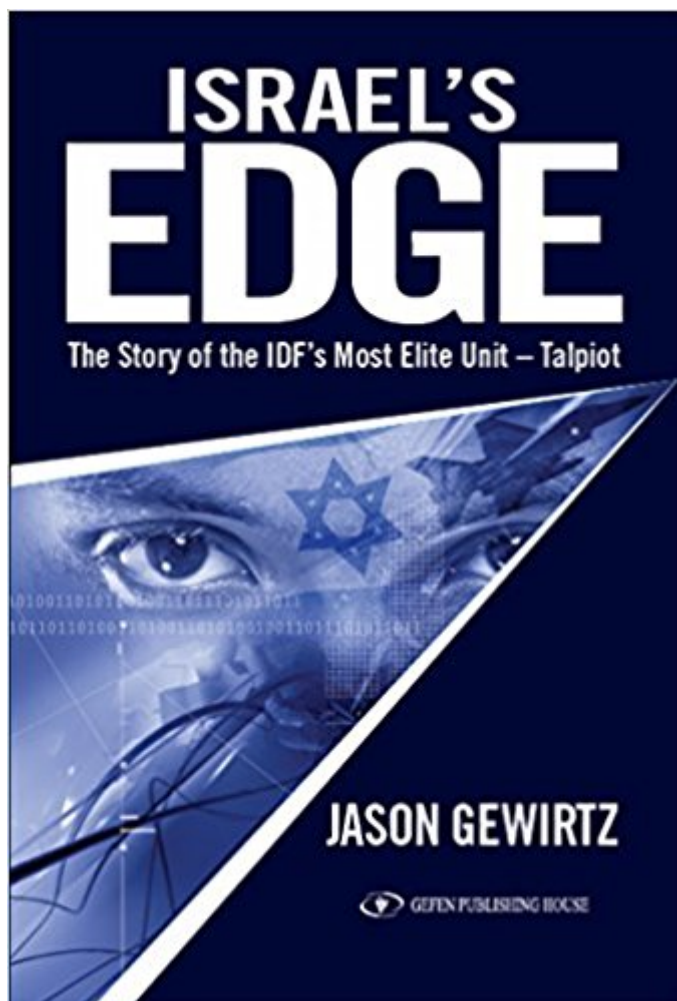


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# Israel's Edge: The Story Of The IDF's Most Elite Unit - Talpiot



## Synopsis

How will Israel keep its strategic edge over an increasingly dangerous Iran? Israel has been preparing for this day by creating a special and secretive IDF unit called Talpiot. Instead of being trained to fight, the few soldiers each year selected for Talpiot are taught how to think. In order to join this unit they have to commit to being in the army for ten years, rather than the three years a normal soldier serves. Talpiots are taught advanced level physics, math and computer science as they train with soldiers from every other branch of the IDF. The result: young men and women become research and development machines. Talpiots have developed battle ready weapons that only Israel's top military officers and political leaders know about. They have also dramatically improved much of the weapons already in Israel's arsenal. Talpiot has been tasked with keeping Israel a generation ahead of a rapidly strengthening and technologically capable Iran. Talpiots contribute to all of the areas that will be most important to the IDF as Iran becomes even more powerful including missile technology, anti-missile defense, cyber-warfare, intelligence, satellite technology and high powered imaging. Talpiot soldiers have also been a major factor in the never ending fight against Israel's other enemies and many have left the R&D lab to fly fighter planes, serve in the field as commanders of elite army ground units and at sea commanding Israel's fleet of naval ships. After leaving the army, Talpiots have become a major force in the Israeli economy, developing some of Israel's most famous and powerful companies. Israel's Edge contains dozens of interviews with Talpiot graduates and some of the early founders of the program. It explains Talpiot's highly successful recruiting methods and discloses many of the secrets of the program's success. The book also profiles some of the most successful businesses founded by Talpiot graduates including CheckPoint, Compugen, Anobit, recently bought by Apple, and XIV, recently bought by IBM. No other military unit has had more of an impact on the State of Israel and no other unit will have more of an impact in the years ahead. The soldiers of Talpiot are truly unsung heroes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

