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**“MAN, I FEEL LIKE A WOMAN”: RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM MEETS GENDER POLITICS IN
ISRAEL AND PALESTINE**

by

Shayna Zamkanei

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through Political Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts at the
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ABSTRACT

The study of fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has often diminished women's political participation and deemed it a force that causes or hastens moderation. Contrary to this claim, women's involvement in Gush Emunim and Hamas occurred after their respective groups' moderation, and demonstrated strong ideological commitment to their movements' original tenets. As both groups became institutionalized, they were forced to moderate their stances toward their expansionist territorial goals. These concessions restricted the political and military freedoms of the leaderships. Criticizing the men's political ineffectiveness, exemplary women assumed more prominent positions within their movements by advocating actions that were in line with their movements' founding principles. Initially lacking the support of their male counterparts, these women, unconstrained by their movements' institutionalization, forced the formal leadership of Gush Emunim and Hamas to accept their new roles in the quests for settlement expansion and military jihad respectively.

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So why not be poetic and wry?
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As I whined and I whelped,
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To withhold all the sighing,
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Lest she find me unfair,
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And working our hides,
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Although I confess,
While I digress,
I'm no poet, which they won't find bad.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The successful militarization of ethnoreligious societies, such as Israel and Palestine, entails instilling the conviction in both men and women that men's "own manhood will be fully validated only if they perform as soldiers either in the state's military or in insurgent autonomous or quasi-autonomous forces."¹ In these wars, some argue that it is women who suffer the most, "united around their identities as mothers."² The existing literature, however, misconstrues women's experiences in nationalist struggles and religious conflicts by depicting women as maternal pacifists. This reductive approach ultimately fails to appreciate women's active roles in militant religious-nationalist fundamentalist groups.

On both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, women's participation in acts of aggression in the nationalist struggle has been discursively cloaked with overtly 'feminine' symbols: Palestinian fighters become roses, female Israel Defense Forces soldiers embody charm, suicide bombers personify purity and settlers exemplify fashion savvy.³ Labelling women as flowers, and stressing their purity and beauty, masks women's violence as perpetrators. It underscores their vulnerability, sensuality and victimhood. This imagery contradicts the fact that many Israeli and Palestinian women are as militant and willing to engage in political violence as their male counterparts.⁴ By highlighting the seemingly paradoxical political activities of women who perpetrate patriarchal and violent religious-nationalist systems, this study addresses the need for scholarship in this area.

Using the cases of Gush Emunim and Hamas, this work argues that after fundamentalist religious-nationalist groups become moderate, their female members challenge gender norms within the parameters of the organizations' discourses. Due to their institutionalization, these movements make pragmatic choices that do not reflect their original ideological tenets. These changes are indicative of political and ideological moderation. Nevertheless, after this moderation has occurred, some women continue to adhere to the original ideology and act accordingly. In demonstrating their commitment to the original and more 'extreme' political and gender ideologies, women challenge some of their movements' gender expectations.

In each nation, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict shapes national identity and informs perceptions of gender. These identities, in turn, affect women's political, economic and social status. Moreover, how one perceives gender helps mould one's national identity.⁵ An understanding of women's social and political relationships with men, as well as prevalent attitudes toward masculinity and femininity, are essential to fully comprehending religious-nationalist politics in Israel and Palestine. As this chapter makes evident, a discussion of women's involvement in Gush Emunim and Hamas necessarily entails contextualizing women's actions within the discourses of maternal pacifism, nationalism, religion, fundamentalism and feminism. Together, these discourses form a multiple critique framework, in which this work is best situated.

Women and Pacifism

Women have sometimes used their identities as mothers as a platform on which to protest war, thereby contributing to the myth that women are innately more peaceful than

men.⁶ Among the strong proponents of this myth is Sara Ruddick, who questions “in the glare of war’s destruction and the light of women’s hope, what mother would hesitate to ‘cast her lot’ with peacemakers.”⁷ In her pivotal book Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace, Ruddick asserts that “women devote the thinking and practices of motherhood to peacekeeping and world repair rather than to war making and world destruction.”⁸ Women’s preference for peace over war, however, may not arise from an aversion to destruction, but a competition for resources. Mark Tessler and Ina Warriner suggest that “women might be more predisposed than men toward the peaceful resolution of international conflicts because they are the principal users of social programs that compete with the military for governmental funds.”⁹ In either case, maternal thinkers are still depicted as pacifists.¹⁰

The portrayal of women as pacifists relies upon linking motherhood with protectiveness, morality, nurture and love. First, women’s potentiality for motherhood is relied upon by society, which instills in women a moral obligation to preserve life. “Maternal thinking,” explains Nancy Scheper-Hughes, “begins in a stance of *protectiveness*,” where protectiveness is equated with pacifism.¹¹ Second, unlike men, women are credited with the inability to divorce their actions from “the moral and human significance of their actions.”¹² This moral obligation, as Carol Gilligan argues, is directed toward “the concrete needs of particular individuals in the private realms of necessity,” rather than in the public sphere.¹³ Third, their role as nurturers is believed to encourage women to be more compromising. Conversely, men are perceived to be less accommodating and therefore more violent. Since they are seldom nurturers, their negotiation and co-operation skills are less developed than those of women. For this

reason, maternal feminists claim that men are more concerned with “hierarchy, hegemony, and justice in intercommunal and international relations” than they are with compromise.¹⁴

Women’s capability for compromise, along with protectiveness, morality and nurture, foster a quality that, as Ruddick argues, ultimately renders women pacifist: love. Viewed as the antithesis of violence, “preservative love is opposed in its fundamental values to military strategy” and seeks to ensure the well-being of all people.¹⁵ For Ruddick,

the contradiction between military destruction and preservative love is obvious. Seen by “the patient eye of love” in the light of maternal humility, military fantasies of violent control, defense, and domination seem like garish nightmares that threaten a living world. Military endeavours endanger what a mother seeks to preserve, wasting the bodies, insulting the sensibilities, threatening the sanity of beings she has treasured.¹⁶

Learned by daughters from their mothers, preservative love and maternal thinking counter militarism and death with motherhood, birth and “feminine connection.”¹⁷ A mother-warrior, therefore, is paradoxical because

when a maternal thinking takes upon itself the critical perspective of a feminist standpoint, it reveals a contradiction between mothering and war. Mothering begins in birth and promises life; military thinking justifies organized, deliberate deaths. A mother preserves the bodies, nurtures the psychic growth, and disciplines the conscience of children. . . Mothers protect children who are at risk; the military risks the children mothers protect.¹⁸

Thus, preservative love is often portrayed as diametrically opposed to military destruction.

Women are not only labelled as preservers, but also as non-combatants, while men play the role of designated combatants.¹⁹ Mothers, wives and sisters, observes Jean Bethke Elshtain, “are designated noncombatants because of the part they play in the reproductive process; because women have been linked symbolically to images of

succoring nonviolence; because men have had a long history of warrioring and policing.”²⁰ Women who vicariously crave heroism through the military actions of their men, and who sacrifice far more than what is demanded of them, are labeled “aggressive mother[s].”²¹ Yet in spite of their strong support, “aggressive mothers” still remain non-combatants.

Many Israeli and Palestinian women, particularly those affiliated with the movements Gush Emunim and Hamas, might be deemed “aggressive mothers” for their overwhelming support for their husbands’ and sons’ military involvement. More often, however, they and other Israeli and Palestinian are labelled by maternal thinkers as “women of sorrow. . . meant to accept their suffering, protesting only against enemy aggressors.”²² Their public mourning becomes a site of empowerment, according to Ruddick: “Women who act *as women* in public spaces transform the passions of attachment and loss into political action, transform the women of sorrow from icon to agent.”²³ These “women of sorrow,” exhausted from mourning the loss of their children, use ‘private’ suffering as a ‘public’ platform for political protest.²⁴

Beliefs in women’s preservative love, innate pacifism and inherent capacities for motherhood and nurture offer distressingly faulty explanations for women’s involvement in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements.²⁵ In the past, critiques of these supposedly innate traits have pointed to the exclusion of childless women from the ‘maternal thinking’ viewpoint; they are simply ignored.²⁶ Also neglected are the “aggressive mothers,” who may promote the very actions that give rise to the “women of sorrow,” but who may also join the “women of sorrow” in using public mourning for political ends. Clearly, different concerns can motivate women’s political protest.

Alternatively, the aforementioned inherent capacities attributed to women may actually encourage women to become violent, especially in cases where women's protection of their own children can only be ensured by attacking the enemies' children. For this reason, Tessler and Warriner caution that "an emphasis on motherhood and maternal thinking reduces women to unidimensional actors and obscures the diversity of the factors that influence their attitudes and behaviour."²⁷ Nevertheless, scholars may consider women one-dimensional political actors for reasons other than motherhood.

For Tami Amanda Jacoby, women are unified actors not because they are mothers, but because they are products of conflict zones that foster subjugation:

Women and men struggle together in zones of conflict for rights and representation; however, women often encounter structures of patriarchal authority – in the national movement, the military, the private sphere, and through the discourses and practices of dominant belief systems. In these structures, women are either domesticated or rendered subordinate to men. As a result, a cross-cultural component of women's organizing in zones of conflict is women's contestation of gendered norms and practices within their own societies in order to promote the liberation of women alongside the liberation of society as a whole.²⁸

Jacoby challenges the idea of a global sisterhood, which she argues is a "Western feminist notion linked to the perceived coincidence between women and pacifism in the field of international relations."²⁹ In this contestation, however, Jacoby fails to indicate when women's attempts to destabilize patriarchal structures are most likely to occur. The timing of women's subversion of gender norms within a conflict raises questions as to why women do not act immediately, whether their actions are the result of male absence due to war, whether they are forced to appropriate alternative roles because of war, and whether they allow nationalist aspirations to overshadow 'women's' concerns. In the Middle East, where the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has embodied six decades of war and social change, when and how women contest gender norms is significant; so too is the

question of which women and which norms, and the perspective from which the problems are studied.

Past Approaches to Women's Issues in the Middle East

The unleashing of male aggression in the Middle East has traditionally been examined from an androcentric perspective. Both male and female scholars have habitually excluded women and gender issues from political accounts of the Middle East.³⁰ Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker, in their book A Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East, outline different approaches to women's issues in the Middle East. These methodologies include highlighting the contributions of exceptional women and their impact, and using the frameworks of political and institutional history, social and economic history, cultural history and discourse, law, property, family and/or religion.³¹

In nationalist narratives, men have used gender differences to emphasize citizenship and the quest for nationalist fulfillment as "masculine prerogatives defined in contrast to the feminine."³² This diminishes the role of women in the nationalist cause.³³ Feminism and women's issues compete with the nationalist agenda outlined by men and consequently, women are expected to demonstrate their devotion to the nationalist cause by deferring gender concerns until after liberation is achieved. For example, numerous Algerian women fought for nationalist objectives without overtly campaigning for women's rights, mistakenly believing that Algerian men would address women's issues after independence. Explaining this deferral, Algerian feminist Marie-Aimée Hélie-Lucas stated:

Most of the women [at the symposium]. . . take for granted that they belong to a country, a nation, which does not have to prove its existence; it allows for transcending the concept of nation, and criticizing it. It has not been allowed for [Algerian women].³⁴

Much feminist literature has also negated women's roles as nationalist actors.³⁵ By viewing nationalist identity as a solely masculine construct that entirely oppresses women, feminist writers erase the presence of the female actors who harbour strong nationalist, but not feminist, affiliations, such as some of the women of Gush Emunim and Hamas.³⁶

For this reason, "femininity as a concept and women as actors need to be made the objects of analytical curiosity when we are trying to make sense of international political processes."³⁷ Feminist literature continues to ignore the limited number of women who solely identify with nationalism, despite recent recognition in mainstream literature that women and gender roles have always coexisted with other marginalized groups in nationalist struggles. Furthermore, very little attention has been paid to politically active women who fully identify with fundamentalist religious-nationalist causes.³⁸ In other words, women who advocate these fundamentalist systems are absent from Israeli-Palestinian fundamentalist religious-nationalist discourse. The dearth of literature mendaciously promotes the myth that religious-nationalist women never enter the public realm.³⁹ As the next section explains, when women are discussed, they are depicted as "victims of fundamentalist belief systems rather than active participants."⁴⁰

Religion, Fundamentalism and Women

Israelis and Palestinians share a decades-long history that is marked by intensive struggle for the same land. Not surprisingly, parallel religious or fundamentalist groups have emerged in both communities. Moreover, two of these groups even share the same

belief structure: both sanctify the land and rigidly believe their possession of it is divinely ordained. Astonishingly, until now, these two movements have never been contrasted. Neither their ideologies and processes of moderation, nor the political activities of their women, have received academic attention in comparative literature.⁴¹

On the Israeli side, the Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) became the forefront settlement movement. Viewing retention of the Land of Israel as a religious commandment, Gush Emunim deems surrendering any land as serious an offence to God as forfeiting one's life.⁴² Similarly, on the Palestinian side, *Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya* (Islamic Resistance Movement) or Hamas, considers the British Mandatory Palestine as land entrusted by Allah to all Muslims. Here, too, control over the land is a religious obligation. This goal also sanctions violence and if necessary, the sacrifice of one's life.⁴³ In order to ensure victory in the seemingly eternal conflict over the same land, each movement reinforces the need for its group's cohesiveness.

Marty and Appleby define fundamentalism as a "strategy, or set of strategies by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinctive identity as a people or group."⁴⁴ The need for the preservation of the group's distinctiveness often affects women's status within the groups, for as the symbolic cultural bearers who reproduce the nation, women "are therefore in need of protection."⁴⁵ Consequently, scholars describe fundamentalism as simultaneously modern, vis-à-vis politics and the economy, and anti-modern, because of the emphasis on women's familial obligations in the protected private sphere.⁴⁶ This dichotomization, however, ignores the instances in which women have extended their roles within the family and the private sphere to the political realm. In instances where women are required to be politically active, they are expected to do so

while adhering to traditional gender norms.⁴⁷ Women must preserve tradition at any cost, while men may change according to the environment.⁴⁸

Others have pointed to fundamentalism as a “backlash against women’s participation in the public sphere.”⁴⁹ In this view, the group’s identity is retained through the preservation of women’s roles. For instance, modifications in familial structure, caused by women working outside the home, or by perceived gains vis-à-vis their independence, including property, inheritance and citizenship rights and freedoms, are changes that can result in subsequent restricted access to the public sphere.⁵⁰ This does not imply that non-fundamentalist men do not react at all: rather, they may confront the issues differently. Nor does it assume that women abstain from participating in the backlashes. For example, in many regions, well-educated women are consistently the most eager to assume religious roles in ideologically patriarchal religions.⁵¹ If fundamentalism is indeed a “protest against the assault on patriarchal structural principles in the family, economy and politics,” as Martin Riesebrodt argues, then it must cease to be treated as a gender-neutral term.⁵²

There exists what Janet Bauer deems a “men’s studies” of fundamentalism, which includes studying the movement’s creation, its male leader, its followers’ socioeconomic backgrounds, its recruitment methods, its ideology and its public political persona. In each of these instances, minimal attention is paid to individuals’ perceptions, attitudes and feelings. Furthermore, as a result of this distance, the experiences of these individuals can become generalized and essentialized to the extent that the ideological commitment of women is questioned.⁵³ This begs the question of whether the paradox of women’s

choice to immerse themselves in a religion or movement that “oppresses” them exists only from an outsider’s viewpoint.

Accordingly, an undertaking of a “women’s studies” of fundamentalism, in which the emphasis is placed on agency rather than structure, is imperative. This is not to suggest that women are unaffected by factors such as class, socioeconomic conditions, political structures or policies; rather, in order to determine whether and to what degree women gain autonomy in religious fundamentalist movements, these factors are not as relevant as those based on ethnography. A “women’s studies” approach entails a methodological adjustment, in which the woman’s standpoint is the centre of reference.⁵⁴ In fundamentalist discourse, for example, the meaning of the term *anomie* (alienation) varies between the sexes. For “men’s studies,” it is “used to convey emotions of dissatisfaction and displacement, presumed from particular external conditions, often with little reference to actual individuals’ perceptions, while ‘women’s studies’ more frequently talks of ‘life crises,’ with a focus on personal responses to those conditions.”⁵⁵ Significantly, the relationships in which individuals negotiate their ideological and social positions with themselves and with others become interwoven in the political fabric of fundamentalism. Thus, the incorporation of “women’s studies” in the study of fundamentalist discourse is essential to fully understanding fundamentalism.

The goals of movements such as Gush Emunim and Hamas include “attempts to reconstruct the fundamentals of an ideational system in modern society, in accordance with political and ideological positions taken in relation to current issues and discourses.”⁵⁶ Nearly all fundamentalist movements aspire to return to an era in which people were perceived as content, perhaps as a result of everybody fulfilling their

“proper” roles within society.⁵⁷ Women are therefore relegated to the private or ‘maternal’ realm, within which women’s political actions can be contextualized and deconstructed for feminist content. Consensus is lacking, however, in how the actions of women should be interpreted. These actions they take place within an environment where women are ‘double-bound’ to the maternalism found within both religious and nationalist contexts, where “militarized motherhood. . . also requires marginalizing or suppressing alternative notions of motherhood.”⁵⁸

Motherhood is militarized in both instances and the womb is consequently conceived as a means by which one can increase national security through the creation of potential fighters.⁵⁹ Both Israeli and Palestinian women “have had to consider and reconsider their understandings of mothering’s relationships to militarism, to children, to nationalism, and to the state and the would-be state.”⁶⁰ Nevertheless, there have been significant instances in which women have occupied public space for the sake of the movement’s religiopolitical goals: as settlers, settlement founders, politicians and suicide bombers. These actions draw attention to the tension between women’s private and public roles, and whether women’s actions reinforce or subvert normative notions of motherhood and femininity. Through their actions in the public domain, Gush Emunim and Hamas women challenge some of their movements’ gender expectations, but through actions that cannot be immediately labelled feminist.

Feminism: A Problematic Term

Feminism not only motivates or is motivated by political movements, it also seeks to explain how sex-based expectations create unjust circumstances primarily, though not

exclusively, for women.⁶¹ In her work The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir attributes the root of women's subordinate status as follows: "Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being."⁶² Miriam Cooke asserts that feminism "provides a cross-cultural prism through which to identify moments of *awareness* that something is wrong in the expectations for women's treatment or behaviour, of *rejection* of such expectations, and of *activism* to effect some kind of change"⁶³ The expectations that women identify as unjust are often the products of patriarchal systems.

Privileging men and elders over women, minorities, and men of low socioeconomic status, patriarchy is

a system for monopolizing resources, maintaining kinship status, reproducing the patriline, controlling women's sexuality and bodies, legitimizing violence, regulating education to reproduce the roles and relations socialized in the family, focusing healthcare exclusively on maternity and procreation, and limiting women's access to the labour market as well as defining the types of work in which women may engage.⁶⁴

The patriarchal systems found today in the Middle East are the products of "the intersection between the colonial and indigenous domain of state and political processes."⁶⁵ Feminism's goal of destabilizing the hegemony of patriarchal hierarchies is to allow other non-patriarchal relationships to exist.⁶⁶ By pushing for women's equal access to opportunities and by encouraging women to shape their own destinies, feminist movements seek to realize this goal.⁶⁷ While this understanding of patriarchy helps situate women's position in both Israeli and Palestinian societies, it remains "unsuitable as a universal framework for analyzing women's oppression" as citizens.⁶⁸

Because of the nationalist element of Gush Emunim and Hamas, women's actions must also be analyzed within citizenship discourse. Social contract theory, which

emerged with the modern nation-state and became the “compulsory political form for the rest of the world,” stipulates that in return for certain freedoms granted by the state, the citizen relinquishes natural freedom.⁶⁹ John Locke explains that

men being, as has been said, by nature, all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent. The only way, whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community, for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it.⁷⁰

Within the social contract narrative, this theory was seen as eclipsing the familial patriarchy with the creation of constitutional government, which embodies civil rights, laws, freedoms and the concept of a detached individual.⁷¹ According to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, this individual relinquishes some of his power to a higher authority: “Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will; and we as a body receive each member as an individual part of the whole.”⁷² The question of who constitutes an individual has caught the attention of some feminists, who assert that without modification, this theory cannot be applied to feminism for three reasons.

First, the citizen of contract theory is an individual male property owner. Throughout the theory’s evolution, from John Locke to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, women and members of certain minorities could not hold property.⁷³ For this reason, Carole Pateman has deemed the modern state a “fraternal patriarchy.”⁷⁴ Moreover, the exclusively masculine character of the citizen supports a second criticism: not all citizens are equal and not all individuals are citizens. Scholars approach the problem of the unequal standing of the citizen in a variety of ways. Liberal feminist thought attempts to

incorporate women into the existing state framework.⁷⁵ Marxist criticism, however, asserts that the liberal approach only benefits élite women, leaving the issue of gendered citizenship largely unaddressed. The majority of women, along with working-class and minority men, are not granted full citizenship and therefore, cannot fully participate as political citizens.⁷⁶ This predicament can only be remedied by a transformation of the class structure.

Utilizing both Marxist and liberal critiques, other feminists cite patriarchy and class as equally oppressive tools that reinforce each other and are thus equally responsible for women's oppression.⁷⁷ Alongside this critique is yet another that regards the issue of class as embedded within a greater patriarchal framework. This approach is common among some Palestinian feminists, who view the economic emancipation of women as a precondition for the eradication of patriarchy. Although each concern addresses the unequal standing of the female citizen, consensus is clearly lacking regarding the main form of oppression for Palestinian, and to a lesser extent Israeli, women.

The last of these three critiques of social contract theory, and the most pertinent when discussing the Middle East, is that the social contract overcomes patriarchy only in the civil arena, not in the private sphere. This division is not always viewed along gendered lines. For instance, Jürgen Habermas does not explicitly use sex as a means of dividing the public and private spheres. Alternatively, he argues that the two spheres are products of modernity:

In bourgeois society, over against those areas of action that are systemically integrated in the economy and the state, socially integrated areas of action take the shape of private and public spheres, which stand in a complementary relation to one another. The institutional core of the private sphere is the nuclear family, relieved of productive functions and specialized in tasks of socialization; from the systematic perspective of the economy, it is viewed as the environment of *private households*.

The institutional core of the public sphere comprises communicate networks amplified by a cultural complex. . . From the systemic perspective of the state, the cultural and political public spheres are viewed as the environment relevant to *generating legitimation*.⁷⁸

The public sphere, therefore, embodies social labour and the economic system. The private sphere becomes the locus of socialization, cultural education and raising a family.

Rather than defining actions primarily in terms of the public or private realms, Habermas instead identifies two spheres that he calls system and lifeworld.⁷⁹ The former fuses capitalism and administration, and the latter constitutes the “subsystem that defines the pattern of the social system as a whole.”⁸⁰ Habermas’s lifeworld involves welding the concept of the modern family or private sphere, with the political arena or public sphere. Together, the family and the space in which one can politically participate are responsible for symbolic reproduction. Habermas’s public and private spheres embody contradistinctive attributes. The public is the site of conflict and the family the site of love and freedom, and there can be no overlap between the two sites.⁸¹ Seyla Benhabib observes that Habermas’s theory of system and lifeworld could have been universal had he not assumed a male world and relegated women to a familial role.⁸²

Evidently, Habermas’s implicit gendered division is problematic. Many contemporary feminists draw attention to the biological and gendered division of the public and private spheres, where men are seen as “naturally” occupying the former and women the latter. Because this order is understood as “natural,” women accept, even unconsciously, their subordinate position in the home.⁸³ This division ultimately produces inequality in different realms. In the private realm, using social contract theory as a basis, the economic and social inequalities found in employment contracts are reflected in the sexual inequality articulated in marriage contracts. Both contracts involve exploitation,

and marriage contracts in particular create a “relationship of domination and subordination.”⁸⁴

In the political realm, women are absent, since politics is “public” and women exist in the “private” realm.⁸⁵ Contemporary scholar Hanna Herzog views the public-private division as a “basic cultural mechanism to exclude women from politics.”⁸⁶ This division has been and is still justified biologically. Sex differences between men and women are imbued with social meanings, which are understood as “natural” as the sex differences themselves. Together, the social meanings constitute gender, which refers to the “traits and roles that are defined in the social universe as feminine or masculine and which are therefore human products deriving from social-cultural definitions and are transmitted from one generation to the next through social arrangements.”⁸⁷ Through this socialization process, an individual appropriates not only gender, but also sexual identity. This process is shaped by both religious and legal systems, which themselves are framed within a greater social context. Because this social context influences the ways in which religious and legal systems are perceived, a feminist critique challenges the public-private division and its consequences.⁸⁸

Feminists are divided over the question of whether these consequences would be minimized if the public-private distinction were abolished. Some individuals argue that the public-private distinction must be eradicated, since the division between the two realms is thought to reproduce women’s subordinate status in the private sphere.⁸⁹ In this explanation, in which the public and the private are perceived as completely separate domains, the private sphere is thought not to affect that of the public. Others argue that the private sphere does in fact offer input to the public sphere.⁹⁰ The rationale is that

within the private sphere, individuals are raised and socialized by their families. It is within the private sphere that individuals learn how to be citizens, taking what they learn in the family framework and applying it in the public domain. Conversely, some theorists argue for the retention of the public-private division.⁹¹ They claim that the private sphere is not a prison, but a refuge. Where the public sphere is cold and hostile, the private sphere is warm and welcoming. Merging the two spheres would eradicate the autonomy the individual has within the private sphere, which would be reflected in the political arena.⁹² Gush Emunim and Hamas women demonstrate that the two spheres are not as divisible as social contract theorists suggest.

Mervat Hatem has observed that “political scientists theorized the Middle Eastern state in terms of modernity, tradition, and the struggle between the two.”⁹³ Consequently, gender-related issues are not addressed directly. The fundamental problem in confronting the public-private distinction in a Middle Eastern context is that citizens reside in “several layers of private or semi-private spheres.”⁹⁴ The blurring of the two domains hinges on the citizen’s “universality.” In Western discourse, the citizen of social contract theory is understood as universal and detached from any community.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, as Suad Joseph explains, “notions of relational or a connective self are particularly common in many Middle Eastern countries.”⁹⁶ Unlike the Western social contract male citizen, the Middle Eastern female citizen is not detached from her community.⁹⁷ To a much lesser extent, the male Middle Eastern citizen is also defined by his connection to his community. Despite the multitude of contemporary Middle Eastern family patterns, a commonality among them is that “the intersection of patriarchy and patrilineality increases the range of men with authority over their female counterparts.”⁹⁸ Thus, the

roots of the woman's inequality as a citizen must be found in connective, and not detached, circumstances.

The inequality of the connective citizen can be found in relation to two institutions: religion and family.⁹⁹ Citizenship is shaped by religion, which in the Middle East carries heavy social, cultural, political and legal implications, as Suad Joseph and Susan Slymovics explicate:¹⁰⁰

With the exception of Tunisia and Turkey, family and religion are legally intertwined [in Middle Eastern and North African countries]. Most Arab-Islamic countries defer personal status laws (also called family law) to religious institutions, as does Israel. Laws concerning marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody are under the aegis of the legally recognized religious institutions. There is no civil recourse: no civil marriage, divorce, or inheritance rules.¹⁰¹

Consequently, some scholars "include religious affiliation in their general definitions of nation-states and nationalism in general."¹⁰²

Like religion, the family also provides an entrance into the political community. In Middle Eastern politics, the family, not the individual, is considered by many as the "basic unity of [political] membership."¹⁰³ One's citizenship depends upon one's personal status in the family, as well as the status of the family within society. Because citizenship is dependent upon the family and not the individual alone, patriarchy plays a heavier role than in Western societies in reinforcing women's inequality. Hanita Brand proposes that

in the cultural discourse, *all* women in the area, Jewish and Arab alike, were viewed as belonging to their national groups via membership in families. . . rather than directly, as men were. This in itself opens the possibility of discrimination and exclusion, suggesting that a woman's proper place was in the home, not in the public sphere.

Conversely, a family's upper status within Palestinian society could also allow women to act within the public domain. For example, many of the female heads of Palestinian non-

governmental organizations, especially those relating to human rights, come from established families whose names lend them enough respectability to allow them the political movement denied to women from lesser or non-established families.¹⁰⁴ Brand perceives that for the majority of women, however, the family is an institution that curtails rather than enlarges their political freedom.

In confronting women's lack of participation in the Middle Eastern public sphere, many scholars do not attribute women's absence to the public-private division. For some scholars, the interrelationships among the public domain, the state, and the domestic domain are subordinate to the problem of gender hierarchy.¹⁰⁵ Focusing on the public-private distinction rather than on patriarchy, they argue, slows the process of full citizenship for women. These scholars prefer to address the roles of religion and the family, although these roles can be heavily influenced by a military milieu.

Consequently, the prolonged Israeli-Palestinian conflict has dramatically affected personal status law with regards to women. With religious institutions carrying the sole authority over family law, issues that are especially pertinent to women fall under the jurisdiction of religious, rather than civil, courts. All clerics are male and many feminists deem the religious institution to be a patriarchal hierarchy.¹⁰⁶ In the Middle Eastern context, therefore, the Western citizen becomes a "connective citizen" or "relational self," which – in conjunction with patriarchy – generates "patriarchal relationality."¹⁰⁷ Because of the family's embedded position within this patriarchal relationality, women are often expected to abandon their individual concerns not only for the welfare of the family, but also that of the national community.

In addition to religious institutions, yet another factor that can affect women's citizenship status is a movement's institutionalization. Because democratization and citizenship are narrowly defined in ways that often exclude women, women and gender studies have largely been absent from discourses that examine the institutionalization process, namely democratization transition and frame alignment theories.¹⁰⁸ Issues of social or economic equality have traditionally not informed discussions of political equality, and this is reflected in the definition of citizenship in purely political terms. Consequently, gender and women's issues are peripheral to the discussion.¹⁰⁹ Georgina Waylen draws attention to the neglect of gender studies within institutionalization discourses:

Until recently the bottom-up focus meant that links between grassroots political activity and the wider context, particularly the relationship with political parties and the state, were ignored. Second. . . the majority of writers fail to discuss gender issues, despite the frequent acknowledgment that the majority of participants in popular movements are women. Because women often participate on the basis of the social roles associated with their gendered identities (for example, as mothers and household providers), the analysis of these movements will be incomplete if this is ignored.¹¹⁰

To date, women's political and social participation in the democratization process, often allowing women to gain more political and/or social rights, is thought to signal or encourage a group's moderation.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, their participation does not imply that their concern is with promoting a feminist agenda.

The modern or egalitarian understanding of feminism does not take into account feminists whose goals are not gender specific. Women who advocate maternal feminism seek to infuse the political culture with their own agendas rather than those that seemingly affect all women. For example, many maternal movements are founded on anti-war platforms pertaining to specific conflicts in which their countries are involved.¹¹²

Moreover, women's involvement in movements that are undergoing institutionalization does not guarantee increased rights, for "political cultures intersect with democratic institutions to produce different kinds of connections between the state and civil society, and these in turn can promote or curtail women's involvement in politics."¹¹³ Women's positions along the political spectrum vary, and not all women advance feminist issues, while those who do may disagree over which issues have priority and how they are defined. Therefore, a sophisticated approach is needed to take into account these manifold differences.

A Paradoxical Critique of Gender Discourse

A multiple critique in gender discourse incorporates what a patriarchal framework does not, namely, women's contradictory roles. Religious-nationalist movements recruit women, whose maternal roles form the backbone of the "quest to build a moral society based on the moral family."¹¹⁴ Furthermore, women serve as religious role models and are often better skilled at recruiting others to the movements.¹¹⁵ For these reasons, social and political opportunities arise for women within the religious framework. Conversely, women are restricted to a confined space in which they cannot develop alternative identities, and are denied opportunities outside the religious movement.¹¹⁶ In most cases, even though women may desire to act outside the identity spaces that have been forged for them, they are unlikely to do so. Not only is this a matter of religious fidelity, but many women "believe in the possibility of creating the conditions in which multiple identities, including the religious, can coexist in safety and dignity."¹¹⁷

This coexistence occurs when a “subalterized group can assume its essentialized representations and use them strategically against those who have ascribed them.”¹¹⁸ Women who belong to religious groups that espouse traditional values have, in the past, successfully employed this tactic. For instance, Mary Hegland describes how Shi‘a women in Pakistan typify paradoxical roles, as skilled political workers on the one hand, and submissive, strong and secluded women on the other.¹¹⁹ In actively placing themselves in religious communities, while assuming roles of political activism, women in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements demonstrate that their identities are not fixed, but are the creations of “new, contingent subject position[s].”¹²⁰ In the case of the activist Pakistani Shi‘a women, their promotion of their group’s beliefs, which heavily stress women’s seclusion, also expands their own opportunities usually denied to other Shi‘a women, such as travelling unaccompanied to other communities.¹²¹

Through their work with other women, the activist Shi‘a women’s new contradictory positions in the communities are contingent on their political roles. As these women demonstrate, connecting seemingly dichotomous identities can potentially become a subversive act. Stuart Hall, in discussing how the marginalized place between identities can become a locus for power, explains that

new subjects, new genders, new ethnicities, new regions, and new communities – all hitherto excluded as decentred or subaltern – have emerged and have acquired through struggle, sometimes in very marginalized ways, the means to speak for themselves for the first time. And the discourses of power in our society, the discourses of the dominant regimes, have been certainly threatened by this decentred cultural empowerment of the marginal and the local.¹²²

Like the Shi‘a women, therefore, women in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements can use their religious and nationalist identities to both criticize and transform regional gender discourses.

Miriam Cooke labels this strategy a multiple critique, or “a multilayered discourse that allows them to engage with and criticize the various individuals, institutions, and systems that limit and oppress them while making sure that they are not caught in their own rhetoric.”¹²³ Given the above complexities pertaining to women in religious, nationalist, fundamentalist, feminist and citizenship discourses, women’s activities within Gush Emunim and Hamas are best analysed using the multiple critique framework. The following chapters highlight the dual forms of resistance and engagement by women in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The following chapter outlines the ideological origins of the Bloc of the Faithful, and the movement’s success in establishing settlements through support by local, regional and national administrative bodies. Gush Emunim’s decline in influence and its pragmatic adjustments in the 1980s point to a lessening commitment to the movement’s original aspirations. This occurred years before some women established the Rachelim settlement. These women’s intentions, actions and self-perceptions, as Chapter Three illustrates, reveal the contradictions of their prescribed roles.

Turning to the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), Chapter Four discusses Hamas’s ideology and describes its subsequent modifications, largely the result of the need to secure approval from the Palestinian population. In comparing the periods before and after the signing of the Declaration of Principles, the group’s approach to the possibility of a long-term ceasefire with, and its use of violence against, Israel significantly altered. These changes occurred years before women were actively involved in Hamas’s military and political structures, which Chapter Five examines in further detail.

In chronicling each movement's institutionalization and moderation, this study demonstrates that women's increased political participation is not a moderating force in either movement. Governing this work are the questions of how some women become more active in the public realm after their movement's moderation, why the women's actions appear more extreme than those of their male counterparts and what contradictory motives drive these women's actions. Finally, this study concludes that some women become more politically and publicly assertive toward their movements' original goals upon the realization that their male counterparts, as a result of their movements' moderation, have been rendered politically impotent.

CHAPTER TWO

GUSH EMUNIM AND THE SETTLEMENT ENTERPRISE

In spite of the Palestinian residents and refugees already living in the territories that Israel acquired following the 1967 war, Gush Emunim has always harboured the hope of populating these areas through the creation of settlements like Rachelim. Nira Yuval-Davis is among those who describe Gush Emunim's settlement goal as uncompromising, citing it as

an example of a Zionist fundamentalist group. They initiated a project, which was initially illegal, of Jewish settlement in the Occupied Territories, especially near the Jewish holy places. In their actions, the settlers, many of whom were the product of the Israeli state religious educational system, combined Zionist pioneering myths with religious practice, and produced a new mode of Jewish religion in which the "Land of Israel" gained a cardinal importance; its control and settlement by Jews became a precondition for the arrival of the messiah. Their vision is total, and there is no space in it for any recognition of the national aspirations of the Palestinians, nor any compromise or negotiated peace with the Arabs. Its most extreme wings, however, turned themselves into paramilitary units terrorizing and counter-terrorizing the Palestinians, as well as threatening to resist by force any attempt by Israel to withdraw from the Occupied Territories.¹²⁴

Nevertheless, this chapter counters the erroneous claims of Gush Emunim's (GE) inflexibility by demonstrating that GE moderated as a result of its institutionalization. This process occurred between its formal establishment in 1974, following the disastrous 1973 Yom Kippur War and GE's opposition to the National Religious Party's decision to participate in the centrist government's coalition, and the creation of the Rachelim settlement in late 1991.¹²⁵

During this period, as some GE men accrued political influence and subsequently lost much of it, women were largely absent from formal leadership positions within the movement. Although they supported their husbands' actions throughout GE's

institutionalization, the literature on GE women does not point to women's political involvement outside familial roles.¹²⁶ Only when GE men had lost much of their power within the movement did women emerge as the new pioneers of the settlement movement. Before discussing women's avant-garde approach to settlement creation, it is first necessary to detail GE's institutionalization.¹²⁷

The following pages outline the movement's ideology, which emphasizes the holiness of the Land of Israel. This doctrine explains why, in GE's view, giving up any land, even for the sake of peace, is theoretically impossible. The paper then shifts its focus to the movement's success in establishing settlements in the 1970s and early 1980s. Parallel to these achievements was the increased institutionalization of the movement through the acquisition of support from local, regional and national administrative bodies. This institutionalization became more apparent with the movement's inability to cope effectively in times of internal crisis, particularly when a minority of adherents carried out actions demonstrating their full commitment to the movement's original goals, which were otherwise met with public disapproval. The discovery of the "Jewish Underground" (JU), some of whose members were Gush members or supporters, and GE's subsequent denunciation of the JU's terrorist activities revealed the movement's moderation. Further demonstrating GE's moderation, this chapter concludes with a section highlighting the movement's reaction to the land concessions made by the Israeli government.

