
BODY, GENDER, AND KNOWLEDGE IN PROTEST MOVEMENTS *The Israeli Case*

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The authors suggest that social movements research should recognize more the potential of the protesting body as an agent of social and political change. This contention is based on studying the relations among the body, gender, and knowledge in social protest by comparing two Israeli-Jewish leftist protest movements, a woman-only movement (Women in Black) and a mixed-gender one (The 21st Year), which protested against the Israeli Occupation in the early 1990s. The comparison reveals reversed patterns of body/knowledge relations, each connoting a different meaning and outcome of the social protest. In the mixed movement, the body served as an instrument in carrying out the political knowledge and thus was left unmarked. In Women in Black, on the other hand, the body was the message, as it produced and articulated political ideology, simultaneously challenging the national security legacy and the gender order in Israel.

Keywords: *body theory; gender; new social movements; Israeli society*

Theories of social movements by and large have been detached from the growing field of the sociology of the body. Although the human body is a vehicle of all social protest, analytical questions raised by the “protesting body” of men and women have been mostly neglected. Since new collective identities (e.g., gay and lesbian, ethnic, and racial) are constituted by and through the gendered body, studying the role of the acting body in social protest is critical to understanding the cultural outcomes and consequences of social movements (Taylor and Van Willigen 1996).

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We study the embodiment of social protest by exploring the relations between the knowledge mobilized by the movement and the presentation of the body involved in the social action. Looking into the relation between knowledge and the body leads us to see the centrality of women's bodies in protest and its outcome.

Our study compares two Jewish-Israeli leftist movements that have protested against the Israeli occupation (since 1967) of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Both movements maneuvered in the same political field (Ray 1998), relied heavily on cultural and discursive strategies, yet each exhibited distinct protest practices.¹ The first, Women in Black (Nashim BeShachor), was an all-women movement; the second, The 21st Year (HaShana HaEsrin VeAchat), was a mixed-gender group. Comparing the two movements on a local level (Klawiter 1999) enables us to overcome the "dilemma of particularism versus universalism" (Ray and Korteweg 1999, 48). Individual case studies tend either to generalize women's experience in social movements by assuming that all women have the same needs and interests or to overemphasize the uniqueness of women's experience: There is insufficient dialogue between these two positions. A comparison between women's experience within two different organizations in the same political field (Ray 1998) can avoid this dilemma and teach us about differences and similarities in women's political participation and experience. Our article responds to the call for comparative research on social movements (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996) and adds a rarely provided dimension of comparison between a women's group and a mixed group. We place this comparison in the context of contemporary sociological developments on social movements and particularly within its incorporation of embodiment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CULTURE, GENDER, AND BODY IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Theories on social movements have shifted in the past decade in two major directions, toward cultural analysis and the gendering of both process and theory. The "paradigmatic shift" (Johnston and Klandermans 1995, 1) toward cultural analysis stemmed from the criticism waged against the "structuralist bias of American sociology that privileged mechanistic explanations" (Klawiter 1999; Ray and Korteweg 1999; Staggenborg 1998; Taylor and Whittier 1995, 163), emphasizing organizational factors, resource management, rational choice, and political opportunities. The cultural critique claims that organizational analysis focused on the "how" of social movements but neglected the "why," that is, goals and content (Melucci 1985).

Cultural analysis argues that the development of alternative cultural patterns is a major goal of new social movements (Melucci 1985; Offe 1985), especially those focusing on identity politics. By politicizing everyday life (Taylor and Whittier 1992) and constructing new interpretative frames (Snow and Benford 1992), these movements challenge dominant cultural patterns and codes (Swidler 1995).

However, cultural explanations must be integrated with organizational factors to understand the link between symbols, ideas, and meaning on one hand and social protest on the other (Taylor and Whittier 1995). Gamson (1992), who sought to reconcile theories of identity and theories of resource mobilization, claimed that the construction of an alternative culture is not only the aim of collective action but also is an effective mechanism for mobilization, as agents of the movements may construct a collective identity to maximize the movements' strategic effectiveness.

A feminist perspective demonstrates that gender hierarchy is so persistent that even in movements that purport to be gender inclusive, mobilization, leadership patterns, strategies, and even outcomes are gendered (Taylor 1999). While theories of gender in social movements tend to emphasize the movements' maintenance and reproduction of gender inequality, they often neglect processes of resistance and change in gender relations. Thus, a conceptual synthesis of culture and gender in social movements should draw attention to the movements' role in challenging the social construction of gender (Taylor and Van Willigen 1996).² Therefore, in our analysis of the two Israeli social movements, we explore the interplay between the types of knowledge developed in the two movements and their respective gendered organizational structures.

Recently, this conceptual synthesis has been revitalized by incorporating analysis of the human body as a site of cultural contest, a flexible signifier of identities and meanings, and an anchor of political knowledge and action (Klawiter 1999, 109). The past neglect of the body in social theory was a product of Western mind-body dualism that divided human experience into bodily and cognitive realms. The knowledge-body distinction identifies knowledge, culture, and reason with masculinity and identifies body, nature, and emotion with femininity. Viewing human reason as the principal source of progress and emancipation, it perceives "the rational" as separate from, and exalted over, the corporeal. In other words, consciousness was grasped as separate from and preceding the body (Bordo 1993; Davis 1997). Following feminist thinking about women's bodies in patriarchal societies, contemporary social theories shifted focus from cognitive dimensions of identity construction to embodiment in the constitution of identities (Davis 1997). Social construction theories do not view the body as a biological given but as constituted in the intersection of discourse, social institutions, and the corporeality of the body. Body practices, therefore, reflect the basic values and themes of the society, and an analysis of the body can expose the intersubjective meaning common to society. At the same time, discourse and social institutions are produced and reproduced only through bodies and their techniques (Frank 1991, 91). Thus, social analysis has expanded from studying the body as an object of social control and discipline "in order to legitimate different regimes of domination" (Bordo 1993; Foucault 1975, 1978, 1980) to perceiving it as a subject that creates meaning and performs social action (Butler 1990). The body is understood as a means for self-expression, an important feature in a person's identity project (Giddens 1991), and a site for social subversiveness and self-empowerment (Davis 1997).

