Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of International Relations

WOMEN IN ISRAELI ARMY IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER, MILITARIZATION AND NATION-BUILDING

Tutku Nur BAYRI

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

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The jury finds that Tutku Nur Bayrı has on the date of 29 May 2024 successfully passed the defense examination and approves her Master's Thesis titled "Women in Israeli Army in the Context of Gender, Militarization and Nation-Building".

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ETİK BEYAN

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ABSTRACT

BAYRI, Tutku Nur. *Women in Israeli Army in the Context of Gender, Militarization and Nation-Building*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

In Israel, soldiers are seen as the embodiment of what it means to be Israeli, both in terms of providing physical protection and representing the community as a whole. This is the source of a sense of belonging that creates a perception of 'us and others' through militarization, the state, ethnicity and gender, in a cyclical process. The conscious production and suppression of difference, both to be feared and to be fought against, requires the repetitive production of the perception of security through 'fear'. Such a state of 'insecurity' led to the inclusion of women in the army, surrounded by patriarchal structures. Within this framework, this thesis will try to understand and explain, in the light of feminist perspectives and nationalist ideologies, how being a woman in the male-dominated army and military, which is seen as both respectable and mysterious due to its unknowns and difficulties, can bring heavy burdens, both moral and physical. Accordingly, it shows how women's participation in the military during and after the nation-building process has been shaped by the structuring of the Israeli military, from dispersed to organized, in the historical context, including changing state objectives and national interests and strategies. It shows how the internal and external patriarchal order in the military is reflected in the service requirements and qualifications of gendered military roles, and how women have been instrumentalised in the military by being placed in secondary roles, mostly non-combatant positions defined as 'women's work', under the guise of national interests and so-called equality.

Keywords

Militarization, feminism, nation-building, Israeli army, organized fear, non-combatant roles.

ÖZET

BAYRI, Tutku Nur. *Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Militarizasyon ve Ulus-İnşası Bağlamında İsrail Ordusunda Kadınlar*, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

İsrail'de askerler hem fiziksel koruma sağlamaları hem de toplumu bir bütün olarak temsil etmeleri bakımından İsrailli olmanın ne anlama geldiğinin somutlaşmış hali olarak görülmektedir. Bu, döngüsel bir süreç içinde militarizasyon, devlet, etnisite ve toplumsal cinsiyet üzerinden 'biz ve ötekiler' algısı yaratan aidiyet duygusunun kaynağıdır. Hem korkulacak hem de mücadele edilecek farklılığın bilinçli olarak üretilmesi ve bastırılması, güvenlik algısının 'korku' üzerinden tekrar tekrar üretilmesini gerektirmektedir. Böylesi bir 'güvensizlik' hali, ataerkil yapılarla kuşatılmış orduya kadınların da dahil edilmesine neden olmuştur. Bu çerçevede, bu tez bilinmezlikleri ve zorlukları nedeniyle hem saygın hem de gizemli olarak görülen erkek egemen ordu ve askerlik olgularının içinde kadın olmanın hem manevi hem fiziksel olarak ne kadar ağır yükler getirebileceğini feminist perspektif ve milliyetçi ideolojiler ışığında anlamaya ve anlatmaya çalışacaktır. Bu doğrultuda, ulus inşası sürecinde ve sonrasında kadınların orduya katılımının; değişen devlet hedefleri ve ulusal çıkarlar ve stratejiler de dahil olmak üzere tarihsel bağlamda İsrail ordusunun dağınık yapıdan organize yapıya doğru örgütlenmesiyle nasıl şekillendiği gösterilecektir. Bu tezde hem iç hem de dış ataerkil düzenin ordudaki yansıması, toplumsal cinsiyete dayanarak atfedilen askeri rollerin hizmet gereklilikleri ve nitelikleri açısından gösterilecek ve kadınların ulusal çıkarlar ve sözde eşitlik kisvesi altında, ikincil rollerde, çoğunlukla 'kadın işi' olarak tanımlanan savaşçı olmayan pozisyonlarda, konumlandırılarak orduda nasıl araçsallaştırıldıkları sunulacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Militarizasyon, feminizm, ulus inşası, İsrail ordusu, toplumsal cinsiyet, örgütlü korku, muharip olmayan roller.

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INTRODUCTION

The state of war in Israel has made the army a part of the circle of life for everyone. The Israeli army, which dates back to the first decade of the 20th century, is at the forefront of security both conceptually and practically. This is evidence of the militarization that dominates all of daily life. Throughout the development of the security forces, women have played a significant role. Thus, the debate on the extent and participation of women in the security forces, has always existed in rigorous discussions among different groups in the Yishuv (Jewish society). However, this issue has not been properly interpreted. Even more striking than the changes examined in the historical context is the remarkable consistency, even for a near state, in the arguments for and against the integration of women in various aspects of defence. Although Israel is a country known for its planned and organized structure, there has been no clear policy on the participation of women in the armed forces. As a result, the role of women has developed in a process rather than in a planned way.

The traditional cultural separation of the two worlds of women and men has been the main source of this process.[1] According to the 'spheres' identified in the description of women's universal status-concerns[2], the world of women is generally labelled as secondary to the world of men. This separation creates an entity that supersedes the individual. This supersession creates an ideal centre of gravity for each individual, which is not in himself/herself, but in the whole, of which s/he is an important part.

The process of integrating women into the Israeli army began with the narrative of gender equality in Jewish life. Its quality was one of the components of a higher entity described for all individuals as a constructed value, but it was not functionalized in a very real sense. Over time, the issue was further complicated by misconceptions about the boundaries of the separate worlds of Jewish men and women. For instance, in the *Shtetl,* the small-town Jewish community in Eastern Europe, important economic roles were taken on women,

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[1] Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life Is With People?,* (New York: Schocken Books,1952), 128.
[2] Peggy R. Sanday, "Female Status in the Public Domain," in *Woman, culture, and society*, eds. by Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, Louise Lamphere, and Bamberger Joan, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1974), 190.

who were generally the main breadwinners for their families. Nevertheless, the family was represented in the community and in the outside world has been represented by Jewish men, and the prestige was attached primarily to the male role.

In 19th century Europe, in intellectual and revolutionary circles, 'the emancipation of women' was a defined issue, whereas in early Zionism, it was not. The problem of Jewish existence emerged as a fundamental social question, and became the overriding issue on which all efforts were concentrated. Although the pressure of pioneering in a challenging atmosphere provided a further impetus towards equality among the participants, the issue of gender equality was more or less taken for granted.[3]

In this context, the military role of women in Israel has evolved historically, but only one part of this evolution has been represented by the individual choices and cultural attitudes and behaviours. The influence of political and religious ideologies, as well as, economic, social, and demographic realities, has had a significant impact on the military role of women. In this multifactorial equation, with the shift from volunteerism the professionalism with the establishment of the state, women's participation in the military has gone from cohesion to confusion. This confusion has also raised questions - such as *whether women are promoted beyond the rank of colonel, whether are given meaningful and powerful military positions beyond the advisory positions, whether women soldiers have access to decision-making mechanisms or roles-* as to whether women's participation in the army is a real integration. In fact, women's participation in the army has always been based on how women should be, rather than how women are or can be. Therefore, the most common story regarding the integration of women into the Israeli military unit is their use, which is both ad hoc and pragmatic in nature.

