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**Gender and Feminism in the Israeli Peace Process: Beyond UNSCR
1325**

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Abstract

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Abstract: In 2000, the United Nations passed Security Council Resolution 1325, calling for the inclusion of women in peace negotiations. Although preliminary research has found positive outcomes from peace processes where women's groups have had influence, the mechanisms to explain how women's inclusion can positively contribute to peace remain undefined. This paper examines existing "women and peace" theories, and proposes a theory to explain how including women, giving them influence, and including feminist perspectives can lead to more lasting peace. This theory is then tested using the case of the Israel/Palestine conflict, incorporating the results of interviews conducted by the author with Israeli peace activists from October 2015 to January 2016. The paper examines, in the context of this theory, why feminist Israeli peace activists and groups such as Jerusalem Link and the International Women's Commission have struggled to obtain influence in past peace processes, and what contemporary women's groups such as Women Wage Peace and Itach-Maaki have been doing to change that in the next one.

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I: Introduction: *Why Women, Why Israel*

Former President Bill Clinton has famously said, “If we’d had women at Camp David, we’d have an agreement.” (Hunt and Posa, 2001: 42) Clinton is not the only one to recent acknowledging the importance of women’s representation in peace negotiations. The same year as Clinton’s Camp David summit, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on gender and conflict. UNSCR 1325 expresses concerns that women and children are disproportionately affected by conflict, especially in modern warfare and insurgency. It also reaffirms the need for human rights law to protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflict, and the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping. In light of this, UNSCR 1325 reaffirms the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, calling for their involvement. But there *weren’t* women at Camp David, and there haven’t been many women at the table throughout the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The absence of women from peace processes is not unique to Israel. Since SCR 1325, various nations have passed action plans to include women in peace negotiations. However, women’s participation in peace processes has remained low. Despite UNSCR 1325, between 1992 and 2011, women comprised only 2% of chief mediators and 9% of negotiators in peace processes (O’Reilly, et. al., 2015: 1). In a representative sample of 31 peace negotiations which occurred from 1992 to 2011, the UN found that only 4% of signatories were women (Castillo Diaz and Tordjman, 2012). Paffenholz found that when women were included, it was only after extensive lobbying by women’s groups or international actors (Paffenholz, 2015).

On the one hand, policy literature has tended to take for granted a liberal rights-based reasoning for including women (Cohen, 2015). On the other hand, social science

research has sought to prove and explain the “women and peace hypothesis”, a theory that women are better peace-builders than men (Maoz, 2009). Additionally, researchers have started to examine whether peace processes that include women have better outcomes. However, few studies examine the mechanisms that explain why including women in peace processes might lead to a more durable peace. Even if women were to be included, most literature does not address two vital questions: which women, and how much influence?

This paper examines the existing hypotheses from policy literature, social science, and feminism supporting the “women and peace hypothesis”, and proposes a new framework for understanding how including women can improve the outcomes of peace processes. This theory is then tested in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Israel’s legitimacy relies on its claim to be the most progressive country of the Middle East, the only democracy and most friendly to women (Friedman, 1989). However, although Israeli women have been advocating for peace for decades, they have generally been denied influence. Their work has been unacknowledged in the bulk of literature on the conflict. Why have women been unable to achieve significant influence in the peace process? Which women have had the most success? What does their struggle to be heard teach us about conflict resolution? These are the questions that will be investigated in this paper.

The next section provides an overview of theories about women and peace. It is divided into four parts: theories from policy literature, theories from social science literature, theories from feminist literature, and the author’s proposal. This section is followed by one that explains the predictions drawn from the theory, as well as the methods and sources to investigate them. The paper then proceeds to a historical overview of women’s peace advocacy in Israel, analyzed through the theoretical lenses of

the first section. Next, the findings section discusses whether the predictions from the theory are borne out in this case, and if not, why not. Finally, a conclusion offers insights into the challenges women peace advocates will face as they strive to influence peace processes beyond Israel.

II: Women as Peacemakers: *The Feminist and Social Science Theories*

Overview of Theory Development: Policy Literature

Since the UN passed SCR 1325, various policy groups have conducted studies of women in peace negotiations to examine the effect of implementing the resolution. A team of researchers led by Thania Paffenholz at the Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (IPTI) at the Graduate Institute of Geneva has analyzed whether including women's groups in peace processes can lead to better outcomes. They found that when women's groups were included and achieved influence, the peace process led to "better quality and more sustainable peace agreements" (Paffenholz, 2015). Women's inclusion and influence also led to better implementation (O'Reilly, et. al., 2015). Other articles and case studies agree, asserting the benefit of women's inclusion from Liberia to the Philippines, and, most recently, in Syria (Johnson, 2012; Conciliation Resources, 2014; Williams, 2016).

Many studies of women in peace negotiations have included women as a category of civil society, including the work by the IPTI. This categorization extends theories about the inclusion of civil society in peace negotiations to the inclusion of women. Unlike civil society, however, the women at the negotiating tables can belong to official delegations from one party or another. UNSCR specifically calls for more women on official decision-making teams. Some may have experience as combatants. Whether part of civil society or official teams, women bring a different perspective to the table based on their experiences as women in a gendered society. They often face exclusion from mixed-gender civil society groups as well as from official parties' teams. In this paper, I consider both women officially involved in negotiating teams and women involved as part of civil society, since in the Israeli women have not often been included on official

teams. Feminist women have specifically been excluded from the Israeli side, both as civil society participants and as official participants. As long as women's civil society groups are involved in a substantive and significant manner, their influence should be similar to when women are included in negotiating teams in a substantive and significant way. However, differences between women representing government and civil society may arise from the differential ability of certain groups of women, such as racial or ethnic minorities, peace activists, and feminists, to access positions of power in the government versus in civil society. Another reason for including civil society as well as members of Track One negotiating teams is that women activists and civil society groups have often been far ahead, meeting and discussing peace far before their government and in moments when official peace processes have shut down.

Overview of Theory Development: Social Science

While policy literature and UNSCR 1325 assert a rights- and democracy-based argument for including women in peace negotiations, social science has attempted to show that women are inherently better at peacemaking, whether in the household, in the research lab, or at the negotiating table. Feminist scholars have been critical of this premise, based on the feminist theory that gender is performative and does not carry with it inherent characteristics (Butler, 1990). Since gender is a social construct, it cannot be detached in the research lab or as a dummy variable from the culture and context that create it (Sa'ar, et. al., 2011: 51). Much social science research on the women and peace hypothesis relies on correlations between women and certain characteristics, such as cooperation, trustworthiness, and mothering. These studies embrace the gender binary but do not have to be interpreted as essentialist. Indeed, some social scientists who are aware of feminist studies acknowledge that rather than being born with them, perhaps

socializing as female leads women to develop these “peacemaking” traits (Tessler, et. al., 1999). This section examines the social science research that has both supported and questioned the women and peace hypothesis.

One persistent explanation for the women and peace hypothesis is that women’s pacifism comes from their role as mothers. In “Maternal Work and the Practice of Peace”, Sara Ruddick first advanced the idea of mothering as peace-building. She describes mothering as neither male nor female; not all women will adopt maternal work happily, just as not all men will soldier happily. However, women have traditionally carried out mothering work for so long that it is impossible to separate the maternal from the womanly. Mothers aim to unite, rather than divide, and derive more satisfaction from relationships than victory over an enemy. They also understand that there is no “perfect security”, as they are negotiating with individuals – children, family – who they will never fully control. Ruddick writes, “The [maternal] peacemaker asks of herself and those she cares for, not what they can afford to give up but what they can give, not how they can be left alone but what they can do together” (Ruddick, 1985: 110). If mothers became aware of their role as peacemakers in the family, they would realize their potential to be agents for peace outside the family as well (Ruddick, 1985).

The next progression from Ruddick’s theory takes the mothering argument from the private sphere to the public sphere as she suggests, hypothesizing that mothers are invested in a peaceful society for the sake of their children. Conflict requiring young soldiers can make motherhood a national issue, pulling women into the public sphere (Herzog, 2004). Palestinian peace activist Rima Nasir Taraz explained in an interview in 2004, “A woman who goes through a life of pain, deprivation and sacrifice to raise her child will not give him or her up easily” (Arat, 2004). In Israeli-Palestinian dialogues hosted by the International Women’s Commission (IWC), women identified as mothers,

and saw the peace that they keep at home as relevant to the peace they desire in their country (Limor, 2009). However, motherhood could also be used to alienate women from the opposing party, and to become more combative. Some Jewish women in the IWC forums claimed that Palestinian mothers aren't really mothers because they "glorify their dead children" while Israeli mothers "sacrifice" theirs (to the Israeli Defense Forces) (Limor, 2009). Motherhood was connected more to nationalism than to sisterhood.

