A Feminist View on the Oslo Process

The Case of the Palestinian Women's Movement

Yuki Nakao

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the
Degree of Master of Public Policy

Graduate School of Public Policy
The University of Tokyo

Supervised by
Professor Kiichi Fujiwara

December, 2019

Abstract

This thesis offers a feminist alternative to the gender-blind mainstream analyses of the Palestine-Israel peace process and the 1993 Oslo Agreement, through a process-tracing case study of the Palestinian women's movement. Drawing upon feminist international relations theories and social movement theories, this study qualitatively analyzes the political environment within which the Palestinian women's movement has operated. Specifically, it explores and documents what has changed in the pre-Oslo to post-Oslo political environment and what role the Oslo Agreement played in causing this shift.

I argue that the emphasis on the state and security in the Oslo process has impeded genuine efforts to promote a democratic system that safeguards human rights and citizenship rights. Major political players – the Palestinian Authority, international donors, and the Israeli government – contributed in different ways in fomenting a hostile environment for women as a result of the security-centric policies being prioritized at every turn. The transformation of the Palestinian women's movement, from a vibrant force of resistance and democratization during the pre-Oslo period to its fragmentation and inefficacy during the post-Oslo period, reveals how the Palestinian state-making process and once-celebrated peace deal was in fact hostile towards Palestinian women, and detrimental to the advancement of their rights and freedom.

Working from within feminist ontologies and epistemologies, the study points out the patriarchal and gendered framing of the objects under study, i.e., the Oslo Agreement, its state-building premises, and failure to achieve peace. This is the explicit goal of the thesis. Second, through a specific case study, this analysis reveals the gendering of political knowledge production. In other words, this study serves to expose, critique, and challenge the (assumed) gender-neutrality of the existing academic literature that focuses primarily on elite stakeholders within the Palestinian state-building and Oslo peace process.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

Introduction

An enormous number of studies on modern Palestine address the complex context of the Palestine-Israel conflict and occupation. Covering diverse disciplines from international relations and security studies to development studies, literature, and anthropology, one of the striking commonalities across the existing literature is their gender-blindness. A vivid example of the failure to address the specificity of women's perspectives, interests, and experiences can be found in analyses of the 1993 Oslo Agreement, the peace-building process that followed, and its implication on Palestinian society. This thesis provides a gender-sensitive alternative to the prevalent discourse on the Oslo Agreement and the sociopolitical shifts that have taken place in Palestine over the last two and a half decades. Through a diachronic analysis of the rise and fall of the Palestinian women's movement, this study examines the role of the peace agreement and subsequent policies in shaping a political environment hostile towards women.

The Oslo Agreement was a historic peace deal signed in 1993 between Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel. Officially titled the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DOP), the agreement included a mutual recognition of the two political entities and a timeline for the establishment of Palestinian self-government over the course of a five-year interim period. The DOP announced a significant paradigm shift, ending the long history of mutual rejection[1] and heralding the promise of an end to "modern colonialism."[2] The idea that the successful signing and implementation of multiple interim agreements would establish a Palestinian state generated a euphoria of peace, especially among the Western audiences.

Yet, the so-called "two-state solution," a political resolution to the conflict through the establishment of two states for two peoples, quickly failed and continues to be unlikely in 2019. While researchers have tried to explain the collapse of the Oslo peace process, they disagree on when and why the peace process began to crumble. A textbook

---

[1] Chie Ezaki, *Isuraeru/Paresutina Wahei Kosho no Seiji Katei (The Political Process of the Israel-Palestine Peace Negotiations)* (Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2013), 33

[2] Derek J. Penslar, "Zionism, Colonialism and Postcolonialism," *Journal of Israeli History* 20, no. 2-3 (2001): 87.; Julia Peteet, "Words as interventions: naming in the Palestine-Israel conflict," *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (2005): 155.; Paul Stevens, "'Leviticus Thinking' and the Rhetoric of Early Modern Colonialism," *Criticism* 35, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 441-461.

explanation is that the failed 2000 Camp David Summit triggered its breakdown as a result of Arafat's rejection of a "generous" offer by the Israelis [3]. The violence exhibited during the second *intifada* (uprising) that followed the Camp David, convinced Israelis and their allies that "the Palestinians made a strategic choice to return to violence" and that they were disinterested in forging peace with the Israelis.[4] Since then, bilateral talks have ceased and civilian cooperation has diminished.

Ron Pundak, Israeli historian who took part in secret negotiations that led to the Oslo Agreement, and Yezid Sayigh, Palestinian political scientist and negotiator of the 1994 Gaza-Jericho Agreement, concur that while the Agreement had promised a political resolution to the conflict, political leaders on both sides failed to convincingly seize the opportunity for peace. According to Pundak, both Israeli and Palestinian leaders share blame for "miscalculations and mismanagement of the entire process," and that eventually shattered the prospects of peace. By disrespecting and breaching the agreement, they failed to take seriously the reality that this peace deal was "the only way out."[5] Sayigh is more critical of Arafat for his lack of a political strategy, arguing that his management was "marked by a high degree of improvisation and short-termism."[6]

In recent years, more and more of the literature addresses the right-wing policies of the Netanyahu Administration and their effects in institutionalizing and perpetuating the occupation. Shlaim claims that the expansion of illegal settlements in the Palestinian

---

[3] The Camp David negotiation in July 2000 took place when the U.S. President Bill Clinton invited Israeli and Palestinian leaders to settle the final status issues after seven years form the signing of the Oslo Agreement. The negotiations did not bear an agreement, because PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was unable to accept the terms Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered. After the summit, Clinton praised Barak's courage and ascribed the summit's failure to Arafat. This event triggered the one-sided narrative, which allowed Israeli leaders to contend that there was "no Palestinian Partner" to achieve peace. On the contrary to the prevalent story, however, records show that the Palestinian side has made numerous concessions in the secret negotiations leading up to the Camp David negotiations, such as accepting Israeli annexation of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Israel's sovereignty over parts of East Jerusalem. Israel, on the other hand, never made formal offers not submitted a written proposal. The U.S. and Israel tried to persuade the Palestinians to accept the vague oral offers, which Arafat refused. (See Robert Malley and Hussein Agha, "Camp David: a tragedy of errors," Guardian, July 20, 2001,
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/jul/20/comment.; "What did, in fact, happen at Camp David in 2000?," Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU), October 28, 2005, https://imeu.org/article/what-did-in-fact-happen-at-camp-david-in-2000.)
[4] Avi Shlaim "It's now clear: the Oslo peace accords were wrecked by Netanyahu's bad faith," *Guardian*, September 12,
https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/12/oslo-israel-reneged-colonial-palestine.
[5] Ron Punda,k "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?," *Survival* 43, no. 3 (2001): 31.
[6] Yezid Sayigh, "Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt," *Survival* 43, no. 3 (2001): 47.

territory and the erection of separation walls "most decidedly violate (the DOP's) spirit."[7] Khan argues that Israel has intentionally placed Palestine in a state of "indefinite transition" through the effective segregation of Gaza from the West Bank.[8] This endless "limbo" phase compromises the development of a Palestinian polity and independent economy.[9] The fragmentation of Palestinian politics since 2006 has continued to aggravate the situation, further boosting hopelessness and dismissiveness towards a two-state solution, especially among Palestinians themselves.

Taking a retrospective look at the events, other researchers have suggested that the failure to implement the DOP stems from the agreement, such as the interim nature of the agreement that ultimately curtailed the decisions on the final status issues.[10] Only a few Arab critics, most famously Edward Said, openly and vehemently opposed the agreement from the beginning. Describing the DOP as "an instrument of Palestinian surrender, a Palestinian Versailles," Said's criticism stemmed from his view that Israel did not concede anything all the while demanding that Palestinians to compromise on their rights to self-determination.[11] He further argued that the PLO elite gave in on numerous UN resolutions guaranteeing Palestinian refugee rights, disallowing Israeli settlements, and condemning crimes against a people under occupation.[12]

None of these criticisms, however, make any attempt to differentiate the specific implications of these political events upon women, as distinct from their general impact upon the Palestinian population as a whole, and yet the two cannot be readily conflated. The reasons and extent of the gender-blindness within mainstream literature has been documented by over a century of feminist scholarship, from Wollstonecraft, de Beauvoir and Young within political philosophy,[13] to McClintock and Yuval-Davis working on

---

[7] Shlaim, "It's now clear."
[8] Khan M. H. "Learning the Lessons of Oslo: State-building and Freedoms in Palestine," in *Decolonizing Palestinian Political Economy: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, ed. Turner M. and Shweiki O. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
[9] Khan, "Learning the Lessons," 238.
[10] See Toshiya Abe, *Paresutina: Funso to Saishuteki Chii Mondai no Rekishi (Palestine: The History of the Conflict and Final Status Issues)* (Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2004); Sara Roy, *Horoko-suto kara Gaza e (From Holocaust to Gaza)*, ed. Oka. M., Odagiri, H. and Hayao, T. (Tokyo: Seidosya, 2009).
[11] Edward Said, "The Morning After," *London Review of Books* 15, no. 20-21 (1993): 4.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Mary Wollstonecraft published in 1972 *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, a groundbreaking book of the time, which argued for women's rights to be respected equally as men's rights for the first time. Arguing for the need of the equal education for women and men, Wollstonecraft harshly critiqued that the educational system of her time intentionally trained women to be incapable and frivolous, which is a

nationalism and statecraft,[14] to international relations scholars such as Elshtain, Enloe, and Spike Peterson.[15] Mainstream academic research, politicians' memoirs, and individual anecdotes recounting the events surrounding this highly politicized topic tend to emphasize the heroic aspects and adversarial narratives emerging from predominantly male actors within the process.[16] These narratives are in turn inflected with masculine language, and implicitly convey masculine assumptions, values, and perspectives, Particularly, when addressing the Palestine-Israel relations, it is easy to ignore the internal diversity and complexity within each political entity, and thus a gendered perspective of the event is utterly lost. Furthermore, classic academic inclinations tend towards a focus on the opinions and viewpoints of high-ranking individuals in a given community, be it a

---

significant loss for all society. Simone de Beauvoir's 1949 book, *Second Sex* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), is one of the earliest attempts to counter human history from a feminist viewpoint. In the book she argued that men not only define women as the inferior opposites to men on every level, but also deny her humanity through constant othering. This denial of women's humanity, according to de Beauvoir, is the source of profoundly uneven gender roles as well as justification for the "natural" neglect of women's experiences in the documenting of human history. Iris Marion Young, a feminist scholar with expertise in social justice theories, argues in her book Justice and The Politics of Difference that redistribution systems are often constructed in a way that favor some groups while excluding others. Young delineates how the experiences of the oppressed, including, but not limited to, women, are critically discounted in mainstream social justice theories. She contends that the recognition of social groups and the different modes of oppression is a critical step towards realizing the institutions that not only ensure equal access to resources, but also help individuals to develop their full capacity. (Iris Marion Young, *Justice and The Politics of Difference* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990).)

[14] Ann McClintock eloquently argues that studies of nationalism, or the idea of "popular unity," is impossible without considering the underlying powerful gender constructions and difference. In nationalist discourse, "women are the symbolic bearers of nation" with no national agency, mirroring the uneven gender power relations in families. (Anne McClintock, "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family," *Feminist Review* 44 (1993): 61-80.) Nira Yuval-Davis's *Gender and Nation* (London: Sage Publications, 1997) is a rigorous and intersectional examination of the history of practices and studies of nationalism. Drawing upon numerous examples, she not only critiques the male-centric theories of nationalism, for instance by Anderson, Gellner and Hobsbawm, but also warns of viewing women as a homogenous social group. McClintock and Yuval-Davis, alongside feminist IR scholars like Enloe and Elshtain, agree than nationalist discourse and practices are inherently masculine.

[15] Jean Bethke Elshtain's book *Women and War* (Chicago: Chicago University Pres, 1987) is one of the first feminist attempts to challenge the mainstream conceptualization of gender roles in war. She argues, "women are represented as beings laced through and through with sexual and maternal imagery" (x) and this representations are "ones we are all heir to, drawing them in as children in our families and schools, absorbing them through movies, newspapers, television, and texts" (x, xi). The book aims at liberating ourselves from the particular depictions of women, in order to gain a "self-substituting autonomy to discourse" (xi). Cynthia Enloe and Spike Peterson will be cited more extensively throughout this thesis.

[16] Aharoni's work is an attempt to overcome the overtly masculine tendency in the studies of the Oslo process. She gathers bureaucratic memoirs of Jewish women that participated in the lower-level civil negotiations and applies a gender analytical frame to understand the negotiation process from the perspective female Israeli negotiators and mediators, The piece ultimately recognizes the "fragmented stories of silence, lack of influence, invisibility and helplessness as valid sources of knowledge narrating the failed Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations." Sarai Aharoni, "Gender and "Peace Work": An Unofficial History of Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiation," *Politics* & Gender 7 (2011): 397.

rural village or a national political institution, and uncritically take those voices to be representative of the entire community. For both of these reasons, little is known about the "less heroic" actors, including, but not limited to, women. Mainstream analyses of the Oslo Agreement and post-Oslo Palestinian society affirms these feminist concerns that the process of gender-blind knowledge production and reproduction perpetuates the political invisibility and social marginalization of women.[17]

In fact, only a minority of scholars critiqued the DOP's failure to address fundamental human rights, socioeconomic rights, and differentiated human security for individual Palestinians. At the time, we find that only a few feminist activists and scholars thought to critique the very nature of the agreement from the standpoint of fundamental human and democratic rights. Simona Sharoni's study explains that in the immediate aftermath of the Oslo Agreement, both Palestinian and Israeli feminists outrightly questioned the absence of women from the negotiation and mediation processes.[18] They were alone in making the poignant observation that the whole Palestinian-Israeli peacebuilding and state-building processes have been fundamentally gendered from the onset. As Jamal argues, the consequence of the Oslo Agreement was a state system that traps women in what she calls the "matrix of domination," where competing political powers, i.e., the Palestinian Authority (PA), Islamists, and the Israeli government, take women's rights hostage.[19] The failure to institute citizenship rights in the Basic Law (Palestine's interim constitution) also allowed a neo-patrimonial system, in which kin-based personal relationships "systematically disadvantaged women."[20] These feminist critiques of the Oslo process constitute a critical challenge to the legitimacy of gender-blind analyses of the negotiations, agreement, and the peace- and state-building processes documented in mainstream scholarship.

---

[17] See Elshtain, *Women and War*; Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1989); V. Spike Peterson, "Introduction," in *Gendered States Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations*, ed. Spike Peterson, V. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992).

[18] Simona Sharoni, "Gender and Conflict Transformation in Israel/Palestine," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13, no. 4, (2012): 115.

[19] Amal Jamal, "Engendering State-Building: The Women's Movement and Gender-Regime in Palestine," *Middle East Journal* 55, no. 2 (2001): 256-258.

[20] Islah Jad, "The post-Oslo Palestine and gendering Palestinian Citizenship," *Ethnicities* 11, no. 3 (2011), 365.

This study builds upon the feminist critiques of the Oslo Agreement and peace process. My goal is not to produce a new causal explanation of why the Oslo peace process failed, but rather to provide an alternative, feminist interpretation of the Oslo process and its failure. I do so by conducting a process-tracing analysis of the Palestinian women's movement, through which I compare the political contexts before and after the Oslo Agreement. Furthermore, I examine how the Oslo Agreement has transformed the political conditions under which the women's movement operates and how it has severely and negatively impacted the capacity of the movement to promote women's liberation in contemporary times.

I argue that the emphasis on the state and security in the post-Oslo phase has impeded genuine efforts to promote a democratic system that safeguards human rights and citizenship rights. Major political players, the Palestinian Authority, international donors, and the Israeli government, contributed in different ways in fomenting a hostile environment for women, as a result of the security-centric policies being prioritized at every turn. The transformation of the Palestinian women's movement, from a vibrant force of resistance and democratization during the pre-Oslo period to its fragmentation and inefficacy during the post-Oslo period, reveals how the Palestinian state-making process and once-celebrated peace deal was in fact hostile towards Palestinian women and detrimental to the advancement and protection of their rights and freedom.

Drawing upon feminist international relations (IR) theories and social movement theories, this study qualitatively analyzes the political environment within which the Palestinian women's movement has operated. Specifically, it explores and documents what has changed in the pre-Oslo to post-Oslo political environment and what role the Oslo Agreement played in causing this shift. While feminist IR frameworks help reveal the patriarchal norms underpinning the peace agreement and state-building process, social movement frameworks help capture the state-civil society relationships, the interference of the international donors, and the correlate impacts of the Israeli occupation.

Among civil society actors, the Palestinian women's movement was the most organized and functional social movement in the Occupied Territory prior to 1993, engaging women from across different areas of Palestine and mobilizing them into an extensive, anti-occupation movement. The nationalist aspiration of the women's movement represented a collective political identity of Palestinian women; it gained a

legitimate position in the resistance movement and this was meant to result in political leverage to advance feminist causes in the post-revolutionary phase. Conversely, in the post-Oslo phase, the Palestinian women's movement became demobilized and women's needs delegitimized. The post-Oslo Palestinian regime comprised of predominantly male political actors with ambition proceeded to marginalize women's rights and feminist priorities in process of a centralized state-building that places women's rights as the lowest priority. The sudden influx of Western aid and the accompanying donor conditionalities debilitated the women's movement by imposing limitations on their operational freedom and inciting Islamists' antagonism. Finally, the prolonged occupation only worked to divide communities and reinforce patriarchal tendencies in Palestinian society.

In short, the vicissitude of the women's movement mirrors the status of Palestinian women in the political establishment as well as within society generally, echoing the ways in which women's issues are treated, how women's claims are perceived, and how much political and personal autonomy women can enjoy. By contrasting the realities of the women's movement in the pre-Oslo and the post-Oslo periods, this study contributes to the feminist scholarship on international relations by revealing and then deconstructing values, conceptual framings and political practices of a peace process that has largely been presumed to be gender-neutral. It contributes to the growing body of scholarship that challenges the study of peace agreements, state-building, and domestic to international state-society relationships. It also contributes to feminist methodologies of knowledge production by offering a reconstructed alternative and a more inclusive historical record and analysis of the Oslo Agreement and Oslo state-building process, as it was understood by both male elites and by the Palestinian women's movement.

Working from within feminist ontologies and epistemologies, the study points out the patriarchal and gendered framing of the objects under study, i.e., the Oslo Agreement, its state-building premises, and failure to achieve peace. This is the explicit goal of the thesis. Second, through a specific case study, this analysis reveals the gendering of political knowledge production. In other words, this study serves to expose, critique, and challenge the (assumed) gender-neutrality of the existing academic literature and unrepresentative studies focusing primarily on elite stakeholders within the Palestinian state-building and Oslo peace process.

This study consists of three chapters. Chapter One outlines the theoretical framework of the study. It maps contrasting understanding of the state, state-making and peacebuilding within mainstream international relations (IR) theories and within feminist IR theories. The chapter also explains how and why social movement theories will be placed in dialogue with feminist IR theories to generate a holistic lens with which to analyze the transformation of the Palestinian women's movement.

The second and third chapters trace the development of the Palestinian women's movement, with a particular focus on the shifting sociopolitical environment in which the movement has operated. Chapter Two is dedicated to the examination of the pre-Oslo women's movement. It delineates how the absence of a central state, affiliation with leftist factions, and most importantly, the context of anti-colonial resistance provided space for women to publicly and extensively engage in political mobilization. I draw largely upon secondary sources that discuss the history of Palestinian grassroots and the women's movement, but also include relevant quotes from the period to convey the nuances and complexity of narratives. The chapter concludes that although the rise of the women's movement was unable to transform the patriarchal culture itself, the movement nonetheless achieved recognition and legitimacy as a political actor within civil society, creating a space for women to advance their political interests.

Chapter Three uses mixed methods. It parses a variety of primary sources, such as NGO publications and official statistics, and secondary sources. These are places in dialogue with in-depth interviews I conducted in East Jerusalem and the West Bank in March 2019. Through this analysis, I argue that, despite the material and symbolic gains of the pre-Oslo women's movement, the exclusivity, male-dominance, and security-focus of the Oslo process ultimately marginalized both women's movement and their political demands for equality from the negation process. While the Palestinian Authority was central in internalizing patriarchal values and practices within state institutions, Palestinian state-building was not advanced only by the PA. International donors were important actors that shaped the political and economic values and determined the systems that were eventually adopted. The Israeli authority asserted a singular focus on security for the Oslo process, which worked to shut down space for debates on human rights and democratic citizenship. The occupation not only destroyed the cohesion of the

Palestinian people, but moreover, it reinforced the patriarchal practices across the Palestinian society.

The concluding chapter traces the core evolution of the analysis and argument of this thesis. I further discuss the challenges of the study, how it makes a novel contribution to the literature, and I chart additional topics and remaining areas of inquiry for future feminist political science research. Applying critical feminist insights on the case of Palestinian women's movement, this study questions the statist premises of peace agreements, given that the elite-driven nature of the political processes rarely result in inclusive and representative process of decision-making.

Chapter One: Situating the State and Peace Agreements

1. International Relations

The concept of the state constitutes the backbone of Western social sciences, and this is especially true in the field of international relations (IR) in which the state remains the principal analytical unit across different theoretical traditions. Realists would agree that international arena is an anarchic field of power politics, where states strive for their own survival, and collective state interest prevails universal morality.[21] While liberals may emphasize the role of mutual trust and dependence in shaping the international system, they share the same premise as realists that states are the primary actors in international politics.

Additionally, the state dominates a central position in the prevalent understanding of governance, as the authority, functions, and mechanisms of governance are uncritically ascribed to the state. The idea of social contract, elaborated by Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, have not only shaped moral and political theory of the modern West, but also largely directed the ways the contemporary social and political orders are built across different parts of the world. Finally, the state, at least in the European context, remains to be the most convincing and "elegant answer to questions about political identity," given the dissolution of social and political hierarchies of earlier times.[22] The state not only provides a reassuring and durable answer to the questions about "who we are," but also defines "who may belong, and how," systematically placing individuals into the "right" places.

As Martin Wight succinctly summarizes the centrality of the state in the Western intellectual tradition:

> "The principle that every individual requires the protection of a state, which
> represents him in the international community, is a juristic expression of the belief
> in the sovereign state as the consummation of political experience and activity which

---

[21] William C, Wohlforth, "Chapter 7: Realism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Reus-Smit, C. and Snidel, D. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 135.

[22] R. B. J. Walker, "Gender and Critique in the Theory of International Relations," in *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory*, ed. Spike Peterson, V (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 189.

has marked Western political thought since the Renaissance. That belief has absorbed almost all the intellectual energy devoted to political study."[23]

Naturally, the concept of state-building has attracted much scholarly attention in contexts of both global North and South. State-building is defined by Tilly as the process by which state apparatus become 1) formalized and autonomous from non-governmental organizations; 2) more centralized; and 3) more integrated internally.[24] Enloe adds the fourth element of state-building, which is to enable state apparatus "to penetrate various geographic and functional sectors of society." [25] The state in this tradition is conceptualized as the Weberian model of depoliticized bureaucracy with robust and efficient institutions.

In the global South, the so-called "internationalization" of post-conflict peacebuilding efforts has rendered peacebuilding almost synonymous with state-building. And state-building in this context refers to institution-building, based on the liberal idea that peace and stability can be produced through collective efforts and consensus.[26] According to Kandiyoti, post-conflict institution-building programs led by Western donors, both around and within the conflict zones, have strongly promoted viable states, since "the global order rests on the assumption that states will continue to perform a vital intermediary role." [27] In short, the "privileging of the state" [28] in the Western political

---

[23] Martin Wight, "Why is There No International Theory (1966)," in *International Theory: Critical Investigations*, ed. Derian, J. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 20.

[24] Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in *The Foundation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Tilly, C. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 34.

[25] Cynthia Enloe, "Ethnicity, bureaucracy and state-building in Africa and Latin America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1, no. 3 (1978), 336.

[26] One of the most notable liberal achievements in peacebuilding is the United Nations and its peacekeeping operations and electoral assistance that aim at ensuring the implementation of peace agreements and installment of a democratic system. For a holistic examination of UN peacekeeping missions, see Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). An extreme antithesis to such liberal mode of conflict resolution would be Luttwak's "Give War a Chance," in which he argues that UN-led interventions and imposition of ceasefire only disrupts the "natural course" of war. He claims that "fighting must continue until a resolution is reached" since peace becomes a justifiable choice for the warring parties only after they are exhausted from fighting. (Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (1999), 36-38, 44.)

[27] Deniz Kandiyoti, "Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Post-conflict reconstruction, Islam and women's rights," *Third Works Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2007): 504.

[28] V. Spike Peterson, "Security and Sovereign States: What is at State in Taking Feminism Seriously," in *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations*, ed. Spike Peterson, V. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers), 31.

thought permeates the standard practices of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.

Peace agreements, signed by the warring parties but largely facilitated by the West, constitute the foundations of such peacebuilding processes. Following the end of the Cold War, negotiation of formal peace agreement has become an increasingly predominant way of ending conflicts. Statistics shows that between 1990 and 2015, 1,168 peace agreements were negotiated during and around 102 conflicts.[29] Peace agreements are "road maps" for the post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization, and their focus is on (re)building a robust political institutions and state apparatus.[30] The underlining belief is that a durable peace is only possible through the construction of a stable, democratic political system, robust institutions, and rule of law. Sustainable states and sustainable peace are in a mutually enhancing relationship in wide range of issues – security, including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR), security sector reform (SSR); a functioning legal system that is capable to redress war-time crimes; return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaces persons (IDPs); policies for economic growth, education reform, and reconstruction of infrastructures.[31]

Institution-building within post-conflict societies is supported by a practical belief that "formal institutions can be modified and adapted to suit specific needs and circumstances" compared to other factors that affect the risk of resurgent violence, such as the demographic make-up and level of economic development.[32] Moreover, focusing on institutions assumes that democracy can be "designed," or that political systems and people's political behaviors can be manipulated and controlled,[33] despite the critiques that such donor-led institution-building can create entities with *de jure* sovereignty but with

---

[29] Paolo Castillo Diaz and Simon Tordjman, *Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence* (New York: UN Women, 2010), 5.

[30] Hideaki Shinoda, *Heiwa Kouchiku to Hou no Shihai (Peacebuilding and the Rule of Law)*, (Tokyo: Sobunsha, 2003), 63. Shinoda explains that, based on the Western intellectual tradition of the "rule of law" approach, peace agreements play a role as the new "social contract" and "governmental contract" for war torn societies (71-72).

[31] Charles T. Call, "Ending Wars, Building States?," in *Building States to Build Peace*, ed. Call, C. T. and Wyeth, V. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008), 3.

[32] Stefan Wolff, "Post-Conflict State Building: the debate on institutional choice," *Third World Quarterly* 32, no. 10 (2011): 1779.

[33] Francis Fukuyama, *State-building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Profile Books, 2004), 57.

limited *de facto* power and real capacity to administer its territories or ensure order and security.[34]

Critical question to be asked is that whose "stability" and "peace" the post-conflict institution-building is aiming to ensure. While post-war institution-building from the viewpoint of international organizations and donors may be about ensuring stability and democracy in war-torn societies, it is about power-sharing from the fighting parties' perspective. Peace negotiations are the process of determining the post-war political order, be it international or domestic, which also determines the distribution of power and influence among the warring parties. As history tells us, post-war international political orders, such as the Versailles System and the post-Cold War unipolar system, are designed in a way that the victors (or *a* victor) dominate and split the "spoils" of the war exclusively among them.