Membership and Ideology

Gush Emunim's religious nationalism is an ideology based on traditional messianism, which safeguards the Jewish nation and seeks to realize the full biblical

Zionist dream. Protecting the family and the nation entails military service, a driving principle of GE ideology.¹²⁸ Following their military service, GE men graduate from the best universities in Israel, while women attend post-secondary religious seminaries. Although no formal membership list exists, studies by David Weisburd and Elin Waring in the early 1980s revealed significant information about Gush settlers in Judea and Samaria.¹²⁹ In terms of age, only 10 percent of the settlers were over forty.¹³⁰ Hardly any of the settlers were single, and more than one third of settler couples had four children or more.¹³¹ GE believers therefore tend to be educated, young and family-oriented. Clearly, religious and national importance was and still is placed on the close-knit individual family and the obligation to have children. Within these families, as some scholars observe, men and women have tended to have complimentary roles: traditionally men have been the 'public' representative of the family, while women have been that of the 'private.'¹³² A detailed explanation of their roles, as well as of the adherence of men and women to these expectations, is discussed in the following chapter.

GE's structure is a macrocosm of the familial unit, with Rabbi Abraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook and his son Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook acting as the religious and political parental authorities of the movement. Grasping GE's political motivations entails examining the ideology of these two rabbis, who were important figures in twentieth century religious Zionism and whose beliefs have influenced and transformed the Israeli political milieu.¹³³ Gush Emunim adheres not only to Kookist dogma, but also to the philosophy of *merkaz harav*, a close relationship with one's rabbi.¹³⁴ In instances where a rabbi's approval can encourage members to break civil or criminal law, potentially resulting in civilian death, this close relationship is especially crucial. Neither the

centrality of *merkaz harav* nor the exclusivity of the male leadership has ever been a source of contention for its young family-oriented followers, even after GE became institutionalized in the late 1970s.¹³⁵ The importance of a rabbinic authority in influencing GE activities reappears in the discussion of the JU, but it must be emphasized that the Kook rabbis in particular played a paramount role in determining GE's course of action.

Rabbi A.Y. Kook, or Rav Kook Senior, emphasized "elements of faith, secrecy, unearthly intuition, supernatural illumination, mystery and paradox" in his theology.¹³⁶ Born at the end of the nineteenth century, he witnessed pivotal events in Zionist history. The Balfour declaration, the *aliya* or immigration movements to Israel, and the ploughing of the land were among the prominent events which led him to proclaim that the era of redemption was at hand: "The whole people believes that, following the redemption now beginning before our very eyes, there will be no more exile, and this deep faith is itself the secret of [our] existence."¹³⁷ Like his contemporaries, Kook Sr. believed the messiah would be sent by God and would free the Jews from political subjugation. The world would recognize the uniqueness of the Jewish people while living in an age of peace.

Although this proclamation angered some of his fellow Orthodox rabbis, who were firm believers in Jewish political passivity until the messiah's arrival, he gained the support of the early secular Zionists.¹³⁸ In need of Orthodox approval to legitimize their cause in Europe for an ethnoreligious homeland, the secular Zionists were eager to secure the support of Rav Kook Sr. To justify this alliance, Rav Kook Sr. relied upon his theoretical teachings about the important role of secular Zionists in ushering in the messianic era. The symbiotic relationship persisted until the 1980s, helping GE gain

support from secular Israelis. Kook Sr.'s teachings, in spite of the support they received, were vague and his death in 1935 left many questions about the redemption unanswered.¹³⁹ For example, if the Jews were unique, this alone should have been enough to usher in the messianic era, yet Kook Sr. made the timing of the redemption conditional on the behaviour and moral improvement of the Jewish people.¹⁴⁰ Kook Sr.'s followers turned to his son for clarification. His son, however, applied his father's ideas in a more deterministic way.

Rabbi Z.Y. Kook elucidated his father's theoretical teachings into more pragmatic terms for the secular public. He first equated the holiness of the land itself to that of the people. According to Rav Kook Junior, the biblical term *Am Yisrael*, or the nation/people of Israel, referred not only to the Jewish people, but to the Land of Israel. Having made clear that the two entities were inseparable and equal, he then proclaimed that the redemption could only occur in a full *Eretz Yisrael*. While Rav Kook Jr. did not emphasize this aspect initially, it acquired particular significance after 1967, when Israel gained control of Arab territory.

Israel's post-1967 territories, including the Gaza Strip, Judea and Samaria were included in Kook Jr.'s interpretation of the Land of Israel. His biblical reading of Israel's borders also included large parts of Jordan, Syria and Iraq. Unabashedly, he declared that "all this land [Greater Israel] is ours, absolutely, belonging to all of us; it is non-transferable to others even in part. . . it was promised to us by God, Creator of the World."¹⁴¹ Unlike his father, Kook Jr. did not make these positive historical events contingent on the spiritual transformation of the Jews.¹⁴² The significance of Kook Jr.'s

ideology was an uncompromising stance concerning the Arab territories acquired during the 1967 war.

For religious messianists, the 1967 and 1973 wars further strengthened their desire to retain the land. The wars, especially the 1973 Yom Kippur War, were not viewed as consequences of Israeli military or political strategy; rather, the 1973 war in particular was understood as a desperate attempt by non-Jewish nations to prevent the redemption.¹⁴³ The combination of these three convictions, the equivalence of the Jewish land with the people, the precondition of a full Israel for redemption, and the intervention of non-Jewish nations in Jewish destiny, had implications for personal sacrifice.

For GE members, the acceptance of any land-for-peace proposition was impossible, since the land, people and Torah were equally important; one could not be sacrificed in place of, nor for the sake of, the other. The equivalence of these three constituents alludes to and parallels the concept of *pikuach nefesh*, in which one must channel all efforts into saving the life of another.¹⁴⁴ This law also requires a Jew, under conditions of duress, to forfeit one's life rather than kill another Jew. Rather than transgress the divine prohibitions against idolatry, incest or murder, a Jew must give up his or her life.¹⁴⁵ Kook Jr., however, added yet another instance in which *pikuach nefesh* was applicable. Preventing territorial confiscation by other nations, precluding Israel's relinquishment of acquired territories, and preserving the integrity of Eretz Yisrael now became legitimate reasons for endangering one's life.¹⁴⁶ Yet as the evacuation of the Sinai settlements reveal, as addressed later in this chapter, the unwillingness of GE members to heed to this interpretation of *pikuach nefesh* indicates an ideological shift within the movement. As the next section makes evident, this change in approach

questions not only the necessity of land settlement in the territories, but the supposition of an imminent messianic era.

Land Settlement and Redemption

Gush Emunim's brand of religious nationalism seeks the realization of a national utopia, whose creation is expected during the lifetime of GE members.¹⁴⁷ Despite their belief that the redemption will be experienced not solely by Israel, but by the entire world, GE perceives some nations and individuals as intent on preventing this momentous event.¹⁴⁸ Those persons and countries apply international pressure on Israel to relinquish the territories, thereby jeopardizing Israel's right to the land and its right to full sovereignty. The conflict of interests is understood as a "fierce struggle" and accordingly, the desire to retain the acquired territories is immense.¹⁴⁹

The liberation of Judea and Samara is integral to the messianic redemptive process for several reasons. First, settlement of these territories is believed to hasten salvation by ushering in the messianic era.¹⁵⁰ In establishing settlements in the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip and the heart of the West Bank, GE transformed a political undertaking into an instrument of religious salvation.¹⁵¹ Second, the messiah's arrival and subsequent salvation are conditional on "the Jewish people restor[ing] itself politically by its own actions." Political renewal is therefore linked to the creation of settlements in Judea, Samaria and the Greater Land of Israel.¹⁵² Moreover, control over the entire Land of Israel must be taken as an uncompromising ideology. To accept only part of the land indicates a lack of understanding of the redemptive process.¹⁵³ Finally, even though the integrity of Israel is but the first step in the redemptive process, it is

currently the most important goal. As one GE leader said hopefully, upon achieving this goal, “the entire Jewish people will constitute Gush Emunim.”¹⁵⁴ Thus, Jewish sovereignty over the acquired territories catalyses the messianic process.

The liberation of Judea and Samaria is also vital in the mystical redemptive process. First, political sovereignty over the land will affect the spiritual realms. *Tikkun*, the kabbalistic notion of spiritual healing, will occur at the cosmic level.¹⁵⁵ These changes are universal and in the best interest of all peoples, and are thought to prevent a further decline in morality worldwide. Rabbi Moshe Levinger, the movement’s spiritual leader since GE’s creation, emphasizes the idea that “enforcing the Israeli national will on the Arabs will foster a religious revival among them, eventually to be expressed in their spontaneous desire to join the reconstruction of the Third [Jewish] Temple.”¹⁵⁶ In addition, there remains another mystical aspect that is more heavily emphasized.

GE ideology includes a belief in reincarnation, a conviction not unusual in Judaism, but carrying practical implications. The commandment of settling in the Land of Israel was unstressed by previous Orthodox generations, and therefore not observed in the past lives of GE members. Consequently, this negligence must now be rectified in order for members to take part in the redemption.¹⁵⁷ Living in Israel becomes a means of attaining the spiritual perfection of one’s past life. It is this spiritual fulfillment of a commandment once unobserved that will cause the messiah’s arrival. GE members, however, are more concerned with a contemporary threat to the Jewish people: Western values.

The Rejection of Western Values

While GE co-operates with its secular political allies, it follows the trend of some parallel religious movements, including Hamas, in taking an anti-Western stance.¹⁵⁸ Its members attribute a multitude of social problems, perceived as by-products of Western values, to secular society. These ills include

reckless radical leftism, permissiveness, drug addiction, teenage prostitution, a decline in the work ethic, alienation from one's country, abetting the enemy, emigration, the refusal to do army service in Judea and Samaria, contempt for the spirit of Judaism, juvenile delinquency, corruption, violence, murder, robbery. . . .¹⁵⁹

Not surprisingly, the movement rejects these values, which are viewed as the product of modernity and its emphasis on the individual.¹⁶⁰ For GE members, the individual is but a conduit to fulfilling the divine commandments, such as raising families and settling the land.¹⁶¹ The values of the nation supersede those of the individual and when the two differ for women, the movement's interests must precede women's own fulfilment. From Gush Emunim's perspective, Western values such as "bra-burning" feminism threaten the group's cohesiveness, which relies upon prescribed roles for men and women that are outlined in the following chapter. An emphasis on the unity of the family and the movement helps explain why settlers are willing to live in areas that endanger their families' lives, a theme that is further developed below.

Just as Gush Emunim rejects Western values, so too does it shun some aspects of the Western concept of democracy. GE's stance on democracy is conflicted. On the one hand, GE accepts the validity of the Israeli parliament, particularly because Rav Kook Jr. sanctioned it on Independence Day 1967. To his followers, Kook Jr. called *Medinat Yisrael* (the State of Israel) the "Kingdom of Israel in the Making" and the "Kingdom of

Israel as the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.”¹⁶² The legitimacy of the state and its institutions hinge on their being manifestations of God’s will. On the other hand, the language used to describe the state institutions is monarchical, not democratic.

While Gush Emunim has not articulated an anti-democratic ideology, one cannot assume that it supports democracy.¹⁶³ Rav Kook Jr. declared, “We are commanded by the Bible, not by the government. The Bible overrides the government, it is eternal and this government is temporary and invalid.”¹⁶⁴ In circumstances where settlement in Judea or Samaria is opposed by the government, GE opinion is that divine will precludes democracy. Moreover, international politics are morally wrong, since land relinquishment contradicts divine will. Goldberg and Ben-Zadok explain that

Gush Emunim in effect rejects the view accepted by the large majority of the Israeli public that defence and foreign policy is governed, among others, by circumstantial considerations, including the constraints of international politics. Gush Emunim rejects one of the cornerstones of Israeli foreign policy shared by hawks and doves alike since 1950, according to which Israel identifies with the west in the global conflict.¹⁶⁵

While GE explicitly does not condemn Western democracy, since the movement needs secular support, it nonetheless perceives democracy and other Western values as detrimental to Jewish morality. As discussed below, Gush Emunim’s decision in the early 1980s to collectively partake in the institutional processes of democracy therefore indicates a growing accommodation to political realities than GE’s rhetoric might otherwise suggest.

According to its own theology, GE claims to support the government only when the government’s actions accord with the movement’s conception of divine will. Similarly, the movement can militarily or politically oppose the government whenever government actions, such as the evacuation of settlements in the early 1980s, explicitly

violate divine law. The movement's decision to severely restrict its use of violence in the face of settlement evacuations is a significant marker of the group's moderation. Nevertheless, the movement in its early stages still required, in addition to the strong religious conviction of its members, political support to help implement its settlement agenda. As discussed below, the institutionalization of the movement largely contributed to Gush Emunim's moderation.

External Political Involvement and Support

Gush Emunim emerged as an independent religious political entity in February 1974. Founded by Rabbi Chaim Druckman, its political leaders have always been men, and Avner Yaniv and Yael Yishai's comment that GE is "joined by women and children" affirms that men constitute the primary membership.¹⁶⁶ GE began its political life as a faction within Israel's National Religious Party (NRP), in which most of the movement's leaders were still active members of the influential NRP.¹⁶⁷ David Schnall observes that "the NRP has participated in almost all of Israel's coalition governments, holding a virtual monopoly on certain ministries and areas of government activity."¹⁶⁸ Moreover, as a result of NRP control over the religious ministries, GE indirectly acquired support from other minority parties. In addition to religious messianists, Arab minorities in Israel also supported the NRP, in spite of its settlement policy. The Arab minorities, under the NRP's treatment of religious minorities, "fall under the jurisdiction of their own respective religious establishments," instead of under the direct control of the state.¹⁶⁹ The NRP has thus played a vital role in securing direct and indirect support for GE.

In addition to the NRP, other parties also supported GE. The Labour government's tacit approval of the settlements, or at least its unwillingness to dismantle them immediately, was the result of both official and unofficial support by parliament members. Likud's win over Labour in 1977 resulted in further aid for settlement activity. In the following few years, two other parties chose to back GE. In the 1981 election, Tehiya won three seats and was included in the 1981 government coalition.¹⁷⁰ Formed by Begin cabinet minister Yuval Neimen and Knesset members Geula Cohen and Moshe Shamir, Tehiya sought to represent GE's settlement agenda in parliament.

Tehiya co-operated with other parties and persons with similar platforms, including Chaim Druckman of the NRP.¹⁷¹ The Tehiya platform was clear: dismantling Yamit, the largest settlement in Sinai, or returning any parts of Sinai or the West Bank, could never be an option.¹⁷² As noted above, GE has always traditionally believed that any forfeiture of land reveals an inability to fully comprehend the redemptive process.¹⁷³ This hard-line approach to peace negotiations garnered much approval. The newly created religious party in 1984 and regurgitated form of Tehiya, Morasha, also supported GE policy.¹⁷⁴ Thus, many parties that often disagreed with one another's policies found common ground in their support of the settlers.¹⁷⁵

The parties' motivations in supporting the settlers, however, greatly varied. For the socialist Zionists, the settlement/dismantlement issue carried heavy sociopolitical implications. Many Israelis at the time were affected by GE's use of rhetoric that alluded to the early settler years. In its nascent years, GE attempted to "portray itself in humanistic terms hearkening back to the binationalism of Socialist Zionist thinking of the '30s and '40s."¹⁷⁶ This socialist Zionist thinking, then, was not restricted exclusively

to the importance of tilling the land, but extended to relations with Arabs. Citing instances of hiring Arab contractors to build new homes, the movement emphasized its role in promoting interaction with local Arabs in daily life and stimulating market economy through job creation for the locals. Despite GE's militant stance regarding settlement, it believed peace necessitated Jews and Arabs living in close proximity.¹⁷⁷

This policy of co-operation, in addition to the early settler allusions, swayed many Labour members and supporters to favour settlement establishment. Goldberg and Ben-Zadok summarize the settlement appeal to different parties:

The three arguments for the territorial integrity of the land of Israel are rooted in three world-views: 'security hawkishness', which can be found even within the Labour movement; 'historical hawkishness', which accepts the need to retain extensive territories for security reasons but adds to this the historical tie of the Jewish people to those territories which were in the past under Jewish rule, a view characteristic of the Herut movement (Likud); 'religious hawkishness,' which does not deny either of the above arguments but adds to them the idea of the sanctity of the land of Israel and the settlement of the land as an element of religious belief and observance. The proportion of the Israelis who hold this latter view is very small, despite the strengthening of the hawkish ideology in general.¹⁷⁸

Despite the small number of religiously motivated supporters, the settlement issue was nonetheless supported for different reasons by the Labour and Likud parties.

Yet another way in which GE gained support was by manipulating strained relationships among Knesset members. For example, GE men exploited tensions between Moshe Dayan and Yigal Allon, between Yitchak Rabin and Shimon Peres, and among Labour party members in general. Meanwhile, the NRP ministers backed and lobbied GE activities throughout these political intrigues.¹⁷⁹ Add Labour support to that of the NRP, Likud and later Tehiya, and GE appeared to have gained the support of a large sector of the Israeli public.

Between the group's inception and the 1977 win of the Likud government, GE acquired public support due to the renewal of nationalism, the unpopularity of Israeli-Arab peace talks, the popularization of settlement in the acquired territories and the establishment of settlements in these areas. At the outset, settlement activity inspired nationalism amongst its supporters. Non-practicing Jews, who constitute the majority of Israel's Jewish population, were among those who were affected by GE. While they may not have subscribed to the religious ideology, they nonetheless backed this religious group that had assumed a leading role in political life, and had reawakened political nationalism among those disenchanted with religion's role in state affairs.¹⁸⁰

Furthermore, the wave of nationalist sentiment contributed to public opposition to the peace talks. In opposing them, the public became a *de facto* ally of GE. Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Syrian peace talks fuelled protest among GE followers, as was clearly indicated by the number of public rallies, petitions, traffic blockades and extensive picketing.¹⁸¹ Protests against the peace talks did not suffice and they were soon superseded by events intended to promote Israeli acceptance of settlement creation. For instance, thousands of protesters lit candles in unison and undertook marathons, while GE members organized the "Movement to Stop the Withdrawal from Sinai."¹⁸² Women were presumably continuing to improve settlement conditions, for the organizers were mostly men.¹⁸³ These activities were staged in order to attract the public's attention to the need for populating Judea and Samaria for strategic, historical and religious purposes.

Emphasizing the tactical advantage of the territories, GE tapped into a voter pool previously foreign to the religious parties: the Jewish laity. By promoting secular explanations such as security, instead of religious justifications such as the messianic

arrival, GE encouraged the growth of public interest in territorial settlement. With the assistance of Likud, which assumed power in 1977, the annual average of new settlers in the territories increased from 300 to 4400.¹⁸⁴ Finally, GE implemented its ideology alongside its protests by creating settlements whose locations and times of creation were determined by GE men.¹⁸⁵ These settlements were often just outside the more populated Arab urban centres in Judea and Samaria and included Kiryat Arba and Elon Moreh.¹⁸⁶ Although the creation of these settlements was illegal, it gained support from the public and even Labour members who officially opposed this policy. While the events of the peace talks, rallies and settlements themselves increased GE popularity, the role of nationalism propelled the movement.

Therefore, the GE transition from an NRP faction to an extra-parliamentary movement in the late 1970s was largely a result of its ability to combine “expressibility with instrumentality” and “vocal protest with action and building.”¹⁸⁷ GE acquired its external political support from a variety of sources. These included the NRP, which supported GE’s policy for religious reasons; the Labour party, for its pioneering history; and the Likud, for its settlement policy. Founded by GE members, Tehiya naturally supported the movement. Finally, the public also backed GE for security reasons and nationalist sentiment.

Settlement Success and Political Lobbying

The political success of Gush Emunim depended on the government’s acceptance of the settlement policy. In 1968, six years before Gush Emunim’s formal establishment, the legality of the acquired territories was still ambiguous. Rather than wait for a formal

decision to be issued by the government, the movement established its first settlement. Acting alone under the authority of their spiritual leader Rabbi Moshe Levinger, the group members rented out rooms in the Park Hotel in Hebron and proclaimed it their new residence, much to the chagrin of their Arab neighbours. Despite protests from locals, no military evacuation occurred. The military and settlers eventually reached a compromise that resulted in the settlement Kiryat Arba, outside of Hebron's municipal boundaries.¹⁸⁸

Eleven years later, the settlers undertook a more ambitious settlement goal and occupied the Davoya/Beit Haddasah building in Hebron. Twelve women and their children occupied the hotel for nearly a year, until the government gave permission for the settlers and additional families to live in Hebron, as a compromise for the Sinai land concessions in the Begin-Sadat peace treaty.¹⁸⁹ The women, led by Rabbi Levinger's wife, acted under the instructions of GE's male leadership. Miriam Levinger recounts, "I went to my husband [Rabbi Moshe Levinger] and I said that the women wanted to live in Hebron. He consulted with others who came to the conclusion that we had a good idea. They worked out the plan."¹⁹⁰ At the hotel, women reproduced their roles as religious Jewish homemakers in an attempt to improve their new living conditions.¹⁹¹ They cooked, they cleaned, and they raised their children as they had done before moving to the hotel.¹⁹² Women's voice in the settlement negotiation process was absent. Tamara Neuman concurs that women's

primary advocates in bureaucratic-administrative circles are men, tactically negotiating the public-private divide. Moreover, religious women's apparent non-political status strengthens the hands of their male counterparts, who by this gendered logic are better able to take up their roles as the "real" political advocates and to argue for increased security measures.¹⁹³

Thus, in creating the settlements, women neither negotiated with the government, nor did they act without the consent of male GE members.

To achieve its goals, Gush Emunim used four operational approaches. The first and most effective method that it employed was the creation, on multiple occasions, of a *fait accompli*. As Ehud Sprinzak summarized, this precedent of creating a settlement by a *fait accompli* involved four phases. First, religion was used as a pretext in asserting a “temporary” presence. Second, religion was cited as a valid excuse for a refusal to leave the grounds. Ideally, this refusal would generate an abundant supply of media attention, which would portray GE as intent on resolving the tensions between itself and the military in a peaceful manner. Third, an agreement would be reached whereupon GE would evacuate the land on the conditions that a religious institution be built thereafter on that site, or that the settlers be permitted to reside in close vicinity to a military base. The last stage would involve the eventual permanent construction of a Jewish settlement. Not only was Kiryat Arba established using this method, but so too were many other settlements, including Keshet and Ellon Moreh in 1977, and Rachelim in 1991. Thus, the tactic of creating settlements through an “overnight surprise presence, creation of new facts, and rapid use of new political manoeuvres to sustain the momentum” was both consistent and effective.¹⁹⁴

The creation of settlements could not have occurred without tacit approval at the administrative level of the government. Gush Emunim’s supporters targeted different bodies in their lobbying efforts to permit settlement creation. Ministry officials were recruited, including those in the Ministry of Agriculture and particularly in ministries that involved religious matters and were headed by the NRP.¹⁹⁵ Individual members of

kibbutzim and moshavim, as well as the Ein Vered group, which had acquired political influence, also supported GE.¹⁹⁶ In addition, military officers and various officials throughout the military administration were enlisted to the settlement cause.¹⁹⁷ In recruiting the above supporters, GE selected its lobbyists and its rhetoric carefully. Using its soft-spoken male members to advocate advancing its settlement cause, GE presented their cause to the Israeli public as one resembling the early secular Zionist pioneers rather than the messianic scripture. Overall, finding supporters in the administration, be they ministerial or military, was initially not a challenge for GE.

The most effective lobbying was targeted at the highest political stratum. Potential recruits included Knessnet members. Without their co-operation, settlement in the occupied territories would not be possible, and GE leaders recognized at the outset the need for these alliances. They used their connections in the NRP to oppose the Allon plan, which called for military control of the territories without Jewish settlement.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, GE welcomed Shimon Peres's tacit approval of the settlers' surprise settlement in the Ba'al Hazor military base.¹⁹⁹ The election of the pro-settlement Likud government in 1977 eradicated the need to increase contacts within the government, or justify Jewish settlement in the occupied territories. Consequently, the GE secretariat dissolved. Since the movement's leaders had met regularly to discuss the settlements' oversight administrations, Amana and Yesha, the need for a specific GE ruling body was never formally articulated.²⁰⁰

Nonetheless, GE members needed to reinforce their rights to the land to a government that might succumb to international pressure to relinquish the territories; this involved persuading the head of parliament himself.²⁰¹ By reminding Prime Minister

Begin of his commitment to the Land of Israel, GE leaders were able to secure their right to establish new settlements. Thus, by using their connections in the NRP and forcing an already pro-settlement government to recall its commitment to them, GE members obtained temporary support for their settlements' establishment.

Political and Policy Impact

Both Labour and Likud regimes felt the tremors of GE's political impact. Under the Labour regime, GE lobbied for support in the government and the military, causing a transformation in the territories' status. GE's vision of a greater Israel began to eclipse the idea of the territories serving as mere bargaining chips in peace talks with Arab neighbours. Moreover, the GE settlements allowed the Labour government to pursue its policy concerning the territories without open involvement. Labour's uncertainty regarding the creation of Jewish settlements, along with the overnight presence of GE settlements, provided the government with an opportunity to postpone the questions of territorial surrender and Palestinian autonomy. This hesitancy is exactly what GE anticipated; members hoped that the creation of new settlements in the territories would make it more difficult for the government to relinquish them in peace talks. Labour was therefore complicit in settlement creation. The public did not allow Labour much time to mull over the settlement issue, however, for Likud's ascension to power carried a promise of creating settlements throughout the West Bank. While Likud actively promoted settlement and Labour did not, both parties were sympathetic to the young settlers.

Gush Emunim also significantly affected the ways in which the Likud government implemented its settlement plans. Upon gaining power, Likud immediately outlined a

plan to erect administrative buildings, create a judicial subsystem to oversee the territories, and fulfill the promise of settling 100 000 Israelis in the West Bank within three years. Consequently, Likud channelled millions of dollars into creating suburban housing complexes that were not fashioned in the Israeli style, but in the American way. Since GE had a network of programs aimed at enticing Westerners to immigrate, emulating American housing encouraged immigration.

In addition, Likud provided various funding opportunities for families who took part in the “Build Your Own Home” programme. These incentives were particularly lucrative for families, due to the horrendous inflation and a near-stagnant economic period.²⁰² GE supporter Yuval Neiman represented Tehiya in its 1982 coalition with the government, and consequently, more money was allocated to immigration recruitment campaigns and advancing the religious-nationalist ideology.²⁰³ Furthermore, as David Schnall aptly writes, “no matter what the [Labour or Likud] position on the wisdom of settlement, few Israelis can accept the idea that it is illegal for a Jew to reside anywhere he chooses, most especially on land with historic Jewish links. Thus, strategy has been traded for legitimacy.”²⁰⁴ GE was clearly successful in securing acquiring support for immigration campaigns and the creation of settlements from the Likud government.

Settlement activity in the territories not only altered the role the occupied land would play in bargaining, it transformed the very way the religious parties behaved politically. First, it forced the religious parties to have stances on secular issues. Traditionally, religious parties were solely concerned with the dominating facets of Israeli society that concerned personal religious matters. Since they maintained power because of their small but vital role in coalition governments, issues such as security,

foreign policy and economics were usually shunted to the Labour party.²⁰⁵ GE, under the influence of Rabbi Kook Jr., altered its role: religious parties now held positions on issues other than what had concerned them in the past. These issues included the rights and status of non-Jews in the state of Israel, the lawfulness of occupying the territories, and the conditions that would justify conceding land won in war.²⁰⁶

Second, as a result of the religious parties' concern with these issues, a revival of medieval rabbinic sources occurred in the political sphere, in the NRP and smaller parties.²⁰⁷ As a result of GE's success and the subsequent revival of religious parties, many of them, particularly the NRP, migrated to the right of the political spectrum. They adopted a more militant attitude when it came to the issue of the territories and Palestinian autonomy.²⁰⁸ Finally, the movement renewed interest in religion and religious issues among the non-Orthodox communities. Unlike the NRP, GE was not perceived as having a stale institutionalized religious platform; rather its "activist and emotional" agenda and its unwavering loyalty to the creation of settlements drew support from across the spectrum.²⁰⁹

Thus, GE was successful in implementing its policy, even with a change of government. Exploiting Labour's uncertainty regarding the occupied territories and its willingness to ignore the issue, the settlers created permanent settlements that were later sanctioned by the Likud government. Moreover, GE policy affected religious parties, policies, and their alignment on the political spectrum. Yet over the following decade, GE lost much of its influence and consequently, the movement began to make pragmatic adjustments.

The Decline in Influence and Commitment

Gush Emunim's political failure in the 1980s can largely be attributed to its external political activities. While its leaders decided not to align the movement officially with any one party, GE policies were nonetheless woven into the political fabrics of both the NRP and Tehiya. In both instances, the association between the movement and the party eventually caused a decline in GE's influence. Two issues in particular encouraged GE members to seek an alternative party for promoting their concerns. First, the increase in secularization caused support for the NRP to wane, dropping five percentage points to 24.7 percent support among students.²¹⁰ When GE declared itself a formal movement in the 1970s, many of its members were actively involved with or supported the NRP. Thus, GE members were concerned that a decline in NRP support would be reflected in a decline in GE support.

Second, the territorial issue, which renewed interest in the NRP, now challenged the party's unity. The newer NRP, with its large GE membership, strove to persuade the NRP leadership to form a coalition with Likud, a party unlikely to give up the territories. In light of weakening support for the Labour party following the Yom Kippur War, the long history of settler affiliation with the Labour party was hampering the settlers' primary aims.²¹¹ These attempts were to no avail and the NRP's decision to join the Labour coalition compelled the GE to sever its ties to the party in 1974. Thus, in order to maintain or increase popularity, GE needed to isolate itself officially from the NRP.

The creation of Tehiya in 1979 had the potential to increase Gush Emunim's support. Ardent settlers, with members from GE, the secular Land of Israel movement, as well as secular nationalists who opposed the Begin-Sadat peace treaty, supported GE. In

1981, the party had three members elected to the Knesset, including GE member Hanan Porat. In 1984, under a different name and with a coalition, Tehiya was – with 5 out of 120 seats -- the third largest party in Israel. Despite its initial success, Tehiya's close unofficial affiliation with GE encountered several challenges.

First, as Ehud Sprinzak succinctly explains, GE is a “homogeneous revitalization movement whose main concern is the settlement of the West Bank. . . all members of the GE agree on fundamental principles and live within the same exclusive Weltanschauung.”²¹² Tehiya, however, had leaders representing the military, journalists, the business sector, settlers and scientists. An issue-oriented movement such as GE cannot have a party representing it on issues for which the movement has little or no concern. Not surprisingly, GE's decision to present an electoral list of candidates was met with resistance within the party.²¹³ The creation of a political party was “seen as motivated as much from a desire for personal gain as from the best interests of the movement.”²¹⁴ Thus, many GE members thought that the movement's non-partisanship was intrinsic to their identity, and that its motivated issue-based voting would fulfil their aims without explicit party affiliation.

Second, this concern became concrete with Tehiya's lack of success in the elections. Three seats alone were far below what party hopefuls had expected. Schnall attributes GE's disappointing results to

partisan ties [that] run deep in Israel: most voters retain their political affiliations over time and pass them along to their children. Aside from political ideology and policy stance, the parties provide numerous social and welfare benefits, pension programmes, and the like; these benefits tend to shore up voter loyalty (as does the threat of their loss). For Tehiya to expect that large numbers of voters would spring to answer its essentially ideological call was ill-advised and albeit naïve; even its supporters generally returned to their electoral moorings within the Likud bloc or the NRP.²¹⁵

GE's creation was initially a response to diminishing NRP political support and 'routinized' religious institutionalization; ironically, the movement was now undergoing the same institutionalization process against which it had once rebelled.

Likud's control over the territories also contributed to the decline in Gush Emunim's popularity. After winning a second term in office in 1981, Likud's organizations replaced GE as the driving force of settlement establishment in the occupied territories. As the number of settlements increased under the Likud government, so too did the need for an administrative body to govern them. As a result, GE lost its best leadership with the creation of a specialized administration to govern the territories. For instance, in 1976 the settlement movement institution Amana was established to govern settlement affairs and was fully staffed with GE members.²¹⁶

While Amana governed settlement activities, Yesha, or the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, oversaw administrative functions. These successful GE advocates were chosen from the original GE leadership "to take over the most organized and orderly institution of the movement."²¹⁷ The establishment of settlements involved creating an administrative infrastructure to act as a liaison between the local settlement administration and the Israeli government. Yesha's formation involved hiring staff, all of whom belonged to GE, as well as regional representatives. Women were intentionally excluded from sitting on settlement councils, and in some cases, they were not allowed to vote.²¹⁸ Some women stated that they "don't mind that it should be all men deciding. . . the rabbis aren't all unsympathetic to [women], either."²¹⁹ Regardless, women had little formal influence in the settlements' administration.

The creation of Amana and Yesha were examples of what Myron Aranoff characterizes as the “routinization, bureaucratisation, and diversification of Gush Emunim’s activities [that have] lead to the specialization of its leaders in different organization spheres.”²²⁰ Consequently, in focusing on regional concerns, less attention was devoted to promoting the movement at the national level. The integration of GE into a political establishment, some could argue, demonstrates that it was indeed a strong political movement. Aranoff, however, contends that since its organizational power had been overtaken by the national level, and redirected to the regional level, “Gush Emunim remains as only a symbol, the crown on the one-time joint activities of a number of different groups.”²²¹ Amana evolved into a “very professional settlement organization,” while the Yesha Council represented the needs of the Gaza, West Bank and East Jerusalem settlements. This transfer of power, however, is typical when movements adopt more pragmatic policies.²²²

The very success of Gush Emunim’s operative aims undermined its need to exist. In some respects, GE gained more support under the Labour party from 1974 to 1977. During these years, the movement primarily served as a protest outlet for young Israelis opposed to the Labour party’s settlement policy.²²³ While Labour preferred not to evacuate the new settlements, it still considered them illegal.²²⁴ At the outset, GE was reactionary and its organizational basis was weak, if non-existent. Even though it was considered renegade, GE nonetheless received much sympathy.

Likud’s victory over Labour, however, resulted in GE activities becoming habitual, expected and even ignored, since the new pro-settlement government took control over GE’s settlement ambitions. Likud had such a sympathetic approach to

Jewish settlement that GE squattings became the routine method in creating new settlements. In the first month of its rule, Likud legalized three GE settlements and approved the construction of three more. As a result of Likud's rule, GE had no significant contributions to politics. On the one hand, because of internal divisions on numerous issues other than settlement, the movement was unable to take a stance that would meet the approval of most of its members. On the other, the very issue that unified the movement, that of territorial settlement, was relinquished to the government's control. Paradoxically, "the very success of Gush Emunim in achieving its operative goals was the major cause of its decline as a distinct political organization."²²⁵ Nevertheless, only men's political power declined throughout this process, since women had not yet played a significant role in the political negotiations between the movement and the government.

Thus, Gush Emunim encountered various failures that emerged as it institutionalized. The divisiveness of GE support toward Tehiya, the public's perception of the party as GE's manifestation of a religious party like any other, the lack of success in the elections, and the Likud government's lead role in establishing settlements were all issues that relegated GE from an avant-garde movement to a mere symbol. These combined factors contributed to GE's decline in popularity. More detrimental than a loss of electoral support was the loss of its leaders: the NRP, Tehiya, and Morasha attracted the leading GE activists, leaving the movement's secondary and less experienced leaders in power.²²⁶

The Jewish Underground

The 1984 discovery of the “Jewish Underground” (JU), whose existence was unknown to GE leaders, exposed internal divisions within Gush Emunim.²²⁷ The JU plots were isolated incidents and involved different individuals who were members or supporters of GE. Twenty-seven members were arrested, all of whom were men.²²⁸ With the exception of the Temple Mount plot, their acts of terror occurred under a rabbi’s authority. JU individuals conspired to severely maim five Arab mayors, in response to the murder of yeshiva students in Hebron by Arab residents; level the Dome of Rock; attack a Muslim college in Hebron; and blow up five Arab buses in retaliation for the bombing of a bus full of Jewish passengers earlier that month. These events demonstrate that GE members’ violent and even homicidal actions could be justified religiously.

Upon the discovery of the Underground, and in particular the Temple Mount plot, the movement’s popularity suffered greatly. Initially, GE members denied the possibility that anybody from their movement could have been involved, accusing left-wing parties of fabricating the stories in an attempt to discredit them. Many Gush members were extremely disturbed by the JU’s existence.²²⁹ The discovery of the existence of the Underground immediately exposed the weakness of GE leadership. When it became apparent that the Underground not only existed, but was composed of GE members, GE leaders found themselves in the position of having to defend their movement while simultaneously trying to absorb a flood of incriminating evidence against them. This demonstrated their lack of control over their own members’ activities, but more importantly, it revealed that only a minority of members had participated in the JU’s plots.