All of this led to the main research question of this thesis: *Why do women remain participants in the construction of national identity in Israel in terms of militarism, nationalism, and gender?* The topic has also been deepened through a number of sub-questions, such as *Why are women assigned to the secondary roles in the military-the*

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[3] Daphne Nundi Izraeli, "The Women's Movement in Palestine, 1911-1927", Paper presented at *the Ninth World Conference on the International Sociological Association*, (Upsala/Sweden, 1978): 3.

othering of women, although they share the same mission with men which is the preservation of the national security and the existence of the state? and *Does the inclusion of women in the military alongside men create a real equality and integration?*

Israel's basic policy has been to have neither permanent friendship nor permanent enmity, only permanent interests because of its small population, geography, siege mentality, and the need for deterrence. This requires great military power and a high degree of aggression. Therefore, at the intersection point of state's ideologies and politics, the state, military service and citizenship have become phenomena. With the shift to professional volunteer armies, especially in the Western nation-states, this intimacy began to be questioned. This raises the question of whether the army is a national army or a colonial army, as the power of the army to shape the meaning of citizenship in general seems to be diminishing. Since 1948, Israel has a history of using mercenaries from various countries in its wars, including the United States (USA), France, Spain and Ukraine. Under the 'Mahal Program'[4]- which allows men under the age of 24 and women under the age of 21 to serve in the Israeli Defence Forces for 18 to 24 months, even if they do not have Israeli citizenship, provided that at least one grandfather or grandmother is Jewish -the Israeli army is authorised to recruit Jews from any part of the world.[5] In addition, any Jewish individual has the right to become a citizen of the State of Israel. Most foreigners who take advantage of this right and obtain dual citizenship can serve in the Israeli army as active, reserve or volunteers. However, it is fair to say that the link between military service and citizenship remains important in Israel due to the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict and the development of civilian militarism. In Israeli culture, which is imbued with militaristic values, a person's presence and rank in the army creates a hierarchy of belonging that determines access to various social, political and economic resources, and demonstrates loyalty to the state. This is, in fact, a situation created within the framework of identity between the understanding of citizenship and military service.

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[4] If you want to learn more information, you can visit https://www.mahal-idf-volunteers.org/ . There are other programmes that support volunteer participation. In this context, Sar-El programmes, which offer prospective volunteers the opportunity to live and work on IDF bases and gain a perspective from inside on Israel, assists in the execution of non-combat support and maintenance and repair tasks. Cf. https://www.sar-el.org/programs/ .

[5] "İsrail Neden Yabancı Asker Kullanıyor?", *GZT*, (Date of Access: 10.06.2024), https://www.gzt.com/jurnalist/israil-neden-yabanci-asker-kullaniyor-3785076 .

In this regard, the liberal discourse of citizenship, military service is perceived as part of the minimum obligations of citizens to the state, in return for the recognition of citizens as having equal civil, political and social rights. It is also argued that the introduction of compulsory conscription laws within the normative definition of citizenship has expanded the scope of citizenship to include wider social groups.[6] The Republican discourse, which recognises citizenship in terms of the individual's contribution to the 'common good' of the collective, emphasises the individual's willingness to sacrifice himself/herself for the good of the country.[7] Therefore, in militarist societies, military service shapes a differentiated structure of citizenship by constituting a criterion for the individual's citizenship and patriotism.[8]

Within this framework, the Israeli army is an exceptional army, that reflects the contradictory nature of women's citizenship more than any other institution: on the one hand, it bears traces of the pre-state socialist ideology -the people's army- and on the other hand, it implements compulsory military service for both men and women due to security needs. Thus, conscription not only meets security needs, but also builds a gendered egalitarian citizenship. In this framework, Feminist International Relations Theory is preferred, as approaching the issue with traditional International Relations theories provides a limited perspective that may not take the evaluation beyond the security study.

So, what have feminists criticised about the identification of citizenship with military service? As a result of this identification, it is stated that citizenship is constructed according to the life cycle of men, thus creating a different and hierarchical citizenship for men and women. As a result, they are not perceived as partners with men in the ultimate obligation to the state, because they are prevented from performing and expressing themselves on the battlefield, which results in them not having the same rights

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[6] Thomas H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1950).
[7] Gershon Shafir, "Introduction," in *The Citizenship Debate*, ed. by Gershon Shafir, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 1-28.
[8] Orna Sasson-Levy and Sarit Amram-Katz, "Gender integration in Israeli officer training: Degendering and regendering the military," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 33, no.1 (2007):109-111.

and privileges as men.[9] With this criticism, two different feminist approaches to the question women's participation in the military have emerged. The first one is the liberal-feminist approach, which believes that the full participation of women in the public sphere is the source of full equality, and states that full responsibility and full equality also bring the full citizenship, since the exclusion of women soldiers from combat positions means placing women in an undifferentiated, inferior category by limiting the number of jobs for them and depriving women of the opportunities for advancement in civilian life after discharge from the army. Other liberal feminists also emphasise the possibility of women's participation in the military to change the male culture of military. On the other hand, radical feminists who oppose the military's deeply masculinist culture of violence and oppression of women, emphasise gender differences that tend to embody the traditional image of women as caregivers, protectors of life, and peacemakers, thus inherently reinforcing an essentialist approach to gender. In this sense, the military emerges as a fundamentally immoral institution, and women's struggle for inclusion in such an institution distracts from a critical analysis of the purposes and functions of military institutions. In response to these approaches, the military approach to explaining the exclusion of women from combat roles, asserts gender differences by rationalising that the integration of woman into combat roles is inefficient due to physiological issues such as sexual attraction, pregnancy, the possibility of women being raped as prisoners of war, and by claiming that women are not aggressive enough for combat positions.[10]

Contrary to the tendency in the ongoing feminist debate on women's military service to see women soldiers as pawns in a larger game, and generally to see them in combat roles as obstructing the military gender system and thus damaging the efficiency of the masculine mechanism of war, feminist observers see women soldiers as serving or harming the interests of women as a whole. In this debate, the most important question is whether military service is a sphere of equal citizenship for women or a place that reinforces and reifies masculine concepts of martial citizenship. As a result, the contemporary debate on women in the military service remains at the macro level,

[9] Carol Pateman, *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism, and Political Theory*, (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), 11.
[10] Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, "Gender integration in Israeli officer training," 111-112.

neglecting the gendered experiences of female soldiers themselves. In this sense, this thesis positions feminism to focus on the subjective gendered experiences of female soldiers in both traditional and non-traditional roles, and to interpret these experiences at not only at the micro level, which includes the effects on women's lives, but also at the macro level, which includes the 'gender regimes' of the military and the state.

Accordingly, the feminist perspective, which emphasises that there are certain types of roles assigned to men and women and that they are far from being equal in social and civilian life due to stereotypes based on the physiological and psychological nature of men and women, is considered to be a consistent approach to understanding whether the participation of women in an army that calls itself as a 'people's army' is a true integration. In addition, the military's super-identity is given by the constant feeling of insecurity, so that women, like the state and the nation, are recognised as phenomena that need to be protected. Placing women in the position of 'protectors', by including them in the army sends a double message to the female soldiers, by sufficiently confining their lives to doing national service and by returning to the community's understanding of their role as woman. Thus, in terms of nationalism and nation- building it is good for Israeli women to be strong and aggressive when Israel is in danger, but women have only been called to be strong and aggressive when Israel's survival at stake.[11] With the end of a crisis or emergency, it becomes patriarchal and hegemonic masculinity reasserts itself.

In this framework, men and women are seen as equal but different, so this is not the 'people's army' but the army of men supported by women. Thus, women are relegated to the secondary role, which is restricted in parallel with the traditional dichotomies of public and private spheres to the demands of the feminist understanding. This restriction creates an instrumental rather than an egalitarian approach because of the intention to involve women in the nation-building process. However, it is likely that their presence in the army, even with women under male control and in subordinate roles, has opened up new areas of resistance for them. Women therefore represent the 'other' against the other. On the one hand, there is a sensitive female or a feminized counterpart and in need of

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[11] Amos Perlmutter, *Military and Politics in Israel, Nation- Building and Role Expansion,* (London: Frank Cass., 1969), 9.

protection, and on the other hand, there is the male soldier both fighting the enemy and protecting the woman.

From a feminist point of view, certain behaviour that are well-suited to military service and a possible fighting spirit, such as competitiveness, unsentimentality, perseverance, and the like, are considered as masculine traits. The image of a fragile woman, on which all this is based, is maintained partly as a result of social processes in which danger and dependence are imposed on women and in which they are given second-class status. Women are therefore only participants in this context. The fact that they generally take on roles outside of the battlefield has led them to do what can be called 'women's work' in terms of gender. As stated in the claims of the feminist understanding, the prevalence of women's roles in the family has led to the exclusion of women from the public sphere, as they participate in the security problem, but are not the first choice for solving it. This is the extension of the chauvinistic, hierarchical, dichotomous structure of the army based on femininity by masculinity- referring to the patriarchal gender. Therefore, it can be said that while Israeli men fight against the system from within the system, women do so from the outside of the system.