...you, the alumni of Talpiot, have stood at the forefront of the Israeli security-technology industry making... you are the flagship of the research and development systems of our security. --Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Israel's Edge,...sheds light on the strategically vital and secretive Talpiot IDF program, which trains select groups of soldiers in how to conduct cutting edge defense research and development. Asked why he (Jason Gewirtz) chose to write about this particular topic, the CNBC executive said, There is no other program like Talpiot in the world and it has had an enormous impact on Israel. It is also benefiting the world in a very positive way. ...Each Talpiot graduate can make a one percent difference in a conflict or battle. They do it through technology, of course, but it is that technological advantage that gives Israel the edge it needs. Israel must defend itself through a qualitative advantage and that is what Talpiot gives Israel the tools for this qualitative advantage that is so necessary for Israel, and the Jewish people's survival. --Yaakov Lappin, Jerusalem Post Throughout the years, Talpiot has included and established a wide variety of unique and amazing tools that have been able to multiply the efficiency and strength of the intelligence services and military might of the IDF immeasurably. --Former Prime Minister and former Defense Minister, Ehud Barak Israel's Edge is a well written look at how a new and vital department of the Israeli military came into being and its huge impact on the military as well as society. I learned a lot about a country that I have always been interested in and the detailed descriptions of wars, historic meetings, and momentous decisions rang true. It is obvious from the first page that Jason Gewirtz researched this topic thoroughly. I read quite a lot of military books, both fiction and non-fiction, but I had never heard of Talpiot, which is now Israel's most elite unit. --Ray Simmons, Readers Favorite 5-Star Review There is a new book out that is a must read for Israel fans and military buffs alike. Talpiot has been tasked with keeping Israel a generation ahead of a rapidly strengthening and technologically capable Iran, making this book extremely timely. There's something in here for history buffs, military watchers, people interested in technology and education and of course anyone interested in Israel and the Middle East. --Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi, The Times of Israel Today, the program's contributions and importance are proven and felt more than ever.--Former Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi The Talpiot unit accentuates one of the most eminent sources of strength of the

State of Israel: its human capital. --President Shimon Peres CyberArc, a great company. CheckPoint as well. Both come from the Israel Defense Forces. CNBC Producer Jason Gewirtz coming out with a great book, Israel's Edge, about these kinds of companies that come from the IDF. It's a natural tie, that's why these stocks have done so well. --Jim Cramer, CNBC If you went on a recruiting trip with Talpiot officers you'd find 16 and 17 year olds who are simply amazing. It's like the NBA going after young ballplayers...It's actually also a good business book, part education book and part military book...The disaster of the Yom Kippur really gave birth to Talpiot and this push for modern day technology. --Nachum Segal: JM in the AM This book is on a unique subject and an outstanding achievement. --IDF Brigadier General Uzi Eilam, former Director of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission This is a very important and interesting book. If you want to know how Israel's military works, this is the book to read. Go out and get it. --Larry Kudlow, Nationally-syndicated talk radio host Talpiot, the so-called Mensa of Israeli military intelligence and innovation. --Jonathan Mark, Associate Editor, Jewish Week A comprehensive look at what many consider to be the most elite unit in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)...It also explains Talpiot's highly successful recruiting methods and discloses many of the secrets of the program's success... No other military unit has had more of an impact on the State of Israel and no other unit will have more of an impact in the years ahead. --Matzav.com Israel's Edge is a mesmerizing story of how Israel gained an edge over its far bigger enemies. It explains how the IDF became invincible. This book tells the story of a heroic people who have survived against all odds and produced the best minds. It is a must-read if you want to understand Israel and the IDF. --The Washington book Review

As executive producer for the business network CNBC, Jason Gewirtz has covered Israel and Israeli business including working for the network from northern Israel during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, and following Warren Buffett to the country when the billionaire investor bought the metalworking company ISCAR, his first foreign purchase. Jason has also covered the attacks from Gaza on southern Israeli towns like Sderot and examined the economic impact. He produced Beyond the Barrel: The Race to Fuel the Future which was shot on five continents and was largely focused on several Israeli-born energy technologies. He currently produces Power Lunch, which is broadcast live every day jointly from CNBC's global headquarters and the New York Stock Exchange and can be viewed all over the world.