Other studies hypothesize that rather than motherhood, the mechanism behind the women and peace hypothesis is that women are better at certain skills such as cooperation and communication. One researcher found that women were more communicative in negotiating teams, in a laboratory setting (Boyer, et. al., 2009). Again, the idea that gender is performative and cultural makes it difficult to assert whether gender carries essential traits, or whether these traits are created by socialization. Women are at least *perceived* to be more cooperative than men (Maoz, 2009; Maoz and David, 2015). When an opponent is viewed as more feminine, they are re-humanized, since they are seen as more vulnerable and cooperative (Maoz and David, 2015). Maoz hypothesizes that this is because of stereotypes portraying women as more peaceful, cooperative, warm, and trustworthy (Maoz, 2009).

There is some evidence that these perceptions carry weight beyond a controlled laboratory setting. In dialogues between Israeli and Palestinian women that were facilitated by the International Women's Commission, female participants widely considered themselves to be more empathetic, less concerned with "honor", and more creative than men (Limor, 2009). At a workshop organized by Inclusive Security in November 2010, women explained that they tend to think more about the public good than men, and make more effort to involve their communities in decision-making

(Nusseibeh, 2011). Even if these traits are not essentially female, women and the men around them often perceive them that way.

However, other research refutes these gender-based theories. Tessler et. al. examined popular opinion polls to see if women were more peacefully inclined. In the United States and Europe, studies have shown that women are less supportive of international war than men. However, data sets from the Middle East fail to find a statistically significant difference between men and women's attitudes towards conflict. Even when controlling for religion, there is no gender difference. Tessler suggests that salience of a conflict is probably more important than individual differences like gender or religion. When a conflict is total or intractable, it dominates citizens' lives, and there is little room for individual variation from the dominant cultural narrative that forms the ethos of conflict (Tessler et. al., 1999; for more on intractable conflict and the ethos of conflict, see Bar-Tal, 2015).

Anecdotal evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian women's dialogues sponsored by the IWC supports Tessler's criticism and underscores the fact that women are not inherently peace seeking. At the IWC forums, for example:

Even when speakers expressed women's greater capacity for empathy, their non-violent language and their greater ability to compromise, when it came to concrete issues such as recognition of Palestinians' human rights, their right to self-determination or the refugee problem, the Jewish Israeli women adopted the mainstream discourse in the Israeli society, which is based primarily on stereotypes and ignorance regarding the other side (Limor, 2009: 40).

Similarly, in a report on UNSCR 1325, a Palestinian IWC member is quoted as saying, "Everywhere in the conflict you see that women have more the tendency to listen, to understand, to try to find solutions, but this doesn't mean that a Palestinian woman

sitting with an Israeli woman would have a different position than a Palestinian man” (Richter-Devroe, 2012).

The gender-based characteristic explanation for the women and peace hypothesis fails to hold up in dialogues between women on opposing sides of the conflict. This suggests that not all women will be peace advocates, and that whether women affect the outcomes of peace negotiations might need analysis of which women are included: women who support peace, or women who don't.

Overview of Theory Development: Feminist Studies

From the feminist perspective that gender is a social construction and that there is vast diversity between women, the conclusion that different women will affect peace processes differently is not surprising. Feminists are critical of mothering arguments and of social science's gender essentialist hypotheses (Burguières, 1990: 16). As Cynthia Enloe points out, accepting the myth of women's natural peacefulness leaves militarism and patriarchal structures unexamined (Cohen, 2015). Feminism looks instead at how “militarism, nationalism, and hegemonic masculinities” affect gendered society, and at violence in the domestic as well as public sphere (Sa'ar et al, 2011). War often serves to legitimize norms of discrimination and oppression of women and other vulnerable groups in the public and private sphere (Españoli and Sachs, 1992). For example, researchers found via questionnaires that both Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli women that those who had been victims of sexual or domestic violence experienced much higher levels of anxiety during armed-political violence. Women from ethnic and national minorities were particularly vulnerable (Sa'ar, et. al., 2011). Complementing the surveys with analysis from domestic violence and rape hotlines, the research also found that women avoided seeking help for domestic and sexual assault during times of intensified political

violence (Sa'ar, et. al., 2011). Women are not the only ones affected by the gendered dimensions of political violence. Military officials are demanded to “act like men”, which means that national security actors often cannot consider “feminine” options such as negotiations as legitimate, and instead must toe the aggressive line (Cohn, 1990, in Tickner, 2014).

In response, feminism is subversive, refusing to “accept the existing order as self-evident”, and imagining a new system (Herzog, 2004). Since warfare and aggression are not innate, but are learned behaviors, they can be unlearned as well. Feminism proposes changes to the structures of oppression as a way of unlearning violent behaviors (Tickner, 2014). It presents alternative, “multidimensional definitions of peace that are not zero-sum...Security cannot be built on others’ insecurity” (Tickner, 2014). Israeli activists have noted that feminism inherently includes a vision of positive peace, by critically examining societal structures and looking beyond the war to the “roots” of the conflict (Simonen, 2010; for more on positive peace see Galtung, 1964).

In contrast to social science where gender is a demographic descriptor, feminism rejects gender as a simple variable. Intersectionality, a theory key to third wave feminism, explains that despite their shared gender, women have very different lived experiences. However, across the diverse experiences of women, women also have shared experiences of oppression that allow them to see the world through a different lens than men. Women understand peace more holistically than men because of their gendered experience of violence and injustice outside of war as well as during it, due to the structures of oppression that women face even in times of peace (Coomaraswamy, 2004). For example, Galia Golan hypothesizes that women tend to perceive “hard” security measures like walls and checkpoints as actually escalating feelings of insecurity. Instead,

women would promote “soft” security, or inclusive security, such as peace parks, educational centers, and tourism (Golan, 2011).

We have seen in Tessler’s work that when asked about specific conflicts, women are no more pacific than men. The concept of intersectionality predicts diversity of opinion among women, and the concepts of militarization and nationalism explain why some women do not support peace. Therefore, in Israel, even when women are included in negotiations, they do not always advocate for a feminist vision of peace. Golda Meir and Tzivi Lipni, for example, are two of Israel’s most prominent female politicians who have been involved in peace negotiations, and neither has advanced a women’s or feminist agenda nor achieved an agreement. At the IWC dialogues, female participants agreed that the women who did manage to achieve political power were those who “adopt the male point of view and forget to promote women’s interests or express women’s voices” (Limor, 35). In 2004, Palestinian peace activist Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas explained that “most women fall in the category of the silent majority” (Arat, 2004).

If including women is about more than advancing gender parity, and aims to increase chances for peace by fundamentally altering the definition of security, then the women to be included must think differently than their mainstream male counterparts. In other words, “replacing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas with women from their respective governments wouldn't fundamentally change the process” (Weingarten, 2014). Abu-Dayyeh Shamas explained, “Not all women, but women activists...do bring something unique [to the negotiating table] since they are mostly guided by principles of justice and equality” (Arat, 2004). In discussing the implementation of UNSCR 1325, Galia Golan talks about the need to bring not just women, but a gender perspective into peace processes to change the militarist nature of Israeli policies. She asks, “Is it enough to demand that there be

women, or should the demand be for feminist women, those who would see themselves as representing women's interests and possessing a feminist consciousness?" (Golan, 2015) From a feminist perspective, women must not only be present in order to influence negotiations, but must be able to prioritize feminist issues (Leila Hilal, quoted in Weingarten, 2014).

In Israel/Palestine: My Theory

In order for the women and peace hypothesis to work, then, we need to ask the questions, *Which women?* and *How much influence?* These two points are raised by Sarai Aharoni and Rula Deeb in their 2003 piece, "Where are all the women?" The first question is qualitative: "not all women are inclined to promote feminist positions, particularly on matters of war and peace" (Aharoni and Deeb, 2003: 56). The second question is quantitative: are there enough women to effectively make their concerns heard as well as "articulate the diversity of women's views"? (Aharoni and Deeb, 2003: 56)

Peace agreements are more likely to be successful when they address a wider number of grievances and have enough popular support to disempower spoilers. (For more on this theory of conflict resolution, see Wanis-St. John and Kew, 2008, and Nilsson, 2012; for more on spoilers, see Zahar, 2008.) Women with a gendered or intersectional consciousness would promote an agenda that seeks to address wider grievances, by examining the "root causes" of the conflict and taking into consideration intersectionality and the diverse concerns of different groups. Paffenholz's research shows a correlation between women's influence in peace negotiations and positive outcomes of the negotiations. This is most likely because the women's civil society groups she included in her study tend to be made up of the women activists, who, as she found, had to lobby hard to be included. These are the women who need to be included in

peace processes, even if they do not explicitly identify as feminist. Thus, Paffenholz’s research at IPTI also underscores how important it is that women be included in such a way that they have influence, and are not just tokens.