In short, from a feminist point of view, the existence of compulsory military service, for both men and women emphasizes that there is a citizenship based on gender equality; on the other hand, the army continues to be a masculine and male-dominated field, since women can participate as much as men allow them to. The main motivation for women to join the army is the desire to strengthen themselves both physically and mentally. In the army, where masculine roles are hegemonic, women may see the need to gain recognition and prestige, the thought of gaining economic benefits, and the pleasure that comes from the feeling of fighting itself as additional benefits.

The aim of this thesis is to show how the military reflects the internal and external patriarchal order and to expose the instrumentalization of women in the military under the guise of national interests and so-called equality. In line with this aim, women's participation in the military has been evaluated in terms of the historical process, the pre-state and post-state periods, and the parallel changes in state objectives, national interest

and strategies as well as the service requirements and qualities of military roles. Israel's mixed ethnic structure is excluded from the analysis. In other words, the participation of women in the military is not evaluated according to their ethnicity. A number of challenges were also encountered during the research for this thesis. The main challenge is the blocking of access to some resources, especially statistical resources. Despite the difficulties encountered, it is believed that this thesis will provide a versatile perspective to the literature, as it has been carried out not only on male phenomena or by questioning these phenomena, but also by including female cases through elements of gender, security, militarism and nationalism.

Furthermore, the selection of the Israeli army as a case study will allow the changing roles attributed to women in the nation-state and nation-building process to be recognized in the context of gender and nationalism, since the Israeli army, as a place of maturation of masculinity, is not only the male institution but also an important component of the nation-building process. Since there is no such study in the field that demonstrates that the inclusion of women in the military service does not change the patriarchal social order or create a different type of woman, using both past and present examples, it is believed that this study will fill a certain gap in the literature.

Within this framework, an analytical assessment of women's participation in the Israeli army is presented through theoretical, historical, and both historical and qualitative analysis, respectively. Accordingly, the first chapter outlines in general terms the perspectives of Feminist International Theory on sub-topics and concepts, such as gender, nation, nation-building, security, and the military as they relate to the main topic. In doing so, the variables influencing women's participation in the military are explained, taking into account the extent to which the premises of nationalism and militarism manifest themselves in these sub-topics and concepts, as auxiliary components of evaluation alongside the feminist perspective.

The second chapter examines the historical framework of the Israeli army in terms of the instrumentalization of the society, the institutionalization of the war and the internalization of the fear. In this sense, the structure of the armed forces, which has

changed from dispersal to coercion, Israel's perception of security and its reflections in parallel with the country's history of war and the construction of gendered security are explained in order to prepare the ground for the relationship between the variables influencing women's participation in the armed forces and the proportion of women in the armed forces.

In the third chapter, the extent of women's participation in the Israeli military is assessed in terms of the historical framework, which is divided into two periods: pre-independence and post-independence, gender equality and military service requirements such as the length of service, the role of women as combatants or non-combatants, the placement of female soldiers in the front or rear duties, and legal and social obligations and benefits. Finally, the findings and the 7 October attack by Hamas are presented as evidence of the findings.

CHAPTER 1- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: RE-GENDERING NATION, SECURITY AND MILITARY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Concepts such as military, power, security and nationalism are primarily correlated with the masculinity. While studying these male- dominated concepts, the role of women is usually neglected. Sometimes the role of women is not neglected, but the issue of the extent to which women operate and participate within these concepts has not attracted enough attention, again being overshadowed by male dominant perspective, remaining for show and without elaboration. Therefore, regarding to the case study which is the participation of women in the Israeli army, the theoretical background will be created for the issue. In this sense, the conditions under which women are recruited into the army, how their participation rates in the army are affected by which variables, and the positions they charge in. In the scope of conceptual, definitional, and theoretical framework, it is considered that the participation of women in the masculine phenomena has not a homogenous structure. Although states accept phenomena such as military, sovereignty, power, use of force and violence within the male-dominated field, they also include women in these phenomena in line with their own interests and when necessary. This means that there is no single definition of these phenomena by considering according to the feminist understanding and ideology of nationalism. Therefore, in this chapter, national values, nation building, security, social, cultural and economic conditions and needs, and the concepts of military and power and their relationship with the gender are defined and interpreted within the theoretical framework as a starting point for the case study.

1.2. NATION, NATIONALISM AND NATION- BUILDING

Before evaluating these concepts within the theoretical framework, it will be useful to know their dictionary definitions. According to the *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, nation is defined as "a country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture and history, who live in a particular area under one government". Nationalism, on the other hand, is defined as "the desire by a group of people who share the same race, culture,

language, etc. to form an independent country or a feeling of love for and pride in your country; a feeling that your country is better than any other". Nation-building is also defined as "the process of creating or developing a nation, especially after a major event such as a country becoming independent".

Different interpretations and discourses in the handling of nationalism have emerged as a result of several historical developments. These developments include the redrawing of maps as a result of political and military struggles to define national borders in different geographies, the persistence of conflicts over identity, the expression of 'rights-seeking' at the regional and local level in line with the search for ethnicity, and thus the need to produce new policies, as well as migrations- political polarizations based on 'recognition' between the existing indigenous elements within the borders and the immigrants. All of this requires the questioning of the modern foundations of the emergence of political and social divisions, fractures, attributions and relations of belonging, and the way they are perceived around conceptual schemes such as ethnicity and race.

This thesis considers nationalism as a discourse, rather than presenting a theory for individuals, which creates a hysterical and pathological situation, an emotional orientation, a tool for the discharge of excessive emotions felt towards those who are different and do not think alike. Therefore, nationalism can be filled with whatever the circumstances require. If everything that is required by the circumstances is used to fill the content of nationalism, any possible event that occurs in the political, economic, social and cultural fields is indirectly an emotional solidarity in drawing and consolidating the boundaries of me/us, in the formation of different coalitions, a holy alliance that can be formed against the other, instead of making individuals to think, and all these are instrumental to nationalism.[12]

This instrumentality actually appears as a rhetoric. Any political or social event creates an atmosphere of enchantment for the individual(s) by presenting a way of speaking and

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[12] Craig Calhoun, *Concepts in Social Thought: Nationalism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 6.

acting. In a way, this is the drawing of a boundary. The boundary represents the beginning and the end of action, speech, and discourse. It is also the production of certain forms of cultural understanding, identity, and language. It allows individuals to speak a particular language, framing identity and understanding in the dimension of passion. This is the underlying factor of nationalism being a discourse. Individuals do not confine themselves to this framing. They get caught up in the discourse of nationalism on a broad spectrum and try to identify it with a wider field. This wider field is the state because the source of moral obligations is the state, so in the balance of power between the dependent and the independent, the state is the centre of language, tradition, culture and morality. Therefore, nationalism creates a sense of belonging for the individual by assuming a commitment that coincides with the boundaries of the state and offers parallel modes of action. In this way of thinking, there is a need for a nation that can determine its own destiny, that provides an environment in which people can feel safe and that is drawn with both physical and spiritual boundaries. However, there is disagreement on the definition of nation as well as the definition of nationalism within the theoretical framework. Some tend to identify nation with the state and state-based movements, while others tend to perceive nation apart from the state as an artificial movement or as an imaginary community. In addition, in conceptualizing the nation, the explanations based on culture gained more validity because they contain both subjective and objective elements.

There are two important criteria in this conceptualization. One of them is a cultural and historical commonality for all or most of a given population. The other one is the settlement of this population mass on a land. As an ideal type, it can be said that a nation is a community that has a common history and culture and lives on a particular piece of land.[13]

The nation is an instrument for nationalism in drawing and consolidating and in forming various coalitions. Thus, the main tendency in here is based on the control of the state and the related use of political power in the context of the state.[14] At this point, there are two

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[13] Celalettin Yanık and Mustafa Kara, "Milliyetçiliğe Yönelik İki Kuramın Değerlendirilmesi: Modern Milliyetçi Kuram ve Etno-Sembolcü Milliyetçi Yaklaşım," *Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 7, no.1 (2016): 560-566.

[14] John Breuilly*, Nationalism and the State*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press,1993), 14.

important components that link individuals and the state. One of them is the position of the individual in isolation from the bonds of group membership, and the other one is the division of labour. There is a linear relationship between these components.