Feminist scholarship on gender and the body teaches us that women's bodies are appropriated more often and completely than those of men because women's bodies are constituted within discourse, rules, norms, and institutions formulated and dominated by men (Frank 1991, 95). At the same time, the female body (like the male body) has an inherent potential to resist domination and power relations. Studies have analyzed the body as an arena of resistance through everyday life practices, such as hairstyle (Kuumba and Ajanaku 1998), body modification (Pitts 2000), veil wearing (Milani 1992), body weight (Bordo 1993), and cosmetic surgery (Davis 1995). Bodily sites are treated as protesting against normative codes of femininity, as a means of self-empowerment, and/or as constructing counterhegemonic identity.

Nevertheless, theories of social movements that have dealt with gender issues have not accounted for the power and impact of the "protesting body" and have remained largely blind to the centrality and specificity of the human body in collective action (see for example Gamson 1997; J. Taylor 1998). The general tendency has been to stress motivational and cognitive factors influencing social activists while ignoring emotions and the body. Yet contemporary feminist research embraces the conceptualization of the body and accentuates its role in collective political action (Klawiter 1999; Young 1990). Our study assumes the significance of human bodies as sites of protest and argues that "repositioning" of the body is critical for an understanding of social movements and their relationship to the gendered social and national-political order.

GETTING TO KNOW THE MOVEMENTS

With the outbreak of the *intifada* (the Palestinian national uprising, which started in December 1987), the Israeli culture of political protest was transformed and revitalized. This cycle of protest (Tarrow 1989) included a number of new protest movements that demanded an end to the occupation and a change in Israel's national security policy. The opposition to the occupation decried the oppression of the Palestinian people and cautioned against the concomitant moral corruption of Israeli-Jewish society. This cycle of protest against government policies was not only characterized by large-scale participation of women, but for the first time in Israel, all-women protest movements were established (Chazan 1992; Sharoni 1995).

Both the political and protest fields in Israel were fragmented in this period. The protest field was divided along the following lines: Right-wing movements demanded that the government maintain a strong-hand policy in the Occupied Territories, and leftist movements called for a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The latter expressed a wide range of political positions within the "master frame" (Snow and Benford 1992) of the Israeli Left, from the relatively moderate and extensive Shalom Achshav (Peace Now movement) to the small and radical Yesh Gvul (There Is a Limit) movement.³

We, the authors, joined this wave of protest: Orna Sasson-Levy⁴ was active in The 21st Year, a mixed-gender group of which women composed 65 percent, while Tamar Rapoport participated in Women in Black, an all-women movement. The two movements shared similar structural and political characteristics. In addition to a common political platform, both aimed to establish new forms of protest. Members of both movements also shared a common socioeconomic background: The majority were secular, academically trained, of European-Jewish origin (Ashkenazi), and aged between 30 and 50. Most members also shared a common political biography, namely membership in youth movements and/or kibbutzim, participation in other leftist frameworks, and a commitment to social and political involvement and change. Like their counterparts in other Western “new social movements” (Offe 1985; V. Taylor 1998), the activists had access to many types of cultural and symbolic resources and an awareness of their own power to construct new cultural identities (Cohen and Aratto 1992). Some women were active in both groups and participated in other protest groups (such as Peace Now). The spillover between protest movements created a “social movement community” (Staggenborg 1998) that shared the same political master frame and common cultural elements.

The 21st Year

The 21st Year⁵ was founded in November 1987 and declined gradually after the outbreak of the Gulf War in January 1991. It emerged after the publication of a political manifesto, “The 21st Year—Covenant for the Struggle against the Occupation,” which was jointly written by two young university lecturers, Yuval and Dan, who became the movement’s leaders. Distributed at demonstrations, workplaces, and parlor meetings and published in full-page ads in Israel’s *Ha’aretz* newspaper, the covenant served as an excellent instrument of mobilization for the movement. Hundreds of people signed it and donated money to the new protest movement.

The writing of the manifesto, coinciding with the outbreak of the intifada, signaled the onset of feverish activity in the movement. Activities included frequent meetings to discuss ideology and plan protest actions, home groups to canvas supporters, and the routine work of “education” and “witnesses of occupation” committees. The number of activists in the movement fluctuated by activity. Alongside a core group of 60-odd permanent activists, hundreds of people identified with the movement’s political goals and took part in its larger events.

One of the movement’s guiding principles was a demand to change the protest repertoire of the Israeli Left. As written in the covenant: “Expressions of protest against the Occupation are circumscribed by the national consensus; [therefore] protests do not transgress the boundaries deemed permissible by the Occupation regime.” The movement’s intention was to renew the “protest repertoire of the times” (Tilly 1978) to ensure that protest would not be subsumed by the national consensus. The logic of using innovative forms of protest was put to action, for instance, in the construction of a symbolic detention camp opposite an actual

detention camp in the Negev desert, to protest against the mass administrative detention of Palestinians. The event lasted three days and attracted hundreds of participants and extensive media coverage. It advanced the movement's political critique in a variety of ways, including an art exhibit, prayer sessions, and discussions on human rights.

A second guiding principle of the movement was advocating civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance as a way to refuse cooperation with the Occupation. The willingness to pay a heavy personal price to maintain the principle of civil disobedience was perceived as fundamental to effective political action.

A large part of the movement's efforts was devoted to ideological writing and debate. The leaders' access to intellectual networks and the media, as well as the movement's innovative protest actions, gave it prominence in the Israeli public arena. The movement's most significant undertaking was a demonstration in May 1989 held in Kalkilya (a small town in the Occupied Territories) against the Israeli government's policy of demolishing Palestinians' homes. The demonstration ended in the arrest and detention of 27 members for a period of five days. This demonstration was the only activity in keeping with the ideology of civil disobedience but also heralded the movement's decline. During the many meetings held to prepare for trial, it became clear that very few members were willing to pay the price again entailed in direct action. A gap between the radical political thinking of the movement's ideology and its actual practice was exposed, and there were no further acts of civil disobedience. The movement turned its focus to home-based group discussions and encounters between Jews and Palestinians.

In retrospect, *The 21st Year* failed to leave its mark on the Israeli collective memory, whereas *Women in Black* has turned into a household name for protest, both inside and outside Israeli society.

Women in Black

The *Women in Black* movement was established by a small group of women in Jerusalem in January 1988. It was active for six years, disbanding officially with the signing of the Oslo Accords in June 1994. The movement gained new momentum with the outbreak of the second intifada, "*Intifada el-Aksa*," in October 2000, and is active again in a few Israeli cities. The central and virtually exclusive activity of the movement is a weekly vigil held every Friday between 1 P.M. and 2 P.M. in fixed locations throughout Israel. The only prerequisite for participation in the vigil is the wearing of black clothing that symbolizes the tragedy of the two peoples, Israeli and Palestinian.

