Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center

Harkabi Institute for Intelligence Studies

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מעצבים את העתיד מאז 1925
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

The Israeli Forum for Intelligence Studies
הפורום הישראלי ללימודי מודיעין [פיל"ם]

הכנס הישראלי השנתי ללימודי מודיעין 2026 בסימן

מודיעין תחת לחץ

The Annual Israeli Conference on Intelligence Studies

Intelligence under pressure

4/11/2026

האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

תוכנייה
PROGRAM

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לתוכניה יש לגלול למטה

יום ד', 04/11/2026

בניין מדעי היהדות ע"ש יצחק רבין, קמפוס הר הצופים,
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים

09:00-09:30	**התכנסות ורישום**
09:30-11:15	**פאנלים מחקריים, מושב 1:** 1א' **מודיעין, ביטחון לאומי והעידן הדיגיטלי.** חדר 3001 1ב' **נקודות עיוורות בתמונת האיום הלאומית.** חדר 2001 1ג' **תרבויות מודיעיניות והמקצוע המודיעיני.** חדר 1001
11:15-11:30	**הפסקת קפה**
11:30-13:00	**פאנלים מחקריים, מושב 2:** 2א' **פיקוח דמוקרטי תחת לחץ.** חדר 3001 2ב' **לוחמה קוגניטיבית והמאבק על סביבת המידע.** חדר 2001 2ג' **הבניית גבולות ההתרעה.** חדר 1001
13:00-13:45	**הפסקת צהריים**
13:45-15:15	**מושב מליאה,** אולם ווסונג דברי ברכה טקס הענקת פרסי הפורום הישראלי ללימודי מודיעין לשנת תשפ"ו **הרצאה מפי גב' קתרין היבס פירסון,** נשיאת האגודה הבינלאומית לחינוך מודיעיני (IAFIE) **הרצאה מפי ד"ר בארי זולוף,** נשיא כבוד של האגודה הבינלאומית לחינוך מודיעיני (IAFIE)
15:15-15:30	**הפסקת קפה**
15:30-17:00	**פאנלים מחקריים, מושב 3:** 3ב' **הפוליטיקה של הפומביות.** חדר 1001 3ג' **בינה מלאכותית, שיקול דעת מחקרי והחוקר עתיר הנתונים.** חדר 3001

הכנס הישראלי השנתי ללימודי מודיעין 2026
The Annual Israeli Conference on Intelligence Studies 2026

Wednesday, 04/11/2026

Yitzhak Rabin Building for Jewish Studies, Mt. Scopus,
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

09:00–09:30	**Reception & Registration**
09:30–11:15	**Academic Panels, Session 1** • 1a. **Intelligence, National Security and the Digital Age [in Hebrew],** Room 3001 • 1b. **Blind Spots in the National Threat Picture,** Room 2001 • 1c. **Intelligence Cultures & the Profession,** Room 1001
11:15–11:30	**Coffee Break**
11:30–13:00	**Academic Panels, Session 2** • 2a. **Democratic Oversight Under Pressure,** Room 3001 • 2b. **Cognitive Warfare & the Contested Information Environment,** Room 2001 • 2c. **Constructing the Boundaries of Early Warning,** Room 1001
13:00–13:45	**Lunch Break**
13:45–15:15	**Plenary Session,** Wassong Auditorium • Welcome Remarks • Awards Ceremony • **Keynote Speech by Ms. Katherine Hibbs Pherson,** President of the International Association for Intelligence Education (IAFIE) • **Keynote Speech by Dr. Barry A. Zulauf,** President Emeritus of the International Association for Intelligence Education (IAFIE) and former Analytic Ombudsman for the U.S. Intelligence Community
15:15–15:30	**Coffee Break**
15:30–17:00	**Academic Panels, Session 3** • 3b. **The Politics of Publicity,** Room 1001 • 3c. **AI, Analytic Judgment & the Data-Rich Analyst,** Room 3001

הפאנלים המחקריים
The Academic Panels

מושב ראשון 09:30-11:15
First Session 09:30-11:15

פאנל 1א': מודיעין, ביטחון לאומי והעידן הדיגיטלי, חדר 3001
Panel 1A: Intelligence, National Security and the Digital Age [in Hebrew], Room 3001