The exposure of the Underground created an internal crisis between moderates and hard-liners within the movement. First, the movement's spiritual leader refused to comment. Although more hard-line members did not mind Levinger's refusal to condemn the Underground's activities, many moderate GE loyalists were perturbed by the apparent silence of their "most respected and influential leader."²³⁰ Second, there were rumours that Levinger himself had been well-connected to the organization's activities. These rumours were partially validated by the Underground's "commander" Menachem Livni, who admitted to state officials that Levinger was indeed a member. Despite being detained for two weeks, the rabbi was not charged. The information that leaked and circulated among GE members, however, was that Levinger had indeed approved of many of the terrorist activities.²³¹

Hanan Porat and numerous other members were particularly disturbed by Levinger's affiliation for two reasons: his serving as the rabbinic authority supporting the Underground discredited the function of the rabbinic authority entirely; and his involvement broke an agreement among GE leaders to steer clear of the Underground activities. Consequently, many GE members for the first time began to distrust their spiritual leader. Bearing in mind that GE members have a *merkaz harav* approach to life, a fundamental difference such as the one presented here could make room in the future for members to act independently of what their spiritual leader might promote or sanction. The willingness to deviate from their spiritual leader's position was already a sign of moderation. Moreover, Underground members themselves "made it clear that they believed they were acting in the name of the entire settler community. . . argu[ing] that under different circumstances other settlers would have done the same"; they did not,

however, articulate under which circumstances.²³² The Underground thus created a rift in the GE community between those who were “in the know” of the Underground’s activities and those who were not, and between those who [decreasingly] supported Levinger and the terrorists, and those who did not.

Militancy and Violence

The Begin-Sadat ‘land-for-peace’ treaty, in which Begin promised to return the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for peace, jeopardized GE’s dream of a Greater Israel. The movement’s emphasis on land settlement as the most important contemporary religious obligation, and the doctrinal contradiction of accepting the pre-1967 borders, forced the movement to choose one of three options in the wake of the evacuation of the Sinai settlements.

First, GE could abandon the core of its doctrine. Settlement in Israel would be seen as a necessity in the renewed kingdom, but it would cause neither the messiah’s arrival nor the subsequent spiritual salvation. In the second scenario, GE could reconsider which religious values it would emphasize. Rather than stressing the importance of settlement, the movement could devote more doctrinal attention to Judaism’s universal ethics. Ironically, this could also be interpreted as the movement’s adoption of Western values. These include the ethics of occupying an alien community, such as the Palestinians, and the need for adhering to human rights.

Both of these instances are long-term solutions, where salvation is an event that is relegated to the distant future, thereby undermining GE’s doctrine of imminent salvation. This raises the question of whether GE could be able to retain the doctrine at all. For

instance, what if the number of settlements required for salvation were to be reduced? The potential for further expansion would be postponed for the future. If expansion is deferred to the future, then so too is salvation, thereby invalidating the imminence of the messianic area, which is the essence of GE ideology.

Moreover, once the imminence of salvation ceased to exist in GE doctrine, then the validity of the entire settlement project in the Greater Land of Israel would be debatable. Considering that GE had declared land settlement to be above Israeli secular law, doctrinally relegating salvation to the future would make land settlement subject to Israeli law. Hence, were the Israeli government to declare certain settlements illegal, GE would have no religious basis to violate civil law. Finally, if Israel's expansion to a Greater Israel were to be excluded from the preconditions for salvation, then the entire religious need for settlements would dissolve. Thus, if the armistice borders of Israel sufficed to make salvation imminent, the entire settlement project, along with the movement's ideology, would die. Neither of the above options appears to be a potentially explosive situation. Nevertheless, GE could reject entirely the idea of land concessions, along with the legitimacy of the government. Given GE's accumulation of weaponry, the potential for a violent confrontation would then seem inevitable.

An understanding of GE's military power can be found in explaining the outcome of the 1967 war. Israel's occupation of the West Bank marked the onset of an array of security problems, such as guerrilla attacks and Palestinian anti-Jewish mobs. The creation of settlements only aggravated these problems, and the military found itself in need of greater security measures. Among these additional measures was giving settlers, who themselves were either active or reserve soldiers, the right to defend themselves.²³³

Thus, military responsibility – the permissibility to use violent forms of resistance -- was transferred directly from the army to the settlers.

If parts of Judea or Samaria were relinquished, therefore, a minority of Gush Emunim members could likely turn to armed resistance to prevent their land from being confiscated.²³⁴ Consequently, a conflict of interest between the government and GE could result in a quasi-independent armed force. Moreover, the movement still had the capabilities to do so; advanced weapons and military equipment were provided for defensive purposes to GE members. How much weaponry, however, is unknown, for “according to unconfirmed but persistent rumours, none of the responsible officers of the Israeli army knows exactly how many arms are stored in the settlements caches, and no one dares check.”²³⁵

Despite GE’s potential for violence, there was little fighting on the part of the settlers in the evacuations.²³⁶ The vast majority of the Yamit residents, as well as those from the thirteen other settlements in the Sinai, preferred to follow the Israel Defense Forces soldiers than to be physically evicted by them from their homes. Some of the five thousand settlers of Yamit in the Sinai were dragged out of their homes by unarmed soldiers.²³⁷ Even the most militant of these settlers only resorted to throwing debris out of their windows or from rooftops, often purposefully aiming away from Israel Defense Forces soldiers.²³⁸ *Jerusalem Post* correspondent Abraham Rabinovitch described how

the militants had thrown burning tires, bucketfuls of sand and other objects at the soldiers on the scaling ladders and tried to hold them off with staves. But after two days of skirmishing, there was not a single injury of any consequence. The militants had not tried to overturn the ladders and the Molotov cocktails had not been thrown to hit. The soldiers had used force when necessary, but in measured doses. . . .

More surprisingly for many, the defenders of Yamit had proved rational idealists, not fanatics. I was far from sharing the militants' worldview, but I could not help admiring their dedication. And, in the end, their restraint.²³⁹

Recalling that control over the Land of Israel was as important to GE as the Torah, requiring one to defend the land to the death if necessary, regardless of land-for-peace agreements; and bearing in mind that control over the entire Eretz Yisrael was an uncompromising ideology, the peaceful evacuation of the Sinai settlements in 1982 was a clear indication of the movement's pragmatic moderation. More significantly, the evacuation of the Sinai settlements occurred nearly a decade before a few dozen GE women established Rachelim.

Conclusion

Gush Emunim had become more moderate in its practices as a result of its institutionalization long before Rachelim's creation in 1991. Adopting its territorial expansionist ideology from that of the Rav Kook Jr., who elucidated and expanded his father's ideology, the movement stressed the retention of the territories occupied during the war. This was of paramount religious importance, especially in light of their belief in an imminent redemption.

Despite the political support GE received, particularly after the right-wing Likud party won the 1977 elections, its influence began to wane by the early 1980s. By using outside political parties, such as the NRP and Tehiya, to conduct its political affairs, GE lost its influence among its members and the electorate who were unable to unite around issues other than that of settlement. Its supporters shunned the newly created religious parties as unwanted forms of state-controlled religious institutions. Meanwhile, the

creation of Amana and Yesha left an inexperienced leadership in control of Gush Emunim.

The weakness of the movement's leadership, as a result of its institutionalization, revealed that many Gush members had changed their views regarding two issues of intrinsic importance to the ideology. First, the diminished support for anti-Arab attacks weakened the belief in *merkaz harav*. The refusal of GE's spiritual leader to condemn the activities of the Underground encouraged many GE members to question the authority of their leader and his role in the political decision-making. GE's response to the discovery of the Jewish Underground also demonstrated the unwillingness of many GE members, in spite of their conviction that the land was their entitlement, to violently antagonize their Arab neighbours, who nonetheless maintained the same land claims. Second, the refusal of GE members to risk their lives by fighting to preserve the integrity of the Land of Israel also revealed the movement's moderation. These instances point to a similar trend discerned by Aviezer Ravitzky: "Since the evacuation of Yamit, there has been a marked tendency in this [redemptionist] camp to moderate its political and even its theological determinism."²⁴⁰

The movement's institutionalization and the decline of men's political power within the movement created the political space for the group's increased moderation. The responses of the Sinai settlers additionally demonstrated a more moderate approach to the issue of settlement in the Greater Land of Israel than otherwise formulated by the movement's founders. As repeatedly iterated throughout the chapter, however, it was the GE men who occupied the leadership roles outside the familial structure. The movement's institutionalization and subsequent decline in political influence coincided

with its moderation. As the next chapter argues, when some of the Gush Emunim women realized that the wellspring of their husbands' political power had run dry, they became more politically assertive over the settlement issue.

CHAPTER THREE

RACHELIM: THE 'MOURNING-AFTER' SETTLEMENT

To recall from the previous chapter, between 1974 and 1991, Gush Emunim's institutionalization indefinitely postponed its ambitious territorial expansionist goals. Gush Emunim emerged in the 1970s as the settler movement par excellence, whose political goal of broadening the boundaries of the Israeli state, a "positive religious act," required creating illegal settlements in Israel's post-1967 acquired territories.²⁴¹ In the early 1990s, after GE had adopted more pragmatic policies, approximately 5,000 nationalist-religious settlers lived in 144 settlements.²⁴² The smaller settlements, scattered across the hilltops of the West Bank, were and still are considered "the moral backbone and political stronghold of Gush Emunim."²⁴³ One settlement, however, differs from all others: it was founded solely by women.

Unarguably, the creation of a settlement by women indicates their involvement in furthering GE's settlement dream. Yet Tami Amanda Jacoby argues that religious-nationalist women are not active participants in the military struggle. She asserts that "although [religious-nationalist] women were considered integral to this nationalist vision, in their domain as keepers of home, culture, and children, they did not have a clearly defined role in military conflict."²⁴⁴ She also observes that

women often encounter structures of patriarchal authority – in the national movement, the military, the private sphere, and through the discourses and practices of dominant belief systems. In these structures, women are either domesticated or rendered subordinate to men.²⁴⁵

Yet women's establishment of the Rachelim settlement appears to counter Jacoby's claims of women's domestication within Gush Emunim.

This chapter argues that in the context of the creation of Rachelim, some religious-nationalist women have occupied a significant military role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, within the confines of their domestic roles. While GE women used maternalism to champion recognition of their illegal settlement, reminiscent of men's actions in the movement's early days, they simultaneously challenged the very gender ideals that their movement valorized. Unlike Hamas, Gush Emunim does not detail its conception of gender roles in any charter. Therefore, in order to understand GE's normative role of women, religious, nationalist and settler discourses must be examined.

Gush Emunim's Gender Ideology

The Orthodox Jewish community, regardless of denomination, considers orthodoxy to refer to "Jews who observe all the religious commandments, and interpret those commandments to require a traditional life strictly attached to religious ritual."²⁴⁶ They regard "gender categorization as manifest, ongoing, and explicitly significant for the course of life."²⁴⁷ Within each community, opinions over women's role differ, depending on how laws and customs are interpreted.²⁴⁸ Nira Yuval-Davis notes that "the emphasis in Jewish fundamentalist movements is on the 'natural' differences between men and women. . . that women were created differently and thus have different religious duties and life careers."²⁴⁹

This essentialism is also found within the secular stream. Frances Raday finds Israel "striking" due to the endurance of the patriarchal religious familial structure within a state that has made great efforts to ensure women's legal, social and economic rights.²⁵⁰ Similarly, Ruth Halperin-Kaddari observes that personal aspects of religious law are "still

considered a basic tenet in the Israeli polity in general and in the delicate construction of Jewish identity in particular”²⁵¹ The emphasis on essentialist roles in both secular and religious streams implies that it, too, exists within Gush Emunim culture. Nevertheless, essentialism does not necessarily imply male superiority.

Within some religious communities, there has been considerable effort to demonstrate that women’s roles, though different from those of men, are not inferior.

Adrienne Baker perceives that Orthodox women

in their homes, in the domain over which they preside and in which they transmit to their children the essence of Judaism – and in their study groups – convey a dignity of spirit which is very different from any suggestion of their feeling second best.²⁵²

Currents within the religious feminist movement have raised awareness over women’s position in Judaism. Yuval-Davis ascertains that “since the rise of the feminist movement, a lot of energy has had to be spent to show that the Jewish woman’s position is ‘really’ even more important and powerful than the man’s,” although she is sceptical of these arguments, “given the overall approach of the movement toward women.”²⁵³ Thus, one might expect Gush Emunim women to feel empowered by their roles within the movement. This can dictate a course of action, however, that departs from the original rationale behind the empowerment.

Women’s empowerment of traditional roles, as Yuval-Davis iterates, is problematic for Jewish religious fundamentalist movements.²⁵⁴ While the feminist movement “resolved any problematic aspect of women claiming power” by distinguishing ‘power of’ from ‘power over,’ this difference could not be applied to the private realm.²⁵⁵ In the context of Gush Emunim, as well as in other Jewish fundamentalist movements, women’s political involvement within the private sphere

must be recognized because “the reproduction of the Jewish fundamentalist system depends on women, their co-operation, and their hard work.”²⁵⁶ Moreover, women’s confinement to the home “domesticates” their men, who are then responsible for generating an income for a growing family.²⁵⁷ Therefore, women can function as political actors within their roles in the private sphere.

Perhaps the most important of these roles, and one which is both idealized and held as normative by the community, is motherhood. Within the religion, explains Baker, “the married woman, especially the mother, is the paradigm idealized in Judaism. . . as the ‘normative experience.’”²⁵⁸ Baker compares the biblical and modern ideal woman:

The proverbial ‘Woman of Worth’ freed her husband and sons from day-to-day economic responsibilities so that they could pursue sacred tasks; her modern counterpart still sees her family’s needs as her highest priority, and arranges her life to fulfill them.²⁵⁹

Rachel, the historic wife of the martyred Rabbi Akiva, is idealized in the religious Jewish tradition for her altruistic support of her husband.²⁶⁰ Recognizing his fine qualities, Rachel marries the destitute Akiva on the condition that he intensively study Torah. Upon hearing of their marriage, Rachel’s father vows not to support her financially and she is left poor and alone. The challenge of supporting Akiva’s decades of Torah study away from home forces Rachel to cut and sell her hair. After 12 years away, Akiva returns with 12 000 students, but overhears Rachel telling her neighbour that she would have him study yet another 12 years. Without seeing his wife, Akiva leaves and returns another 12 years later with double the students.

Rachel rushes to greet her husband, but is shoved aside by his students, who see instead a poor beggar trying to touch their beloved master. Only Akiva recognizes Rachel in her impoverished condition, and explains to his students, “That which is mine and

which is yours is really hers.” According to Aviva Cantor, Rachel is “held up as a role model of what the Jewish woman should be – devoted, appreciative of her husband’s intellectual possibilities and (later) his accomplishments, and provider of support in his academic endeavours to the point of self-sacrifice.”²⁶¹ These historic examples indicate that the idealization of women’s self-sacrifice, as wives or mothers, is entrenched in the religious tradition.²⁶²

Anthropologist Tamar El-Or’s research affirms that the identities of religious-nationalist women cannot be divorced from their roles as mothers. In spite of the gender role challenges confronting these women, both in status and in literacy of oral law, El-Or observes how motherhood is the “single station that is known from the start.”²⁶³ In a study of 185 subjects at an academic religious seminary, she found that all the women united around their maternal roles.²⁶⁴ Within this role, religious-nationalist women have attempted to locate “femininity as an area of power” for both religious and political purposes.²⁶⁵ For example, through the study of ‘male’ texts, women have begun to destabilize the definition of motherhood, calling into question its singularity.²⁶⁶ Forming alternative identities, women oscillate between motherhood as ‘natural’ and as ‘work.’²⁶⁷ In viewing motherhood as work, women make motherhood a job transferable to others, resulting in a shift in household responsibility for many married couples.²⁶⁸ In spite of the debate over the definition of motherhood, the women still identify with this prescribed role.²⁶⁹ This power is not only harnessed in their roles as mothers, but home-builders.

Gush Emunim women also play an essential role in building the home. The importance of the home in Judaism is undisputed, for the “family has always been the

unit of Jewish existence.”²⁷⁰ Moshe Meiselman claims that “the centre of Jewish life has been, and will always be, the home,” while Baker recounts the apologetic argument that the “home is central and that in this sphere the woman’s role is respected and all-important.”²⁷¹ Defining a woman’s role as “the creator, moulder, and guardian of the Jewish home,” Meiselman asserts that while “the man has always been the family’s public representative, the woman has been its soul.”²⁷² Women’s familial role is therefore a private one, but one that is greatly respected by the community.

Women’s ultimate task within the home is not performing domestic duties, but serving as the religious foundation for the family.²⁷³ She is allotted the responsibility of guiding the family in a positive religious direction.²⁷⁴ In this role, Meiselman argues, women express their individuality:

The Jewish woman is the soul and inspiration of the Jewish home. Through building this home she achieves her ultimate Jewish self-definition, and the stamp she leaves on the home expresses her own uniqueness and individuality.²⁷⁵

The home is not only an outlet for individuality, but a source of autonomy and economic benefit. Raday discerns that “women’s status in the home plays an important role in determining the extent of their autonomy and of their equality of opportunity in socioeconomic terms, too.”²⁷⁶ Women’s link to the public arises through their roles as mothers and as wives of husbands who study religious texts.²⁷⁷ The public, in this context, refers to social rather than economic spheres, as Jewish women historically have heavily participated in the public economic arena.²⁷⁸ In many Jewish fundamentalist families, women are responsible for generating an income while their husbands pursue full-time religious study, although this is more common among the ultra-Orthodox than among the religious nationalists.²⁷⁹

The home plays a central role as the normative experience not only for religious families, but for all Israeli families. Halperin-Kaddari explains that “Israel is a family-oriented society. Familism, the normative family’s centrality in the lives of the individual and the collective, is one of the central characteristics of Israeli society.”²⁸⁰ The emphasis on the home, and on sacrificial motherhood for the Zionist cause, can be traced historically to the state’s inception. Motherhood and sacrifice were interwoven as children grew into soldiers who gave their lives to the nation.²⁸¹

Zionist motherhood demands that a mother be “be willing to sacrifice her son on behalf of his homeland (motherland).”²⁸² States and regions engaged in conflict demand that women ‘offer’ their children to the cause. Yet Israel’s case is unique, argues Sachlav Stoler-Liss:

The Zionist case is remarkable, not because it stressed the woman’s role in bearing and raising children, but because it expanded the national boundaries of motherhood to include the period before birth and the entire span of time between birth and the child’s enlistment in the army.²⁸³

Although women are conscripted, the military still regards them as [potential] mothers and wives. Consequently, they are easily exempted from military service. Their twenty-one-month obligation falls more than one year short of men’s three-year requirement and requires them to perform different tasks from that of men. In the mid-1990s, more than 70 percent of female soldiers occupied “traditional military roles”: they typed, cooked, cleaned, folded, and entertained for the benefit of the troops.²⁸⁴ The division of roles in the nationalist cause, women as nurturers and men as soldiers, is perceived as an issue of national security. Simona Sharoni maintains that

the Israeli state’s doctrine of ‘national security’ depends both upon men who are ready to serve as soldiers, as fighters on the battlefield, and upon women who are ready to adjust to the needs of the Israeli collective experience. On one hand,

women are socialized into the roles of unconditional supporters, exceptional caretakers, and keepers of the home front; on the other hand, they are expected to remain vulnerable and in need of protection.²⁸⁵

Through either the religious or nationalist ethos, all Israeli women are socialized in an environment where motherhood is held as the normative experience. Any attempt to divorce women from this fundamental role, as feminism seeks to do, is thus “conceived as morally wrong for both religious and nationalistic reasons, presenting the divine order and national virility with a challenge.”²⁸⁶

The normative experience of motherhood, however, is composed of two contradictory expectations. In times of peace, women are expected to be the altruistic nurturers. In this position, they are perceived as vulnerable. The ideal Israeli man, the ‘sabra,’ was not only limited to strengthening the enfeebled Jewish diaspora, but also fighting for and protecting the defenceless mothers and mothers-to-be.²⁸⁷ With reference to the sabra, Sharoni succinctly states that “in the terms of this gendered juxtaposition, men must be offensive on the battlefield in order to protect vulnerable women on the home front.”²⁸⁸ Conversely, women are also expected to embody the sabra ideal in times of war;

on the one hand, when Israeli men are on the home front, women are relegated to conventionally gendered roles: they have to be inside, soft, tender and sweet. On the other hand, during wartime when men are on the battlefield, women are expected to step out of their traditional roles and to enter, if only temporarily, the public political arena. During such periods pragmatic, assertive, and tough behaviour on the part of women is praised as a significant contribution to the collective national effort.²⁸⁹

Yet in a country that has been in a state of conflict since its founding, the dichotomy between the vulnerable versus the aggressive female has often been blurred.

Consequently, it is not apparent whether settler women, who live in direct zones of conflict, are expected to embody the traditional and domestic position articulated in religious expectations, or the temporary aggressive role defined by the nationalist discourse. Michael Feige hypothesizes that like their nationalist counterparts,

fundamentalist men active in liberation movements expect the women fighting side-by-side with them to return to the traditional lifestyle after the battle is won, while women find it difficult to retain the achievements of their emancipation. . . [this motif is] concordant with the concepts of femininity in the settlers' movement Gush Emunim and the national-religious women's camp in general.²⁹⁰

Given their perceived expected role of domesticity, and their absence from the top political leadership of the movement, women's role in Gush Emunim has largely been neglected in favour of a focus on the male political leadership of the movement.²⁹¹ Feige relates that "within the Gush Emunim camp, political leadership of the early days was uniformly male and the religious authority of rabbis. . . was an exclusively male prerogative."²⁹²

El-Or concurs that "these dimensions of maternalism and the centrality of women and children in settlement expansion have been largely ignored in favour of more male-centred explanations of militancy."²⁹³ One might even be tempted to think, given the emphasis of the latter, that women have in no way influenced any of the political decisions of the movement. The movement's women, however, do not perceive this to be the case. They understand their roles to be no less important than those of men in formal leadership positions, who determine when and where settlements will be established. More importantly, they attest that without the "real leaders," the Gush Emunim women, the settlements could not exist.²⁹⁴

Both GE women and men are highly aware of the importance of women within the movement. First, women's embrace of motherhood is considered vital to the strength of Gush Emunim. In El-Or's study, one prominent teacher explained to her students that motherhood

is natural for women, and giving birth is an experience they all share. This is their purpose in this world, and it is their merit for the next world. To be a mother is to be yourself, and therefore it is a task of endless happiness. Motherhood is the source of moral judgment and national strength, which the national religious community is in need of. . . Motherhood is an *identity* that embraces everything. It accompanies the woman-mother wherever she goes and is present in every other facet of her identity. This is gender-conditioned motherhood, carried out by women only.²⁹⁵

Motherhood is not only needed to fortify Gush Emunim, but the entire national religious community. Jacoby observes that the immense respect conferred to Gush Emunim women, who are viewed as equal to men in their spiritual devotion to the movement's goal,

may arise partly from women's necessary role in raising large families, which [are] necessary for fulfilling the commandment to settle the land. Indeed, Jewish settlers tend to have high birthrates. The large settler family is highly politicized and mobilized as a means of fighting the "demographic struggle"²⁹⁶

Second, within this struggle, women often decide where the family is going to live.²⁹⁷ Moreover, they help their families cope with the difficult living conditions of the settlements in the initial stages and the perceived constant threat of terrorist attacks.²⁹⁸ Commenting on women's role in maintaining the integrity of the settlements, one settler explained that it is a "very natural thing that the women are actually in the everyday life those who hold the settlements together because they hold the family together in the settlements, despite difficulties that may come."²⁹⁹ Through their roles as mothers, therefore, Gush Emunim women play an extremely significant role in preserving the cohesiveness of the family unit and the settlement community.

Rachelim's Establishment

GE's leadership, as mentioned in the previous chapter, considered Palestinian attacks or killings of Jews, regardless of whether the latter were civilians or soldiers, as valid grounds for creating settlements. In October 1991, in what settlers then "considered the most severe attack," bus driver Yitzhak Rofeh and settler mother of seven Rachel Druk were shot and killed by a Palestinian near the Shiloh settlement in the West Bank.³⁰⁰ The GE's proclamation of the 1991 attack as the "most severe" should have further impelled them than in previous cases to push for a new settlement's creation. In contrast to this expectation and yet another indication of their moderation, however, GE men did not participate from the outset, and intentionally avoided any confrontation with the military or government.³⁰¹

The establishment of Rachelim by GE women was in large part a consequence of their husbands' political impotence. Even after women had established themselves at the site, their husbands lacked any desire to confront the military.³⁰² Justifying male inaction, one female settler explained that the men "were used to working with the official authorities."³⁰³ Since the government at the time was officially pro-settlement, rather than risk acting against it, the men preferred to wait until they had received its permission.³⁰⁴ The women, however, "couldn't just stay home after Rachel was murdered on that road."³⁰⁵ Instead, they chose to pursue an "irrational" act, which, according to the settlers, had

become a necessary and logical strategy: women can bring off what the dominant but immobilized men cannot permit themselves [because the men] work to further their objectives through accepted conventional channels, while the women do not feel constrained by the establishment and are free to act as "madwomen."³⁰⁶

Through the creation of Rachelim, therefore, Gush Emunim women eclipsed their husbands as the new pioneers of the settlement movement.

Immediately after the funeral, female settlers “staked a claim” near the site of Druk’s murder and refused to leave.³⁰⁷ With their children and small babies accompanying them, the women remained overnight to demonstrate their refusal to allow anybody to shoot them “on their own land.”³⁰⁸ They were all mothers and therefore considered their actions to be a “natural reaction” to the death of a fellow settler mother.³⁰⁹ These few dozen Gush Emunim women decided that the creation of a settlement, named Rachelim (“Rachels”) primarily after Rachel Druk, but also after Rachel Weiss, killed three years earlier, and the Biblical matriarch Rachel, would be a proper way to commemorate the women.³¹⁰

Rachelim became the first instance in which women fully undertook the initiative of creating a settlement, thereby marking a milestone in settlement history.³¹¹ Future settlements, such as Nofei Nehemia, replicated the justifications and tactics used at Rachelim.³¹² The 25 Rachelim founders were all between the ages of 35 and 45, and affiliated with Gush Emunim.³¹³ All were married with children, and employed.³¹⁴ In addition to these founders, 200 women from across the West Bank descended on Rachelim in the early stages, in order to spend a few hours, a day or a night in support of Rachelim.³¹⁵ Men also assisted the women at night and Rachelim quickly developed into “the social, political and ritualistic centre for the West Bank Jewish settlers’ community.”³¹⁶

Due to the illegality of the settlement under Israeli law, the women were not permitted to establish a permanent presence.³¹⁷ This deterrence proved unsuccessful and

the women were able to justify staying the night, then shiva (week of mourning) and then shloshim (month of mourning).³¹⁸ After a few weeks of dispute between the Rachelim women and the military, the latter agreed to establish a military outpost and memorial vigil near the spot where the killings occurred.³¹⁹ Within a few months, Amana nominated a woman, Orit Rapaport, to be officially in charge of the settlement.³²⁰ One year later, the government gave permission for people to live permanently at the military settlement.³²¹ In 1999, the Israeli government recognized Rachelim as a legal civilian settlement.³²²

During the initial period of the settlement's creation, women obeyed the government's prohibition against the building of permanent structures. Instead, they used two tents as temporary dwellings: one for the kitchen, a study room and a "makeshift synagogue," and the other for lodging.³²³ While women were at the site, their husbands "stayed at home to attend to the household chores and cater to the women."³²⁴ The women, meanwhile, studied religious texts, cared for their children and entertained visitors.³²⁵

In the early days of the settlement, the women's actions outwardly contradicted the strong tendency among politically right-wing Israeli women to be more militant than their husbands.³²⁶ Regarding the presence of children at the settlement, Tamara Neuman remarks that "the sheer numbers of children at play, tended by religious mothers in flow skirts and stylish hats, is a panoply of nature and nurture that disrupts one's preconceptions of how militant communities are constituted."³²⁷ Although the Rachelim women understood their act as a peaceful response to a violent action, settler presence is often perceived by Palestinians as more threatening than uniformed soldiers, since the

duration of the settlements is intended to long surpass that of the Israel Defense Forces in the territories.³²⁸ If the Rachelim women are indeed “enthusiastic participants in the Gush Emunim project, impelling their husbands towards greater radicalism,” then there is much justification in the Palestinian perception.³²⁹ In this view, the maternalism that drove Rachelim’s creation is a more destructive force than overt military action alone.

The Gush Emunim women’s spontaneous creation of Rachelim mirrored and defied their movement’s gender expectations. Their ability to employ maternalism as a mechanism for settlement gain relied on the perceived public-private division of the settlers, the expansion of their home-building role, and their conscious use of gender as a tool to confront the Israeli military. In each of these instances, women superficially conformed to gender expectations.

The public-private division found in religious-nationalist discourse, as explained above, suggests that Gush Emunim men work primarily within the public realm, while women reign over the private. In the case of Rachelim, one may argue that such a division was constantly maintained. First, although women’s actions occurred under the public eye, the women followed the well-established male settlement script. Sharing this sentiment, Michael Feige suggests that

the acts of conquest by Gush Emunim, the penetration into hostile social environments and erecting settlements, are inherently masculine, and the women of Rachelim suggested no reinterpretation or subversive perspective on the all-important practice of settlement, occupation, let alone the rights of the occupied Palestinian Arabs.³³⁰

He notes further that the women “merely performed according to the script they had received,” implying that their actions were in no way subversive toward the movement’s gender expectations.³³¹ Their decision to create a settlement in response to a murdered

Israeli was “a standardized and ritualized practice” of the movement.³³² He concludes that the very creation of Rachelim was a metaphor for the Gush Emunim movement, and that in following this narrative, women were acting in accordance with previously established gender expectations.

Second, the women’s actions demonstrated a full commitment to both the gender expectations and founding nationalist aspirations of their movement. On the one hand, women’s role in Rachelim was an expansion of their settlement responsibilities and a continuation of

a project of private and national home building. The struggle for a national home is conducted through the creation of private homes, and the private homes receive their unique value from their being contributions to the establishment of a national home.³³³

Because of “the presumed exceptionalism of [religious] mothers in the political arena,” the military had difficulty opposing them.³³⁴ Soldiers fulfilled women’s domestic requests, allowing them to improve the decrepit settlement conditions in which they lived. Despite the government’s edict that only tents could be erected, the military permitted the women to build brick walls on the outside of the tents in order to keep warm in the winter. Women’s requests, therefore, addressed the needs of the home, rather than Israel’s need for greater security measures.

Similarly, whenever an illegal settlement had been established in the past, Gush Emunim men successfully lobbied for its legalization on both ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ grounds. As men, they argued for security considerations, but they deplored the women’s appalling living conditions on behalf of their wives and mothers.³³⁵ Rachelim women continued GE’s sexual division of requests, basing their own needs on their maternal roles as homemakers, leaving the men once again to detail security measures. As one

female settler stated, “We, more than others, determine the nation’s policy by giving our support behind the scenes to those around us, to grow, develop, contribute and build.”³³⁶

In acting like concerned, fully-committed mothers, the women ensured better treatment by the Israel Defense Forces. The Israeli military treats women differently than men because women’s primary supportive role is regarded as “behind the scenes,” implying a greater vulnerability, since they are not the primary fighters and are therefore in need of protection. Since their support of their husbands’ and sons’ military participation is crucial to the maintenance of the nationalist vision, women must be approached with increased sensitivity.³³⁷ This differential treatment is based on several considerations, the first of which is the military’s function to protect the family unit, seeing “itself as a guardian of Jewish civilian life, rather than as a force to be used against its own women and children.”³³⁸ Consequently, soldiers would have greater difficulty in removing female settlers, a detail on which the settlers capitalized by establishing a dominant female and child presence at Rachelim.³³⁹ The presence of mothers and children on the settlement site demonstrated “how rooted they [were] in their newly established homes,” augmenting the challenge to the soldiers to uproot them.³⁴⁰

Nevertheless, female settlers counter the claims of having used women strategically at Rachelim.³⁴¹ They argue that the Israel Defense Forces is fully capable of removing women. Shortly after midnight on the first night, a truck full of female soldiers who were prepared to remove the women were brought onto the site.³⁴² Although the female Israel Defense Forces soldiers “almost managed to do so,” like their male counterparts, they were reluctant to physically drag the women away.³⁴³ The female soldiers were apparently as affected as the male soldiers by the presence of mothers and

children at the newly-formed settlement. The Rachelim women negotiated with the [male] commander, who permitted them to stay.³⁴⁴

Not only were all the settlers mothers, but they acted according to a 'female' social script. For example, in welcoming an array of visitors, the women received their guests in "traditionally feminine ways."³⁴⁵ Tamar El-Or and Gideon Aran observed that the women "played the role of gracious hostess, and offered food and drink and warmth by the stove," while they cared for the multitude of children they had brought with them.³⁴⁶ They were also attentive to the needs of the soldiers. Emuna Elon, one of the founding women, lamented that

these poor men had to stand there in the biting cold. But the women went up to them and offered them homemade cakes sent by their families. They invited them to warm themselves by the small heater.

Women embodied the role of the traditional mother for the soldiers and devoted substantial amounts of time toward preparing meals, cleaning and taking care of the children.³⁴⁷

Their discussions at the site primarily revolved around motherhood issues such as feeding, child-rearing, cleaning, education and kitchen duties.³⁴⁸ Settlement and security concerns were not addressed.³⁴⁹ Not only were they concerned about 'female' issues, they also worried about their physical appearance. In the words of one settler, they considered it important to appear "pretty and feminine," rather than risk looking like "Amazons on the mount."³⁵⁰ One of the women, writing for the settler newsletter, observed that "anyone passing by would probably have been surprised to see a group of tired, eccentric women dressed in long, full skirts and head scarves, sitting around a rabbi and listening to

a lesson.”³⁵¹ The goal was, as Rachelim settler Geula Tzroia aptly stated, to demonstrate that their strength was “quiet, beautiful, and positive.”³⁵²

In apparent contrast to this desire to exhibit strength, Rachelim women also utilized their perceived vulnerability, thereby fostering public empathy. The women feared for their children’s safety, as well as that of other settlers.³⁵³ “Unafraid of being accused of melodramatics,” the settlers described to visitors various instances in which they had been the victims of Palestinian attacks.³⁵⁴ Their visible commitment to motherhood and safeguarding their children was a response to “the threat not only to physical existence, but to the ability to maintain a viable image and identity of responsible parenthood as well.”³⁵⁵ Their articulation of fear was a ‘feminine’ reaction to an outsiders’ attack, which threatened their public image as conscientious mothers who ensured the safety of the settlement communities.

From their standpoint, the women’s reaction was both spontaneous and emotional, “motivated by a bundle of feminine (motherly) actions.”³⁵⁶ A circulating pamphlet during the settlement’s establishment described how “what started as a spontaneous vigil following the murder of Rachel Druk and Yitzhak Rofeh, turned into a fact in the settlement landscape of the Land of Israel.”³⁵⁷ Their spontaneity translated into a decisive political action that was made possible by rallying around their identity as individual mothers, and as the collective mother of the settlement project. Naomi Sapir, a Rachelim co-founder, explained:

By remaining here we express the idea that life for us in Judea and Samaria is not a political demonstration, but a simple and day-to-day wish to live. We state that life goes on and that our answer to death is – life! We organized on a feminine basis because *the women provide the emotional organic justification for the entire idea of settling* [italics mine]. As to the political authorities, some of us are of the opinion that we should make do with exerting influence on the decision-makers, while

others think that we should actually be in there [in parliament]. Either way, we've wasted a lot of time and there's a lot to do.³⁵⁸

Feige clarifies that women were drawn to the site "spontaneously and unpremeditatedly simply by virtue of their feminine essence," assuming that "women had a certain intuitive understanding and reaction to the dangers threatening the safety of their families."³⁵⁹ Thus, their spontaneity and emotional response were channelled into an attempt to not only protect their own families, but also to defend the national Jewish community as a whole.³⁶⁰

Finally, the women did not superficially subvert gender expectations because they did not intend to define their action as 'feminist.' The women were always careful to define their primary task as protecting their families, "which they regarded as the quintessential role of women," rather than promoting a feminist political agenda.³⁶¹ Recall that the religious-nationalist community considers feminism a destabilizing force that threatens the structure of the traditional family. Not surprisingly, the Rachelim women associated feminism with "negative attitudes and destructive goals," while they considered their actions to be motivated by "positive attitudes and creative goals."³⁶² Even if the women did not intend to subvert the normative patriarchal order, however, the possibility remains that their actions did indeed deviate from the normative female settler narrative.