At this point, it will be useful to open up the concept of division of labour a bit for future discussions about the actions of women and men in and for the society. The division of labour has created the politically and economically rational individuals. In the political sense, the rational individual realized with the division of labour places nationalism, which has the potential to eliminate the predicament of the individual acting in accordance with rational ideals and calculations, in a key position to deal with the problem of the realization of social collectivity. Here, the intellectual possibilities here are used to channel the individual into a certain situation. In particular, the concept of citizenship offered by nationalism and the sense of belonging to a particular culture are instrumental in overcoming the anomic situation of the individual. It is the political elites that can provide all this. Political elites ensure the adaptation of individuals to modern political situations and mobilize the masses, since the state has the potential to control the excessively oppressive political attitudes that can be presented to individuals both politically, legally, and intellectually.[15]

In this context, it would be inappropriate to claim that there is a complete consensus on the concept of nationalism. Some argue that nationalism emerged as a unifying factor in the process of alienation caused by the growing separation between civil society and the state in Europe since the 16th century. In order to get rid of this alienation-especially against the homogenization efforts that emerged with modernization- people feel the need to belong to a secure community. Therefore, the phenomenon of nationalism is an imagined political community, and the nation is not produced by the combination of a set of concrete social realities, but it is something 'thought and thus created'. The intangible elements that create a nation vary according to social structure, race and ethnicity, gender,

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[15] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Pres, 1983), 48; Özge Çelik, "Ortak Kimlik Olarak ve İlişkisel Otonomi," *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 8, no.2 (2013): 197.

time, geography, culture, political and economic conditions. They can be emotions, needs-political, social, economic, interests, and goals.

E. Gellner, representing the modernist movement on the origins of nationalism, states that nationalism creates nations not the other way around.[16] Based on high culture[17] in his theory, Gellner claims that an anonymous society can be created by imposing nationalism on a subculture of that high culture. Hobsbawm also defines nationalism as a principle that predicts the compatibility of the political unit and the national unit. Moreover, the nation as a social unit makes sense as long as it is associated with the modern state and the nation-state. On the other hand, Hobsbawm argues that nations owe much to invented traditions. According to him, nations are products of social engineering in which their energies were channelled for specific purposes to ensure that the ruling elites serve their political interests, and in this respect, they were invented.[18]

In addition to these modernist approaches, there is an ethno-symbolist approach. According to this approach, ethnic boundaries are permanent, even if the cultural formation of any community or society changes, because the symbols or myths created in the cultural formation or network will ultimately exhibit a functional integrity at the point of ensuring the continuity of ethnic boundaries. This situation, which can show parallelism with the category of "I" and "me" expressed by Mead in the sociological sense, is the dimension in which the individual identity that develops as "I" is integrated with the "me" that can be categorized as the creative universe, by formalizing group identity through cultural identity, and ethnically.[19] It can be a source of the situation in which identities have similar structures. Community identity thus shapes possible aspects of ontological differentiation between self and other by providing codifications of ethnic

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[16] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.

[17] It is the general cultural characteristics that are valid in a society, known and adopted by all segments of the society. In this context, the concept of high means the distinctiveness of a class and the preservation of this distinctiveness. It is a culture that combines the products (classics) of the past with exploratory, creative and revolutionary elements of future. The practices that determine high culture are the daily lifestyles of the people who construct that culture. With this way of life, certain practices are included while others are excluded. Thus, the non-high (Low culture) is also determined.

[18] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[19] William L. Kolb, "A critical evaluation of Mead's "I" and "Me" concepts," *Social Forces* 22, no.3 (1944): 291-296.

identity. In this way, this boundary, which is formed in conjunction with the cultural texture, makes it necessary to differentiate the distance from the other in the context of ethnic identity and transform it into fixedness. Therefore, according to the ethno-symbolic approach, ethnicities and nations are simultaneously interconnected. Moreover, this link between ethnicity and nation, provides the formation of the idea of nationalism, because this situation constitutes the basic point of the theory as a reference source for nationalism. Although the emphasis of this approach on culture, myths, and symbols is also similarly included in the modernist paradigm, its emphasis is more on the emotionality or emotional unity in the formation of nationalism.

In this sense, nationalism can be described in four different ways, as stated in the book titled *Ethnic Origins of Nationalism* written by Anthony D. Smith. First, nationalism has been described as the general process of forming a nation, which is accepted as artificial. Secondly, it is identified with the "consciousness of belonging to a nation". Thirdly, it is defined as a movement aimed at achieving certain goals. Finally, it has been understood as a doctrine or ideology that places the nation at the centre. In parallel with these identifications, some take the concept to be more general, while others reduce it to a more specific one. For example, while Kedourie treats nationalism as a doctrine, Breuilly it as a political argument.[20] There have also been those who have approached the concept from a more abstract point of view. Kohn, for example, describes nationalism as the sum of collective emotions.[21]

Moreover, Anthony D. Smith emphasizes that nationalism did not appear only in parallel with the French Revolution and other radical social and political transformations; on the contrary, he states that it has a close connection with previous periods of these political and social transformations. In this context, nationalism has an intensive formation with the phenomena of ethnicity and ethnic identity, without the missing phenomena of the modern period.[22] In this respect, the main difference between the ethno-symbolist

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[20] Breuilly*, Nationalism and the State*, 420; Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1961).

[21] Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History*, (Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1965), 23-25.

[22] Anthony D. Smith, *Milli Kimlik*, trans. Bahadır Sina Şener, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2014), 15- 20.

approach and the modernist paradigm is that ethnicity is similar in character to the modern understanding of nation, but it is not the same, because both ethnicity and nation treat a particular region as the basis for their own structure. This particular region or territory is where collective memory and myths originate. Thus, the phenomenon of common origin in the context of a particular region is functional in the formation or assimilation of regional communities. At the same time, this particular region is a combination of collective memory and history and symbols for ethnic communities, while it means the formation of the homeland for the nation.

So, where do the necessary resources for the formation of national identity come from? National identity is formed as a result of nationalist thinking. However, as Smith notes, this idea of nationalism is possible when ethnic ideology makes ethnic identities visible in the political arena and at the same time selectively uses ethnic cultural elements in the construction of the nation.[23] In fact, the ethnic nationalism expressed here is possible with the transformation of an ethnic group into a nation. In this transformation, the visibility of the ethnic group in the political arena increases, and this visibility leads to the formation of the idea of autonomy and, ultimately, to an increase in the elements of nationality.

In this regard, continuity over time and differentiation from others are the basic criteria that determine both identity and national identity. In the process of nation-building, continuity is perceived as an entity that has historical roots and reaches into the future, and differentiation from others stems from the commitment to a common culture, a concrete land, and the claim to build a community. Ultimately, both of these lead to a distinction between members of the society and 'strangers' or 'others.' The starting point of nation building, which creates the idea of national belonging and produces national identity over and over again, is the idea of uniqueness and sameness.[24] At this point,

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[23] Smith, *Milli Kimlik*, 83.
[24] Catherine Palmer, "From Theory to Practice. Experiencing the Nation in Everyday Life," *Journal of Material Culture* 3, no.2 (2000): 144.

nationalism, which is primarily a first-person plural ideology, must also use the third-person mode.[25]

Nation-building creates an emotional force that helps people decide who they are. It constructs a national identity that empowers individuals to the extent that it reflects their identification that transcends them- the nation. National identity as a collective feeling should be promoted and strengthened at regular intervals and on various occasions.[26] National identity, which is produced as a source of solidarity that binds people together despite their differences, is not just an illusion or manipulation, but a complex structure consisting of many interrelated ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political elements as a source of interdependence. However, the role of institutions, social interactions, and specific events in producing and reproducing national identities is almost implicit. So, do these implicit practices have a unified structure that acts and treats all members of the nation as if they were all one? It will be more useful to answer this question by considering the 'given' (accepted) norms that are known to exist 'out there'.