יו"ר: **ד"ר נועם אלון**, מכון הרכבי לחקר המודיעין

"סוכן כפול": הרעלת סוכני בינה מלאכותית כאיום על הביטחון הלאומי

עו"ד חופית וסרמן-רוזן, אוניברסיטת תל אביב

סוכני בינה מלאכותית - מערכות ממוחשבות המסוגלות לתכנן, להחליט ולפעול תוך מעורבות אנושית מינימלית - הופכים במהירות לחלק מהתשתית הארגונית, הכלכלית והביטחונית של מדינות וארגונים. מאמר זה מתמקד בסיכון מתפתח המוכר כהרעלת סוכני בינה מלאכותית, קרי מניפולציה זדונית של הזיכרון, הכלים או המידע שעליהם מסתמך הסוכן, שמטרתה להופכו ל"סוכן כפול" ללא ידיעתו - גורם הפועל למען תוקף, בעודו נחזה ואף "מאמין" שהוא משרת נאמנה את המשתמש שהפעיל אותו. המאמר טוען כי בשל האוטונומיה, השימוש בכלים חיצוניים והזיכרון ארוך הטווח המאפיינים סוכני בינה מלאכותית, הרעלתם חמורה בהיקפה ובתוצאותיה מהרעלת מודל שפה "גרידא", והופכת מאיום על דיוק הפלט לאיום תפעולי-מערכתי על הארגון כולו. לאחר סקירת התופעה והשלכותיה, לרבות בהקשרי בטחון לאומי, מציע המאמר לבחון התמודדות עם הסיכון דרך הפריזמה של דיני יחסי שולח-שליח, ובפרט שלושת עמודי התווך שלהם: הסכמה, שליטה ונאמנות. בכוחה של פריזמה זו לתמוך באימוץ כלים לעיצוב מוסדי של מנגנוני בקרה על סוכני בינה מלאכותית וסכנת הרעלתם, בכפוף להתאמות המתחייבות מן הפער המהותי בין סוכנים אנושיים לסוכנים מלאכותיים.

כיצד הדיגיטל משנה את הפעילות החשאית?

שרון טל, מכון הרכבי לחקר המודיעין

התווך החשאי הקלאסי, שהתבסס לאורך דורות על הסתרה אנושית פיזית, יצירת סיפורי כיסוי ובידוד מערכתי, עובר בעידן הדיגיטלי טרנספורמציה מהותית. בעידן שבו המרחב הציבורי מרושת בחיישנים ביומטריים, מצלמות חכמות וכלי בינה מלאכותית (AI) המאפשרים ניתוח רטרואקטיבי של עקבות דיגיטליות, אי-נראות הפכה לבלתי אפשרית, ואף לחשודה בפני עצמה. המאמר מצביע על ארבע תמורות מבניות של החשאיות המודרנית: שחיקת המונופול המדינתי על יכולות הריגול והסייבר, וכניסת שחקנים תת-מדינתיים (ארגוני טרור ופשע) לצד קבלנים עסקיים פרטיים; מעבר מהסתרת זהות פיזית לבניית זהויות סינטטיות המחקות חתימה דיגיטלית טבעית ואותנטית לאורך זמן; ניצול מרחב הסייבר כאזור ביניים אפור של "מלחמה מתמדת ללא מלחמה"; ופיזור איום החשיפה על פני ציר זמן מתמשך (לפני, במהלך ושנים אחרי הפעולה) במקום ברגע הביצוע בלבד. מתוך ההבנות האלה, המאמר מראה כי החשאיות המודרנית אינה עוד שאלה של גילוי או הסתרה, אלא ניהול פערי ידיעה ושליטה במשמעות של המידע הנגלה. לתובנה זו מתלוות דרישות ארגוניות, תהליכיות ואופרטיביות מגופי המודיעין המעוניינים לפעול באופן חשאי במגרש המשחקים החדש.

הנכסים הדיגיטליים כמימד חדש באתגרי המודיעין המשטרתי והביטחון הלאומי

נצ"מ דודי קץ, סגן ראש חטיבת המודיעין במשטרת ישראל

הדיון הציבורי והמשפטי סביב פעילות פיננסית במטבעות קריפטוגרפיים נוטה להתמקד במרחבי הרגולציה, המיסוי וכלי האכיפה הפליליים. אולם, קריאה מעמיקה של המציאות המשתנה - ובראשה השימוש הגובר בתשתיות קריפטו בלתי מפוקחות על ידי ארגוני פשיעה, גורמי טרור ומדינות אויב - חושפת פער פרדיגמטי עמוק בין קצב התפתחות האיום לבין קצב המענה המדינתי. המאמר מציע מסגרת תיאורטית חדשנית המרחיבה את מושג ה"שטח המת" או הספר ללא משילות (Spaces Ungoverned) מהממד הגיאוגרפי והחברתי אל הממד הדיגיטלי. באמצעות מודל אמפירי המבוסס על ניתוח כתבי אישום תקדימיים בישראל, המאמר משרטט את ארבע שכבות שרשרת הערך הקריפטוגרפית הפלילית: המרה, הסתרה, הפצה והפעלה; ומראה כיצד תשתית זו משרתת במקביל שלוש רמות של איום ביטחוני-אסטרטגי: טרור פנים-ארצי, ממשק עם אויב חיצוני וריגול ישיר.באמצעות בחינה של הניסיון הבין-לאומי, המחקר מראה שישראל אינה מצליחה לטפל באופן מערכתי בתופעה לא בשל היעדר כלים ויכולות, אלא בשל הגדרה שגויה של הבעיה. לאור זאת, המאמר מציע ארכיטקטורה לאומית-מוסדית חדשה, המגדירה את שרשרת הערך הקריפטוגרפית כאיום קיומי-מערכתי-לאומי, ובראשה הקמת כוח משימה לאומי משולב.