***HaKol HaNashi* or the Feminine Voice**

In many respects, Rachelim's creation marked a stark departure by Gush Emunim women from the traditional GE narrative of settlement establishment. First, women were eager to respond in a peaceful manner, for they disliked the violent

aspects typically associated with the male settlers.³⁶³ Feige points to studies that demonstrate how the hostile and violent aspects of Gush Emunim ideology negatively influence the family.³⁶⁴ The women's preference for peaceful alternatives surfaced in their diction. El-Or and Aran detect sex-differences in the settlers' language: men spoke of "seizing, struggling, constructing and resisting," while women referred to "creating, giving birth, continuity and education."³⁶⁵ Second, in what El-Or and Aran refer to as a "form of feminine radicalism," women's primary roles transformed from supporters of men to initiators of settlements, thereby eclipsing their husbands' roles.³⁶⁶ This is evidenced by the women's decision to act on their accord rather than ceding to the male leadership's desires. Not only did the military and other administrative bodies oppose the women's actions, encouraging them to "go home," but the women's husbands were also never consulted.³⁶⁷

Third, the Rachelim women used their positions as mothers to speak with a legitimate political voice. Neuman has observed a similar trend in the past, whereby "in settlement expansion, women mask the political content of their actions by recasting them as part of the private sphere."³⁶⁸ Neither the military nor the government, in allowing the women to remain at the mourning site on the grounds of protecting their children, viewed the women's actions as political. Instead, they cast women as "non-political advocates of children," whose perceived maternal protective response was "natural."³⁶⁹ Contrary to previous instances of settlement establishment, the Rachelim mothers were not auxiliaries in their husbands' settlement tactics, but innovators of a "novel strategy based on novel arguments."³⁷⁰ Their unique strategy used maternalism and "routine practices of care," rather than sole obstinate refusals to leave, in order to normalize an otherwise illegal

settlement.³⁷¹ These routine practices, which include protecting, nurturing and homemaking, were previously manipulated by GE women to advocate more deliberate political undertakings, for

the significance of the quotidian in this case lies in the fact that politics is infused in everyday practices and these practices serve as the foundation for more overtly political acts, such as takeovers, protests, and political rallies.³⁷²

In willingly bringing along their children into a potentially life-threatening situation from the outset, the Rachelim women forged a relationship between the memorial piece of land and its female defenders that could not easily be severed by the military, the government or even their spouses.³⁷³

Moreover, their “commitment to retain childrearing routines in the face of considerable conflict” was also imbued with political significance.³⁷⁴ The mother-child bond is perceived to be “natural,” thereby lending women “the character of morally sanctioned actions.”³⁷⁵ The maternal ethos, therefore, carries the moral authority. To question women’s primacy in this instance would be to jeopardize a foundation that has served not only the interests of the settlements, but the state as a whole.³⁷⁶ More public support was given to the women for their maternal motivations, which they frequently expressed in actions and in words. In response to questions requiring ideological explanations, they reiterated what their male counterparts professed:

Israelis are duty bound to occupy and hold all parts of the historical land of Israel, that living in the territories was a risk to be taken today in the interest of securing complete safety in the future.³⁷⁷

Thus, women’s use of maternalism enabled them to be political actors who did not need to account for overt political actions.

The Gush Emunim women repeatedly justified their paradoxical decision to protect their children in a way that many Israelis would consider even more life-threatening.³⁷⁸ For the sake of national security, the women endangered their own families, although they disagree with this assessment. One could argue, as El-Or and Aran do, that had they truly desired to protect their children, they would not be living in the settlements:

The full realization of the experience of motherhood would mean evacuation of the territories, or at least an acknowledgement of the contradiction between the wish to ensure the safety of one's children and the national conflict. . . If this mother does not believe in a totally national narrative, she may experience the contradiction between her two tasks and acknowledge the fact that her life in Israel poses a continuous threat to herself and her children, as well as a threat to the Palestinians.³⁷⁹

Israeli society has often criticized settler parents, who are sometimes regarded as “being ready to sacrifice their children in the name of faith and ideology.”³⁸⁰ Assuming El-Or and Aran's argument is true, this is a legitimate criticism. Settlement evacuation, or recognition by the women that settlement life is more dangerous than life outside the settlements, severely undermines Gush Emunim's vision of a Greater Land of Israel. Therefore, the Rachelim women cannot fully be committed to the safety of their own families, as this would threaten their movement's settlement goals.

Although their actions were ostensibly for their own families' safety, the women ultimately endangered their families' lives for the sake of the nation.³⁸¹ They argued that it was their responsibility to the country and the nation to ensure that Rachelim and other settlements remain, regardless of whatever events transpire.³⁸² This responsibility, in turn, helped the women endure the difficulties of the founding days of Rachelim, knowing that “in spite of everything that's happening, [this] is saving the state, the whole state.”³⁸³

Alongside saving the state, however, comes a greater personal risk, one that settlers are not too eager to admit.

Yaron Ezrahi attributes this risk to the settlers' inability to divorce themselves from the children:

These parents see the children as an extension of themselves. This attitude contradicts the liberal approach that views children as independent entities. They don't understand the autonomy of the child. In Western society, which has assimilated liberal principles, life is endangered only in order to defend life itself. The settlers are ready to sacrifice themselves and their children for the meaning of life.³⁸⁴

Settler Emuna Elon, aware that people may regard her as an "irresponsible mother," does not deny the risk for her children, but affirms that "it's not a matter of ideology. It's simply the most logical life I can live in this country."³⁸⁵ She attests that she "couldn't think of any place where the children would be perfectly safe, since an Israeli child is not safe when traveling on a bus or on an outing to Dizengoff Center."³⁸⁶ On the other hand, she also claims that the settlements themselves pose little risk:

I really don't think the danger here is much greater. If I were to come to this conclusion, I would really have a problem. I don't believe that there is even one parent who thinks that he is endangering his children for the sake of his ideology. This includes even the most extreme right-wingers -- and I regard the Hebron settlers in the same way that you regard me. People view life here as a logical reality, not only according to their ideology, but also according to their intellect.³⁸⁷

Settlers argue that there is no truly safe place in Israel whenever they are challenged on the issue of their children's safety. They assert that Israel is dangerous everywhere, and that people endanger themselves whenever they go out onto the streets.³⁸⁸ One settler explained, "I don't know where there is a safer place for them [children]" to justify her family's decision for living in the settlement.³⁸⁹ Either of the two arguments put forth, that the risk of living in the settlement is no greater than living anywhere else and/or that

this decision is based on “logic” and not “ideology,” indicate that women are sensitive to the potential risks to their children. Nevertheless, settlers are aware that “nothing arouses sympathy for the settlers more than an injury to a child.”³⁹⁰ Thus, the increased risk to children’s lives is politically advantageous for the movement’s ambition.

Given their assertiveness, it is nonetheless remarkable, considering the negative connotations of feminism – “childless” and “bra-burning” -- within the religious-nationalist camp, that the Rachelim women came to regard their actions as feminist.³⁹¹ Within one month after the murder, the “Feminist Manifesto” was published in a settler newsletter. It read:

We the women of Judea, Samaria and Gaza have established a memorial vigil. We demand we be allowed to found the settlement of Rachelim at this spot, on this hill, where the murderers lay in ambush. There are sufficient government lands for the establishment of a permanent settlement. We remain at this site demanding to found a settlement, for this is the only Zionist response to this criminal murder, we hold vigil at this place, and we will persevere in the hope that the Government of Israel will decide to found a civilian settlement at the spot from which the shots were fired. This will be the way to prove to those who would uproot us that they will never achieve their goal. Not only will we not be uprooted, our roots will only grow deeper. We call upon every woman and mother in the settlements and every woman and mother in Israel to stand up and be counted with us at this memorial vigil. And, of course, men too, husbands and sons, are invited. Let us find comfort in the building of the land.³⁹²

The call to establish Rachelim, therefore, was issued by women, for women. Although men were “invited,” this invitation appears to be more of a formality than the heartfelt plea targeted at the female settlement community at large. The women’s lack of concerted effort to recruit men may be, as noted above, due to men’s political immobilization. Furthermore, the men were not wanted at the settlement. One founding settler, Naomi Sapir, stated:

The men need to undergo a process to make them understand that we are equal partners. Fifty percent of the settlers are women. How can anyone come and tell me

to stay home? That's absurd. The women can go out and make their own livings and ensure their own security. We came out of the kitchen long ago.³⁹³

One settler emphasized that there is “no need to fight men when you're a feminist” and what the Rachelim did was a “feminist act. . . but it [was] done in a gentle and different way than some other feminists choose to act.”³⁹⁴ Thus, the women's descriptions of their renegade actions allude to the ‘separate-but-equal’ arguments used to religiously justify their ‘public’ political inaction.

Conclusion

The Gush Emunim women, in advancing the fundamental ideological tenet of their movement, did not depart from their traditional gender roles during the settlement's creation. Nevertheless, the Rachelim women undertook a feminist action that greatly departed from their movement's expectations: they founded a settlement solely for women; innovatively used motherhood and the need to protect children as a political platform; understood the death of Rachel Druk as particularly problematic and threatening for women and children alike; treated the vigil as a way of uniting all settlement women; and finally, criticized their male counterparts as politically paralyzed. Demonstrating their utter commitment to their movement's original ideological goals, at a time when the movement had moderated and the movement's men could no longer oppose the very authorities against which they had rebelled more than a decade earlier, allowed the women to expand their ‘private’ roles to act on the movement's behalf. The following two chapters demonstrate that this phenomenon is also visible among the women whose movement holds the same territorial goal as Gush Emunim: Hamas.

CHAPTER FOUR

HAMAS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR MANDATORY PALESTINE

As discussed above, Gush Emunim's ideological campaign for settlement creation, accelerated by the events of the 1973 war, stagnated in the following years due to institutional factors. Consequently, women eclipsed their husbands' functions as primary settlers and political negotiators in their creation of Rachelim. During these years, a strengthening parallel movement in the Palestinian territories encountered similar ideological and institutional challenges, the latter of which motivated women's increased political participation. Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela describe the phenomenon:

The turn to Islam in the West Bank was probably also boosted by the ascendancy to power in 1977 of a nationalist-religious coalition in Israel. The new right-wing government embarked on a large-scale Jewish settlement effort in the West Bank, in which Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful), a religious-nationalist messianic group, played a central role.³⁹⁵

Yet Israeli measures, as Khaled Hroub counters, were not solely responsible for the popularity of Islamist movements:

Rather than perceiving the rise of Palestinian Islamism as a reaction to developments within the Israeli domestic arena and their consequences for Palestinians, this movement's rise should be viewed as an outcome of two long, intertwined processes: a) the internal struggle of Palestinian politics as they developed in light of the struggle against Israel and the position of the Islamists within this dynamism; and b) the phenomenon of political Islam, which swept the region by the late 1970s and remained at the heart of sociopolitical change and tension, Palestinian Islamism being the local manifestation of a much wider tide.³⁹⁶

Clearly, there are multiple causes for what led to the popularity of Islamist groups among Palestinians.

Because of its use of suicide bombings, the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas or "zeal") has been called the "antithesis" to the ineffective, once Fatah-dominated

Palestinian Authority.³⁹⁷ Since the movement's victory in the 2006 Palestinian national elections, the first Islamist party to win elections in the Middle East, many academics and analysts are debating the significance of an Islamist-led government vis-à-vis political moderation. Peace-building theorists John Darby and Marie-Joëlle Zahhar argue that Hamas is incapable of compromising its ideology.³⁹⁸ Others point to the incongruence of expecting a Palestinian democracy to exclude Islamists.³⁹⁹ In both cases, however, it is Hamas's "Islamist vision, combined with its nationalist claims and militancy toward Israel, that accounts for the prevailing image of Hamas as a rigid movement, ready to pursue its goals at any costs, with no limits or constraints."⁴⁰⁰ Hamas's involvement and institutionalization within Palestinian society has caused it to become more pragmatic than its Charter indicates. Nevertheless, Hamas's moderation, relative to its Charter's objectives, occurred more than a decade before its electoral victory, and nearly a decade before women's overt military and political involvement.

This chapter examines the historic role of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine and provides a discussion of Hamas's religious ideology. The movement's evolution in pragmatism is described in two stages, pre-Oslo and post-Oslo, the latter focusing on policies vis-à-vis political participation, restrained violence and acceptance of ceasefires. Over time, Hamas has demonstrated doctrinal flexibility and an ability to adapt its practices to changing political circumstances. Under its exclusively male leadership, Hamas barred women from the formal decision-making processes that resulted in the movement's pragmatism.

History of the Muslim Brotherhood

In 1928, Hassan al-Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in Egypt.⁴⁰¹ His brother, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Banna, left Egypt in 1935 to establish contacts in Palestine and ten years later, the MB opened an official Palestinian branch.⁴⁰² Through education, charity and social services that reflected Islamic values, this exclusively male movement aspired to reform secular society.⁴⁰³ Although al-Banna considered nationalism to be a "secular, exclusivist and selfish value," it nonetheless played an important role in how the MB developed in Palestine.⁴⁰⁴

In the aftermath of the 1948 war, Egypt and Jordan gained administration and control respectively over the Palestinian territories. Consequently, the MB in these territories reflected the corresponding countries' political attitudes vis-à-vis the Palestinian issue.⁴⁰⁵ The countries' stances on the MB also played a role in how the MB developed. The Brotherhoods of Transjordan and the West Bank merged and devoted much of their energy toward education and politics. The Jordanian regime considered the MB as a 'loyal opposition'; the movement was allowed to participate politically, thereby countering the popularity of the leftist and secularist opposition groups, but never gained, or was granted, enough political power to threaten the status quo.⁴⁰⁶

The MB's relationship with Egypt, however, was much more turbulent. When Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser declared the MB to be an illegal movement, many of its active Egyptian members fled to the Gaza Strip to avoid the vigilant gaze of the government.⁴⁰⁷ Egypt nevertheless implemented repressive measures on Brotherhood activity in the Gaza Strip. Unlike their Jordanian counterparts, Gazan MB members focused on revolutionary and militant tactics, forming secret military cells in the

1950s.⁴⁰⁸ After Israel gained control over the territories in 1967 and communication between both territories was permitted, the Gaza MB was able to share its clandestine skills with its West Bank counterpart.⁴⁰⁹

Despite the latter's moderation, however, the entire MB viewed the loss of Palestinian land as "a major symptom of the broader malaise of the Muslim world."⁴¹⁰ This spiritual ailment needed alleviation through greater social reform. For decades, an emphasis on reforming society eclipsed the need to violently resist the occupation of the land. Aside from 1968 until 1970, when the Palestinian MB, under pressure from the wider Arab MB headquarters, collaborated with Fatah in military attacks against Israel, the Palestinian MB otherwise refrained from participating in military operations.⁴¹¹

The policy of abstention from active resistance did not sit well with many MB members. As early as 1957, Khalil al-Wazir had advised the Gazan MB to create a separate organization whose sole task would be armed struggle and whose justification would be entirely divorced from Islamic reasoning.⁴¹² His advice was ignored. Consequently, some members broke away and formed Fatah, attracting the support of many secular Palestinians. Fatah became the dominant group in the Palestinian Liberation Organization, whose legitimacy "as the embodiment of the Palestinian national will" the MB rejected.⁴¹³ Following Fatah's example, disgruntled Gazan Brothers formed the militant group Islamic Jihad in the early 1980s.⁴¹⁴ During this time, the spiritual leader of the Palestinian MB, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, began hoarding weapons. The weapons were intended to be used upon the Brotherhood's eventual entrance on the political stage, and would serve two purposes: punishing Palestinian collaborators with Israel and acquiring the support of militant MB members who might otherwise transfer their loyalty to Islamic

Jihad.⁴¹⁵ Describing the multiple interests with which Hamas was faced, author Husam al-Nasir expounds:

In the second half of the 1980s the Brotherhood had acquired the organizational capacity and sufficient following to engage in *jihad*. The theoretical perspective on the long-ranging debate concerning the priority to be accorded to the armed struggle versus the social change thesis had arrived at an organic synthesis of the two. The Brotherhood tried to resolve the conflict between the two priorities by arguing that it was possible and necessary to try to achieve them simultaneously, and not to delay one for the sake of the other.⁴¹⁶

Therefore, the mid-1980s were years devoted to increasing the arms supply while reconciling the divergent attitudes toward participation in the active resistance.

When Hamas emerged as an independent organization in 1987/88, the Palestinian MB had already created extensive social networks that affected education, medical care, food, daycare and an array of other services. Hamas was able to capitalize on this social infrastructure, attaining the support of individuals who might not have agreed with the movement ideologically. For example, in the late 1990s, the social institutions created by the MB and Hamas supported 275 000 people, not all of whom were Hamas ideologues; this number has increased exponentially since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifada.⁴¹⁷ Despite women's institutional absence in the 1990s from the exclusively male organizational structure of the MB and Hamas, women worked in Islamist women's charitable societies, although these did not fall under Hamas's direct auspices.⁴¹⁸ In interviews between Islah Jad and Islamist women, the latter denied any involvement in Hamas or any role in organizing women's programmes.⁴¹⁹ Nevertheless, among Palestinian women and men, the MB/Hamas has a well-established history as a credible social movement.

Ideology of Hamas

In order to understand why Hamas is perceived as rigidly uncompromising, it is crucial to examine its religious ideology on several matters. First and foremost is the role of Islam. The motto of Hamas, found in Article 8 of its Charter, is that “Allah is its goal, the Prophet is its model, the Qur’an is its constitution, *Jihad* is its path, and death for the sake of Allah is its most coveted desire.”⁴²⁰ By employing this religious language, identifying nationalism as “part and parcel of its religious creed,” and using significant historical figures in Islam to support its cause, Hamas uses Islam as the basis in constructing Palestinian national identity.⁴²¹ The movement aspires to create a religious state, “for the Islamic nature of Palestine is part of [its] religion, and anyone who neglects his religion is bound to lose.”⁴²² Religious and political goals are inseparable, since nationalism is part of religion. This inseparability is especially relevant when discussing the issue of Palestine.

The significance of Hamas’s view of Palestine as *waqf*, or “endowed” land for Muslims for time immemorial, is clear: giving up any part of Palestine within the borders defined by the British mandate is tantamount to forfeiting part of Islam, for “renouncing any part of Palestine means renouncing part of the religion; the nationalism of the Islamic Resistance Movement is part of its faith.”⁴²³ Accepting a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank is “sinful if it entails conceding the rest of Palestine to Israel, an illegitimate entity.”⁴²⁴ For Hamas, as for Gush Emunim, any land-for-peace agreements are meaningless. Article 13 states that “[peace] initiatives, the so-called peaceful solutions, and the international conferences to resolve the Palestinian problem, are all contrary to the beliefs of the Islamic Resistance Movement.” The conferences are later

described in the Article as a “waste of time.” Accordingly, Hamas has traditionally called for the Palestinian withdrawal from peace negotiations with Israel.⁴²⁵

Before the twentieth century, Palestinian land had no special status. Faced with the loss of land to Zionists, Hajj Amin al-Husseini issued a fatwa in 1935 that declared Palestine a “trust” for Palestinian Muslims, as granted by Allah and Muslims worldwide. In a similar vein, confronted with the Israeli settlement projects and possible Palestinian land concessions for peace, Hamas raised the “trust” status of Palestinian land to *waqf*.⁴²⁶ It justified this action religiously by viewing Abraham not as the first monotheist, but as a “full-fledged Muslim,” whose construction of the al-Aqsa mosque henceforth made the land Islamic.⁴²⁷ *Waqf* is considered an invention of tradition, since its legal status does not exist in Shari’ah; no Muslim country today has the legal status of *waqf*.⁴²⁸ Regardless of its legitimacy, Palestine’s status as *waqf* compels Hamas adherents to ‘regain’ control of Palestine through *jihad*.⁴²⁹

Jihad is the holy war against the enemy and is intrinsic to Hamas’s brand of Palestinian nationalism.⁴³⁰ According to Article 7, Hamas views itself as “one of the links in the Chain of *Jihad* in the confrontation with the Zionist invasion.” Other links in this chain include the Muslim Brothers who participated in the 1948 and 1967 wars, as well as the man after whom the militant division of Hamas is named, Izz a-din al-Qassam.⁴³¹ *Jihad* involves “confronting him [the enemy] when he sets foot on the land of the Muslims.”⁴³²

Hamas diverged from the traditional understanding of *jihad* as a collective responsibility (*fard kifaya*), and proclaimed it to be an individual duty (*fard ‘ain*), incumbent on every man and woman.⁴³³ On the one hand, the emphasis on this external

form of *jihad* encourages the movement to glorify ‘suicide bombings’ or ‘martyrdom operations,’ where an “act of martyrdom [is] actually the betrothal marriage of the martyr with the land of Palestine.”⁴³⁴ Here, the individual fulfills his/her obligation toward religion and nationalism. The call for *jihad* is intended not only for Palestinian Muslims but for Muslims worldwide, to liberate both Palestine and Jerusalem, a city that is highly symbolic in Arab political mythology.⁴³⁵ On the other hand, *jihad* for Hamas is also defined as an internal war, a war against secularism and immorality, and indirectly, the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Thus, in either scenario, to call off or lose the fight for *jihad* would be considered demoralizing for Hamas and Muslims, a concession of victory not only in terms of contested territory, but also contested worldviews.

Liberating Palestine requires that the State of Israel be destroyed through an armed struggle, though Hamas also emphasizes “the eschatological significance. . . [of] the eventual extermination of the Jews in addition to the glorification of martyrdom among its won fighters [sic].”⁴³⁶ The Charter’s introduction states that Hamas’s “struggle against the Jews is extremely wide-ranging and grave,” while Article 28 declares that “Israel, by virtue of its being Jewish and of having a Jewish population, defies Islam and Muslims.” Unlike the PLO, which tried to distinguish Zionists from Jews, Hamas uses the terms interchangeably. Meir Litvak assesses that

the portrayal of the Jews as powerful arch-enemies and conspirators against Islam departs from traditional Islamic depictions of the Jews that are associated with cowardice, degradation and wretchedness. It has become a central element in Hamas’ ideology and an important theme in the writings of all Islamist movements in the Middle East as part of a broader need to explain the current crisis of the Muslim world. It is particularly difficult within this context to explain Jewish or Zionist success vis-à-vis the Muslims since, according to Islamic tradition, the Jews were destined to humiliation and subjugation to Muslims after they had rejected the message of the Prophet. . . The only way to explain this cognitive dissonance is to

magnify the power and evil of the Jews, and thereby help to explain Muslim weakness.⁴³⁷

Israel represents both a state and people that must be conquered for Hamas's vision to be realized.

In this struggle, Hamas cautiously allies itself with nationalist Palestinian movements, provided "they do not give their allegiance to the Communist East or the Crusading West."⁴³⁸ Hamas emphasizes its aversion to dividing the nationalist struggle, maintaining that "it is there to bring to bring together and not to divide, to preserve and not to squander, to unify and not to throw asunder."⁴³⁹ Viewing the Palestinian Liberation Organization as "the closest to the heart of the Islamic Resistance Movement," Hamas carefully praises and criticizes the PLO's vision.⁴⁴⁰ Attributing perceived weaknesses of the PLO to its upbringing in a deficient political environment, the Charter explains:

Because of the situations surrounding the formation of the Organization, of the ideological confusion prevailing in the Arab world as a result of the ideological invasion under whose influence the Arab world has fallen since the defeat of the Crusaders and which was, and still is, intensified through orientalists, missionaries and imperialists, the Organization adopted the idea of the secular state. And that is how we view it.⁴⁴¹

Hamas acknowledges the PLO's important role, but nonetheless identifies the PLO with secularism, which "completely contradicts religious ideology."⁴⁴² Even before the Oslo accords were signed,

Hamas sharply criticize[d] the PLO's secular discourse and its leadership, as well as its political program calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state that would coexist with the State of Israel. Hamas had already condemned the PLO's recognition of the State of Israel and its acceptance of UN Security Resolutions 242 and 338.⁴⁴³

The Oslo peace accords, however, confronted Hamas with the challenge of undermining its staunchest political opponent without losing the mass support it had acquired before the agreement.

Pre-Declaration of Principles

The political evolution of Hamas can be divided in the pre-Oslo (1987/88 – 1993) and post-Oslo (1993 – present) eras, with the Declaration of Principles being the crucial event in which Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization formally recognized each other and made a pledge for peace. In each of these time periods, Hamas's actions were governed by both political and military considerations. When Hamas published its Charter in December 1987, its ultimate aim was to preserve the Islamic core of society. King Hussein's disengagement from the West Bank created space for the Palestinians to declare statehood, an action that Hamas co-founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin opposed, for fear it would divide the Palestinian population along religious and geographic lines.⁴⁴⁴ Nevertheless, people became divided over the question of whether religion should precede nationalism in the struggle for Palestinian independence. In this debate, Hamas "represented a shift of emphasis in the Islamic movement's strategy, from reformist and communal to political, and from the spiritual life of the individual to national action," thereby appealing to more nationalist-minded individuals.⁴⁴⁵ This need to appeal to a broader base caused Hamas to adhere less strictly to its religious doctrine.

During the initial phase of the movement, a number of factors reveal that the creation of Hamas was clearly a deliberate political decision. First, its founding was the result of a compromise within the movement. Throughout the 1980s, the leadership of the

Mujamma, the MB-affiliated Islamic Centre founded by Yassin, had opted for a passive approach to the occupation, an approach scorned by secular nationalists. When the Intifada erupted, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was viewed as politically inept and militarily deficient, which created an opportune political space in which the Mujamma leadership could participate.

More importantly, the MB was compelled to forfeit its previous passive policy, since “non-engagement would mean losing the respect of, and political influence over, its young activists.”⁴⁴⁶ The possibility of the Intifada failing, or the Mujamma drawing Israeli reprisal for Intifada activities, were also risks to be considered. Hamas’s creation as a distinct movement from the Brotherhood was therefore supported both by MB members who favoured active resistance, namely the younger and more militant members, and by those who opposed the Brotherhood’s direct involvement, since their own MB participation and membership would remain unaffected. In the event of the failure of Hamas or the Intifada, the MB could not be held entirely responsible.

When Hamas emerged, its political and military leadership were initially unified in their strategies vis-à-vis Israel. Iyad Barghouti remarked in 1993, before the accords were made public, that there was “not really [much discrepancy between what is preached and what is practiced]” concerning Hamas’s military aims and its opposition to peace negotiations.⁴⁴⁷ The independence from the MB and its perceived rigid religiosity encouraged many individuals who had not been involved in Mujamma activities to join Hamas and participate in its armed operations. Israeli reprisals to Hamas attacks often encouraged more individuals to join. In response to three separate attacks carried out by Hamas on Israelis, over the span of one week in December 1992, Israel expelled 400

Palestinian Islamists, many of whom were affiliated with Hamas.⁴⁴⁸ “Israel,” concludes Wendy Kristianasen, “could not have dreamed up a better way of transforming the movement it feared into collective martyrs.”⁴⁴⁹

While the number of younger, more violent and less religious Hamas members grew, Hamas’s full commitment to its Charter’s objectives began to wane as the new generation was incorporated into positions of leadership.⁴⁵⁰ Within two years of the Charter’s publication, for example, there were already changing perceptions of the Jews. While the Charter attributes world power, wealth, influence and control to the Jews, the prevailing notion of global Jewish domination began to diminish. For instance, in internal memos circulated among Hamas leaders, the enemy came to be primarily identified as Zionists, rather than as Jews.⁴⁵¹ It was not until after the Oslo accords were signed, however, that discrepancies could clearly be identified between Hamas’s stated objectives and its actual practices.

Post-Declaration of Principles

The Oslo peace accords incorporated Palestinian recognition of Israel and received massive support across Palestinian society. Consequently, Hamas, which had at this point acquired large popular support from disenchanted PLO supporters for its violent campaign, was faced with the dilemma of jeopardizing its reputation for doctrinal adherence. Frame alignment theory proposes that “movements whose power is largely dependent on securing popular support may engage in a process of ideological alignment to maximize ideological resonance with potential constituencies, their life experiences and existing world perspectives”; that is, if the overwhelming majority of Palestinians

favoured peace, Hamas would somehow need to incorporate this preference into its ideology if it hoped to maintain support.⁴⁵²

When the Oslo accords were made public, the PLO recovered much of its old popularity, thereby eclipsing support for Hamas. The Islamist movement's reaction, however, was not quite as zealous as might have been anticipated. Hroub makes clear that "the strongest language used by Hamas to describe the subsequent security accords with Israel was 'treasonous agreements,' but it avoided naming individuals or leaders who negotiated those pacts."⁴⁵³ In their public statements, Hamas leaders employed "non-inflammatory" language.⁴⁵⁴ Considering that the Hamas Charter describes "leaving the circle of conflict with Israel" as a "major act of treason" that will "bring curse [sic] on its perpetrators," Hamas's under-reaction appears astonishing. Nevertheless, democratic transition theory posits:⁴⁵⁵

Participation in a politically competitive environment typically leads to the gradual internalization of the underlying values of power-sharing and compromise. The increasing manifestation of a consequentialist, rather than an absolutist logic is likewise to be expected.⁴⁵⁶

Because of the reinvigoration of the PLO-Hamas competition, and the new authority given to the PLO as the Palestinian Authority (PA), Hamas would gradually be forced to compromise if it hoped to secure any power.

Although Hamas rejected the validity of the accords, it did modify several of its political stances over time, even though the political situation, that is the PLO/PA's recognition of Israel, remained unchanged.⁴⁵⁷ This was largely due to Hamas's policy of *shura*, in which power is not monopolized by the external leadership, but shared with the internal leadership. Consequently, the internal leadership did wield power and caused the group's overall approaches to moderate, since "decisions, when taken by outside political

leadership, do not involve them in a direct clash with the PA, as opposed to the inside leaders who must cope with the movement's day-to-day affairs.”⁴⁵⁸ Signs of pragmatism found expression in political participation and coexistence with the PLO/PA, restrained violence, the use of ceasefires and the normalization of the two-state solution as a reference point.

Political Participation

The creation of the PA generated a series of political hurdles for Hamas. First, as a consequence of the PA's recognition of Israel, Hamas entirely rejected the PA's authority. Second, its demand of 40 percent of the Palestinian National Council seats had not been accepted in the past and was unlikely to be accepted at the present moment.⁴⁵⁹ Third, the Fatah-dominated PA actively marginalized Hamas as a political group: its leadership was frequently arrested, detained, harassed and excluded from civil and governmental bodies.⁴⁶⁰ The antagonism between the political rivals further aggravated Hamas's position regarding Israel.

Initially, Hamas opposed the entire Palestinian electoral process. Like Gush Emunim, Palestinian Islamist groups in general were apathetic in their attitudes toward democracy, viewing it as a “secular, Western concept” inferior to the Qur'anic – and therefore ideal – model of *shura* (consultation) councils.⁴⁶¹ Theoretically, in an Islamic state, non-Islamic parties would be banned, “but before the establishment of Islamic rule, democracy is preferred to dictatorship as more hospitable to the flourishing of Islam.”⁴⁶² Yet an aversion to democracy was not the primary reason for Hamas's electoral reticence. Hamas's official electoral and party boycott of the 1996 elections is often attributed to the

movement's refusal to recognize Israel, since "from an Islamist's point of view, participation in self-rule gives legitimacy to the peace process."⁴⁶³ Lending credit to this argument is the movement's published statements in its nascent years with the heading "No Elections Except After the Expulsion of the Occupier."⁴⁶⁴

The debate over political participation nevertheless grew, especially after the formation of the PA. Given the popularity of the peace process at the time, had a Hamas-backed party won, Hamas would have been forced to recognize the Oslo accords regardless of its ideological objection; even a refusal to denounce the elections could imply Israel's recognition in the public eye. Moreover, some of the Hamas leadership regarded the elections as an Israeli attempt to cripple the movement. Explains Mahmoud al-Zahhar:

Israel wants to use these [1996] elections to lure us into the trap of the political game. Just as it succeeded in luring the PLO in the 1970s. . . Israel says it is ready to recognize the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people if the PLO will accept Israel and the two-state solution. The rest is known. The PLO, made vulnerable thus, was weakened even before the opening of the negotiations. Hamas will not fall into this trap.⁴⁶⁵

Contrary to al-Zahhar's assertion, Hamas's stance on electoral participation had clearly shifted from rejection to consideration toward the end of 1994, pointing to new approaches to the Oslo accords.⁴⁶⁶ Palestinian scholar Ziad Abu-Amr elaborated in 1994:

While Hamas publicly oppose[d] a peaceful settlement with Israel on principle, the movement's actual position regarding an interim solution remain[ed] ambiguous, as illustrated in recent Hamas statements that leave participation in the elections for the Palestinian Council open.⁴⁶⁷

In spite of its secular basis, however, democracy enlarged Hamas's room for political manoeuvring. Hamas's failure to label the elections as *haram*, or religiously forbidden, largely made this possible.⁴⁶⁸

In contrast to the group's principles, Hamas members like Ismail Haniyeh pushed for the group's political participation, citing a number of persuasive reasons to gain political power.⁴⁶⁹ In October and December 1995, he and three other moderates met with the external Hamas leadership, but a consensus on Hamas's political participation could not be achieved.⁴⁷⁰ Although the movement had often been labelled idealist, unable to address the "facts-on-the-ground," its leaders also preferred not to situate the group in a politically isolated environment. Khaled Masha'al, head of Hamas's political bureau based in Damascus, asserted that members of the movement

are not advocates of isolationism from reality. . . That does not mean, however, that [they] are going to be preoccupied by any fait accompli manufactured by others; nor are [they] going to follow in their footsteps wherever they may lead, not deviating from their path while forgetting the true path to [their] goal. Excessive preoccupation with realism has led the Palestinian cause to where it is now. On the other hand, idealism may not advance [them] a single step toward the liberation of Palestine. . . This does not mean that [they] should become mired in reality or that [their] vision should become so myopic that [they] are unable to see beyond [their] feet. [They] should keep a foot in reality to launch [them]selves toward [their] strategic objective with firm steps.⁴⁷¹

Originally, Hamas had intended to participate in the elections and had even created a political party, Hizb al-Khalas al-Watani al-Islami (National Islamic Salvation Party), for that purpose.⁴⁷²

Unlike the secular parties, however, Hamas did not attempt to attract female voters, nor did they recruit women for the party's electoral list. Islah Jad explains that

the Salvation Party has no bodies parallel to those in Gaza or in the West Bank, nor any mobilizing and organizing structures for other social groups, such as students and workers. While party members were seen in the different activities of the intifada (strikes, funeral processions, confrontations with the Israeli army, and so on), female Hamas members at the time were not visible as participants. . . the reason for this absence could be explained by the fact that Islamist organizations target males. . . in answer to why the Islamists did not seek to organize female students in their mainstream political parties, whether under the name of the Muslim Brothers, Hamas, or the Salvation Party, it must be acknowledged that

these institutions carried the imprint of the conservative gender ideology of the movement from its inception.⁴⁷³

Yet even male Hamas members were officially denied their voting privileges: when they discovered that Arafat's win was 'pre-arranged,' Hamas leaders withdrew from national electoral participation and called for a boycott of the elections.⁴⁷⁴ Their withdrawal, however, was last-minute. In spite of the boycott, Hamas is credited with supporting the Hamas-affiliated candidates who nevertheless ran, seven of whom won seats on the Palestinian Council.⁴⁷⁵ The boycott was evidently not observed by Hamas followers: between 60 and 70 percent of Hamas supporters voted, reflecting "the deep divisions within the movement over the issue of participation in the elections."⁴⁷⁶

Although it refrained from running in the national elections, Hamas still demonstrated an ability to work not just within a secular political system, but with secular parties. In joining the Palestinian Forces Alliance, a group of ten Palestinian organizations that rejected the Declaration of Principles, Hamas demonstrated its flexibility in working alongside non-Islamic, even communist, parties when necessary, in spite of the Charter's prohibition of forming communist alliances.⁴⁷⁷ Despite its absence from the 1996 elections, Hamas's willingness to participate begs the question of how it approached the issue of coexistence with its primary adversaries, the former PLO and the PA.

The political and violent conflict between Fatah/PLO and the MB/Hamas (the former often offensively labelled the other as "collaborators") increased in intensity throughout the 1980s. The Declaration of Principles in 1993, the first instance in which Israel and the PLO officially recognized each other, further widened the ideological gulf between both camps. In spite of its refusal to recognize Israel, however, Hamas used

pragmatic justifications in its initial willingness to run as a party in the elections that arose from the DOP framework, even urging its members to vote. Women did not actively campaign for the party, although this has been attributed to their “depend[ence] on the goodwill of their husbands, not on the commitment of the party.”⁴⁷⁸ While the public gradually expected Hamas to engage politically with the PLO/PA through dialogue and co-operation, the Hamas leadership realized that there was a diminished risk of Hamas members charging its leadership with ideological betrayal; such a challenge would inevitably cause an organizational implosion.⁴⁷⁹

The PLO was the sole established international voice for the Palestinians and despite Hamas’s resentment, any legitimacy they could hope to acquire would demand working with a PLO-based institution.⁴⁸⁰ Furthermore, Hamas was cognizant that the PLO’s adoption of more pragmatic policies after 1973 met with strong public approval. By intending to vote in the 1996 elections, an action the public perceived as its partial acceptance of the PA, Hamas demonstrated a sense of political pragmatism. This adjustment helped prevent the marginalization of the movement and accusations that it held “unshakable fundamentalist interests.”⁴⁸¹

Hamas’s need to compete with the secular parties prompted the movement to consider women as potential recruits. In 1997, the Islamic Salvation Party published a pamphlet entitled “Palestinian Woman [sic]. . . Where Next?” and distributed it at a conference at which male and female Hamas members spoke about women and Islam.⁴⁸² In late 2003, Hamas’s leaders allowed women, for the first time in MB/Hamas’s history, to join the mainstream Islamist movement.⁴⁸³ This decision was not a result of the movement’s changing gender attitudes, but the result of two calculated decisions.