Individuals are generally socialized according to their nation and national identity. In fact, this is a reciprocal relationship, resulting from the situation of both the determinant and the determined.[27] The cultures into which people are born, the educational systems applied, the economic, social and political policies they are exposed to, and the responsibilities that these policies entail- taxes, military service, etc.- also determine the national identity of people. In this context, it is also important how individuals position themselves in relation to national narratives or national symbols, how they make sense of and interpret their nation and national identity. In this framework, if nationalism is considered as a discourse, and if it is assumed that there are some facts that are given or accepted in nation-building in both a social and political sense, nationalism can be articulated with other ideologies such as feminism and militarism.

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[25] Micheal Billig, *Banal Nationalism,* (London: Sage, 1995), 79.
[26] Montserrat Guibernau, *Milliyetçilikler: 20. Yüzyılda Ulusal Devlet ve Milliyetçilikler*, trans. N. N. Domaniç, (İstanbul: Sarmal Yayınları, 1997), 128.
[27] Nükhet Sirman, "Kadınların Milliyeti," in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Milliyetçilik, Cilt:4*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 227.

1.3. FEMINIST INTERNATIONAL THEORY AND GENDER, SECURITY AND NATIONALISM

Feminist International Theory is just like other theories that simply propose and ask questions, that can be supported or judged. The first set of questions is how do ideas about and behaviours and practices about masculinity work? What does masculinity mean? What are the practices of what it means to be masculine? For example, there is a classic saying, 'Boys do not cry!', but boys do cry. The second set of questions is how do ideas about femininities and masculinities and how ideas about what it means to be a proper woman, a respectable woman, a bad woman, and a bad mother work? So, how do these ideas feed into things like international trade, national values, security, arms and nuclear weapons policies, military bases, and migration?

According to the dictionary definition of gender in the *Oxford Learner's Dictionaries*, it is "the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, rather than differences in biology; members of a particular gender as a group". The elements that promote and maintain the process of socially constructing gender are generally related to two different mentalities. The first is related to prejudices, attitudes, reactions, and treatments regarding to gender and beliefs regarding to the difference between the sexes. The second one is related to idealized differences that women and men are supposed to have.[28] In the historical process, women have been positioned as unimportant and secondary to men, so they have been fictionalized as the 'other' of men. Simone de Beauvoir describes this situation as follows: "…humanity is masculine and man defines woman not for himself, but according to man; woman is not seen as an autonomous entity… Man is defined and differentiated by reference to man, not by reference to woman. On the other hand, woman is the accidental, the essential as opposed to the non-essential. The man is the subject (me), the absolute whereas the woman is the other sex".[29]

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[28] Celalettin Vatandaş, "Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Cinsiyet Rollerinin Algılanışı," *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Konferansları Dergisi*, (2007): 29-56.

[29] Simone De Beauvoir, *Kadın İkinci Cins I: Genç Kızlık Çağı*, trans. Bertan Onaran, (İstanbul: Payel Yayınları, 1993), 17.

According to R. W. Connell's *Social Theory of Gender and Power*, the relationship between women and men can be identified through three main underlying structures which are power, labour and desire. These interrelated and overlapping structures have operated through some key institutions such as the state, the workplace (both civilian and military), public places and streets, and the family, which have their own 'gender regimes' to maintain male dominance. In this regard, the perpetuation of the male dominance over women and other related perceptions of masculinity cannot be reduced to a single or primary cause, which cannot meet the requirements of the historically grounded system because they are interconnected, changing, and overlapping.

The structure of 'labour' deals with the division of labour in the context of some issues such as childcare, housework, job discrimination, unequal working conditions such as wages, promotion, training, and the relationship between paid and unpaid work.[30] Greater freedom to participate in cultural, economic, political, social and military activities attributed to men is the root cause of male dominance over women in the context of sexual division of labour.[31] Thus, Connell emphasizes that different patterns in the dominant masculinities and subordinate femininities have been constructed in the workplace.[32] For instance, as a one type of work- related masculinity is the production of technical knowledge and expertise that focuses on the improving skills uninterrupted by personal life, a kind of a professionalism. Since domestic routines are attributed to women, this creates a workplace vulnerability for them in the workplace, and eventually job segregation is adopted to ensure efficiency by excluding women from the workplace completely or partially. In the case of partial exclusion, men unconsciously assume that they have superiority over women and this situation manifests itself in some ways such as harassment of women, sexual put-downs and unequal treatment or training based on gender, which create a less secure and less confident work atmosphere.[33]

Outside the division of labour, there is a connection between the male dominance and meanings of masculinity and femininity, and other power relations and forms of emotional

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[30] Raewyn W. Connell, *Gender and Power*, (Cambridge: Polity Press,1987), 99-107.
[31] Sheila Rowbotham, *Women's Consciousness, Mam's World*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).
[32] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 107-111.
[33] Ibid. 107-111.; Cynthia Cockburn, *Machinery of Dominance*, (London: Pluto Press, 1986).

attachment. This brings us to the second structure, power, which includes all the institutions of control, authority, and coercion. These institutions are the producers of state and corporate hierarchies, sexual regulations, surveillance and control, institutional and interpersonal violence, and domestic authority and its struggles. In this sense, welfare, benefits, opportunities, taxation and so on are based on the assumption of female dependency.[34] It has always been the men who have been at the top of the institutional bureaucracy, the 'captains' of the military, industry, etc. So, men have been like the power elite of society.[35]

Authorized state institutions for the use of violence consist of armed forces and police forces that derive their legitimacy from prominent gendered ideologies which have been constructed around active, strong, and protective men who must defend or fight for the existence, rights, and integrity of passive, weak, and vulnerable women. Looking at military training for men, it is understood that a particular type of aggressive masculinity is explicitly promoted by these trainings. For instance, sergeant majors yell at soldiers by using common gender-based insults like 'pussy', 'queer', and 'like a girl' in order to grow and toughen military manhood. The ideology and rituals of male dominance are concretely manifested through male control of military technology and men's roles as professional warriors.[36] The military training of men and the cultural glorification of masculinity in movies such as *Top Gun* and *Rambo* reveal both a general misogyny and the acceptance or use of violence by many men against women and other men.[37]

The structure of 'desire' has been patterned on the prohibitions and encouragements that include both ideologies of family life along with romance and pleasure and sanctions implemented against homosexuality, incest taboos, rape laws, and age of consent. Desire is linked to the psychodynamics of emotional life, and this is the heterosexual male authority that controls and constructs desire, its patterns and desirability, including gender dichotomies in terms of sexual relations, emotional dynamics of marriage, and child

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[34] Elizabeth Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State*, (London: Tavistock, 1977); Mary Mclntosh, "The State and the Oppression of Women," in *Feminism and Materialism,* eds. by Annette Kuhn and Anne-Marie Wolpe, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).
[35] Barbara Rogers, *Men Only: An Investigation into Men's Organisations*, (London: Pandora, 1988).
[36] Lynne Segal, *Is the Future Female,* (London: Virago, 1987), 168.
[37] Joan Smith, *Misogynies*, (London: Faber, 1989).

rearing.[38] Therefore, it can be said that in the construction of 'masculinity' and 'a particular manhood', desire has played a central role in both supporting and undermining male power and authority.

With all of this in mind, it is important to recognize how feminist IR theory defines nationalism and security in the context of this thesis. In this context, Cynthia Enloe has had an enormous impact on the incorporation of feminist thought into the international studies, especially with her book *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. She begins by evaluating a particular case, tourism, as a product of gendered constructed international power relations, aiming to show the construction of vacation desires, the reinforcement of the division of labour and the rise of elite male power. Subsequent chapters assess the gender of diplomatic views, military bases, global labour, and banana republics. The study as a whole compares the roles ascribed to women and men as respectable and honourable. The special emphasis begins with the questioning of the absence and marginalization of women, then the visibility of women is increased through new efforts to redefine concepts such as security, power, and peace, which have been described from male perspectives. With her studies, people began to question how the natural and inevitable facts presented by realism were displayed in this way and by whom they were produced.[39] In this context, although security is predominantly perceived as a militarized phenomenon, neglecting women as a unit of analysis or as actors in security, Enloe's critique of traditional theories rejected the long historical role of men in organized violence and militarism, and expanded the framework of security beyond a militarised state-level view to include social and individual impacts of security. All this confirms Enloe's statement that 'men are the military whereas women are in the military'.[40]

Moreover, J. A. Tickner provides a systematic analysis of IR from a feminist perspective on the issue of "security" by exposing the basic premise cycle of international relations,

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[38] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 44.