סכנות השימוש המצוין בבינה מלאכותית בליבת עבודת המודיעין

ענבל קארו, מכון הרכבי לחקר המודיעין וג'וינט ישראל

שילוב מודלי שפה גדולים (LLMs) בעבודת המודיעין נמצא בחיתוליו. היכולות החדשות שהמודלים הללו מציעים משלבים הזדמנויות וסיכונים. המאמר מציב אזהרה מפני סכנה עמוקה ואינהרנטית דווקא כאשר המערכות פועלות היטב. הסכנה נובעת מכך שהכלים משנים באופן מהותי את אופן הכתיבה, עלולים להחליש את אופן החשיבה המקצועית ואת מנגנוני הערעור והוויכוח המרכיבים את המקצוע המודיעיני, וכן הם משנים את מאפייני המומחיות וההתמחות של התפקידנים השונים. הניתוח מתפתח בארבעה צירים: קריאה/הערכה; מגוון חשיבה; ויכוח/בקרה; הכשרה. בכל אחד מהצירים נבחנים השינויים והסיכונים הנובעים דווקא משימוש מצוין ויעיל במודלים: יצירת תוצרים מהוקצעים המייצרים דימוי שגוי של איכות, אך בפועל נשענים על תשתית ראייתית רעועה; הכנסת הטיות סמויות (כמו נטייה מוגברת לקוהרנטיות ורציונליזציה), שיטוח סתירות בין מקורות, ואחידות לשונית ומחשבתית המשתיקה קולות חריגים; שחיקת מנגנוני הבקרה האנושית בשל "הטיית אוטומציה"; ופגיעה במסלול ההכשרה השולייתי (Unskilling), המונעת מאנליסטים צעירים רכישת מומחיות ואינטואיציה.מתוך השוואה לדיסציפלינות משיקות (אקדמיה ורפואה), המאמר מציע שורת אסטרטגיות לצמצום הסיכון (Mitigations), ומציע לעצב מחדש את ההטמעה הטכנולוגית כך שתשמר במכוון נקודות חיכוך, מחלוקת מקצועית ושיקול דעת אנושי, המהווים את היסוד המרכזי של הבינה המודיעינית.

Panel 1B: Blind Spots in the National Threat Picture, Room 2001

Chair & discussant: Col. (Ret.) Miri Eisin, Reichman University

Beyond the Blind Spot: Reframing Political Intelligence After October 7

Irina Tsukerman, The Washington Outsider Center for Information Warfare

The October 7, 2023 terrorist attacks exposed operational failures within Israel's intelligence architecture alongside deeper weaknesses in political intelligence assessment. This paper examines how Israeli strategic analysis misread regional normalization trends before the attacks, particularly assumptions surrounding the Abraham Accords, prospective Saudi normalization, Gulf economic integration, and expanding anti-Iran alignment. These developments were increasingly interpreted as evidence of a stabilizing regional order and diminishing salience of the Palestinian issue. Simultaneously, Israeli assessments underestimated the extent to which Hamas, Iran, and aligned non-state actors viewed normalization as a threat to their ideological legitimacy and regional influence.

Drawing on theories of cognitive bias, securitization, organizational groupthink, and networked intelligence, the paper analyzes how political assumptions shaped threat interpretation regarding Gaza, Iran, and regional dynamics. Using discourse analysis, comparative case studies, and open-source intelligence evaluation, the research explores how private sector analysts, civil society actors, and decentralized knowledge networks identified political and social indicators that remained marginal within formal intelligence structures.

Know Your Partner: An Israeli Perspective

Dr. Ehud Golan, Institute for Maritime Policy and Strategy (MPS)

Intelligence organizations traditionally focus on the enemy - gathering intelligence and studying the states that pose a threat to the country and may go to war against it. However, a surprise on the part of a nation's ally or partner can also have far-U. reaching implications. A warning about relying on an unreliable partner was issued in the Bible by Assyrian King Sennacherib to Hezekiah, King of Judah, who rebelled against Assyria: "You are relying on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which enters and punctures the palm of anyone who leans on it" (Isaiah 36:6)

In recent years, Israel signed the "Abraham Accords" and joined CENTCOM, this expanded and deepened Israel's security relations with moderate Arab countries. In the "Swords of Iron" war, Israel was assisted for its defense by a coalition led by the U.S. Operation "Epic Fury" was a joint military operation with the U.S against Iran.

What is the role of intelligence regarding partners? This article examines the unique limitations, challenges, and dilemmas that arise when intelligence organizations focus on partners rather than adversaries. It analyzes issues related to intelligence collection, assessment, intelligence-policy relations.

History as a Tool for Intelligence Work - The Israeli Case

Omri Adomi, University of Haifa

Studying the history and culture of an adversary is an essential tool for achieving a deeper comprehension of both the opponent and their perception of oneself. With the notable exception of works concerning Palestinian organizations, Israeli historical writing exhibits a scarcity of literature regarding regional rivals while sometimes, not always, focusing on their leaders. However, this was not always the case. This research demonstrates how Israeli scholars and practitioners wrote or translated works concerning "the other side" to foster strategic insight. Furthermore, historical analyses of past conflicts were frequently examined from the Arab perspective, illuminating enemy doctrine, practical field implementation, and operational planning. Such inquiries ultimately shed light on how Israel is viewed - its perceived strengths and weaknesses. Ultimately, history remains a vital component in understanding the enemy and yields valuable lessons crucial for intelligence analysis.

In my research I will show how very little Israelis learn about their potential rivals, especially from the operational and tactical level.