The Jerusalem vigil was the largest, most lively, and most determined of the groups that made up the movement. The Jerusalem group (to which we refer in our study) fashioned a style of protest that served as a model for demonstrators throughout Israel and for women's groups worldwide. At its peak, the Jerusalem protest encompassed an average of 100 to 120 women: a core group of 40 to 60 women who

demonstrated in the square every week, reinforced by women who came more or less regularly.

On arrival at the vigil, women would take a sign out of a bag on the side of the square. The sign itself was black, was shaped like a stop sign, and bore a white inscription that read "Stop the Occupation" (in Hebrew, English, Arabic, and later in Russian). After pausing for a brief exchange with their friends, the protestors would climb over a fence surrounding the square onto a round, hollow makeshift stage on which each took a more or less fixed position. In climbing over the fence, which formed a symbolic divide between the women and the Israeli public sphere, the women signaled the beginning of the protest activity.

Throughout the years of its existence, the movement maintained six minimal rules for the weekly vigils: the time, the place, the silent protest (no dialogue with the public), the black attire, the all-women composition, and the sign "Stop the Occupation." The movement respected these rules almost unfailingly and did not significantly change the style of its demonstration or alter its slogan. The result was a dramatic spectacle repeated every Friday afternoon, a minimalist public event that resonated in the square and in Jerusalem, and carried beyond the borders of Jerusalem—to the Occupied Territories, other parts of Israel, and farther. Since 1991, groups of Women in Black have organized around similar causes in London, New York, Italy, Spain, Azerbaijan, Serbia, Canberra, and more.⁶

The visual effect of the vigil was fortified by the silent protest. By not shouting slogans and hardly responding to provocation from the public, the women compelled the passersby to "listen" to them. Silence is not always mute: Situated in the center of a city, a silent protest "speaks" loud and clear, delivering a message and calling for reaction, just as much or perhaps more than do vocal protests.

Only a small proportion of the passersby expressed support for the women's cause and appreciation for their personal and political courage. Most reactions were harshly negative. Particularly vociferous were taxi drivers, many of whom came across the demonstration time and again as they drove through the busy intersection in downtown Jerusalem. Between stoplights, they would slow down to shower the women with sexist catcalls and curses.

Women in Black did not emerge as a feminist group, and most of these women did not refer to themselves as feminists. The movement did not hold essentialist perspectives, nor did it rationalize and articulate its exclusion of men from the vigil. From time to time, a few women would ask who set this rule, but they did not insist on an answer. The single-gender composition was a pragmatic result of a quest to employ alternative protest practices to attract as much public attention as possible.

THE RESEARCH SETTING AND METHOD

Each case study, as well as our comparison between the two movements, derives from our personal experiences as women engaged in protest movements and educated

in feminist thought. Our feminist methodology attends to issues of gender and gender inequality, while emphasizing women's experience, reflexivity, participatory methods, and social action (V. Taylor 1998). As the process of contrasting the two movements began only after completion of our independent case studies, the methods of each study are discussed separately.

Orna

The 21st Year was conceived at the Van Leer Institute (a prestigious Israeli research center), where I worked on a project on Jewish-Arab coexistence. I joined The 21st Year on its inception and was active for two years until November 1987. At first, participation in the movement was an empowering experience, enabling me to practice and express my political opinions and resist feelings of political despair and helplessness. The opportunity to take part in an intensive protest brought forth the political agent in me. But with time, I experienced growing feelings of anger and disappointment, which were shared by other women in the movement. We gradually realized that even in this radical movement, we were marginalized and silenced. The experience brought forth and eventually shaped my feminist identity and consciousness. When I went back to graduate school, I decided to write my thesis on the movement, focusing on its gendered and organizational aspects. My method can thus be termed *retroactive participant observation*, as I embarked on the research when the movement was no longer active.

In addition to my personal experiences, I studied the movement's discourse through analyzing its various publications. I also conducted in-depth retrospective interviews with 20 central members, 14 women and 6 men. As an ex-member of the movement, I did not play a role of "objective observer" but allowed interviews to become open and reciprocal conversations (Oakley 1981).

The reactions to my thesis differed according to the gendered position of the activists in the movement: Male leaders dismissed it as unimportant, and one even argued against my feminist analysis in the pages of *Ha'aretz* daily newspaper. In his article, he claimed that a protest movement must be specific and cannot confront feminist and ethnic issues while it struggles against the Occupation. Since "war is on the horizon," he added, the struggle against the Occupation is far more important than other social issues (Kalderon 1997). Such criticism echoes the national discourse that prioritizes security issues over all others in Israeli society (Sasson-Levy 1992). By contrast, all the women but one identified with my critique and said it expressed their own experiences in the movement. A few wrote letters of gratitude and invited me to present my analysis at meetings of other peace groups.

Tamar

I joined Women in Black demonstrations in Jerusalem in November 1990 and participated regularly until September 1993. Attending the vigil on Friday gained

special significance and meaning and became a focal point around which my week was structured.

Like many of the other women, I would put on my black attire in the morning, proud to announce to anyone who asked that I was a member of Women in Black. When my friend and I got home, full of impressions, we discussed our experiences and tried to make sense of “what was going on there,” contextualizing our discussions in our sociological and feminist academic scholarship. Driven by a strong feeling that to understand the movement we needed to conduct a systematic study, we started the research. From this point on, we participated in vigils both as “rank-and-file” activists and as researchers, well aware that our dual role raised the issue of the participant as a researcher (Thorne 1979).

We conducted ethnographic research for more than two years, collecting information about the vigil primarily by means of participatory observation and in-depth interviews. Weekly observations enabled us to examine the performative and symbolic aspects of the demonstration, and their dynamics over time, particularly in terms of place, time, mode of protest, and type of message. We focused on interactions between the protesters in the square and their various audiences. In addition, we held 30 interviews with women protesters that were recorded and transcribed. All the women, who differed in levels of activity and commitment to the protest, were glad to talk to us. They spoke freely and assertively, mostly about their motivation to participate in the protest; their related experiences, political views, and activities; and their perceptions of various issues in Israeli society. Ten interviews were conducted with cab drivers by a male interviewer, focusing on attitudes toward the demonstration, the women, and the state of Israeli politics. The cab drivers, who worked for a cab station near the demonstration site, were familiar with Women in Black activities, having driven past the square regularly.

We also distributed close-ended questionnaires (mostly by mail) to collect information about the women’s personal backgrounds, political attitudes, and modes of participation. Of 350 questionnaires that were sent out, 219 (63 percent) were returned.