First, the women whom Hamas promoted and continues to promote are the wives of popular Hamas leaders who have either been assassinated or imprisoned.⁴⁸⁴ The women, therefore, represent their husbands' legacies more than they represent themselves. Unlike their husbands, these female Hamas electoral candidates were and still are unlikely to be arrested, which would allow them to campaign openly without fear of detainment.⁴⁸⁵ Second, there was an ardent need for Hamas to incorporate the increasing numbers of educated Islamist women who desired an intellectual outlet after graduating from university.⁴⁸⁶ In spite of the women's hope to be more involved, Hamas's 2006 election platform called for women's "social leadership," the "insist[ence] on their purity, shyness and moral obligation" and the reactivation of "women [sic] voluntary organizations." The platform did not encourage women's political involvement in the movement's leadership. While Hamas's moderation vis-à-vis national political participation occurred in the mid-1990s, it only adjusted its policies toward women's involvement within the movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Moreover, the next chapter makes clear that its female candidates deviated from their platform's insistence on shyness and similar 'virtues.'⁴⁸⁷

Restrained Violence

Mishal and Sela claim that "a prolonged adoption of strategies of political adjustment could lead to greater institutionalization and routinization at the expense of revolutionary fervour and political and military activism."⁴⁸⁸ On the one hand, Hamas leaders have never relinquished their right to use violence, a right that was, until recently, solely reserved for men. Commenting on the Oslo accords, Mussa Abu Marzuq, head of

Hamas's political bureau at the time, stated that "military activity is a permanent strategy that will not change. The modus operandi, the tactics, means and timing are conditional on their benefit. They will change from time to time in order to inflict the heaviest damage on the occupation."⁴⁸⁹ Moreover, as Hamas leader Khaled Masha'al believes, "negotiating without resistance leads to surrender but negotiating with resistance leads to real peace."⁴⁹⁰ Whereas Marzuq's use of violence is a means unto itself, that is, destructive, Masha'al regards violence as part of a constructive process, leading to "real peace." In either case, destructive or constructive, the use of violence is so deeply ingrained that it is difficult to imagine a scenario in which it might be compromised.

On the other hand, despite its opposition to Oslo, Hamas did not accuse any Palestinians of being collaborators, nor did it attempt to kill those who participated in the accords' creation, nor did it send its thousands of supporters flooding the streets protesting against the PLO, as some expected.⁴⁹¹ Moreover, as a result of Oslo, Hamas's use of violence became more strategic. For instance, many of the violent acts committed against Israel were intended to disrupt the evolution of the peace process.⁴⁹² Paradoxically, the attacks were also used to strengthen the position of the Palestinians in the negotiations. Jamal Mansour, a Nablus-based Hamas leader, stated in 1997 that military operations were intended to demonstrate that Palestinians were not without means, likening Israeli planes to Palestinian bomb-makers.⁴⁹³ The peace process was not only viewed by Hamas as an attempt to make peace with Israel, but as a mechanism for preventing a Palestinian counter-elite from gaining power. Therefore, military operations were carried out for the purposes of undermining the peace process and the hegemony of Fatah and the PLO, and strengthening the Palestinian position in peace negotiations.⁴⁹⁴

In the post-Oslo years, it became apparent that Hamas was not a homogeneous movement, despite Hamas leader Jamil Hamami's assertion in 1988 that "no matter who is in control of our military wing, they are subject to political decisions."⁴⁹⁵ Because of the arrests and imprisonments of the leaders in the early 1990s, the movement compartmentalized its structure according to function.⁴⁹⁶ Military operations, political activities, internal security and *da'wa* (Islamic preaching and social services) became fully autonomous units.⁴⁹⁷ Consequently, while there may have been some overlap between the political and military wings, each could be identified as unique. Moreover, only a minority of political leaders has been involved in the military wing.⁴⁹⁸ By the mid-1990s, the military wing therefore had ceased to reflect the entirety of the movement.

The actions by the military and political wings have since become informed by different interests. For the military wing, clandestine behaviour and efficiency are its primary concerns. The political wing, however, seeks to secure popular support, appear legitimate and maintain public visibility. It even sought credit right after the Oslo accords for the PA's "liberalization of the dress code" that allowed women to discard their hijab outside of mosques and meetings.⁴⁹⁹ By the mid-1990s, the Gaza leadership was more concerned with building civil infrastructure, retaining Hamas's political achievements, and controlling the religious and educational institutions, than it was with military *jihad*.⁵⁰⁰ The leaders later observed a limited "halt to military action in and from the autonomous areas as a basis for establishing a *modus vivendi* with the PA," although "such an undertaking could not become part of its official agenda."⁵⁰¹ While the actions of the military wing often bolstered the status of the political wing, they also undermined it on numerous occasions. Jeroen Gunning observes that "at times, it is precisely the

continuation of unpopular military operations that undermines Hamas's political popularity (as it did towards the end of the 1990s)."⁵⁰²

The military wing has even transgressed policies implemented by Hamas's official leadership.⁵⁰³ The reason for this, mentioned earlier in the chapter, was due to the discrepancy in ages and socioeconomic backgrounds between the militants and the political leadership, the former being less experienced but having a proportionately greater amount of power within the military wing.⁵⁰⁴ Although the political wing of Hamas is the core and "not a mere 'front,' in the sense of being a creation of the armed organization and subservient to it," it has required the co-operation of the military wing to act.⁵⁰⁵

Yet the military wing has proved its capability for restraint. Israel's assassination of Islamic Jihad head Fathi Shiqaqi on 26 October 1995 and of Hamas's chief bombmaker Yahya Ayyash on 5 January 1996 did not prompt Hamas to renege on its promise to the PA in September 1995 to refrain from military action.⁵⁰⁶ None of the four retaliatory suicide bombings that followed in February and March 1996 was directly carried out by Hamas. Following these bombings, Hamas's military wing circulated pamphlets in Gaza and the West Bank that commanded its armed members to "immediately and absolutely obey the central decisions taken by the Qassam leadership to halt martyrdom attacks against the Jews."⁵⁰⁷

In the aftermath of the attacks and this statement, rumours circulated that Hamas was partly to blame. Meetings of prominent figures confirmed the leadership divisions within Hamas: Gazan versus the external, and political versus military.⁵⁰⁸ Although the PA punished Hamas for the bombings, and its supposed violation of the moratorium on

violence, Mishal and Sela explain that “it still remained unclear whether the suicide bombings had been specifically ordered by the Political Bureau or were the result of local initiative and operational availability.”⁵⁰⁹ Contrary to the Charter’s insistence on constant armed struggle against Israel, Hamas’s newspaper editor Ghazi Hamad stated frankly:

Continuous military operations do not help Hamas: in fact they have a grave and damaging effect on the movement. We don’t want the Palestinians to blame Hamas for their suffering, nor are we looking for a confrontation with the Palestinian Authority. We’re ready to talk to them. The cessation of our armed actions will be part of an overall agreement with the Authority. And as soon as we get travel permits, we’ll be ready to go and discuss the matter with the outside leadership in Amman.⁵¹⁰

Although it is not always clear which wing obeys the other, the separation of the political and military wings and the former’s greater concern for political actions and tolerance of the PLO indicate pragmatic adjustments within Hamas.

The Possibility of a Ceasefire with Israel

Hamas’s ultimate goal of creating a Palestinian state that incorporates all of present-day Israel begs the question of how Sheikh Yassin could justify a ceasefire less than two months after Oslo, or how Marzuq could trade withdrawal from the occupied territories for a “truce to give the enemy government an opportunity to get out of the deadlock.”⁵¹¹ More “opportunities” followed: since the Oslo accords, Hamas has offered Israel a ceasefire on ten occasions.⁵¹² To illustrate how Hamas’s position on a ceasefire with Israel evolved from utter rejection to ambiguity and finally to desirability, one must first understand how Hamas defines ceasefire with respect to military, political and doctrinal considerations.

The term “ceasefire” can be translated into Arabic to refer to either a short-term or a long-term agreement. A short-term “period of calm,” or *tahdiya*, is what Palestinian factions signed on 17 March 2005 in Egypt, a temporary break from inter-factional fighting.⁵¹³ Yet in relation to Israel, the word Hamas used throughout the 1990s -- and continues to use today -- is *hudna*, which is understood as a long-term truce. Hassan Youssef, a West Bank Hamas leader, defines *hudna* as “two warring parties liv[ing] side by side in peace and security for a certain period and this period is eligible for renewal. . . . That means Hamas accepts that the other party will live in security and peace,” provided conditions by the other side are met.

Even if a *hudna* were in effect, Hamas in no way would officially abandon its right to use violence, since resistance is intrinsic to its ideology.⁵¹⁴ Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi said that if Hamas abandoned *jihad*, it would lose its identity.⁵¹⁵ Whether the movement would employ this right of violent resistance, however, would be determined by the conditions of the *hudna*. Leading Hamas figure Mahmoud al-Zahhar articulated this difference: “We must calculate the benefit and cost of continued armed operations. If we can fulfill our goals without violence, we will do so. . . . We will never recognize Israel but it might be possible that a truce would prevail between us for days, months or years. . . .”⁵¹⁶ In 1997, Hamas sent a message through Jordan’s King Hussein to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, suggesting an “indirect dialogue with the Israeli government, to be mediated by the king, toward achieving a cessation of violence, as well as a ‘discussion of other matters.’”⁵¹⁷ Clearly, the very act of discussing the possibility of a *hudna* with Israel, let alone initiating peace negotiations, demonstrates that the idea itself has escaped the realm of the impossible for Hamas ideologues.

Although Hamas does not totally reject the idea of peace with Israel, it does not accept it either. Instead, a middle-ground ambiguity exists in which three approaches to the hudna are taken. First, the formation of a Palestinian state from the West Bank and Gaza becomes a legitimate consideration, though not an end goal in itself, in a peace settlement with Israel. Second, were Israel to withdraw from the territories, the borders could be temporarily supervised by international observers. Third, peace talks could only occur after the end of the occupation.⁵¹⁸ These approaches, which are not mutually exclusive, cause the same outcome: temporary tolerance of the other side.

In private, Hamas leaders admitted in 1998 that the younger generation of Palestinians could be socialized into regarding temporary peace as the status quo. Therefore, it would be possible and easier for the younger Palestinians to take the ideological leap necessary to accept peace.⁵¹⁹ Given that making a long-term peace settlement with the Jewish state is considered a crime, the recognition by Hamas leaders that peace with Israel could become a normalized idea among the youth demonstrates a moderated shift in thinking.⁵²⁰ While one might expect more moderation, were political and economic conditions to improve, Hamas would need to maintain enough ambiguity so as not to appear in full contradiction to its doctrine, in order to retain the support of its stronger ideologically committed members.

Although Hamas's consideration of a long-term truce is ideologically significant, it is also important for Hamas militarily. Hudnas have often been a preferred option when Hamas was ill-equipped with arms. Some argue, for example, that all of the hudnas Hamas offered to Israel occurred under conditions of military weakness or pressure from the PA, such as in 1995.⁵²¹ The hudna allowed Hamas time to rebuild and reorganize its

fighters.⁵²² Hamas's cited examples of hudnas implemented throughout Islamic history and used to justify hudnas in contemporary times were all ones in which fighting resumed once the Muslim community gained the advantage.⁵²³ Following the example of Muhammed's ten-year hudna with the Meccans at Hudaybiya in 628 CE, Yassin stated that a hudna with Israel should not exceed ten years. Nevertheless, some militants-turned-moderates have pushed for twenty years.⁵²⁴

Even on the eve of the transfer of control over Gaza and Jericho from Israel to the PA in the mid-nineties, then-head of Hamas's political bureau, Musa Abu Marzuq, offered Israel a truce if it

withdrew to its 1967 borders, disarmed all settlers as a prelude to dismantling all settlements, released Palestinian prisoners, and permitted elections to a 'sovereign' body that would represent all Palestinians and possess the authority to 'define Palestinian self-determination.'⁵²⁵

In 1997, Yassin once again broached the possibility of a ceasefire: "If a Palestinian state [in Gaza and the West Bank] is established, our violence will end."⁵²⁶ Once foreign concepts to Hamas, ceasefires and hudnas with Israel have been justified for both political and military reasons, and have even become a normative model for peace. Beginning in the mid-1990s, Hamas's mention of 1967 borders and settlements as the normative reference point not only eclipsed its original aim of a Mandatory Islamic Palestine, but "suggested a *de facto* recognition of Israel, and so placed it in the mainstream of contemporary Palestinian nationalism."⁵²⁷ More importantly, the gradual acceptance of the idea of a ceasefire, a sure sign of Hamas's moderation, occurred well before Hamas women became visibly active in the public domain.

The concept of a two-state solution with a long-term truce, as iterated by Yassin and Youssef, also became normative for Hamas in the late 1990s.⁵²⁸ One Hamas official

even asserted that there is “only one taboo and that is recognition of Israel. . . anything else is permissible.”⁵²⁹ In Hamas’s first year of existence, however, the movement fully rejected any land concessions to Israel. For example, in 1988 one leaflet asserted that “the Muslims have had a full – not a partial – right to Palestine for generations. . . No Palestinian generation has the right to concede the land, seeped in martyrs’ blood.”⁵³⁰ Another leaflet declared that they were strongly “against conceding so much as an inch of [their] land.”⁵³¹ Palestinian leaders who might have been tempted that year to make land concessions to Israel risked losing body parts: “Let any hand be cut off that signs [away] a grain of sand in Palestine in favour of the enemies of God.”⁵³²

The ushering in of the Oslo era forced Hamas to reorient its nationalist goal, as one leading Islamist explained in 1994:

The Islamist tendency has reached the conclusion that it is no longer possible to halt the [Declaration of Principles] negotiations, since the U.S., which rules our region, is pushing towards [their] completion. But the negotiation with Israel must grant the Palestinians minimal rights, such as the 1967 borders, and at this time they will be satisfied with that. The continuation of the solution of the Palestinian problem will be in the hands of future generations.⁵³³

The 1967 borders therefore replaced the borders of the British Mandate as the “minimal rights.” One could argue that Hamas’s short-term goals do not contradict its long-term aspirations, but at least one Hamas leader implied that Hamas would no longer continue its armed struggle if a Palestinian state along 1967 borders were created. Speaking in 1998, leader Ismail Abu Shanab was quite blunt:

What is the point in speaking rhetoric? Let’s be frank, we cannot destroy Israel. The practical solution is for us to have a state alongside Israel. . . When we build a Palestinian state, we will not need these militias; all the needs for attack will stop. Everything will change into a civil life.⁵³⁴

In accepting and referring to a Palestinian state along the pre-1967 borders, Hamas “achieved political flexibility without forsaking its ideological credibility” by the mid-1990s, years before women were actively involved in either elections or armed resistance.⁵³⁵

Conclusion

Since its inception, Hamas has demonstrated pragmatism and flexibility, in spite of banning women from participating in Hamas’s military wing and from running as candidates in the Salvation Party. Once unheard of, Hamas’s political participation, its employment of ceasefires and its implicit and explicit references to a two-state solution became increasingly normative as the movement became institutionalized. Much of Hamas’s popularity, argues Abdel Sattar Qasem, was acquired through domestic violent and political opposition to Fatah and the PA, rather than to Israel:

Hamas’s doctrinal discourse has diminished in intensity since the mid-1990s, and references to its Charter by its leaders have been made rarely, if at all. The literature, statements, and symbols used by Hamas have come to focus more and more on the idea that the core problem is the multi-dimensional issue of usurpation of Palestinian land, and the basic question is how to end the occupation. The notion of liberating Palestine has assumed greater importance than the general Islamic concept.⁵³⁶

Thus, because Hamas’s popularity is derived from its admirable social movement aspects, the group has not taken an “all or nothing” approach to many aspects of its doctrine, unless the public has desired it. Having demonstrated that Hamas moderated before women overtly became militarily and politically involved in the movement, the next chapter explores how these women’s actions have challenged the normative role for Hamas women.

CHAPTER FIVE
CHALLENGING 'TRADITION,' REINFORCING RELIGION:
THE WOMEN OF HAMAS

While Hamas excluded women from its military operations and its lists of potential party candidates throughout its moderation process, women's eagerness to become more involved forced the movement to overturn these restrictive policies. In the years following Hamas's pragmatic adjustments in the mid-1990s, therefore, women's involvement in the movement became visibly apparent, particularly as campaigners and candidates in the 2006 Palestinian national elections, and as fighters in the movement's armed operations. Yet this begs the question of how women became more involved and why they have chosen to do so.

Women's prescribed role is encapsulated on Hamas's English website in a cartoon. Two hands representing the United States extend from the right, one holding a bowl of soup labelled "compromises" and the other offering a loaf of bread labelled "submission."⁵³⁷ The woman whose baby is sticking its tongue out at the person offering the food says, "A free woman goes hungry but does not submit." The free woman here is one who is not forced to compromise, who is able to assert her independence and who submits only to Allah. Alternatively, some might look at the depiction of this woman and argue that even in hunger, she is neither free nor independent, forced to submit not to the deity only but also to the religious and political ideologies of her milieu. This chapter argues that following Hamas's moderation, in spite of the women's full commitment to the movement's original political goals, some women have subverted aspects of Hamas's

gender ideology, thereby enabling them to occupy a more prominent role in the public arena.

Hamas's Gender Ideology

Hamas's Charter outlines the role of women and states that Muslim men and women have an equal individual obligation with men to fight the enemy who occupies their land.⁵³⁸ For this task, a woman needs neither the permission of her husband nor that of her male relatives.⁵³⁹ Nevertheless, the primary ways in which women may fight the enemy differ from those of men. Article 17 of the Charter states that

the Moslem woman has a role no less important than that of the Moslem man in the battle of liberation. She is the maker of men. Her role in guiding and educating the new generations is great. The enemies have realised the importance of her role. They consider that if they are able to direct and bring her up the way they wish, far from Islam, they would have won the battle. That is why you find them giving these attempts constant attention through information campaigns, films, and the school curriculum, using for that purpose their lackeys who are infiltrated through Zionist organizations under various names and shapes, such as Freemasons, Rotary Clubs, espionage groups and others, which are all nothing more than cells of subversion and saboteurs. . . The Islamic peoples should perform their role in confronting the conspiracies of these saboteurs.⁵⁴⁰

Women's primary responsibilities, therefore, are to produce male children and educate them, while "the Islamic peoples" are responsible for protecting Muslim Palestinian women from the corruptive forces of the enemies. Women maintain responsibility for the preservation and transmission of Islamic culture. Consequently, they are the cultural locus of the battle between secularism and religious conservatism.

Women's domestic role within the family is further stressed in Article 18:

Woman in the home of the fighting family, whether she is a mother or a sister, plays the most important role in looking after the family, rearing the children and imbuing them with moral values and thoughts derived from Islam. She has to teach them to perform the religious duties in preparation for the role of fighting awaiting them.

That is why it is necessary to pay great attention to schools and the curriculum followed in educating Moslem girls, so that they would grow up to be good mothers, aware of their role in the battle of liberation.

She has to be of sufficient knowledge and understanding where the performance of housekeeping matters are concerned, because economy and avoidance of waste of the family budget, is one of the requirements for the ability to continue moving forward in the difficult conditions surrounding us. She should put before her eyes the fact that the money available to her is just like blood which should never flow except through the veins so that both children and grown-ups could continue to live.

“Verily, the Moslems of either sex, and the true believers of either sex, and the devout men, and the devout women, and the men of veracity, and the women of veracity, and the patient men, and the patient women, and the humble men, and the humble women, and the alms-givers of either sex who remember Allah frequently; for them hath Allah prepared forgiveness and a great reward” (The Confederates - verse 25).⁵⁴¹

Once again, the emphasis is placed on childbearing, education and proficient housekeeping. Women educate their children in a *jihad* ethos: boys become fighters and girls support fighters. Islah Jad observes that “women were thus advised to give to their family and nation instead of taking, a notion that Hamas stresses to differentiate Islamist women from secular activists. In this vision, women are portrayed as dependent on men, confined to their homes, and segregated from public space.”⁵⁴² As indicated in the last verse of Article 18, women will receive the same reward as men for fulfilling their parental and domestic duties.

In the Palestinian national struggle, the sacrifice required of women is often highlighted in the context of martyrdom. Ibrahim Z’arour, a professor at Damascus University, observes that “the mother in our Arab and Islamic history has always sacrificed her children and prepared them for martyrdom. This is rooted in our religion, our culture, in our values, and our upbringing.”⁵⁴³ If sacrifice is rooted in cultural history,

one may assume that the struggle for national independence has exerted even greater pressure on women to conform to these precedents. Z'arour further explains that

the mother is the school that prepares the children and sends them to martyrdom in defense of the homeland. This culture is within all of us. I always see mothers who utter cries of joy when they learn that their sons were martyred in battles in Palestine, in the Golan Heights, or Iraq.⁵⁴⁴

Thus, Z'arour's observation of the joy of the mother who sends her son to 'battles in Palestine' is both descriptive and prescriptive.

Sacrificing their sons in this way is also what enables women to achieve, before that of their children or homeland, their own freedom. Adnan Kanafani asserts that "the mother knows perfectly well that if she does not sacrifice her son, she will never be liberated, or her son's sons, or the homeland, will never be liberated." As a result of this sacrifice, however, a woman "may weep a lot, but she will not weep over the martyrdom of her son, because she believes that he has ascended to a better world, leaving a mark of pride on her forehead."⁵⁴⁵ Women have nonetheless wept over the martyrdom of their sons; Kanafani's statements only reinforce the notion that it is not socially acceptable to do so.

These attitudes concerning motherhood, sacrifice and *jihad* embody both political and religious beliefs. Although there are no official statistics that identify how many women belong to or identify with Hamas, this number is likely significant. First, Hamas is the largest religious group in the Palestinian territories, and its only serious political rival is the secular group Fatah.⁵⁴⁶ Hamas's predecessor, the Muslim Brotherhood, was well-established in Palestine for decades.⁵⁴⁷ Second, throughout the 1990s, Hamas gained popularity in the territories because of the perceived political failure of the Palestinian Liberation Organization/Palestinian Authority and the success of Hamas's social

institutions.⁵⁴⁸ The rise in popularity, however, was accompanied by restrictions on public behaviour. Ray Huntington and his colleagues describe how

one manifestation of this revival [of Islamic fundamentalism] during the intifada was the intense pressure put on women to wear the hijab as a sign of their commitment to Islamic orthodoxy. Further, the Islamic revival may have also pressured women to drop out of the labour force, curtail their education, and retreat back into the private sphere of the home. Indeed, supporters of Hamas openly express their desires for a Palestinian state governed by strict Islamic law.⁵⁴⁹

Thus, the rise in popularity of Hamas was associated with increasing curtailment of women's freedoms. This finding alone, however, does not explain why significantly more women than men support Hamas, with at least one poll pointing to a 14 percent gap.⁵⁵⁰

Women's support for Hamas involves two interlocking factors: poverty and religion. Households with women as the primary breadwinner tend to be poorer and therefore more reliant on religious institutions for financial and social support.⁵⁵¹ Hamas's vast charitable institutions cater more to these women than men. Moreover, women are not only likely to identify with Hamas because of social support, but also because of religious affiliation. Palestinian women tend to be more religious than Palestinian men.⁵⁵² Only 6 percent of Palestinian women say they are not religious.⁵⁵³ Even these women, however, cannot escape the Islamic influence due to the overlap of religious and cultural expectations. Both secular and religious women often attend sex-segregated schools and regardless of religious observance, similar familial roles are taught in the schools.⁵⁵⁴ This is due to Hamas's control of a multitude of educational institutions, where Islamic/Hamas political and gender attitudes are reinforced.⁵⁵⁵

Hamas's greater popularity among women than men is surprising given Forskningsstiftelsen Fafo findings that "men [tend to be] more religiously activist [Islamist] than women (24 percent versus 12 percent)."⁵⁵⁶ Asked to choose among Islam,

democracy, Arabism or Socialism as the principle attribute in a future Palestinian state, three times as many respondents favoured Islam over democracy, with women primarily supporting the former and men the latter.⁵⁵⁷ This suggests that women would be more supportive of Hamas and its importance on implementing religious law than would men. Forskningsstiftelsen Fafo accounts for this phenomenon as follows:

With regard to Islam's support among women, two aspects need to be mentioned. First, Islam can be understood in at least two different ways. It can be understood as a religious belief and practice, primarily a matter of scripture. It can also be understood as a political framework, primarily a matter of law, government and society. Survey results suggest that women tend to see Islam more in terms of religious orthodoxy than of political activism. Second, in comparison to men, women seem less politicized and consequently their understanding of various political options tends to be more restricted. Therefore, there are indications that to some extent women overwhelmingly have chosen Islam because this is the attribute with which they are most familiar.⁵⁵⁸

Nearly 60 percent of Palestinian male Islamists, not all of whom are necessarily affiliated with Hamas, believe that that "women should stay at home, take care of their children and not indulge in money generating activities of any sort."⁵⁵⁹ Women are more likely than men to "make the ultimate sacrifice" for their families and the Palestinian people than are men, but are less inclined to do so for the Islamic nation.⁵⁶⁰ Nevertheless, many women still turn to religion for support.

Nearly four out of every five Palestinian women use religious beliefs as a way of coping with the occupation.⁵⁶¹ Statistics indicate that many women practice their beliefs, with 30 percent of women following any four out of five of these practices: fasting during Ramadan, celebrating Eid al-Adha, attending Friday services at the mosque, abstaining from alcohol and making the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).⁵⁶² Ten percent have made the relatively expensive trip to Saudi Arabia to perform hajj, a large number considering the many women who live in poverty.⁵⁶³ The majority of women identify themselves as

moderately religious because they believe that “only religious leaders or scholars, who devote their life to the study of the Koran, the hadiths of the prophet Muhammed, and the Sharia could be considered extremely religious.”⁵⁶⁴

The most revealing statistic is that 31 per cent of Palestinian women regularly attend mosque, despite the absence of any religious or cultural obligation to do so.⁵⁶⁵ This is significant not only because it demonstrates their voluntary religiosity, but because the mosques have traditionally fallen under the control of Hamas. The messages, the beliefs and the practices to which women adhere originate from the mosque and hence reflect the tenets of Hamas’s ideology.⁵⁶⁶ Not surprisingly, Ray Huntington and his colleagues discovered that “those women who pray in the mosque on Fridays, celebrate the feast of Eid al-Adha, fast during Ramadan, and who refrain from alcohol, practice more traditional family roles than do less religious involved women.”⁵⁶⁷ Thus, Islam, and by extension nationalist groups that preach an Islamic message, are contributing factors to the maintenance of traditional female roles.

The emphasis on traditional roles and women’s place in the home, however, does not appear to discourage women’s involvement in the resistance. Huntington et al. were surprised to learn that women’s “extensive political involvement was not related to less traditional family roles or to greater family power for wives.”⁵⁶⁸ During the Al-Aqsa Intifada, women were heavily involved in the resistance. In a survey of 5,600 Palestinian women, each woman performed any combination of the following activities an average of ten times: protecting Palestinians from the Israeli authorities (44 percent of women did this); protesting in demonstrations or marches against the occupation (38 percent); distributing pamphlets for the uprising (9 percent); and throwing stones at the police or

Israel Defense Forces (28 percent).⁵⁶⁹ Women's performance of these particular activities was not unique to the second intifada; many women had participated in these very same forms of resistance in the beginning stages of the first intifada.⁵⁷⁰ What characterizes women's unique involvement in the second intifada, however, is their participation in suicide missions.

Female Suicide Bombers

Suicide bombing is defined by the Institute for Counter-Terrorism as an "operational method in which the very act of the attack is dependent upon the death of the perpetrator. The terrorist is fully aware that if she/he does not kill her/himself, the planned attack will not be implemented."⁵⁷¹ Although suicide terrorism has existed for a millennium, the first female suicide attack occurred relatively recently, in Lebanon in 1985.⁵⁷² Beginning in 1994, Palestinian groups began to employ suicide attacks.⁵⁷³ Until 2002, however, all suicide attacks were carried out by men.⁵⁷⁴ The second intifada marked the first time in history when Palestinian women participated as suicide bombers.⁵⁷⁵ Traditionally, women who participated in the revolutionary cause did so by relaying messages among male militants, supporting male relatives involved in the cause and sacrificing their children.⁵⁷⁶ Terri Toles Patkin notes that "historically, Hamas and Islamic Jihad were adamant that women should not participate in violent demonstrations but rather remain at home in their established roles as mothers and homemakers, donning traditional dress and head coverings."⁵⁷⁷ Regardless of their political or religious affiliation, Hamas venerates the "female martyrs in the Al-Aqsa Intifada": those who helped implant and transport explosive objects, assisted others in militant operations,

high-jacked airplanes and “hundreds of women who participated in some of the heroic operations of the Palestinian revolution.”⁵⁷⁸

Thus far, there have been 11 successful female Palestinian suicide bombers, only one of which has died in a suicide mission carried out by Hamas. Nevertheless, several of the other successful women were Islamist, in spite of their being sent by the more secular Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades.⁵⁷⁹ Hamas glorified all of these women, regardless of the group that organized their missions. Notwithstanding the relative lack of women who have participated in operations under the movement’s banner, Hamas now strongly supports women’s roles in suicide operations. As noted above, however, the Hamas Charter identifies women’s primary function as producing men for *jihad*. While men and women are equally obligated to participate in *jihad*, women’s participation comes in the form of having children and of providing them with a religious upbringing that will eventually prepare them for the day when they, too, must fight.

An understanding of these differences explains why just as male martyrs are glorified, women whose sons are martyrs are also highly honoured. In particular, Mariam Farahat or Um Nidal, has received much international press coverage as the contemporary Khansa’a of Palestine, a historical figure in early Islam who rejoiced in her four sons’ deaths for the sake of defending Islam.⁵⁸⁰ Um Nidal is well known for encouraging her son Muhammed to “become a martyr,” telling him to return from his mission only as a shahid, and celebrating his then-upcoming mission with him in his testimonial video.⁵⁸¹ Rasha al-Rantisi, the widow of Hamas co-founder Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, has also heavily stressed in public the importance of educating male children on martyrdom.⁵⁸² Moreover, a multitude of interviews are available in Palestinian media that

glorify mothers who rejoice in their children's choice of martyrdom.⁵⁸³ Women have therefore been encouraged to be a "symbol of a tender mother who gives the blood of her children."⁵⁸⁴ Nevertheless, some women have chosen to give their own blood in *jihad* operations, rather than, or in addition to, that of their offspring.

Women's participation in militant operations not only endangers their lives, but it threatens the roles defined for them in the Hamas Charter. On the one hand, they are encouraged to produce soldiers for the struggle and to keep active their warrior wombs. On the other, Hamas believes that "it is the duty of every Muslim to struggle for an Islamic state."⁵⁸⁵ If women are killed, however, they are unable to produce the fighters necessary for the greater struggle. These two notions must be harmonized for both to be simultaneously accepted by Hamas. Consequently, the religious basis for allowing women to participate in militant *jihad* is ambiguous. Commenting on women's participation in *jihad*, David Cook observed that "according to the usual interpretation, women are not permitted to fight in *jihad*, but were told that their *jihad* was a righteous pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj)," since the trip itself was once extremely dangerous.⁵⁸⁶ He goes on to demonstrate that the historical instances in which women did participate in *jihad* were when they played auxiliary roles in assisting or encouraging men.⁵⁸⁷

With the rise of Islamic feminism in the last few decades, the discourse over women's participation in *jihad* has greatly expanded. Muhammed Khayr Haykal's three-volume work on *jihad* explains that it is obligatory for Muslim, adult, sane, free, male and able-bodied individuals.⁵⁸⁸ Women's participation is optional in *fard kifaya* (community), but mandatory for *fard 'ayn* (individual). Although many scholars state that women's

participation in the most extreme cases remains optional, Haykal argues that women must be trained for armed operations:

From this we believe that it is incumbent upon the Islamic state to prepare training centres for women so that they can learn the use of arms and methods of fighting in them. This is because as long as it is possible that *jihad* could become *fard 'ayn* upon the woman, it is incumbent to train her for this eventuality so that she will be prepared to fulfill this obligation.⁵⁸⁹

Cook is critical of Haykal's use of sources: "It is interesting to realize to what extent a writer such as Haykal –whose command of the legal and historical literature is near total – is willing to disregard it and make the exception the rule."⁵⁹⁰

Haykal, however, is not the only religious scholar making this exception. Syrian Nawaf al-Takruri raised the issue of female fighters in the fourth edition of his work Martyrdom Operations in the Legal Balance.⁵⁹¹ Al-Takruri does not permit *jihad* in situations that involve contradicting some aspects of Islamic law. For instance, a woman cannot attain permission to fight *jihad* if it involves her limbs being naked.⁵⁹² In his book, al-Takruri points to six fatwas that have been issued allowing women to participate in *jihad*: "Yusuf al-Qaradawi, (the famous TV and radio personality), three faculty at al-Azhar University in Egypt, Faysal al-Mawlawi of the European Council of Research and Legal Opinion (based in Dublin), and Nizar 'Abd al-Qadir Riyyan of the Islamic University of Gaza (Palestine)."⁵⁹³ Nevertheless, these six fatwas are associated with Egyptian and Palestinian cultures, considered the most liberal in the Arab world.

The absence of fatwas from conservative countries like Saudi Arabia indicates a lack of consensus over women's role in *jihad*. When compared to the corpus of literature that either ignores the issue or prohibits women's participation, the Palestinians' inclusion of women in *jihad* suggests that the use of women as fighters has arisen out of

necessity. David Cook concludes that women's participation in *jihad* is "seen as a radical change in Islam and has been treated with suspicion by Muslim conservatives. It is also clear, however, that the radicals have been able to establish a fairly strong intellectual and religious case for women fighting."⁵⁹⁴

Only after the first female Palestinian suicide bomber blew herself up in 2002, with crowds flooding the streets of Gaza and the West Bank in support of her action, did Hamas condone the use of female fighters.⁵⁹⁵ Three years earlier, a Hamas leader had rejected Dareen Abu Aisha's request to participate in the military wing, saying, "When we finish with men we will ask women to come in."⁵⁹⁶ Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi affirmed women's right to participate half a year earlier, stating that "there is no reason that the perpetration of suicide attacks should be monopolized by men," but others were not convinced.⁵⁹⁷

The spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, maintained several reservations. First, immediately after the first female suicide bombing, he argued that recruiting women would break Islamic law, since the recruiter would be "taking the girl or woman without the permission of her father, brother, or husband, and therefore the family of the girl confronts an even greater problem since the man has the biggest power over her, choosing the day that she will give her life back to Allah."⁵⁹⁸ Second, he stated that women undertaking martyrdom operations needed to be accompanied by a male chaperone.⁵⁹⁹ Thus, the spiritual leader of the movement was more reticent than other Hamas leaders in accepting women's new role in *jihad*.

One month after the bombing, Yassin denied the necessity of women's involvement:

At the present stage, we do not need women to bear this burden of *Jihad* and martyrdom. The Islamic Movement cannot take all the Palestinian males demanding to participate in *Jihad* and in martyrdom operations, because they are so numerous. Our means are limited, and we cannot absorb all those who desire to confront the Israeli enemy. But the days of decisive conflict with the Israeli occupation will come, and then men, women, the elderly, and children will participate in *Jihad*, in the crucial battle for the liberation of Palestine, Allah willing. We have entered a new phase of history, in which Palestinian women are willing to fight and to die a martyr's death as the men and youths do. This is from the grace of Allah. But, meanwhile, women have no military organization in the framework of the [Islamic] movement. When such an organization arises, it will be possible to discuss wide-scale recruitment of women.⁶⁰⁰

Less than half a year later, however, Yassin was more confident about women's military role:

We are men of principle and according to our religion, a Muslim woman is permitted to wage *jihad* and struggle against the enemy who invades holy land. The Prophet would draw lots among the women who wanted to go out with him to make *Jihad*. The Prophet always emphasized the woman's right to wage *jihad*.⁶⁰¹

Gazan Hamas leader Ismail Abu Shanab clarified that "Islam has never differentiated between men and women on the battlefield."⁶⁰² Expressing concern that Hamas's change in attitude appeared to be based on popularity rather than religion, West Bank Hamas leader Sheikh Hassan Yusef iterated:

We [Hamas] do not act according to the opinion of the street or of society. We are *men* [italics mine] of principle. . . [and act] according to what our religion dictates. A Muslim woman is permitted to wage *Jihad* and struggle against the occupation. The Prophet [Muhammad] would draw lots among the women who wanted to go out to wage *Jihad* with him. The Prophet always emphasized the woman's right to wage *Jihad*.⁶⁰³

Thus, as a result of the popularity of female suicide bombers, Hamas's official stance shifted from refusal to ambiguity to acceptance of female fighters.