Jewish Terrorism in the West Bank: A Blind Spot in Assessing Threats to Israel's National Security

Dr. Avner Barnea, University of Haifa

Internal threats have not been formally integrated into Israel's national security doctrine. While the Israeli Military Intelligence (IMI) is responsible for the Israeli national intelligence assessment and handles external threats, internal threat assessments are managed by the Israel Security Agency (ISA). The ISA, due to pressure from extreme right political actors, has neglected its responsibility to prevent Jewish terror. This negligence creates hazardous blind spots in national intelligence and poses an immediate and grave threat to Israel's national security, potentially resulting in a Palestinian uprising.

Panel 1C: Intelligence Cultures & the Profession, Room 1001

Chair & discussant: Brig. Gen. (res.) Dr. Itai Shapira, Johns Hopkins University

Coalition Building and Intelligence Cooperation between Greece and Israel

Prof. John M. Nomikos, Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS)

The intelligence traditions of Greece and Israel are quite different. The article focuses on the idiosyncrasies of the Greek Intelligence Community and describes the intelligence reforms that took place in the Greek Intelligence Service (NIS-EYP). It offers recommendations on supporting Greece-Israel intelligence sharing collaboration on preventing security threats in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean regions.

Do Better Intelligence Studies Make Better Intelligence Services? The Intelligence-Academia Nexus

Prof. Shlomo Shpiro, Bar-Ilan University

While the field of intelligence studies is expanding rapidly in academia all over the world, its interaction with the practitioner side, i.e. national intelligence services, is still vague and undefined. This paper examines the nexus and interaction between intelligence studies, on the one side, and intelligence services, on the other, and provides observations on the benefits and pitfalls of intelligence studies for the practical application of intelligence.

HUMINT Under Cultural Pressure: Rethinking Training for Non-Western Espionage and Culturally Adaptive Intelligence Threats

Dr. Anastasios-Nikolaos Kanellopoulos, Athens University of Economics and Business
and **Nikolaos-Nikitas Moulios,** Coventry University

This paper addresses a growing challenge for intelligence organizations operating under strategic, methodological, and cultural pressure: the gap between largely Western models of HUMINT training and the increasingly diverse practices of non-Western espionage. While intelligence education has developed significantly in areas such as technical collection, and artificial intelligence, cultural intelligence remains underdeveloped. It is often treated as an auxiliary skill rather than as a core component of operational readiness and counterintelligence. The paper argues that existing HUMINT training models often assume Western concepts of individual motivation, rational choice, persuasion, loyalty, and risk. These assumptions may be insufficient when intelligence officers confront espionage practices shaped by different historical, ideological, religious, familial, communal, and organizational traditions. Non-Western intelligence activity may rely on relationship-based recruitment and long-term influence cultivation. By linking cultural intelligence to the broader question of intelligence under pressure, the paper highlights the risks created when agencies face adversaries whose methods do not conform to their own institutional assumptions.

Intelligence Education for the Next Generation in an Era of Complexity, Technology and Media Exposure

Dr. Orit Miller Katav, Ariel University

Intelligence systems around the world are currently facing a dual challenge: coping with a saturated, dynamic and manipulative information space, in which many parties are flooded with information, sometimes real and critical, and sometimes false and deceptive, along with the need to train a new generation of intelligence personnel capable of operating within this reality in a professional, ethical and safe manner. The research will focus on three main dimensions: intelligence information literacy: developing the ability to distinguish between reliable information and media noise, identifying disinformation, and understanding the impact of algorithms and social networks on alert and giving processes. The second: ethics and law in the digital age: examining the limits of the operation of intelligence systems when personal information becomes intelligence material, and the law has difficulty keeping pace with technological development. The third: stopping information leakage and maintaining the secret system at the level of information security in a breached media space: Analyze the phenomenon of unintentional exposures by civilians, soldiers, and employees, and propose an educational model to prevent harm to national security through education for personal responsibility and awareness of publicity risks.

מושב שני 11:30-13:00
Second Session 11:30-13:00

Panel 2A: Democratic Oversight Under Pressure, Room 2001
Chair & discussant: Prof (Emeritus). Menachem Hofnung, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Politics of Intelligence and Uncomfortable Co-Habitations
Dr. Diana Popa, Red Sky 4

With national security remaining in the remit of sovereign states, in networked structures, overarching legislation, by definition adopted at the political level of the supra-structure can become conflictual with national level priorities and interests, resulting in further sharpening of the tensions between the intelligence community and the political sphere. Large disparities between operational practices, profiles and ways of working, and complexity of regulatory frameworks are observed, with peer to peer transactions in the intelligence field not necessarily replicated in the corresponding political realm. In the name of the democratic exercise of oversight and ministerial accountability of the intelligence activity, collisions between the operational efficiency and strategic interests of the intelligence and security fields and political accountability arise. Complex oversight can become a vulnerability when having the possibility to look into the work of the services but not falling under the ministerial responsibility for international cooperation. The intelligence filed and political realm at times observe confronting views over "need to know" insight into means and methods, streaming from internal and international political accountability.