Comparing the Movements

As sociologists and peace activists in the small Jerusalem-based academic-leftist community, we have known each other for many years but were not involved with one another’s research. Only after the publication of our separate studies did we begin a series of discussions that revealed our convergent yet very different experiences in the protest movements. We both felt that participation in the movements had empowered us as political agents, radicalized our leftist identities, and enhanced our feminist consciousness (McAdam 1992). Our gendered experiences, on the other hand, differed greatly: Orna recalled how she and other women of The 21st Year underwent an experience of silencing and restraint, while Tamar described enriching experiences that derived from being part of an all-woman

space. Departing from these experiences, we sought to compare the protest practices and the cultural patterns of each movement. The comparison, to which we refer below, produced a cultural analysis of the different types of knowledge mobilized by the movements and the different processes of embodiment in each form of protest.

POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AND PROTEST

The 21st Year: "The Text Created a Group"

We start this section by comparing the movements according to the type of knowledge each employed. This analysis is necessary to expose the relations between knowledge, gender, and the body in each movement. We begin with The 21st Year, which centered on ideological knowledge. As we will show, the bodies of the activists in this movement were almost "invisible" and unmarked as they operated as "instruments" in the name of intellectual ideas.

The communication of ideas in a social movement is a crucial cultural domain, constructing shared meanings and group cohesion. Despite its central role in group practice, the discourse of movements has been barely explored by social movement researchers (Fine 1995). In The 21st Year, the narrative, the written text, and the verbal elaboration of ideas were of major importance. Yuval, one of the two founders of the movement, expressed the centrality of the text in constituting the movement: "The process was that the text created a group," he said, using "text" to refer to the "Covenant against the Occupation."

The covenant laid the intellectual and ideological foundation of the movement and was conceived as a necessary means to organize the movement and define its practices. The purpose of the covenant was to "posit a new framework of thought, for critical debate and for political action," offering a new analysis of the effects of the Occupation on Israel society and suggesting ways in which to resist it. The covenant described the destructive effects of the Occupation as widespread and diffused throughout all sectors of Israeli life (economy, education, culture, the judicial system, and Israeli political thought). "The presence of the Occupation is total," the covenant declared, and it called for protest that would expose the presence and effects of the Occupation by refusing to cooperate with its apparatuses. To disengage from the discourse of the Occupation and open "a new field for both personal and public conduct vis-a-vis the Occupation," the covenant called on activists to be prepared to pay a "personal price" in a political struggle by using creative protest practices and strategies of civil disobedience.

The covenant served as an "elaborated key symbol," which according to Ortner (1973) classifies and clarifies an intricate and complex system of ideas and provides analytical concepts, orientations, and strategies for both thought and the organization of experience and emotion. The covenant provided the framework within

which to analyze the political situation and arrange and classify complex ideas, as it proposed orientations and strategies for action with respect to predefined goals.

The basic precepts of the covenant, drawn from contemporary postmodernist French thinkers, aimed to expose invisible mechanisms of political power. However, it used difficult, highly academic, universalizing language, making it accessible to only a limited circle of cognoscenti. The absence of a visible speaker also created the aura of absolute truth, in contrast to postmodernism's critique of metanarratives that produce an authoritarian "discourse of truth" (Foucault 1980). Through such textual practices, the authors assumed a position of expertise and authority vis-à-vis their potential readers. The centrality of academic expertise in navigating the movement endowed its leaders with a sense of elitist authoritarian control and ownership, which emanates from Yuval's words in an interview with him:

[The movement] was our baby, we established it, we wanted it to be the way we thought it should be, not just because of the honor and the prestige, but because we had *a conception that was very difficult to understand*, and one reason why The 21st Year missed the target was because people did not fully grasp it. (Emphasis added)

Expressing a paternalistic feeling toward the movement, Yuval claims the movement declined because the members were not capable of fully comprehending its complex narrative. His celebration of intellectual discourse was characteristic of the movement's everyday life: Various forums, sessions, home discussion groups, and conferences were devoted time and again to political discussions and analysis.

Intellectual knowledge framed the movement's boundaries of the collective and produced its elitist image. Those who were not familiar with postmodern academic thinking found it difficult to belong to The 21st Year. Galya summarized the problem as follows:

I think I began to see the problem when Yuval was talking and nobody seemed to understand. Do you remember [she said to the interviewer] what high-flown language he used? It was such a difficult evening; it was exciting and wonderful and all that . . . but they [the male leaders] were talking in such a way that only very few people could understand.

The abstract and complex language of the knowledge used in the movement functioned as a classificatory mechanism that reproduced and preserved the exclusive nature of the group's activity and its participants. In this context, it is obvious that ideology and knowledge would be the major mediums of protest in The 21st Year, casting a shadow on the body. Needless to say, the body was always present in the protest of The 21st Year (as in any protest group), especially when activists were arrested and put in jail or in the case of the symbolic detention camp. However, the body was unmarked in these acts of protest, both because it was "a-gendered" and particularly because it was employed for the sake of ideas, rather than carrying a

message of its own. As the movement used a wide range of protest tactics, the role of the body in performing the protest remained vague and inconsistent.

Women in Black: Minimal Ideological Elaboration

Contrary to *The 21st Year*, the relation of knowledge and body in *Women in Black* was reversed. In the case of *Women in Black*, an extensive inner debate is not essential for a significant act of protest. The movement's ideology was expressed succinctly in its slogan "Stop the Occupation," which the founder had borrowed from a contemporaneous Israeli political movement of the same name. The slogan entailed a variety of meanings with respect to a possible political solution to the Occupation, the reasons behind it, and its consequences in Israeli and Palestinian societies. The demonstrators, who refrained from interpreting the slogan and discussing it among themselves or with the audience, refused to change or refine it.

Given its numerous possible interpretations (especially calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and/or sexual occupation),⁷ the slogan may be defined, following Ortner (1973), as a "summarizing key symbol." This is a symbol that is succinct, consistent, and emotionally evocative and that represents and summarizes the meaning of the system for its participants.

In addition to the slogan "Stop the Occupation," the vigil generated only one other written text, a flyer that was drawn up by a number of participants and gained general approval. This flyer served as an "identity card" of sorts for the movement:

We, the Women in Black, are citizens of the State of Israel . . . of various political persuasions, but united by the call to "Stop the Occupation." . . . Many of us think that the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] is our partner in peace negotiations . . . while others are of the opinion that it is not up to us to decide who our Palestinian partner will be or on what the solution for peace will be based. . . . We are united by our belief that our message is powerful and just and eventually, will lead to peace.