The inclusion of women with a certain perspective that is contrary to the mainstream and the amount of influence these women are able to obtain are two conditional variables included in the diagram of my theory below. This theory is diagrammed according to Stephen Van Evera’s arrow diagram method (Van Evera, 1997). The following causal mechanisms are adapted from theories about civil society inclusion by Desiree Nilsson, Darren Kew, and Anthony Wanis-St. John (Kew and Wanis-St. John, 2008; Nilsson, 2012). If the women present, whether in official teams or as civil society, have a gender/feminist perspective and can obtain influence, then they will promote solutions that address more grievances. If this is the case, we should see more popular support for proposals made with women’s contributions, and therefore less support for spoilers. This will lead to better implementation of the peace agreement and a longer lasting peace. The theory is arrow diagrammed below:

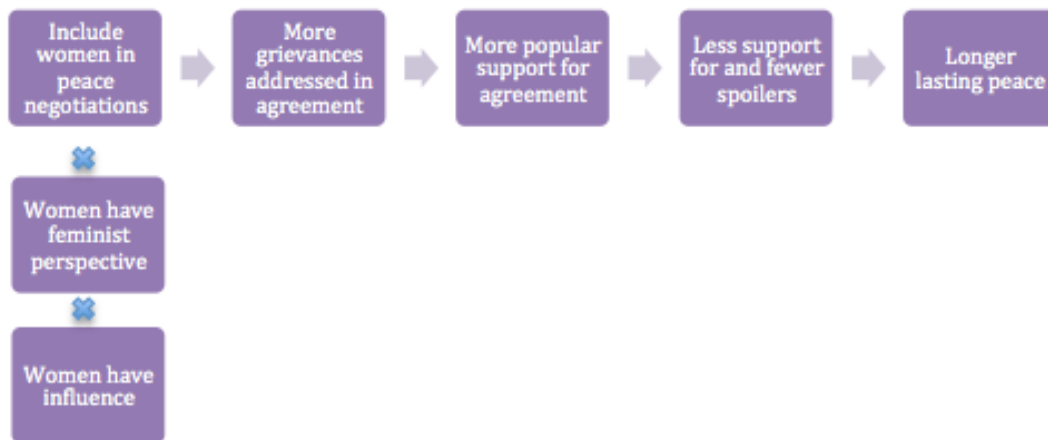


Figure 1: Arrow diagram of the author’s theory.

In this theory, the term “feminist” is used to refer to all individuals and groups who promote a gender or feminist perspective, i.e. include principles of feminist peace theory, although some may not explicitly identify as feminist.

In order to test this theory, we must find a case where women, specifically feminists, have been advocating for peace. In Israel, feminist activists have been advocating for peace for decades. The next section of this paper will provide an overview of what we expect to find, based on the theory, and what methods and sources will be used to investigate. It is followed by an overview of the history of women’s peace advocacy in Israel. In the findings section, we will compare the reality to the theory’s predictions, and examine whether the conditional variables have been met or not.

III: Predictions, Methods, and Sources

This paper will test the author's theory based on a case study of women's peace activism in Israel. This chapter will outline the predictions to be tested, the method for testing them, and the sources of information considered for the case study.

The theory assumes that there are feminist women who can be included in peace talks. This section is followed by a chapter that briefly examines the history of women's peace advocacy in Israel, both in civil society and in Track One peace processes. After this historical overview, we will examine whether the theory can explain the history or not, based on the analysis of the following predictions.

Predictions

1. Women organizing for peace will not be able to make a difference if they are unable to achieve influence. If this is found to be the case, we will examine why women have failed to obtain influence in the peace process in Israel.

2. Feminist women advocating for peace will address more grievances than non-feminist women, or men. Since feminist women have not been included in any official negotiations, evidence for this prediction will be found by examining proposals from women's groups and comparing them to official proposals.

3. The theory predicts that proposals from women's groups will have more popular support than those of the government. In the absence of poll data on unofficial proposals, we will look at how women's groups' proposals have been received by national media.

4. When feminist women are involved substantively and significantly in peace negotiations, there will be a greater chance for longer-lasting peace. Although this has not

yet occurred in Israel, we will examine recent developments in implementing UNSCR 1325 in Israel that lay the groundwork for a true test of this theory in the future by including women in the next negotiations.

Methods and Sources

The above predictions will be tested using qualitative evidence from secondary sources, primary documents, and eight interviews with Israeli women peace advocates conducted by the author in Israel from October 2015 through January 2016.

My choice to conduct interviews was influenced by feminist scholarship, which seeks to uncover “the subjugated knowledge that often lies hidden from mainstream knowledge building” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2007: 147). Interviews provided the opportunity to hear about activists’ experiences that had not been published, whether by feminist or mainstream media. In addition, open-ended interviews can prevent the interviewer from ascribing incorrect external meaning to the subject’s words (Reinharz, 1992). My interviews focused on questions about each woman’s personal experience with peace advocacy, from which I was able to learn about greater issues facing Israeli feminist peace activists in general. I found my interviewees through the snowball method, as well as by conducting research about prominent Israeli peace activists. I also acknowledge my own biases as a feminist, and that this is a personal and situational characteristic that I bring to this research (Reinharz, 2011).

Because ties between Israeli and Palestinian activists have been strained since the Second Intifada and the anti-normalization movement within Palestine, I was unable to officially interview any Palestinian women. Because of this lack of access, my analysis will focus on organizing taking place within Israel.

IV: Historical Overview: *Women's Involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process*

The theory assumes that women, especially feminist women, have organized for peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That history will be examined in this section, in relation to the theoretical overview above, although I cannot provide a thorough history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in this limited space. Good resources for additional background on the conflict include Timea Spitka's dissertation on international intervention in the peace process (Spitka, 2012), the *Routledge Handbook on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Peters, 2015), and *Israeli Peacemaking Since 1967: Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures* (Golan, 2014). Here, I will focus on briefly summarizing the history of the peace process and peace work done by women.

Women have been involved in peace activism in Israel since the founding of the state. In 1951, one thousand Arab and Jewish women founded the anti-Zionist Movement of Democratic Women in Israel, called "Tandi" (Pouzol, 2013). Tandis was an alliance of an Arab women's group dating to 1948, Women's Awakening, and the Progressive Democratic Organization of Jewish Women. They allied around their goal of a "just peace" in the region, and in 1973, 5,000 women signed a manifesto proclaiming this goal (Powers, 2006: 104). Early women peace advocates were denied visibility in the early years of peace advocacy. Legitimacy for advocating peace was sought in past military service, which demonstrated loyalty to the state, authority, and expertise. Most who had this military experience were men (Pouzol, 2013).

By the time of the Israeli-Egyptian Camp David Accords in 1978-1979, women's exclusion from peace advocacy was beginning to change. The official negotiation teams did not include women. However, civil society was able to have an influence. Prime

Minister Menachem Begin (in office 1977-1983) began to feel pressure from mass demonstrations supporting the peace process, especially by women's groups (Golan, 2012). In response to the gender gap in government, as evidenced not only by the lack of women in negotiating positions but also by the lack of women in the Knesset, women began to organize for political representation. In 1984, the Israel Women's Network was created to, among other things, advance women in politics regardless of political affiliation. This group succeeded in creating a network of politically active women and supporting those who ran for office (Golan, interview, 2015). In 1992, eleven women who had been connected with the IWN won seats in the Knesset, as well as one feminist man from the Meretz party. These feminists, whether on the left or right, had influence. In that Knesset, compared to previous Knessets with roughly the same percentage of women, triple the number of bills on women's issues was proposed. Feminism had an impact (Golan, interview, 2015).

Women activists were some of the first to break the mainstream taboo against public dialogue with Palestinians. Before 1985, only extreme left-wing Israelis and Palestinians had begun public dialogues. In 1985, the first dialogue between mainstream Israeli and Palestinian women was hosted at the UN's third World Conference for Women in Nairobi. Some women continued the dialogue back in Israel and Palestine, and were thinking about taking their dialogue public when their progress was interrupted by Israel's bombing of the PLO in Tunis (Golan, interview, 2015). At the time, meetings between Israelis and PLO members were against the law. As Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas said in 2007, "Women were meeting when it was illegal to meet" (Women@Google, 2007). As mentioned above, feminist activists were far ahead of the official government position.