As a Talpiot graduate (Class IX) I was extremely impressed with the breadth and depth of research concerning the Talpiot program as covered by the author in this book. I can personally attest to the

accuracy of many of the events outlined in the book having lived through them and having shaped others. Talpiot is one of the crown achievements of the IDF. In a way it is a typical Israeli story: define an outrageous goal and then over deliver on it by a mile. Yes, life during the program was hard - My class (Talpiot IX) displayed the following waterfall: 8,000 applicants (all come from the top of their high school) -> 29 candidates -> 19 graduates after 3 years of the toughest academic studies and a most grueling military training. This by far was a defining period in my life, but more importantly a defining initiative for the IDF. The book is such a great read for anyone who is interesting in learning more about a milestone chapter in the history of modern Israel.

ISRAEL'S EDGE: THE STORY OF THE IDF'S MOST ELITE UNIT - TALPIOT written by Jason Gewirtz and published by Gefen Publishing House. IDF is the Israel Defense Force. Talpiot is a Hebrew word meaning tall turrets and/or sturdy strongholds. MAFAT is the acronym for Administration for the Development of Weapons and Technological Infrastructure established in the early 1980s by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and used as the umbrella for all things R&D in the Israeli Military. The Yom Kippur War (October 1973) caught Israel a bit off guard. There was much soul-searching among military and government leaders, as well as fear and anxiety. "How did this fiasco happen?" Israel asked itself. In the years before the war, Israel was engaged in constant war and military preparedness. Also, many Arab nations were receiving mass shipments of arms from the Soviet Union. There were also new weapons and technology being used against Israel. Israel was caught napping, so to speak. Two professors at Hebrew University, Professor Shaul Yatziv and Professor Felix Dothan, wanted to give Israel its edge back. Their idea or goal was to rearm Israel with the best and the brightest young minds who would work exclusively on research and development for the IDF. It took several years to get the government and especially the IDF behind their idea. In 1977, Menachem Begin became Prime Minister and Rafael Eitan was appointed chief of staff. They were both committed to change and an elite educated unit in the army. Talpiot was finally born. Many organizational details had to be worked out - the recruitment process; the admissions process; curriculum; teachers; examinations; program structure and the partnership and the cooperation of the IDF and MAFAT. The first recruiting began for Talpiot and the program was developed. The first Talpiot class reported in the summer of 1979. The rest is history. This book is very interesting reading. The access points were very helpful - a good cover picture; an introduction; a table of contents (20 chapters); a timeline

(which I found very helpful); a salute from the author and acknowledgements. I especially liked chapter 20: The Future; the timeline; many comments about the Israeli educational system and education, in general; examples of the Talpiot graduate network; all the many accomplishments of the Talpiot participants; Unit 8200 and the many innovations that developed from Professor Yatziv and Professor Dothan's original plan. ISRAEL'S EDGE is very well-written, thoroughly researched and an interesting and educational read. I would heartily recommend this book

Although the book is more like a documentary I found it educational and interesting. It does give the reader some understanding of why such a small country has proven to be so resourceful and inventive on so many fronts. I enjoyed the read.

Very well written, makes a complicated and complex subject very understandable and interesting. Looks in depth into the inter-workings of how Israel uses its bright young soldiers to invent and utilize technology that keeps it at the forefront of military and industrial advancement to protect the country and benefit society.

One star deducted for leaving this brain scar, kindle location 47: "...paratroopers, with their distinctive red boots that symbolize to everyone just how tough you are..." The symbol of the paratrooper is the red beret, not red boots. A second star deducted for shallow explication of the educational concepts involved. An introduction to the work of Avi Poleg, a central figure in this book, is available as a chapter in "Applied Practice for Educators of Gifted and Able Learners."

An information work of genius that describes the strength of brain power over tanks, missiles, rockets, forces and rogue leaders. To understand the threats, read "Living to Die" by C. Nurick, Chapter 7.

Informative of Israel's efforts to develop more effective defensive technologies and methods.

Excellent and highly readable history of a program I knew nothing about. Gewirtz makes a convincing case that Talpiot is an important part of Israel's success. Even if it isn't, learning about the program was fascinating on its own regard. Indeed, this is as much a book about education as about Israeli military history.

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