Post-civil-conflict peace negotiations similarly exhibit political bargaining among different social groups that all aim at maximizing their access to power, resources and influence in the post-conflict order.[35] In this sense, political institutions and state apparatus are the tools for these stakeholders to stabilize and exercise the power and influence they gained, perhaps for generations, through determining parliamentary-seats allocation, electoral laws, system of appointment to public offices, demographic make-up of the security forces, and other numerous rules in their own favor. Therefore, post-conflict reconstruction efforts, including institution-building and economic development, are not designed genuinely for the public good, democracy, or human security. Rather, they are constructed and implemented according to the post-conflict power dynamics, in service of the most influential social group(s).

---

[34] For the idea of "quasi-states" and critique towards peacebuilding practices, see Robert Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[35] For political bargaining between social groups in the context of multinational states, see Alain GT. Gagnon and James Tully, *Multinational Democracies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001). The book offers the core definition of multi-national democracies and governance and political challenges they face, which I find profoundly relevant to the debates of post-war institution-building process.

2. Feminist International Relations Theories

Feminist IR theorists, since 30 years ago when Cynthia Enloe critically asked "where are the women?,"[36] have pointed out the lack of gender consciousness in mainstream IR theories and peacebuilding practices. From a feminist perspective, neither state-building nor peace agreements are neutral practices; both are critically gendered, and they place women under structural violence. Feminist scholarships of various genre share two insights: first, that gender is a socially constructed, and often unfairly imposed, set of characteristics; and second, that our world is inescapably affected by gendered meanings.[37] These gendered meanings, i.e., what is ought to be "masculine" or "feminine," disadvantage women disproportionately, and the uneven gender relations are built into the polity and economy in a way that it "naturalizes" or "legalizes" women's inferior status.[38] Feminist theories are ought to elucidate the causes and consequences of these injustices placed upon women and to offer strategies for eliminating them.[39]

According to Spike Peterson, the state is "particularly and profoundly contradictory for women."[40] She argues that state-building institutionalizes "systemic and masculinist class domination" as well as patriarchal public-private dichotomy, and naturalizes male superiority over the female body and identity.[41] Brown concurs that state formation fundamentally affirms the general superiority of men over women. While the political

---

[36] Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases*, 200.

[37] Spike Peterson believes that not only political phenomena, but also the process of knowledge production are gendered, since men's experiences, discoveries and wisdom have often been inherited as the knowledge of mankind. She questions the "empirical adequacy" of knowledge claims about human activities, relations, and engagements, when they are made based solely on men's experiences (Spike Peterson, "Introduction," 9-12). Similarly, Tickner explains that feminists define gender "as a set of variable but social and culturally constructed characteristics" such as power, rationality, public, and autonomy. These "positive" characteristics are often associated with masculinity, and characteristics like weakness, emotion, private and dependence are associated with femininity. (J. Ann Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists," *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1997): 611-632.)

[38] Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1069.

[39] Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand," 620.

[40] Spike Peterson , "Security and Sovereign States," 33. In this chapter, Spike Peterson traces the history of state formation all the way back to ancient Athens and demonstrates how making of state-making embodies "divisions of labor, institutions, and identities that are profoundly gendered, with systemic implications for the production and reproduction of women's insecurities." Liberal political theories, emanating from John Locke, have naturalized male rule over female, and the rise of industrial capitalism has in turn solidified the public/private bifurcation and relegated domestic work as "non-work," despite its necessity in servicing the "legitimate work" done outside homes.

[41] Ibid., 41-42.

1 6

rearrangement accompanying the establishment of a state may undermine the authority of family patriarch, this is merely a shift from "private patriarchy" to "public patriarchy," which rather institutionalize the gender hierarchy in a more robust form.[42] Connell similarly contends that the state functions as "the main organizer of the power relations of gender," that, in turn, provides the legitimation for social hierarchy.[43] The feminist critique, in short, centers around the state's monopolizing the power to define the "correct" form of identity and social relationship and to marginalize others. Since the state is a masculine construct, women are unambiguously marginalized.

State-building process marginalizes women even when women play an indispensable role in enabling state formation in the first place. Studies show that women's active involvement in revolutions and national struggles do not translate to a fundamental shift in their sociopolitical status. Tetreault argues that, despite women's participation in the American and French Revolutions, the post-revolutionary regimes failed to "remember the ladies" by continuously defining women's rights and interest in service to those of men.[44] Even in socialist revolutions, where men and women are ideologically treated as equals, post-revolutionary regimes instituted oppressive laws and policies.[45] With the beginning of a state-building process, women are often sidelined from the mainstream politics and returned to the domestic/private sphere. Finally, as described more in detail in the next chapter, history of post-colonial state-building by Arab regimes exhibited similar dynamics, though intricately compounded with specific cultural and historical factors.[46]

---

[42] Carol Brown, "Mothers, Fathers, and Children: From Private to Public Patriarchy," in *Women and Revolution*, ed. Sargent, L. (Boston: South End Press, 1981): 257-258.

[43] R. W. Connell, "The state, gender, and sexual politics: Theory and appraisal," *Theory and Society* 19 (1990): 520.

[44] Marry Ann Tetreault, "Women and Revolution," in *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory*, ed. Spike Peterson, V. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 111.

[45] For feminist critiques on revolutions and citizenship, see Joan W. Scott, "Some Reflections on Gender and Politics," in *Revisioning Gender*, ed. Ferree, M., Lorber, J., Hess, B. (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2000), 79-80.

[46] Botman's book on Egyptian women and their citizenship delineates the link between the dominant political discourses across time and women's experience. While nationalism offered Egyptian women with legitimacy as political actors, possibilities for women diminished over time, due to political and economic situations as well as the patriarchal assumption that leaves women out of the realm of public action. (Selam Botman, *Engendering Citizenship in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).); Jamal's analysis of Palestinian women's experience ascribes the absence of equal legal and political representation in the post-Oslo period to the combination of the Islamists' anti-feminist campaigns and the Palestinian Authority's ambivalent attitude towards women's issues. (Jamal, "Engendering State-Building.")

Peace negotiations and peacebuilding also exhibit a tendency to marginalize women. Because peace agreements are road maps for the post-conflict state-building, their provisions and implementation should be of a democratic concern. However, peace negotiations are often diplomatic processes that are completed between a cadre of political and/or military elites representing sides of the conflict.[47] Women "continue to be virtually absent from the peace table and to be severely underrepresented as third-party mediators…Women's activism at the grass roots rarely translates into official recognition during peace processes, where they are seldom included in formal negotiations." [48] Aharoni also notes that the formalized setting of the peace agreement negotiations generates "a large gap… between the community-based activities of women's nongovernmental organizations and their incorporation into formal peace negotiations."[49] Statistics confirm that women constituted only 4% (11 out of 280) of negotiators in 33 sample peace negotiations.[50] Another study in 2012 showed that in 31 peace negotiations that took place between 1992 and 2011, women accounted for 4% of signatories, 2.4% of chief mediators, 3.7% of witness and 9% of negotiations.[51]

This utter absence of women from peace negotiations, from a critical feminist perspective, vividly embodies the patriarchal idea that denies women's political agency. The unfair and patronizing gender meanings, that women are too weak, emotional, and incompetent to handle formal political process, eliminate women from the critical process of power-sharing. Regardless of the considerable contributions women make during the grassroots resistance and revolutionary phase, they are not considered as legitimate political stakeholders who are entitled to participate in construction of post-conflict orders, but they are rather seen as wives, mothers and daughters who are ought to serve the nation under the new political order created by men.[52] Elite men are either confident in their

---

[47] Christine Bell, *Text and Context: Evaluating Peace Agreements for Their 'Gender Perspective'* (New York: UN Women, 2015): 5.
[48] United Nations Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security* (September 2009), https://undocs.org/S/2009/465, Para 21.
[49] Aharoni, "Gender and "Peace Work"," 398.
[50] Bell, *Text and Context*, 6.
[51] Diaz and Tordjman, *Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations*, 3.
[52] For the idea that women are fundamentally excluded from the negotiations over rights and freedoms through social contract, see Carole *Pateman*, The Sexual Contract (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). Pateman argues that our society is made of two-fold contracts, the original contract (marriage contract) and the social contract, and critically maintains that without confronting women's marginalization

ability to speak for women in their own social groups or unwilling to share power and influence with women.

Yet, since peace agreements outline the stakeholders in the peacebuilding and state-building process – who gets what and when, where, and how resources are allocated – the lack of gender sensibility results in a multitude of negative outcomes. First, the particular costs women have to bear, in contrast with those born by men can be largely neglected. For instance, while issues such as displacement, refugeeism and institutional reform impact women and men differently, peace agreements negotiated by men are often gender blind, i.e., they address men's needs post-conflict as "people's needs" and do not shed light on specific women's needs.[53]

Second, the legal and political framework, though often conceived as gender neutral, tend to be hostile towards women, if only negotiated by men. Stipulations regarding the type of electoral system, how socio-economic rights are addressed, and the relationship between traditional laws and human rights all affect women's positions and rights in the post-conflict society.[54] Lack of gender perspective in the drafting and negotiating process can easily regress or sustain the patriarchal traditions through institutionalizing them in the post-conflict systems.

Finally, the post-conflict power relationships, shaped after a political bargaining process in a conflict context, can be unfavorable for women. Both the conflict and peace negotiation processes are sites to negotiate power, not just between warring parties but also men and women. When the bargaining process is dominated by men, the new social and political order born out of it becomes also male-centric. Chapter Three highlights how the male-centric political alignment in the post-Oslo Palestine brought about negative impacts on the women's movement and women's status.

3. Social Movement Theories

Feminist IR theories offer critical insights on why and how women, despite their active involvements in the revolutionary/anti-colonial resistance movement, become

---

in the original contract the precedes the social contract, one cannot discuss the latter as performed between equal partners or entered into without any coercion or a priori power asymmetry.

[53] Bell, *Text and Context*, 8.

[54] Ibid.

sidelined throughout and after the state-building process. Yet, they do not delve into why women's movements tend to be active in revolutionary or anti-colonial contexts in the first place. Understanding the historical and political contexts that enabled the Palestinian women's movement to flourish in the pre-Oslo period can in turn help highlight the contrasting political conditions that eroded the space for women's collective political actions in the post-Oslo period. Social movement theories, in this regard, provide insights that are useful for this thesis' inquiry.

Both women's movements and revolutionary movements fall under the general category of social movements.[55] There is no "official" definition of social movements, but many studies are influenced by Tarrow's definition; "collective challenges to existing arrangements of power and distribution by people with common purposes and solidarity, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities."[56] These "collective challenges" take different forms, from conventional pressure groups to influence mainstream politics, to disruptive protests or peaceful campaigns. Additionally, social movements do not require specific structural forms: they can be organized through a loose and decentralized network of local charity and/or advocacy groups, under a clear command of opposition leadership, or by NGOs and civil-society groups that operate in a more professionalized manner.[57]

Additionally, women's movements and feminist movements should be differentiated, since the former are labeled based on the demographic make-up and the latter on the agenda and/or ideology leading the movement. A women's movement is defined as "collective action by women organized as women presenting claims in public life based

---

[55] According to McBride and Mazur, not all women's movements can be defined as social movements, because mainstream conceptualization of social movements requires that the "collective action" involves disruptive methods, or the "element of protest," as opposed to conventional tactics employed by opposition parties and interest groups united against the authority (Dorothy E. McBride and Amy G. Mazur, "Women's movements, feminism, and feminist movements," in *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*, ed. Goertz G. and Mazur A. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 232-233). The Palestinian women's movement has clearly employed disruptive methods, especially in the pre-Oslo period, in forms of marches, strikes, and demonstrations. The need to reexamine the assumption that women's movements can easily be categorized as subtype of social movements will be discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

[56] Sydney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

[57] See David S. Meyer and Sydney Tarrow. "A Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century." In *The Social Movement Society*, ed. Meyer. D. S. and Tarrow, S. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 9-15.

on gendered identities as women."[58] In other words, women organize the movement as women, and men cannot organize a women's movement. Feminist movements do not differentiate the gender of participants, since the marker is ideological. Feminism is an ideology, discourse and ideal that 1) seeks to change the position of women in society and politics; 2) analyzes and challenges women's subordination to men; and 3) aims at transforming the structures of gender-based hierarchies.[59]

Nevertheless, women's movements and feminist movements are empirically and normatively overlapping, because most *feminist movements* are initiated and sustained largely by women, and active *women's movements* often impact the women's position within society and politics, thereby achieving a feminist ideal.[60] As we later see, women's active participation in the pre-Oslo anti-occupation resistance through organizing a women's movement shifted women's social and political positions, since local leaders of the resistance movement recognized the indispensable roles played by women. At the same time, the obliteration of the feminist momentum in the post-Oslo period cannot be explained solely by the domination of the political establishments by men, but also by the masculine ideologies and arrangements they put forth.

Social movement theories increasingly presuppose that social movements are different from institutions that are characterized as static, operational, and autonomous. Rather, movements are dynamic and relational "strategizing actors."[61] The premise is that a movement is a collective action taken by rational individuals, who make conscious judgment to engage in the movement or not. In short, the movements' rise and fall, changes in modality, and degree of success in achieving their policy goals are understood as the outcome of various political conditions that shape activists' and protestors' rational decision whether to mobilize (Meyer and Minkoff; Tarrow).[62]

---

[58] McBride and Mazur, "Women's movements," 226.

[59] Ibid., 236.

[60] Yet, it must be remembered that there are women's movements that promote conservative ideas and values, though they may be small in number. In this sense, the difference between demographic definition and ideological definition of the two types of movements becomes salient when we compare a conservative "pro-life" women's movement and a progressive "pro-choice" feminist movement. (See McBride and Mazur, "Women's movements," 235.) This thesis is not concerned with conservative women's movement, since the Palestinian women's movement upheld progressive values for equality from the pre-Oslo period.

[61] Sydney Tarrow, "National Politics and Collective Action," *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988): 427.

[62] David S. Meyer and Debra C. Mindoff "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity," *Social Forces* 82, no. 4 (2004). ; Sydney Tarrow, "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements," in

Therefore, analysis of a movement is largely an analysis of the political conditions under which the movement operates and how the movement reacts to the shifting conditions from time to time. This is why more and more social movement researches deploy political opportunity structure (POS) theory as their analytical framework. [63] According to this framework, these political conditions are critical explanatory variables for the movement's "life cycle" (its birth, growth, reaching maturity, weakening, and eventual death) and the prospects for success in achieving its political target (for instance, raise in minimum wage, institution of a gender quota in the parliament, or removal of a bill). [64] The framework rests on three interrelated premises. First, social movements are part of politics, and members of social movements are rational political actors (as opposed to the prior view that they are irrational and crazed). Second, if social movements are organized by rational actors, their emergence, development, culmination, and decline of a social movement also have to be understood in relation to the macro political environment. Third, social change affects a movement only when it is mediated by political conditions. [65]

POS is defined by Tarrow as "consistent - but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national - signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements. [66] This definition implies that political opportunity encompasses a wide range of political factors. Researchers have often employed the following as the main variables: the extent of openness of the political institutions (Eisinger)[67]; the stability of political alignments (Piven and Cloward)[68]; the

---

Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements, ed. McAdam, D. and McCarthy J. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[63] Political opportunity structure, also known as political process theory, was initially developed by sociologists during 1970s and 80s, who examined the anti-war, Civil Rights, and student movements of the 1960s.

[64] Meyer and Minkoff, "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity," 1457.

[65] For instance, according to the POS theory, industrialization and development of capitalism themselves cannot induce social movements, because these structural changes may create a potential for a movement but do not overcome individuals' inaction or disinterest. In other words, there needs to be sufficient conditions that translate the mobilizational potentiality into action, such as protests, strikes, and demonstrations. Advocates of the POS approach argue that political opportunities prepare these "conditions." (See Sydney Tarrow, *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 19655-1975* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 21.)

[66] Tarrow, "Sates and Opportunities," 54.

[67] Peter Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities," *American Political Science Review* 81 (1973).

[68] Francis F. Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements*, (New York: Vintage, 1977).

presence of support groups and allies (Gamson)[69]; shifts in electoral and alliances (McAdam)[70]; and the government's policy-making capability (Kitschelt).[71] Existing studies have reached a general conclusion that favorable conditions for movements are open political system, instability of party alignment and electoral results, elite conflicts, and the presence of influential allies in the establishment who can promote the movement's claims.[72]

Feminist versions of social movement theories agree that contexts matter, while paying more attention to specific variables that may encourage ordinary women to take part in activism. Waylen, critiquing the "genderless approach" of revolution and democratization literatures, attempts to offer a comprehensive framework to capture women's role in the transitional phase. Her study on urban community-based women's movements suggests that, in the 1980s Latin America, the context of military oppression, which specifically targeted men, offered many women with an opportunity to mobilize against the government.[73] While poor women channeled their discontent for the aggravating economic situation towards the state, feminist groups linked authoritarianism in the society and authoritarianism within the household, claiming that an authoritarian rule would continue to subjugate women at various levels of their lives.[74] Waylen suggests that women often participated in movements based on the "politicization of their social roles," a perception by women that their participation in social affairs, or their presence as a demographic group, become politically relevant.[75]

Existing literature has not been able to formally apply and adapt the POS framework to feminist/women's movements. Waylen's Latin American case could have set a precedence of the use of political opportunity lens, but her analysis within the democratization framework prevented the explicit emphasis of the POS. Still, studies of

[69] W. A., Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protect* (Homewood: Dorsey, 1975).

[70] Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

[71] Herbert Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structure and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (1986).

[72] Loris Caruso, "Theories of the Political Process, Political Opportunities Structure and Local Mobilizations: The Case of Italy," *Sociologia* 3 (2015): 3.

[73] Georgina Waylen, "Women and Democratization: Conceptualizing Gender Relations in Transition Politics," *World Politics* 46, no. 3 (1994): 337.

[74] Ibid., 337.

[75] Ibid., 327.

feminist and the literature suggests that political opportunities are gendered in ways that benefit women actors rather than men, and vice versa. For instance, Beckwith argues that community-based women's movements might have an advantage over men when given political conditions prevent predominantly male groups, such as labor unions, from organizing picketing or mass demonstrations.[76] In these situations, women, by presenting themselves as wives, mothers, or daughters, can initiate actions that are designed to advance workers' and poor people's interests since they are not subject to legal repercussion.[77] Another example is that redrafting of a constitution incentivizes women to mobilize, not just to directly influence the contents of the revised or new constitution, but also to indirectly reshape the political opportunity in a more favorable way. In Namibia, for instance, a women's movement successfully pressured the government to ratify Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) under the new constitutional framework and gained important leverage for themselves.[78] Additionally, as explained in the next chapter, alliance with leftist parties has provided favorable mobilizational opportunities to women's movements. In short, political opportunities are not free from gender implications, confirming the feminist conviction about gendered meanings.

Through integrating social movement frameworks and feminist IR theories, the current study takes a holistic approach to understanding the Palestinian women's movement. Combining the two is important because feminist IR framework can only analyze the contents of the peace agreement and state-building that marginalize women. Moreover, feminist IR theories cannot amply elucidate the ways in which women practice agency, since they tend to focus on the negative consequences of gendered state systems. The peace agreement and the consequent birth of the Palestinian Authority alone does not capture the complicated aspects of the fragmentation of women's movement in the post-Oslo Palestine. For instance, why is the women's movement no longer engaging a wide range of women? Why are women's NGOs today looking increasingly similar? These questions can be answered through an analyses of the general environmental shifts which

---

[76] Karen Beckwith, "Collective identities of class and gender: Working-class women in the Pittston coal strike," *Political Psychology* 19, no. 1 (1998): 162-164.
[77] Ibid.
[78] D. Hubbard and C. Solomon, "The many faces of feminism in Namibia," in *The challenge of local feminisms,* ed. Basu, A. (Boulder: Westview): 163-166.

involve the presence of international donors and the Israeli government, and how those relate to the choices and actions of local women's organizations. Thus, this study employs the social movement framework in order to complement the feminist IR critiques.

Chapter Two: Vibrant Women's Movement Before the Oslo Agreement

The Palestinian Question provided the motive and platform
propelling women into a new arena as visible actors.[79]

(Mulla Asghar M.M. Jaffer)

1. Overview: Occupation, Active "Third Sector," and Women's Participation

Prior to the signing of the Oslo Agreement, Palestine was among the few areas in the Middle East that enjoyed expansive grassroots activities. The emergence of Palestinian NGOs, largely in the form of charitable societies, dates back to the British mandate period in the 1920s. A latent NGO activities law by the British Mandate authority allowed a pluralistic NGO infrastructure largely led by middle-class Christian Arabs.[80] Palestinian women during the period not only participated in social and welfare activities in small groups, but also began to sporadically protest on the streets against British imperial rule.[81] Although these demonstrations were not as organized and extensive as the *intifada*, resistance became part of everyday life of Palestinian women as much as of Palestinians as a whole. Moreover, despite the anti-colonial focus of these demonstrations, women's "unladylike" participation helped defy the cultural gender norms that gave women limited public visibility.[82]

When the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 triggered the *Nakba* ("catastrophe" in Arabic), approximately 770,000 Palestinian Arabs fled from their home villages to adjacent Arab countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan, while leaving some 150,000 trapped inside the new Israeli borders.[83] In refugeeism, numerous grassroots, voluntary

---

[79] Ebba Augustin, *Palestinian Women: Identity and Experience*, (London: Zed Books, 1995), 4.

[80] Until the enforcement of a less restrictive law on private and non-profit organizations by the British Mandate authority, Palestinian grassroots has little freedom due to Ottoman authorities' licensing and monitoring system that prohibited any nationalist activities. Introduction of British rule brought about relative freedom to grassroots association, and especially charity groups led by middle-class Christian Arabs flourished.

[81] Maria Holt, "Palestinian women, violence, and the peace process," *Development in Practice* 13, no. 2-3 (2003): 227-228.

[82] E. J. Fleischmann, "The Emergence of the Palestinian women's movement, 1929-39," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29, no. 3, (2000): 16.

[83] The term "Nakba" refers to the mass displacement of Palestinian Arabs from British Mandate Palestine, largely during the war following Israeli independence in May 1948. (Rema Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs Since Oslo: From NGO Politics to Social Movements?," *Middle East Report* 214 (2000): 17.) Statistics

associations were found, and the rise of a political consciousness amounted to the formation of a national liberation movement led by the PLO in 1964.[84]

Women's organizations assumed increasingly critical roles, "substituting for state services."[85] In 1968, The General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) was established as the PLO's women's wing and as an umbrella organization for Palestinian women's groups, in order to effectively mobilize women in the resistance movement.[86] As a product of male elite, the GUPW's mandate and activities were inherently confined in the boundaries of the national project and were therefore unable to tackle the patriarchal dominance in the movement. As Warnock notes, GUPW "encourage[d] the participation of women in political life as active housewives rather than on equal terms with men," implicating the organizations' lack of feminist consciousness.[87]

True mobilization of women took place inside the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). In 1987, the first nation-wide popular uprising (*intifada*) occurred. Though *intifada* was triggered by a spontaneous incident,[88] the expansive demonstrations embodied the accumulated discontent among Palestinians towards Israeli occupation policies.[89] Additionally, the twenty years in which Palestinians had worked in Israel was characterized by humiliation and discrimination towards Palestinians.[90] Israeli political scientist Meron Benvenisti observed that the Palestinian grievances over individual and

---

retrieved from "Quick Facts: The Palestinian Nakba," Institute for Middle East Understanding, last modified May 13, 2015, https://imeu.org/article/quick-facts-the-palestinian-nakba.

[84] The PLO was created by the Arab Union, largely with Gamal Abdel Nasser's initiative and support. The new political establishment was initially an embodiment of Nasser's pan-Arab project, until Yasser Arafat was elected to be the Chairman and took ownership of the movement.

[85] Rita Giacaman and Muna Odeh, "Palestinian Women's Movement in the Israeli-Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip," in *Women of the Arab World: The Coming Challenge*, ed. Nahid Toubia, (London: Zed Books, 1988): 61.

[86] the GUPW charter departed from the PLO's National Charter (1968) which confined Palestinian identity to that which is "transferred from father to sons" (Art. 5). ("Palestine Liberation Organization: the Original Palestine National Charter," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed July 22, 2019, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-original-palestine-national-charter-1964.)

[87] Kitty Warnock, *Land Before Honour: Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), 166.

[88] The *intifada* happened when an Israeli agricultural convoy crashed into a truck full of Palestinian laborers in Gaza, killing four Palestinian men. A demonstration happened immediately following their funeral, and quickly expanded to other part of the OPT.

[89] The most damaging policies included house demolitions and land expropriation, arbitrary imprisonment of political activists, and increasingly expanding settlements.

[90] Sara Roy, *From Holocaust to Gaza*, 14.

collective deprivation was mounting to a point where any trivial event could trigger an eruption.[91]

Women were central in the process leading up to the breakout of the *intifada* and even more so during the *intifada*. An expansive women's movement was formed by a network of women's charity and service provision groups which took cohesive actions under the banner of national liberation. The movement was organized with the guidance of the four Women's Committees, each affiliated with a PLO political faction. Women's roles in the *intifada* were not limited to service provisions – they assumed leadership roles in sit-ins, marches, circulation of pamphlets, and in other forms of political mobilization. Prominent women nationalists and activists substituted male leaders of the affiliated parties, since many Palestinian men were imprisoned during the uprising. Thus, even before the surprising news of the Oslo Agreement reached the OPT, Palestinian women were convinced that, based on their contributions, they would play a formative role in a future Palestinian state.[92]

Why were the Palestinian women able to mobilize themselves into an effective movement in prior to and during the *intifada*? The rest of this chapter will examine the sociopolitical and economic conditions under which the Palestinian women's movement gained momentum, expanded, and mobilized women from all walk of life throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

2. Absence of a Central State

A distinguishing feature of pre-Oslo Palestine was the general condition of state-lessness. The absence of a national government for Palestinians until 1993 had significant implications for the nation's civil society and movements. The first implication was the relative freedom of association. In social movement theories, and particularly from the political process/political opportunity structure perspective, presence of a centralized, controlling state is understood as an unfavorable political condition for social

---

[91] Meron Benvinisti, "1987 Report: Demographic, Economic, Legal, Social and Political Developments in the West Bank" (Jerusalem: West Bank Data Projects, 1987): 23.
[92] Sharoni, "Gender and Conflict Transformation," 118.

movements.[93] The state is deemed as the intervening and regulating power, and its policing of the civil sphere constitutes a visible barometer of political opportunities.[94] Thus, a lack of state regulations in Palestine prepared a favorable environment for active associational life. This does not mean that Palestinian society was always autonomous from external interventions. Between 1948 and 1967, Arab regimes, for their respective political purposes, tried to influence Palestinian organizing.[95] From 1967 until 1993, Israel was present as the occupying power, leading Palestinian grassroots associations to adapt their forms and strategies to the political reality.

Second, absence of a central state meant that there was no formalized system for service provision. The necessity to substitute state functions led various voluntary and women's groups to organize and work in coordination to service their communities. Muslih notes how this necessity leads to organic cooperation that transcends sectoral differences:

> "The idea that guides Palestinian social work and the women's groups is that of voluntary social action in which individuals and groups work together… to promote the welfare of society. Implicit in this idea is a strong element of political pluralism, for the members of these groups are of different political persuasions, have different class origins, and come from diverse religious backgrounds."[96]

Thus, these voluntary groups were instrumental in sowing seeds of an engaged population in the OPT, and the active associational life was also the foundation of a potential democracy in Palestine.