In 1987, the First Intifada broke out, and Israeli grassroots women responded by founding the Women in Black peace movement (Espanioli and Sachs, 1992). The Women in Black movement is still active protesting various conflicts around the world. Upon its founding in 1988, women from all backgrounds could join, as long as they committed to ending the occupation (Schor, 11). The group soon adopted an explicitly feminist ideology, and included Palestinian Israelis, although not Palestinians from the Occupied Territories (Schor, 12).

They were just the first of many groups who would adopt a feminist theoretical approach to peace advocacy. Feminist activists organized the first women's peace conference in December 1988, "Feminist Response to the Intifada." After the conference, various women's peace groups formed the "Women and Peace Coalition." The coalition established a feminist framework for peace in the Middle East, including women's participation, women's perspectives, and women's issues (Espanioli and Sachs, 1992). The coalition was also intersectional, embracing not only Palestinians and Jews, but also Ashkenazi and Mizrahi, and queer women, and addressing issues relevant to all these groups (Pouzol, 2013).

In May 1989, 50 women from Israel, the Occupied Territories, and the PLO met in Brussels for a conference, "Give Peace a Chance: Women Speak Out" (Sharoni, 2012). The core group was made up of women from the short-lived dialogue spawned in Nairobi. The Palestinian women included leaders of women's organizations and top politicians. The Israeli side included members of Parliament as well as mainstream peace activists (Golan, interview, 2015). The Israeli side went on to create the Women's Net for Peace, which worked on an ad hoc basis with Palestinian women across the Green Line. Their actions included a provocative joint demonstration on the border between East and West Jerusalem calling for Israeli-PLO peace talks. This joint activity was later

formalized into the Jerusalem Link. Also in 1989, the Coalition of Women for Peace joined with Palestinian Women's Committees to host another women's peace conference in Jerusalem, "Women Go for Peace". As part of the conference, over 6,000 women marched in Jerusalem (Espanioli and Sachs, 1992).

In 1991, a feminist was finally included in peace negotiations. Hanan Ashrawi became the official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Peace Conference, and specifically brought a feminist perspective to the table (Finkel, 2012). Two other Palestinian women, also originally grassroots activists, participated in the Madrid Peace Conference delegation: Zahira Kamal and Suad Ameri (Sharoni, 2012). In addition to the women at the table, women's groups presented a "Women's Charter" to Arafat (Sharoni, 2012). A Palestinian technical team on women's issues was created to advise follow-up discussions (Biggs, 2015). On the Israeli side, although feminist activists were involved as part of the mixed-gender Peace Now movement in the informal lead-up to the Madrid Conference, women participated only in lower-level roles. Global media attention to the women on the Palestinian teams pushed Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to add Likud member and Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Sarah Doron in the midst of the talks (Biggs, 2015). On the international teams, Aharoni also draws attention to the roles of two Swedish women, Heiberg and Yoll. Their active role "remains the best kept secret of the history of the backstage negotiations" (Aharoni, 2011: 399).

While not prominent in negotiating teams, women worked behind the scenes on both sides before and during the Oslo Accords, from 1991-1995. During negotiations for the accords, women made up the majority of the Israeli team that negotiated the postal services agreement, for example, and female secretaries had important behind-the-scene roles (Aharoni, 2011: 412). However, because they were not in publicly visible positions,

their presence garnered little attention and their influence was limited on overarching issues.

After the initial signing of the Oslo Declaration of Principles, women continued to organize outside of the official Track One negotiations. From 1993 to 2006, the most active and prominent feminist group was the Jerusalem Link. Palestinian and Israeli women connected over their shared experience as being disadvantaged members of patriarchal, religious, and militarized states (Cockburn, 2014). Comprised of the Israeli group Bat Shalom and the Palestinian Jerusalem Center for Women, the Jerusalem Link took a grassroots approach inspired by the concept of “power with” instead of “power over” (Golan and Kamal, 2005). Bat Shalom included women from the Knesset, and Israeli women had a real feeling that change could be achieved (Eisin, interview, 2015). However, the group collapsed in the early 2000s (Cockburn, 2014; Golan, interview, 2015).

In the 1990s, a new group was formed that relied on a different, less feminist rhetoric. Four Mothers was founded with the specific, limited goal of removing Israeli troops from Lebanon, and derived legitimacy from the fact that its founder-leaders were mothers of sons serving in Lebanon. Their goals did not extend to ending militarization or advocating for a just peace. Because they derived their legitimacy from motherhood, they were perceived as apolitical and therefore less threatening (Sasson-Levy et. al., 2011: 746). Yet they succeeded in pressuring the Israeli government to end Israel’s military presence in Lebanon, and some even credit the group with motivating Israel’s withdrawal in 2000 (Golan, 2012). They accomplished this through very political actions, such as faxes to the Minister of Defense, and by mobilizing a large part of civil society (Shapira, interview, 2016).

Feminist organizers saw the success of Four Mothers, and realized that Israeli society needed to be transformed in order to accept women's peace advocacy in the name of feminism as well as motherhood. The public was more open to motherhood or gender-essentialist explanations for the "women and peace hypothesis" than to a feminist critique of the entire military-security complex. To start changing Israeli society and make anti-militarism more acceptable, women's groups, albeit with very different approaches and effects such as New Profile and Machsom Watch (Checkpoint Watch), formed in the early 2000s (Sharoni, 2012). Machsom Watch, for example, uses female volunteers to monitor human rights abuses at IDF checkpoints. The group bridges the theoretical divide between feminist and mothering peace activism, using their perceived maternal identity to shame soldiers into being more respectful and humane (Eisin, interview, 2015). Even though Machsom Watch is explicitly against the Occupation, more radical feminists sometimes criticize the group for condoning checkpoints by monitoring behavior, rather than fighting to remove checkpoints altogether. Of a very different nature, New Profile challenges militarism in Israeli culture, including the education system and the army itself. The group self-identifies as feminist and includes women and men who encourage youth to question militarism and provide support for those who refuse to do army service in the Occupied Territories on moral grounds (Sharoni, 2012). One of the founders, Ruth Miller, grew the organization out of a study group focusing on feminism and militarism in Israeli society, which she joined after her son decided to be a conscientious objector (Beauzamy, 2012).

Despite the increasing number of women's peace advocacy groups, Clinton's Camp David talks in 2000 did not include women. When the talks collapsed and the Second Intifada began, public opinion in Israel took a turn towards "security" and against "peace", a trend that has not been reversed to this day (The Peace Index; Eisin, interview,

2015). The ethos of conflict was gaining more power as the conflict was perceived to be more intractable (Bar-Tal, 2015). Under pressure to be less “radical” and more “patriotic” in the face of increased violence and terror attacks, some peace groups re-positioned themselves within the national security consensus. Peace Now, for example, supported the construction of the “security wall” in 2002 (Pouzol, 2013).

Other groups continued to push an uncompromising ethos of peace. In November 2000, women founded the intersectional Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP), which worked against militarism and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza (Sharoni, 2012). In 2002-2003, the Quartet (US, EU, Russia, and the UN) unveiled the “Road Map to Peace”, prioritizing security issues (Friedman, 2012). The Arab League also produced its own plan, the Arab Peace Initiative. In 2003, the track two Geneva Initiative began. Women participated, with women coming from the highest ranks of the IDF (retired) as well as civil society. (<http://www.geneva-accord.org/>) Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (in office 2001-2006) acknowledged the importance of the Geneva Initiative, negatively, as too radical, referring to them as “other (harmful) plans” necessitating a counter-proposal, namely, his own plan to disengage from Gaza (Golan, 2012).

Meanwhile, efforts to ensure that women would be represented in the next round of negotiations continued as well. In 2005, the feminist Knesset members proposed and achieved an amendment to the Women’s Equal Rights Act of 1951 stipulating women’s inclusion in peace-building negotiating teams. It was an explicit attempt to institutionalize UNSCR 1325 in Israeli law. The amendment included a diversity clause, affirming that a “variety of women” will be represented (Aharoni, 2014: 16). This clause, an example of intersectionality, was pushed for by an Israeli Jewish-Arab female lawyers’ organization, Itach-Maaki, which recognized that having women in high positions was not enough; they needed to be diverse women as well (Thon, interview,

2016). In 2005, Abbas issued a Presidential Decree recognizing and accepting 1325 as well. However, the Israeli amendment and Palestinian decree have both been poorly implemented. In 2006, Palestinian women founded MIFTAH to work towards implementing 1325. Itach-Maaki has also continued to push for implementation in Israel.

During the mid-2000s, parallel to the organizing around 1325, there was a general shift in the approach and attitudes of feminist peace activism. Organizations began to emphasize the asymmetry between the two sides, and the discourse shifted from dialogue to solidarity, and from sisterhood to intersectionality (Sharoni, 2012). In 2005, a new group was formed, the International Women's Commission (IWC), that explicitly attempted to bridge the asymmetry adopting UNIFEM sponsorship and the inclusion of 20 international women alongside the 20 Israeli and 20 Palestinian members. The IWC attempted to address some of the problems that had led to the downfall of the Jerusalem Link by using this international model with neutral, international funding (Aharoni, interview, 2015).