Contrary to *The 21st Year's* covenant, the wording of the flyer was simple and nonauthoritarian. By employing the first-person plural, it expressed the participants' different voices. By acknowledging a diversity of political opinions, the flyer did not claim to represent a single all-inclusive truth but rather expressed the possibility of different yet coexisting interpretations.

The participants did not accord the flyer any particular regard and accepted it informally without discussion. The avoidance of ideological elaboration was made evident by the resistance to issuing any other written material in the name of the movement. Any attempt to formulate a shared ideology was rejected by the demonstrators, who considered it an individual initiative that did not represent them or the vigil. The written or spoken word therefore played a subsidiary role in constituting and sustaining the vigil and was of no importance in shaping the movement's protest practice or securing its survival.

The summarizing nature of the homogeneous message—"Stop the Occupation"—enabled each woman to maintain zealously her individual political

interpretation and position, while outwardly preserving a united front. Thus, women who supported various solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could stand side by side in the square, while the generalized slogan "Stop the Occupation" made it possible for them to maintain their personal political identities.

The importance of adherence to a personal (rather than collective) political interpretation was expressed by Deborah, who, when interviewed, said that she did not know and was not interested in knowing what meaning other women ascribed to the message "Stop the Occupation." In her own words, she attended the vigils

because of the boys [so that Israeli young men wouldn't have to serve in the Occupied Territories]. What do I care [if] this one is here because of feminism, and that one wants to prove to men that women can do what men can't do, and that the violence in the street symbolizes the masculine aspect, and another one that she loves the Palestinians because they're human, and she wants them to live like us. What do I care why they're here. . . . And really I never even made much of an effort to find out.

What mattered to Deborah, and other participants like her, was the existence of a framework that allowed her to protest. Within this framework, the women sought to exclude any personal or sectarian interpretation and thus succeeded in maintaining legitimacy for the coexistence of different political interpretations within a small group, essentially preventing the development of a homogeneous group identity. The absence of debate ensured that the different interpretations would have equal value and that no interpretive group would dominate the others. The group's solidarity and conceptual collectivism, which was all the outside observer could see, reflected neither the women's motivation and experience nor the social and interpersonal processes of the vigil.

Paradoxically, despite the rejection of a homogeneous identity, the power of the summarizing symbol "Stop the Occupation" lay precisely in its ability to forge apparent homogeneity. Yet the participants unequivocally rejected any shared identity. The inner logic that guided the vigil precluded ideological disputes and ideological affirmation. Thus, for example, at a meeting convened to discuss the action to be taken during the 1991 Gulf War, each woman was given an opportunity to voice her opinion. After listening to one another patiently and attentively, the women avoided any significant discussion, mutual criticism, or shared declaration, and the meeting ended in an ambiguous decision. The absence of ideological elaboration and clarification prevented the emergence of foci of power based on interpretive domination of the movement's political or ideological discourse.

The relatively long-term duration of Women in Black may be attributed in large part to its deliberate avoidance of any collective ideological elaboration of the political message, protest practices, or the vigil in general. This avoidance did not stem from a lack of intellectual resources to discuss ideological matters or from "expectations" that men fill this theoretical gap. Rather, the avoidance may be regarded as a protest practice that enabled the inclusion of as many women as possible in the vigil.

The case of Women in Black indicates that movements can develop culture, values, and rituals almost without formal articulation of the ideology. As Renato Rosaldo (1984, 178) observed, "The greatest human import [does not] always reside in the densest forest of symbols"; that is, "cultural depth does not always equal cultural elaboration." The minimal concise symbol "Stop the Occupation" had a strong cultural impact, even though it was not elaborately articulated.

The significance of the contrasted models of knowledge advanced by the movements can be further understood in terms of their gendered organization. As we will show, the model of knowledge in The 21st Year contributed to the construction of gendered hierarchy, while in Women in Black knowledge expressed through the female body challenged gender and national hierarchies.

KNOWLEDGE, GENDER RELATIONS, AND BODY

The 21st Year: The Knowledge Reproduces Gender Relations

Theoretical deliberations of The 21st Year were monopolized by male members, endowing them with a privileged status that brought about a structural gendered inequality that affected all spheres of the movement's life. This was clearly expressed and embodied in the traditional gendered division of labor, with the male leaders responsible for theoretical/ideological work (they wrote articles, composed newspaper ads, and represented the movement in the media), while the women performed most of the logistical and administrative tasks required to keep the movement going on a daily basis. The women ran the office, coordinated events, edited the texts written by the men, and managed the accounts.⁸ Such tasks, by their very nature, are performed behind the scenes and regarded as low status. The women's organizational work may be likened to the traditional role of the housewife: paying attention to numerous details and taking responsibility for the management and maintenance of everyday life. But despite its importance, and again like the drudgery of domestic chores, organizational work does not reward those who perform it with the prestige equal to that of the "ideologues."

Only in hindsight did Ruchama become aware of the movement's gendered division of labor, which she described as follows: "There was a sort of division whereby the men were [responsible] for the wisdom, and for the opinions, and for the theory, and for the ideas, and we were [responsible] for the foot work." Ruchama used four near-synonyms to express the importance ascribed by the movement to the men's theoretical preoccupation but only one word to depict the numerous tasks carried out by the women. The words she chose reflect the low prestige awarded women's work as compared to the men's responsibilities. Yael, a university lecturer, specified how the division of labor manifested itself in the day-to-day routine of the movement:

The women were the doers. No matter how hard the women toiled, when someone was needed for an interview, say, on the radio, on TV, in the press, or to appear in a representative capacity, people always went running to look for Yuval and Dan. I mean, it was obvious that they were the ones doing it, and they clearly and self-evidently took it upon themselves, while the women were making the phone calls and doing all the dirty work.

According to Yael and other women activists, for a long time both men and women took the gendered division of labor for granted. Ruchama's and Yael's remarks suggest a congruency between the gendered division of roles and the military distinction between front line and behind the lines: The men, who did the thinking, were positioned in the front line of the political battlefield, while the women were active behind the lines. The masculine voice that directed the movement on the inside was the same one heard on the front line. Behind the lines, feelings of enforced silence, negation, and frustration gradually emerged. Ariela bitterly stated how women's voices were relegated to the sidelines:

When a woman said something very smart it was overlooked and nobody took any notice. If a man would have said the same thing it was all right, or if another man said something completely stupid people took more notice of it than when a woman said something smarter before him. . . . Orit [a female member] came up with an outstanding idea, people took no notice, as if it were hot air. . . . And then Nachman [a male member] spoke after that, not having done anything for a while and talked nonsense, and they [the leaders] gave him center stage.