The absence of a centralized state also rendered Palestinian women fortunate compared to their counterparts in the neighboring Arab nations. While different post-colonial Arab regimes tackled women's rights as part of modernization and development

---

[93] Caruso, "Theories of the Political Process," 3. See also Kitschelt's typology of state-movement relationship, though note that his case studies exclusively focus on movements in democratic systems (Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structure," 58-59).

[94] Donatella Della Porta, "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing or Protest." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*, ed. McAdam, D. and McCarthy, J. D. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 68.

[95] Muhammad Muslih "Palestinian Civil Society," *The Middle East Journal* 47, no. 2 (1993): 261.

[96] Ibid., 267.

initiatives, the policies were often gendered.[97] The Arab regimes' policies focused on educational reform and provision of social services such as health care and family planning, which not only failed, but also reinforced the gender-based division of labor.[98]

Examples from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt show that the state-building process often accompanied patriarchal bargains and collusions between the central political elite and rural tribal elite, which placed women further in the private domain.[99] Kandiyoti delineates how state-making in Arab societies was a process of the state intervening against the interest of male heads of households and tribes. While the two parties had mutual benefits in colluding, conflicts took place around defining the patriarchal control of women.[100] As a result, a multitude of social and institutional public-private boundaries were set up, placing women in the latter. Thompson's study of Syria and Lebanon similarly revolves around the role of state-intervention in creating gendered sociopolitical power dynamics, while it highlights the French colonial legacy and its perpetuation by the local elite as the source of women's marginalization.[101] Specifically, colonial government's favoritism towards its patriarchal clients led to the alienation of women, Islamic reformists, and labor movements and to the subordination of civic claims to the state order.[102] These studies on Middle Eastern state-building resonate with the aforementioned accounts of state-building in the West, yet the colonial and post-colonial contexts, the discursive Islamic traditions, and tribal culture had also played a critical role in shaping the specific experiences of Arab women.

In the Palestinian context, the tribal culture and patriarchal traditions were present but in informal ways. Patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes were (and still are) pervasive in Palestinian society, but women in the pre-Oslo period, because of the general context of occupation could more easily blur the gender-based division of labor based on

---

[97] Islah Jad, "Palestinian Women Contesting Power in Chaos," *Bulletin* 41, no. 5 (2010): 87.

[98] Elizabeth Thompson, "Public and Private in Middle Eastern Women's History," *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (2003): 59-60.

[99] Deniz Kandiyoti, "Women, Islam, and the State: A Comparative Approach," in *Comparing Muslim Soicieities: Knowledge and the State in a World Civilization*, ed. Cole, J. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992).; Thompson, "Public and Private."

[100] Kandiyoti, "Women, Islam and the State," 241-245.

[101] Thompson, "Public and Private," 60-62.

[102] Ibid., 62.

necessity.[103] Women would work outside homes in order to support their families on behalf of imprisoned husbands; they would join unions and form women's groups to provide social services; and they would take out to the streets to show solidarity with fellow Palestinians. As Chapter Three describes more in detail, the institution of the Palestinian Authority, the governmentalization of national agenda, and the masculinization of public institutions detrimentally damaged the women's movement and its cause.

3. Disappearance of the Traditional Elite and Rise of Nationalist Momentum

Two interrelated political shifts in the 1970s contributed to the increase of Palestinian women's public visibility: 1) the virtual disappearance of the traditional ruling elite; and 2) the rise of locally bred, nationalist youths. These two phenomena rendered women's public participation in the resistance movement normatively plausible. In other words, the disappearance of the old guard mitigated the patriarchal pressure they have embodied, and the permeation of youthful nationalist energy encouraged women's involvement in the anti-occupation movement.

The Six-Day War in 1967 and the beginning of Israeli occupation sparked a "real and vibrant NGO movement" in the Palestinian civil society, leading to more expansive and politicized grassroots activities. The same conditions prepared an environment in which the women's movement would flourish. First, the opening of the Israeli labor market to Palestinians as well as the massive confiscation of Palestinian lands led to the traditional elite class' decline.[104] Following the Six-Day War, Israel opened its domestic market for Palestinians to work in unskilled, manual labor that Israelis refused to do themselves.[105] The relatively higher pay in the Israeli market on one hand, and the expropriation of farm lands and diminished job opportunities in the OPT on the other, incentivized many Palestinian farmers and laborers to cross the border every day to work in Israel. By the

---

[103] Souad Dajani, "The Struggle of Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories: Between National and Social Liberation," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (1994): 17.

[104] As soon as the Six-Day War began, Israel unilaterally tripled its municipal boundaries in East Jerusalem and froze that lands it did not confiscate. In the West Bank in Gaza, Israel declared an enormous amount of lands as its state land or as necessary for "security" reasons. The construction of Israeli settlements had accelerated after the Likud Party's coming to power as well.

[105] Glenn E. Robinson, "The Palestinians," in *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. Gasiorowski, M. (Boulder: Westview Press, 2014), 351.

1980s, 40% of the Palestinian work force, or 120,000 Palestinians, worked for the Israelis.[106] While the traditional elite, consisted mainly of land owners and local notables, secured their authority through patron-client relationships, the virtual disappearance of the Palestinian peasantry critically undermined the existing social hierarchy.[107]

The social power vacuum was filled by younger leaders, including women educated at newly opened local universities. Until the early 1970s, higher education was an exclusive privilege for wealthy families capable of sending their children to overseas universities. In 1972, however, Birzeit University, the first fully Palestinian university, was found. In the following years, universities were found in Bethlehem, Hebron, Gaza, Jerusalem, and Nablus, and the university student population grew rapidly each year. University campuses became the hub of political socialization for Palestinian youth from various backgrounds – 70% of the students were from refugee camps, villages, and small towns.[108] Enmeshing of the various local narratives of Israeli occupation and oppression forged a more radicalized and mobilized nationalistic sentiment.[109] Those who were students around this period tended to be more politicized, since they directly experienced the impacts of the occupation brought upon them.

At the same time, a gradual change in attitudes regarding women's education took place. More and more parents began to send their daughters to universities, since education was perceived essential for women's ability to financially support her family

---

[106] Abe, *Palestine*, 94.

[107] Palestine's agricultural population shrank from 44.8% of total employment in 1969 to 18.7% in 1985 in the West bank and 33.1% to 9.7% in Gaza. (Samira Haj, "Palestinian Women and Patriarchal Relations," *Signs* 17, no. 4 (1992): 765.)

[108] Roger Owen, *Gendai Chuto no Kokka, Kenryoku, Seiji (State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East)*, trans. Yamao, D. and Mizobuchi, M. (Tokyo, Akashi Shoten, 2015), 363.

[109] These emerging young leaders were becoming increasingly powerful and influential, as they represented various segments of the Palestinian society through forming unions and associations. PLO, in effort to capitalize on the nationalist momentum on the ground, distributed funds to different factions operating in the OPT. Thus, by the end of the 1970s, formerly non-factional women's students' and workers' groups were affiliated with one of the political factions under the umbrella of the PLO. The financial source of the PLO was the Palestine National Fund financed by Arab countries that support the Palestinian cause. For instance, while a large number of Palestinians worked in Gulf states, the governments placed 5% tax on their Palestinian labor force and disbursed the revenue to the PLO. Islamic Development Bank and the AGFUND, through which Arab philanthropist made donations, were crucial funding sources to the PLO as well. (Joseph DeVoir and Alaa Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding to Palestinian non governmental organizations in the West Bank and Gaza strip 1999 -2008* (Ramallah: Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, 2009), 7.

since men were frequently imprisoned.[110] Female students also established women's unions and began to join political movement themselves. A number of strong women's organizations with nationalist agenda emerged throughout the 1970s and 80s, and their activities went beyond charitable work and became to represent a nationalist women's front.

Inclusion of women in the liberation struggle was actively encouraged by the national leadership since it would serve a practical need to complement the condition of statelessness and a symbolic need to represent the Palestinians people as a united front. The attempt to incorporate women in national liberation efforts is symbolized by the establishment of four Women's Committees, or *utor*s, each affiliated with the political factions under the PLO. The four committees were

- Federation of Palestinian Women's Action Committees (FPWAC, Est. 1978) affiliated with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)
- Union of Palestinian Working Women (UPWWC, Est. 1981) affiliated with the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP), though PCP had still not joined the PLO at this moment.
- Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC, Est. 1982) affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
- Women's Committee for Social Work (WCSW, Est. 1983) affiliated with al-Fateh

These Committees, all having membership of thousands, aimed at mobilizing women under the banner of nationalist cause, cultivating political consciousness, and engaging in nationalist undertakings such as offering support to families of political prisoners.[111] While the Committees were technically women's wings of the PLO's political factions, they attempted to maintain their independence in their activities. They built schools, health clinics, childcare centers, and vocational trainings and literacy classes for women across the OPT, signifying "the beginning of a truly wide-reaching Palestinian women's movement."[112] While the GUPW leadership was virtually in exile alongside the PLO

---

[110] *Palestinian Women* (Jerusalem: PASSIA: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, 2015), 5.
[111] Hamida Kazi, "Palestinian women and the national liberation movement: a social perspective" in *Women in the Middle East,* ed. Salman, M. (London: Zed Books, 1987), 34.
[112] Islah Jad, "The Demobilization of Women's Movements: The Case of Palestine," *Changing Their World* 1, (2008): 4.

cadres, "these committees and their heads became the uncontested leaders" among women in the OPT.[113]

4. Affiliation with Leftist Factions

The visible presence of the leftist factions in the nationalist movement encouraged women's active involvement in the national resistance. Researcher recognize the presence of elite support as key POS for successful social mobilization. This is because the sympathetic political elite are able to not only directly reflect the movement's cause in policy-making, but also shape the dominant ideology in the political establishment.[114] The history of women's movements demonstrates that when a women's movement aligns with the elite in the political establishment, it does so overwhelmingly with leftist parties.[115] Women's movements have successfully pursued their goals by connecting with communist, socialist, social democratic, and labor parties than more right-leaning parties, and left-wing parties generally have higher percentages of women members and nominees.[116]

The situation was similar for the Palestinian women's movement. The leftist parties had already established themselves as the local organizer of the bottom-up national resistance. While labor unions and professional syndicates were central actors in both Palestine's associational life and the resistance, it was the DFLP and PFLP, rather than the mainstream al-Fateh, that influenced and organized the labor movement.[117] The leftists had multiple reasons to involve women in the resistance movement – they believed that women would be liberated through their participation in labor; they wanted as many Palestinians as possible in their labor movement; and they wanted to present themselves

---

[113] Islah Jad, "The conundrums of post-Oslo Palestine: Gendering Palestinian citizenship," *Feminist Theory* 11, no. 2 (2011): 162.

[114] See Gamson, *The Strategy*.; Craig J. Jenkins and Charles Perrow, "Insurgency of the powerless farm workers movements (1946-1972)," *American Sociological Review* 42, (1977).; Meyer and Minkoff, "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity."

[115] Karen Beckwith, "Beyond compare? Women's movements in comparative perspective," *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (2000): 439. Also see Waylen, "Women in Democratization," 344-345.

[116] Beckwith, "Beyond compare?," 440.

[117] Muslih, "Palestinian Civil Society," 263.

as modernizing forces in Palestinian society by including women.[118] Thus, when the establishment of local universities gave rise to student-led mass voluntary organizations and students'/women's unions, leftist factions quickly established ties with them. Women's groups were not discriminated against. More and more politicized women's organizations, alongside local women's charitable groups began to align with the leftists.

It is important to note that Palestinian women's groups were not simply coopted by male leftist leaders. Rather, women used the platform provided by the leftist parties to organize their own movements within the labor unions. At Committee meetings, women would share their concerns and sense of inferiority and "reframe women's problems as social-structural, as opposed to personal, and to find solutions." [119] The reconceptualization of women's issues as public matter rather than private matter incentivized the Committee members to extensively recruit women. And this link between women's liberation and national liberation gave women a rational reason to participate in the resistance movement.

Among the aforementioned women's committees, DFLP-affiliated PFWAC had the largest presence in the women's movement. The FPWAC boasted to have around ten-thousand active members, and it stood out among others by operating concrete programs that empowered women through teaching self-reliance and leadership skills.[120] Hasso notes that the PFWAC women viewed "women's active participation in the national liberation struggle as a prerequisite for women's liberation."[121] Thus, there was an exponential growth in women's presence not only in the party itself but also in all DFLP structures, such as unions and student groups. When men were imprisoned or deported, women would constitute 70-80% of DFLP leaders.[122] Therefore, the decline of leftists in the post-Oslo period, and prioritization of kin affiliation over party affiliation seriously erodes women's political participation.

---

[118] According to Hasso, Leftist parties' "leaders and cadres believed that national liberation required the "modernization" of Palestinian society and social values." (Frances Hasso, "The 'Women's Front': Nationalism, Feminism, and Modernity in Palestine," *Gender and Society* 12, no. 4 (1998) 144.)
[119] Hasso, "The 'Women's Front'," 447.
[120] Joost R. Hiltermann, "The Women's Movement During Uprising" in *Palestinian Women of Gaza and the West Bank,* ed. Sabbagh, S. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 43.
[121] Hasso, "The 'Women's Front'," 449.
[122] Haaso, "The 'Women's Front'," 452.

Various scholars have recorded the crucial roles played by the Women's Committees in this period. Joost Hiltermann notes that, during the *intifada*, these *utor*s provided the "economic, social, and political infrastructure of Palestinian society," because their expansive grassroots network out-administered the Israeli occupation by reaching the areas where Israelis could not reach and earned loyalty of Palestinians in a way the occupier could never do.[123] In Hiltermann's writing, "infrastructure" points to service-provision and popular-mobilization systems that offer not only material connections but psychological bonds. By the 1990s, the *utor*s provided 60% of healthcare, 100% of disability-care, and 30% of educational services to Palestinians. [124]

According to Eileen Kuttab the women's movement was "the backbone of the resistance" as it coordinated with other mass-based organizations and acted as the local authority "to sustain the community's steadfastness in crisis." [125] In supporting the steadfastness, or *sumud* in Arabic, the Committees "train[ed] and assist[ed] women to be more useful to themselves and to society." [126] Therefore, women's subjective understanding of their involvement in the liberation struggle was, at least for the first few years of the *intifada*, lacked a direct feminist consciousness. Yet, through visibly contributing to the national project, Palestinian women tried to skew the gender-based division of labor and embodied the assertion that women were also entitled to the equal membership of the Palestinian national community.

When the *intifada* broke out in December 1987, the Women's Committees immediately began to play active roles in organizing the resistance, utilizing their expansive network, from urban areas to refugee camps. The *intifada* took the form of rock-throwing, demonstrations, marches, and rallies. It was not an armed insurgency, nor was it particularly violent. As Robinson puts it, the *intifada* "was primarily about mass organized disengagement from Israel" through which "Palestinians denied Israeli authority on any number of issues."[127] The Women's Committees issued leaflets to invite

---

[123] Joost R. Hiltermann, *Behind the Intifada: Labor and Women's Movements in the Occupied Territories.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 13.

[124] Denis J. Sullivan, "NGOs in Palestine: Agents of Development and Foundation of Civil Society," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 3 (1996): 94.

[125] Eileen Kuttab, "Palestinian Women's Organizations: Global Cooption and Local Contradiction," *Cultural Dynamics* 20, no. 2 (2008): 103.

[126] Robert Hunter, *The Palestinian Uprising: A War by Other Means* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 16.

[127] Robinson, "The Palestinians," 353.

women to join demonstrations, organize sit-ins, and run projects for promoting the local economy. They called for boycotts of Israeli products and helped set up businesses in the OPT to decrease reliance on Israel. Women from diverse social and economic strata responded with active and visible participation in the resistance: schoolgirls would throw rocks, older women would carry baskets of stones to supply younger protestors, and mothers would confront Israeli forces about releasing ther sons. It was an expansive and inclusive mobilization of Palestinian women.

5. Masculine Nationalism and Engendering Feminist Consciousness

The account of Palestinian women's participation in the national struggle appears to be a model case for an inclusive anti-colonial struggle. Yet, once one scratches the surface, multiple inconsistencies can be found. While women's active participation in the liberation movement did pose a challenge to the traditional separation of public and private and women's "natural" belonging to the latter, it did not alter the uneven gender relations within society and family. The nationalist leaders' active mobilization of women in the resistance movement did not lead to the establishment of gender-equal rights and recognition of women's autonomy. On the contrary, the mainstream nationalist discourse assigned Palestinian women specific symbolic roles that inherently denied women's right to self-define their positions within the Palestinian nation.

Works of scholars like Cynthia Enloe, Anne McClintock, and Nira Yuval-Davis question the gender-blindness of the mainstream theories of nationalism and highlight the uneven gender relations that underpin nationalist discourse and practices. They agree that "the representation of male national power depends on the prior construction of gender difference," [128] and nationalism is therefore typically "a masculine phenomenon, springing from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation and masculinized hope."[129] They claim that women are not absent from nationalist discourses, but rather exist in particular figures such as wartime rape victims, military prostitutes, mistresses of martyr, workers, girlfriends, daughters, and wives. In short, women are often deprived of

---

[128] McClintock, "Family Feuds," 62.
[129] Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches*, 44.

their agency in defining and speaking for themselves. despite their centrality to nationalist discourses.

The Palestinian case demonstrated similar dynamics. While Palestinian women were not only mobilized, but also entrusted with important leadership positions in organizing anti-colonial resistance, women's roles and the female body were conceptualized in the nationalist discourse differently from those of men. Abdulhadi explains the three interconnected images of Palestinian womanhood constructed by the Palestinian leadership in their nationalist narrative.[130] The first image is the 'superwoman,' which "glorifies martyrdom and nurturance"; the second image is the "'fertile mother' or reproducer of the nation," in both biological and cultural sense; and the third image is the nation itself, which was imagined as "vulnerable as a beloved woman."[131] Hasso similarly argues that Palestinian nationalist narrative "valorized women as biological reproducers of the nation, analogized the land of Palestine to women's bodies, and represented the appropriation and occupation of Palestine as the sexual violation and appropriation of women's bodies."[132]

In the course of the *intifada* and with its recognition of women's committees as a necessary organ of the resistance movement, the United National Leadership of Uprising (UNLU) started to refer to women in their publications.[133] On the International Women's Day in 1990, UNLU went so far as to issue a pamphlet titled "The Women's Call." And ironically, its text typically exemplifies the nationalists' patriarchal attitude towards women:

> Progressive nations celebrate International Women's Day on March 8 as
> a day of struggle for the world's women's masses. While celebrating this
> great day, in the name of all the sons of our people, we congratulate the
> world's women's masses and the masses of the Palestinian women's
> movement and its vanguard organizations, hailing every working

---

[130] Rabab Abdulhadi, "The Palestinian Women's Autonomous Movement: Emergence, Dynamics, and Challenges," *Gender and Society* 12, no. 6 (1998): 655.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Hasso, "The 'Women's Front'," 443.

[133] UNLU was the coalition of local leaders during the first intifada, and it played a critical role organizing the grassroots resistance program. Although it was initially independent from the PLO leadership, it soon became under its influence, through which PLO headquarter in Tunis tried to direct the course of resistance inside the OPT.

woman, woman struggler and housewife, and especially our imprisoned
strugglers, We also pay tribute to the struggling role of the Palestinian
uprising's women's movement, to every mother who has lost a son,
daughter, husband or brother, and to every wo man who meets with a
struggling daughter or a heroic son from behind the Bastilles of the
Zionist enemy.[134]

The male elite's contradictory attitudes towards Palestinian women, namely their
effort to incorporate women in the resistance while neglecting their autonomy, can be
ascribed to their attempt to balance the two competing needs – mobilization of manpower
and preservation of Arab/national culture. In other words, male leaders would expect
women to assume new public tasks in the struggle without subverting the old value
systems of women's positions and roles in the personal arena.[135] The concept of
motherhood was in fact an essential element of PLO's nationalist ideology, since it places
women in the "appropriate" space, i.e. homes, where they foster national identity through
their child-rearing and domestic responsibilities.[136] In short, no matter how active women
became on the streets, the public/private dichotomy persisted and women could not leave
the latter.

This contradiction was, however, essential for the awakening of feminist
consciousness among the formerly dominantly nationalist women's movement. As Peteet
notes, precisely the discourse of "maternal sacrifice," while limiting, offered women a
"validation position from which to launch a critique of the movement and its
leadership."[137]   As women began to take part in the national project with equally
important responsibilities as men, the contradiction between the national liberation and
women's emancipation appeared as an apparent question.[138] On the streets, women and
men threw rocks and marched shoulder to shoulder as equals. At home, however, women

[134] Hiltermann, "The Women's Movement," 49.
[135] Mervat Hatem, "Toward the development of post-Islamist and post-nationalist feminist discourses in the Middle East," in *Arab Women: Old Boundaries, New Frontiers*, ed. Tucker, J. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 42-43.
[136] Nahla Abdo, "Women of the intifada: gender, class and national liberation," *Race and Class* 32, no. 4 (1991): 23.
[137] Peteet, "Icons and Militant," 104.
[138] Nahla Abdo, "Feminism and Difference: The Struggle of Palestinian Women," *Canadian Woman Studies* 15, no. 2 & 3 (1995): 142.

became wives and daughters, who prepares meals, laundered dirty clothes, and looked after children and elderly. Thus, the *intifada* brought to the fore "the frictions and contradictions between Palestinian women's struggle for their emancipation and their struggle to free the nation from colonialism."[139]

It is critical to note that the target of feminist critique was not necessarily the affiliation of motherhood to the Palestinian nationhood per se, since it took root in the Palestinian's living reality as refugees and displaced people. Under the general conditions of statelessness, women acted as the alternative service providers, including cultural education and childcare. Confined in camps and occupied territories with imperceptible socioeconomic mobility, Palestinian women poured their energies on "maintaining and reproducing Palestinian child (children, that is, with a national identity)."[140] Thus, the concept of "um al-Shaheed" (mother of the martyr) and the self-assignment of this title by women did not directly indicate the passivity of women.

An issue arises, from a feminist perspective, when the concept is coopted by male elites into the ideological construct of the mainstream nationalism, since it effectively reduces women's identity and *raison d'etre* to mothers, and specifically speaking, mothers of nationalist, self-sacrificing freedom fighters. More fundamentally, men's assigning of roles to women is a critical issue pertaining women's agency, begging the question of who gets to decide what roles women should play. An emerging need to reclaim their agency led Palestinian feminists to assert their rights – not as mothers but as equal and autonomous individuals. Their most important achievements were their ability to recruit women "in large numbers from all walks of life" and to have them involved in decision-making processes.[141] And these women were able to take collective action, through transcending political and ideological fault lines, in the national movement and against its patriarchal structure.

The rising feminist momentum led to the establishment of specialized women's centers and programs, while political Women's Committees continued to play an important role in servicing an expansive anti-colonial movement. Multiple women's

---

[139] Abdo, "Women of the Intifada," 22.
[140] Ibid., 26.
[141] Manal Jamal, "Democracy Promotion, Civil Society Building, and the Primacy of Politics," *Comparative Political Studies* 45, no. 1 (2012): 6.

centers were established in major Arab cities such as Ramallah, Jerusalem, Nablus and Gaza and began to claim their political independence from the male national and party leadership (a record tells there were 174 women's organization in the OPT by 1993).[142] This new wave of Palestinian feminism clearly acknowledged the double pressures of occupation and patriarchy and took autonomous actions to redefine women's position in Palestinian society as well as in the national struggle, and they aimed to represent women's agenda separately from the national agenda and treat it as a legitimate issue in its own terms. Different groups began to agitate for changing the personal status law and criminal code that were deemed discriminatory against women.

The coordinated efforts of multiple women's centers culminated in the establishment of the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC), a coordination and cooperation network of women's and human rights organizations. The central objective was to represent women's needs and opinions in the Madrid peace conference. While all other Technical Committees became Ministries following the establishment of the PA, the WATC decided to remain independent as a non-governmental organization.[143] In 1994, the WATC, with a group of feminists, leftists, and other progressive academics, submitted to the GUPW the "Document on Principles of Women's Rights," or the so-called Women's Charter which aimed at rectifying discriminatory laws, advancing equal political, economic, and social rights, and pressuring the PA to observe international women's rights conventions. [144] Through the rise of feminist consciousness and realization of their ability to make independent claims regarding women's agenda, "women affirmed themselves through their own activism."[145] They increasingly gained confidence in their work and took pride in their visible and meaningful roles in the political process.

<center>*   *</center>

[142] The Directory of Palestinian Women's Organization, cited in Abdulhadi, "The Palestinian Women's Autonomous Movements," 650. Among them, prominent women's organizations were the Women' Affairs Technical Committee, Women's Resource and Research Centre, Bisan Research and Development Centre, and Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, Women's Studies Program at Birzeit University.

[143] Layali Zaharan. (Women's Affairs Technical Committee), interview with the author. March 11. 2019.; Abdo, "Feminism and Difference," 143.

[144] Holt, "Palestinian women," 233.; Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 262.

[145] Jad, "Palestinian Women," 83.

As Jayawardena establishes, women's commitment to the nationalist project does not mean that they do not struggle within it for the transformation and improvement of the women's position in their society.[146] The same was said for the Palestinian women's case. Yet, the growth of the Palestinian women's movement in the pre-Oslo period reveals two contradictory realities about the relationship between the feminist and nationalist agenda.

First, women were extensively mobilized in the movement because the specific context of statelessness and resistance required their involvement. Women's mobilization was practically and symbolically necessary in the nation-wide resistance campaign and to take over positions after many male activists were detained in Israeli prisons. Through increased visibility in Palestinian public life, women achieved not only a subjective realization of their political capabilities, but also an objective outcome where three prominent women activists, Hanan Ashrawi, Zahira Kamal, and Suad Amry, were included in the Palestinian delegation to the official negotiation table in Madrid. The Madrid Conference was ultimately a product of the *intifada*, and it was reasonable that those at the forefront of the uprising were represented in the multilateral negotiations.

The flip side, however, was that the women's movement was always within the confines of the national movement. In other words, if there is a conflict between the two causes of national and women's liberation, the former takes primacy. Palestinian women knew that the public recognition of women's efforts in the *intifada* and shift in popular image of women as passive and subdued did not significantly modify the traditional role of women in Palestinian society.[147] That was why women began to establish a more feminist movement with explicit focus on equal citizenship rights, independently from the resistance movement, in the early 1990s. The tension between women's agenda and the national agenda not only continued into the post-Oslo period, but it was also actively invoked by the new political leadership, Islamists, and Israeli Authority in order to undermine issues around human rights and citizenship rights in light of statehood, security and sovereignty. The weakening of the Palestinian women's movement through numerous attempts to delegitimize the locally-bred feminist agenda, which the next chapter delineates, begs the question of "what peace? And peace for whom?"

---

[146] Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: Zed Books, 1986).
[147] *Towards Equality: Examination of the Status of Palestinian Women in Existing Law* (Ramallah: Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), 1995), 3.