The idea for the IWC came from the Jerusalem Link in response to a report on UNSCR 1325 produced by two feminist groups, Isha L'Isha and Kayan, in 2003. As Jerusalem Link began to schism, Bat Shalom director Terry Greenblatt and Jerusalem Women's Center leader Maha Abu-Dayyeh Shamas proposed a new feminist group which would include a Palestinian, an Israeli, and an international delegation (Essays in Aharoni and Deeb, 2003). They put together a team to work on this idea which grew into the International Women's Commission. It was an "experiment" to operationalize 1325 (Aharoni, interview, 2015). The group aimed to speak with one voice, a feminist voice, against asymmetrical and militarized negotiations (Simonen, 2010). The women of the IWC strove to use theories of intersectionality and human security to modify international and national policy, by hosting dialogues and leveraging international politicians. In line

with the prevailing feminist thinking, their strategy shifted from dialogue to consensus, with a non-hierarchical and transparent structure (Polfus, 2008).

The IWC published a variety of position papers, spoke at events all over the world, and met with Ban Ki-Moon, the European Union, and other international actors to push for Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. Former IWC and Knesset member Naomi Chazan pointed out, however, that “there was an inverse relationship between diplomacy and grassroots” (Chazan, interview, 2015). Domestic impact was limited by the marginalization of Israeli women in their own society, and by pressures against collaboration for Palestinians. This will be discussed in depth in the next section. However, the group “hung together because of outside gains” (Chazan, interview, 2015).

In 2007, official negotiations briefly resumed with the Annapolis Conference, with Tzipi Livni leading the Israeli team. Naava Eisin credits feminist advocacy for 1325 with Livni’s appointment (Women@Google, 2007). Livni did not, however, identify explicitly as feminist at the time (Finkel, 2012). Including one non-feminist woman was not enough to bring a feminist perspective to Annapolis (Weingarten, 2014). The IWC had been lobbying for a seat at the conference, supported by 1325, their large volume of policy proposals, and international connections that the IWC had fostered. However, “there was no chair to be found for IWC at Annapolis despite a very loud knock at the door from the highest levels of UNIFEM” (Polfus, 2008: 6). Although the negotiations between Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and PLO Chairman Mahmud, which were launched by Annapolis, came closer to agreement than any before, the talks collapsed when Olmert was forced to resign in the face of corruption charges.

In 2009-2010, Obama attempted to host additional talks. Netanyahu announced that the Israeli delegation would include a woman, but she was apparently never appointed, or at least her identity was never announced (Naili, 2011).

In the prevailing atmosphere of hostility towards peace talks, the IWC broke down in 2011. Bringing women in from the top didn't work, reflecting the lack of UN power in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a general shortcoming of global governance. The international women, who might have served as mediators, failed to do so, particularly when they were very much needed during stresses on the group, such as the 2008-2009 war on Gaza (Operation Cast Lead) and the Gaza flotilla, violently thwarted by the Israeli navy (Aharoni, interview, 2015; Susskind, in Naili, 2011). Physically, the IWC struggled to find appropriate places to meet. Israelis couldn't go to Area A, due to interdictions resulting from the violence of the second Intifada, and Palestinians were often denied permits to enter Israel and even East Jerusalem.

Facing a lack of progress via track one, Palestinians began pursuing other options, including pushing for statehood at the UN. The Palestinian Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS) movement, which was founded in 2005 and which is considered by many today as denying Israel's right to exist, presented another challenge to the group. The anti-normalization campaign launched by Palestinian NGOs during the second intifada brought additional pressure, as Palestinian women were suspected of prioritizing feminist cooperation over the national struggle (Eisin, interview, 2015; Golan, interview, 2015). The UN funded international meetings, but Palestinian participants faced criticism for benefiting from the "peace business", staying in fancy hotels and attending expensive conferences, without bringing anything back (Eisin, interview, 2015). In addition, one basic tenet of the organization, to "speak in one voice", began to lead to problems, according to Galia Golan, another member of the IWC. The beginning of this problem came when a few of the Israeli women failed to condemn the war on Gaza in 2008, despite a strong statement issued by the IWC as a whole (Golan, 2012; Golan, interview, 2015). Naava Eisin put it simply: "BDS broke us." The group struggled to speak "in one

voice” as Israeli women failed to support the BDS movement’s demands on total boycotts of Israel (Golan, 2012; Golan, interview, 2015). The activists were tired. Israelis felt like their government and public were against them (Susskind in Naili, 2011; Eisin, interview, 2015). By 2011, the functions of the IWC had completely ceased to operate and a decision was made, led by the Palestinians, to disband (Golan, 2012).

Since 2011, Israeli feminists have focused on UNSCR 1325. The 1325-compliant amendments to the Equality of Women’s Rights Law in 2005 have been poorly implemented, as evidenced by the Annapolis negotiations and subsequent talks under the sponsorship of United States Secretary of State, John Kerry. However, two have been able to use the amendment to lay the legal groundwork for women’s inclusion. Dvora, Women in National Security, which is group of former security and army officers, and Itach-Maaki, Women Lawyers for Social Justice, have led this cause. Itach Maaki has appealed to the High Court of Justice against governmental agencies that have not included women or a gender perspective pursuant to the law (Thon-Ashkenazy and Loevy, 2015). The fact that the law included a diversity clause meant that Itach-Maaki could bring cases even when women were included, if non-Ashkenazi women, for example, were excluded. The diversity amendment also made clear that 1325 was intended to benefit all women in Israeli society, including Israeli Arabs (Thon, interview, 2016). By 2008, Itach-Maaki had submitted seven petitions to the High Court, and had a successful petition about the diversity clause specifically in 2011 (Thon, interview, 2016).

The drawback to Itach-Maaki’s approach is that the legal tool is inherently reactive, and forces the group to advance the cause of one plaintiff at a time. The Supreme Court does not recognize groups such as Ethiopians and ultra-Orthodox women as discriminated against groups, which limits the legal action that can be taken to advance

their representation. Itach-Maaki had to choose one group to advocate for at a time. In addition, the legal system was not the appropriate arena to ensure that women being included had a gender perspective, which Itach-Maaki believed was important (Thon, interview, 2016). Dvora has had more immediate success by publicly demanding women's appointment to committees such as the Turkel Committee, created to investigate the Flotilla incident (Golan, comments, 2016).

The recognition that progress via the legal system was limited led Itach-Maaki to create a forum of 35 women's groups to draft a Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) on the implementation of 1325 in Israel. In 2013, this civil society coalition submitted a CAP to the Knesset. This plan "rests upon a basic re-definition of the concept of 'security'" (Thon-Ashkenazy, 2013). Anat Thon, coordinator of the Israel 1325 Project, said that despite their differences, "women left and right understand that the notion of security is the hardest barrier for women" (Thon, interview, 2016). Although the plan is not explicitly feminist, its definition of security is. The re-definition of security advocated for in the plan includes protection from public and private violence; the end of warfare; protecting and advancing political, civil, and economic rights; freedom of religion and from oppression; and equal opportunities for all women. The plan also calls for establishing agreed-upon borders and the end of the occupation (Thon-Ashkenazy, 2013). Some members of the Knesset were enthusiastic about the plan, and many see implementation of 1325 as a way to gain legitimacy in international society (Thon, interview, 2016). However, the Knesset has not yet released Israel's National Action Plan, and has not been transparent about the plan's progress (Aharoni, 2015; Thon, interview, 2016). In the meantime, Itach-Maaki has returned to grassroots work in an attempt to start re-defining security from the ground up (Thon, interview, 2016; Shapira, interview, 2016).

In addition, in 2014, a new movement called Women Wage Peace (WWP) emerged. This group has not been widely written about; I was able to participate in a WWP demonstration in January 2016, and interview a Masters student who conducted a participant-observation study of the group from October 2014 to October 2015. Like the 1325 Comprehensive Action Plan coalition, the group does not explicitly identify as feminist, although some members are both openly feminist and political, either as party members or activists against the occupation. The movement's goal is to push for a return to negotiations as a political solution to the conflict, but it does not advocate for a specific vision of what that solution would look like (Schor, 13). They eschew a political agenda, even refusing to use the word "occupation", and instead they intend to mobilize thousands of women with the persistent, simple message that violence is unacceptable and "enough is enough" (Shapira, interview, 2016).