[39] Spike Peterson, "Feminisms and International Relations," *Gender & History* 10, no.3 (1998): 581.

[40] Orna Sasson-Levy, "Constructing Gender Identities within the Israeli Army," (PhD dissertation, Hebrew University, 2000), quoted in Orna Sasson-Levy, "Feminism and military gender practices: Israeli women soldiers in "masculine" roles," *Sociological inquiry* 73, no.3 (2003): 441.

based on the men's experience and a masculine model of human nature, and arguing the dominant orientation of Realism by stating its rationality, pontification, and determination.[41] In this sense, the allegedly anarchic three-level analysis of the system above the individual, the polity and the system is undermined. Relations among nation-states were presented as inevitably conflictual in the necessarily anarchic structure, since the principle of self-help and war would arise in the absence of a higher authority among equals to resolve inherent conflicts. However, she draws a new line about the human nature and man that are assumed as aggressive, competitive, atomistic, and rationally self-interested. To do so, she takes a next step by arguing that the IR theories reflect of these masculinist characteristics on states- defined as competitive and rational primary actors. Therefore, the actions of states as warriors in the international arena serve to power relations. A s a systemic condition, there is a Hobbesian idea of "war of everyman against everyman".[42] In the end, the security of one causes the insecurity of the other, which is known as the 'security dilemma'. However, contrary to essentialist and traditional viewpoints, she argues that the war is not inevitable and that there have always been ways to resolve conflicts peacefully rather than through the use of force.[43] Hierarchies of racism, sexism, and imperialism produced on geopolitical rather than ecopolitical foci are transformed into non-gendered global security by using two key components: rethinking basic concepts in the multidimensional levels of the discipline and recognizing the insecurity caused by conventional and contemporary definitions of concepts.

In the traditional sense, the representation of external dangers is often gendered, and threats are identified with female characters. Feminists like S. Peterson argue that Machiavelli sees the danger not in the unsocialized behaviour of men in the state structure, but in living in desolate places with the "*capricious goddess Fortuna*". In addition, Machiavelli's use of the phrase "feminization of dangerous areas outside the territory of

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[41] Peterson, "Feminisms and International Relations," 583.

[42] Fitriani Fitriani, "Gender in international conflict: Women representation in security discourse", *Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional* 8, no. 2 (2012): 604.

[43] Simona Sharoni, "Conflict Resolution: Feminist Perspectives," *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of International Studies,* (2010): 3, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.130.

the country" is noted and questioned as a metaphorical expression used to justify expansionist state policies or defence budgets.[44]

The strong criticism of the classical understanding of security stems from the idea that security has not only a military and political dimension, but also a social dimension related to identity, and feminists state that gender roles should also be included in security-related analyses. Feminists' basic approaches to security are based on the recognition that there are strong links between individual life, especially women's life and security, the rejection of the dominant understanding of the state based on national security, and the acceptance that violence is structural in realist thinking. Thus, on the one hand there is direct violence, as experienced in wars or in the event of an attack, resulting in death and suffering, and on the other hand, there is indirect structural violence, resulting from situations such as hunger or disease, as well as from economic, cultural, and legal discrimination. Therefore, security is considered multidimensional and defined as "reduction in all forms of physical, structural and ecological violence".[45]

Nationalism has a gendered stance. Feminists believe that nationalism produces militarism that marginalizes women in the nationalist projects and practices, especially by reducing them to the private sphere - the family- in parallel with the concept of security.

From a theoretical perspective, the feminist literature on the relationship between nationalism and gender has developed more critically.[46] This literature has advanced by focusing on the instrumentalization of women and their centrality. Despite the efforts to neglect women, they are a part of nationalism, but they have been ascribed as a carrier role in nationalist practices and discourses. In this sense, the involvement of women in nationalist projects, especially in the construction of national identity, and the imagining

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[44] Spike V. Peterson, "Feminist Theories Within, Invisible to, and Beyond IR," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 10, no. 2 (2004): 40.

[45] J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 43-48.

[46] Ayşe Gül Altınay, "Giriş: Milliyetçilik, Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Feminizm," in *Vatan Millet Kadınlar,* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 17.

of new types of femininity are issues that need to be explored. In addition to their roles as good mothers, good wives, and good citizens in times of war and peace, women's association with homeland and land ensures the continuity of nationalist projects and goals.

Whether the nation is built naturally, is imagined, or invented, the way in which women are involved in this process differs from society to society. However, the extent to which women's rights and gender equality are valued and considered by the new nation in the process of nationalization, or how legitimate these demands are, is also a determining factor in every society. Therefore, in nation-building, it is important to know to what extent women can be active in this process and what kind of gains they have made. In the context of the reproductive mechanism of societies, the roles of women differ. The ideas on this issue highlight the view that the modern state instrumentalizes women. In the process of nation-building, citizenship that creates national honour or being a good citizen is imagined by states for men and women.

In their study titled *Women-Nation-State*, Anthias and Yuval-Davis state that the involvement of women in the nation-building process occurs in five different ways. First, women participate in the nation-building process as the biological producers of members of ethnic communities. Second, the role of reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic and national groups has been attributed to women. Third, women are involved as transmitters of culture by playing a central role in the ideological reproduction of the community. Fourth, women represent the symbols that are at the centre of ideological discourses that are used for the transformation, reproduction, and construction of ethnic and national categories. Finally, women participate in the nationalization process as participants in the national, economic, political, and military struggles. These forms of involvement reemphasize women's role as biological and cultural carriers. Women become a part of this process consciously or unconsciously, or voluntarily or involuntarily.

The role of women in reproducing and perpetuating the nation is important for the cultivation of nationalism. However, the roles assigned to women are obstacles to their independence. While women's roles as mothers, warriors, workers, and educators make

them the main actors in nationalist movements, they are also forced to express themselves within the framework of cultural limitations.

One of the best examples of this situation is the participation of women in the military service or in the army. In fact, in case of danger or need, women are deployed at the front, but when these situations disappear, women take on the roles assigned to them in the home. So, even though women are temporarily prioritized through militarization, the culture and ideology of hegemonic masculinity and the culture and ideology of hegemonic nationalism are intertwined, and the process of nation-building works differently for men and women.[47]

With the transformation of nationalism in the historical process, the fact that women are a part of this transformation is a created situation. The female body is constructed as the most important tool for the survival, success and belonging of the nation, and the woman is the carrier of these fictional roles. Women have influenced and been influenced by national and ethnical processes in different ways. In the nation-building process, women are involved not only in the biological reproduction but also in cultural reproduction. While women fulfil the biological reproduction function of the society through the role of motherhood, they are also in a position to transmit gender relations from one generation to the next. At this point, the emphasis on the home is important in terms of incorporating children's eating, drinking, sleeping, and playing habits and patterns into biological reproduction. In this process, women are constructed as symbolic bearers of the community's identity and honour, both individually and collectively.[48]

There is an opinion that the nation represents the man, and the homeland (as in motherland) represents the woman. This view actually coincides with the concept of honour or pudicity, because the chastity of women is a phenomenon that must be absolutely protected, and the same instinct of protection applies to the land of the country. The pudicity, which is constructed between the chastity of women and the integrity of the

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[47] Cynthia Enloe, "Feminizm, Milliyetçilik, Militarizm," in *Vatan Millet Kadınlar*, ed. by Ayşe Gül Altınay, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 203-226.
[48] Nira Yuval-Davis, *Cinsiyet ve Millet*, trans. Ayşin Bektaş, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016), 90-94.

homeland, is undertaken by men to protect both women and the land. At this point, the female body is taken as a geographical boundary. In such a situation, the man's failure to prevent the loss of the homeland creates a feeling of shame, which is the same as when he fails to protect the chastity of the women he loves. The female body is also metaphorized as 'mother'. In the metaphor of homeland as mother, homeland was both the beloved woman and the mother. Assigning these roles- homeland and motherhood- to women created a new femininity and masculinity by placing women under the protection of men.[49]

So, how do we think about and learn about gender in the context of war, conflict management, and military institutions? Indeed, it is a necessary to recognize that gender is highly context specific. Gendered experiences, gendered cultures, gendered social roles are specific and related to people's identities such as race, ethnicity, class, and so on. Therefore, there cannot be a set way of teaching about or learning about gender. It should give people tools to recognize gender knowledge.