The Four Horsemen of Populism and the Defence of Democratic Intelligence
Dr. Ofek Riemer, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
and Dr. Ehud Eiran, University of Haifa

Across a growing number of democratic systems, intelligence agencies are operating under sustained political strain from populist leaders. Yet the implications of populism for intelligence organizations remain underexplored. This, despite their central role in democratic security governance and foreign policymaking. This article argues that populism undermines democratic intelligence through four mutually reinforcing mechanisms: the systematic sidelining of intelligence from decision-making; politicization and institutional capture; adversarial and inverted security agendas that erode expertise and warning capacity; and the securitization of domestic opposition. Building on intelligence studies and the populism literature, the article reconceptualizes intelligence not merely as a policy-support function but as a democratic public good. It advances institutional design recommendations aimed at resilience rather than insulation, including functional differentiation between assessment and operations, strengthened oversight and selective transparency, pluralized expertise, and limited non-majoritarian protections. The objective is not to depoliticize intelligence, but to preserve analytic integrity and institutional friction long enough for democratic correction to remain possible.

The Public and the Secret State - Measuring Citizens' Attitudes towards Intelligence Services
Stefanie Kirchweger, Bar-Ilan University, University of Innsbruck
and Dr. Franz Eder, University of Innsbruck

The tension between national security intelligence and the values of liberal democracy lies at the core of Intelligence Studies. To what extent are citizens willing to accept trade-offs between security and civil liberties? Despite recent studies, we still know relatively little about public attitudes toward intelligence services and their activities, and there is no comprehensive survey instrument to measure them. This article addresses these gaps by introducing a survey instrument, making it publicly available, and applying it to the case of Austria. The instrument rests on five interdependent pillars: (1) citizens' knowledge of intelligence agencies, their mandates, and capabilities, and the sources of that knowledge; (2) citizens' trust in these agencies; (3) the conditions under which citizens are willing to accept trade-offs between security and civil liberties; (4) the forms and degree of oversight that citizens deem necessary; and (5) citizens' willingness to allow intelligence agencies to share information internationally, and with whom.

Intelligence-Policy Relations under Political Pressure: Institutional Independence and State-Building in Fragile African States

Aromeo James Sworo Sekwat, University of Dar es Salaam

Intelligence institutions are expected to provide objective assessments that inform policymaking while maintaining professional independence. In fragile African states, however, intelligence-policy relations are often shaped by political interference, weak institutions, and the legacies of armed conflict. This paper examines how sustained political pressure influences intelligence institutions, using South Sudan as the principal case with comparative insights from selected African post-conflict states.

The paper argues that persistent executive interference produces intelligence capture—the subordination of intelligence institutions to partisan political interests through politicised appointments, manipulation of intelligence assessments, and weakened oversight. These dynamics undermine analytical independence, erode public trust, and privilege regime security over national security.

Drawing on a qualitative comparative case study based on documentary analysis and legal and policy frameworks, the paper contributes to Intelligence Studies by demonstrating that institutional independence and effective democratic oversight are essential for credible intelligence, resilient state institutions, and sustainable state-building in fragile political environments.

Panel 2B: Cognitive Warfare & the Contested Information Environment, Room 3001

Chair & Discussant: Dr. Ron Schleifer, Ariel University

The Role of Cognition in Information Conflict: Democratic Resilience and Intelligence Assessment Beyond 'Cognitive Warfare'

Josef Kohlmaier, University of Graz

Debates on 'cognitive warfare' risk turning a mechanism into a domain, obscuring how information operations degrade decision integrity. This article reconceptualises cognition as a conversion layer through which contested informational inputs become judgement, collective action, and authoritative settlement. These processes are not directly controllable but predictably exploitable via manipulation of the information environment and its infrastructure. The article (i) specifies five conversion gates (attention, credibility, ambiguity, coordination, procedural acceptance), (ii) maps concept families onto campaign cycles, and (iii) develops a practitioner workflow linking techniques to assessment and integrity-preserving countermeasures. The strategic implication: democratic resilience rests on hardening decision-conversion conditions, not pursuing 'cognitive superiority'.

Towards a Cultural Intelligence Analysis (CULINT) Framework for Analyzing Terrorist Communication

Dr. Yaen Yaacov Sofer, Bar-Ilan University; Prof. Noa Aharony, Bar-Ilan University; and Dr. Gal Yavetz, Bar-Ilan University

Digital communication has transformed intelligence collection but increased the challenge of interpreting culturally embedded meaning. While AI and computational analytics detect patterns and classify content, they often overlook the religious, linguistic, rhetorical, and symbolic context of terrorist communication. This paper proposes Cultural Intelligence Analysis (CULINT) as a conceptual framework integrating computational analytics with culturally informed interpretation. The framework is illustrated through a mixed-method study of 6,307 Telegram posts from 63 official and affiliated channels associated with Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, West Bank local organizations, al-Qaeda, and ISIS, complemented by expert interviews. The findings show that religious references, rhetorical structures, symbolic language, emojis, hashtags, visual motifs, and platform-specific communication patterns function as intelligence indicators revealing organizational identity, ideological positioning, audience targeting, strategic adaptation, and operational priorities. The study introduces CULINT as a new analytical layer that extends AI with contextual interpretation, providing a scalable foundation for intelligence analysis in digitally saturated environments.