The group was founded at the end of Operation Protective Edge in 2014, another Israeli operation against Gaza. During the conflict, more than 2,100 Palestinians were killed, as were 66 Israeli soldiers and 7 civilians (<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28439404>). While international and left-wing Israeli activists focused on the suffering in Gaza during the war, Women Wage Peace took an inward-looking stance focused on the costs of the war within Israel. In November 2014, over 1,000 Israeli women boarded a train south to Sderot, the Israeli city that suffered the most physically and psychologically during the rocket attacks from Gaza during Operation Protective Edge (Schor, 14). While WWP embraces diversity within Israeli female identity, they do not attempt to engage with Palestinian women from the Occupied Territories. As they demonstrated by their inward-looking reaction to Operation Protective Edge, WWP rarely considers Palestinian interests in their demonstrations or publications, though they do publicly include Israeli Arab women. The movement does not address the general

belief that there is “no partner for peace” on the other side. Rather, they seek to address disagreements within Israeli society before addressing the larger conflict (Schor, 17). At this point in time, overtures to Palestinian women might not be welcome; one effect of BDS has been the difficulty for Palestinian women to cooperate with Israelis (Eisin, interview, 2015).

Since this first action, the group has used traditional feminist organizing, including rotating, non-hierarchical leadership, round circle conversations, and “salon” discussions, to build a movement demanding a peace agreement. On the anniversary of Operation Protective Edge, WWP launched “Operation Protective Fast”, and women took shifts fasting in a tent in front of the Prime Minister’s residence for 51 days. Facilitated by their professed non-political nature, women were invited to speak with Sara and Benjamin Netanyahu, and had the opportunity to speak as well with diverse groups of citizens. The fast concluded with a WWP event attended by over 3,000 people (Schor, 14). The group is currently sponsoring screenings in cities across Israel of a documentary about the women’s peace movement in Liberia in 2003 (Schor, 14).

The group feels more comfortable with comparisons to Four Mothers than Women in Black, perhaps a strategic decision based on the greater success that Four Mothers found using a motherhood-based strategy than one rooted in feminism and tinged with radicalism (Schor, 15). Indeed, at the demonstration I attended on January 15, 2016, the women I spoke with focused on their identity as mothers when explaining why they joined WWP. Their main motivations for protesting were aspirations for “a better Israel” for their children and fear for the lives of their children in the army. They were planning future protests outside schools to coincide with when parents would be picking up their children, in order to reach out “mother-to-mother” (Interview, 2016). Going beyond motherhood, though, WWP explicitly refers to UNSCR 1325 in their literature,

and their name invokes the women and peace hypothesis (Schor, 6). Researcher Sophie Schor found that all members drew inspiration from their identity as women, and believed that as women, “they added something integral to the conversation about peace that had been missing” (Schor, 15). Schor explicitly compared the salon-style events hosted by WWP to salons hosted by Gloria Steinem (Schor, interview, 2016). Schor writes after talking to various salon leaders,

They are creating the public space for conversation that bridges differences and attempts to build space for dialogue between the fractured sectors of Israeli society. More than that, by empowering women to speak up about peace, and providing women the safe space in which to formulate their arguments, opinions, and confidence to speak on security issues, the movement is making a difference in Israeli society. WWP is making an important contribution to mending the fragmented Israeli society—from an interview by Federica Sasso, ‘Women are talking together about what life is like in Israel, what they want for their children...it’s powerful’ (Schor, 18).

Although Women Wage Peace does not accept the feminist mantle, they are currently the most prominent group carrying on the peace work done by Israeli women since the foundation of the Israeli state.

There are other groups of women organizing for peace, but usually of a small, informal nature. These many grassroots initiatives include one by an established peace organization, Combatants for Peace. This peace organization, which advocates for a non-violent struggle against the occupation, is composed of Israeli and Palestinian former fighters. The women’s group was formed only recently, subsequently to my stay in Israel; news of its formation has been conveyed to be by Galia Golan, a member of the new group. The group plans to work jointly in the activities of Combatants for Peace, such as its monthly Freedom March in the Occupied Territories and joint visits and lectures

amongst both publics. In addition, the women's group will address topics connected with the different ways occupation, war, and violence effect women as distinct from men. The group is not explicitly feminist, but many of its members could be described as feminists. Unlike the Jerusalem Link or the IWC, the group does not foresee framing peace proposals or political activity abroad, except as conducted by the parent organization Combatants for Peace (Golan, comments, 2016).

Israeli women, and especially Israeli feminists, have been consistently organizing to advocate for peace. However, the conditional variables from the theory are missing. Feminist women have not been able to influence official channels, whether as civil society groups or as participants in negotiating teams. In the next section, we will move on to the four predictions of the theory. How has the gendered security environment in Israel (and Palestine) served to keep women out of peace negotiations? And why have even high-level groups like the International Women's Commission, with the support of UNIFEM, failed to build a bridge to Track One negotiations?

V: Findings: *Challenges of the Israeli Context*

As we have seen, feminist women in Israel have satisfied the first premise of the theory, advancing a different agenda for peace and human security than the mainstream, whether in civil society or government. Israeli women activists, whether explicitly identified with feminism or not, mainly work to get the decision-makers back on track, to oppose the Occupation, and to change the military-security discourse that dominates Israeli society (Chazan, interview, 2016).

The other predictions drawn from the theory are that women will only be able to create change if they have influence, that proposals from women's groups will address more grievances than mainstream proposals, that proposals from women's groups will have more popular support because they address more grievances, and that when feminist women are involved substantively and significantly in negotiations, there will be a greater chance for longer-lasting peace. This section will examine how these predictions play out in the case of Israel.

1. Women Lack Influence Due to Israeli Ethos of Conflict

Women in Israel have struggled to gain influence in the peace process, as is evidenced in the preceding section. From Camp David in 1978-1979 to the chair denied to the IWC at Annapolis in 2007, feminist women have not had a voice in peace talks. Even under Yitzhak Rabin, who many women I interviewed felt had been the strongest supporter of feminist peace advocates, women remained in behind-the-scenes roles at peace talks. According to Ashrawi, Palestinian women had shattered the taboos about talking about Jerusalem and hosting meetings between Israelis and members of the PLO after the 1989 meeting in Brussels (Pouzol, 2013). Palestinian society respected well-

educated, articulate women, whereas the Israeli society valued military experience for peacemaking (Golan, interview, 2015). Therefore, contributions of women from the Israeli side were not explicitly acknowledged, and women present at the conference felt marginalized.

Issues of peace and security are “omnipresent” in Israeli society, but “legitimacy to speak about these issues is limited to certain spheres of society—mainly Jewish, Ashkenazi males [who have held] high-ranking army positions” (Schor, 1). Peace is equated with security, “the absence of war, in purely military terms, and thus women are further excluded from negotiations as ‘unqualified’ in military matters” (Aharoni, not dated). In Israel, the peace community in general is a relatively small minority, “under attack in every way, muzzled by the government” (Spitka, interview, 2016). The feminist peace community is even more silenced. Within the greater peace movement, women found that they tended to be ignored in mixed-gender groups (Golan and Kamal, 2005). Israeli society is a militarized society, based on gender binaries, with women unequally represented in all positions of power (Herzog, 2004; Golan, 2012). Negotiation about peace and security issues is perceived as “a man’s job” (Finkel, interview, 2016). In a society based on a military ideology, “women will always play a supporting role, a secondary role” (Malekar, 2007).

Israeli women who participated in the Oslo Accords, including the Camp David Talks of 2000, felt that they did not have enough power to bring a feminist perspective to their work (Aharoni, 2011). Indeed, Paffenholz’s team at the Inclusive Peace and Security Initiative did not include the Oslo Accords in their list of negotiations with women’s participation because there was no unified women’s voice. Women in the Oslo process were part of many planning teams and held many supporting administrative roles. Interestingly, one Israeli secretary said, “When someone [Arab] was insulted, a thousand

secretaries would have to be sent there [to the Palestinians] to ease things.” This reveals the power of women to cross over and “soothe” the other side (Aharoni, 2014: 384). Since these teams and secretaries were not involved with security, the “heart of negotiations,” their roles were perceived as unimportant (Aharoni, 2011).

Some activists and historians hypothesize that women’s perspectives were marginalized during Oslo because of how vocal women’s groups had been in past years; their “tendency to deviate from nationalist loyalties” resulted in being sidelined by the nationalist male leadership (Biggs, 2015). In some instances, civil society groups have been investigated and excluded from certain public spaces. In 2010, New Profile was investigated for “inciting refusal”, which is illegal in Israel, and have been prohibited from going near schools (Beauzamy, 2012).