The criticism, and at times the disregard, leveled at texts written by women (such as petitions, reports, and proposals for debate) reinforced their experience of silencing and marginalization. Silencing occurred, for example, when Dan argued that it was impossible to publish Orit's reports on visits to the Occupied Territories because her style of writing was too poetic for his liking. On another occasion, two women drew up a proposal on ways to anchor the movement's political activity in a wider alternative culture. One of the authors of the proposal recalled,

We wrote this paper and wanted to talk about it, but it didn't come up for discussion. Everybody was saying, "We should be talking about this," but those who actually had to approve it for serious consideration were Dan or Yuval, and they completely ignored it. (Shula)

The experience of enforced silence was especially poignant for these women because of the gap between their high social status outside the movement and their marginal position within it. Many of the women were university lecturers or engaged in academic research, others were veterans of political parties, and still others held important positions in Israeli culture and society. These women, who had exercised their voices in other public arenas, were denied the opportunity to have a voice in the protest movement.

Dan, who was aware of the problem inherent in gender-blind social action, placed the responsibility for the gendered division of labor in the movement on the women:

We reproduced the division of roles quite amazingly. As I remember it, in my opinion, even though it may sound a little self-righteous or apologetic, it was extraordinary how the women collaborated in this business. I remember, because it really troubled me. There were complaints, but as soon as decisions had to be made and someone had to manage things, there were vacuums. They were always waiting for Yuval and me to say something, do something, tell them something.

Being aware of the movement's sexist structure, Dan tries to rationalize his part in constructing it. He claims that the movement's type of leadership emerged because of the women's unwillingness to take responsibility, an attitude that created a "vacuum" that only men could fill. This explanation expresses the normative conception that women are not political agents and are incapable of assuming leadership positions.

The gendered division of labor among the activists of *The 21st Year* is not surprising or unique in the history of women in mixed progressive social movements. Sargent (1981) and McAdam (1992) described a traditional gendered division of labor that characterized the civil rights and New Left movements in the United States. Molyneux (1989) claimed that the Left in Nicaragua seemed to be incapable of overcoming the "natural" division of labor between men and women. Alvarez (1989) noted that in Brazil, the sexist practice of left-wing oppositional organizations was one of the major factors in sparking the articulation of a feminist consciousness. Indeed, many women's movements have emerged out of other progressive movements precisely because the latter reproduced the patriarchal culture (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Young 1990).

The question then is why women in *The 21st Year*, with a wealth of personal and social resources, "collaborated" with a patriarchal culture that deprived them of their own power and voice. We suggest that two interconnected types of gender blindness may account for this seeming collaboration. The first relates to the women's lack of awareness of their inferior position as women within the movement. For a long time, each and every woman perceived her marginal position in the movement as if it were her own personal problem, thereby failing to reflect on it as a general political-social problem.

The second blindness that might account for women's "collaboration" was the dominant discourse in the movement and in Israeli society in general, which accords precedence to national security and military issues over women's issues or virtually any other issue. Moreover, in the dominant perception, there is a zero-sum competition between security issues and any other realm of life (Kimmerling 1993). Over the years, this situation has blocked many collective demands for equal rights as well as social issues from minority relations to environmental protection. Along the same lines, the contention of *The 21st Year* was that the joint struggle

against the Occupation was far more important than women's equality. This double blindness blurred the hierarchical connection between national order and gender order in Israeli society and then reproduced the gendered power structure and male dominance in the movement. Israeli society equates masculinity with security and both discourses with "Israeli eligibility." The 21st Year reproduced the order of precedence that constructs everyday life and relations in Israeli society. Thus, a theory of protest that drew on radical and antiauthoritarian social theories ironically reproduced in its practices the traditional power structures characterizing Israeli society.

Women in Black: The Body Challenges Gender Relations

One of the most important effects of social movements is publicly to enact images that confound existing cultural codes (Swidler 1995). When protest is expressed through the body, especially the female body, it is more difficult to tolerate because it challenges the existing order (Young 1990). The vigil of Women in Black was persistently disturbing. This is exactly what Moshe, a taxi driver who frequently passed by the square, complained about:

Okay. [Protest] is allowed. But it shouldn't go on for one, two, three, four or five years. It's fine by me if it's once or twice. Even three times. Do they think they own it? That it's their own private square? It's a central public square. And they have to stand there and remind us of it every Friday. They remind us of blackness.

Moshe expresses rage over the reoccurring symbolic "occupation" of the square by women dressed in black. Not only is the square taken over by the women on Friday afternoons, these women remind him time and again of issues he would rather forget—black issues of death, bereavement, and violence, which he prefers to ignore in order to get on with his life. Dressed in black, instead of mourning in private, the women dominate public space, silently daring to stir his and others' memories and conscience.

Moshe's harsh response to the vigil, and those of others like him, attests to the impression of the bodily statement on the Israeli street. The scorn, outrage, and aggression directed at the women were intended to rediscipline them exactly at the site they had chosen to express their resistance and protest. As their bodies were vehicles of public protest, they would be publicly disciplined through the female body (Bordo 1993). Thus, most of the invectives were sexist in nature and lumped together gender, patriotism, and national conflict. Shouts—such as "Arafat's slut," "Go get fucked in the Jaffa Gate" (one of the gates to the Old City of Jerusalem), or "You should be fucked and then killed"—sought to cast out the "traitorous" women, the "collaborators," from the Jewish-Israeli collective. But it would not suffice to expel Women in Black from the nation: The association made between national betrayal and sexual subjugation ("sleeps with Arabs") was intended to humiliate. The invective struck an analogy between the women's regard for their

nation and the use they were making of their bodies: As they allegedly “sold” both nation and body cheaply, their political statement was not to be heeded.

The attempt to drag women down to the level of wanton and debased sexual objects indicates two simultaneous targets of outrage and frustration: one concerning the content of the women’s political statement and their audacity in voicing it and the other in direct response to the positioning of an alternative body (Kohavi 1997). By exposing the link between the female body and the nation, these men were trying to reclaim possession of the former and reaffirm women’s subordination to the nation and to men in general. The reactions expressed a wish to remove Women in Black from the political sphere, the public arena, and the boundaries of the Israeli collective, thereby reinstating the familiar and taken-for-granted gender order.