Protecting Democracy, Undermining Trust? Intelligence Responses to Foreign Electoral Influence: The Romanian Case

Larisa-Nicoleta Patrașcu, Agora Center for Democracy and Mihai-Vlad Turcu, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest

Foreign intelligence services increasingly seek political change by shaping the informational environment in which citizens choose their leaders. Algorithmic amplification, covert proxies, cyber-enabled influence and the exploitation of domestic cleavages allow external actors to affect electoral preferences while preserving plausible deniability. This creates a counterintelligence dilemma: institutions must expose foreign influence without turning classified intelligence into an opaque source of political authority.

This paper asks how intelligence-based responses to foreign electoral influence can protect democratic processes without weakening public trust. It develops the concept of an intelligence legitimacy gap: the distance between classified assessments and the publicly verifiable justification required for exceptional electoral measures. The argument combines comparative analysis with an in-depth case study of Romania's annulled 2024 presidential election. Using qualitative process tracing, it examines declassified assessments, constitutional adjudication, institutional communication and public-trust data. It argues that distrust is most likely when disclosure is delayed, attribution remains uncertain, contestability is limited and post-decision explanations are insufficient. The findings are relevant to future elections and counterintelligence planning.

Panel 2C: Constructing the Boundaries of Early Warning, Room 1001

Chair & discussant: Dr. Netanel Flamer, Bar-Ilan University

From Thinkability to Warnability: The Epistemic Limits of Early Warning

Shira Barbibay-Shaham, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Early-warning scholarship offers rich explanations for warning failure, including cognitive biases, organizational culture, and intelligence analysis. Less attention has been paid to an earlier stage: how intelligence organizations construct threat-reference frameworks that determine which futures become thinkable, and therefore warnable.

Drawing on forty interviews with former Israeli intelligence professionals and post-October 7 military inquiries, this paper examines how intelligence communities construct the epistemic boundaries of early warning. It identifies two forms of epistemic conservatism. Some threats are anticipated but calibrated too narrowly, causing organizations to underestimate their scale, simultaneity, or operational innovation. Others remain outside the threat-reference framework altogether, bounded out by familiar experience, local history, and reassuring assumptions about organizational performance. Alternative repertoires of violence, lessons from comparable conflicts, and scenarios of institutional failure may consequently remain beyond professional thinkability.

Building on Jennifer Mitzen's concept of unthinkability, the paper argues that warning failures originate not only in collection or analysis, but also in the institutional construction of thinkability itself. When excluded scenarios materialize, their consequences extend beyond intelligence surprise: unforeseen forms of violence may reshape the battlefield, alter the strategic meaning of an attack, and influence the trajectory of the ensuing campaign.

The Forest Unseen for the Trees: Frontline War Rooms and Epistemic Filtering in Warning Failure

Prof. Ayelet Harel, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
and **Shir Daphna-Tekoah,** Ashkelon Academic College

This paper examines the warning failure preceding the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack on Israel through the case of women soldiers serving in frontline war rooms along the Gaza border. Drawing on a unique dataset of over sixty interviews with frontline soldiers, commanders, and bereaved family members, it traces how repeated observational data, irregularities, and frontline alerts were produced and transmitted in the months preceding the attack yet did not coalesce into a recognized warning.

Situated within scholarship on strategic surprise, intelligence warning, and feminist security studies, the research conceptualizes this dynamic as epistemic filtering: a process through which available and credible data are downgraded when they conflict with dominant assumptions embedded in organizational hierarchies.

No country is immune to strategic surprise or major warning failures. The case analyzed here offers a rare glimpse into frontline women soldiers' perspectives and contributes to broader debates on how institutions interpret signals under uncertainty. While frontline war rooms were not the only point of failure, and gender was not the sole factor, the findings illuminate how critical knowledge generated closest to unfolding events may fail to receive adequate institutional recognition or action.

Buying Quiet, Losing Sight: How Concessions to Militant Groups Reshape Intelligence Cooperation Between States (A Case of Israeli-Egyptian Cooperation, 2018-2023)

Aviv Hagar, IBEI (Barcelona Institute of International Studies)

States often manage militant groups through concessions rather than coercion. This talk asks what such arrangements do to a state's intelligence cooperation with its partners, a second-order effect the literature has largely left unexamined.

The argument is developed through a within-dyad comparison of Israeli-Egyptian intelligence cooperation between 2018 and 2023, across two domains of the same liaison relationship: Wilayat Sinai and Hamas in Gaza. In Sinai, Egyptian intelligence translated into sustained operational coordination and a campaign that concluded in January 2023. In Gaza, Egyptian warnings of an impending escalation were transmitted but produced no preventive response. Why did the same channel produce opposite outcomes? Treating cooperation as three stages, sharing, valuation and response, shows that sharing remained active while valuation and response diverged. As a plausibility probe, I argue the divergence stems in part from Israel's Qatar-mediated arrangement, which reinforced the assessment that Hamas was deterred and led Egyptian warnings to be discounted. No equivalent instrument applied in Sinai.

An active liaison channel does not by itself ensure effective cooperation: a state's own policy toward an adversary can shape how it receives a partner's warning about that adversary. This opens two agendas: whether the mechanism generalises beyond buying quiet to other cases of managing non-state actors, and whether the cooperation-failure relationship varies across a wider comparative matrix.