Additionally, Israeli women faced a “gender-culture double bind” (Aharoni, 2014). Israelis excused the absence of women on their team as a logical response to the supposedly illogical culture of the Palestinians. Gender essentialism and Orientalism combined to form a static view of Palestinian society as hyper-masculine and irrational. Faced with opponents who held unreasonable views of women, the Israeli team claimed they had no rational choice but to exclude women. However, men and women from mixed-gender negotiating teams emphasized that Palestinian negotiators were part of an elite professional class who didn’t have problems negotiating with women. In fact, sometimes women could connect with Palestinians better, since Israeli men marginalize both. Some Israeli women pointed out that they had more problems within their Israeli teams than with the opposing Palestinian teams (Aharoni, 2014). A female negotiator from the Joint Water Committee observed that it was not Arab culture and the East-West “clash of cultures” that caused problems in communication and negotiation, but the inherent asymmetry of power between the teams (Aharoni, 2014).

However, by the time of the Second Intifada in 2000, women lacked domestic influence as well. Unlike Bat Shalom, which included Knesset members, there were few, if any, feminist Knesset members to be included in the IWC. Although there are more women in the Knesset now, they aren't advancing a feminist agenda (Chazan, 2011). Former IWC member Naava Eisin explained that when the Labor party was in power in the early 1990s, "we all had the feeling that we could reach Rabin or Barak or the Minister of Defense. I could try and influence them, quietly or not so quietly." But by the time of the IWC, Likud was in power, and feminist activists had no influence on the ruling political coalition (Eisin, interview, 2015). "After that," Eisin told me, "we had no influence. Why would they meet us?"

Women's issues were depoliticized and separated from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has put women's issues in a small box and limited the areas in which a feminist agenda is considered appropriate (Aharoni, 2015). In 2010, at an IWC meeting, Naomi Chazan lamented, "Women who have been active for decades in attempting to bring about a real resolution to the conflict – we are today a diminishing voice in our societies and a diminishing group, especially in Israel" (Chazan in Simonen, 2010).

In Israel today, you rarely hear talk about peace; instead, discussions focus on "security." The dominant military-security narrative allows only military and masculine voices to speak about security, and limits grassroots and women's influence. The IWC is evidence that in such an environment, the support of the UN is an ineffective route for achieving influence as well. Israelis consistently emphasize that the conflict is an Israeli issue, a local issue, a regional issue, and that other states (and citizens from other states) should stay out of it. The IWC tried to emphasize the opposite, that the conflict is international (Polfus, 2008). However, it is a general shortcoming of global governance, Sarai Aharoni told me, that the UN simply doesn't have enough power in this conflict

(Aharoni, interview, 2015). Israelis trust their own male-dominated military and security institutions more than the United Nations.

Because of the barrier presented by the conflict-supporting narrative, changing the notion of security is a priority for the dominant women's groups today, both the Israel 1325 Project and Women Wage Peace. (For more on the concept of a conflict-supporting narrative or ethos of conflict, refer to Bar-Tal, *Intractable Conflicts*, 2015.) In Israel, "the word peace has become corrupted", and these women's groups are working to reclaim it (Abu-Dayyeh Shamas, 2007). WWP is working to appeal to a broader audience by using the lessons learned from Four Mothers' success and by remaining apolitical, using strong simple messages that emphasize how peace negotiations are the "common sense" solution. Anat Thon, organizer of the 1325 project, told me, "If we change the notion of security, I don't care about the action plan. This is the biggest barrier" (Thon, interview, 2016).

2. Women's Proposals Address Human Security, Not National Security

Women's groups have been associated within Israel with addressing more grievances than official military or government proposals. However, the lack of women-influenced peace negotiations, and the current lack of a peace process in general, complicate the methodology of investigating how women's proposals compare.

Since the governmental peace process is nonexistent, women's proposals are coming from civil society groups. All civil society groups that advocate peace, whether feminist or not, will likely address more grievances than the mainstream government proposals, so civil society becomes a confounding variable. By grievances, I mean complaints that the public has relating to the conflict and its solution. Research on civil society groups have shown that these groups are able to address more grievances because

of their grassroots base and the fact that they are composed of people outside the echelons of power (Kew and Wanis-St. John, 2008). Groups that take an alternative, intersectional approach will tend to address the grievances of a wider variety of people. For example, women's groups tend to address grievances specific to women, such as violence that affects the domestic sphere or the conflict's reproduction of violent, patriarchal norms that undermine women's rights. Groups like the Combatants for Peace, Breaking the Silence, and Peace Now also advocate for ending the Occupation, and more radical groups advocate for boycotts of Israel, a one-state, or confederative solution. Many of these Israeli groups address Palestinian grievances, and embrace the concept of human security. Many of these groups are more ambitious in their advocacy goals than women's groups that rely on motherhood as their claim to legitimacy, like Four Mothers or Women Wage Peace.

However, women's groups still tend to address more grievances than other civil society groups. The mixed civil society groups tend to ignore feminist demands and women's equality issues, while building on work started by women's groups. The issue of asymmetry is one of many that was originally promoted by women's groups and has now been adopted by integrated, mainstream civil society (Chazan in Simonen, 2010). The impetus for addressing wider grievances comes especially from the feminist conception of human security. Among women's groups, there is a consensus that the "peace process failed because the human aspect was not acknowledged" (Malekar, 2007). The IWC explicitly said that "as women, we look at human security as a basic element for any kind of security. There is no military security without human security" (Abu-Dayyeh Shamas, 2007). Naava Eisin summarized how Israeli feminists envisioned "security" at a Women@Google event in 2007:

We know very well there is no such thing as a “secure border” that you can defend with an army. Even if the whole Israeli army stood holding hands on the green line, they couldn’t stop the Palestinian people if they are not satisfied that they have their own state and can live in whatever land is left after the Palestinian mandate was divided...For Israel to be secure, we need a friendly Palestine living next to us, and no guns can do that (Eisin, 2007).

Some proposals advocated by the IWC that fall well outside the mainstream include another of Eisin’s ideas, to give compensation to the Mizrahi and Arab Jews who came to Israel as refugees in the 1940s and 50s, just as Ashkenazi Jews who came as Holocaust refugees got reparations from the Germans. She sees this as the root of much of Israel’s economic inequality, and as a way to address underlying conflicts to increase human security within Israel and in that way advance the peace process (Eisin, interview, 2015). Women are considered to have a stronger sense of “power with” instead of “power over”, and therefore are consistently concerned with increasing grassroots support (Golan and Kamal, 2005). The IWC was insistent that future negotiations be carried out in a new way, one that eschewed a militarized setting and asymmetry (Abu-Dayyeh Samas, in Simonen, 2010).

Critically, women’s groups are often the only ones addressing women’s specific grievances. They embrace intersectionality and recognize the differences among women. They connect military spending to a lack of social services for women, especially from marginalized communities (Aharoni, not dated). They are non-hierarchical and strive for diversity (Polfus, 2008). They are persistent and consistent in a landscape of civil society organizations that is constantly shifting and changing (Chazan in Simonen, 2010). They connect the militarized society and the greater conflict with private conflict, writing, for example, that “many women suffer from domestic violence, whose linkages to the empowerment of the broader, patriarchal, and militarized society cannot be denied”

(Aharoni, not dated). In broad terms, the issues addressed and solutions proposed by the IWC alone are greater than almost any other civil society group.

3. Popular Support Limited By Lack of Exposure

Levels of public support can be difficult to measure. In her 2012 chapter “What Have the Israeli Peace and Related Human Rights NGOs Achieved?”, Galia Golan writes, “It would be hard to identify an impact even on public opinion, much less the government.” It is difficult to quantify concepts such as trust- or community-building. In addition, women’s groups have struggled to obtain media coverage. The Israeli media can be unwilling to portray activity that falls out of the mainstream security consensus, and women are also “silenced or regarded as marginal” even as members of civil society. “Our best efforts notwithstanding,” wrote an activist from Coalition of Women for a Just Peace, “the media have ignored our activities or ascribed them to other, ‘mixed’ [gender] movements. This has been frustrating and sometimes even infuriating” (Gila Svirsky, quoted in Abdo-Zubi and Lentin, 2002: 247).

However, some women’s groups have had measurable success, most notably Four Mothers. In May 2000, the Peace Index survey found that 58% of Israelis believed that Four Mothers had some or significant influence over the decision to withdraw troops from Lebanon (The Peace Index - Summary May 2000). Four Mothers made critique of the war mainstream, after first being called traitors, and a *Jerusalem Post* article called them “one of the most successful grass-roots movements in Israeli history” (Schor, 9).