1.4. GENDER AND MILITARISM

The phenomenon of military and war should be evaluated at multidimensional levels. In this regard, what happens to girls in war or what happens to them when they are involved in military; what happens to boys in war or what happens to them when they serve in military; what happens to fathers and mothers when their sons and girls are in service, actively or inactively, in the context of military; and what happens to different kinds of women in these contents are among the important questions.

The application of gender analysis to the phenomena of war, militarism and peace is generally against the masculinist nature of these phenomena. In this sense, it can be said that the existing gender roles are reflected in the military.

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[49] Afsaneh Najmabadi, "The Erotic Vatan (Homeland) as Beloved and Mother to Love, to Possess and to Protect," *Comparative Studies in Society and in 483 History* 39, no.4 (1997): 442-467.

The military framework is created by military logics. There are two specific military logics. The first one is that the world is a dangerous place, and the second is that we are safer with a bigger military. These logics have made it possible to shape the defence industry. To produce a military framework, it is necessary to train in the use of coercion and the rhetoric of domination. This need is strongly linked to images of man and masculinity. Man is the one who is strong, assertive, brave, heroic and stoic, so the traditional monopoly of institutionalized force- military, police or gendarme- belongs to men, and this provides a reinforcement for the domination of men not only over women, but also existing hierarchies between nations, different ethnic groups or classes.

In the historical context, there have been diverse and complex ways in which women have been involved in war and the military. This diversity and complexity are due to the direct and indirect roles of women in war. Sometimes women have dedicated themselves to the men at the front, sometimes they have disrespected those who refused to fight; and sometimes, they have supported dictators, inspired by due to their appearance on the battlefield and their enjoyment of their involvement in the seemingly perfect world of men.[50]

In the endless cycle of war, women are an indispensable part of the critique of the military. In this sense, notions of masculinity have played an important role in modern warfare. Some scholars, such as John Tosh, note that male dominance has been enforced and justified through the use of military values. For instance, in the late 19th century, in Britain, hegemonic masculinity was partially militarized and this supported the indispensability of masculine roles when there was a perception that women's educational and social progress was a threat to traditional patriarchal assumptions.[51] However, the gender privilege, or "patriarchal dividend" as Tosh used it, was only one of the power dynamics validated by the bravery derived from the military and the burden of being seriously

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[50] Sandra M. Gilbert, "Soldier's heart: Literary men, literary women, and the Great War," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 8, no.3 (1983), 422-450; Lynne Segal, "Men after feminism: what's left to say?," in (introduction) *Slow motion: Changing masculinities, changing men*, (London: Palgrave, 2007), xvii- xxviii.
[51] Lynne Segal, "Gender, war and militarism: Making and questioning the links," *Feminist Review* 88, no.1 (2008), 31.

injured or facing death.[52] Indeed, there is something that needs to be kept in mind, which is the shared helplessness of women and men, because all human bodies are essentially both physically and emotionally vulnerable and dependent.[53]

Among all social institutions, the military has traditionally been defined as a male institution. Therefore, if women are, or are perceived to be, suitable for military service by policymakers and the population, they are considered as eligible to participate in the military. Indeed fact, this is the result of an extreme and unusual situation that is perceived as so dire. However, these perceptions are not based on objective reality, but they are socially constructed and the product of cultural values. Therefore, cultural definitions and redefinitions of women's roles have influenced the subsequent roles of women in the military. Accordingly, the extent and nature of women's participation in the armed forces has varied across nations and over time. In this sense, there are several variables to explain the extent and nature of women's participation in the military. The explanatory variables can be divided into three categories: military, culture, and social structure.

The military dimension includes some characteristics such as the national security situation, military technology, force structure, military accession policy, and combat to support ratio. The category of culture consists of the social construction of gender and family roles, which concerns gender-related public discourse, and social values regarding gender, family and equality. The category of social structure mainly includes the civilian roles of women, in the general sense of civilian social structural variables such as labour force characteristics, demographic patterns, economic factors, and family structure. These three categories are generally interrelated to each other. For example, demographic patterns affect military access policies, or the social structure affects the national security situation. In addition, social structure and culture are fundamentally interrelated.[54]

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[52] John Tosh, "Hegemonic masculinity and gender history," in *Masculinities in politics and war: Gendering modern history*, eds. by Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 55.
[53] Judith Butler, *Precarious Lives: The Power of Mourning and Violence*, (London: Verso., 2004).
[54] Mady Wechsler Segal, "Women's military roles cross-nationally: Past, present, and future," *Gender & Society* 9, no.6 (1995): 759.

The relationship between these variables and women's roles and participation in the military will be discussed one by one. Starting with the national security in the context of military variables, the security of the society is one of the most important components that determine the women's participation in the military. However, the relationship between the military roles of women and the national security is complicated because the increase in women's military roles due to the shortage of qualified men in the military, especially in times of a national emergency, shows parallelism with women's non-combat roles. Under some conditions, more often, these non-combat roles of women have increased. There are few nations that conscript women for military service, but their obligations are different from those of men.

In the past, especially in times of war, some countries such as Germany, France, Norway, Greece and the United Kingdom (UK) have conscripted women.[55] They set an example both of an actual conscription of women and of making or having laws that allowed conscription of women. During the World War II era, Germany and the UK provided interesting examples of conscription of women in terms of the social construction of women's military roles. In Germany, women were conscripted into jobs that were labelled as civilian, even though they wore uniforms and worked under a military authority to do military work. Nevertheless, they were referred to as civilians. On the other hand, in the UK, women were conscripted and volunteered for both civilian and military service.[56] However, even the women in uniform were referred to as non-combatants. The difference between the combatant and non-combatant was related to their definitions. Combatants could fire weapons while non-combatants could not. Women were allowed to perform all tasks related to the firing of anti-aircraft weapons except the actual firing. Although they were allowed to move ammunition and load weapons, they could not use the weapons they had loaded. They had to find a man to do that.[57]

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[55] Mattie Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps*, (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1954); Nancy Loring Goldman and Richard Stites, "Great Britain and the World Wars," *in Female soldiers- combatants and non-combatants?: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. by Nancy Loring Goldman, (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1982); Sandra Carson Stanley and, Mady Wechsler Segal, "Military women in NATO: An update," *Armed Forces and Society* 14, no.4 (1988): 559-585.
[56] Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps*; Goldman and Stites, "Great Britain and the World Wars,".
[57] D'Ann Campbell, "Women in Combat: The World War II Experience in the United States, Great Britain, Germany and the Soviet Union," *The Journal of Military History* 57, no.2 (1993): 301-323.

The active participation of women has been seen in the revolutionary movements has been seen in partisan and guerrilla operations. In China, Russia, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Rhodesia, Yugoslavia, Algeria and the USA, there were some examples of this kind of active participation of women in the framework of revolutionary wars. However, with the formation of a new government after the overthrow of the old one, the armed forces were organized more conventionally, so that women began to return to their more traditional social roles by leaving the military, either voluntarily or involuntarily.[58] In this context, it can be said that women's military activities have been restricted or reduced when they are no longer needed. This service of women is an example of reserved labour, both military and civilian.[59]

In this context, women's military roles are socially constructed, especially through public discourse that shapes behaviours, expectations, and attributions. Basically, when women are needed, the discourse has been designed to make everyone believe that women are capable of serving effectively in the military in various positions, especially by recalling the past. However, the contributions of women during the emergency times have tended to be culturally forgotten. Thus, when the situation of emergency situation passes, women's military activities are reconstructed as insignificant and at a minimal level, or worse, as if they have never existed. This creates an environment in which the culture produces myths such as "men in arms, women at home".[60]

So, is the military threat to the country an effective element in women's participation in the military? The answer to this question shows a curvilinear variation with an interaction with social values regarding to gender. When the level of threat reaches to its peak point, the military role of women seems to increase. In fact, when faced with a threat so great

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[58] Cynthia Enloe, "Women-The reserve army of Army labour," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 12, no.2 (1980): 42-52; Evelyn M. Cherpak, "The Participation of Women in The Wars for Independence in Northern South America 1810-1824," *Minerva* 11, no.3 (1993):11-36; Linda Grant De Pauw, "Women in combat: The revolutionary war experience," *Armed Forces & Society* 7, no.2 (1981): 209-226.
[59] D'Ann Campbell, *Women at war with America: Private lives in a politic era*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Enloe, "Women-The reserve army of Army labour", (1980); Sherna Berger Gluck, *Rosie the riveter revisited: Women, the war, and social change*, (Boston: Twayne, 1987).
[60] Miriam Cooke, "(Wo)-Man, Retelling The War Myth," in *Gendering war talk*, eds. by Miriam Cooke and Angela Woollacott, (Princeton University Press,1993), 178.

that it destroys the existence of the country, women are included in military operations even as combatants.