Hamas women appeared to make this transition faster than their male counterparts. The women's branch of Hamas was not as concerned with issues of modesty in the course of *jihad* as the male leadership. Contradicting al-Takruri's assertion that women

cannot undertake *jihad* if it involves a breach of modesty, and brushing aside Yassin's concern of women being unaccompanied, widow of Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, Jamila Shanti, clarified:

The issue of martyrdom [operations] has gained much popularity in Palestinian society. There is no difference between the martyrdom of sisters and the martyrdom of brothers, because the enemy does not differentiate between firing on men and firing on women. . . Islam does not prohibit a woman from sacrificing herself to defend her land and her honour. It is she who was attacked, and she has the right to defend herself in any way. It is not puzzling that Muslim sisters have been carrying out heroic operations within Palestine since 1948. On the contrary: It would be strange if the Palestinian woman had not done so, as *Jihad* is a personal imperative for her and no one can prevent her from waging it, provided. . . she avoids fitna [in this case: inappropriate behaviour] – which is not on the agenda in martyrdom operations because she is going to her death. Perhaps these activities require the woman to wear a particular garment in order to mislead the enemy, and therefore she may have to relinquish part of her veil when she goes to martyrdom. But there is nothing wrong with this, because the clerics are in consensus that martyrdom operations are the highest level of martyrdom.⁶⁰⁴

According to Shanti, women are equal to men in the struggle and may even partly unveil in the course of action, provided they avoid “inappropriate behaviour.”⁶⁰⁵ Unveiling is not always an option but a command, and Patkin recounts that at least one potential female recruit “rejected her orders to dress in modern clothing.”⁶⁰⁶ While opinions differ as to whether concerns over modesty can be overridden by the imperative for *jihad*, the statements made by each personality mentioned thus far have emphasized women's right, equal to that of men, to fight in *jihad*.

Reaffirming the movement's commitment to women's equal participation in *jihad*, the military wing of Hamas created a women's unit. The separation of this unit from the male unit is consistent with Hamas's conservative approach to the interaction between the sexes. In an interview with the weekly *Al-Risala*, the leader of the women's unit explained the rationale for joining the 'Izz Al-Din Al-Qassam Brigades.⁶⁰⁷ On the one

hand, the initial explanations the leader offered as to why women joined the brigades indicated that women had the same motivations as men. For instance, women joined the military wing because “the Al-Qassam Brigades are considered the standard-bearers and the pioneers of *jihad*.”⁶⁰⁸ They joined the group fully of their own volition, from their “[love of] *jihad* and its path.”⁶⁰⁹ Although they secured the permission of their husbands to join the group, the Hamas Charter indicates that women do not require permission from spouses or male relatives to bear arms. The women’s aim, like that of their male counterparts, is to liberate the land of Palestine through resistance and *jihad*. Raphael Israel explains that “Palestinian clerics are unified by the theme of what they perceive as a concrete, daily and all-persuasive national struggle to which they provide theological responses. And once they sanctified Islamikaze as a legitimate form of struggle, indeed encouraged it, they could not exclude women and children from it.”⁶¹⁰

Hamas’s use of women has also been justified for tactical reasons. First, women are recruited because they attract less attention from the Israel Defense Forces than do men. For instance, Hamas has disguised female militants as pregnant women, “assuming correctly that they would not be frisked or subjected to intense scrutiny.”⁶¹¹ Hussein al-Sheikh, a West Bank Fatah commander, reaffirms Hamas’s supposition:

The tight Israeli security measures and the strict searches of young men by the occupation forces drove the Palestinian organizations to incorporate women. Girls and women were not subjected to strict Israeli security measures, and it was easier for them to reach a certain place and carry out a mission than it was for young men.⁶¹²

Concurring with al-Sheikh, Sami Abu Zuhri elaborates:

The Palestinian resistance, at times, purposely uses women in some operations that men cannot carry out, especially in high security areas, which male Palestinian *Mujaheedin* cannot easily reach. This is why the Palestinian woman has an

important role in the Palestinian resistance, and at times she may even have roles that the young male Palestinian *Mujaheed* cannot fulfill.⁶¹³

In the case of al-Riyashi's operation Col. Yoav Mordechai, in charge of Erez crossing's District Coordinating Office, affirmed that al-Riyashi "took advantage of her gender, knowing that she would not be asked to lift her clothes as the males are to ensure they have no explosives strapped to their bodies. She also took advantage of her medical situation."⁶¹⁴ Because of their apparent modesty and their ability to use pregnancy as a disguise, Hamas women possess 'natural' military tactical advantages that have successfully been exploited.

Women's 'innocence' has also been instrumental in the success of their operations. Patkin observes that Israel Security Services are reluctant to search women who appear Western in appearance or who don maternity clothing, effectively exploiting "the presumption of innocence."⁶¹⁵ For example, "the perception that women are less prone to violence, the Islamic dress code and the reluctance to carry out body searches on Muslim women made them the 'perfect demographic.'"⁶¹⁶ Viewed by the public as a suicidal ingénue, the female suicide bomber generates more sympathy from the public than does her male counterpart. Journalists Alexis B. Delaney and Peter R. Neumann write that women's participation in suicide missions contradicts a familiar notion upheld by many: women are the preservers of life, not its destroyers.⁶¹⁷ Thus, the female suicide bomber is viewed as both a perpetrator and a victim.

In justifying the tactical need for women's military participation initially, Hamas attempted to minimize the potential shock value of women's incorporation into the militant fold. The movement expected that after female suicide bombings would repeatedly occur, "it [would] become routine and no one [would] talk about it any

more.”⁶¹⁸ Nevertheless, the very participation of women has encouraged more men and women to join in *jihad*. Women, especially young women, are given role models to emulate. Since becoming the first shahida, Wafa Idris “has become a source of pride. Many girls, for various reasons, wanted to play the same role,” explains al-Sheikh.⁶¹⁹ Women’s motivation has translated into increased numbers of women seeking suicide operations. According to Zuhri,

there are hundreds of female martyrdom bombers, who stream en masse and insist on participating in martyrdom operations. This is a unique phenomenon, reflecting the live spirit of *Jihad* among this people. . . We see this stream of young men and of women seeking martyrdom. This people [sic] emphasizes its adherence to the option of martyrdom, especially, in light of the models of female martyrdom bombers.⁶²⁰

Between January 2002 and January 2003, at least 38 women attempted suicide operations.⁶²¹ Between the onset of the second intifada and 2003, more than 250 women were either involved in or attempted suicide attacks.⁶²²

In addition to the tactical advantages, the growing number of women willing to participate in these missions also carries economic benefits for Hamas. The families of female bombers are paid half as much in compensation as those of male bombers. Furthermore, where men require months of preparation, women only need two to eight weeks of training because they “require less persuasion (they are considerably less inclined to be swayed by promises of virgins in paradise). . . women have already made a long ideological journey before they set foot in the door of the terrorist organization; they arrive ready to take that final step.”⁶²³ The use of female bombers, therefore, is the cheaper option between the two sexes.

Women’s recruitment not only causes an increase in the number of female recruits, but also the number of males, as Mia Bloom observes:

The recruitment of women by insurgent organizations can mobilize greater numbers of operatives by shaming men into participating. . . this point is underscored by the bombers themselves. . . Before Ayat Akras blew herself up in Israel in April 2002, she taped her martyrdom video and stated, “I am going to fight instead of the sleeping Arab armies who are watching Palestinian girls fight alone.”⁶²⁴

Akhras added that “now even women are martyring themselves for the Palestinian cause,” questioning where “the Arab leaders [are].”⁶²⁵ Her last words are not merely an observation, but a negative judgement on the Arab political leadership and military. Akhras’s challenge to the “Arab armies” alludes to *sharaf*, a notion of male honour that is upheld or denigrated through a man’s actions and public image. Raphael Israel writes that the man’s honour

is redeemable if he only applies himself to maintain it, shelter it and retrieve it when lost. The woman’s honour, by contrast, refers to her intimacy, modesty and decency in dress, the preservation of virginity until marriage, gentle behaviour and keeping aloof from male society, which is corrupt by definition. If she should fail in one of those categories, her honour is lost forever.⁶²⁶

In the instance of a woman fighting *jihad*, her honour is not lost provided she upholds expectations of modesty throughout the battle. Nevertheless, *jihad* is still viewed as more of a man’s obligation. Women’s participation, therefore, may be perceived as challenging men’s role by demonstrating that men are no longer capable of fighting. This idea was reaffirmed in an article published by the Egyptian Islamist newspaper *Al-Sha’ab*. Entitled “It’s a Woman!,” the editorial proclaims:

It is a woman, a woman, a woman who is a source of pride for the women of this nation and a source of honour that shames the submissive men with a shame that cannot be washed away except by blood. . . It is a woman in the spring of her youth who swore in the name of her God, with every drop of her blood, with every limb of her body, and with every one of her cells that turned into coals that burned the hearts of the enemy with the fire of fear, loss, and pain. . .⁶²⁷

Women’s actions therefore shame and challenge men who are not fighting in *jihad*.

Women's participation in military operations, however, conflicts with their prescribed roles, as outlined in the Hamas Charter. First, women's participation alongside men undermines the belief in a complementary familial role structure. Some argue that women use violence as an empowerment tool to challenge the "norms [that] have dictated the separation of the sexes and prescribed that women restrict themselves to the private space of the home."⁶²⁸ Members of the female military wing of Hamas have expressed their desire to "become like [Reem al-Riyashi] at once," a "crown on [their] heads and a pioneer of the resistance."⁶²⁹ Al-Rantisi observed that "those Palestinian women who dared to risk their lives by committing acts of *jihad fardi* were determined to continue to struggle against the occupation on an equal basis with the men."⁶³⁰ What al-Rantisi neglects to say, however, is that his movement forbade women from participating alongside men in *jihad fardi* operations during the first intifada.⁶³¹ Therefore, female martyrdom in the second intifada is, for the first time, upheld as a religious and nationalist ideal for women.

Conversely, when asked, "What do women like you tell your children," the head of the women's military unit emphasized teaching the importance of *jihad* to children.⁶³² Commenting on women's role in the intifada, after having exemplified Al-Riyashi's role and sacrifice, the head asserted that women's "role is very important and is no less important than that of the man. The woman is the fighter's wife and sister. She carries the difficult burden of making a living and educating the children to *jihad*."⁶³³ Similarly, she added:

It's all one path. We raise our children and perform our domestic duties, the duty of encouraging devotion to religion, as well as the other everyday duties, and the epitome of them is *jihad* for the sake of Allah. *Jihad* is a duty that every Muslim is

required to fulfill if he can. Our joining the military organization is one of the essential everyday tasks.⁶³⁴

Nevertheless, the “essential everyday” task of being part of a military organization demands time that might otherwise be devoted to caring for one’s family. The female military head adheres to the Charter’s primary expectations of women, that is, supporting male fighters and educating children. She simultaneously advances women’s right to fight in *jihad*, thereby challenging Hamas’s prescribed gender roles.

By participating in militant *jihad*, Hamas women challenge their movement’s notions of familial structure and motherhood. Referring to actions undertaken by Palestinian women in the first intifada, Julie Peteet observed that

when they engaged in defense of their communities as mothers they acted in reference to culturally dominant and highly charged symbols of maternal sentiment and behaviour. Yet a transformation in meaning was occasioned by a praxis that, while culturally sanctioned, subverted the space and meaning traditionally associated with maternal practice.⁶³⁵

Simply, the private sphere was politicized and motherhood became a platform on which political objectives could be achieved. The Palestinian political leadership exalted the ‘fertile mother’ of Palestinian society, whose reproductive capabilities would enable the demographic triumph over Israel.⁶³⁶ For this reason, “motherhood has been exalted both in the political and cultural texts, but only the right kind of mother is socially and nationally validated – the mother who can bear sons for the revolution.”⁶³⁷ In choosing or being encouraged to participate in suicide or martyrdom operations, Hamas women threaten their future status as emblematic icons of normative motherhood.

The tension between women’s duty toward militant *jihad* and motherhood is clearly discernable. Hamas’s decision to send Reem al-Riyashi, the 21/22 year-old mother of two, on a suicide mission that left four dead at the Erez Gaza border crossing,

was highly controversial.⁶³⁸ Numerous Palestinian writers have debated whether Reem al-Riyahi should have been dispatched. The editor of the Palestinian Authority's daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* wrote that it is their

right to wonder about what made Hamas urge a mother of two to carry out the operation, even though Hamas is not the first [movement] to do so. But the other factions stopped pressuring women into carrying out operations of this kind because they are likely to increase the abuse of women by the occupation.⁶³⁹

Not only is Hamas implicated in using coercive measures, the mother-bomber issue is perceived as furthering women's oppression.

Other writers emphasize the need for mothers to choose motherhood over militancy. Hassan al-Battal, a writer for *Al-Ayyam*, implored in an article: "The women's organizations must not stop with copious sentiments for the two orphans [left by Reem Al-Riyashi], but must raise their voices and declare that the obligation of motherhood and breastfeeding comes before the obligation of fighting."⁶⁴⁰ Writing in the Gaza-based paper *Al-Karam*, Ziyad Abu al-Hijja questioned how

a 22-year-old mother of two children, one an infant boy and the other a girl, carried out a martyrdom operation. Who issued a *Fatwa* taking an infant's mother from him? Who decided to add two more orphans to the list of Palestine's orphans? On the basis of which *Qur'an* verses and *Hadiths* does a young mother leave her true place of *Jihad*, which is raising the two children, one of whom needs her milk? By what right do they present us to the world as lacking the most basic of human emotions?⁶⁴¹

The sentiment condemning al-Riyashi's action forced al-Rantisi to modify the fatwa permitting women to participate in suicide operations: female recruits were now required to produce one male and one female child before they could pursue suicide operations.⁶⁴² Al-Battal and al-Hijaa also expressed concern that sending mothers on suicide missions, or what he euphemistically referred to as a "sacrifice [of] our humanity," would discredit the nationalist movement on the world stage.⁶⁴³

Others are less clear in their condemnation of Al-Riyashi's decision. For example, 'Adnan Kanafani stresses that

the Palestinian mother, or the Arab mother in general, is the most compassionate mother on the face of the earth, because she is dedicated to the upbringing of her children, and would rather eat dirt than refrain from breastfeeding. This is a well known fact about the Arab woman, in complete contrast to the other women.⁶⁴⁴

If this is indeed the case, then the mother's suicide operation must be harmonized with her sense of compassion. Adli Sadeq, former PA Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, suggested that perhaps Al-Riyashi foresaw her own death and chose to die in a "meaningful" way.⁶⁴⁵ He understands her choice as one of "two options for her children: between the tragic loss of a peace-seeking mother, or the painful loss of a warrior-mother," in which al-Riyashi chose the latter.⁶⁴⁶ Regarding her controversial decision, Sadeq is adamant that no woman "has the right to claim that her own maternal sentiments are stronger than Reem's."⁶⁴⁷ Clearly, Hamas's use of mothers in suicide operations generated much debate, both condemnatory and apologetic, over normative motherhood. From the evidence cited above, mothers who choose to fight in *jihad* are rebelling against Hamas's expectation that their roles be primarily restricted to childrearing.

Women's participation in Hamas's *jihad* operations not only challenges conceptions of motherhood but also notions of male authority. First, female martyrs are perceived to occupy a higher rung on the sacrificial ladder than are mothers of martyrs. The Egyptian government-backed *Al-Akhbar* published an article in which Dr. Samiya Sa'ad Al-Din professed that

Palestinian women have torn the gender classification out of their birth certificates, declaring that sacrifice for the Palestinian homeland would not be for men alone; on the contrary, all Palestinian women will write the history of the liberation with their blood, and will become time bombs in the face of the Israeli enemy. They will not settle for being mothers of martyrs. . . .⁶⁴⁸

Mothers of martyrs, therefore, are not viewed as contributing equally to the struggle as male fighters; rather, female fighters are women who refuse to “settle,” whose participation assures them an equal place in history.

Clara Beyer argues that “when women become human bombs, their intent is to make a statement not only in the name of a country, a religion, a leader, but also in the name of their gender.”⁶⁴⁹ These women’s actions help their spouses and male relatives recover some of their “lost manhood” that results from men’s insufficient military participation, thereby restoring their families’ reputations.⁶⁵⁰ Furthermore, as Islah Jad argues, “their acts do not seek a total equality with Arab men, let alone Hamas men, but aim to supersede men to activate their lost role as their women’s protectors. . . ris[ing] above the male order and gain[ing] power over all structures of power, whether patriarchy, despotism, or Occupation.”⁶⁵¹ Thus, women who carry out suicide operations are both asserting their prescribed protective roles and revealing the failure of their men to fulfill their own masculine roles.

Women’s rebuke of male authority is not only expressed by carrying out public acts without the permission of their husbands or close male relatives, but also in challenging the authority of the political leadership of Hamas itself. These women directly undermined the attitudes of the spiritual head of Hamas. Initially, Sheikh Yassin deplored the use of women as suicide bombers.⁶⁵² After the first female Palestinian blew herself up, he modified his position, iterating that women’s participation was unnecessary given the influx of male volunteers. He changed his position yet again after al-Riyashi’s operation:

The fact that a woman took part for the first time in a Hamas operation marks a significant evolution for the Iz a Din al-Kassam brigades. The male fighters face many obstacles on their way to operations, and this is a new development in our fight against the enemy. The holy war is an imperative for all Muslim men and women; and this operation proves that the armed resistance will continue until the enemy is driven from our land. This is revenge for all the fatalities sustained by the armed resistance.⁶⁵³

Yet he still harboured reservations concerning female militants' preservation of modesty.

Yassin initially made female participation conditional on women having male chaperones on their missions.⁶⁵⁴ He modified his position several days later, clarifying that a chaperone was unnecessary provided the woman was not alone longer than one day and one night.⁶⁵⁵ Since the chaperone must either be a spouse or male relative, Yassin's amendment and restriction fully contradicts the Charter's stipulation that women be allowed to wage *jihad* without male permission. Especially because the end itself is considered most virtuous, attempted female suicide bombers have ridiculed Hamas's demand that a male chaperone accompany the prospective female martyr.⁶⁵⁶ Ironically, the very modesty that Hamas can exploit and Yassin seeks to preserve in women ceases to be a military advantage due to the chaperone's presence.

Crucial to understanding the 'significant evolution' of which Yassin speaks is women's forefront position in his decision-making process. Only after women have carried out actions that are fully compliant with the movement's goal — ceaseless fighting until Palestine is restored — but contradict the opinions of the male leadership, do leaders such as Yassin modify their positions, sanctioning the women's actions *post facto*. Women have thus expanded their roles as protectors and destabilized men's roles as defenders, while challenging the authority of the Hamas leadership.

Participation in National Elections

Unlike the issue of female suicide bombers, women's electoral participation as both voters and candidates did not conflict with the decisions of the male leadership. In order to run in the 2006 elections, the Palestinian government imposed upon each party a party list minimum quota of 20 percent female candidates.⁶⁵⁷ Although parties freely determined the placements of their female candidates on the national lists, and could technically place all their female candidates at the bottom said lists, Hamas nonetheless ranked Jamila Shanti as its third candidate.⁶⁵⁸ The movement's realization of the need to cater to an otherwise politically neglected female electorate prompted Hamas to place Shanti in this prominent position. Yet the question arises of how Hamas women could campaign and run for a group that forces many women to wear its conception of Islamic dress, and continually asserts that a woman's place is in the home.⁶⁵⁹

Women's increased participation as fighters may have bolstered their political popularity. Both men and women listed "fighter" (27.4 percent) as the most important factor in choosing a candidate, followed by religious observance (24.1 percent), good character (17 percent) and active community service (16.3 percent).⁶⁶⁰ Not only was the women's military wing of Hamas formed around the time Hamas announced its intention to participate in the 2006 elections, but images of the religious khaki-clad military women holding guns and grenades were used as campaign posters.⁶⁶¹ In spite of their leverage of belonging to a new class of warriors, the female candidates have often emphasized reform over military struggle.⁶⁶² Hamas's gender ideology is contradictory: it regards women as soldier-producing wombs but also emphasizes the "new Islamic woman."

In “Neo-Ottomanism and the New Islamic Woman in Turkey,” Jenny White discusses a belief held by many individuals in Turkey that the “new Islam is a route toward upward mobility,” where women adapt new and trendy styles in veiling and dress that have no precedent in their own cultural histories.⁶⁶³ Similarly, the adoption of ‘Shari’ah’ dress, long robes and a particular kind of hijab, became an “invented tradition” in the Palestinian territories.⁶⁶⁴ Because relaxed clothing standards were perceived as “a Western scheme to invade the country’s culture,” ‘Shari’ah’ dress was intended to counter this cultural invasion by protecting and veiling Palestinian women.⁶⁶⁵ Within a year of the outbreak of the first intifada, Hamas’s pressure on women to wear hijabs was so great that unveiled Gazan women could not walk the streets bareheaded.⁶⁶⁶ At the time, Hamas’s primary targets were “educated, urban and petit bourgeois women.”⁶⁶⁷ The imposition of the hijab on women was therefore an oppressive tool, what Palestinian writer Rima Hammami calls “a direct disciplining of women’s bodies for political means.”⁶⁶⁸

In the years following the first intifada, however, the ideology that drove Hamas’s ‘Shari’ah’ dress campaigns altered as Islamist women within Hamas slowly began to acquire power, in both the religious and social spheres. In spite of the prohibition of women serving as imams or preachers, in 1998 women nonetheless constituted 16 percent of the Hamas-controlled Gazan religious establishment and 9 percent in the West Bank.⁶⁶⁹ The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics postulates that the recruitment of women into the religious establishment is an attempt to “mobilize housewives and ensure interpretation equates religious affiliation with conservatism, the validity of the latter interpretation is dependent on the nature of message being transmitted – whether it

encourages equity between men and women, or endorses male dominance.”⁶⁷⁰ Regardless of whether or not the motivation of the recruitment is to indoctrinate women with a particular gender and religious ideology, a different kind of woman, modern and religious, was promoted by the movement. Hamas-affiliated political parties and the movement’s women’s branch began to advocate the image of the “new Islamic woman”:

[They] opened [their] doors to the “new Islamic woman” who is highly educated, outspoken, *moltazemah* (veiled), and *modern* (a new form of veiling). Modernity is reflected in the fact that these women are educated, professional, and politically active. The veil is seen as a signifier of modernity, since it is different from traditional dress. The new Islamic dress (a long robe of plain colour and a white or black head scarf) is seen as a uniform of conviction.⁶⁷¹

In dressing in this particular fashion, women are not only able to recognize their fellow “sisters,” but are also able to differentiate themselves from their less-educated and often illiterate mothers and grandmothers.⁶⁷² As Hamas enlarged their network of social services, the movement became a source of employment and upward social mobility for many women.⁶⁷³

By the late 1990s, the integration of women into Hamas became a prominent concern for the movement. In response to the secular parties, which incorporated women into their political structures, the Islamists “focused on women – particularly the highly educated – and integrated them by the thousands into their party’s (Khalas) structure at all levels.”⁶⁷⁴ Beginning in 1997, Hamas held annual conferences with the goal of increasing its female membership and widening its social base.⁶⁷⁵ These conferences were taken seriously by the Hamas leadership, many of whom presented papers.⁶⁷⁶

At the conferences, Islamist women’s approach to women’s issues evolved. At the first conference, the Islamist women undermined other female voices in the hopes of asserting their own authority as the voice representing women’s welfare.⁶⁷⁷ Speakers

rejected gender concerns in favour of nationalist aspirations, and NGOs, wellsprings of secular women's employment, were said to be linked to the corruptive West.⁶⁷⁸ By the third conference, the women were launching feminist critiques of the liberal rights approach, stressing the need for scriptural re-interpretation that "incorporated women's achievements thus far due to modernization processes."⁶⁷⁹ The change in the women's approach, from rejection to engagement of gender concerns, paralleled Hamas's increasing development from a purely military wing into a political party. Unlike the military wing, the political wing could not afford to ignore its primary supporters.

In 2003, Sheikh Yassin announced the creation of a women's wing of Hamas, which would concern itself with women's activism.⁶⁸⁰ Run by the widow of Hamas co-founder Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, Jamila Shanti, the wing hosts a variety of programmes for women.⁶⁸¹ For instance, Hamas sends one of its militants on a weekly basis to host a religious class for women. Other classes include literacy for the elderly, education and health, and are attended by up to 250 women.⁶⁸² Women within the wing frequent the families of suicide bombers and those killed in operations against Israel to give them moral support, in addition to the financial support they may receive from Hamas.⁶⁸³ Given these services, a seemingly stark contrast to the movement's oppressive measures in the early days of the intifada, it is not surprising that up to 70 percent of women voted for Hamas.⁶⁸⁴

The 2006 Palestinian national elections marked the first instance in which women ran as candidates for Hamas. Speaking a few weeks before the election, Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Zahhar foresaw that "Palestinian women [would] have an important role to play in the upcoming elections" alongside men, in part due to the "huge sacrifices" made

by women during the second intifada.⁶⁸⁵ His statement reflects the confluence of two contradictory trends. Khalil Shikaki observed that Palestinian women had a certain degree of political equality with men because of the mass mobilization of society in the struggle against the occupation.⁶⁸⁶ Similarly, the very struggle also caused society to cling more strongly to “conservative social values” embodied in “its most traditional social networks: the family, the tribe, and mosque.”⁶⁸⁷ Lama Hourani, a women’s rights activist in Gaza, concurs with Shikaki, asserting that the Hamas Islamists view men and women unequally. Women, she claims, are raised to subordinate themselves to their male relatives and husbands.⁶⁸⁸

Contrary to al-Zahhar, the female Hamas candidates did not explain their right to participate in the elections as a consequence or reward for their sacrifices. The Minister of Women’s Affairs under the Hamas-led government, Mariam Saleh, considers Palestinian women to be the strongest and most courageous members of society.⁶⁸⁹ She did not, however, explicitly use this as a justification for participating in the elections.⁶⁹⁰ Many of the female candidates stress the importance of religion and use religious justification to be both active politicians and family members. Muna Monsour, an elected Hamas candidate and the widow of a Hamas leader, views the Qur’an as a means of solving any policy question.⁶⁹¹ Her dual responsibility toward public office and family embodies her concept of a ‘modern woman.’⁶⁹² Moreover, she regards religion as the key to women’s emancipation, an idea supported in her claim that “the low key role of women nowadays [is] due to the society’s habits and traditions rather than the Islamic standpoint.”⁶⁹³ She cited the decision by the Islamic-dominated Bani Zeid council to appoint a woman as mayor an example of Hamas’s “matured” regard of women.⁶⁹⁴

In accord with Mansour's observations, the movement claims that " Hamas women are striving hard as equal [sic] as the Hamas men in delivering the Movement's ideology." ⁶⁹⁵ The widow of Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi admitted that Hamas hoped to implement Shari'ah law, as she "will not accept secularism." ⁶⁹⁶ Moreover, she maintained a traditional Hamas outlook on Israel. "I refuse any compromise," she said. "The liberation struggle will continue until we liberate all our land. Even if we enter elections our weapons will not grow dusty against Israel." ⁶⁹⁷ Promoting this position, female Hamas supporters visited hundreds of family homes campaigning in the national elections. ⁶⁹⁸ They also had access to the vast array of social programmes in which women worked and sought assistance. ⁶⁹⁹ Mkhaimar Abusada affirms that women's campaigning is "something noticeable in the Gaza Strip" because Palestinian values "do not accept women to go out and campaign in the street." ⁷⁰⁰ Unprecedented in the territories "to a degree specialists said was new in the conservative Muslim society of the Gaza Strip," notes journalist Ian Fisher, " Hamas used its women to win, sending them door to door with voter lists and to polling places for last-minute campaigning." ⁷⁰¹

In addition to door-to-door campaigning, female candidates hosted rallies and meetings, attended by a multitude of supporters. Hundreds of women attended lectures given by Mansour around Nablus. ⁷⁰² Hamas candidates Noha Saymah and Huda Naeem also hosted meetings in which tens of female Palestinians participated. ⁷⁰³ The week preceding the election, Mariam Saleh spoke at a rally attended by 400 female Hamas supporters in Nablus, many of whom were professionals. ⁷⁰⁴ Public meetings were also held in Nablus and hosted by the Islamic League for Palestinian Women. ⁷⁰⁵ Meanwhile, the candidates convened conferences in mosques, schools and villages, in order to raise

“women’s consciousness” among the female attendees, and to make them aware of their rights.⁷⁰⁶ Throughout the campaign, both male and female Hamas candidates brought attention to women’s roles in supporting the Palestinian resistance “through offering sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers for the sake of Allah and for the sake of Palestine, pledging to enact pro-woman legislations [sic] if succeeded in the elections.”⁷⁰⁷

At the rallies, however, there was more emphasis on pro-woman legislation than on sacrificing men for *jihad*. Jamila Shanti, the third candidate on Hamas’s “Change and Reform” list, stressed the future parliament’s intention to safeguard and improve women’s rights, in the familial, social, economic and political domains.⁷⁰⁸ Female candidate Dr. Majeda Fedda highlighted Islam’s recognition of women.⁷⁰⁹ Even the “Mother of Martyrs” made references to active female fighters, telling the female crowds that it was their “role to fight corruption, make reform, and avenge humiliation, like the women [suicide bombers] who took revenge on the streets of Tel Aviv, Netanya, and Jerusalem.”⁷¹⁰

Concurrently, the women expressed beliefs that appealed to both men and women. *Jihad* was naturally a safe starting point on which women could campaign and maintain support from both sexes. “The role of women in *jihad*,” Shanti told supporters in October 2005, “is to encourage their sons and husbands to participate. But women also have the right to wage *jihad*.”⁷¹¹ Candidates like Saleh also emphasized the need to serve the Palestinian people, help society and improve the lives of marginalized groups.⁷¹² Mansour, meanwhile, encouraged women to “set a good model in terms of steadfastness and resoluteness in face of the Israeli arrogance.”⁷¹³ She also highlighted the need for economic improvement and employment opportunities, as well as a reduction in

poverty.⁷¹⁴ Both Mariam Farhat and Huda Naeem emphasized preparing their “children to die when the homeland calls for it.”⁷¹⁵ Thus, throughout the election campaign, Hamas women advocated the need for gender reform on the one hand, and preparing their children for *jihad* on the other.

Since their electoral victory, the Hamas female candidates, in their quest to eradicate gender inequality, have stressed the need to follow religion instead of tradition.

According to Jamila Shanti, tradition is to blame for restricting women’s rights:

There are traditions [in Palestine] that say that a woman should take a secondary role - that she should be at the back. . . But that is not Islam. Hamas will scrap many of these traditions. You will find women going out and participating. . . This doesn’t mean that [they] will depart from Islamic law. People think that Islamic law is about being veiled, and closed and staying at home - but that’s wrong. A woman can go out veiled and do all kinds of work without any problem.⁷¹⁶

Al-Rantisi’s widow, however, does not explicitly state the Hamas treats women unfairly:

“I speak for my sisters. Hamas has always honoured women, but now the time has come for Hamas to give a role to women. We can participate in health and education, and politics too.”⁷¹⁷ Shanti cautions that challenging gender discrimination and making legal reforms will be a process to which “men may not agree.”⁷¹⁸ Like Shanti, Mariam Saleh also discusses the need to make women aware of their rights through education at school and at home, in order to make them efficient members of the evolving society.⁷¹⁹ This sentiment is likewise shared by Huda Naeem, who before the election stated that she would

work hard to accord the Palestinian woman the position she deserves and to activate her role in the community, and to block all traditions that deny her such a right as well as impeding all attempts to turn her into a cheap propaganda item, in order to propagate anarchy and immorality in the community. . . the Islamic Movement is focusing on the woman being the cornerstone of education, change, and construction in the community.⁷²⁰

For Naeem, all Palestinian women should be granted “complete rights” as accorded by religion, not tradition.⁷²¹ Thus, for the female Hamas parliament members, both strict adherence to religion and reform of existing legislation concerning women occupied a paramount place in their political messages.

Conclusion

Since Hamas’s moderation, some women affiliated with Hamas have used the political goals of the movement’s discourse to challenge its gender norms. On the one hand, the Hamas Charter enjoins women to raise their children for *jihad*, and to be model homemakers. Accordingly, some members of the women’s military wing, as well as the female electoral candidates, have emphasized these imperatives in the movement’s fight to end the occupation of Palestine. On the other hand, the extent to which women can adequately educate their children if they themselves are training for, or carrying out, suicide operations is questionable. Nor can they fully care for their families as the Charter envisions while rallying for upcoming elections or serving as members of parliament. The statements of the female Hamas candidates embodied the tension between these expectations. Moreover, their potentially subversive calls for reform within their movement and tradition were offset by their devotion to religion, their encouragement of their sons’ martyrdom and their uncompromising stance toward Israel, in spite of the movement’s moderation nearly a decade earlier. Thus, in both instances, female participants promoted the political goals of the movement, while expanding the public space in which women were able to act.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The study of fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has often diminished women's political participation. In the few instances where women's roles in the transition or moderation processes are discussed in contemporary discourse, women's active political involvement is understood as a force that causes or hastens moderation. Contrary to this claim, women's involvement in Gush Emunim and Hamas occurred after their respective groups' moderation, and demonstrated strong ideological commitment to their groups' original tenets.

Summary

This work focused on Gush Emunim and Hamas, two movements whose territorial conquest goals are similar and understood as divine mandates. In spite of women's heavy involvement within the groups, the roles of the movements' women have received little academic attention. Moreover, the movements have not been contrasted in comparative political discourse. As Gush Emunim and Hamas became institutionalized, they were forced to adopt more moderate stances toward their expansionist territorial goals. Naturally, these concessions restricted the political and military freedoms of the leaderships. Criticizing the men's political ineffectiveness, some women assumed more prominent positions within their movements by advocating actions that were in line with their movements' founding principles: territorial settlement for GE and constant *jihad* for Hamas.

Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the settlement movement Gush Emunim. In the first few years after its formal creation, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook strongly emphasized the importance of settling the territories acquired during the 1967 war, namely the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Overnight, young male settlers established illegal settlements. This tactic was repeatedly and successfully employed, until it became commonplace. When the party favouring the settlers gained power in 1977, Gush Emunim's influence and devotion began to weaken. Since the movement had received strong political support, administrative and political bodies were created to represent its interests.

As a result, however, Gush Emunim lost much of its strong leadership, leaving behind an inexperienced leadership to run the movement. The evacuation of the Sinai settlements failed to produce the anticipated extremely violent reaction from the settlers, marking a trend in the movement's adjustment to political realities. Had Gush Emunim members been fully committed, that is, faithful to the *merkaz harav* philosophy and willing to endanger their own lives for the preservation of land under Israel's control, a violent battle between the settlers and the military would have ensued. With one exception, the extent of women's involvement throughout GE's institutionalization was limited.

Almost a decade after the dismantlement of the Sinai settlements, a group of Gush Emunim women spontaneously founded a settlement. The act of settlement creation against the will of all authorities -- the government and the military -- was a 'masculine' Gush Emunim tactic before the leadership adopted a more pragmatic approach. Yet the Rachelim women even opposed their husbands. They related to the murdered victim in

whose name the settlement was founded and therefore justified the settlement's creation through their identities as mothers, and to a lesser extent, as settlers. In defining their motives for establishing the settlement, they conformed to their movement's gender expectations by regarding themselves as homemakers and as mothers concerned for their children's welfare.

Perceived as safeguarding the individual and national family, the GE women secured the implicit support of the military and the government through their roles as protectors. Disgusted with the violence male settlers had used in the past, the women saw their act as a peaceful and constructive alternative. They expanded their roles from homemakers and mothers, to settlement initiators, before criticizing the male members for their political immobilization. Reticent in acknowledging the danger to their own families' lives by living in settlements, the women understood this threat as one facing every Jewish Israeli family. Nonetheless, they were determined to continue their maternal routine practices in the midst of conflict.

In Chapters 4 and 5, the moderation of, and women's involvement in, Hamas was discussed. Between the publication of the Charter in 1987, which outlines Hamas's objectives, and its participation in the national elections in 2006, Hamas adopted moderate policies as it became more integrated into the Palestinian social and political fabric. Although the movement's military and political branches were unified upon the movement's creation, following the Oslo accords, a clear divergence between these two wings was discernible. As its political presence became more prominent, Hamas increased its pragmatism through references to ceasefires with Israel, a two-state solution,

and a willingness to participate in elections that were constructed within a framework that recognized Israel.

With its institutionalization and moderation also came a shift in the emphasis of the core problem: the need to regain lost Palestinian land eclipsed the need for creating an Islamist society. Like Gush Emunim, the political, military and religious leadership of Hamas has been exclusively male. Like Gush Emunim, again, discussions of the movement's moderation neglected the role of Hamas women as potentially hastening or stalling the moderation process. As made evident, however, Hamas's moderation preceded women's overt military and political campaign for the movement's foundational goals.

Women have used Hamas's charter to expand the very gender roles outlined for them. The Hamas Charter stresses the importance of women bearing males for the struggle, acting as model homemakers and educating their children. It also emphasizes that the commandment to participate in *jihad* is equally incumbent upon both men and women. A few women have embraced *jihad* in the form of suicide bombers, and many others have tried. In fulfilling this expectation, the women are simultaneously defying the norm that they be male-producing homemakers. Yet Hamas's female electoral candidates emphasized the need for women to fight in *jihad*, and encouraged their sons to seek martyrdom. Given their active public involvement, these women could not preach that women's primary obligation was to stay at home. Throughout the campaign, female candidates promoted the need for eradicating women's inequality in Palestine, while affirming that tradition was solely to blame.

The Mythologies of Women's Involvement

The lack of scholarly attention concerning women's role in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements is due to a convergence of four myths. The first myth posits an essentialist bond between women and peace. The depiction of women as pacifists assumes that motherhood carries with it a moral compulsion to preserve life and prevent destruction at whatever cost. This heightened moral awareness, in turn, prevents women, but not men, from divorcing their own actions from the moral consequences of those actions. Women's innate moral obligation arises from their roles as preservers of life and protectors of society. Consequently, their conscience does not permit them to isolate their actions from the moral implications.