מושב שלישי 15:30-17:00

Third Session 15:30-17:00

Panel 3B: The Politics of Publicity, Room 1001

Chair & discussant: Dr. Ofek Riemer, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

A Grammar of Exposure: Intelligence Diplomacy and the Politics of Publicity

Jeremie Renous, Université Aix-Marseille

Secrecy is routinely presented as a structuring principle of intelligence work. Len Scott goes so far as to make it the very foundation of the intelligence services' institutional identity. The scholarship has built extensively on that premise: intelligence becomes visible only through mechanisms of leaks, declassification, or oversight. What this framing does not account for, however, is the growing practice of publicization by intelligence services of the diplomatic activities they are carrying out by themselves on behalf on the state. These practices are often made public through communiqués announcing meetings between agency directors, photographs released by the communication units of intelligence services, briefings given to the press. This diplomatic function is today staged as much as it is concealed.

Based on a corpus of institutional communication by American and Israeli intelligence services, this presentation argues that mediatization has become a constitutive dimension of intelligence diplomacy. This exposure of diplomatic activities is governed by identifiable patterns: what is shown and what is withheld, at which stage of a negotiation, in whose name, and to which audiences. Reconstructing that grammar of exposure sheds light on the evolution of the politics of intelligence by offering a more accurate account of contemporary practices.

Weaponised Medical Intelligence (MEDINT): Contested Epistemic Space and the Erosion of Analytical Trust

Eddie Chaloner, King's College London and Huw Dylan, King's College London

MEDINT has traditionally been a supporting discipline, informing force protection, biodefence, and leader assessment. This paper argues an underexamined category demands attention: Weaponised MEDINT where medical data, diagnosis, or clinical authority serves strategic or political ends.

Building on broader typology of Direct, Indirect, and Weaponised MEDINT, this paper focuses on the third category's three sub-modes: fabrication, selective deployment, and manufacture of contested epistemic space. Case studies include Soviet punitive psychiatry and the Bukovsky dossiers, the Navalny poisoning, casualty-figure contestation in Gaza, competing narratives of COVID-19 origin, and Havana Syndrome.

Across these cases, medical claims function less as evidence to be assessed than as terrain to be fought over. Diagnostic uncertainty is exploited to stall consensus, discredit institutions, or manufacture doubt. Drawing on securitisation and agnotology theory, the paper argues Weaponised MEDINT creates pressure on analytical independence: not simply politicised intelligence, but deliberate erosion of the evidentiary ground on which MEDINT judgements are made. This has implications for sustaining credibility when medical facts become sites of contestation — a case study in the conference's broader theme of intelligence institutions operating under compounding epistemic pressure.

From Vulnerability Management to Exposure Management: The Evolving Role of Intelligence in the CTEM Era

Yonatan Keller, Independent Researcher

The article describes the evolving role of Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) within the framework of Continuous Threat Exposure Management (CTEM) - a systemic and proactive approach to managing an organization's exposure to threats. Unlike traditional vulnerability management, this new concept seeks to understand the organization's exposure posture as a whole: which assets are exposed, to what extent they can be exploited, what their business criticalities are, which security controls are in place, and whether attack paths to critical assets exist. The goal is not to "fix everything," but rather to identify, manage, and reduce risk. Within this framework, the role of CTI also changes. Intelligence shifts from an effort focused primarily on the "Red" side - understanding the adversary, their identity, intentions, and capabilities - to a systemic component of the entire defensive posture. It is no longer required merely to explain who might attack and h

Panel 3C: AI, Analytic Judgment & the Data-Rich Analyst, Room 3001

Chair & discussant: Prof. Amit Sheniak, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Discussant: Dr. Barry A. Zulauf, Georgetown University

AI, Bias, and Intelligence Culture: A Cross-National Experimental Study of Analyst Simulations in the UK, the Netherlands, and Israel

Dr. Ofer Guterman, Harkabi Institute & The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Dr. Ofek Riemer, Ben Gurion University; Dr. Kristian Gustafson, Brunel University; Dr. Steven Wagner, Brunel University; and Gideon Manger, Netherlands Defence Academy

This study examines whether artificial intelligence can identify and mitigate cognitive biases in intelligence analysis, and whether AI-mediated analytic traces can reveal cross-national differences in intelligence culture. The research will compare 45-60 experienced intelligence analysts from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Israel, each completing the same context-rich hypothetical assessment. Participants will produce an initial intelligence product without AI assistance, receive AI-generated feedback on their reasoning and writing, and then revise or redraft their assessment.

The study contributes to research on intelligence culture, analytic standards, and human-AI collaboration by combining process data, product evaluation, and cross-national experimental comparison.

Too Much Information: How Does Access to Raw Data Change Intelligence Process and Expertise - and What Needs to Be Done to Address It?

Gal Hagi, Harkabi Institute

The “Ma’aseh Aman” (Aman’s Enterprise) process, led by the Head of the Military Intelligence Directorate (Aman), Aviv Kochavi in 2011, created a new concept for the organization information systems. The new approach sought to “break the intelligence cycle” and “tear down the walls” between collection and research. A unified network infrastructure, automated translation engines and advanced data mining capabilities were integrated, creating a reality in which ”the analyst was empowered with collection capability”- including access to raw materials and their translation - as a mean to “refine and optimize her work”.