Chapter Three: Post-Oslo Environment's Hostility towards Women

The women's movement is caught in a labyrinth in which
the broader the scope of its struggle for gender equality, the stronger
its internal fragmentation and the broader the resentment to its efforts[148]

(Amal Jamal)

1. Overview: Fragmentation of Women's Movement and Scholarly Evaluations

While the pre-Oslo women's movement explicitly upheld a nationalist banner, it compounded a feminist implication, since women's presence on the streets and in leadership positions challenged the traditional gender-based demarcation of roles. Following the signing of the Oslo Agreement, however, the women's movement lost both nationalist and feminist momentums. The formerly community-based, extensive, and politicized Palestinian women's movement came to be dominated by professional NGOs with formal organizational structures and clear memberships.[149] These NGOs work specifically towards improving legal, social and economic status of women, and ordinary Palestinian women became *beneficiaries* of the movement rather than active *participants*. While these groups have made some progress, for instance, modifying laws discriminatory towards women *de jure*, status of Palestinian women in general has not improved very much for the past few decades.[150]

While the level of education attainment is high, Palestinian women exhibit low participation in the labor market, due to early marriage, gender-based roles, and other societal expectations.[151] In public life, while women had long been involved in the

---

[148] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 256.

[149] Rema Hammami, "NGOs: the professionalization of politics," *Race and Class* 37, no. 2 (1995): 52.

[150] For instance, a coalition of women's movement lobbied to end legal discriminations against women, such as the requirement of male guardian's permission to acquire a passport. (See *The Legal and Social Status of Palestinian Women: A Gap Analysis Report Using CEDAW as Reference*, (Ramallah: Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC), 2005)). Another example is that women's groups successfully lobbied to repeal the requirement for the minor women to marry their "rapists" (1960 Penal Code, article 308). (See "Palestine: 'Marry-Your-Rapist' Law Repealed," Human Rights Watch, last modified May 10, 2018. https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/10/palestine-marry-your-rapist-law-repealed.)

[151] Palestinian women's enrollment rate in universities is slightly higher than that of men, and nearly 60% of graduates are women. Yet, women only account for less than 20% of the labor force and their unemployment rate is much higher than male. (*Palestinian Women*, 6-9.)

grassroots politics, their representation has been hanging low between 10-15% in the parliament and approximately 20% in the cabinet.[152] Finally, tribal customs such as child marriage and honor killings persist, and nearly 40% of married Palestinian women are subjected to domestic violence (physical, psychological, and sexual combined). Palestinian laws (specifically speaking, Jordanian laws in the West Bank and Egyptian laws in the Gaza Strip) and court are far from helpful – violence against women is not outlawed, and number of women's murder cases have been processed as "mysterious deaths."[153]

Palestinian feminist critics are concerned with the negative impacts of professionalized NGOs on the mobilizational capacity of the women's movement, which they believe to have contributed to the slow progress of women's liberation. According to Jad, these specialized and professionalized NGOs increasingly treat women's issues "in isolation from the general context in which they arise, without consideration of the economic, social and political factors affecting them."[154] This process of so-called "NGO-ization" undermined the women's movement's commitment to local needs, especially those arising from the occupation context, in favor of donors demands and "universal" values.[155] The elitist and exclusive NGO "industry" lost its popular base, thereby rendering the contemporary women's movement incapable of an effective and successful mobilization towards social change.[156] Finally, a chasm between powerful NGOs and small, weaker grassroots organizations, as well as rivalry and distrust between different women's groups have further rendered collaborated efforts difficult.[157]

This chapter analyzes the factors of the professionalization of the women's movements as well as the slow, if not lack of, progress in the achievement of feminist agenda. It ascribes the current situation of the women's movement and liberation to the

---

[152] *Palestinian Women,* 10-11.

[153] "Mysterious1 deaths," concretely speaking, mean that women were found shot, stabbed, or had "fallen" from high floors. (*Implementation of Human Rights Council resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1, A/HRC/28/80*, (Geneva: United Nations Human Rights Council, March 2, 2015), 13. https://www.refworld.org/docid/550fead44.html?fbclid=IwAR0QnbUElvmMunTNk09aqLmSLU081HT_ Cfe7B11cuUlP8m-teuSRTStCCGs.

[154] Jad, "The Demobilization," 1.

[155] Ibid., 2.

[156] See Tariq Dana, "The Structural Transformation of Palestinian Civil Society: Key Paradigm Shifts," *Middle East Critique* 24, no.2 (2015): 199-202.; Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs," 19.; Islah Jad, "NGOs: between buzzwords and social movements," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4 & 5 (2007): 624-628.

[157] Kuttab, "Palestinian Women's Organizations," 108.

three-fold shifts in the political conditions, all of which emanating from the Oslo Agreement: 1) The establishment of a centralized state dominated by al-Fateh, which "governmentalized" the national project and discredited women's claims to equality; 2) the depoliticizing pressure by the Western donors, which led to the fragmentation of women's movement and induced Islamist backlash on women's agenda; and 3) the prolonging occupation and military policies, which consequently strengthened patriarchal tendencies within Palestinian society. An examination of the overall post-Oslo political conditions enables a more nuanced view towards the absence of an expansive women's mobilization, than the simple attribution to the inability of the professionalized women's NGOs.

2. The Masculine State and The Suppression of The Grassroots

By the end of the *intifada*, Palestinian women came to yearn for a representative and inclusive Palestinian government that would sufficiently appreciate the progress and gains women's movement has made to serve the national cause. The institution of the Palestinian Authority in 1994, on the contrary, brought about double pressures on the women's movement – the government embodied masculine discourse and structure and it repressed the grassroots in order to showcase state authority. The interim government was headed by the old-guard elite of the "exile movement." These long-standing men of the PLO did not appreciate women's claims nor grassroots politics. Since they had been based in Tunis, they were unaware of, or disinterested in, the gradually shifting gender dynamics on the ground which was triggered by the expansive resistance movement.

The Oslo Agreement – Its Premise and Male-Centricity

Following the end of the Gulf War (1990-1991), Israel and the Arab countries that were directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict gathered in Madrid. The Madrid Peace Conference, hosted by Spain and co-sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, aimed at reviving the Palestinian-Israeli peace process. Israeli and non-PLO Palestinian representatives engaged in formal negotiations in Madrid, and subsequently in Washington D.C. These formal negotiations were fruitless, however, largely due to the Israeli law that forbade the country's official any contact with the PLO, the allegedly

terrorist organization. Meanwhile, the PLO had not formally recognized the legitimacy of Israel, and its supporters would criticize any attempt to deviate from this political stance.

Hoping to overcome the stagnation of the peace process, Norwegian diplomat and academic Terje Rod-Larsen approached Israeli politician Yossi Beilin in May 1992. Rod-Larsen argued that Israel had to negotiate directly with the PLO and suggested that Norway would act as an intermediary.[158] Following the establishment of the Labor-Party cabinet in Israel, Rod-Larsen and Beilin convinced Prime Minister Rabin to accede to the initiation of secret direct meetings with the PLO.

The PLO's participation in the secret Oslo negotiations was a strategic choice for survival. By the beginning of the secret negotiations, the PLO was weakened politically and financially. First, the PLO was brutally defeated by the Israelis during the 1982 Lebanon War. The end of the Cold War marked the end of the Soviet Union and other socialist regimes' financial assistance to the PLO. Finally, the PLO's outright support for Iraq during the Gulf War led the Gulf states to halt their capital transfer to the PLO, bringing it near to bankruptcy.[159] Meanwhile, Israel entirely terminated the work permits of the Palestinian laborers working in Israel, beginning in March 1993 until immediately after the signing of the Oslo Agreement, further aggravating Palestinians', and especially Gazans', living conditions.[160]

Yet, a more fundamental psychological explanation for the Arafat's signing of the Oslo Agreement was the combination of his political ambition and sense of insecurity that al-Fatah elite had cultivated through the years of exile. On one hand, al-Fateh elite had always wanted to reenact the PLO's centralized and bureaucratic structure in their homeland – a plan Arafat had developed since the inception of the national movement.[161]

---

[158] The main personnel from the Norwegian government was Thorvald Stoltenberg, Norway's Foreign Minister, Terje Rod-Larsen, Director of Fafo Research Foundation, and Mona Juul, Rod-Larsen's wife and Stoltenberg's deputy. (Ezaki, *The Political Process*, 38).

[159] See Ezaki, *The Political Process*, 26-30; Ryoji Tateyama, "Beikoku-Isuraeru Kankei no Henyo (The Transformation of US-Israel Relationship)," *Gendai Chuto Kenkyu (Modern Middle East Studies)* (1991): 44-45.

[160] According to Roy, The Gaza Strip, compared to the West Bank, had a higher economic dependence on Israel. Thus, Israel's siege of the OPT hit Gaza most directly and acutely. (Roy, *From Holocaust to Gaza*, 29.)

[161] Owen, *State, Power and Politics,* 362.

On the other hand, however, the eruption and continuation of the *intifada* led the PLO elites to increasingly feel that their position was threatened. Their attempts to control the course of the uprising were not successful, due to the physical and psychological distance between the 'inside' Palestinians in the OPT and the 'outside' PLO elite. Additionally, the PLO leaders' lack of political solutions increasingly took its toll on activists on the ground, both women and men. For instance, while Israeli military's crackdown on Palestinian grassroots committees and organizations had gradually destroyed the infrastructure for grassroots mobilization, PLO could not take decisive measures to stop or prevent further Israeli destruction. The rise of Islamists in the Gaza Strip, as a result of the aggravating living conditions and the impotence of the PLO, critically threatened the PLO's hegemony in the liberation struggle. Consequently, though PLO elite had not lost its legitimacy as the leader of the nationalist movement, various alternative guiding bodies were gaining support on the ground through working closely with the people.

The Oslo Agreement was the means for the PLO cadre to quietly establish a foundation for their return to the homeland and consolidation of power. Arafat also believed that moving the locus of the negotiations from Washington to Oslo would enable the PLO re-establish its authoritative leadership in the negotiation process. The fourteen secret negotiations were carried out without informing those at the vanguard of resistance, and naturally, the women's movement was excluded from the decision-making process that would ultimately determine the fate of the Palestinian nation.[162] Furthermore, the secret negotiations were carried out only by men.[163] Abu Ala (Ahmad Qray), Financial Advisor of the PLO, represented the PLO, while Arafat and Abu Mazen (Mahmood Abbas) gave directions.[164] These three men had been long-standing colleagues and

---

[162] Nigel Parsons, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 67. Abe concurs that the secret back channel negotiations provided the PLO with more freedom to exercise their influence for two reasons. First, Israeli and Palestinian stances during US-led negotiations were often published as official statements, and hence both sides tended to take hawkish attitudes in the face of media coverage. Second, outcomes of open negotiations could be easily attacked by non-mainstream political factions, especially when they indicated "progress in peace" (Abe, Palestine, 82-83).

[163] Behind the scenes of this highly confidential operation, there were a few high-profile women who played a critical role in its execution. Mona Juul, a Norwegian diplomat and Rod-Larsen's wife, was part of a small group of Norwegian diplomats that coordinated the two parties and enabled numerous secret trips to Oslo. (Ezaki, *The Political Process*, 38).

[164] Maher al-Kurd, Arafat's direct report, and Hassan Asfur, Abbas's deputy as well as PLO executive member, were part of the Palestinian team.

members of al-Fateh's central committee.[165] On the Israeli side, Simon Peres, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Yossi Belin, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs were the main personnel.

The secret negotiations were infused by Israel's security interests, and the formality and exclusivity of the space promoted a further state-centric agreement.[166] Critics argue that the focus of the Oslo Agreement was neither a reconciliation between the peoples of Israel and Palestine nor recognition of Palestinian national rights, but it was rather about ensuring security of the Israeli state and solidifying the uneven power balance between the two entities.[167] This meant that the 'land-for-peace' formula underlined in the Oslo process was "based on Israeli interests and values and not on any sense of justice for the Palestinians."[168]

The DOP stipulated that by the end of the five-year interim period, permanent status will be negotiated based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 which called for Israeli forces' withdrawal from the OPT conquered since 1967.[169] Yet, in order to initiate the final status negotiations in five years, Arafat had to promise to end anti-Israeli violence in the OPT and even cooperate with Israeli security forces.[170] Most obligations were imposed on the Palestinians, and Israel's legal duties, such as ensuring Palestinian

---

[165] Nigel Parsons, *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority*, 67.

[166] In fact, the reason for Rabin's reluctant acceptance to initiate the direct negotiations with the PLO was ground in security concerns: he believed the decision to "make peace" with the PLO would be the most pragmatic way to compensate for Israel's security vulnerability vis-à-vis jihadist groups, maintain its strategic importance for the US, and retain domestic support for his cabinet. Israel's strategic importance for the US decreased, and US was gradually tightening its relationship with Syria with a common enemy Iraq. Additionally, Rabin had to devise ways to contain the Islamists that had emerged and quickly gained popularity during the *intifada*, and he found it convenient to force the responsibility on the PLO (Jerome Slater, "What Went Wrong? The Collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process," *Political Science Quarterly* 116, no. 2 (Summer 2001), 176-178).

[167] As a result, authorities over different policy areas did not transfer from Israel to Palestine unconditionally and definitively. Rather, various "joint committees" were established so the Israeli authority retains its control over all matters pertaining Israel's security. Israel had an overriding power in critical policy areas, such as diplomacy, national security, economy and public finance, and it also had the right to halt the negotiation depending on the PA's ability to carry out its duties (Abe, *Palestine*, 117).

[168] Jonathan Rynhold, "Re-Conceptualizing Israeli Approaches to 'Land For Peace' and the Palestinian Question Since 1967," *Israel Studies* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2001), 42.

[169] Slater, "What Went Wrong," 176.

[170] Yossi Beilin, reflecting on the 'five-year idea,' claims that such an interim solution was an inheritance from Menahim Begin, who used the same strategy in the 1979 Camp David with Egypt. Beilin states that despite his recommendation to Rabin to seek a permanent deal, Rabin was set on following Begin's way because "it would be easier to get support." ("Former Minister Yossi Beilin: Oslo Peace Process Was Not a Failure," *Jerusalem Post*, September 15, 2018, https://www.jpost.com/Magazine/The-unrepentant-dreamers-unfullled-vision-567115.)

diaspora the rights to return, came to be conceptualized as part of this "deal."[171] As Ezaki puts it, the essence of Oslo process was "to make the Palestinian Authority to *earn* necessary results as a realistic governing body through successive interim agreements and to make peaceful coexistence of Israelis and Palestinians a fait accompli."[172] Furthermore, the Oslo "peacebuilding" embodied a shifted discourse from how to emancipate the "occupied Palestinian territory" and to achieve the "rights of the Palestinian people" to how to provide aid to the residents of the "Palestinian territory" and to promote the recognition of a virtual "Palestinian State."[173]

The negotiation process for the series of interim agreements also reflected the DOP's focus on territory and security. This rendered the negotiation spaces dominantly masculine, as a former Israeli negotiator recalls: "It is obvious that [the themes] were part of a masculine operative environment. I mean, almost every field… for example, security issues were a masculine field. Territorial issues were also… And the strategic planning unit in the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) comprised men only."[174] Aharoni explains that the all-male demographics in the high-level negotiations aggravated the asymmetrical power relations between Israelis and Palestinians, since these were essentially interactions between occupying forces and ex-prisoners. An ex-general explains to Aharoni that "since they were all men, many of the Palestinians had been imprisoned in Israeli jails, so the Israelis used to say 'I put that man in jail' or 'I freed that one from imprisonment.' It was arrogant. It was all about mastership."[175]

Neither the DOP nor the following agreements addressed human/sociocultural rights, and to say nothing of women's rights and gender equality.[176] In addition to that, the PLO's political aspirations to territorialize its power reproduced power relations that located

---

[171]Roy, *From Holocaust to Gaza, 114.*

[172] Ezaki, *The Political Process*, 172. Emphasis added by the author.

[173] Raja Khalidi and Sobhi Samour, "Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 2 (Winter 2011): 11.

[174] Ex-general Sasson answering to the interview by Aharoni. (Aharoni, "Gender and "Peace Work"," 403.) Formal title of IDF added by the author.

[175] Ibid., 404.

[176] The Oslo Agreement was signed before the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, which aimed at mainstreaming women's issues in matters regarding peace and security. In prior to UNSC 1325, only 11% of peace agreements mentioned women's and gender issues, but the number increased to 27% after the adoption. (Bell, *Text and Context*, 3.)

women's interests "at the lowest priority of the national movement."[177] The negotiations and the agreements implied that women's issues were private issues and not public, political issues. As Julia Bacha, the director of a recent documentary "Naila and the Uprising" notes, "Oslo was created as a way of empowering, again, the male Palestinian leadership that had been in exile."[178] In a similar vein, Kamal recalls: "By the time the men returned, women had achieved a lot in their position, but the expectation was that women would slot straight back into their position, and women would have to step aside."[179] From Bacha and Kamal's words, it is not difficult to see the connection they draw between the returned al-Fateh elite with patriarchy. As argued in the previous chapter, the dissolution of the traditional patriarchal social relations and the statelessness were the key to the rise of women in Palestinian political life. On the contrary, the return of the old guards and the domination of the state institutions by them only signified the reinstitution of the hostile political condition for women politicians and activists.

Concentration of Political Power to al-Fateh

The masculine and bureaucratic tendencies of the negotiations resulted in a power dispensation that disproportionately benefited al-Fateh and excluded the leftist factions in the PLO. As soon as the PA was established, the returned PLO leadership attempted to quickly consolidate political power in their hands and to ensure their influence over political institutions and state apparatus. Army, police, judiciary, and other public sector jobs were dominated by al-Fateh-affiliated elements.[180] Monopolizing power was not too difficult for al-Fateh, since Islamists and leftist factions, most importantly the PFLP and

---

[177] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 258.
[178] Alice Speri, "How the Oslo Accords Betrayed the Palestinian Women Behind the First Intifada," *The Intercept*, September 13, 2018, https://theintercept.com/2018/09/13/oslo-accords-palestinian-women-first-intifada-naila-and-the-uprising/.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Al-Fateh extended its influence in the executive branch as well. While it is stipulated that 80% of the cabinet members must be PLC members, the number of PLC members was approximately 60% and the rest consisted of the members of the PLO's Executive Committee. Despite the DOP stipulates the PLO and PA be distinct entities, the overlapping of leadership and positions, lack of clear responsibility definitions, and the reestablished nepotism formed a collusion of PLO elite and the PA leadership. At the same time, the disempowerment of the PLO's main organs, the Palestinian National Council (PNC) and the EC, rendering the PLO merely nominal and obsolete. (*PLO vs. PA*, (Ramallah: PASSIA (Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs), 2014), 5.)

the DFLP refused to join the new establishment, objecting the "peace" agreements.[181] These non-Fateh parties also boycotted the 1996 elections that decided the *Raiis* (President of the PA) and the 88 the members of Palestinian Legislative Council, in which more than 70% of the eligible voters participated.[182] Consequently, Arafat won 88% of the votes, and al-Fateh candidates and al-Fateh-affiliated independents won more than 70% of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) seats.[183] With the help of the euphoria immediately after Oslo Agreement, the elections conferred legitimacy to Arafat's one-man rule.

The reason for the "de-democratization" of the new government was not merely the opposing parties' boycotts of elections. The foundation for the undemocratic PA institutions was internalized in the Oslo Agreement itself. The DOP stipulation limited the voting rights to the Palestinians residing in the OPT, consequently excluding 60% of the Palestinian population who lived in diaspora from the democratic constituency.[184] The PLC, a *state* institution, also takes supremacy over the Palestinian National Council, a more inclusive *national* deliberative body of the PLO.

As a result, the Palestinian political sphere became less inclusive. While "no one political group or organization ha[d] the monopoly over the means and aims" in the pre-Oslo period, political power concentrated under a single faction in the post-Oslo period,

---

[181] The Oslo Agreement was met with wide criticism. Even the PLO's EC criticized Arafat for keeping the negotiation secret, and it therefore did not ratify the agreement. Palestinians who joined the negotiation team with Jordan in Washington DC were also disappointed by this form of betrayal. The non-mainstream PLO member parties established the Alliance of Palestinian Forces in December 1993 in Damascus to oppose the Oslo process and its premise of a two-state solution and to sustain the original nationalism claim for the liberation of all Palestinian lands. The ten member parties included the PFLP, DFLP, PLF, al-Fateh, PFLP/GC, Hamas, Saica, PSF, PRCP, and Islamic Jihad. Intellectuals such as Hydar Abd al-Shafi and Edward Saiid expressed vehement opposition and disappointment towards al-Fateh elites. Donors have not facilitated the development of political parties, because the competition between those who support Oslo and those might jeopardize the "peace" process. Leading up to the 1996 elections, the donors offered technical training to electoral staff, built the congress library, and monitored the election process to ensure smooth and democratic implementation. They did not, however, support minority political factions to formulate themselves as political parties and ignored that the present electoral system would unambiguously benefit the majority al-Fateh. Donors also did not make the effort to promote sociopolitical associations such as labor and trade unions, religious institutions, and charitable organizations that would have been capable of holding the PA accountable and represent the people's interests. (See Leila Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy in Palestine: The Politics of International Aid since Oslo," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 45, no. 4 (2016): 54-55)

[182] *The January 20, 1996 Palestinian Elections* (Atlanta: The Carter Center, 1997), vii.

[183] Ibid., 84-85.

[184] Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, Article 3 and Annex I; Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 54.

for the first time in the history.[185] The political implication was that the national agenda became no longer at the hands of grassroots activist who propelled the resistance movement throughout the 1970s and 80s. In the post-Oslo Palestinian politics, the "outsider" government effectively dominated the rights to create a vision for future Palestinian state.

The weakening of the leftist parties, due to their objection against the Oslo Agreement and al-Fateh's domination of the Palestinian Authority had brought upon significant consequences on the women's movement. The first impact was financial. UPWC and FPWAC each affiliated with the PFLP and DFLP lost their financial support because the parties themselves lost revenue.[186] The virtual demise of the leftist parties led to the Women's Committees' loss of influence in the Palestinian society as well. This development of events was a setback in the Palestinian feminist history, since both the women's wings and the parties held more progressive visions on women's and gender issues than other factions of the Palestinian national movement. From the political-opportunity perspective, loss of ally elite who can promote progressive and pluralistic causes in the political establishment was a clear disadvantage to the women's movement.[187]

The erosion of a strong leftist opposition also gave rise to two ideological trends that negatively affected women's cause. The first was the masculinization of the state ideology by al-Fateh cadres who dominated the newly established Palestinian political institutions. The next section will elaborate on this issue in more detail. The second was the rising tide of Islamist movement against any secular and progressive ideals which they deemed as corrosive towards Arab cultural integrity. During the pre-Oslo period, the nationalist alliance in the OPT was coordinated enough to counter, if not to delegitimize, Islamist discourses in different aspects. Women's movement was also able to fight back the Hamas-led hijab campaign, as well as to reach out to Islamist women to find a common ground.[188] With the lack of political backing, women's groups in the post-Oslo period lost

---

[185] Jamil Hilal quoted in Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 54.

[186] Sharoni, "Gender and Conflict Transformation," 118.

[187] Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*; Meyer and Minkoff, "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity," 1475.

[188] Rema Hammami offers a detailed explanation of hijab campaign. She describes how the Islamist parties obliged Palestinian women to dress modestly and cover themselves with hijab, claiming that the hijab was part of the Palestinian national identity and cultural heritage that stand against Israeli and Western

the momentum and physical capability to counter Islamists as effectively as they used to do. The Islamist attack on the Palestinian women's movement is discussed further below, in relation to the influence of the Western donors.

In short, the domination of the political institutions by al-Fateh and its sympathizers affected Palestinian women's status negatively. It is critical to remember that the configuration of political power began at the negotiation process. The case of Palestine embodies feminist IR scholars' concern that "the new political settlement which will result from the peace negotiations will contain an implicit 'sexual contract'" that is often regressive for women.[189] The next section elaborates on the negative impacts of al-Fateh's domination of power on women.

Institutionalization of Patriarchy and Masculine Discourse

The nascent government internalized a ruling structure that systemically excluded women from policy- and decision-making processes. Being originally a guerilla movement, the PLO, and especially al-Fateh faction, was dominated by men. Arafat returned to the OPT with several thousands of PLO cadres and their families, and these individuals became the core of the new PA institutions.[190] The dramatic expansion of the public sector under the PA, from a few thousand in 1994 to more than a hundred thousand in the early 2000s, happened not based on a clear bureaucratic hiring process, but on clientelism and patronage. This was done through the *hamula* (clan) system, in which individuals are employed and promoted based on kinship and connections, rather than merits and competency.[191] While the kinship-oriented power structure had been once deconstructed in the 1970s, Arafat re-empowered the kinship as a network for Palestinians to attain jobs in the public sector.

---

influences. Additionally, Hammer argues that the "nationalization" of hijab in Islamist discourse was actually "about the power of religious groups to impose themselves by attacking secularism and nationalism at their more vulnerable points: over issues of women's liberation." (p. 304). Hence, their purpose was to maintain dominance over women, in the face of rising influence of women activists in the resistance. Rema Hammami, "Women, the hijab and the Intifada," *Middle East Report* 20, no. 164 (May-August 1990): 26.; Juliane Hammer, "Prayer, Hijab and the Intifada: The influence of the Islamic movement on Palestinian women," *Islam and Christian-Islam Relations* 11, no. 3 (2000): 304.

[189] Bell, *Text and Context*, 9.
[190] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 274.
[191] Nahda Sh'hada, "Gender and Politics in Palestine: Discourse Analysis of the Palestinian Authority & Islamists," University of Miami International & Comparative Law Review 11, no. 3 (2003): 38.

The PA elites' nepotism consequently reversed the pre-Oslo tendency to emphasize political affiliation. Tribal or clan membership regained significance in sociopolitical relations, and since men possessed dominant decision-making power in Palestinian families, the power structure in the public sphere began to replicate the traditional social structure.[192] Women's appointment to governmental positions became either due to their membership in al-Fateh or through assistance of their male relatives and friends, rendering them unable to make genuine feminist commitments which may "undermine" the reputation of the appointer. Jamal claims that the reinstitution of the *hamula* system turned PA institutions into "extensions to the prevalent family structure" [193] This observation echoes Brown's claim that state-building represents a shift from "private" to "public" patriarchy.[194]

As mentioned earlier, the national movement has produced activists such as Leila Shahid, Hanan Ashrawi and Zahira Kamal. Women, however, have only been included in formal power structures in peripheral ways.[195] Women that were included in the government structure were largely done so through patronage, and these so-called "femocrats" were not necessarily feminists.[196] Neither do femocrats strive to utilize their bureaucratic positions to advance the women's cause intra- or extra-institutionally.[197] Rather, they deploy women's issues, regardless of their commitment to improve them, in order to secure their positions within the PA and Palestinian society.[198]

The electoral space also exhibited the return of patriarchal tendency in the society. In the 1996 general elections, of the 676 candidates who ran for the PLC, only 27 (4%) were women, half of them being either members or affiliates of al-Fateh.[199] Explaining the low participation rate of women in the election, Ghada Zughayar, then Director of the

---

[192] Ibid., 39.
[193] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 274.
[194] Brown, "Mothers, Fathers, and Children," 257-258.
[195] Among these women, only Zahira Kamal joins the cabinet by becoming he head of the Ministry of Planning.
[196] Jad explains that Palestinian femocrats are different from "femocrats" in the original sense, which "referred to women who are employed within a state bureaucracy to work on advancing the position of women in the wider society through advancement of policies supportive of equal opportunity and anti-discrimination." Palestinian femocrats are hired through patronage and they strive to secure their positions in the PA. (Jad, "The Post-Oslo Palestine," 365.)
[197] Anna Yeatman, *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990), 65.
[198] Jad, "Palestinian Women," 83.
[199] *1996 Palestinian Elections*, 44.

