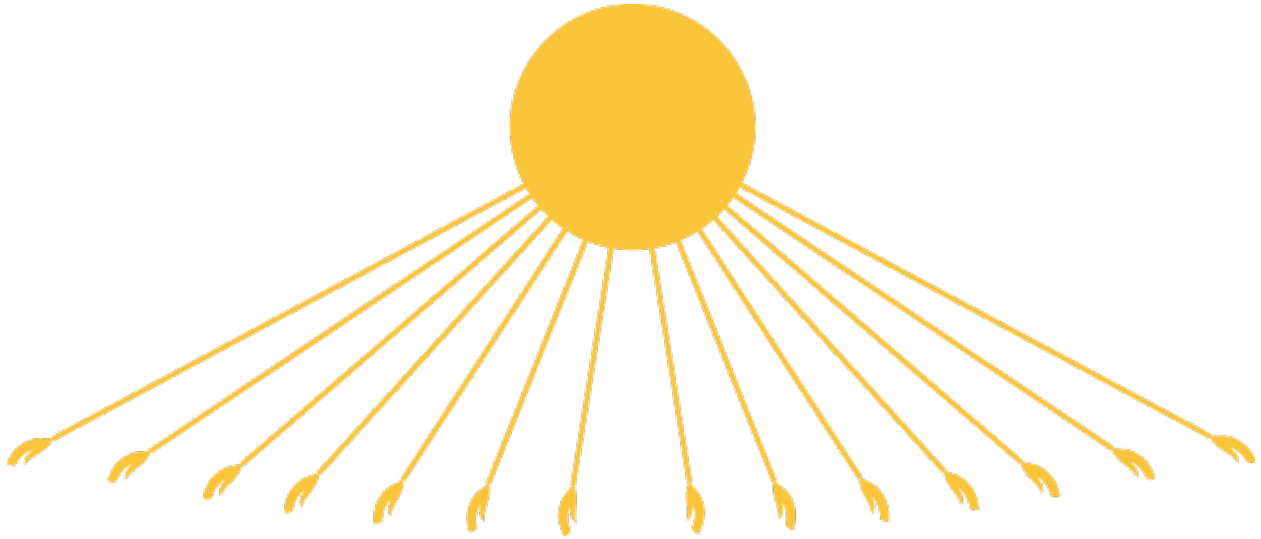
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On the Order of the Military Revolutionary Committee

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FREE ANALYSIS, FLIER, AND
PAMPHLET, January 5th, 2024
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1. It is hereby ordered that the adherent to the democratically centralized Military Revolutionary Committee (*henceforth* MRC), a subcommittee of the Central Committee, Ariel Plotnik, produce an analysis of the battle of Khan Younis.
2. Within or before, whichever may be sooner, a fortnight the adherent must produce an analysis no less than 2,000 words in length, noting from beginning to end the key elements of the battle with an international scope from foreign sources of public information (FSoPI).
3. Upon review of the analysis by the MRC the analysis shall thereafter be published as the MRC's official analysis of the battle.

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