However, the big questions raised by this accessibility, including the potential harm to analysts’ professional identity and the validity of intelligence products based on independent extraction - remained unresolved even a decade after that revolution. Over the years, various organizational, professional, technological and methodological answers were examined - and eventually integrated into the “Diamond Model,” which defined four distinct integration models between collection and research. These included multidisciplinary teams; information systems that create transparency between collection and analytic processes; “data products” jointly defined and accessible to researchers; and analysts’ ability to locate and process the information relevant to them from the “pool” of raw data . Nevertheless, Aman never managed to turn this model into a unified, managed concept. Nor did it formulate the needed updates in role definitions, work processes, and organizational digital architecture.

This study will address the professional implications of providing access to raw data to intelligence officers and analysts. It will emphasize on the three main challenges created by this accessibility: information overload, professionalism, and product validity. The research will examine current answers given to these challenges, identify additional solutions that can be developed, and explore what changes and adaptations must be made to the intelligence process and research disciplines to realize these solutions.

AI as a Cognitive Partner in Intelligence Analysis: New Findings from Empirical Experimentation

Brig. Gen. (Res.) Itai Brun, Tel Aviv University

The paper presents findings from three years of empirical research conducted following the publication of “A Seat at the Table: Harnessing ChatGPT to Intelligence Analysis” (Itai Brun and Te-

hilla Shwartz Altshuler, 2023). The study draws on the iterative development and evaluation of a dedicated AI agent ("Modi"). It examines three complementary roles through which AI supports intelligence analysts in addressing gaps in understanding reality that lead to strategic surprise. The paper adopts the premise that intelligence failures frequently result not from a lack of information, but from the inability to recognize "signals from reality" - information that challenges the leading hypothesis yet receives insufficient attention. The paper proposes a methodological framework in which AI serves three complementary roles: A Seat at the Table, where AI identifies anomalies and contradictions during analytical discussions; Signals Simulator, which develops analysts' sensitivity to signals through dynamic simulations and reflective debriefing; and Methodological Co-Pilot, which assists analysts in addressing methodological questions arising throughout the analysis process. Finally, the paper discusses the organizational and cultural preconditions for AI to serve as a cognitive partner in intelligence analysis and briefly considers approaches beyond the cognitive-partner model.

Human Judgment Under Algorithmic Pressure: Safeguarding Analytical Independence in AI-Augmented Intelligence Analysis

Dumitru-Catalin Vasile, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest

Artificial intelligence offers intelligence analysts major advantages in speed, data processing, and pattern recognition. However, it also creates risks for human judgment, including automation bias, opacity, and excessive reliance on persuasive AI-generated outputs.

Drawing on my practitioner experience with AI systems in the public sector and my research on defense, foreign policy, and democratic governance, I examine how intelligence organizations can use AI without weakening analytical independence. I ask when AI supports analysts and when it begins to influence or replace their professional judgment.

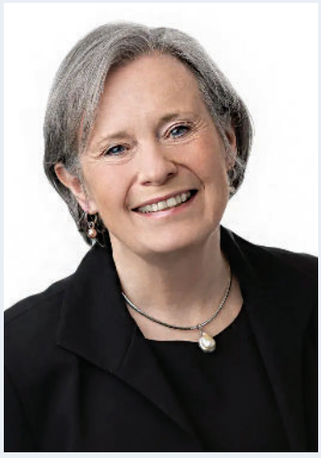
Using a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach, I analyze intelligence doctrines, policy documents, and responsible AI governance frameworks. I propose four safeguards: meaningful human control, transparent documentation of AI contributions, procedures for challenging algorithmic outputs, and clear responsibility for final assessments.

I argue that oversight requires more than formal human approval. Analysts must retain the expertise, authority, and institutional protection needed to question automated systems and politically preferred conclusions. I conclude that analytical independence in the AI era depends as much on organizational culture and accountability as on technical performance.

על הדוברות והדוברים (לפי סדר ההופעה)
About the Speakers (by order of appearance)



Dr. Barry A. Zulauf is President Emeritus of the International Association for Intelligence Education (IAFIE) and an adjunct professor of applied intelligence at Georgetown University. Until November 2025 he served as the U.S. Defense Intelligence Officer for Counternarcotics, Transnational Organized Crime, and Threat Finance. His previous positions include Analytic Ombudsman for the U.S. Intelligence Community, Chief of the Solutions Division at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), and the first ODNI Chair at the National Intelligence University. He led the establishment of the Drug Enforcement Administration's intelligence component and is a retired Naval Intelligence officer. He holds a PhD in international relations from Indiana University.



Ms. Katherine Hibbs Pherson is President of the International Association for Intelligence Education (IAFIE) and CEO of Globalytica and of the VEXAS Global Foundation. She teaches structured analytic techniques and critical thinking to analysts in government, academia, and the private sector. She retired from the Central Intelligence Agency in 2000 after a 27-year career in intelligence and security analysis and resource management, during which she headed the Director of Central Intelligence's Center for Security Evaluation. She is co-author, with the late Randolph H. Pherson, of Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence (4th ed., 2025), and a recipient of the CIA's Distinguished Career Intelligence Medal.