Jerusalem Center for Women noted that "women were deterred from running by financial restrictions, but the constituency system which allotted only a few seats in each religion, and by the patriarchal nature of society which bars women from decision-making positions."[200] While women played critical roles in the left-dominated pre-Oslo resistance, the non-participation of the leftist factions in the election and the majoritarian system that preferred traditional elements hampered women from running. Consequently, women gained five seats (5.6%) of the PLC seats.[201]

Interestingly, while there were discussions on instituting a 20% quota in the legislature, women activists and leaders rejected the idea, believing that they would gain more sears that the quota might give them.[202] Since women had played pivotal roles throughout the national liberation struggle, they assumed that the voters would evaluate the candidates based on their merit.[203] The reality, however, turned out differently. Feminists subsequently lobbied for the stipulation of the women's quota to be included from the 2005 local elections and 2006 general elections.[204] However, women's representation in the PLC remain as low as 12.9% and 21% of local authority members.[205] Furthermore, while the target set by the Women's Affairs Technical Committee (WATC), the leading lobby group, was the introduction of minimum 30% quota in parties' candidate list, this was not achieved.[206]

Unsurprisingly, the PA has been incapable and unwilling to deliver on women's rights agenda. Since substantial violations of women's rights and human rights took place due to the absence of a formal government that safeguards the people, the advent of the Palestinian Authority was supposed to improve both position and conditions of women,

---

[200] Ibid., 44-45.
[201] Ibid., 84-85.
[202] Jad, "Palestinian Women," 84.
[203] Ibid.
[204] As for the national elections, the 2005 Election Law (Law No. 9), Article 4, and the 2007 Decree on the Election Law, stipulates that political parties must include at least one woman among the first three candidates, at least one woman among the next four, and one woman among every five candidates in the rest of the list. This rule applies to the proportional segment of the elections (50% of the seats), since the rest of the parliament members are elected through single-member system. At the local level, the 2005 Election Law, Article 17 stipulates that women must attain at least two seats at local bodies of less than 13 seats. ("Gender Quota Database," Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), accessed November 10, 2019, https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/country-view/246/35.)
[205] *Palestinian Women*, 10.
[206] "Gender Quota Database – State of Palestine," Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Accessed November 10, 2019, https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/country-view/246/35.

at least legally and institutionally. However, the PA's male-dominated structures "broke faith with their positions on women's rights" because the national leadership had integrated women in the resistance out of necessity, and not based on the principles of equality and citizenship.[207] The PA's central agenda was the consolidation of its power, and the nationalist discourse was invoked as to serve this purpose. The PA would endorse women's movement as long as it helps to contain the Islamists but turned it down in order not to upset the religious conservatives and the Islamists. In doing so, the PA keeps employing the same old logic from the *intifada* period, that the sidelining of women's and human rights is justifiable as long as the national liberation is not completed.[208]

The PA made limited commitments to addressing women's issues. It ratified the CEDAW without reservation (which is a rare case among Arab governments).[209] However, the PA has not enforced any laws that define "discrimination" or criminalize discrimination.[210] While the PA established the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) in 2003, for "the promotion and the empowerment of Palestinian women," the ministry's capacity to bring national attention and resources on women's issues has been limited.[211] Jamilah Abu-Duhou, a consultant to MOWA appointed by UN Women explains that women "are affected as any other Palestinian is affected" by Israeli occupation, but they also "bear the brunt of the backlash of the occupation."

Feminists' and MOWA's attempts to rectify the patriarchal system, which inevitably involves criticisms towards Palestinian men and culture, is perceived as compromising the unity and internal coherence of the Palestinian cause. Kuttab notes that the PA has the mindset of "our first enemy is the occupation, not the man."[212] Therefore, while improving women's conditions requires a full-fledged commitment to institute gender-sensitive policies, women's issues are not just postponed, but they are also rejected for

---

[207] *The Arab Human Development Report 2005: Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World* (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2005), 98.

[208] Michael Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance: The development of secular Palestinian NGOs in the Post-Oslo period* (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2005), 20.

[209] *The Arab Human Development Report,* 179-181.

[210] *Al-Haq Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on the First Periodic Review: The State of Palestine* (Ramallah: Al-Haq, 2018), 4.

[211] "Palestinian women's rights overlooked in favour of national liberation," *Middle East Eye*, November 3, 2015, https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/palestinian-womens-rights-overlooked-favour-national-liberation.

[212] Ibid.

their "divisiveness" in service to what Palestine's political elite call the "national priorities."[213]

The general public mirrors the PA's attitude - "people give more attention to the liberation of the land at the expense of the liberation of women," says Rawda Basir, director of the Nablus branch of the Women's Studies Centre.[214] As a result, women's issues continue to be regarded as a private matter rather than a public or social justice concern, let alone a democratic concern. The government's attempt to separate women's issues from the public discourse is regressive, compared to the intifada period when the Palestinian women linked their experiences as women with the broader political and social contexts. As discussed later, this privatization of women's issues is also internalized by the women's NGOs themselves, as part of their effort to accommodate international donors' expectations.

The government's negligence is a separate problem from the patriarchal culture itself that is ingrained in Palestinian society, since the former is a willful refusal to include social justice issues in mainstream political conversations. Helie-Lucas's observation of the state's denial of women's rights remains relevant to the post-Oslo Palestinian situation: "Priority is thus given again and again to other problems and excludes both popular demands and women's claim for a better status in their society…the time for women's demands is never now."[215] The ability of the Palestinian state to define political priorities has similarly undermined the legitimacy of women's claims in the public sphere.

Institutional Suppression of Grassroots Elements

The PA's attempt to consolidate political power directly affected the grassroots as well. The PA preferred to subordinate the civil society to the state in order to monopolize the national struggle. The establishment of the PA as the official government authority granted a justification to exclude the grassroots, claiming that their political engagement was only necessary under the condition of statelessness. Therefore, a clear distinction between state and society emerged, and the latter was subjugated to the former. The

---

[213] *The Arab Human Development Report,* 46.
[214] "Palestinian women's rights overlooked"
[215] Marie-Aimee Helie-Lucas, "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women in Muslim Personal Laws," in *Identity Politics and Women*, ed. Moghadam, V. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994): 402.

Palestinian NGOs were excluded from the political process and were expected to engage only in development works that serve the PA's development agenda.

The PA elite, the "outsiders" who finally returned after decades of exile, had always had a sense of mistrust vis-à-vis the local NGOs. Yet, their explicit antagonization of NGOs began when the World Bank established an NGO Trust Fund and provided PNGO some seats at the consultative committee to the NGO Fund in December 1996. This is when the PA started to see the PNGOs as "actual (though limited) threat," rather than a "mere political irritation."[216] The PA not only created governmental NGO networks that could compete against independent NGOs, but also tightened its control over the civil society. Starting in 1997, some NGOs active in lobbying for civic freedom were suddenly audited by officials from the President's Office (under the name of the "Financial Oversight Board") or visited by different "public security" groups demanding information on records of employees' political activism and funding sources. [217] The tension culminated in 1999 when a report issued by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO) revealed that $20 million of $100 million contributed to the development sector was channeled to NGOs with human rights, legal, and civic mandates.[218] The PA officials quickly appropriated and denounces the NGOs as "a bunch of thieves, fat cats, and foreign agents."[219]

The PA official's hostile comment against PNGOs embodies not only an intensive competition over money, but also their insecurity about popular legitimacy. The PA elite were essentially installed in the position of power through a political arrangement and not through a fair competition. Compared to the local NGOs that have sustained the nationalist struggle, the PA suffered from a considerable insecurity about its popular legitimacy, both internally and externally. The allocation of a large sum of funding to NGOs by an international institution appeared as further hurting the PA's authority as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Palestinian people. Thus, the PA's attempt to showcase their "upper-hand" over civil society, alongside the international pressure to

---

[216] Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs," 17.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid, 18.
[219] Quoted in Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs," 18.

suppress anti-Oslo, anti-Israel elements, can explain its various attempts to maneuver the Palestinian grassroots.

The PA employed a combination of methods to control the grassroots. One of the methods was to invite service-provision-oriented NGOs to become part of the PA institutions. For instance, the Health Service Council, formerly consisted of 62 clinics in the OPT, was merged into the PA structure.[220] Similarly, almost all of the Technical Committees that were established for the Madrid Conference became PA ministries, with a single exception of the Women's Affairs Technical Committee, which remained non-governmental in order to maintain its independence. According to Layali Zaharan of the WATC, the members of the organization at the time of Committees' governmentalization aspired to keep WATC an NGO, so it "can be monitoring the work of the government" and "to be able to work and advocate against any (governmental) decisions that are unfair (to women)."[221] The WATC remains administratively and financially independent from the Palestinian government until today. Many other women's NGOs are caught in the gap between their bid to maintain their independence and their wish to build positive contacts with the government in order to influence policy-making.[222]

Some harsher methods include arbitrary imprisonment and torture of activists and political opponents. Marginalization of human-rights NGOs and imprisonment of human rights activists happen frequently. This is partly because human rights groups expanded their scope of monitoring from exclusively Israel's human rights violation in the pre-Oslo period to the PA's misconduct post-Oslo period.[223] The PA rationalized these repressive measures by employing the all-embracing justification of "national interest." Human rights NGOs' accusations of the PA for its infringement of human rights were exploited by the PA to blame the NGOs for abandoning national interests and being "foreign agents or collaborators."[224] Outside parties, such as the EU and the US, tend to turn a blind eye

---

[220] DeVoir and Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding,* 8.

[221] Layali Zaharan (Women's Affairs Technical Committee), interview with the author. March 11. 2019. Words in the brackets added by the author.

[222] According to Weylen, women's movements are regularly caught in the dilemma of "autonomy versus integration." (Waylen, "Women and Democratization," 339.)

[223] For the development of human rights NGOs from pre- to post-Oslo period, see Lisa Hajjar (2001). "Human Rights in Israel/Palestine: The History and Politics of a Movement," *Journal of Palestinian Studies* 30, no. 4 (2001): 22-28.

[224] Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs," 18. Also see Hajjar, "Human Rights in Israel/Palestine," in which she claims that pressure on human rights activists on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides were present since

to human rights violations committed by the PA, as they are committed to safeguard the PA on behalf of Israel's security interests.[225]

Finally, the PA uses the law to regulate NGO activities. In February 1995, the PA issued a draft law regarding regulations on charitable associations.[226] This draft law modeled after the most restrictive Egyptian NGO law prompted the local NGOs' swift and organized lobby, through which they successfully pushed back the law.[227] However, the final draft, which passed the PLC and was approved by Arafat in 2000, is utilized to impose legal and institutional restrictions and to practice a "friendly surveillance" on PNGOs.[228] While The Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organizations (Law No.1 of 2000) is regarded as one of the least restrictive NGO laws in the Middle East, it is still restrictive compared to the international standard.   With the passing of the law, the PA established an NGO-regulation system under the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and mandated that all NGOs must register with the MoI. This organ was led by Hasan Asfour, an Arafat loyalist and former Oslo negotiator, who was in charge of tactical maneuver around the law to reclaim control over NGOs.[229] While PNGOs rallied to keep the NGO-registration under the Ministry of Judiciary, the regulation was put into force anyway.[230]

According to the NGO law, all NGOs operating in the OPT must obtain license from the MOI before they can "practice an of their activities." Mandatory licensing is not

---

the Oslo negotiation process in order to curb any criticisms against the Israeli government, which may disturb the talks. After the signing of the DOP and establishment of the PA, human rights activists were still restricted of their freedom to criticize their respective governments because their activism would then damage the PA's perceived capability to preserve its commitment to ensure internal stability and Israel's security.

[225] Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance*, 8.

[226] "Charitable associations" subjected to Palestinian laws include service provision organizations, community-based groups, faith-based groups, and research and/or advocacy groups. The Law on Charitable Asociations and Community Foundations (Law No. 1 of 2000) defines charitable associations as any institutions with "independent judicial personality, established upon an agreement concluded among no less than seven persons to achieve legitimate objectives of public concern, without aiming at attaining financial profits to be shared among the members or achieving any personal benefits" (Article 2, Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organizations (Law No. 1, Year 2000)

http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Palestine/law1-2000-en.pdf.)

[227] For more detailed explanation of the lobbying and law adoption process, see Peter Gubser, "The Impact of NGOs on the State & Non-State Relations in the Middle East," *Middle East Policy* 9, no. 1 (2002).

[228] Nahla Abdo, "Imperialism, the State, and NGOs: Middle Eastern Contexts and Contestations," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30, no. 2 (2010): 241.

[229] Hammami, "Palestinian NGOs," 19.

[230] Hajjar, "Human Rights in Israel/Palestine," 32.

unusual in the Middle East, typically justified by the government's fear of Islamic extremism and terrorist groups – as Elbayar describes the mandatory licensing as "a regional propensity."[231] The registration process is completed in the following steps. Applicant submit three copies of their bylaws, signed by the founding members, with an application form. Though the NGO law writes that the MOI must respond to applications within two months from the date of submission,[232] one of my interviewees mentioned that it could take in fact around six months.[233] Unlike many other NGO laws in the Middle Eastern countries, the MOI cannot reject NGOs for being contrary to ambiguous principles such as "public morals" or "national interest."[234] However, the law neither stipulates on which grounds NGO applications are rejected nor clarify whether the court can reverse MOI's rejection of applications.[235]

The PA's iron-fist measures towards the grassroots and civil society came as a huge disappointment for the local NGOs, since they were willing to offer their expertise and knowledge in for Palestine's new phase of development. Some of my interviewees explained that they offered the government ministries whatever they were asked for, such as school curriculum modules and original software programs, in order to support the nascent interim government. They also hoped to eventually participate in the development-planning process. However, these NGOs were neither consulted nor compensated for their contributions. Abla Nasir, Director of a non-profit that runs a school in East Jerusalem noted:

> "[Before the Oslo Agreement,] we were the government, taking care of education, social needs, and everything. When the Palestinian Authority came… I wished that we could work together because we (the NGOs) had the history and accumulated experiences that we could [use] to contribute to the development of our country. […] But the vision I had was shut – the cooperation between NGOs and the PA did not materialize as envisioned."[236]

---

[231] Kareem Elbayar, "NGO Laws in Selected Arab States," *International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law* 7, no. 4 (2005): 22.
[232] Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organizations, Law No. 1 of Year 2000, Article 4-2.
[233] Ohaila Shomar (Director, Sawa), in personal communication with the author, July 4, 2019.
[234] Elbayar, "NGO Laws," 22.
[235] Law of Charitable Associations, Article 4-4.
[236] Abla Nasir (Director, Rawdat el-Zuhur), interview with the author. March 11, 2019.

Her words articulate the considerable gap between the NGOs' self-understanding about their roles in state-building and the PA's understanding about the positions of NGOs in the new political arrangement. And this gap has generated a wide-spread sense of betrayal among the local NGOs.

3. Depoliticizing Pressure by the Donors

This section establishes that the international donors' attempts to build a "robust" state within the Oslo framework contributed to forming a stifling environment for the women's movement. The premise of the Oslo Agreement that the PA must "earn" milestones for eventual independence led the donor states and institutions to channel substantial amount of funding away from the grassroots to the Palestinian government. Additionally, the donors tried to re-create the Palestinian civil society into a depoliticized and liberal-oriented form in order to safeguard the peace process from potential oppositions and attacks. While women's empowerment was a key field for donors to promote progressive values, this effort was utilized by the Islamists to frame and attack feminist agenda as the West's cultural imposition.

<u>Defunding The Grassroots</u>

A month after the signing of the DOP, 43 donor countries and multilateral agencies convened in Washington DC to provide the economic underpinning for the implementation of the Oslo peace process. The aim of this donors' conference, according to then US Secretary of State, was

> to mobilize the resources needed to make the Agreement work. The international community must move immediately to see that the agreement produces tangible results in the security and daily lives of the Palestinians and the Israelis. If peace is to be achieved, this must be translated directly and visibly – vividly into real progress on the ground.[237]

---

[237] *Donor Investment in Palestinian Development 1994-1998* (Jerusalem: The World Bank, West Bank & Gaza Resident Mission and United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, 1999), 8.

The Western donors shared the notion that a strong Palestinian Authority would guarantee the stability and progress of the peace process.[238] This notion was a normative belief, rather than an empirical one, since the achievement of "peace" depended on the PA's ability to keep their promises in the interim agreements. The PA had to "earn" the trust of Israelis and convince them that it was a realistic governing body through the steady implementation of the interim agreements.[239] Progress in peace talks was considered a "reward" to the PA's demonstrated ability to "coexist" with the Israelis, rather than a fruit of mutual concessions.

Therefore, the realization of peace became synonymous with propping the Palestinian Authority. The focal point of the international development scheme was *state-building*, i.e., the reconstruction of infrastructure, the strengthening of PA's administrative capability, and the promotion of market-driven economic growth. Issues such as promotion of a competitive democracy or ensuring Palestinian people's rights, including the refugees' right to return, were important only to an extent they would aid the Oslo policies, despite their intrinsic relevance to the Palestinian question. Stabilizing the PA as the ruling authority was central to donors' effort, especially because the "Tunisians" who dominated the PA did not enjoy popular legitimacy.[240] The heavy focus on the PA institutions was a radical shift from the funding policy negotiated during the Madrid peace conference, where the international community indicated willingness to promote various facets of Palestinian rights, such as refugees and water.[241]

In the 1993 donors' conference, international donors pledged $2.4 billion for a three-year period reconstruction and development program which consisted of three pillars: 1) institution-building, which focused on establishing the PA's financial capacity, transparent and accountable governance including the judiciary, and a legal framework which fosters private sector investment; 2) infrastructure, including reconstruction of necessary education and medical facilities as well as water, sanitation, and power systems,

---

[238] Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance,* 5.
[239] Ezaki, *The Political Process,* 172.
[240] In fact, in Nablus, which was not a stronghold of al-Fateh, there were multiple cases of stone-throwing to Israeli soldiers by Palestinians who disagree with the Oslo arrangements, to which the IDF responded by firing guns. Additionally, there were successive cases of terrorist attacks by Islamists and other political groups that disagree with the Oslo Agreement. Thus, as the self-governed territory expanded, a swift establishment of the PA's rule and legitimacy was necessary.
[241] Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 51.

transportation, and financial facilities; and 3) human resources development that emphasized training individuals from the government to health and education staff at all levels.[242] Donors contributed some $3.6 billion for Palestine's development in the five-year interim period,[243] and additional $3.3 billion between 1999 and 2004, making the Palestinians the "most receiving entities per capita worldwide."[244]

Among the three pillars, the first one was the most critical. Donors wanted to create robust state institutions that could contain radical political factions, such as the Islamists and the left, practice "good governance" that serves a market-driven economic growth, and establish itself as the legitimate government authority in the eyes of the Palestinian people.[245] Thus, in 1993, donors established several funds just for stabilizing and building capacity of the PA, including the Johan Jorgen Holst Fund and Technical Assistance Trust Fund.[246] USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and Britain's DFID (Department for International Development) among others have continuously directed between $25-40 million per annum on PA's capacity-building projects.[247] The EU invested more than $200 million between 2000 and 2002 to establish a World-Bank monitored trust fund, which has been used by most international donors to channel fund to the PA, though conditional on its willingness to meet certain standards of fiscal governance.[248]

Generally speaking, West-funded government capacity-building projects in the global South are often part of the post-Washington consensus that seeks the incorporation of neoliberal agenda geared in institutional practices to promote free market economy, conservative fiscal policy and loosely regulated private sector.[249] Thus, the focal point of donor-led institutional reforms, such as anti-corruption measures, are less about promoting democratic values and ensuring people's welfare, but more about building an

---

[242] *Donor Investment,* 10-11.

[243] *Donor Investment* 8. In the same period of time (1993-1999), UNRWA received $600 million (Ibid.).

[244] Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance,* 1.

[245] Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 57

[246] The Johan Jorgen Holst Fund was established initially as a transitory (4-6 months) funding organization to aid the PA establish its financial stability and respond to high unemployment rate. The initial donors' pledge was $19 million, but by December 1998, the PA had received more than $250 million through the JJHF.

[247] Yezid Sayigh & Khalil Shikaki, *Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions*. (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), 67.

[248] Ibid., 70.

[249] Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 53.

institutional setting that promotes free market transactions, private sector growth through competition, and foreign capital enticement.

Furthermore, recipient governments are hardly capable of resistng donors' proposals. In the Oslo context, "external drivers such as the World Bank, IMF, and UN/donor organizations predominate[d] in telling the Palestinians what is best for them and how best to get it done." And the recipients of international aid, i.e., the Palestinians, "largely abandoned any pretext of trying to influence the aid flows."[250] Western donors' demands sometimes coincide with the local elite's interests, but these elites often manipulate the political space to extend their personal gains and portfolios in ways that neither include nor reflect democratic aspirations, needs, and rights."[251] The Oslo Agreement and successive interim agreements reinforced the state-centrism in the nation's developmental path. They founded the basic attitude towards the Palestinian grassroots and NGOs that they must service the Oslo process through promoting liberal values and undertaking apolitical service-provision responsibilities.

Oslo Agreement and its state-building premises led to the diversion of significant amount of funding from the local NGOs to the newly established Palestinian government. In the pre-Oslo period, external funding to the OPT was channeled largely through local NGOs. Especially when political parties were banned during the *intifada,* many of the affiliated NGOs continued to receive funding from foreign donors, as they were regarded as necessary service providers. The outbreak of the *intifada* and consequential severe humanitarian crisis, in face of the absence of the state, invited Western governments, multi-lateral organizations such as United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and European Economic Community (EEC), and large international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such as Oxfam to fund Palestinian NGOs.[252] As a result, Palestinian NGOs received the majority of foreign aid delivered to the OPT – approximately $170 to $240 million per year.[253]

---

[250] Khalidi and Samour, "Neoliberalism as Liberation," 10.

[251] Kuttab, "Palestinian Women's Organization," 101.

[252] The pre-Oslo period mass-based grassroots NGOs were often connected to local political parties under the umbrella of the PLO, which provided necessary funding to the parties as well as their "satellite organizations." When these parties were banned with the outbreak of the first *intifada* in 1987, NGOs were given some freedom to operate because they were regarded as service providers to the people. Therefore, between 1987 and 1993, international aid was channeled through NGOs. (Jad, "The Demobilization," 4.)

[253] R. Brynen, *A Very Political Economy: Peacebuilding and Foreign Aid in the West Bank* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2000), 187.

Following the Oslo Agreement, the re-channeling of humanitarian and development aid to the PA decreased the total NGO funding to $90 million by 1994, and $60 million by 1996. An exponential growth in the number of INGOs operating in the OPT further diverted the funding that was supposed to reach local NGOs. As a result, while the amount of external aid to the OPT increased by over 500% from 1990 to 2008, Palestinian NGOs (PNGOs) have only received 10% of the aid allocation.[254] Their financial deficits, on the other hand, grew from $9 million in 1999 to $22 million in 2006.[255] Old PNGOs lost more than half of their income from 1993 to 1994, since many of them were opposed to Oslo accords, hit hard by Western donors.[256]

Donors' Support for Liberal Values

The diversion of NGO funding in the post-Oslo period did not indicate the international community's disinterest in the civil society. On the contrary, the idea of civil-society empowerment was an increasingly popular concept among the donors post-Washington consensus. According to Farsakh, civil society has been one of the principal elements in donors' democracy promotion efforts alongside elections and good governance, and other social practices that supplement the broad agenda of a neoliberal free market.[257] As a result, the signing of the DOP prompted number of local and international NGOs to offer workshops and trainings on "how to be democratic citizens."[258] From a Eurocentric viewpoint, NGOs were flexible, because they were less legally and politically constrained; innovative, because of the (perceived) decentralized structure and adaptability; and cost-efficient, because they procured funding themselves and are able to quickly reach the most needy.[259] NGOs were also expected to become the driver of democratization and establishment of "good governance" through ensuring bottom-up accountability and representing the voices of the weak and marginalized.[260]

---

[254] Foreign aid to the OPT in 1990 was $48 and it increased to $257 million by 2008. However, the level of external ai received by the PNGOs averaged around 10% of the total foreign funding to NGOs. (DeVoir and Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding,* x.)

[255] DeVoir and Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding,* x.

[256] Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance*, 5.

[257] Ibid., 49.

[258] Hammami, "NGOs: the professionalization of politics," 51.

[259] Jael Silliman, "Expanding Civil Society, Shrinking Political Spaces: The Case of Women's Nongovernmental Organizations," *Social Politics* (1999): 24.

[260] Good governance is part of the post-Washington Consensus that seeks to "incorporate institutional practice and political concepts into a neo-liberal agenda geared towards promoting free market economy, conservative fiscal policy and softly regulated private sector." According to the USAID, good governance

However, the West's "civil-society empowerment" presupposed specific types of NGOs. And donors were able to either promote or reject certain NGOs and determine for whom and what purpose their money was spent. As Jensen puts it, "[m]oney is an extremely strong force and it makes people, organisations, and countries dependent."[261] Studies on civil society in the non-West countries have amply substantiated that international donors tend to fund local NGOs on ideological grounds rather than empirical confirmation of the organization's contribution to the genuine needs of local communities. [262] The funding criteria include, but are not limited to, the NGO's compliance with specific administrative standards and frequent reporting (as explained previously), compatibility with liberal norms and especially with the "New Policy Agenda," secularity, and non-violent and apolitical attitude. Post-development scholars like Escobar points out how the field of international development, composed by international financial institutions (IFI), governments, and charity and philanthropic organizations, has been dominantly shaped by Western values, reinforcing Western hegemony at the global level.[263]

In the Palestinian context, the NGO's compatibility with the Oslo process, i.e., congruence with "peace" with Israel, commitment to liberal values, and contribution to the neo-liberal economic growth, was an important criterion for donor funding. The Oslo framework was an internationally sponsored 'peace-making' effort, and overtly political activities that potentially disturbed the Oslo process have not been funded. Such activities included acts of challenging a two-state solution and its premises and leading or supporting the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign. Considering the extensive role played by local NGOs during the pre-Oslo liberation struggle, a "civil society" and NGO functions Western donors promoted in the post-Oslo period were

projects in Palestine seek to "improve the capacity of PA institutions" and "enhance communication and coordination among PA, local governments and civil society organizations." (Farsakh, "Undermining Democracy," 49-50.)

[261] Irving Jensen, *Peace, aid & renewed anti-colonial resistance*, 1.

[262] See Michael Edwards and David Hulme, "Too Close For Comfort?: The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations," *World Development* 24, (1996): 961.; Steven J. Klees, "NGOs: Progressive Force or Neo-Liberal Tool?," *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 1, no. 1 (2002): 50.; 2002; Silliman, "Expanding Civil Society," 38.

[263] Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 32-34.

contrasting. Jamal calls this donors' effort as "strategic delinking of grassroots" from the political process in service of the state-led "peace" process.[264]

Women's NGOs in the global South were given a special place among others, because women's liberation from patriarchal oppression and (in Arab regions) Islamic customs symbolized modernization in the Western eyes.[265] This tendency was especially true in Palestine. Palestinian women, with their long history of participation in political activism, appeared to the donors as the symbol of Palestine's modernization. While this perception among the donors was one of the reasons women's organizations were likely to receive foreign funding, it also had some negative implications, namely, the depoliticization of women's issues by separating them from the larger national and political agenda.