As discussed above, one of the reasons Four Mothers was able to transition from an emerging and attacked counter-narrative to convincing the Prime Minister to withdraw from Lebanon was the fact that their motherhood-based messaging kept the focus on getting their “sons” home from Lebanon, not fundamentally altering Israel’s militarized

society. One of the founders, Rachel Ben-Dor, wrote, “All the time they latched onto the female thing rather than to the problem at hand. It allowed them to cling to the motherhood issues and not go in depth into the problem...On the other hand...it worked” (quoted in Schor, 9). Since women were still acting as mothers within the private sphere, they didn’t threaten the state as citizens acting in the public sphere (Schor, 10). Nor did they challenge the male territory of rational thinking, security, and political planning, by at least being portrayed as staying within the female territory of motherhood-driven emotions and feelings (Golan, comments, 2016).

Choosing a non-feminist narrative is a strategic move in a country that is still resistant to feminism. Hanna Herzog writes that feminism is not salient in Israel, which “results in few women at the top, who end up isolated and unable to advance a feminist agenda” (Herzog, 1999: 269). Even women who speak out about women’s rights are often hesitant to label themselves “feminists” (Aharoni, 2003). Even groups whose feminism is not explicit, but whose goals are considered radical, face difficulties. For example, Women in Black is best known for dressing in black, as if mourning for the Palestinians, and demonstrating against the occupation. Both these ideas were and are considered radical. One Women in Black member said that instead of speaking out as mothers, they “speak out as citizens and this is why we’ve remained out of mainstream” (Isaschar, 2003 quoted in Hermann, 2009, cited by Schor, 2015: 11). Even without an explicitly feminist public face, they have faced sexual harassment at protests, and members were considered “the threatening type of an over-liberated, over-intellectual, over-cosmopolitan woman”, something members of a group based on motherhood were not accused of (Safran, 2005, quoted in Schor, 13). Because WIB’s goal, the end of the occupation, is considered more radical, their impact has been small, if any (Hermann, 2009: 103, quoted in Schor, 2015: 13). New Profile, with their ambitious goal of

demilitarizing Israeli society, has also had little influence. As Dorothy Naor, one of New Profile's cofounders said in a 2012 interview, "New Profile wants to transform Israel from a military society into a civilian society, and we've been doing very badly on that, but that's not the fault of New Profile" (Beauzamy, 2012). Despite New Profile's many activities and the hundreds of people who contact them about conscientious objection every year, society has moved even further to the right, becoming more militaristic and fascistic (Beauzamy, 2012).

Women Wage Peace has attracted the most public support recently, with 3,000 people coming to the conclusion event for their fast last summer (Lis, 2015). In addition, their social media reaches 15,000 supporters (Schor, 2015). They have sacrificed specific policy or feminist demands in an attempt to garner larger appeal. Unlike previous women's groups such as the IWC, or even Four Mothers, which had a specific and political goal, WWP eschews politics and policy papers. They simply demand a political peace process. In a society more and more focused on maintaining the "secure" status quo after the failed Oslo process, limited goals are a strategic decision (Schor, 2015: 16). Just reintroducing a demand for peace has become radical, since "peace has become a 'dirty word' associated with the disempowered left" (Schor, 2015: 16). As summarized by Sophie Schor after her observation of the group, "The women proclaim the power of 'women's voices' to change the current conversation, but they do not discuss in depth patriarchal systems and power structures which have previously kept the 'women's voice' to the sidelines" (Schor, 2015: 16).

However, some messages of earlier women's groups have slowly become acceptable (and detached from feminism). Now, among mainstream left groups, the idea that "the occupation corrupts the occupier" is accepted and common. This adage was originally the slogan of the feminist peace camp of the 1970s (Malekar, 2007). Some

might claim that more young people today seek alternatives to combat in their army service, especially as high-tech and intelligence skills become more valued than combat experience. Moreover, according to one opinion, mainstream young people are no longer passionate about maintaining the Occupation (Malekar, 2007). The success of the campaign for implementing UNSCR 1325 has brought women's representation to the attention of the public (Finkel, interview, 2016). In a major shift from women being excluded from the security sphere, a poll from Ha'aretz in October 2014 found that two-thirds of the Israeli public support including women in peace negotiations (cited in Schor, 2015: 17). The shift in public opinion is such that committees without women almost always face some sort of public shaming in the media, although such exclusion is still the norm. Nor has this public support for women's representation extended yet to demanding diversity among women, or to challenging the militaristic discourse (Thon, interview, 2016). It will be interesting to track the evolution of WWP, and see how their apolitical approach fares among mainstream Israelis.

4. Will The Next Negotiations Bring a Greater Chance for Peace?

Based on the progress made with implementing UNSCR into Israeli law and raising public consciousness about women's representations, it is more likely now that if negotiations resume, women will be involved. If not, Thon described a lawsuit against the government for excluding women as "our dream petition" – one that Itach-Maaki would prefer to not have to file, but for which they have built a strong background (Thon, interview, 2016). As Anat Thon is careful to point out though, "If there are some women, it's not enough." A gender perspective and feminist point of view should also be on the table (Thon, interview, 2016). The next negotiations in Israel, when and if they happen,

will be a true test of UNSCR 1325. If feminist women are substantively involved in the next negotiations, I look forward to updating this paper with the results.

VI: Conclusion

The Women Wage Peace event that I attended in January 2016 took place outside the Israeli Justice Minister's house. She arrived home during the demonstration, and the women from WWP were able to engage her in a conversation. The women talking on the sidewalk, one a Justice Minister who belongs to Naftali Bennett's Jewish Home Party and who once posted on Facebook "Who is the enemy? The Palestinian people. Why? Ask them, they started it," (Hillel, 2015) and the others members of a new movement pushing for peace negotiations, underscore the message of this paper: not all women will be advocates for peace. Even the organizations based on motherhood, including Four Mothers and WWP, lack the support of many Israeli mothers. The fact that mothers in both peace-advocating organizations continued to, and will in the future, encourage their children to join the IDF illustrates how radical New Profile's aim of demilitarizing Israeli society is, even within the peace camp (Golan, comments, 2016).

The real variable, then, is feminism, not gender. Discussions of 1325 must acknowledge that women are not a monolithic group, and neither are men. Both can advance a feminist peace agenda, and both can fight against it. As IPTI says, it isn't about counting women, but about making women count.

The Israeli case shows us that women are more likely to obtain influence when they do not identify as feminist. However, this influence is likely to be limited to a specific goal that does not fundamentally challenge the ethos of conflict. If Four Mothers were explicitly feminist, they would likely have been unable to achieve their goal of withdrawal from Lebanon, due to the invisibility of feminism in Israeli media and the harassment that explicitly feminist groups such as Women in Black faced. Four Mothers' apolitical character, and the fact that they were demonstrating as mothers, was key to

their success. Achieving the withdrawal of troops from Lebanon is no small accomplishment, but this goal was able to achieve support from the Israeli public because it was limited. Mothers who explicitly identified as feminist, and accordingly challenged the security apparatus at large, may have been unable to accomplish it. Feminist women's groups seeking inclusion in peace processes face a challenge not only as women, but as feminists who challenge the dominant security discourse as well.

The fact that Jerusalem Link and the IWC ended up disbanding also shows that feminist, and especially binational, groups have their own internal issues. In binational groups, developments on either side, whether new outbreaks of warfare or more radical movements like BDS, can affect the group. The asymmetry between the two parties is especially challenging to these groups. Naava Eisin told me during our interview that she had recently watched *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, the film about Liberian women's activism that successfully pressured the government into peace talks. Thousands of women wore white and participated in various protests, including a sit-in outside governmental buildings. Eisin told me that at the end of the film, "I was crying. I sat in white, in black, in Tel Aviv, in Jerusalem, and nothing has changed. We got hundreds of women – but not thousands. The women of Liberia suffered. They had nothing to lose. Here, if you don't have a soldier in the family, if you don't live in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, if a Palestinian doesn't meet you with a knife, why should you change?" (Eisin, interview, 2015)

In addition to the gender-culture double bind, women seem to face a gender-feminism double bind. Other feminist Israelis who I interviewed echoed her frustration. Dr. Golan told me in an interview that "nobody ever listened to us [women] on the Israeli side, and they still don't" (Golan, interview, 2015). Until advocacy to include women in peace negotiations expands beyond rights-based arguments for equal representation to

include advocating for feminism and diversity among women, women's affect on peace processes will be limited. In the meantime, states should do their best to implement UNSCR 1325, calling for more equal gender representation in peace talks. But states should go beyond this call to recognize the importance of including diverse women. Women can be included as members of civil society or as representatives on official teams. The Philippines, Syria, and Liberia, as well as Paffenholz's research, have shown that including women does not inhibit progress, and if anything, adds value. Regardless of the specific impact women may have, peace talks should be representative of women and other vulnerable groups as a basic principle of justice.

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