In Israeli society, the female body is constituted in the nexus among several discursive fields, which together regulate the woman’s body in accordance with patriarchal principles. For our purposes, three discursive fields are especially significant: the all-encompassing field of motherhood that conceives of the female body through the prism of reproduction and child rearing, the discourse that conceives of women as sexual objects, and the traditional Jewish discourse of chastity that requires women to conceal their bodies and restricts them to the domestic sphere.

Women in Black confronted and challenged all three discursive fields. In contradistinction to many other women’s political groups, inside and outside Israel, Women in Black made a political statement not as, or on behalf of, mothers but as autonomous political citizens. Unlike other Israeli women’s organizations, Women in Black did not protest in the names of their children, of the future generations, or of warrior sons and husbands. This practice defied the dominant construction of motherhood as the women’s identity anchor and endowed the activists with an autonomous voice as political citizens.⁹

The practice of wearing black uniform-like clothing did not allow them to be perceived as “being[s] that exist only for the pleasure of men,” emphasizing their sexuality as a means of attracting and arousing men (MacKinnon 1982, 533). It was clear that their visibility in the public sphere was meant solely to advance a political message and not their sexuality. Stubbornly sticking to the square and giving voice to the “political person,” women like Galya, quoted in Kohavi (1997), rejected the rules of sexual attraction as pivotal to the definition of women in Israeli society:

I found it difficult to swallow so many remarks each Friday. They [passersby] told me how fat I was, and that if I looked different I wouldn’t have to stand there. They told me to go home and lose weight so then maybe some savior would come along and rescue me and I wouldn’t have to stand there anymore.

The imperative to lose weight was meant to reduce Galya, the political woman, into a “slim and attractive woman” whose main preoccupation should be cultivating her appearance as a sexual object for men (Bordo 1993). The men she quotes demand

that she reconstitute her body. In their view, only by adapting herself to the norms of (Israeli) femininity is she likely to be attractive enough to find a husband. Then she will be able to stay home where she belongs and no longer have to stand in the street. The audience's comments demean the protest as a default activity rather than a conscious political act.

The bodily protest of Women in Black also undermined the hegemonic contention that men's "natural" place is in the public sphere and that men must protect women who belong, as wives and mothers, to the domestic sphere. Women in Black were no longer willing to stand in the shadow of men: They took center stage. By making their bodies a political vehicle, they symbolically appropriated male domination (Kohavi 1997). In so doing, the women overturned and undermined social categories. Moving from passive subjugation to active participation, they challenged the meaning and structure of the public/political space and gendered order in Israel.

Jane, a dedicated member of the movement, describes the challenge in terms of gender reversal and as a source of her own self-empowerment:

I cannot refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories because they won't draft me into the army; they don't want me in the army. So I'm left with standing with Women in Black, which gives me a sense of pride. I think one of the reasons I feel this way is because women are second-class citizens in Israeli society. In Israeli society I feel as if I'm down below and men are on top, but when I'm standing on the wall [in the square] I feel as if I'm on top and they're down below.

Using implicitly sexual imagery, Jane states that her common experience in Israeli society is being "under" men. More explicitly, she speaks of power and authority in gender relations in Israel. The vigil offers her a "corrective" experience: Here, she feels that she is "on top" and that they are underneath her. Thus, Jane posits a link between the female body, sexuality, political protest, and the marginal status of women in Israeli society.

Aiming to advance a political cause, the women put forward an alternative, autonomous, and courageous body that challenges attempts by the Israeli patriarchal order to discipline their bodies. The protest activity turns into a feminist statement by challenging the constitution of femininity in Israel. This challenge cannot be explained by conscious or explicit motivation on the part of the women, as the movement was not established as a feminist one. Yet the protest practice chosen by Women in Black had unintended feminist consequences that made it possible for the movement simultaneously to challenge both national security policy and gender categories (Sharoni 1995). Like many other struggles over democracy, nationalism, and human rights in which women are vital parts and that eventually come to challenge dominant gendered relations of power (Basu 1995, 19), Women in Black challenged the division between feminist and nonfeminist social struggles in Israel.

EMBODIED PROTEST: EXPANDING SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

The growing literature on the role of the body in new social movements demonstrates that the linkage between the body and political protest may take on many different, even contradictory, forms. We suggest distinguishing two different meanings of the body in social movements: First, the body can be the major subject matter of the protest, such as in self-help groups (Wuthnow 1994) concerning rape, violence against women, postpartum depression (Taylor and Van Willigen 1996), abortion (Staggenborg 1991), and breast cancer (Klawiter 1999). In these movements, inspired by second-wave feminism (Ray 1998), body politics is the main cause of social protest. Second, the body can be used as the carrier for social and political protest, even when the body is not the subject matter of the protest, as in Greenpeace and the Greenham Common Women (Young 1990).

Most studies of social movements that deal with embodiment concentrate on movements of the first type. However, outstanding political and social impact may be achieved by women's movements of the second type, namely movements that engage the body as a medium of protest such as the Mothers of Plaza Del Mayo in Argentina, the antiapartheid Black Sash in South Africa, and the Greenham Common Women in England. Such movements have expanded the definition of who is entitled to act as a political agent and shifted the gendered meaning of political action in the public sphere.

In *Women in Black*, which can be seen as a movement of the second type, the body never remained unmarked or taken for granted; the body was the message. In *The 21st Year*, on the other hand, the body was instrumental in carrying the movement's political message. As it served knowledge and ideology, the body was left insignificant and unmarked, while in *Women in Black* knowledge was performed and communicated through the protesting body.

Our comparison of the two Israeli movements thus reveals opposite patterns of body-knowledge relations, each effecting different outcomes and meaning on the Israeli protest field, as well as on the Israeli gender regime and sociopolitical order. The 21st Year protest was assimilated by the sociopolitical order without being perceived as a challenge or threat (Sasson-Levy 1995). This cannot be explained by the movement's serious investment in ideological elaboration. Rather, we claim, the reproduction of hegemonic knowledge, gender, and body hierarchies explains why *The 21st Year* did not substantially challenge existing social categories. The recreation of the link between male ownership of the security field and the marginalization of women in Israeli society accounts, in our view, for the movement's gradual decline. Although its political discourse revitalized the political debate of the time and contributed to a leftward shift in the protest field, it did not become a landmark in the Israeli collective memory.