Western donors have permitted certain forms of women's activism. Generally, donor pressure has led women's groups to conform their activities from those concerning the "position" of women within a society to the "condition" of women in specific fields.[266] For instance, Palestinian women's NGOs were expected to provide women with education opportunities, establish shelters for victims of domestic violence, and support income generation for women, as opposed to political mobilization.[267] Often, donor-funded projects, including those by the UN agencies, focus on improving women's life conditions under the Israeli occupation. In other words, these projects do not, and cannot, openly challenge the macro structure of occupation. This depoliticized approach, however, runs counter to local women activists' claim that women's liberation and national liberation must come hand in hand.

Some local women's and human rights NGOs publicly accuse the Israeli government for its military and occupation policies and their direct impacts on the people's lives (most prominently, al-Haq and WCLAC). Organizations like Samidoun support Palestinian prisoners whom they believe to be unjustly imprisoned for expressing their political

---

[264] Jamal, "Democracy Promotion," 14.
[265] Julie Hemmet, "The Riddle of the Third Sector: Civil Society, International Aid, and NGOs in Russia," Anthropological Quarterly 77, no. 2 (2004): 221-222.
[266] Silliman, "Expanding Civil Society," 30.
[267] Hammami, "NGOs: the professionalization of politics," 56.

opinions. These NGOs, as explained in the final section, are often subjected to negative campaigning by the Israeli Authority.[268]

Most small and locally-based women NGOs, however, have no choice but to abide by donors' requirements for funding, and re-orient their activities "to harmonize with the Oslo process and promote pacification, liberal democratic values."[269] They would also have re-orient their ideology based on neo-liberal values, such as individualism, rationalism, and consumerism, and foster an entrepreneurial spirit of self-responsibility and risk taking.[270] The current "booming" of women's entrepreneurship and acceleration of projects emphasizing women's economic independence represents this trend. According to Ms. Jumana Salous at Ramallah-based Women's Business Forum (WBF), there is an increasing number of initiatives promoting women-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups. These initiatives are either proposed or supported by UN organizations such as UN Women and UNDP, foreign governments such as Canada, Italy and Poland, and local banks.[271]

The issue is not that the donors promote progressive values and economic empowerment. These efforts are much needed to encourage women's autonomy and to deconstruct overly collectivist and patriarchal traditions within the Palestinian society. The problem is that only women's NGOs that can abide by the donors' rules have access to their funding, which homogenizes the previously pluralistic NGO environment. As Jad argues, these women's NGOs whose "projects" are "geared to priorities set by an international discourse without diversity" cannot fully respond to the local needs inherently tied with the struggle for national causes.[272]

Demobilizing Women's Movement

Donor demands are not limited to the agenda of NGO activities, but they are also imposed on their day-to-day operations. Western donors often require recipient

---

[268] For instance, Samidoun is accused by the NGO Monitor, a Jerusalem-based research center with close ties with the Israeli government, for being affiliated with "terrorist" PFLP, being involved in numbers of "delegitimizing campaigns against the State of Israel," and organizing pro-BDS actions. ("Samidoun," NGO Monitor accessed October 15, 2019, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/samidoun/.)

[269] Tariq Dana, "Palestinian Civil Society: What Went Wrong?," *Al-Shabka Policy Brief* (2013): 4.

[270] Ibid.

[271] Jumana Salous (Women's Business Forum), noticed the trend of women's economic empowerment becoming increasingly popular since five years ago. (In an interview with the author. March 12, 2019.

[272] Jad, "Between Buzzwords," 625-626.

organizations to systematize and professionalize their operations, such as keeping financial records and submitting regular assessment reports, to enhance the organizations' accountability towards the donors.[273] The NGO sector has increasingly professionalized in order to meet Western donors' operation standards. These professionalized operations require individuals with skills for budgeting, accounting, and report-writing. [274] Furthermore, since the donors are mostly English-speaking, NGOs workers must be English-speakers themselves or hire expensive foreign personnel who would write grant proposals and donor reports on NGOs' behalf.

"Until the 80s, any woman could operate an NGO," Ms. Sally Shami, Director of Jerusalem Center for Women (JCW) told me in an interview. "But the needs and requirements have changed, and the NGO market has become more and more competitive. Getting a job at an NGO is harder than getting a job in the private sector."[275] As a result, small, grassroots NGOs made up of individuals with no access to English education or opportunities to learn Western management style naturally reduced their scale of activities or completely disappeared.[276]

NGOs' effort to meet donor demands diverges a considerable amount of time to the miscellaneous and procedural work. Ms. Shami shared her experience being required to write a 35-page proposal for a one-time, €7,000 ($7,865) grant for hosting a youth debate program, which would still not cover the total cost for implementation. Ms. Shami faced another type of difficulty when a Western donor organization (unnamed), that was willing to fund a project for women's economic empowerment in East Jerusalem, refused to cover any administrative cost. In other words, this donor only agreed to pay for the direct costs of the project, but not the indirect expenditures, such as JCW staffs' salary, that were necessary to implement the project. Ms. Shami and the donors' representative had been unable to reach an agreement after more than five meetings over this particular case.

---

[273] Lisa Markowitz and Karen W. Tice, "Paradoxes of professionalization: Parallel dilemmas in women's organizations in the Americas," *Gender & Society* 16, no. 6 (2002): 946.

[274] Islah Jad, "The 'NGOization' of the Arab Women's Movements," *Al-Raida* 20, no. 100 (2003): 42.

[275] Sally Shami (Director, Jerusalem Center for Women) in an interview with the author. March 12, 2019.

[276] While there were approximately 1400 PNGOs operating in 1994, the number dropped to little less than 1,000, with "more than a third of those organizations having been established after the coming of the PA." Devoir and Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding,* 10.

Reflecting on the amount of time spent on these two cases, Ms. Shami noted that "it was completely a waste of time."[277]

Even an NGO successfully receives necessary funding, its fiscal situation remains volatile because foreign funding is usually given to a specific project and not to the NGO to freely invest in their activities. According to Ms. Ohaila Shomar of Sawa, the instability of funding makes it harder for NGOs to have a long-term plan, that would actually yield meaningful results.[278]

Most importantly, the continuous struggle for funding and constituents have led to the lack of cooperation between different NGOs that are working to promote the same cause. When I asked Ms. Abla Nasir of Rawdat el-Zuhur on her perspective towards the current status of collective efforts among Palestinian women's NGOs, she answered:

> "I am going to be very frank about this, I am very critical of lack of cooperation and putting efforts together. Instead of having a workshop together, there is one workshop here, one workshop there, all doing the same thing instead of getting together and do more. And this is in all sectors. […] We all belong to a Union for Charitable Organizations. So, they meet together, they exchange views […]. But how much do they coordinate or work together in order to give more? Not much as they should. Part of the reason is funding. They all want the funding for themselves. And also the power, the authority."

The competition has also resulted in fragmented visions among women's groups. Women's organizations differ in their views about the right strategy to be followed. Ms. Jumana Salous from the WBF explained how "real cooperation" becomes difficult when NGOs compete over beneficiaries (for instance, attendees of their workshops and events), since those attempts necessarily infringes a trust relationship among NGOs and impedes truthful communication. As a result, women's NGOs do not "share the same vision."[279] Ms. Salous goes far to saying that she does not "think they (the NGOs) even know the visions of other similar organizations that are working for women."[280]

---

[277] Sally Shami (Director, Jerusalem Center for Women) in an interview with the author. March 12, 2019.
[278] Ohaila Shomar (Director, Sawa), in an interview with the author. March 11, 2019.
[279] Jumana Salous (Women's Business Forum), in an interview with the author. March 12, 2019.
[280] Ibid.

Morally speaking, NGOs are expected to remain accountable to their beneficiaries, contributors, and staff. Yet, when multiple accountabilities clash, NGOs tend to prioritize accountability to their most powerful constituency, "which under the New Policy Agenda may mean the official donor agencies."[281] With nearly 80% of funding coming from foreign funders, most PNGOs have had no choice but to cater their operations towards donors' requirements. [282] One of my interviewees, Abla Nasir regrettably explained the incongruence between the locally developed mode of NGO activities and Western donors' expectation:

> I think they did us a lot of harm. We were swamped with this issue of needing fund and ran after many organizations, after the agenda of others, while we could have developed our own tools from our own culture. Why should we inherit the American way of thinking or ways of dealing with things? Who says that they are the best? We have our ways. We have a lot of it. We just need to bring it out and emphasize it, and teach our children and youths the tradition we have. I believe that they have done us a lot of harm and we allowed it. Because we were weak. We didn't know any better and we were greedy. We wanted money to get out of this world that we were in. [283]

What is interesting about Ms. Nasir's words is that, she not only recognizes the forceful impacts and self-righteous attitude of the Western donors, but also admits the Palestinian NGOs' fault in being blinded by immediate funding possibilities at the expense of organizational autonomy. Her words tell that financial situations immediately following the Oslo Agreement was already difficult, partly due to NGO defunding policies by the Western donors, and partly due to the weakened leftist parties that had provided the foundation of their activities until then.

Islamist Backlash on "Western" Feminist Agenda

---

[281] Edwards and Hulme, "Too Close," 16.
[282] A critical issue regarding Palestinian NGOs is that there is no formal governmental institution that provides them with subsidies. With shrinking leftist support disappearance of local-fund raising, many NGOs have to turn to external funding sources. (Devoir and Tartir, *Tracking external donor funding,* 12.)
[283] Abla Nasir (Director, Rawdat el-Zuhur), interview with the author. March 11, 2019.

While women's empowerment has been a primary site for donors to promote universal and democratic values, their emphasis on women's rights has conceptually reinforced the idea that feminism was a Western product, or in a worse case "Western conspiracy against Islam."[284] Aided by the new wave of Western interest in improving women's position, donors tended to support projects just because they were visibly led by women's or feminist institutions.[285] However, proper studies of relevant local contexts surrounding Arab women, such as their position in the family or in relation to the state, were rarely carried out.[286] At the same time, professionalized, women-led NGOs backed by Western donors propeled a universal (meaning, progressive and liberal) rights decoupled from Palestinian national rights. Jad acutely points out that dominant liberal feminist discourses can only reproduce itself by excluding "the Other," i.e., the non-liberal elements.[287] Islamist gender discourse, sidelined by liberals, therefore arises from anti-liberal and anti-secular motivations, rather than emanating from Islamic religion.

While most women's rights groups are secular, secularism for Islamists is "a colonial imposition, a world view that gives precedence to the material over the spiritual and results in a culture of alienation and unrestrained hedonism."[288] An explicit example of an Islamist backlash against secular women's initiatives has been the Palestinian Model Parliament (PMP). The PMP, where men and women were represented equally, aimed at challenging the "traditional female image" and "the whole gendered social order" and integrating the national discourse with "a discourse of difference and plurality."[289] During the 1996-98 sessions, Islamists would use printed materials and speeches at mosques to denounce "evil women's organizations" that are "demolishing Islamic society."[290] While the MP debated the issue of personal status law, a shari'a-infused law that was perceived fundamentally oppressive towards women, prominent religious figures, such as Sheikh Hamid Bitwai (the head of the West Bank Appeals Court) and Sheikh Bassam Jarrar

---

[284] Sh'hada, "Gender and Politics in Palestine," 52.
[285] *The Arab Human Development Report*, 22.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Jad cited in Valentine M. Moghadam, "Women, Structure," and Agency in the Middle East: Introduction and Overview to Feminist Formations," *Feminist Formations* 22, no. 3 (2010), 3.
[288] Islah Jad, "Islamist Women of Hamas: Between Feminism and Nationalism," *Feminismes islamiques* 128 (2010), 2.
[289] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 268.
[290] Sh'hada, "Gender and Politics in Palestine," 50-53.

(Hamas-affiliated) would issue hostile comments on the PMP that its existence and premises eroded the cultural integrity of the Arab/Muslim society.[291]

The rather implicit goal of the Islamists was to undermine the PA. By pointing out that the GUPW, the PA's women wing, was involved in the PMP, Islamists attacked the PA for being hypocritical. It was their way to instigate popular dissatisfaction against PA for representing the national struggle while submitting to the West's cultural imperialism. Islamists, who were politically and militarily inferior to the al-Fateh and the PA, capitalized on progressive and secular agenda, even if they were locally formed, to wage a cultural war. For instance, the aforementioned PMP was a locally initiated project led by WCLAC, but the activities were still "Western" and "neo-imperial" to the Islamists. The PA, on the other hand, did not take any decisive position on Islamist attacks on feminists. They would cite the Basic Law's equality clause, while maintaining that Islam was the cultural foundation of Palestine. This halfhearted attitude of the PA was dissatisfying to both camps, liberals and conservatives.[292]

As the Arab Human Development Report states, an "anatomic separation between what is deemed local and what is deemed foreign" is no longer an appropriate thought framework.[293] Nevertheless, cultural essentialists, not limited to merely Islamists, continue to employ the dichotomous rhetoric to advocate the distinctiveness and authenticity of the "national culture" at expense of a sincere engagement with issues facing women. The call for a reform from "outside" often generates negative sentiments locally, and women's agenda and feminist organizations often bear the brunt of the criticism that they violate both innate Arab culture and unitary spirit of national independence.

Donors' intrusion to the women's NGOs' activities and agenda, using funding as a control stick, significantly weakened the political momentum of women's movement. General funding deficiency has led the women's organizations to practice upward accountability towards their donors rather than responding to local needs and has created a wedge between different women's groups. As a result, women's organizations are

---

[291] Jamal, "Engendering State-Building," 272.
[292] Ibid., 273-274.
[293] *The Arab Human Development Report*, 6.

disunited and lack a popular base and the ability to reach women expansively – all of these were the strength of women's movement in prior to the Oslo Agreement.

4. Divided Communities, Strengthened Patriarchy

The final section delineates how the deepened Israeli occupation of the OPT after the Oslo Agreement demobilized the women's movement and aggravated women's status in the Palestinian society. After establishing that the Oslo process not only failed to end the occupation, but also allowed the Israeli authority to accelerate it for "security" reasons, the chapter goes on to explaining the impacts of military policies on both the Palestinian people generally and women particularly. The chapter also delves into the negative smear campaigns conducted by a pro-Israeli-government organization, NGO Monitor, which aims at discrediting and demobilizing human rights and women's rights NGOs.

Institutionalizing and "Legalizing" Occupation

Since 1993, Israel cited national security as one-fits-all justification for further promoting its occupation of the Palestinian territory. Due to the premise of the Oslo Agreement, i.e., the uneven power configuration that forces the PA to proof its commitment to "peace" and provides freedom as a "reward, the construction of new settlements and separation wall came to be framed as conditionally permissible security measures, instead of illegal actions.

What the post-Oslo destructions demarcate themselves from those of the pre-Oslo period is the Israeli government's attempt "to institutionalize a discriminatory rule of annexation and occupation" that violates Palestinian rights.[294] Since 1993 and especially after Netanyahu's inauguration, the Knesset passed multiple laws that enabled "legal annexation" of the West Bank, all of which intended to aggravate the territorial penetration through construction of settlements and outposts [295] At the same time, as the

---

[294] "Israel establishes dual regime in the West Bank," The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), last modified May 6, 2019, https://www.english.acri.org.il/single-post/84.
[295] The Illegal Outpost Regulation Law the transfer of all Palestinian's petitions from the High Court of Justice to the Jerusalem District Court, application of the Higher Education Law to academic institutions in the settlements, and the amendment of the Prohibition of Discrimination in Products Law (Ibid.).

Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) carefully delineates, Israel's annexation of parts of the OPT does not entail inclusion of the Arab residents into the Israeli state.

> (T)he (Israeli) government has neither intention of granting status or voting rights to millions of Palestinians, nor to providing equal education, health and welfare services or freedom of movement throughout the "one state" between the Jordan River and the sea. Military occupation rule will continue to be applied to the Palestinian population and conduct its way of life, as if nothing has changed.[296]

Critics argue that the Oslo Agreements and its implementation process established a legal and practical basis for this institutionalized occupation which has divided the Palestinian territory and communities into pieces.[297] This is because Israel's military policies can be rationalized as reasonable responses to the PA's default in their security policies. For instance, following the second *intifada* in 2000, the Israeli authority erected the separation wall, or what it calls the "security fence," as "a legitimate temporary security measure" necessary for "renewing the peace process."[298] Despite the International Court of Justice's ruling that the wall was illegal and disproportionate in regards to Israel's security-based justification, the construction of the wall never ceased.[299] As of 2017, the length of the eight-meter tall concrete wall reached some 460 km (65% of the planned route) and another 53 km is under construction.[300] The peace process remains halted. 85% of the wall winds *through* the West Bank (instead of being

---

[296] Ibid.

[297] Roy, *From Holocaust to Gaza*, 187.

[298] Though the construction of wall was executed under Ariel Sharon in 2000, the plan had existed since 1992, when Yitzhak Rabin proposed to "take Gaza out of Tel Aviv" so as to minimize frictions between Israelis and Palestinians. In November 2000, during peace negotiations in the Washington D.C., Ehud Barak gave approval to funding the wall construction. In April 2002 Ariel Sharon decided to implement the plan and initiated the construction (David Makovsky, "How to Build a Fence," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (March/April 2004): 52-54, 58).

[299] "10 years after the ICJ ruling, the illegal Separation Wall remains standing," *Middle East Monitor,* July 9, 2014, https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20140709-10-years-after-the-icj-ruling-the-illegal-separation-wall-remains-standing/.

[300] "The Separation Barrier," B'Tselem, last modified November 11, 2017, https://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier. The construction of the wall significantly contributed to the expropriation of hundreds of thousands of dunams land, alongside establishment of illegal settlements (1 dunam = 1,000 sq.meters). According to B'Tselem, over 200 settlements (131 of which have official recognition of the Israeli MoI) were built between 1967 and 2017 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem with nearly 620,000 residents. ("Settlements," B'Tselem, last modified November 11, 2017, https://www.btselem.org/topic/settlements.)

constructed along the Green Line[301]) and surrounds the 200 illegal settlements, indicating Israel's intention of annexing the settlements in the future.[302]

The territorial separation is deemed as the cause for various humanitarian injustice. 70,000 Palestinians working in the Israeli territory get up before sunrise to pass the cage-like checkpoints to arrive at work on time.[303] One fifth of pregnant women are unable to receive prenatal care, and some give unattended birth at the checkpoints.[304] Arbitrary delay or close down of checkpoints and denial of entry permits, generally perceived as a collective punishment of the Palestinian people, not only deprive the people of time and energy, but also impose considerable emotional distress and cause serious health issues.[305] The restricted movement of people and goods also have developmental implications, such as limited access to water and electricity, and a consequent deficiency of basic services and essential infrastructures. Area C which accounts for approximately 60% of the OPT is the most vulnerable, where Israeli Authority has full control over security and provision of social services.[306]

The geographical separation has had a social and psychological impact, as the emergence of differentiated identities based on the color-coded ID system have replaced a cohesive national identity as "one Palestine." The Israeli authority obligates all

---

[301] The Green Line refers to the 1949 armistice border established between Israel and the neighboring Arab states in the aftermath of the 1948 Independence War/Nakba. The 1948 War granted Israel 78.5% of historic Palestine, which is now the territory of the Israeli state. Palestinian territories additionally taken by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War are not recognized as legitimate part of Israel.

[302] "The Separation Barrier." In fact, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly declared his intention to "extend Israeli sovereignty" over the settlements in the West Bank throughout the 2019 election campaign. ("Netanyahu Vows to Start Annexing West Bank, in Bid to Rally the Right," *New York Times*, April 6, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/06/world/middleeast/netanyahu-annex-west-bank.html.) Recently, Netanyahu has pushed U.S. President Trump to publish a public declaration saying that Washington supports the territorial annexation. ("Netanyahu seeks Trump go-ahead for Israel's West Bank annexation to help win election," *Middle East Monitor*, August 13, 2019,
 https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190813-netanyahu-seeks-trump-go-ahead-for-israels-west-bank-annexation-to-help-win-election/.)

[303] William Booth and Sufian Taha, "Israeli occupation turns 50: A Palestinian's commute through Checkpoint 300," *Washington Post*, May 25, 2017,
 https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/world/occupied/checkpoint/?utm_term=.6ca51c3b5051.

[304] According to UNFPA, due to inaccessibility to hospitals the rate of miscarriages, death of women, unattended birth, and home delivers have risen since the second *intifada* in 2000. ("Checkpoints Compound the Risks of Childbirth for Palestinian Women," United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), May 15, 2007, https://www.unfpa.org/news/checkpoints-compound-risks-childbirth-palestinian-women.

[305] *The Arab Human Development Report*, 44.

[306] For details on the development status of Area C, see Roubina Ghattas, Khaldoun Rishmawi, Jad Isaac, Issa Zboun, Jane Hilal, Ayman Abu Zahra, and Iyad Khalifeh, *Opportunities and Challenges of Palestinian Development Actions in Area C* (Jerusalem: Applied Research Institute, 2016)
 https://www.arij.org/files/arijadmin/2017/areac_report_2017.pdf.

Palestinians to hold one of the three types of ID cards – West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem – thereby deciding "who is, and who is not, a West Banker, Gazan or Jerusalemite."[307]

Through the conversations with Palestinians of various residency status, it became clear that these ID cards are more than a mere administrative tool, but a political tool to promote emotional detachment between Palestinians of other ID status and occasionally from the Palestinian land as well. According to Ms. Salous of the WBF, Ramallah, as the de facto capital of Palestine, tends to foster a stronger Palestinian identity as well as attachment to the land. "All the people here," Salous spoke, "believe that they should get back to old Palestine… that this country is their country."[308] An administrative staff at the Bethlehem University in her mid-thirties has been to Jerusalem, which is only 20 minutes by car, only once in her lifetime to complete her visa procedure. "A tourist like you can move around my own country more freely than I do," she pointed out the irony to me. "But this is where I belong."[309]

Some Palestinians, however, are less attached to the land. A Christian Arab man residing in Jerusalem has explained the contradiction between the perceived "privilege" of Jerusalemites for having access to developed infrastructure and freedom of movement, and the reality where they frequently face public humiliation by IDF soldiers. He hopes for a day when he can "leave Palestine and move to Canada or the U.S.," where he expects to be treated respectfully.[310] He also said that he would prefer to be an Israeli citizen, as long as the government ensures Arabs equal rights, than living under the corrupt and incapable PA.[311] A refugee at Deheishe refugee camp in Bethlehem told me that he "will jump on any opportunity to leave this place. I don't see my future here."[312]

What is most striking is, however, the emotional estrangement of West Bankers and Jerusalemites towards the Gazan population. The situation in Gaza, since the unilateral "disengagement" of the IDF, and moreover since the 2014 Operation Protective Edge, is

---

[307] Sherine Tadros, "ID cards split Palestinian families," *Al Jazeera*, April 24, 2008, https://www.aljazeera.com/focus/palestine/2008/04/20086151028916537.html.

[308] Jumana Salous (Women's Business Forum), in an interview with the author. March 11, 2019.

[309] Amjaad Musleh (Public Relations Officer, Bethlehem University), in conversation with the author. March 6, 2019.

[310] Yacoub Ghazzawi, in conversation with the author. March 7, 2019.

[311] Ibid.

[312] Hammad (alias, resident of Deheishe refugee camp), in conversation with the author. March 8, 2019.

described by the UN as a "dramatic" humanitarian crisis.[313] Detainment and killing of thousands of Palestinians have deprived women of their husbands and brothers, and female-headed households face severe insecurity and vulnerability [314] As I inquired several West Bank and Jerusalem resident about how they viewed the Gaza Strip, many of the answers indicated a degree of emotional disengagement. For instance, the aforementioned refugee camp resident stated that "the life at refugee camps is hard, but compared to them (Gazans) we are lucky."[315] My host mother at Jerusalem told me in a detached tone, "Gaza is just a different world. West Bank and Gaza are like different countries."

These episodes vividly indicate how territorial division leads to emotional and social fragmentations. And considering how division of land is closely interlinked with division of the nation, community, and family, one can hardly imagine a re-emergence of a cohesive grassroots mobilization with a unitary vision. I thus claim that, abilities of NGOs to organize a popular movement aside, the social capital that would allow the generation of such a political or social movement as the united "People of Palestine" is non-existent today.

Occupation's Toll on Women's Status and NGOs

Israel's occupation policies have had negative impacts specifically on the cause of women's liberation and empowerment, such as the reinforced patriarchal protectionism and increased gender-based violence. The reality of occupation perpetuates the gender-based division of labor. For instance, the morning rush at the checkpoints, where thousands of Palestinian men crowd and dodge one another, can be extremely violent for women to go through.[316] Additionally, IDF soldiers conduct targeted harassment of

---

[313] "In the Gaza Strip, UN chief appeals for Palestinian unity; renews call for two-state solution," *UN News*, August 2017, https://10news.un.org/en/story/2017/08/564132-gaza-strip-un-chief-appeals-palestinian-unity-renews-call-two-state-solution. According to the UN Human Rights Council, the Israeli bombing of Gaza in 2014 killed 2,251 Palestinians and 73 Israelis, leaving many women vulnerable by depriving them of their husbands and sons. (*Report of the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1 [on the 2014 Gaza conflict] (A/HRC/29/52)*, (Geneva: United Nations Human Rights Council, 2015), 6.

[314] Ibid.

[315] Hammad (alias, resident of Deheishe refugee camp), in conversation with the author. March 8, 2019.

[316] For a concrete explanation with visuals on the situation checkpoints from the West Bank to Jerusalem see Booth and Taha, "Israeli occupation turns 50."

women and girls, intending not only to humiliate the women but also to demoralize the male companions. Facing these realities, it became a practical choice for Palestinian men to act conservatively and prevent wives, daughters and sisters from leaving the house to pursue their careers. The increasingly felt need of a male guardian, compound with socioeconomic issues such as poverty, has pushed up the rate of child marriage, especially in the Gaza Strip.[317] Israeli occupation policies augment patriarchal tendency, depriving women of their access to career and education opportunities.