Women supposedly channel their heightened moral awareness into their role as nurturers in the family domain. In this role, they develop preservative love and are also forced to learn the art of negotiation and compromise. By contrast, men are not subject to compromise as frequently and are thus more aggressive and focused on hierarchal relations than on 'sharing' interrelationships. Such attributed values are the very antithesis to the culture of war and destruction. Consequently, women are typically portrayed as non-combatants in violent conflicts. As a result of this myth, women become transformed into one-dimensional players whose motivations are often assumed, simplified and rarely questioned.

This study reveals the mendacity of women's innate pacifism. Both Gush Emunim and Hamas women encouraged their husbands and sons respectively to aggressively carry out their goals against the other community. GE women's perception of their actions as "peaceful" further illustrates that maternal thinking, which in this case

helps feed settler militarism, can be the more destructive of the two forces. Similarly, the “Mother of Martyrs” and others like her, who effectively discourage their sons from reneging on suicide operations and returning home, manipulate maternalism for a destructive means. Conversely, the women of both movements emphasize construction over destruction, and the imperative for women to take part in the former’s process: for Gush Emunim, this is in the building of the settlements, and for Hamas, it is in the creation of an Islamic society. The preservation of life at whatever cost, as this study demonstrates, can be set aside for the preservation of the homeland and the national community.

The second myth assumes that women’s public political participation is coupled with a feminist agenda. Within nationalist discourses, the negation of the presence of women who do not promote feminism is once again overlooked. For this reason, women who affiliate with religious-nationalist movements that hold essentialist beliefs do not become objects of academic political curiosity, since they are thought to be fully complicit in their own subordination and subjugation. Yet this work highlights the participation of women who have embraced their movements’ nationalist aspirations, without promoting a separate feminist agenda. Increased women’s participation, they believe, would ultimately benefit their entire movement. Although the women later emphasized the importance of women’s involvement, they were careful to do so within the discourses their movements would allow: GE women could call for women’s initiative in creating settlements, in conformity to their movement’s primary goal; while Hamas women could exercise their right to participate in *jihad*, and to call for the

implementation of women's Qur'anic rights, since these too were consistent with their movement's beliefs.

The third myth, originating in fundamentalist discourse, supposes that fundamentalism entirely and rigidly relegates women to the private sphere. History teaches that waves of fundamentalism arise as backlashes to women's greater access into the public sphere. The origins of these backlashes are blamed on men, and rarely are women regarded as complicit. Defining fundamentalism as the preservation of traditional patriarchal structures within the familial, political and economic realms reveals that fundamentalism is not a gender-free term. This definition has diminished women's importance as political actors by focusing on the movement's (male) leadership, organizational structure, ideology and public persona. The emphasis on structural aspects not only undermines women's involvement outside of formal political and administrative bodies, rather it ignores women's sense of agency within these movements. Consequently, this study has employed a "women's studies" approach to fundamentalism.

This unconventional methodology sharply diverts from the traditional focus of fundamentalist movements' structures and instead emphasizes ethnography. By incorporating women's attitudes, feelings and individual perceptions, and by explaining how women situate themselves within the ideological and social parameters of their movements, this study reveals how exemplary women in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements experience a strong sense of agency in promoting their movement's ideology. Gush Emunim women created a manifesto, imploring all settlement and Israeli women to "stand up" for the creation of Rachelim. Similarly, Hamas women preached women's right to participate in armed operations and spoke to

thousands of Palestinian women throughout the 2006 election campaign, emphasizing the rights owed to them by religion.

Ignored by the “men’s studies” of fundamentalism, these actions draw attention to some women’s vigorous involvement and empowerment within the movement, in spite of their absence from formal decision-making processes. The “women’s studies” approach asserts that women’s experiences cannot be essentialized, nor can their decision to be involved in these movements exclusively be attributed to their manipulation by men. In using women’s standpoint as the centre of reference, and stressing the role of agency, a more sophisticated understanding of women’s degree of autonomy within fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements emerges.

In the last of these myths, the Western public-private division is erroneously applied to the Middle Eastern context, in which the relationship between the two spheres is inextricably interconnected. Western social contract theory assumes the citizen’s universality and complete independence. In the Middle East, however, a relational or connective form of citizenship is prevalent, where one’s citizenship status is dependent upon sex, religion, family and the status of the family in society. These patriarchal hierarchies frequently lend greater authority to men over their female counterparts. Religion and family serve as a defining mechanism of citizenship, shaping women’s status as citizens through personal laws. The laws are deferred to religious courts whose rulings by the exclusively male composition frequently discriminate against women.

The division between the public and private domains is not clearly discernible, and women’s actions can occur in the semi-private domains. In both cases, motherhood is at once ‘private’ and ‘public,’ as this study found; Gush Emunim women mourned the

loss of a fellow mother and established their settlement around this perceived common identity, while Hamas women used the authority of motherhood as a means of encouraging their sons' embracement of martyrdom. With each side seeking victory in a demographic war, childrearing is a private, semi-private and public issue. Yet, the greater community of each side repeatedly called into question the women's conception of the mother-child relationship: Israelis accused the settlers of needlessly jeopardizing children's lives, and Palestinians criticized the (potential) female suicide bombers for orphaning their children. In justifying their actions, both GE and Hamas women subordinated part of their obligations and responsibilities to their families to the broader national communities.

Citizenship identity for these women is heavily influenced by religious and familial structures. Women's full membership in society does not occur through their rights as individual citizens, but through families whose national affiliation is clearly defined. The family, therefore, is a domain in which women have the potential to be prominent political actors, even as wives or relatives of prominent politicians. Women's small presence in the public domain gives the mistaken impression that the public-private division is to blame, when in actuality, the family is a unit in which women exercise considerable power. Both Gush Emunim and Hamas defined a woman's primary duty as instilling religious values in her children and guiding her family's religious course. These prescribed roles, therefore, allocate responsibility and a measure of autonomy to women.

This thesis examined in greater detail women's political involvement within fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements and compared the occurrence of some of their political activities with the groups' political moderation. Since gender issues were

traditionally considered outside the scope of institutionalization processes, after decades of neglect, only recently has a gendered approach to movements' institutionalization emerged. Considering women's heavy involvement in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements, the dearth of knowledge concerning women's motivations and actions within these two movements is appalling.

This study of Gush Emunim and Hamas women has revealed that at least a minority of women in fundamentalist religious-nationalist movements are, at times, able to subvert some of their movement's gender expectations. They do so by demonstrating a strict fidelity to their movement's original political goals and by following a traditional, that is, male, script. By emulating the primary actions of the men in the movement, rather than drastically departing from their movements' traditional narratives, Gush Emunim women's decision to create a settlement and Hamas women's resolve to participate in military *jihad* garnered the eventual approval of their male leadership.

Conversely, in undertaking these actions, women used their movements' prescribed female roles to draw attention to and criticize men's lack of participation. To some extent, they felt they were left with little choice but to act. Gush Emunim women believed they had waited too long, even lamenting the lost time in which they could have acted as assertively as in Rachelim. Hamas women also implicitly criticized men for not being more involved in *jihad*, as well as their movement for its differential treatment of women, citing tradition as the main problem and pledging to rectify gender inequality through legislation. The women's increased 'feminist' consciousness, however, raises the possibility of their retroactive dissatisfaction with their prescribed roles. Consequently,

they must constantly and carefully negotiate their leadership roles within the family and within the community.

The notion that women's political involvement is both an indication and a cause of a movement's moderation, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, is prevalent. Nevertheless, contrary to what some theorists have argued, women's political participation is not inherently a moderating force. Lacking the support of their male counterparts initially, GE and Hamas women, unconstrained by their movements' institutionalization, forced their movements' formal leadership to accept their new roles in the quest for settlement expansion and military *jihad* respectively. When women in movements such as Gush Emunim and Hamas are as militant as men, if not more so, their motives and the implications of their actions can no longer be ignored in favour of simplistic assumptions that they are unknowingly subjugated and oppressed by men. Clearly, a more differentiated approach is needed in understanding religious-nationalist women's political involvement.

¹ Cynthia Enloe, "All the Men Are in the Militias, All the Women Are Victims: The Politics of Masculinity and Femininity in Nationalist Wars," in The Women and War Reader, ed. Lois Ann Lorenzten and Jennifer Trupin (NY: New York University Press, 1998), 55.

² Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, "War, Nationalism, and Mothers in the Former Yugoslavia," in The Women and War Reader, ed. Lois Ann Lorenzten and Jennifer Trupin (NY: New York University Press, 1998), 234-235.

³ Unless otherwise stated, for the purpose of this work the term Palestine refers to Gaza and the West Bank, and the term Palestinians for those who reside in these territories.

⁴ Mark Tessler and Ina Warriner, "Gender, Feminism, and Attitudes Toward International Conflict: Exploring Relationships with Survey Data from the Middle East," World Politics 49, no. 2 (1997): 252. For a study on differences among Israeli Jewish and Israeli Arab men and women, see Yael Yishai, Between the Flag and the Banner: Women in Israeli Politics (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 91-117.

⁵ Simona Sharoni, Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Resistance (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 31.

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- ⁶ These groups include Four Mothers, Women in Black, Bat Shalom, The Fifth Mother, Machsom Watch, Mothers Against War, Mothers Against the Draft, Greenham Common and Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo.
- ⁷ Nikolić-Ristanović, 234.
- ⁸ Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Maternal Thinking and the Politics of War," in The Women and War Reader, ed. Lois Ann Lorenzten and Jennifer Trupin (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 233; Sara Ruddick, Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995, first published 1989), 151.
- ⁹ Tessler and Warriner, 254.
- ¹⁰ Sara Ruddick, "Pacifying the Forces: Drafting Women in the Interests of Peace," Signs 8, no. 3, Women and Violence, (Spring 1983): 482.
- ¹¹ Scheper-Hughes, 228.
- ¹² Ruddick, "Pacifying the Forces," 482.
- ¹³ Carol Gilligan, cited in Tami Amanda Jacoby, Women in Zones of Conflict: Power and Resistance in Israel (Montreal and Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 12.
- ¹⁴ Tessler and Warriner, 253.
- ¹⁵ Ruddick, "Pacifying the Forces," 479.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 480.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 479; Ruddick, Maternal Thinking, 141.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.
- ¹⁹ Jean Bethke Elshtain, Women and War (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1987), 192.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 183.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 192.
- ²² Sara Ruddick, "'Woman of Peace': A Feminist Construction," in The Women and War Reader, ed. Lois Ann Lorenzten and Jennifer Trupin (NY: New York University Press, 1998), 216-217.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 216.
- ²⁵ For summary, see Tessler and Warriner.
- ²⁶ Tessler and Warriner, 254.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ Jacoby, 5.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ³¹ See Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker, "Introduction," in The Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East, ed. Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker (Boulder, CO: Frances S. Hasso, "The 'Women's Front': Nationalism, Feminism, and Modernity in Palestine," Gender and Society 12, no. 4 (Aug. 1998): 442.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 442.
- ³³ Cited in Cynthia Enloe, Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 44-45.
- ³⁴ Hasso, 442.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ Cynthia H. Enloe, Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives (Berkeley: University of California Press, Ltd., 2000), 300.
- ³⁷ While the following works discuss their respective movements at length, no attention is devoted to women in the movement. For Gush Emunim, see David Newman, ed. The Impact of Gush Emunim, (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985); Aviezer Ravitzky, Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Ehud Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). For Hamas, see Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, The Palestinian Hamas (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Khalid Hroub, Hamas: Political Thought and Practice (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000); Meir Litvak, The Islamization of Palestinian Identity: The Case of Hamas (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1996); Agnès Pavlowsky, Hamas ou Le miroir des frustrations palestiniennes (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

- ³⁹ Janet L. Bauer, "Conclusion. The Mixed Blessings of Women's Fundamentalism: Democratic Impulses in a Patriarchal World," in Mixed Blessings: Gender and Religious Fundamentalism Cross Culturally, ed. Judy Brink and Joan Mencher (New York: Routledge, 1997), 224.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 222.
- ⁴¹ This conclusion is that of the author, based on her research in English and French sources. The only comparative work found was a study comparing Gush Emunim with Shalom Achshav (Peace Now).
- ⁴² This interpretation is not accepted by many Orthodox rabbis.
- ⁴³ The use of, or at best the right to exercise, violence against Israel is intrinsic to Hamas's ideology. Gush Emunim does not hold a comparable fundamental belief about using violence against Palestinians. For this reason, a greater amount of attention is paid to violent acts committed by Hamas than by Gush Emunim. Nevertheless, with rabbinic approval, violence against Palestinians can indirectly be considered part of Gush Emunim's doctrine. Although it is beyond the scope of this work, settler violence has been well documented in annual reports published by the human rights monitoring groups, such as Amnesty International and B'Tselem. For example, see Tacit Consent: Israeli Policy on Law Enforcement toward Settlers in the Occupied Territories (Jerusalem: B'Tselem – The Israel Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, March 2001).
- ⁴⁴ M.E. Marty and R.S. Appleby, The Glory and the Power (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 1.
- ⁴⁵ Sharoni, 37.
- ⁴⁶ Shahin Gerami, Women and Fundamentalism: Islam and Christianity (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1996), 31.
- ⁴⁷ Mervat Hatem, "Toward the Development of Post-Islamist and Post-Nationalist Feminist Discourses in the Middle East" in Arab Women, ed. Judith E. Tucker (Washington, DC: The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1993), 42.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Bauer, 222.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 223.
- ⁵² Martin Riesebrodt, Pious Passion: The Emergence of Modern Fundamentalism in the United States and Iran (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 202.
- ⁵³ Bauer, 223.
- ⁵⁴ For an explanation of standpoint theory, see S. Reinharz and L. Davidman, Feminist Methods in Social Research (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- ⁵⁵ Bauer, 234.
- ⁵⁶ Sami Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East (New York: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1993), 38. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the multitude of definitions of fundamentalism. For a monumental work that exhausts the variety of interpretations, see M.E. Marty and R.S. Appleby, Fundamentalisms Observed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Fundamentalisms and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Fundamentalisms and the State (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); and Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
- ⁵⁷ Joan Mencher, "Introduction," in Mixed Blessings: Gender and Religious Fundamentalism Cross Culturally, ed. Judy Brink and Joan Mencher (New York: Routledge, 1997), 6.
- ⁵⁸ Enloe, Maneuvers, 247.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 255.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶¹ Miriam Cooke, Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature (New York: Routledge, 2001), ix-x.
- ⁶² Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. H.M. Parshley (London: Lowe and Brydone, Ltd., 1960), 255.
- ⁶³ Miriam Cooke, "Multiple Critique," in Postcolonialism, Feminism and Religious Discourse, ed. Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui-lan (New York: Routledge, 2002), 143.
- ⁶⁴ Cheryl A. Rubenberg, Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 13.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., 10.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., 14.

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- ⁶⁷ Herzog, 1.
- ⁶⁸ Rubenberg, 12.
- ⁶⁹ Hanita Brand, "Loyalty, Belonging, and their Discontents: Women in the Public Sphere in Jewish and Palestinian Cultural Discourse," Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues (2003): 86.
- ⁷⁰ John Locke, Second Treatise of Government, Chapter 8, Article 95, in Classics of Moral and Political Theory, ed. Michael L. Morgan 2nd edition (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1996), 769.
- ⁷¹ Brand, 86.
- ⁷² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, trans. Christopher Betts (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 55.
- ⁷³ Suad Joseph and Susan Sylomovics, "Introduction," in Women and Power in the Middle East, ed. Suad Joseph and Susan Sylomovics (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 9.
- ⁷⁴ See Carole Pateman, The Sexual Contract (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).
- ⁷⁵ Joseph and Sylomovics, 9.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., 9.
- ⁷⁸ Jürgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981): 319.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., 153-197.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid., 154.
- ⁸¹ Joseph and Sylomovics, 9.
- ⁸² Seyla Benhabib, "Models of Public Space: Hannah Arendt, the Liberal Tradition, and Jürgen Habermas," in Habermas and the Public Sphere, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1996), 92.
- ⁸³ See Pateman.
- ⁸⁴ Brand, 87.
- ⁸⁵ Hanna Herzog, Gender Politics: Women in Israel (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 33.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ See Judith Lorber, Paradox of Gender (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).
- ⁸⁸ Herzog, 47.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid.
- ⁹¹ See Jean B. Elshtain, Public Man, Private Woman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).
- ⁹² Herzog, 46-48.
- ⁹³ Mervat Hatem, "Modernization, the State, and the Family," in The Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East, ed. Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 65. Which countries constitute the Middle East depends on the author, but the bibliographic sources in this work consistently included Palestine and often Israel in discussions of personal status laws and religious institutions. Generalizations about the Middle East presented in the survey of literature are not intended to be understood as absolutes, nor do they imply that the models presented are unique to the Middle Eastern context; rather, they suggest a possible framework within which the issue of women's political participation can be situated. See Rita Giacaman et al., "For the Common Good? Gender and Social Citizenship in Palestine," in Women and Power in the Middle East, ed. Suad Joseph and Susan Sylomovics (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 126-134.
- ⁹⁴ Brand, 87.
- ⁹⁵ Joseph and Sylomovics, 14.
- ⁹⁶ Suad Joseph, "Gendering Citizenship in the Middle East," in Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East, ed. Suad Joseph (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 24.
- ⁹⁷ Rita Giacaman et al. bring to attention that a Palestinian by definition, thus far, lacks formal citizenship. To speak of Palestinian citizenship, therefore, is to speak of a term whose fundamental definition is still being debated within Palestinian society. Nevertheless, the Nationality Law's definition of citizenship in 2001 conferred Palestinian citizenship solely through the father. This definition of citizenship, along with former president Yasser Arafat's renewed emphasis on clan-based leadership, still renders Palestinian women's citizenship as connective rather than individual. See Rita Giacaman et. al, "For the Common

Good? Gender and Social Citizenship in Palestine,” in Women and Power in the Middle East ed. Suad Joseph and Susan Sylomovics (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 126-134.

⁹⁸ Joseph and Sylomovics, 3.

⁹⁹ Brand, 88.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Joseph and Sylomovics, 5. Reem Bahdi, a professor of law at the University of Windsor and director of the Judicial Independence and Human Dignity Initiative, explains that “the judges in the High Court say that there is a right to appeal to the higher courts so that the religious courts do not have the final say. At best, the relationship between these two court systems is up in the air in the Palestinian context” (personal correspondence, 13 Aug. 2006).

¹⁰² For example, Anthony Smith and Benedict Anderson. See Brand, 88.

¹⁰³ Joseph, 24.

¹⁰⁴ Reem Bahdi, personal correspondence, 13 Aug. 2006.

¹⁰⁵ Joseph and Sylomovics, 12.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁸ For example, see Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971); and Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1943).

¹⁰⁹ Georgina Waylen, “Women and Democratization: Conceptualizing Gender Relations in Transition Politics,” World Politics 46, no. 3 (Apr. 1994): 332-333.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 334.

¹¹¹ Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, “Think Again: Middle East Democracy,” Foreign Policy no. 145 (2004): 27; Jane S. Jaquette, “Women and Democracy, Regional Differences and Contrasting Views,” Journal of Democracy 12, no. 3 (Jul. 2001): 111-112. See Jaquette and Waylen for a discussion of women’s increased participation in Latin American and Eastern European movements.

¹¹² See above, note 3.

¹¹³ Jaquette, 121.

¹¹⁴ Islah Jad, “Between Religion and Secularism: Islamist Women of Hamas,” in On Shifting Ground, ed. Fereshteh Nouraie-Simone (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2005), 174.

¹¹⁵ Mary Elaine Hegland, “The Power Paradox in Muslim Women’s *Majales*: North-West Pakistani Mourning Rituals as Sites of Contestation over Religious Politics, Ethnicity, and Gender,” in Gender, Politics and Islam, ed. Carolyn Allen et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 95-132.

¹¹⁶ For a discussion of the use of women as Islamist symbols, see Mary Elaine Hegland, “Gender and Religion in the Middle East and South Asia: Women’s Voices Rising,” in The Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East, ed. Margaret L. Meriwether and Judith E. Tucker (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 177-212.

¹¹⁷ Miriam Cooke, “Multiple Critique,” in Postcolonialism, Feminism and Religious Discourse, ed. Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui-lan (New York: Routledge, 2002), 143.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 50.

¹¹⁹ Hegland, “The Power Paradox in Muslim Women’s *Majales*,” 95-132.

¹²⁰ Cooke, “Multiple Critique,” 144.

¹²¹ Hegland, “The Power Paradox in Muslim Women’s *Majales*,” 113.

¹²² Stuart Hall, “The Local and the Global,” in Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives, ed. Anne McClintock et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 183.

¹²³ Cooke, “Multiple Critique,” 151.

¹²⁴ Nira Yuval-Davis, “The Personal Is Political: Jewish Fundamentalism and Women’s Empowerment,” in Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women, ed. Courtney W. Howland (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 36.

¹²⁵ The war was disastrous from the perspective of Gush Emunim.

¹²⁶ Unless otherwise noted, none of the sources used in this chapter discussed women’s non-familial political roles.

¹²⁷ One exception is Daniela Weiss, who served as Gush Emunim’s secretary-general from 1985 until 1987.

¹²⁸ Lilly Weissbrod, “Gush Emunim and the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process: Modern Religious Fundamentalism in Crisis,” Israel Affairs 3, no. 1 (1996): 100.

- ¹²⁹ In the context of the discussion of Gush Emunim, the terms Judea and Samaria will be used, since this is how they refer to the West Bank. Similarly, the term West Bank will be used in the Hamas context, since this is how they are referred to by Palestinians. As stated earlier, Palestine encompasses both the West Bank and Gaza.
- ¹³⁰ David Weissbrod and Elin Waring, "Settlement Motivations in the Gush Emunim Movement: Comparing Bonds of Altruism and Self Interest," in The Impact of Gush Emunim, ed. David Newman (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985) 185.
- ¹³¹ Ibid.
- ¹³² For example, Moses Meiselman.
- ¹³³ Aviezer Ravitzky, Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 37.
- ¹³⁴ Merkaz Harav is also the name of the yeshiva (religious institution) founded by Rav Kook Jr. Ehud Sprinzak, The Ascendancy of Israel's Radical Right (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 108.
- ¹³⁵ Sprinzak, 108.
- ¹³⁶ Ibid., 110.
- ¹³⁷ Ravitzky, 136.
- ¹³⁸ Lilly Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim Ideology – From Religious Doctrine to Political Action," Middle Eastern Studies 18, no. 3 (1982): 267.
- ¹³⁹ See Abraham Isaac Kook, Orot ha-kodesh (Jerusalem: 1964).
- ¹⁴⁰ Ravitzky, 135.
- ¹⁴¹ Weissbrod, 269.
- ¹⁴² Ravitzky, 135.
- ¹⁴³ For a more lengthy discussion of Kookist theology, see Ravitzky.
- ¹⁴⁴ Ariel Scheib, "Pikuach Nefesh," Jewish Virtual Library [online]; accessed 23 Jun. 2006; available from http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Judaism/pikuach_nefesh.html.
- ¹⁴⁵ Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 74a-b.
- ¹⁴⁶ This interpretation is not accepted by many Orthodox rabbis.
- ¹⁴⁷ Gwyn Rowley, "The Land of Israel: A Reconstructionist Approach," in Newman, 132.
- ¹⁴⁸ Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism," in Fundamentalisms Observed, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 290.
- ¹⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁰ Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim and the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," 88.
- ¹⁵¹ Settlements in the Sinai and the Gaza Strip were dismantled in 1982 and 2005 respectively.
- ¹⁵² Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim and the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," 88.
- ¹⁵³ Giora Goldberg and Efraim Ben-Zadok, "Gush Emunim in the West Bank," Middle Eastern Studies 22, no. 1 (1986): 57.
- ¹⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁵ Aran, 292.
- ¹⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 310.
- ¹⁵⁸ For instance, Al-Qaeda. See Manocher Dorraj, "The Crisis of Modernity and Religious Revivalism: A Comparative Study of Islamic Fundamentalism, Jewish Fundamentalism and Liberation Theology," Social Compass 46, no. 2 (1999): 225 – 240.
- ¹⁵⁹ Aran, 59.
- ¹⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ¹⁶¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁶² Sprinzak, 46.
- ¹⁶³ Goldberg et al., 60.
- ¹⁶⁴ Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim Ideology," 269.
- ¹⁶⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶⁶ Avner Yaniv and Yael Yishai, "Israeli Settlements in the West Bank: The Politics of Intransigence," Journal of Politics 43, no. 4 (Nov. 1981): 1114.
- ¹⁶⁷ David J. Schnall, "Religion and Political Dissent in Israel," in Religious Resurgence, ed. Richard T. Antoun and Mary Elaine Hegland (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 171.
- ¹⁶⁸ Schnall, 169.

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- ¹⁶⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁷⁰ Sprinzak, 146.
- ¹⁷¹ Ibid., 77.
- ¹⁷² Ibid., 100.
- ¹⁷³ Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, 57.
- ¹⁷⁴ Mark Tessler, "The Political Right in Israel: Its Origins, Growth, and Prospects," Journal of Palestine Studies 15, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 35.
- ¹⁷⁵ Sprinzak, 100-101.
- ¹⁷⁶ Schnall, 171.
- ¹⁷⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁷⁸ Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, 57.
- ¹⁷⁹ Myron J. Aranoff, "The Institutionalisation and Cooptation of a Charismatic, Messianic, Religious-Political Revitalisation Movement," in The Impact of Gush Emunim, ed. David Newman (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1985), 52.
- ¹⁸⁰ Don-Yehiya, 230.
- ¹⁸¹ Sprinzak, 102-103; Schnall, 171.
- ¹⁸² Schnall, 171.
- ¹⁸³ For example, women are not mentioned in the activities of the Movement to Stop the Withdrawal in Sinai. See Gideon Aran and Michael Feige, "The Movement to Stop the Withdrawal in Sinai: A Sociological Perspective," Journal of Applied Behavioural Science 23 (1987): 73-87. Only one woman is cited in a list of Sinai Movement activists who met together in order to develop ideas to prevent the withdrawal. See Nadav Shragai, "Mounting an Extremist Action" Ha'aretz 7 Apr. 2004 [online]; accessed 9 Aug. 2006; available from <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=412556&contrassID=1&subContrassID=1&sbSubContrassID=0&listSrc=Y>.
- ¹⁸⁴ Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, 52.
- ¹⁸⁵ Madeline Tress, "Halakha, Zionism and Gender: The Case of Gush Emunim," in Identity Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective, ed. Valentine M. Moghadam (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 318; Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ¹⁸⁶ Schnall, 171.
- ¹⁸⁷ Goldberg and Ben-Zadok, 57.
- ¹⁸⁸ Sprinzak, 140.
- ¹⁸⁹ Tamara Neuman, "Maternal 'Anti-Politics' in the Formation of Hebron's Jewish Enclave," Journal of Palestine Studies 33, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 61.
- ¹⁹⁰ Madeline Tress, "Halakha, Zionism and Gender: The Case of Gush Emunim," in Identity Politics and Women: Cultural Reassertions and Feminisms in International Perspective, ed. Valentine M. Moghadam (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994), 318.
- ¹⁹¹ Tress, 319.
- ¹⁹² Ibid.
- ¹⁹³ Neuman, 63.
- ¹⁹⁴ Sprinzak, 140.
- ¹⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 142.
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 145.
- ¹⁹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁰ Ibid., 157.
- ²⁰¹ Ibid., 145.
- ²⁰² Schnall, 190.
- ²⁰³ Ibid., 188-190.
- ²⁰⁴ Ibid., 188.
- ²⁰⁵ Ibid., 185.
- ²⁰⁶ Ibid., 185-186.

- ²⁰⁷ This revival, however, did not always work in favour of GE. Religious authorities, quoting medieval texts to support their views of the responsibilities Jews must uphold as both invader and occupier, opposed the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, as well as Israel's role in the Shatila and Sabra massacres. Netivot Shalom, or Pathways to Peace, was created by these reservists. See Schnall, 186 for details.
- ²⁰⁸ Schnall, 187.
- ²⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ²¹⁰ Aranoff, 56.
- ²¹¹ Ibid.
- ²¹² Sprinzak, 168.
- ²¹³ Ibid.
- ²¹⁴ Schnall, 189.
- ²¹⁵ Ibid.
- ²¹⁶ Aranoff, 59.
- ²¹⁷ Sprinzak, 142.
- ²¹⁸ Tress, 319.
- ²¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²²⁰ Aranoff, 59.
- ²²¹ Ibid.
- ²²² See Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (1970): 337-363 and David Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Process, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 4 (1986): 464-481.
- ²²³ Don-Yehiya, 217.
- ²²⁴ Weissbrod, "Gush Emunim – From Religious Doctrine to Political Action," 265.
- ²²⁵ Don-Yehiya, 217.
- ²²⁶ Ibid.
- ²²⁷ Ravitzky, 37. The "Jewish Underground" was not the official name of the group.
- ²²⁸ Tessler, 50.
- ²²⁹ Ibid., 51.
- ²³⁰ Sprinzak, 156.
- ²³¹ Ibid.
- ²³² Ibid., 158.
- ²³³ Ibid., 135.
- ²³⁴ Ibid.
- ²³⁵ Ibid.
- ²³⁶ Perhaps the reaction would have been more severe had Rabbi Kook Jr. been alive and able to guide Gush Emunim. He died in 1982, months before the evacuation of the settlements was complete.
- ²³⁷ Aaron David Miller, "Why Gaza May Spell a New Start," *International Herald Tribune* [online]; 5 May 2005; accessed 14 May 2006; available from <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2005/05/04/opinion/edmiller.php>.
- ²³⁸ Miller, "Why Gaza May Spell a New Start."
- ²³⁹ Abraham Rabinovitch, "When Jews Evacuated Jews," *Jerusalem Post* 28 Jun. 2005.
- ²⁴⁰ Ravitzky, 134.
- ²⁴¹ Yuval-Davis, 35.
- ²⁴² Michael Feige, "Do Not Weep Rachel: Fundamentalism, Commemoration and Gender in a West Bank Settlement," *Gender and Israeli Society: Women's Time*, *Journal of Israeli History* 21, no. 1-2. (Mar.-Oct. 2002): 124. Many of the footnotes directly relating to Rachelim will refer to either Michael Feige, or Tamar El-Or and Gideon Aran. Despite extensive research, using English and Hebrew databases, these were surprisingly the only two academic articles the author could find on the topic. After rigorous attempts to acquire the monthly settler newsletter *Nekuda*, as well unsuccessful attempts to contact the editor-in-chief, the author was unable to find copies. Attempts were also made to interview some of the settlers, but for reasons of anonymity, names will not be provided. Settlers' names that are used were interviewed by others.
- ²⁴³ Feige, 124.
- ²⁴⁴ Tami Amanda Jacoby, *Women in Zones of Conflict: Power and Resistance in Israel* (Montreal and Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 93.
- ²⁴⁵ Jacoby, 5.
- ²⁴⁶ Yuval-Davis, 35.

- ²⁴⁷ Tamar El-Or, "Paradoxes and Social Boundaries: Ultra Orthodox Jewish Women and Their World," in Israeli Women's Studies: A Reader, ed. Esther Fuchs (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 134.
- ²⁴⁸ Yuval-Davis, 38.
- ²⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁰ Frances Raday, "Religion and Patriarchal Politics: The Israeli Experience," in Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women, ed. Courtney W. Howland (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 156.
- ²⁵¹ Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Women in Israel (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 228.
- ²⁵² Adrienne Baker, The Jewish Woman in Contemporary Society: Transitions and Traditions (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 38.
- ²⁵³ Yuval-Davis, 38.
- ²⁵⁴ Ibid., 40.
- ²⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁶ Ibid., 40-41.
- ²⁵⁷ Feige, 121. This does not imply that this phenomenon is unique to Judaism.
- ²⁵⁸ Baker, 165.
- ²⁵⁹ Ibid., 36.
- ²⁶⁰ Babylonian Talmud Nedarim 50a, Ketubot 62b-63a; Jerusalem Talmud Shabbat 7:1.
- ²⁶¹ Aviva Cantor, Jewish Women/Jewish Men: The Legacy of Patriarchy in Jewish Life (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 100.
- ²⁶² While Judaism recognizes that the primary function of a spouse is for companionship and not procreation only, Rachel is nonetheless regarded as the ideal mother. If she was willing to make such great sacrifices for her husband, it is expected that she would make greater sacrifices for her children, the blood of her blood.
- ²⁶³ Tamar El-Or, Next Year I Will Know More: Literacy and Identity Among Young Orthodox Women in Israel, trans. Haim Watzman (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 176.
- ²⁶⁴ See El-Or, "Next Year I Will Know More."
- ²⁶⁵ El-Or, "Next Year I Will Know More," 189.
- ²⁶⁶ Tamar El-Or, telephone interview, 24 August 2006.
- ²⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁹ El-Or, "Next Year I Will Know More," 189.
- ²⁷⁰ Moshe Meiselman, Jewish Woman in Jewish Law (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc./Yeshiva University Press, 1978), 16.
- ²⁷¹ Ibid; Baker, 35.
- ²⁷² Meiselman, 16.
- ²⁷³ Ibid., 17.
- ²⁷⁴ Ibid., 18.
- ²⁷⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁷⁶ Raday, 157.
- ²⁷⁷ El-Or, "Next Year I Will Know More," 176-177.
- ²⁷⁸ Paula E. Hyman, "A Feminist Perspective on Jewish Fundamentalism," in Religious Fundamentalisms and the Human Rights of Women, ed. Courtney W. Howland (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 273.
- ²⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁰ Halperin-Kaddari, 229.
- ²⁸¹ See Sachlav Stoler-Liss, "Mothers Birth the Nation: The Social Construction of Zionist Motherhood in Wartime in Israeli Parents' Manuals," Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues 6 (2003): 104-118.
- ²⁸² Ibid., 107.
- ²⁸³ Ibid., 115.
- ²⁸⁴ Simona Sharoni, Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's Resistance (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 41-47. For a sociolegal analysis that argues the conscription law constructs Israeli Jewish women as wives and mothers, rather than as individual citizens, see Nitza Berkovitch, "Motherhood as a National Mission: the Construction of Womanhood in the Legal

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- Discourse in Israel," Women's Studies International Forum 20, no. 5/6 (1997): 605-619. For a discussion of how women's militarization has not translated into empowerment, and how the military reinforces gender inequality, see Uta Klein, "The Gender Perspective of Civil Military Relations in Israeli Society," Current Sociology 50, no. 5 (Sept. 2002): 669-686.
- ²⁸⁵ Simona Sharoni, "Gender and Military Occupation," in Israeli Women's Studies: A Reader, ed. Esther Fuchs (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 242.
- ²⁸⁶ Feige, 121.
- ²⁸⁷ Sharoni, "Gender and Military Occupation," 242.
- ²⁸⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁹ Ibid., 243.
- ²⁹⁰ Feige, 121.
- ²⁹¹ Tamar El-Or and Gideon Aran, "Giving Birth to a Settlement: Maternal Thinking and Political Action of Jewish Women on the West Bank," Gender and Society 9, no. 1 (Feb. 1995): 66.
- ²⁹² Feige, 122.
- ²⁹³ Tamara Neuman, "Maternal 'Anti-Politics' in the Formation of Hebron's Jewish Enclave," Journal of Palestine Studies 33, no. 2 (Winter 2004): 52.
- ²⁹⁴ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ²⁹⁵ El-Or, "Next Year I Will Know More," 189.
- ²⁹⁶ Jacoby, 95-96.
- ²⁹⁷ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ²⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰⁰ Feige, 125; Nadav Shragai, "'Hell No, We Won't Go,' Vow Settlers, But For Now They Choose Legal Challenges," Ha'aretz 10 Jun. 2003.
- ³⁰¹ Feige, 126.
- ³⁰² Ibid.
- ³⁰³ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁰⁶ El-Or and Aran, 66.
- ³⁰⁷ Shragai, "'Hell No, We Won't Go.'"
- ³⁰⁸ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ³¹⁰ Feige, 125. In a Jericho attack three years before Rachel Druk's murder, Rachel Weiss died with her three children, although it has been claimed that she chose to die along with her children, who could not be saved, in the bus fire.
- ³¹¹ Shragai, "Hell No, We Won't Go." In the occupation of Beit Hadassah, the women and children were sent under the instructions of the men. See Jacoby, 97.
- ³¹² Shragai, "Hell No, We Won't Go."
- ³¹³ El-Or and Aran, 60.
- ³¹⁴ Ibid.
- ³¹⁵ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006; El-Or and Aran, 62.
- ³¹⁶ Feige, 126.
- ³¹⁷ The definition pertaining to the illegality of the settlements differs between Israel and international law. See Feige above, note 25.
- ³¹⁸ El-Or and Aran, 60.
- ³¹⁹ Shragai, "Hell No, We Won't Go."
- ³²⁰ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³²¹ Ibid.
- ³²² Shragai, "Hell No, We Won't Go."
- ³²³ Feige, 125; Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³²⁴ Feige, 138.
- ³²⁵ El-Or and Aran, 62.