We contend that as long as security discourse is detached from gender-feminist issues in Israel, its dominance will perpetuate the hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995, 77) of the warrior. As a militaristic society, Israel identifies hegemonic

masculinity with the masculinity of the Jewish combat soldier, which is perceived as an emblem of good citizenship (Lomsky-Feder and Ben-Ari 1999). This valuation of masculine identity assumes a central role in shaping a hierarchical ordering of gendered and civic identities that reflects and reproduces social stratification and reconstructs differential modes of participation in, and belonging to, the Israeli state (Sasson-Levy 2001). Thus, only a movement that consciously and reflexively structures gender egalitarian discourse and practice may challenge the existing social order. When social protest reflects the existing hierarchies, its message is co-opted by the overall social order.

In contrast, the unique protest of Women in Black had multiple and radical implications. Its embodied political protest eventually expanded to a feminist "life politics": political action that emphasizes choice and the shaping of a lifestyle, in addition to self-fulfillment and a reflexive structuring of personal identity (Giddens 1991, 214). The all-women composition, along with the display of the body as an agent of protest in the heart of Israeli public space, produced unintended consequences. While contesting the national security field, the women constituted a new Israeli female identity—a political woman who enters the national masculine-political sphere in a new way, thereby changing its meaning and boundaries. By forcing the public sphere to take notice of what was supposed to remain hidden, the women asserted identities that were denied them. Thus, the women's mode of protest opened up the political discourse by redefining who is a legitimate political participant and what is the legitimate manner of participation. This mode of protest blurs existing gender distinctions and enables women to transgress them.

By undermining the taken-for-granted identification between masculinity, security, and "Israeliness," the Women in Black's protest simultaneously challenged the national security legacy and the gender order. The movement destabilized different fronts of Israeli political and gender orders: the Occupation, the cultural imperatives of Israeli "femininity," and the marginal position of women in Israel's national security discourse. Thus, the unique bodily protest mode that shaped Women in Black shattered hierarchical distinctions between knowledge, gender, and body.

As we can see, the body produces, elaborates, and articulates political ideology. It does not only serve as a medium for change but also realizes it. This leads us to suggest that the female body as a text of alternative and subversive knowledge can challenge deep social and cultural structures. Our comparison of women's experiences in the two movements might mistakenly be read as reinforcing gender stereotypes, assuming male-dominated movements as cerebral and women-only movements as body oriented. Such a focus on the embodied nature of sexual difference tends to universalize the male retreat from the body and female emphasis on the body as well as inadvertently reiterates biological essentialism that historically has grounded women's subordination. However, we maintain that there is no necessary link between gender and the use of the body as a carrier of protest. Both men's and mixed groups can and do use their bodies to advance protest (Act Up and Earth First! are good examples) (see DeLuca 1999). As the embodiment of ideology brings together the corporeal, social-political, and gender dimensions of the

protest, the potency and efficacy of the protest are fortified. Social movement researchers should consider the potential power of the protesting body as an agent of social change. The meaning of the protesting body should thus be recognized in exploring the effectiveness of movements in challenging existing social and political orders.

Postscript: Women in Black 2001-2

The collapse of the Oslo agreement and the second intifada that followed revitalized the protest of Women in Black. On 8 June 2001, and again on 28 December 2001, about 2,000 Women in Black gathered in Jerusalem to protest against Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories. Simultaneously, other Women in Black groups demonstrated in 150 sites around the Western world. On 27 December 2002, when another year of occupation and intifada has gone by, Women in Black gathered again in a busy corner at the center of Tel Aviv. This time, 1,500 women—Palestinians and Jews, Europeans, Americans, and Israelis; old and young; lesbians and straights—all stood together for two hours to protest discrimination and violence against women and to reject all forms of racism and oppression against the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. This renewal and expansion of Women in Black attest to the special vitality and potency of this original mode of protest, in which the body constitutes an alternative political and gendered knowledge.

NOTES

1. For details on the original case studies, see Helman and Rapoport (1997) and Sasson-Levy (1992, 1995). The study of Women in Black was jointly conducted with Dr. Sara Helman, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Based on Helman and Rapoport's study, this article also focuses on the Jerusalem vigil.

2. While some studies incorporate gender into their analyses and explore women's participation and experience in mixed social movements (McAdam 1992; Molyneux 1989; Ostrander 1999; Sargent 1981), most tend to examine exclusive women's movements that struggle for women's issues, such as rape or violence against women (Ray and Korteweg 1999; Taylor and Whittier 1992).

3. Yesh Gvul (There Is a Limit) is a movement that focuses on refusal to perform reservist military service in the Occupied Territories.

4. Except for Orna and Tamar, the authors' names, all other names are pseudonymous.

5. The movement's name had a double meaning: It marked the 21st year of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories while at the same time referring to Charta '77, the group of Czech intellectuals who opposed the 1977 Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia.

6. For example, during the UN 1995 International Women's Conference in Beijing, hundreds of "women in black" from all over the world demonstrated. For more information on Women in Black in Israel and internationally, see www.womeninblack.net.

7. In Hebrew, the word *occupation* (*kibush*) has double meaning, military and sexual (similar to the word *conquer* in English).

8. Very few men performed organizational jobs, while most of the women did. One of the men, Doron, said, "On the organizational and administrative side there were only women. Finance, making phone calls, doing—there were the women. With anything that had to do with talk there were the men. In

that sense I belong more to the women.” In his words, Doron reaffirmed the women’s interpretation of the movement’s gendered division of labor.

9. As with many women’s protest movements that draw legitimacy from their collective identity as mothers (Ray and Korteweg 1999), in Israel, all-women social movements, apart from Women in Black, have claimed the legitimacy of their political voice because their members are the “mothers of soldiers.” Some of the “mothers movements,” such as Mothers against Silence (Imahot Neged Shtika) and Four Mothers (Arba Imahot), transform dominant cultural codes (identifying women as mothers) in a new cultural frame to address their needs and broader human rights issues (Schirmer 1989). Thus, traditional mobilization can result in transformed identities, as in the case of Palestinian women participating in the intifada (Haj 1992). However, using motherhood as a source of legitimacy can be problematic as it upholds the traditional belief that motherhood is essential to the definition of any woman and is a woman’s only legitimate political claim. This danger is exemplified in the case of the Greenham Common camp that idealized women’s capacity to have children and emphasized their motherhood as the central motive for their political action. Some women worried that this theme could be seized by the media, subverted, and turned into a mechanism for control. And, indeed, the question of women’s role as mothers was used frequently as a source for criticism in the English media that asked, If they were so fond of children, why were they not at home with them (Young 1990)?

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