Impacts of occupation on gender-based violence cannot be overlooked. The 2012 PCBS data revealed that 29.9% of ever-married women in the West Bank and 51% in Gaza experienced domestic violence.[318] During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, Gaza witnessed a 22% increase in the cases of domestic violence for married women and 30% for non-married women.[319] Another poll showed that 86 percent of respondents said that violence against women had significantly or somewhat increased as a result of changing political, economic, and social conditions.[320] When asked if they knew of a woman who had been assaulted by her husband, 57 per cent of the respondents said yes, representing an increase of 22 points on a poll.[321]

Various studies have established connections between the impacts of the occupation on male productivity and their violence against women (VAW). While the lack of appropriate legal remedies for VAW victims is a critical issue, continued political violence fundamentally exacerbates VAW.[322] The literature delineates how long-standing

---

[317] According to the 2015 statistics published by the PCBS, 23.7% of the Gaza population has gotten married before the age of 18. ("Girls Not Brides: Ending Child Marriage in Gaza," United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), last modified July 20, 2017, https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/features/girls-not-brides-ending-child-marriage-gaza.)
According to Sawa, a Ramallah-based women's rights organization, one in five girls marries before turning 18, while early marriages violates women's rights in various forms, such as end of schooling and career, forced sexual relations, and higher chance of exposure to spouse violence. "Early marriages in the Palestinian society," (Ramallah: Sawa, 2016), 1-2.
http://www.sawa.ps/Upload/Reports/Sawa%20fact%20sheet%20on%20early%20marriage.pdf.
[318] "Girls Not Brides."
[319] "How Israel's blockade exacerbates violence against women in Gaza," +972 Magazine, May 17, 2019, https://972mag.com/women-in-gaza-violence-israel-blockade/141508/.
[320] Valentine M. Moghadam, "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction with Women: Reflections on Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine," Development 48, no. 3 (2005): 68.
[321] Ibid.
[322] Giorgia Baldi, "Between patriarchy and occupation: violence against women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," in Reconsidering gender based violence and other forms of violence against women: Comparative analysis in the light of the Istanbul Convention, ed. Giovanni Picelli, Andrea Borroni, and Irine Kherkerulidze (Tricase: Libellula University Press, 2018), 249.

occupation, which has diminished mobility, economic productivity and political freedom, has deprived men of the fields in which they can practice, display, or affirm their masculinity through autonomous actions. The accumulated frustrations are combined with patriarchal institution and cultural norms, leading to the proliferation and acceptance of VAW.[323]

The occupation policies have had specific impacts on NGO activities as well. First, the territorial segregation not only rendered every-day commute more difficult, but also led some NGOs to close down their branches at the other side of the wall. As result, while NGOs tend to concentrate in major governorates such as Ramallah, Jerusalem, and Gaza, the rural population remain unreached.[324] The concentration of NGOs in a few locations would theoretically make coordination and collaboration among and between NGOs easier, but as established in the previous section, competitions over funding and beneficiaries have prevented such cooperative works. In short, territorial segregation diminishes the range of NGO activities by physically limiting the capacity of movement.

Jerusalem-based Palestinian NGOs suffer the most, for they are under severe poverty and subjugated to various regulations that significantly limits the scope of NGO activities.[325] They pay municipal and other taxes like any other households and businesses, but both the Jerusalem municipality and other government ministries have abandoned the effort to provide the most basic infrastructure, including roads, sewage systems and schools.[326] Ramallah allocates majority of its budget for projects and services in the West Bank and Gaza, and very little reach the Palestinians in East Jerusalem.[327] While the lack

---

[323] Cari Jo Clark and Muhammad M. Haj-Yahia, "Intimate Partner Violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Prevalence and Risk Factors," *Journal of Family Violence* 28, no. 8 (2013): 800-801.; *Palestinian Women and Girls and the Provision of Security - DCAF Spotlight No. 8* (Ramallah: Geneva Centre of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), 2010).

[324] Out of approximately 2,200 NGOs operating in the OPT, nearly half of them are located in Ramallah, Jerusalem and Gaza.

[325] Abla Nasir (Director, Rawdat el-Zuhur), interview with the author. March 11, 2019.

[326] According to B'Tselem, as of 2017 there is a shortage of 2,557 classrooms in East Jerusalem, an only 52% of the population has access to the water grid. 76% of all Palestinian residents and 83.4% of children live below the poverty line. ("East Jerusalem," B'Tselem, last modified November 11, 2017, https://www.btselem.org/jerusalem.) A report published by the Jerusalem-based International Peace and Cooperation Center notes that by law, even if East Jerusalem residents failed to pay the municipal tax, Jerusalem Municipality would be obliged to provide equal services to the people. The Municipality's claim to sovereignty over East Jerusalem incurs legal responsibility to do so. (See *Jerusalem on the Map* (Jerusalem: International Peace and Cooperation Center, 2007), 42-43.)

[327] Adam Rasgon, "Taboo-breaking Palestinian candidate says East Jerusalem deserves better," *Times of Israel*, August 2, 2018, https://www.timesofisrael.com/taboo-breaking-palestinian-candidate-says-east-jerusalem-deserves-better/.

of schools, medical care, and other necessary social services demands NGOs to substitute the governmental responsibilities, lack of funding impedes their activities.

Israeli government's interferences, typically through detention of NGO workers and closing of offices also pose considerable pressure on Palestinian NGOs. The detention of NGO staff are most of the time arbitrary, and they accompany physical abuse, humiliating treatment, and seizure of equipment, particularly cameras.[328] Following the outbreak of the al-Aqsa *intifada* in 2000, Israeli authority began a systematic crack down of Palestinian NGOs operating in East Jerusalem, citing "security threat."[329]

NGO Surveillance and Smear Campaign

The government of Israel has always sensitively and excessively reacted to the internal affairs in the OPT, let alone in East Jerusalem where it has annexed since 1967. While the Israeli authority cannot directly shut down Palestinian NGOs operating in the West Bank and Gaza, surveillance of and negative campaigns against Palestinian/pro-Palestinian NGOs that are allegedly "anti-Israel" have also been a critical element of Israel's "security" policies. Palestinian human rights NGOs, and especially women's organizations have been targeted for these measures.

An institution that undertakes the surveillance is the NGO Monitor, a Jerusalem-based right-wing research institute that tracks "political NGOs active in delegitimization campaign against Israel."[330] While NGO Monitor claims to be "independent and non-partisan,"[331] its close relationship with the Israeli government is well-recorded by critics. The institute receives abundant diplomatic assistance from the government, in exchange of providing research and analyses for the government's use.[332] For instance, the institute was the backbone for Netanyahu's pressuring of European governments to halt their

---

[328] Najat Hirbawi and David Helfand, "Palestinian Institutions in Jerusalem," *Palestine Israel Journal* 17, no. 1 (2011). https://pij.org/articles/1306.

[329] According to Hirbawi and Helfand, more than 22 NGOs were closed down between 2001 and 2009. Many of them worked in the field of human rights and legal protection, as a source of security to Arab Jerusalemites who have neither Israeli nor Palestinian nationality. An alleged affiliation with the PA is often used to justify NGO closure. This broad charge is a potential threat to number of Palestinian NGOs that operate in the West Bank as well, since it requires the NGO to acquire a permit from the PA, and thereby risking their legal status in Jerusalem. (Ibid.)

[330] "FAQs," NGO Monitor, accessed on August 15, 2019, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/about/faqs/.

[331] Ibid.

[332] *NGO Monitor: Shrinking Space – Defaming human rights organizations that criticize the Israeli occupation* (Jerusalem: Policy Working Group, 2018), 6.

funding for human rights advocacy groups such as B'Tselem and Breaking the Silence, famously critical of Israel's occupation policies.[333]

The regular tactics of the NGO Monitor in defaming Palestinian NGOs are demonization of organizations supporting BDS movement and accusations of alleged ties with leftist parties as "terrorist affiliations."[334] In its directory of their "target" NGOs, there is a heading titled "BDS" and the NGO's participation or affiliation in the movement is meticulously recorded. While this Palestine-led movement, which pressures the Israeli government to end its human rights and violations of international law, is a long-standing global movement, NGO Monitor frames it as a "political warfare" that delegitimizes Israel as "an apartheid regime" and as "the antithesis of universal human rights values."[335]

Among NGO Monitor's regularly published reports on "anti-Israel" NGOs and donor institutions, two recent publications were especially damaging to women's cause as well as the work of women's NGOs in the OPT. The first publication was an online media statement that aimed at delegitimizing a UN Women report that elaborates on the occupation's negative impacts on physical, psychological and social conditions of Palestinian women and Israel's violations of several international human rights conventions.[336] While the report recognizes the negative impacts of traditional cultural norms and outdated legal frameworks on women, it also emphasizes the need to scrutiny the ways in which Israeli occupation intersect with patriarchal elements in aggravating the situation of Palestinian women. The NGO Monitor criticized that this report depended on unsubstantiated "false claims" by "politicized" and anti-Semitic local women's NGOs.[337] Through the rebuttal of the UN Women report, NGO Monitor denied the report's central claim that Israeli occupation critically violated women's and human rights.

---

[333] "'Stop funding Breaking the Silence,' PM asks UK's May," *Times of Israel,* February 6, 2017, https://www.timesofisrael.com/stop-funding-breaking-the-silence-pm-asks-uks-may/. "Israel's envoy to call on UN to end funding for B'Tselem," *Times of Israel,* October 19, 2016, https://www.timesofisrael.com/israels-envoy-to-call-on-un-to-end-funding-for-btselem/.

[334] The surveillance by NGO Monitor is so scrupulous as well as reactionary that, according to a researcher at the Middle East Institute of Japan, there is a common joke among local NGOs that unless an organization has been called out by the NGO Monitor, it is not a true Palestinian NGO.

[335] "Key Issue: BDS (Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions)," NGO Monitor, accessed August 17, 2019. https://www.ngo-monitor.org/key-issues/bds/about/.

[336] *International Legal Accountability Mechanisms: Palestinian Women Living Under Occupation* (New York: UN Women, 2016), http://www.lacs.ps/documentsShow.aspx?ATT_ID=30314.

[337] "UN Women Report on Israel – Faulty Methodology and Promotion of NGO Political Warfare," NGO Monitor, last modified June 8, 2017, https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/un-women-report-israel-faulty-methodology-promotion-ngo-political-warfare/.

Furthermore, its accusation hurt the credentials of the locally and internationally trusted NGOs such as Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC) by claiming that their research and advocacy work was untrustworthy and political motivated to delegitimize Israel.[338]

The second anti-women's NGO publication exhibits a greater sexist undertone. In March 2018, the NGO Monitor published a report titled "The Exploitation of Palestinian Women's Rights NGOs." It argues that a group of powerful women's NGOs like WCLAC and WATC not only promote anti-Semitic and violent narratives while disguising themselves as "women's rights organizations," but also force other women's NGOs to follow their paths by making them sign the Palestinian NGOs' Code of Conduct.[339] The report also claims this exploitation of women's NGO platform to promote national agenda is the fundamental cause that perpetuates the patriarchal customs and institutions and protracts Palestinian women's suffering.[340]

This report includes numerous issues. The first problem is its blatant inaccuracies. For instance, the report cites a booklet published by Palestinian prisoner's solidarity networks Addameer (which has alleged link to "PFLP terror organization") and Samidoun that features Palestinian female political prisoners,[341] and argues that these NGOs "utilize their platform on women's issues" to idolize female "terrorists as role models."[342] A close read of the booklet, however, reveals that what the NGO Monitor report refers as "terrorists" are in fact human rights and feminist activists and lawyers (some are teenage girls) who publicly criticized the Israel government for its inhumane conducts. Additionally, the Code of Conduct, which the report claims to promote "anti-normalization, rejectionism and prioritization of Palestinians aspirations for statehood over all endeavors,"[343] is a general guideline the recommends all NGOs to respect the

---

[338] Ibid.

[339] *The Exploitation of Palestinian Women's Rights NGOs*, (Jerusalem: NGO Monitor, 2018), 3.

[340] Ibid.

[341] Diana Block and Anna Henry, *For the Love of Palestine: Stories of Women, Imprisonment and Resistance*, (Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association and Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, 2016). https://www.freedomarchives.org/Pal/womenprisoners.pdf.

[342] *The Exploitation*, 1.

[343] *The Exploitation,* 9.

rule of law, promote transparency and good governance, and commit to non-discrimination.[344]

This report not only misrepresents Palestinian women as well as the NGO community, but also grossly generalizes the complexity of feminist NGOs and activists. The report's depiction as if all women activists engage in this particular form of political activism ignores the diversity of feminist and nationalist claims made by women. Also, framing of political prisoners as "terrorists" misleads the readers to conflate them with suicide bombers and further mystifies Palestinian/Arab women as incomprehensible "others."

Additionally, the claim that many women's NGOs are forced to sign the Code of Conducts belittles women's NGOs' agency vilifies the listed prominent NGOs such as WCLAC and WTAC on one hand, and foments an image that other women's NGOs are naïve, dependent, and submissive on the other. The perpetuation of these false (sexists and racist) images discredit the claims made by Palestinian women's groups and damage their efforts towards women's cause. Finally, NGO Monitor falsely denies the relationship between the occupation policies and the reality of human rights abuse against women by drawing a dichotomous contrast between women's and national agenda.

Occupation policies, ranging from segregation of communities to negative campaigns on human-rights NGOs, including women's groups, have all negatively impacted the women's movement. Not only women's NGOs face difficulty to carry out their missions, but physical segregation hampers a unitary action, both psychologically and physically. Moreover, the longstanding occupation has further pushed women's issues down in terms of the political priority. While women bear the brunt of gendered occupation policies, their needs remain the least of concern in the increasingly patriarchal society.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *</p>

The final chapter analyzed the fragmentation of Palestinian women's movement through an observation of the shifts in political context following the signing of the Oslo Agreement. The masculinization of state by the returned al-Fateh cadres, demobilization of local women's activism by the Western donors, and physical and psychological

---

[344] *The Palestinian NGOs Code of Conduct, Second Edition* (Jerusalem: NGO Development Center, 2015), http://ndc.ps/sites/default/files/Code-of-Conduct-English.pdf.

destruction of Palestinian community by the Israeli government intertwine and constitute a hostile and demoralizing environment for the women's movement. Facing multitude of difficulties, the post-Oslo movement has been caught in myriad of dilemmas – integration to or independence from the state, donors' demands or local demands, and women's liberation or national liberation (though Palestinian women have always argued that these two are mutually necessary, rather than exclusive). These dilemmas have emerged, due to the shifted political circumstances following the signing of the Oslo Agreement.

This is not to say that the masculinity of the national leadership, intervention by the West, Islamist attacks on women, and gendered impacts of the Israeli occupation had not existed prior to the Oslo Agreement. What is different about the post-Oslo environment, however, is the emphasis on state and security in the political discourses and practices underpinned by the Oslo framework. This framework, from its birth, has been exclusive and masculine, and eventually undermined the inherently popular nature of the Palestinian question. The exclusion of women from the public sphere, fragmentation of women's movement, and the decoupling of women's agenda and the national agenda provide a vivid snapshot of the transformation of the political environment.

Conclusion

Throughout this study, I asked to what extent the fragmentation of the Palestinian women's movement owed to the historic Oslo peace deal and its implementation process. The answer is that, it did, substantially. This study tried to expose the negative impacts of the Oslo Agreement on the women's movement by comparing the distinct political conditions during the pre-Oslo and post-Oslo periods, which critically shaped the movement's capability to mobilize women extensively and to advance women's needs. The key intermediary concept to understand the shifts in the political conditions was "the state," which critically underpinned the Oslo Agreement and the peace process that followed.

In prior to 1993, the general stateless condition and the context of anti-colonial resistance provided Palestinian women with a space in which they assumed indispensable political roles through participating in the nationalist women's movement. Though women's increased appearance in the public sphere did not alter the deep-rooted patriarchal culture in Palestinian society, it led the male leaders in the OPT to partly acknowledge women's political agency. With the negotiation of the Oslo Agreement, however, Palestinian women were denied their status as important political stakeholders. The Palestinian national elite in exile, whose priority was to return to their homeland and consolidate political power in their hands, excluded all important local actors from the peace negotiations and critical decision-making process. This benefited the Israeli authority, since it could maintain its superiority over the Palestinians and place security responsibilities on the new Palestinian Authority. The combination of Arafat's political ambition and pressure by the Israeli government rendered the new political institutions and civil space hostile towards women and the women's movement. Western donors, in their efforts to safeguard the peace deal, placed financial and ideological pressures on Palestinian civil society, which drove a wedge among different women's organizations. Protracting Israeli occupation has destroyed the Palestinian communities, alongside the unitary identity as Palestinians and a ground on which any extensive solidarity movement could take place. Israeli government's mischievous campaigns against rights-based NGOs further hurt women's cause, while its military policies have already caused regressive impacts on women's liberation.

My investigation of the Oslo Agreement' gendered impacts emanated from a more general aim to identify the ways in which feminist epistemology can transform how peace processes are generally viewed. In other words, I was curious how a feminist gaze towards the Oslo process may emancipate us from the conventional analytical approaches and reconstruct new knowledge about this well-studied topic. Chapter One established that the centrality of the state in the Western political thoughts often led to the notion that comprehensive peace agreements, aiming at reconstructing sovereignty in a given state, was the most effective way to end conflicts. Yet, feminist IR theorists have critiqued that the process of state formation, be it the product of a revolution or peace talks, marginalizes women because the very process of state-making is carried out predominantly by men. This is true even women played a significant and visible role in revolutionary/liberation struggles.

The case of the Palestinian women's movement was yet another evidence for this gendered formula of state-building. While Palestinian women's active participation in the anti-colonial struggle contributed to the subjective and objective increase in women's power, the Oslo Agreement and the institution of a new government comprised of "Tunisians" reversed the current. What is particular about the Palestinian case, however, is that women's insecurity and the movement's fragmentation did not exclusively stem from the patriarchal makeup and policies of the Palestinian government. The international community and the Israeli authority have also substantially shaped the political environment in which women's movement operated, and negatively impacted their capacity to mobilize around women's agenda.

During the process of this research, I faced a methodological challenge. Ensuring a representative analysis of women's groups in the post-Oslo period has been difficult, due to the limited number of interviews I conducted during the short stay in Palestine. While I met with five directors and staff of local women's NGOs who elaborated not only on their personal experiences, but also on the general conditions of the Palestinian women's movement, I also understood that their opinions and experiences were not representative of entire Palestinian women's organizations. Furthermore, the NGOs I interviewed were located either in Ramallah or East Jerusalem, while experiences of women's organizations greatly differ based on their geographical locations. Thus, I had limited first-hand information about contemporary women's NGOs, and I had to complement the

lack of information by using secondary sources, which were also sparse compared to the literature on the women's movement in the pre-Oslo period. It is a regret that I was unable to complete a holistic mapping of the women's organizations currently operating, which could have enabled a more specific and balanced causal analysis of the fragmentation of the women's movement.

At the same time, I believe that this study made several contributions to the existing fields of study, and I present those below with some correlating suggestions for future academic inquiry. First, the comparative analysis of the pre-Oslo and post-Oslo Palestinian women's movement has demonstrated that a feminist approach could expose the gendered nature of purportedly "gender-neutral" concepts and theories. Through studying *as* women, rather than *about* women,[345] I was able to inquire *whose peace* the Oslo Agreement intended to achieve. In the process, this thesis has demonstrated that the traditional, security-centric definition of peace has clear gender implications that negatively affect Palestinian women. While Johan Galtung's concept of "positive peace" has become a well-known, human-centric notion of peace,[346] Enloe goes further to present a feminist definition of peace, that is "women's achievement of control over their lives."[347] Based on this definition, peace for women must involve the enjoyment of human rights and human security, and women's political agency must be recognized in the first place so they can speak for their interests as legitimate stakeholders.

Accordingly, this study suggests that analyses of peacebuilding should depart from the conventional state- and security-centric approaches, which often fail to recognize the insecurities experienced by women at various levels. Specifically, feminist research must try to expose and dismantle the implicit hierarchies, injustices, and violence against

---

[345] According to Spike Peterson, the basis of any feminist intellectual approach is the effort for a "systematic inclusion of women – our bodies, activities, knowledge" that "challenges categorical givens, disciplinary divisions, and theoretical frameworks" (Spike Peterson, "Introduction," 8). Also, see Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand," 619-621.

[346] Galtung generally defines peace as "absence of violence" but pays close attention to different kinds of violence. He differentiates the absence of personal violence (direct harm, including physical violence and war) as *negative peace* and the absence of structural violence (exclusion, marginalization and discrimination) as *positive peace*. The latter is synonymous to the state where social justice is achieved. Galtung concludes that comprehensive peace is achieved when both personal and structural violence are removed. (See Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research," *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969):183-186.)

[347] Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?* (London: Pandora Press, 1988), 538.

women embodied by both practices and studies of peacebuilding.[348] In this sense, feminist research should examine the definition of human security as well, because feminist epistemologies point to the numerous ways in which social hierarchies manifest even in the most progressive concepts. I echo the need for the further gender-mainstreaming in intellectual activities, that is to place women at the center of analyses rather than to merely add women to the object of study or to incorporate women in extant frameworks.[349]

The second contribution of this study was to point out the Eurocentric practices and analyses of peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, and development. Eurocentrism is an attitude that assumes Europe's historical, economic, cultural, and political distinctiveness that significantly determines the overall character of global politics.[350] Although the standard practices in liberal peacebuilding and peacekeeping, such as political resolutions based on written contracts and elite negotiations, installation of a top-down bureaucratic system, and policies for promoting neo-liberal economy and "good governance," largely owe to the specific context of Western history, these modalities are often presented as *the right way*. In this sense, Eurocentrism can be intellectually limiting, because it restrains our understanding and critical imagination of what is politically possible.

With an effort to liberate our minds, we should ask, for instance, whether the West's conceptualization of post-Oslo Palestine as a post-conflict society was valid in the first place. Can a signed piece of paper really mark the end of a conflict, especially when critical final status issues are left out of the agreement? Isn't this mode of conflict

---

[348] The international community has made progress in its effort to gender-mainstream their peacebuilding and mediation practices. In October 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, which reaffirmed the importance of women's roles in prevention and resolution of conflicts. The resolution also urges to fully implement international human rights and humanitarian conventions to protect the rights of women and girls in conflict/post-conflict contexts. (See United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 2000, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SC_ResolutionWomenPeaceSecurity_SRES1325%282000%29%28english_0.pdf.) Challenges remain in the implementation, however. While the UN personnel and members of peacekeeping missions today include an increasing number of women, representatives of conflict parties, post-conflict political arrangements and institutional practices remain largely male-dominant. Additionally, asymmetric nature of post-conflict political power configuration renders achievement of gender equality extremely difficult. (For critical examinations of UNSCR 1325 in contexts, see Valentine Moghadam, "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction"; Nicola Pratt and Sophie Richter-Devroe, "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13, no. 4 (2011): 489-503.)
[349] Spike Peterson, "Introduction," 8. Also, see Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand," 619-621.
[350] Meera Sabaratnam, "Avatars of Eurocentrism in the critique of the liberal peace," S*ecurity Dialogue* 44, no. 3 (2013): 261.

resolution a mere offspring of traditional European practices? By asking these questions, I do not intend to reject liberal peacebuilding entirely or to instigate the universal-local dichotomy and territorialization of peacebuilding knowledge. Assuming the homogeneity of "European" practices and romanticizing the sanctity of "the local" would be grossly erroneous.[351] Yet, I argue that we must pursue ways that are more likely to produce genuine and contextualized practices and knowledge by taking the agency of the subjects of peacebuilding sincerely.[352] This study was part of this effort, for it tried to analyze the Oslo political process and its outcome through the eyes of Palestinian women.

Finally, this study's holistic assessment of the pre- and post-Oslo political environments suggested at least two limitations of the existing social movement theories. First, while the state-movement relationship is central to the existing approach in political opportunity structure analyses, the case of the Palestinian women's movement demonstrated that the transformation of the movement could not be understood solely through its relationship with the national leadership and the Palestinian Authority. Rather, the factors shaping the movement opportunities included Israeli occupation and donor interventions. Therefore, while this study beneficially utilized the main premises of the POS framework, that mobilization is a result of movement participants' rational decisions and that political conditions significantly inform these decisions, it has also revealed the framework's "privileging" of the sovereign state. The tendency may be a natural consequence of knowledge production since an extensive body of social movement literature is on movements in Western democracies. On the contrary, the uniqueness of the Palestinian women's movement derives from the PA's lack of complete sovereignty. The Palestinian case suggests the need to update, or create a sub-set of, the POS framework that can systematically analyze the movements under the influence of external interventions that are equally, or more powerful than, the national government.

Second, I suggest that there needs to be more empirical and theoretical studies that can produce a nuanced definition as well as typologies of women's movements, as

---

[351] Romanticization of the local and the traditional is particularly harmful for women, since local practices and social structure are often constructed in a way that marginalizes women. (Heidi Hudson, "Decolonizing gender and peacebuilding: feminist frontiers and border thinking in Africa," *Peacebuilding* 4, no. 2 (2016): 196.)

[352] Sabaratnam explains the various ways research on the liberal peace tend to exclude or marginalize consideration of the people subjected to interventions (Sabaratnam refers to this intellectual tendency as "bypassing of subjects"). See Sabaratnam, "Avatars of Eurocentrism," 263-266.

opposed to the conventional wisdom that all women's and feminist movements can simply be subsumed under the umbrella definition of social movements. If the conceptualization of women's movements is faulty, analytical frameworks generally applied to studies of social movements may have limited utility in studying women's and feminist movements.[353] Mainstream characterization of social movements suggests that social movements necessarily employ "disruptive" methods, such as protests, strikes, and sometimes violence.[354] However, the assumption that only extra-institutional, subversive methods can challenge existing power structure and authority does not always apply to women's movements.

For instance, the pre-Oslo nationalist women's movement was disruptive from the viewpoint of the occupying power. The women regularly marched on streets while chanting anti-occupation slogans, threw rocks at Israeli soldiers, and circulated political pamphlets. However, seen as a feminist movement, the Palestinian women were able to gain a political voice within the resistance movement by working *with* the largest political movement in the OPT, rather than *against* it. They attained leadership position through contributing to, rather than disrupting, the national movement led by the PLO political factions. In the post-Oslo period, powerful women's NGOs have led coalitions to lobby against discriminatory and sexist legal frameworks or for the institution of electoral gender quota, although act of lobbying is not always considered as part of social movements in mainstream social movement literature. The use of less "disruptive" tactics by women can also be seen outside of the Palestinian context, as Katzenstein argues that "feminist activists' arsenal of political activism has drawn only fleetingly on demonstrative protest activities and even more rarely on violent activism," largely due to traditional gender-role stereotypes and to strategic choice. If this is the case, the dichotomous differentiation between "disruptive" and "conventional" tactics is not analytically viable in the study of women's movements, especially if the researchers' goal is to investigate the different ways in which women strategize given opportunities and advance their feminist claims. Therefore, I recommend that more empirical and

---

[353] McBride and Mazur, "Women's movements," 232.

[354] Tarrow explains that "contentious politics," which serves as the foundation of social movements, is acted by ordinary people who have limited access to representative institutions and therefore behave in ways that "fundamentally challenge" the existing systems of power and authority. (Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 8.)

comparative studies on feminist movements take place in order to produce conceptual and analytical frameworks that help understand and examine the various ways in which women's exercise their agency and power to challenge patriarchal structures.

In closing, I would like to refer to the ambivalent relationship between the establishment of state sovereignty and assurance of women's rights. On one hand, feminist political theories critique the ways in which the state structurally oppresses women through institutionalizing patriarchal practices and values. On the other hand, however, it is also the state that ensures protection of rights. For instance, every individual is entitled to universal human rights by birth, but one has access to concrete protection of rights based on one's citizenship in a state. That is precisely why the achievement of equal citizenship rights is an essential agenda for feminists. Palestinian women have suffered from extreme vulnerability largely because the Palestinian Authority lacks full sovereignty and most of its national resources are controlled by the occupying power.

Thus, Palestinian women have been burdened with a very complicated task, where they struggle to ensure and expand their citizenship rights in a state with neither *de jure* nor *de facto* sovereignty. How can we reconcile the oppressive nature of state on one hand, and the need for a sovereign state to ensure the protection of rights on the other? Palestinian women seemed to have known the answer – that national liberation and women's liberation must come hand in hand. The women's movement in the pre-Oslo period understood that, without ensuring Palestinian state full sovereignty, Palestinian women would continue to suffer from inequality, violence, and segregation. They were also convinced that women, active on the ground, must, and would be, actively involved in the state-making process as well. Fast-forward to 2019, the key questions are how we can begin to democratize Palestine's state-building process from now, as well as how we can apply the lessons of Oslo process to the ongoing and future peacebuilding.