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- ³²⁶ Feige, 123; see also Tessler and Warriner, 250-281. Right and left wing are labels that in Israel reflects the attitudes toward retaining territories acquired in the 1967 and 1973 wars. Those who are right wing have a more 'hardline' approach, although within each camp there are 'hawks' and 'doves.'
- ³²⁷ Neuman, 55.
- ³²⁸ Feige, 125.
- ³²⁹ Ibid, 123.
- ³³⁰ Ibid., 119.
- ³³¹ Ibid., 132.
- ³³² Ibid.
- ³³³ Ibid., 122.
- ³³⁴ Neuman, 62.
- ³³⁵ See Neuman, 62, for an example of an early settlement, the hotel takeover of the Davoya building in Hebron.
- ³³⁶ Dvorah Arziel, "Hapes et ha-ishah" (Look for the Woman), *Nekuda* no. 154 (1987): 24-25, cited in Feige, 122.
- ³³⁷ See above, notes 40-41.
- ³³⁸ Neuman, 60.
- ³³⁹ Feige, 127.
- ³⁴⁰ Ibid., 128.
- ³⁴¹ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁴² Ibid.
- ³⁴³ Ibid.
- ³⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁴⁵ El-Or and Aran, 64.
- ³⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁴⁷ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁴⁸ Tamar El-Or, telephone interview, 24 Aug. 2006.
- ³⁴⁹ El-Or and Aran, 64.
- ³⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ³⁵¹ Emuna Elon, "You Do Not Kill Mommy," *Nekuda* Nov. 1991, 44, cited in El-Or and Aran, 64.
- ³⁵² El-Or and Aran, 64.
- ³⁵³ Ibid., 70.
- ³⁵⁴ Ibid., 69.
- ³⁵⁵ Feige, 129.
- ³⁵⁶ El-Or and Aran, 65.
- ³⁵⁷ Feige, 133.
- ³⁵⁸ El-Or and Aran, 72.
- ³⁵⁹ Feige, 129.
- ³⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ³⁶¹ Ibid.
- ³⁶² Ibid., 128.
- ³⁶³ El-Or and Aran, 73.
- ³⁶⁴ Feige, 129.
- ³⁶⁵ El-Or and Aran, 73.
- ³⁶⁶ Ibid., 74.
- ³⁶⁷ El-Or and Aran, 62.
- ³⁶⁸ Neuman, 56.
- ³⁶⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁷⁰ El-Or and Aran, 61.
- ³⁷¹ Neuman, 56.
- ³⁷² For example, Sarah Nachshon's illegal circumcision of her fifth child in the Tomb of the Patriarchs, which created a "more permanent settler presence in the mosque"; her insistence on burying her baby in Hebron; the takeover of the Daboya building; and the killing of the infant Shalhevet Pas. See Neuman, 55 for further explanation.

- ³⁷³ Neuman, 68. The dream of settling the land has been entrenched in Jewish religious texts and culture for over two millennia. For detailed discussions on the relationships between the people and the land in Israel, see Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, eds. Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997).
- ³⁷⁴ Neuman, 56.
- ³⁷⁵ Ibid., 63.
- ³⁷⁶ Ibid., 57.
- ³⁷⁷ El-Or and Aran, 70.
- ³⁷⁸ Lily Gallili, "The Child Sacrifice Debate," Ha'aretz 29 Apr. 2001 [online newspaper]; accessed 5 Jun. 2006; available from http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/arch/ArchSearchResultsEng.jhtml?_DARGS=%2Farch%2Fobjects%2Ffunctions%2FSearchInEnglishArchion.jhtml and <http://www.1worldcommunication.org/childsacrificedebate.htm>.
- ³⁷⁹ El-Or and Aran, 74.
- ³⁸⁰ Lily Gallili, "The Child Sacrifice Debate."
- ³⁸¹ Alternatively, this could be read as "for the sake of the nation-state" or "for the sake of the state," since Gush Emunim's ideology regards the state as the official institutional apparatus of the Jewish nation.
- ³⁸² Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁸³ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁴ Gallili, "The Child Sacrifice Debate."
- ³⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁸ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁸⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁹⁰ Gallili, "The Child Sacrifice Debate."
- ³⁹¹ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁹² Rachelim Haim, "Rachelim," Nekuda Nov., 12-14, cited in El-Or and Aran, 62.
- ³⁹³ Naomi Sapir in Shelomo Dror, "Women Settlers on the Frontier Line," Hadashot 2 Feb. 1992, cited in El-Or and Aran, 72.
- ³⁹⁴ Rachelim co-founder, telephone conversation with author, 8 Jun. 2006.
- ³⁹⁵ Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, The Palestinian Hamas (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 26.
- ³⁹⁶ Khalid Hroub, Hamas: Political Thought and Practice (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000), 32.
- ³⁹⁷ Joharah Baker, "In Hamas We Trust?" The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (MIFTAH) 3 Apr. 2006 [online]; accessed 9 April 2006; available from <http://www.miftah.org/Display.cfm?DocId=9906&CategoryId=5>.
- ³⁹⁸ Jeroen Gunning, "Peace with Hamas? The Transforming Potential of Political Participation," International Affairs 80, no. 2 (2004): 24.
- ³⁹⁹ Alain Gresh, "Sur la victoire du Hamas," Le Monde, 27 Jan. 2006 [online]; accessed 12 Apr. 2006; available from <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/carnet/2006-01-27-Sur-la-victoire-du-Hamas>.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Shaul Mishal, "The Pragmatic Dimension of the Palestinian Hamas: A Network Perspective," Armed Forces and Society 29, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 569.
- ⁴⁰¹ Haim Malka, "Forcing Choices: Testing the Transformation of Hamas," The Washington Quarterly 28, no. 4 (2005): 38.
- ⁴⁰² Meir Litvak, The Islamization of Palestinian Identity: The Case of Hamas (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1996), 5; Ziad Abu-Amr, "Hamas: A Historical and Political Background," Journal of Palestine Studies 22, no. 4 (Summer 1993): 6.
- ⁴⁰³ Malka, 38.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Litvak, 5.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Litvak, 16-17.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Hroub, 20 – 23.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 23.
- ⁴⁰⁸ Youth for Vengeance [Shabab al-Tha'r] and Battalion of Justice [Katibat al-Haq]; see Hroub, 24.

- ⁴⁰⁹ Litvak, 18.
- ⁴¹⁰ Meir Litvak, "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism: The Case of Hamas," in Fanaticism and Conflict in the Modern Age, ed. Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Frank Cass, 2005), 156.
- ⁴¹¹ Hroub, 27.
- ⁴¹² Ibid., 26.
- ⁴¹³ Lisa Taraki, "The Islamic Resistance Movement in the Palestinian Uprising," Middle East Report no. 156 (Jan.-Feb. 1989): 31.
- ⁴¹⁴ Hroub, 32.
- ⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 33.
- ⁴¹⁶ Husam al-Nasir, Harakat al-muqawama al-Islamiyya (Hamas): Al-Intilaq wa mo'adalit al-sira' [Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas: The Launching and Plan of Struggle] (London Muslim Palestine Publications, 1990), 3-4, cited in Hroub, 35-36.
- ⁴¹⁷ Malka, 39.
- ⁴¹⁸ Jad, 183.
- ⁴¹⁹ Ibid. Dr. Islah Jad is part of the Women's Research Institute at Birzeit Univeristy in Ramallah, Palestine.
- ⁴²⁰ There is no official English translation of the Hamas Charter. For an unofficial translation, see Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, The Palestinian Hamas (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 175-199.
- ⁴²¹ Article 12.
- ⁴²² Article 27.
- ⁴²³ Article 13.
- ⁴²⁴ Abu-Amr, 9.
- ⁴²⁵ For example, Hamas protested in Tehran the 1991 Madrid Israeli-Palestinian talks. See Abu-Amr, 9.
- ⁴²⁶ Litvak, The Islamization of Palestinian Identity, 13.
- ⁴²⁷ Ibid., 15.
- ⁴²⁸ Ibid., 13.
- ⁴²⁹ Hamas's Palestine includes Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- ⁴³⁰ Article 12.
- ⁴³¹ Article 7. Kassam fought against the British and the Jews in Mandatory Palestine, and was killed by the British in 1935.
- ⁴³² Litvak, The Islamization of Palestinian Identity, 15.
- ⁴³³ Mishal and Sela, 30; Article 12.
- ⁴³⁴ Litvak, "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism," 167.
- ⁴³⁵ Agnès Pavlowsky, Hamas ou Le miroir des frustrations palestiniennes (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 159.
- ⁴³⁶ Litvak, "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism," 156.
- ⁴³⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴³⁸ Article 25.
- ⁴³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴⁰ Article 27.
- ⁴⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴² Article 27.
- ⁴⁴³ Abu-Amr, 13.
- ⁴⁴⁴ Mishal and Sela, 43.
- ⁴⁴⁵ Mishal, 575.
- ⁴⁴⁶ Gunning, 246.
- ⁴⁴⁷ Iyad Barghouti and Lisa Hajjar, "The Islamist Movements in the Occupied Territories: An Interview with Iyad Barghouti," Middle East Report no. 183 (Jul.-Aug. 1993): 11.
- ⁴⁴⁸ Wendy Kristianasen, "Challenge and Counterchallenge: Hamas's Response to Oslo," Journal of Palestine Studies 28, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 21. Within a year, international pressure forced Israel to allow the exiles' return.
- ⁴⁴⁹ Kristianasen, 21.
- ⁴⁵⁰ Gunning, 247.
- ⁴⁵¹ "Siyasat Hamas al-marhaliyya fil-'alaqat al-siyasiyya" [Hamas's interim policies in political relations], shown to Khalid Hroub by Hamas members in Amman, 16 Apr. 1995. The difference between Jew and Zionist is articulated in Filastin al-Muslima, April 1990, cited in Hroub, 50.

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- ⁴⁵² Gunning, 248.
- ⁴⁵³ See also Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, "Letters," Al-Wasat, 11 Nov. 1993, cited in Hroub, 62.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵⁵ Article 32.
- ⁴⁵⁶ Gunning, 248.
- ⁴⁵⁷ See Gresh.
- ⁴⁵⁸ Hroub, 59.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Aaron Mannes, Profiles in Terror (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 115.
- ⁴⁶⁰ Malka, 42.
- ⁴⁶¹ Ziad Abu-Amr, "Pluralism and the Palestinians," Journal of Democracy 7, no. 3 (1996): 88.
- ⁴⁶² Abu-Amr, " Hamas," 18.
- ⁴⁶³ Graham Usher, interview with Bassam Jarrar, "The Islamist Movement and the Palestinian Authority," in Political Islam, ed. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA.: Middle East Research and Information Project, 1997), 337.
- ⁴⁶⁴ Statement no. 36 published 25 Feb. 1989, cited in Hroub, 221.
- ⁴⁶⁵ Mahmud al-Zahhar and Hussein Hijazi, " Hamas: Waiting for Secular Nationalism to Self-Destruct, An Interview with Mahmud Zahhar," Journal of Palestine Studies 24, no. 3 (Spring 1995): 82.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Ziad Abu-Amr, "The View from Palestine: In the Wake of the Agreement," Journal of Palestine Studies 23, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 79.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Abu-Amr, "The View from Palestine," 79.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Ali Jarbawi, "Palestinian Politics at a Crossroads," Journal of Palestine Studies 25, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 33.
- ⁴⁶⁹ See Hroub, 226-227.
- ⁴⁷⁰ Kristianasen, 27.
- ⁴⁷¹ Khaled Masha'al, "Shurout wa ihtimalat qiyam intikhabat naziha" [Conditions and possibilities of conducting fair elections] (Amman: Centre for Middle East Studies, 1994), cited in Hroub, 65.
- ⁴⁷² Mannes, 115.
- ⁴⁷³ Jad, 182, 183. Gender was the only category in Khalil Shikaki's study that did not reflect Palestinian demographics. Women accounted for only 43 percent of voters, while women's groups did little to mobilize female voters and support for female candidates. See Khalil Shikaki, "The Palestinian Elections: An Assessment," Journal of Palestine Studies 25, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 19, 21.
- ⁴⁷⁴ Mannes, 115. For an article arguing that the elections were fair, see Khalil Shikaki, "The Palestinian Elections: An Assessment," Journal of Palestine Studies 25, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 17-22. Nevertheless, it is highly possible that Yasser Arafat could have threatened Shikaki's life had Shikaki declared the elections to be unfair. All of Shikaki's studies and assessments had to be personally approved by Arafat. On one occasion, when Shikaki told Arafat that Yassin was the more popular of the two in Hebron, Arafat told Shikaki, "It is a dangerous game to play with numbers. Go check your numbers again"; Début Global: Show You're Engaged with Khalil Shikaki and Nissim Zsvili, Cable Public Affairs Channel, 17 Aug. 2006. See also Shikaki, 20.
- ⁴⁷⁵ Jarbawi, 33; Kristianasen, 26.
- ⁴⁷⁶ Shikaki, 20.
- ⁴⁷⁷ Gunning, 343.
- ⁴⁷⁸ Jad, 183.
- ⁴⁷⁹ Mishal and Sela, 48.
- ⁴⁸⁰ Gunning, 338.
- ⁴⁸¹ Mishal and Sela, 170.
- ⁴⁸² Jad, 185.
- ⁴⁸³ Ibid., 183.
- ⁴⁸⁴ Arnon Regular, " Hamas Aims to Win 60 Percent of PLC Seats," Ha'aretz 11 Dec. 2005 [online]; accessed 1 Aug. 2006; available from www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/65087.html or www.kibush.co.il/show_file.asp?num=10416.
- ⁴⁸⁵ Shahnaz Taplin-Chinoy, "Arab Women in Politics: Between Repression and Islamism?" Views and Analyses, Islam Online [online]; accessed 1 Aug. 2006; available from www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2006/04/article02.shtml.
- ⁴⁸⁶ Jad, 183.

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- ⁴⁸⁷ " Hamas Movement's Platform," Palestinian National Information Centre; accessed 1 Aug. 2006; available from <http://www.pnic.gov.ps/english/gover/Elections/Hamas-program.html>.
- ⁴⁸⁸ Mishal and Sela, 170.
- ⁴⁸⁹ Mishal, 577.
- ⁴⁹⁰ Malka, 44.
- ⁴⁹¹ Hroub, 61.
- ⁴⁹² Gunning, 241.
- ⁴⁹³ Pavlowsky, 88. "Bien sûr nous devons faire contrepoids, car actuellement nous, les Palestiniens, nous sommes faibles dans les negotiations. Les attentats prouvent que les Palestiniens ne sont pas dépourvus de moyens. Ils ont leurs avions; nous, nous avons des Yayha Ayyach."
- ⁴⁹⁴ Gunning, 243.
- ⁴⁹⁵ Kristianasen, 30.
- ⁴⁹⁶ Mishal and Sela, 58.
- ⁴⁹⁷ Mishal, 582.
- ⁴⁹⁸ Gunning, 236; Karby Leggett, "Uneasy Balance – Hamas's Two Faces: Militant Islamism, Local Pragmatism; Newly Elected Mr. Abduljawad Has a Foot in Both Camps; A Dilemma for U.S. Policy; Epiphany in an Israeli Prison," Wall Street Journal, New York, 15 Mar. 2006.
- ⁴⁹⁹ Kristianasen, 26.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰¹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰² Gunning, 236.
- ⁵⁰³ For instance, the military wing issued a truce in June 2001 without Yassin's knowledge. See Mishal, 583.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Mishal, 582.
- ⁵⁰⁵ Gunning, 236.
- ⁵⁰⁶ Kristianasen, 28.
- ⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 29.
- ⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰⁹ Mishal and Sela, 76, 78-79.
- ⁵¹⁰ Kristianasen, 30.
- ⁵¹¹ Ibid., 23.
- ⁵¹² Ze'ev Schiff and Reuters, "Hamas Government Offers Israel 'Quiet for Quiet,'" Ha'aretz, 7 Apr. 2006 [online]; accessed 7 Apr. 2006; available from <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/703434.html>.
- ⁵¹³ Malka 40, 41.
- ⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 44-45.
- ⁵¹⁵ Pavlowsky, 114.
- ⁵¹⁶ Mishal, 577.
- ⁵¹⁷ Mishal and Sela, 72.
- ⁵¹⁸ Mishal, 578.
- ⁵¹⁹ Gunning, 250.
- ⁵²⁰ Litvak, "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism," 170.
- ⁵²¹ Malka, 41.
- ⁵²² See Schiff and Reuters.
- ⁵²³ Mishal, 579.
- ⁵²⁴ Litvak, "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism," 170. See also Leggett.
- ⁵²⁵ Graham Usher, "What Kind of Nation? The Rise of Hamas in the Occupied Territories," in Political Islam, ed. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: Middle East Research and Information Project, 1997), 348.
- ⁵²⁶ Kristianasen, 31.
- ⁵²⁷ Graham Usher, "What Kind of Nation?," 348.
- ⁵²⁸ Malka, 39.
- ⁵²⁹ Gunning, 349.
- ⁵³⁰ Leaflet no. 28, 18 Aug. 1988, cited in Mishal and Sela, 51.
- ⁵³¹ 5 Oct. 1988, cited in Mishal and Sela, 53.
- ⁵³² 13 Mar. 1988, cited in Mishal and Sela, 53.
- ⁵³³ Graham Usher, "What Kind of Nation?," 348.

- ⁵³⁴ Gunning, 250.
- ⁵³⁵ Mishal, 576.
- ⁵³⁶ Summarized from Abdel Sattar Qasem, "Al-fikr al-siyasi li harakat Hamas" [The political thought of Hamas], *Al-Siyasa al-Filastiniyya* 3, no. 9 (1995), 112-128, in Hroub, 44.
- ⁵³⁷ Cartoon was available at www.palestine-info.co.uk/am/publish/index.shtml; accessed 11 May 2006. The Hamas website is called The Palestinian Information Centre and is available in English, French, Russian, Malayu, Farsi, Urdu and Arabic. Although there are similarities among the different sites, the content greatly differs among them.
- ⁵³⁸ No official translation of the Hamas Charter exists. All references to the Charter are from an unofficial translation available at <http://www.mideastweb.org/hamas.htm>; accessed 11 May 2006; Article 12.
- ⁵³⁹ Article 12.
- ⁵⁴⁰ Article 17.
- ⁵⁴¹ Article 18.
- ⁵⁴² Islah Jad, "Between Religion and Secularism: Islamist Women of Hamas," in *On Shifting Ground*, ed. Fereshteh Nouraie-Simone (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2005), 181.
- ⁵⁴³ "Palestinian Author and Syrian University Professor Praise Arab Mothers for Sacrificing Their Sons," discussion with Arab intellectuals regarding martyrdom, Syrian TV, The Middle East Media Research Institute, 6 May 2006 [online]; available from <http://memritv.org/Transcript.asp?P1=1134>; accessed 12 May 2006.
- ⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴⁶ See Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, The Palestinian Hamas (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
- ⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴⁸ See Mishal and Sela, The Palestinian Hamas; Graham Usher, interview with Bassam Jarrar, "The Islamist Movement and the Palestinian Authority"; Agnès Pavlowsky, Hamas ou Le miroir des frustrations palestiniennes (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).
- ⁵⁴⁹ Ray L. Huntington et al., "Family Roles of Contemporary Palestinian Women," Journal of Comparative Family Studies 32, no. 1 (2001): 3.
- ⁵⁵⁰ "Survey – Public Opinion Poll #6," Development Studies Programme, Birzeit University [online]; accessed 19 Jul. 2006; available from <http://home.birzeit.edu/dsp/polls/p6/analysis.html>.
- ⁵⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵⁵³ Table 5, "Feeling of Religiosity Among Palestinian Women," Huntington et al., 11.
- ⁵⁵⁴ Huntington et al., 17 and 18.
- ⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵⁶ Marianne Heiberg and Geir Øvensen, "Palestinian Society in Gaza, West Bank and Arab Jerusalem: A Survey of Living Conditions," Religious Attitudes, FAFO Report 151, Forskningsstiftelsen Fafo 1993, 1994 [online]; accessed 25 Aug. 2006; available from http://almashriq.hiof.no/general/300/320/327/fafo/reports/FAFO151/9_4.html.
- ⁵⁵⁷ Marianne Heiberg and Geir Øvensen, "Palestinian Society in Gaza, West Bank and Arab Jerusalem: A Survey of Living Conditions," Political Attitudes, FAFO Report 151, Forskningsstiftelsen Fafo 1993, 1994 [online]; accessed 25 Aug. 2006; available from http://almashriq.hiof.no/general/300/320/327/fafo/reports/FAFO151/9_5.html.
- ⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵⁹ Heiberg and Øvensen, *Religious Attitudes*.
- ⁵⁶⁰ Heiberg and Øvensen, *Political Attitudes*.
- ⁵⁶¹ Dr. Khawla Abu-Baker, ed. Women, Armed Conflict and Loss: The Mental Health of Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories (Jerusalem: Women's Studies Centre, 2004), 45.
- ⁵⁶² Huntington et al., 12. Huntington et al.'s research did not include a study of men's participation, hence the absence of statistics on men.
- ⁵⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁶ For details on Hamas's control of mosques and other religious institutions, see Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela, The Palestinian Hamas (NY: Columbia University Press, 2000) and Khalid Hroub, Hamas: Political Thought and Practice (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2000).

⁵⁶⁷ Huntington et al., 14.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁶⁹ Table 7, "Political Participation During Intifada by Palestinian Women," Huntington et al., 13.

⁵⁷⁰ Sharoni, Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 70.

⁵⁷¹ Debra D. Zedalis, Female Suicide Bombers, Strategic Studies Institute, Jun. 2004 [online]; accessed 20 Jul. 2006; available from <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB408.pdf>. The term "suicide bomber" is controversial, since the bombers do not consider their actions to be a form of suicide. Possible alternatives to this term include "martyrdom seekers," "martyrdom bombers," "martyrs," "Islamikazes" or "homicide bombers." The choice to use "suicide bomber" over other possible labels is to emphasize the willingness of the individual to engage in an action which in all likelihood and hope, will result in the perpetrator's death, as well as that of others. Moreover, there are many Islamic religious scholars who disagree with the use of the term "martyr" in relation to suicide bombings. To remove some of the ambiguity of the appropriateness of using "martyr," while acknowledging that homicide for the Israelis can be considered acts of defense for the Palestinians, "suicide bombers" is used throughout this work more frequently than other terms.

⁵⁷² Zedalis, Female Suicide Bombers.

⁵⁷³ Tarik Kafala and Martin Asser, "Analysis: Palestinian Suicide Attacks," BBC News [online]; accessed 20 Jul. 2006; available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3256858.stm.

⁵⁷⁴ "Suicide Terror- Its Use and Rationalization - July 2002," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs [online]; accessed 20 Jul. 2006; available from <http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Terrorism-+Obstacle+to+Peace/Palestinian+terror+before+2000/Suicide%20and%20Other%20Bombing%20Attacks%20in%20Israel%20Since>.

⁵⁷⁵ Zedalis, Female Suicide Bombers.

⁵⁷⁶ Terri Toles Patkin, "Explosive Baggage: Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers and the Rhetoric of Emotion," Women and Language 27, no. 2 (2004): 82.

⁵⁷⁷ Patkin, 79-88. See also Barbara Victor, Army of Roses: Inside the World of Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers (New York: St. Marten's Press, 2003).

⁵⁷⁸ http://www.palestine-info.cc/french/article_3731.shtml; accessed 12 May 2006.

⁵⁷⁹ For example, Darine Abou Aycha was an active member of an Islamist group affiliated with Hamas, but was sent by Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades. Hanadi Jaradat was also an Islamist and was sent by Palestinian Islamic Jihad. At this point in time, women were still not involved in Hamas's military operations. For more information, see http://www.palestine-info.cc/french/article_3731.shtml; accessed 12 May 2006.

⁵⁸⁰ "Suicide Bombers' Mother Elected to Parliament," ABC News 26 Jan. 2006 [online]; accessed 15 Jun. 2006; available from <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=1536576>; Ian Fisher and Steven Erlange, "Women, Secret Hamas Strength, Win Votes at Polls and New Role," New York Times 3 Feb. 2006 [online newspaper]; accessed 3 Feb. 2006; available from <http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F60B10FF3D5A0C708CDDAB0894DE404482>; Stéphanie Le Bars, "Femme au Hamas," Le Monde 24 Jan. 2006 [online newspaper]; accessed 12 Apr. 2006; available from http://www.lemonde.fr/web/imprimer_element/0,40-0@2-3230,50-733989,0.html; Carolynne Wheeler, "Young Religious Women Putting Faith in Hamas," Globe and Mail 14. Feb. 2006, A15; "De Vrouwen van Hamas," De Standaard 25 Feb. 2006 [online newspaper]; available from <http://www.standaard.be/Artikel/Detail.aspx?artikelId=GUKONQM8>; Silke Mertins, "Terror? Die Besatzung ist Terror für Mich," Welt am Sonntag 16 Apr. 2006 [online newspaper]; accessed 15 Jun. 2006; available from <http://www.wams.de/data/2006/04/16/874838.html>.

⁵⁸¹ "Om Nidal, 'Khensa' Palestine,' la mère palestinienne croyante et fière, a donné son fils, un acte que le plus fort homme n'arrive pas à faire," Centre Palestinien D'Information 31 Mar. 2005 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available at http://www.palestine-info.cc/french/article_3743.shtml.

⁵⁸² "Khansa of Palestine Talks on Palestinian Women's Role in Liberation," Daily News 26 Dec. 2006, The Palestinian Information Center [online]; accessed 25 May 2006; available at http://www.palestine-info.co.uk/am/publish/article_16089.shtml.

⁵⁸³ See "Mother of Suicide Terrorist: Son's Shahada [death for Allah] [sic], Is a 'Wedding,' a Time of Joy"; "Mother of Suicide Terrorist: He Told Me to 'Pray for Me that I Will Be a Shahid'; "Parting Ceremony";

"*Hamas Lists Mother of Suicide Terrorists as Candidate*"; "PA Ministry of Social Affairs Official on Palestinian Mothers Encouraging Their Sons to *Shahada*"; Mother's Joy at Her Son's *Shahada*"; "Why Mother's [sic] Express Joy News of Son's *Shahada*"; "Mother Who Rejoiced at Sons' Death a Role Model"; accessed 25 May 2006; all available at <http://www.pmw.org.il/tv%20part4.html>.

⁵⁸⁴ "Om Nidal, 'Khensa' Palestine, la mère palestinienne croyante et fière."

⁵⁸⁵ Mary-Jane Deeb, "Militant Islam and the Politics of Redemption," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 524 (Political Islam), (Nov. 1992): 62.

⁵⁸⁶ David Cook, "Women Fighting in Jihad?," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28 (2005): 376.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸ Muhammad Khayr Haykal, *Al-Jihad wa-l-qital fi al-siyasa al-shara'iyya* (Jihad and Fighting According to the Shariah Policy), cited in Cook, 379.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁹¹ *Al-'Amaliyyat al-ishtishhadiyya fi al-mizan al-fiqhi*, cited in Cook, 379.

⁵⁹² Cook, 380.

⁵⁹³ Cited in Cook, 380.

⁵⁹⁴ Cook, 383.

⁵⁹⁵ Raphael Israel, "Palestinian Women: The Quest for a Voice in the Public Square through 'Islamikaze Martyrdom,'" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 85.

⁵⁹⁶ Cited in Jad, 191. Hamas affiliate Dureen Abu Aisha turned to the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade which, unlike Hamas, sent her on a suicide operation. See Kai Adler, "The Women of Hamas: 'Islam Protects Us,'" trans. from German by Jennifer Taylor-Gaida, *Qantara* [online]; accessed 4 Sept. 2006; available from http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-478/_nr-391/i.html2/21/2005.

⁵⁹⁷ "The Role of Palestinian Women in Suicide Terrorism," 30 Jan. 2003 [online]; accessed 22 May 2006; available from

http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/mfaarchive/2000_2009/2003/1/the%20role%20of%20palestinian%20women%20in%20suicide%20terrorism.

⁵⁹⁸ Victor, 30.

⁵⁹⁹ "Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 83," The Middle East Media Research Institute, 12 Feb. 2002 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from

<http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=IA8302>; Mia Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber.," *The Bulletin* 61, no. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2005) [online]; accessed 27 Mar. 2006; available from www.thebulletin.org/print.php?art_ofn=nd05bloom.

⁶⁰⁰ "Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 83," see above, note 607.

⁶⁰¹ Victor, 30.

⁶⁰² "Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 83," see above, note 607.

⁶⁰³ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁴ "Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 83"; Maria Alavanou, "Islamic Incitement and Palestinian Female Suicide Terrorism," paper given at Centro Studi sulle Nuove Religioni diretto da Massimo Introvigne 2005 International Conference, 2-5 Jun. 2005, Palermo, Sicily [online]; accessed 26 May 2006; www.cesnur.org/2005/pa_alvanou.htm. In the bibliographic sources, the widow of Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi is referred to as either Jamila Shanti or Rasha al-Rantisi. None of the sources has stated that they are the same person, although both names have been used in the context of the head of the women's division of the Islamic movement. Although they are likely the same person, given the number of different sources that attribute widowhood and leadership of the women's division to each woman, one source did claim that Jamila Shanti never married. In photos of Shanti after the Palestinian 2006 elections, she is wearing a hijab, yet a photo of Rasha al-Rantisi [accessed 21 Sept. 2006; available from http://www.intelligence.org.il/sp/sib3_04/images/k_6.jpg] shows her wearing a niqab (full veil). It is possible that she once wore the niqab, and switched to the hijab, although it is not likely, especially for a woman whose husband was so well-known, to adopt a less modest form of dress. In addition to this discrepancy, there is also the more obvious issue of their names. Although Muslim women tend retain their father's last names after marriage, Jamila Shanti's full name on the electoral list did not contain the name Rasha. Of course, Rasha may be her nickname. These discrepancies suggest that the two names may correspond to different individuals. In her research, the author was not able to determine whether Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi was in a polygamous marriage. For the purpose of this thesis, however, the author has

assumed that they are the same person, but in quotations has used the name corresponding to the respective source.

⁶⁰⁵ Israel, 85.

⁶⁰⁶ Patkin, 84.

⁶⁰⁷ "The Role of Palestinian Women in Suicide Terrorism," no. 983, The Middle East Media Research Institute 9 Sept. 2005 [online]; accessed 22 May 2005; available at <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=SP98305>.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ Israel, 83.

⁶¹¹ This tactic was used by Hanadi Jaradat. See Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber."

⁶¹² "Al-Jazeera Special about Hanadi Jaradat, Other Female Palestinian Suicide Bombers, Their Families and the People Who Send Them to Die," no. 817, aired on Al-Jazeera (Qatar), 16 Aug. 2005, The Middle East Media Research Institute [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=SP96605>.

⁶¹³ " Hamas Spokesman on UAE TV Program: On the Recruitment and Training of Palestinian Suicide Bombers," Special Dispatch Series - No. 741, The Middle East Media Research Institute, 8 Jul. 2004 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP74104#_ednl.

⁶¹⁴ Margot Dudkevitch, "Suicide Attack at Erez Crossing Kills Four," Jerusalem Post 14 Jan. 2004 [online newspaper]; accessed 5 Jun. 2006; available at http://info.jpost.com/C002/Supplements/CasualtiesOfWar/2004_01_14.html.

⁶¹⁵ Patkin, 83.

⁶¹⁶ Alexis B. Delaney and Peter R. Neumann, "Another Failure of Imagination?: The Spectacular Rise of the Female Terrorist," International Herald Tribune 6 Sept. 2004 [online newspaper]; accessed 16 Feb. 2006; available from http://www.ihf.com/articles/2004/09/06/edneumann_ed3_.php.

⁶¹⁷ Delaney and Neumann, "Another Failure of Imagination?."

⁶¹⁸ "Wafa Idris: The Celebration of the First Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber - Part I," Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 83, The Middle East Media Research Institute 12 Feb. 2002 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=IA8302>.

⁶¹⁹ "Al-Jazeera Special about Hanadi Jaradat."

⁶²⁰ " Hamas Spokesman on UAE TV Program."

⁶²¹ Victor, 258.

⁶²² Ibid., 239.

⁶²³ Patkin, 87.

⁶²⁴ Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber."

⁶²⁵ David Cook, "The Implications of 'Martyrdom Operations' for Contemporary Islam", Journal of Religious Ethics 32, no. 1 (Mar. 2004): 142.

⁶²⁶ Israel, 67.

⁶²⁷ "It's a Woman!," Al-Sha'ab 1 Feb. 2002, cited in "Wafa Idris: The Celebration of the First Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber - Part II," Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 84, The Middle East Media Research Institute, 13 Feb. 2002 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=IA8402>.

⁶²⁸ Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber."

⁶²⁹ "The Role of Palestinian Women in Suicide Terrorism."

⁶³⁰ Victor, 14.

⁶³¹ Ibid., 195.

⁶³² Neither the identity of the head nor that of the spokeswoman was disclosed in any of the interviews published in English. See "The Role of Palestinian Women in Suicide Terrorism."

⁶³³ Ibid.

⁶³⁴ Ibid.

⁶³⁵ Julie Peteet, "Icons and Militants: Mothering in the Danger Zone," Signs 23, no.1 (Autumn 1997): 103-104.

⁶³⁶ Jamileh Abu-Duhou, "Motherhood as an 'Act of Defiance': Palestinian Women's Reproductive Experience," Society for International Development 46, no.2 (2003): 85.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Arnon Regular, "Mother of Two Becomes First Female Suicide Bomber for Hamas," Ha'aretz 15 Jan. 2004 [online newspaper]; accessed 5 Jun. 2006; available from <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=383183&contrassID=1&subContrassID=5&sbSubContrassID=0&listSrc=Y>.

⁶³⁹ "Conflicting Arab Press Reactions to the Gaza Suicide Bombing," Special Dispatch Series - No. 651, Middle East Media Research Institute 27 Jan. 2004 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP65104>.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ Ibid.

⁶⁴² Victor, 266.

⁶⁴³ "Conflicting Arab Press Reactions to the Gaza Suicide Bombing."

⁶⁴⁴ "Arab Intellectuals Praise Martyrdom in Discussion on Syrian TV," Special Dispatch Series - No. 1162, The Middle East Media Research Institute 12 May 2006 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=sd&ID=SP116206>.

⁶⁴⁵ "Conflicting Arab Press Reactions to the Gaza Suicide Bombing."

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁸ "Wafa Idris: The Celebration of the First Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber - Part II," Inquiry and Analysis Series - No. 84, The Middle East Media Research Institute, 13 Feb. 2002 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=countries&Area=palestinian&ID=IA8402>.

⁶⁴⁹ Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber."; Clara Beyler, "Messengers of Death: Female Suicide Bombers," The Institute for Counter-Terrorism 12 Feb. 2003 [online]; accessed 22 May 2006; available from <http://ict.org.il/articles/articleDet.cfm?articleid=470>.

⁶⁵⁰ Term used by Jad in Jad, 190. See also Article 17 of the Charter, "duty to protect women from saboteurs."

⁶⁵¹ Jad, 190.

⁶⁵² Regular, "Mother of Two Becomes First Female Suicide Bomber for Hamas."

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.; "Wafa Idris: The Celebration of the First Female Palestinian Suicide Bomber - Part I."

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁷ According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, only 3.7 percent of the candidates of the Palestinian Legislative Council were women. Of these 25 female candidates, 5 women won their seats, giving women a 5.7 percent representation on the PLC. See Women and Men in Palestine: Trends and Statistics (Ramallah: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1998), 140; Dr. Mona El-Farra, "Palestinian Women: After the Election," speech to the International Women's Day event in Sheffield, UK on 4 Mar. 2006; report published 7 Mar. 2006 [online]; accessed 12 Jun. 2006; available from <http://www.labournet.net/world/0603/mona1.html>; and Thanassis Cambanis, "Islamist Women Redraw Palestinian Debate on Rights," Boston Globe 21 Jan. 2006 [online newspaper]; accessed 12 Jun. 2006; available from http://www.boston.com/news/world/articles/2006/01/21/islamist_women_redraw_palestinian_debate_on_rights/.

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Handbook of Hamas Palestinian Legislative Members (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2006) [online]; accessed 9 Sept. 2006; available from <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/html/pdf/PLCHandbook.pdf>.

⁶⁵⁹ Rima Hammami, "Women, the Hijab and the Intifada," Middle East Report 20, no. 3-4, (1990): 24-28.

⁶⁶⁰ Women and Men in Palestine, 144.

⁶⁶¹ Chris McGreal, "Women MPs Vow to Change Face of Hamas," The Guardian 18 Feb. 2006 [online newspaper]; accessed 13 Jun. 2006; available from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,,1712532,00.html?gusrc=rss>.

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- ⁶⁶⁴ Hammami, 24-28.
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- ⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.
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- ⁶⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶⁷¹ Jad, 177.
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- ⁶⁷³ Ibid., 175.
- ⁶⁷⁴ Islah Jad, " Hamas, Women and Islam. Again?," This Week in Palestine no. 95, Mar. 2006 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from <http://www.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?id=1639&ed=112>.
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- ⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸⁸ Johnston, "Women Ponder Future Under Hamas."
- ⁶⁸⁹ Luisa Morgantini, "Mariam Mahmoud Saleh: notre objectif est d'être à l'écoute de notre peuple, de ses exigences, et d'être en accord avec son choix," Centre Palestien D'Information 2 Apr. 2006 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from http://www.palestine-info.cc/french/article_8220.shtml.
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- ⁷¹⁷ De Quetteville, "Hamas Women's Wing Takes Up Weapons 'For the Love of Jihad.'"
- ⁷¹⁸ See "Hamas' Female Legislators Vow to Fight for Womens' [sic] Rights."
- ⁷¹⁹ Morgantini, "Mariam Mahmoud Saleh."
- ⁷²⁰ "Hamas' Female Candidates Refute Opponents' Allegations on Woman [sic] Rights," Daily News, Palestinian Information Centre, 15 Jan. 2006 [online]; accessed 12 May 2006; available from http://www.palestine-info.co.uk/am/publish/article_16387.shtml.
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