List of Abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DFID	Department for International Development
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DOP	Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements
GUPW	General Union of Palestinian Women
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCP	Palestinian Communist Party
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFWAC	Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PMP	Palestinian Model Parliament
PNC	Palestinian National Council
PNGO	Palestinian Non-Governmental Organization
UNLU	United National Leadership of Uprising
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence against women
WBF	Women's Business Forum

References

"10 Years after the ICJ Ruling, the Illegal Separation Wall Remains Standing." *Middle East Monitor*, July 9, 2014.

Abdo, Nahla. "Feminism and Difference: The Struggle of Palestinian Women." *Canadian Woman Studies* 15, no. 2–3 (1995): 141–45.

———. "Imperialism, the State, and NGOs: Middle Eastern Contexts and Contestations." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30, no. 2 (2010): 238–49.

———. "Women of the Intifada: Gender, Class and National Liberation." *Race and Class* 32, no. 4 (1991): 19–34.

Abdulhadi, Rabab. "The Palestinian Women's Autonomous Movement: Emergence, Dynamics, and Challenges." *Gender and Society* 12, no. 6 (1998): 649–73.

Abe, Toshiya. *Paresutina: Funso to Saishuteki Chii Mondai No Rekishi (Palestine: The History of the Conflict and Final Status Issues)*. Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2004.

Aharoni, Sarai. "Gender and 'Peace Work': An Unofficial History of Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiation." *Politics & Gender* 7 (2011): 391–416.

Al-Haq Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on the First Periodic Review: The State of Palestine. Ramallah: Al-Haq, June 2018. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/PSE/INT_CEDAW_NGO_PSE_31670_E.pdf.

Augustin, Ebba. *Palestinian Women: Identity and Experience*. London: Zed Books, 1995.

Baldi, Giorgia. "Between Patriarchy and Occupation: Violence against Women in the Occupied Palestinian Territories." In *Reconsidering Gender Based Violence and Other Forms of Violence Against Women: Comparative Analysis in the Light of the Istanbul Convention*, edited by Giovanni Picelli, Andrea Barroni, and Irine Kherkerulidze, 247–95. Libellula University Press, 2018.

Block, Diana, and Anna Henry. *For the Love of Palestine: Stories of Women, Imprisonment and Resistance*. Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association and Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, 2016. https://www.freedomarchives.org/Pal/womenprisoners.pdf.

Beckwith, Karen. "Beyond Compare? Women's Movements in Comparative Perspective." *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (2000): 431–68.

———. "Collective Identities of Class and Gender: Working-Class Women in the Pittston Coal Strike." *Political Psychology* 19, no. 1 (1998): 147–67.

Bell, Christine. "Text and Context: Evaluating Peace Agreements for Their 'Gender Perspective.'" Research Paper. New York: UN Women, October 2015.

Benvinisti, Meron. "1987 Report: Demographic, Economic, Legal, Social and Political Developments in the West Bank." Jerusalem: West Bank Data Projects, 1987.

Booth, William, and Sufian Taha. "Israeli Occupation Turns 50: A Palestinian's Commute through Checkpoint 300." *Washington Post*, May 25, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/world/occupied/checkpoint/.

Botman, Selam. *Engendering Citizenship in Egypt*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Brown, Carol. "Mothers, Fathers, and Children: From Private to Public Patriarchy." In *Women and Revolution*, edited by Lydia Sargent, 239–68. Boston: South End Press, 1981.

Brynen, R. "A Very Political Economy: Peacebuilding and Foreign Aid in the West Bank." Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2000.

Call, Charles T. "Ending Wars, Building States?" In *Building States to Build Peace*, edited by Charles T. Call and Vanessa Wyeth. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2008.

Caruso, Loris. "Theories of the Political Process, Political Opportunities Structure and Local Mobilizations: The Case of Italy." *Sociologia* 3 (2015): 1–29.

"Checkpoints Compound the Risks of Childbirth for Palestinian Women," United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). May 15, 2007. /news/checkpoints-compound-risks-childbirth-palestinian-women.

Clark, Cari Jo, and Muhammad M. Haj-Yahia. "Intimate Partner Violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Prevalence and Risk Factors." *Journal of Family Violence* 28, no. 8 (2013): 797–809.

Connell, R. W. "The State, Gender, and Sexual Politics: Theory and Appraisal." *Theory and Society* 19 (1990): 507–44.

Dajani, Souad. "The Struggle of Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories: Between National and Social Liberation." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (1994): 13–26.

Dana, Tariq. "Palestinian Civil Society: What Went Wrong?" *Al-Shabaka Policy Brief*, April 2013.

———. "The Structural Transformation of Palestinian Civil Society: Key Paradigm Shifts." *Middle East Critique* 24, no. 2 (2015): 191–210.

De Beauvoir, Simone. *Second Sex*. New York: Alfred A. Kmoph, 2010.

Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (1993).

De Voir, Joseph, and Alaa Tartir. "Tracking External Donor Funding to Palestinian Non Governmental Organizations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip 1999 -2008." Jerusalem: Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, 2009.

Della Porta, Donatella. "Social Movements and the State: Thoughts on the Policing or Protest." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*, edited by Doug McAdam and J. D. McCarthy, 62–92. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Diaz, Paolo C., and Simon Tordjman. "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence." New York: UN Women, 2010.

Donor Investment in Palestinian Development 1994-1998. Jerusalem: The World Bank, West Bank & Gaza Resident Mission and United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, 1999.

Doyle, Michael W., and Nicholas Sambians. *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

"East Jerusalem," B'Tselem. November 11, 2017. https://www.btselem.org/jerusalem.

"Early Marriages in the Palestinian Society." Ramallah: Sawa, 2016. http://www.sawa.ps/Upload/Reports/Sawa%20fact%20sheet%20on%20early%20marriage.pdf.

Edwards, Michael, and David Hulme. "Too Close For Comfort?: The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations." *World Development* 24 (1996): 961–73.

Eisinger, Peter. "The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities." *American Political Science Review* 81 (1973): 11–28.

Elbayar, Kareem. "NGO Laws in Selected Arab States." *International Journal of Not-for-Profit Law* 7, no. 4 (2005): 3–27.

Elshtain, Jean B. *Women and War*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987.

Enloe, Cynthia. *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1990.

———. *Does Khaki Become You?* London: Pandora Press, 1988.

———. "Ethnicity, Bureaucracy and State-building in Africa and Latin America." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1, no. 3 (1978): 336–51.

Escobar, Arturo. *Encountering Development*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Ezaki, Chie. *Isurael/Paresutina Wahei Kosho No Seiji Katei (The Political Process of the Israel-Palestine Peace Negotiations)*. Tokyo: Minerva Shobo, 2013.

"FAQs." NGO Monitor. Accessed August 15, 2019. https://www.ngo-monitor.org/about/faqs/.

Farsakh, Leila. "Undermining Democracy in Palestine: The Politics of International Aid since Oslo." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 45, no. 4 (Summer 2016): 48–63.

Fleischmann, E. J. "The Emergence of the Palestinian Women's Movement, 1929-39." *Journal of Palestine Studies* XXIX, no. 3 (2000): 16–32.

"Former Minister Yossi Beilin: Oslo Peace Process Was Not a Failure." *Jerusalem Post*, September 15, 2018. https://www.jpost.com/Magazine/The-unrepentant-dreamers-unfullled-vision-567115.

Fukuyama, Francis. *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Profile Books, 2004.

Gagnon, Alain G., and James Tully. *Multinational Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Galtung, Johan. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." *Journal of Peace Research* 6, no. 3 (1969): 167–91.

Gamson, W. A. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. Homewood: Dorsey, 1975.

"Gender Quota Database - State of Palestine." Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Accessed November 10, 2019. https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/gender-quotas/country-view/246/35.

Ghattas, Roubina, Khaldoun Rishmawi, Jad Isaac, Issa Zboun, Jane Hilal, Ayman Abu Zahra, and Iyad Khalifeh. *Opportunities and Challenges of Palestinian Development Actions in Area C*. Jerusalem: Applied Research Institute, 2016.

Giacaman, Rita, and Muna Odeh. "Palestinian Women's Movement in the Israeli-Occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip." In *Women of the Arab World: The Coming Challenge*, edited by Toubia, 57–68. London: Zed Books, 1988.

"Girls Not Brides: Ending Child Marriage in Gaza," United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). July 20, 2019. https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/features/girls-not-brides-ending-child-marriage-gaza.

Gubser, Peter. "The Impact of NGOs on the State & Non-State Relations in the Middle East." *Middle East Policy* 9, no. 1 (March 2002).

Haj, Samira. "Palestinian Women and Patriarchal Relations." *Signs* 17, no. 4 (Summer 1992): 761–78.

Hajjar, Lisa. "Human Rights in Israel/Palestine: The History and Politics of a Movement." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30, no. 4 (2001): 21–38.

Hammami, Rema. "NGOs: The Professionalisation of Politics." *Race and Class* 37, no. 2 (1995): 51–63.

———. "Palestinian NGOs Since Oslo: From NGO Politics to Social Movements?" *Middle East Report*, no. 214 (Spring 2000): 16–19, 27.

———. "Women, the Hijab and the Intifada." *Middle East Report* 20, no. 164 (August 1990): 24–28.

Hammer, Juliane. "Prayer, Hijab and the Intifada: The Influence of the Islamic Movement on Palestinian Women." *Islam and Christian-Islam Relations* 11, no. 3 (2000): 299–320.

Hasso, Frances S. "The 'Women's Front': Nationalism, Feminism, and Modernity in Palestine." *Gender and Society* 12, no. 4 (August 1998): 441–65.

Hatem, Mervat. "Toward the Development of Post-Islamist and Post-Nationalist Feminist Discourses in the Middle East." In *Arab Women: Old Boundaries, New Frontiers*, edited by Judith Tucker, 29–48. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Helie-Lucas, Marie-Aimee. "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women in Muslim Personal Laws." In *Identity Politics and Women*, edited by Valentine. M Moghadam, 391–407. Boulder: Westview Press, n.d.

Hemmet, Julie. "The Riddle of the Third Sector: Civil Society, International Aid, and NGOs in Russia." *Anthropological Quarterly* 77, no. 2 (2004): 215–41.

Hiltermann, Joost R. *Behind the Intifada: Labor and Women's Movements in the Occupied Territories*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

———. "The Women's Movement During Uprising." In *Palestinian Women of Gaza and the West Bank*, edited by Suha Sabbagh. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Hirbawi, Najat, and David Helfand. "Palestinian Institutions in Jerusalem." *Palestine Israel Journal* 17, no. 1 (2011).

Holt, Maria. "Palestinian Women, Violence, and the Peace Process." *Development in Practice* 13, no. 2–3 (2003): 223–38.

"How Israel's Blockade Exacerbates Violence against Women in Gaza," *+972 Magazine*. May 17, 2019. https://972mag.com/women-in-gaza-violence-israel-blockade/141508/.

Hubbard, D., and C Solomon. "The Many Faces of Feminism in Namibia." In *The Challenge of Local Feminisms*, edited by Amrita Basu. Boulder: Westview, 1995.

Hudson, Heidi. "Decolonising Gender and Peacebuilding: Feminist Frontiers and Border Thinking in Africa." *Peacebuilding* 4, no. 2 (May 3, 2016): 194–209. https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2016.1192242.

Hunter, Robert. *The Palestinian Uprising: A War by Other Means*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Implementation of Human Rights Council Resolutions S-9/1 and S-12/1, A/HRC/28/80. Geneva: United Nations Human Rights Council, March 2, 2015. https://www.refworld.org/docid/550fead44.html?fbclid=IwAR0QnbUElvmMunTNk09a qLmSLU081HT_Cfe7B11cuUlP8m-teuSRTStCCGs.

Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU). "Quick Facts: The Palestinian Nakba | IMEU." Accessed October 11, 2019. https://imeu.org/article/quick-facts-the-palestinian-nakba.

———. "What Did, in Fact, Happen at Camp David in 2000?," Accessed October 28, 2019. https://imeu.org/article/what-did-in-fact-happen-at-camp-david-in-2000.

International Legal Accountability Mechanisms: Palestinian Women Living Under Occupation. New York: UN Women, 2016. http://www.lacs.ps/documentsShow.aspx?ATT_ID=30314.

"In the Gaza Strip, UN Chief Appeals for Palestinian Unity; Renews Call for Two-State Solution." *UN News*, August 2017. https://10news.un.org/en/story/2017/08/564132-gaza-strip-un-chief-appeals-palestinian-unity-renews-call-two-state-solution.

Irving Jensen, Michael. "Peace, Aid & Renewed Anti-Colonial Resistance: The Development of Secular Palestinian NGOs in the Post-Oslo Period." Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2005.

"Israel Establishes Dual Regime in the West Bank," The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI). May 6, 2019. https://www.english.acri.org.il/single-post/84.

"Israel's Envoy to Call on UN to End Funding for B'Tselem." *Times of Israel*, October 19, 2016. https://www.timesofisrael.com/israels-envoy-to-call-on-un-to-end-funding-for-btselem/.

Jackson, Robert. *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Jad, Islah. "Islamist Women of Hamas: Between Feminism and Nationalism." *Feminismes Islamiques* 128 (December 2010): 1–22.

———. "NGOs: Between Buzzwords and Social Movements." *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4–5 (2007): 622–29.

———. "Palestinian Women Contesting Power in Chaos." *Bulletin* 41, no. 5 (2010): 81–88.

———. "The Conundrums of Post-Oslo Palestine: Gendering Palestinian Citizenship." *Feminist Theory* 11, no. 2 (2011): 149–69.

———. "The Demobilization of Women's Movements: The Case of Palestine." Changing Their World. AWID: Association For Women's Rights in Development, 2008.

———. "The 'NGOization' of the Arab Women's Movements." *Al-Raida* 20, no. 100 (2003): 38–47.

———. "The Post-Oslo Palestine and Gendering Palestinian Citizenship." *Ethnicities* 11, no. 3 (October 2011): 360–72.

Jamal, Amal. "Engendering State-Building: The Women's Movement and Gender-Regime in Palestine." *Middle East Journal* 55, no. 2 (2001): 256–76.

Jamal, Manal. "Democracy Promotion, Civil Society Building, and the Primacy of Politics." *Comparative Political Studies* 45, no. 1 (2012): 3–31.

Jayawardena, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*. London: Zed Books, 1986.

Jenkins, Criag J., and Charles Perrow. "Insurgency of the Powerless Farm Workers Movements (1946-1972)." *American Sociological Review* 42 (1977): 249–68.

"Jerusalem on the Map." Jerusalem: International Peace and Cooperation Center, 2007.

Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Between the Hammer and the Anvil: Post-Conflict Reconstruction, Islam and Women's Rights." *Third World Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2007): 503–17.

———. "Women, Islam, and the State: A Comparative Approach." In *Comparing Muslim Socieities: Knowledge and the State in a World Civilization*, edited by Juan R. I. Cole, 237–60. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992.

Kazi, Hamida. "Palestinian Women and the National Liberation Movement: A Social Perspective." In *Women in the Middle East*, edited by Magida Salman. London: Zed Books, 1987.

"Key Issue: BDS (Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions)." NGO Monitor. Accessed August 17, 2019. https://www.ngo-monitor.org/key-issues/bds/about/.

Khalidi, Raja, and Sobhi Samour. "Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 40, no. 2 (Winter 2011): 6–25.

Khan, M. H. "Learning the Lessons of Oslo: State-Building and Freedoms in Palestine." In *Decolonizing Palestinian Political Economy: Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, edited by M Turner and O. Shweiki, 238–56. London: Pagrave Macmillan, 2014.

Kitschelt, Herbert. "Political Opportunity Structure and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (1986): 57–85.

Klees, Steven J. "NGOs: Progressive Force or Neo-Liberal Tool?" *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 1, no. 1 (2002): 49–54.

Kuttab, Eileen. "Palestinian Women's Organizations: Global Cooption and Local Contradiction." *Cultural Dynamics* 20, no. 2 (2008): 99–117.

Law of Charitable Associations and Community Organizations, Pub. L. No. Law No. 1 (2000). http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Palestine/law1-2000-en.pdf.

Luttwak, Edward N. "Give War a Chance." *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (1999): 36–44. https://doi.org/10.2307/20049362.

Makovsky, David. "How to Build a Fence." *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (April 2004): 51–64.

Markowitz, Lisa, and Karen W. Tice. "Paradoxes of Professionalization: Parallel Dilemmas in Women's Organizations in the Americas." *Gender & Society* 16, no. 6 (2002): 941–58.

Malley, Robert, and Hussein Agha. "Camp David: A Tragedy of Errors." *Guardian*, July 20, 2001. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/jul/20/comment.

McAdam, Doug. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

McBride, Dorothy E., and Amy G. Mazur. "Women's Movements, Feminism, and Feminist Movements." In *Politics, Gender, and Concepts: Theory and Methodology*, edited by Gary Goertz and Amy G. Mazur, 219–43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

McClintock, Anne. "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism and the Family." *Feminist Review* 44 (1993): 61–80.

Meyer, David S., and Debra C. Minkoff. "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity." *Social Forces* 82, no. 4 (2004): 1457–92.

Meyer, David S., and Sydney Tarrow. "A Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century." In *The Social Movement Society*, edited by David S. Meyer and Sydney Tarrow, 1–28. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998.

Moghadam, Valentine. M. "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction with Women: Reflections on Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine." *Development* 48, no. 3 (2005): 63–72.

———. "Women, Structure, and Agency in the Middle East: Introduction and Overview to Feminist Formations." *Feminist Formations* 22, no. 3 (2010): 1–9.

Muslih, Muhammad. "Palestinian Civil Society." *The Middle East Journal* 47, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 258–74.

"Netanyahu Seeks Trump Go-Ahead for Israel's West Bank Annexation to Help Win Election." *Middle East Monitor*, August 13, 2019. https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190813-netanyahu-seeks-trump-go-ahead-for-israels-west-bank-annexation-to-help-win-election/.

"Netanyahu Vows to Start Annexing West Bank, in Bid to Rally the Right - The New York Times." *New York Times*. Accessed November 5, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/06/world/middleeast/netanyahu-annex-west-bank.html.

NGO Monitor: Shrinking Space – Defaming Human Rights Organizations That Criticize the Israeli Occupation. Jerusalem: Policy Working Group, 2018.

Owen, Roger. *Gendai Chuto No Kokka, Kenryoku, Seiji (State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East)*. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2015.

"Palestine Liberation Organization: The Original Palestine National Charter." Jewish Virtual Library. Accessed July 22, 2019. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-original-palestine-national-charter-1964.

Human Rights Watch. "Palestine: 'Marry-Your-Rapist' Law Repealed," May 10, 2018. https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/10/palestine-marry-your-rapist-law-repealed.

"Palestinian Women." Jerusalem: PASSIA: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, August 2015.

Palestinian Women and Girls and the Provision of Security - DCAF Spotlight No. 8. Ramallah: Geneva Centre of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), August 2010.

"Palestinian Women's Rights Overlooked in Favour of National Liberation." *Middle East Eye*, November 3, 2015. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/palestinian-womens-rights-overlooked-favour-national-liberation.

Parsons, Nigel. *The Politics of the Palestinian Authority: From Oslo to Al-Aqsa*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Pateman, Carole. *Sexual Contract*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

Penslar, Derek J. "Zionism, Colonialism and Postcolonialism." *Journal of Israeli History* 20, no. 2–3 (June 1, 2001): 84–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/13531040108576161.

Peteet, Julie. "Icons and Militant: Mothering in the Danger Zone." *Signs* 23, no. 1 (1997): 103–29.

———. "Words as Interventions: Naming in the Palestine-Israel Conflict." *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (2005): 153–72.

Piven, Francis Fox, and Richard A. Cloward. *Poor People's Movements*. Vintage, 1977.

"PLO vs. PA." Jerusalem: PASSIA: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, September 2014. http://passia.org/media/filer_public/8a/e7/8ae7c030-ac1d-4688-b3f4-606fbd50cd41/pa-plo2.pdf.

Pratt, Nicola, and Sophie Richter-Devroe. "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13, no. 4 (2011): 489–503.

Pundak, Ron. "From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?" *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 43, no. 3 (2001): 31–45.

Rasgon, Adam. "Taboo-Breaking Palestinian Candidate Says East Jerusalem Deserves Better." *Times of Israel*, August 2, 2018. https://www.timesofisrael.com/taboo-breaking-palestinian-candidate-says-east-jerusalem-deserves-better/.

Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry Established Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution S-21/1 [on the 2014 Gaza Conflict] (A/HRC/29/52). Geneva: United Nations Human Rights Council, n.d.

Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security. United Nations Security Council, September 2009.

Robinson, Glenn E. "The Palestinians." In *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, by Mark Gasiorowski, 343–70, 7th Edition. Boulder: Westview Press, 2014.

Roy, Sara. *Horoko-Suto Kara Gaza e (From Holocaust to Gisaza)*. Edited by Mari Oka, Hiromu Odagiri, and Takanori Hayao, n.d.

Rynhold, Jonathan. "Re-Conceptualizing Israeli Approaches to 'Land For Peace' and the Palestinian Question Since 1967." *Israel Studies* 6, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 33–52.

Sabaratnam, Meera. "Avatars of Eurocentrism in the Critique of the Liberal Peace." *Security Dialogue* 44, no. 3 (June 1, 2013): 259–78. https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010613485870.

Said, Edward. "The Morning After." *London Review of Books* 15, no. 20–21 (1993): 3–5.

"Samidoun." NGO Monitor. Accessed October 15, 2019. https://www.ngo-monitor.org/ngos/samidoun/.

Sayigh, Yezid. "Arafat and the Anatomy of a Revolt." *Survival* 43, no. 3 (September 2001): 47–60.

Sayigh, Yezid, and Shikaki Khalil. *Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions*. New York: The Council of Foreign Relations, 1999.

Scott, Joan W. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75. https://doi.org/10.2307/1864376.

———. "Some Relfections on Gender and Politics." In *Revisioning Gender*, edited by Myra M. Ferree, Judith Lorber, and Beth B. Hess, 70–98. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2000.

"Settlements." B'Tselem. Accessed November 5, 2019. https://www.btselem.org/topic/settlements.

Sharoni, Simona. "Gender and Conflict Transformation in Islrael/Palestine." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13, no. 4 (2012): 113–28.

Sh'hada, Nahda. "Gender and Politics in Palestine: Discourse Analysis of the Palestinian Authority & Islamists." *University of Miami International & Comparative Law Review* 11, no. 3 (2003): 3–73.

Shinoda, Hideaki. *Heiwa Kouchiku to Hou No Shihai (Peacebuilding and the Rule of Law)*. Tokyo: Sobunsha, 2003.

Shlaim, Avi. "It's Now Clear: The Oslo Peace Accords Were Wrecked by Netanyahu's Bad Faith." *Guardian*, September 12, 2013. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/12/oslo-israel-reneged-colonial-palestine.

Silliman, Jael. "Expanding Civil Society, Shrinking Political Spaces: The Case of Women's Nongovernmental Organizations." *Social Politics*, Spring 1999, 23–53.

Slater, Jerome. "What Went Wrong? The Collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process." *Political Science Quarterly* 116, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 171–99.

Speri, Alice. "How the Oslo Accords Betrayed the Palestinian Women Behind the First Intifada." *The Intercept* (blog), September 13, 2018. https://theintercept.com/2018/09/13/oslo-accords-palestinian-women-first-intifada-naila-and-the-uprising/.

Spike Peterson, V. "Introduction." In *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

———. "Security and Sovereign States: What Is at Stake in Taking Feminism Seriously?" In *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

"'Stop Funding Breaking the Silence,' PM Asks UK's May." *Times of Israel*, February 6, 2017. http://www.timesofisrael.com/stop-funding-breaking-the-silence-pm-asks-uks-may/.

Stevents, Paul. "'Leviticus Thinking' and the Rhetoric of Early Modern Colonialism." *Criticism* 35, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 441–61.

Sullivan, Denis J. "NGOs in Palestine: Agents of Development and Foundation of Civil Society." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 25, no. 3 (Spring 1996): 93–100.

Tadros, Sherine. "ID Cards Split Palestinian Families." *Al Jazeera*, April 24, 2008. https://www.aljazeera.com/focus/palestine/2008/04/20086151028916537.html.

Tarrow, Sydney. *Democracy and Disorder: Protest and Politics in Italy, 19655-1975.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

———. "National Politics and Collective Action." *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988): 421–40.

———. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

———. "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of SocialMovements." In *ComparativePerspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Zald Mayer, 41–61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Tateyama, Ryoji. "Beikoku-Isuraeru Kankei No Henyo (The Transformation of US-Israel Relationship)." *Gendai Chuto Kenkyu (Modern Middle East Studies)*, 1990, 43–56.

Tetreault, Mary Ann. "Women and Revolution." In *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory*, edited by V. Spike Peterson, 99–121. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

The Arab Human Development Report 2005. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2006.

The Exploitation of Palestinian Women's Rights NGOs. Jerusalem: NGO Monitor, March 2018. https://ngo-monitor.org/pdf/womens_report2018.pdf.

The January 20, 1996 Palestinian Elections. Atlanta: The Carter Center, 1997.

The Legal and Social Status of Palestinian Women: A Gap Analysis Report Using CEDAW as Reference. Ramallah: Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling (WCLAC), 2005. http://www.mediterraneas.org/article.php3?id _article=278.

The Palestinian NGOs Code of Conduct, Second Edition. NGO Development Center, 2015. http://ndc.ps/sites/default/files/Code-of-Conduct-English.pdf.

"The Separation Barrier." B'Tselem. Accessed November 5, 2019. https://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier.

Thompson, Elizabeth. "Public and Private in Middle Eastern Women's History." *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 1 (2003): 52–69. https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2003.0037.

Tickner, J. Ann. "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists." *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1, 1997): 611–32. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2478.00060.

Tilly, Charles. "Reflections on the History of European State-Making." In *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, edited by Charles Tilly. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

Towards Equality: Examination of the Status of Palestinian Women in Existing Law. Ramallah: Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), 1995.

"UN Women Report on Israel – Faulty Methodology and Promotion of NGO Political Warfare," NGO Monitor. June 8, 2017. https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/un-women-report-israel-faulty-methodology-promotion-ngo-political-warfare/.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, Pub. L. No. S/RES/1325 (2000).
https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/SC_ResolutionWomenPeaceSe
curity_SRES1325%282000%29%28english_0.pdf.

Walker, R. B. J. "Gender and Critique in the Theory of International Relations." In *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations*, 179–202. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

Warnock, Kitty. *Land Before Honour: Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990.

Waylen, Georgina. "Women and Democratization: Conceptualizing Gender Relations in Transition Politics." *World Politics* 46, no. 3 (April 1994).

Wight, Martin. "Why Is There No International Theory (1966)." In *International Theory: Critical Investigations*, edited by James Der Derian, 15–35. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995.

Wohlforth, William C. "Chapter 7: Realism." In *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidel, 131–49. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Wolff, Stefan. "Post-Conflict State Building: The Debate on Institutional Choice." *Third World Quarterly* 32, no. 10 (2011): 1777–1802.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. London: Penguin Random House, 2004.

Yeatman, Anna. *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1990.

Young, Iris Marion. *Justice and The Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Gender and Nation*. London: Sage Publications, 1997.