Even when the threat to the national security is low, women's participation can be expected to increase as societal values regarding gender seek equality for all. Canada and Sweden are contemporary examples of allowing women to participate in combat roles.[61] The low combat potential of these nations proves that women's military roles of women are constructed to eliminate gender discrimination.

As can be seen, the perception and requirements of national security change according to the level of threat. Therefore, after examining the effects of low and high threats, it is also worth noting the medium threat. In the situation of medium threat, there is no imminent threat of annihilation or invasion of the nation by superior military forces, but the military action with the possibility ranging from moderate to high may take place on its territory in the near future. This definition is very applicable to Israel. In this sense, when there is a medium threat, despite the growing need for women, there is a minimization of the extent of participation of women in combat jobs.

In addition to all this, the nature of military missions, whether based on actual warfare or ground combat, or peacekeeping operations or disaster relief activities, also influences women's participation in the military. Under normal conditions, peacekeeping and disaster relief operations are more likely to involve women in the military.

Continuing with military technology in the context of military variables, technology is an important tool for changing the source power of actions. In this sense, some technological developments have allowed the use of brain power instead of muscle power in the realization of military roles and duties. Biologically, the upper body strength of men is on average much higher than that of women. Therefore, tasks that require a high level of

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[61] David R. Segal and Mady Wechsler Segal, "Female combatants in Canada: An update," *Defense Analysis* 5, no.4 (1989):372-373; David R. Segal, Mady Wechsler Segal and Xiaolin Li, "The role of women in the Chinese People's Liberation Army," *Minerva* 10, mo.1 (1992): 48- 55; Kurt Törnquist, "Sweden: The neutral nation," in *Female soldiers- combatants or non- combatants?: Historical and contemporary perspectives*, ed. by Nancy L. Goldman, (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1982).

strength are more likely to be performed by men. Weapons that are produced for destruction and protection, such as downsizing of weapons, and the development of nuclear technologies and air power, partially eliminate the need for such a strength.[62]

With various technological changes, a greater participation of women in the armed forces is seen. In this sense, the qualities required to be a warrior have been changed by some developments, and also, the military roles of women have been altered by other developments by changing the way of organizing warfare or the social roles of women, or both.

Industrialization also has opened the doors for people to leave their homes and go to work far from their home. This has changed the social role of women, so even though it is difficult for women to leave their children at home, this change in social role of women may increase their military activity.

In addition to the development of technology in the military and economic fields, technology, especially in the medical field, has also made it possible to control reproduction through some methods such as contraceptives, medical interventions etc. This has led to a decrease in infant and child mortality, and women can have fewer children, so they can spend more time to play military roles other than their social role of raising children.

In addition, the specialization of military jobs to include a relatively narrow range of tasks, and requiring technical skills rather than physical strength, has increased women's participation in the armed forces.[63] Moreover, such changes have made civilian and military occupations more similar.[64] Thus, the potential for women to serve in the military has increased. However, the relationship between the impact of current and future

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[62] Martin Binkin, *Military Technology and defense manpower*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1986).

[63] Ibid; Harold Wool, *The Military Specialist: Skilled manpower for the armed forces*, (Baltimore MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1968).

[64] Charles C. Moskos, "Institutional and occupational trends in armed forces," in *The military: More like a just a job?*, eds. by Charles C. Moskos and Frank R. Wood, (Washington DC: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988).

technological developments and women's participation in the armed forces is not linear, since there is a lack of equality between men and women in the cultural and social sense, and their biological differences as well as their different technical abilities cannot fully satisfy the requirements of many military jobs.

A third variable in the context of military variables is the combat to support ratio. How the combat to support ratio has affected the military roles of women is about the type of military functions that are open to women. The combat to support ratio has negatively affected women's participation in military operations since combat has been perceived as primarily a male job. Therefore, women have been excluded from direct offensive combat positions but the number and the proportion of female personnel in support functions have shown an increase.

The structure of the military force also affects women's participation in the military. The ratio of combat to support is one aspect of this structure. In this sense, if women are excluded from active-duty forces, there will be a higher representation of women in the reserves. However, in some cultures, such as Israel, the participation of women is low. In general, reserve personnel are selected from among older people and they have families, so mothers are not perceived as available for military operations. In Israel, for example, both men and women are conscripted, but longer reserve obligations have been adopted for men only, and they must serve on active duty.[65]

Military accession policies- as the last military variable, have been carried out on a voluntary basis or through conscription (compulsory military service). Under voluntary accession systems, women's military participation tends to increase in line with the social changes to achieve greater gender equality. Canada, the USA, and the UK have recruited military personnel under voluntary systems. As a result, women's military roles have increased rapidly in these countries compared to those conscript countries, such as Israel. Although both women and men are conscripted in Israel, there have been strict restrictions

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[65] Ane R. Bloom, "Israel: The longest War," in *Female soldiers- combatants or non- combatants?: Historical and contemporary perspectives*, ed. by Nancy L. Goldman, (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1982); Reuven Gall, *A portrait of the Israeli soldier*, (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1986).

on women's participation that have not allowed the involvement of women in the combat.[66]

Indeed, the extent to which women have been brought into the armed forces generally depends on whether the supply of men meets the needs of military activities. If the need is greater than the functioning male labour force, then there will be a greater female participation regardless of how personnel are accessed.

The first of the variables included in the social structure after the military variables is demographic patterns. Women's roles have been shaped in various ways by demographic patterns. Serving as a reserve source of labour, both military and civilian, is the most common feature of women in industrial societies. Basically, when there is a gap between the demand for military labour and the supply of men, women are called up for military service. Second, women's participation in the labour force is directly proportional to their representation in the military. In other words, an increase in the women's employment rate means an increase in women's representation in the armed forces. In fact, there are the same factors that influence both activities, such as the shortage of male labour and the greater involvement of women in the workplace, which go hand in hand with structural and cultural changes that make military service more compatible with women's roles and less justifiable in excluding women. Gender discrimination in the civilian occupational structure has also influenced the women's participation in the military, although there is a no linear relationship between the two. When gender discrimination is extremely high, women are expected to perform military activities that are already dominated by women in the civilian areas. This is related to the gendered characterization of jobs. In this sense, nursing is one of the gendered jobs that is perceived as a women's job. In fact, most countries have allowed women who have joined the military to serve as nurses. However, when there is a gender discrimination, women's participation in the armed forces has been negatively affected because gender equality can be achieved through a more gender-integrated occupational structure that creates greater acceptance for women's military roles. In addition, if women perform similar civilian jobs that are more similar to men's,

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[66] Ibid.

it proves that women have the skills to serve in the military like men. Third, the state of the civilian economy is one of the influences that affect women's employment in both civilian and military jobs. When the economy is expanding, the employment of women increases, while when the economy is contracting, the employment of women tends to decrease. Moreover, when the unemployment rate, especially the unemployment rate of young men, is high, it means that there is a ready supply of men to serve in the military and there are relatively few opportunities for women to participate in the armed forces. On the other hand, when the unemployment rate of men is low, especially in voluntary military accession, there is an expansion on the military roles for women, and the motivation for women to participate in the military will be high, especially if they are in a disadvantaged position in the civilian economy. Fourth, women's traditional family roles have influenced their participation in the military. For example, especially in times of oppression or economic crisis, women have joined in the military to protect their children because of the role of motherhood.

In this regard, women's participation in military activities is influenced by family roles for two reasons. The first one is that in most cultures, women's roles are linked to family values and norms in a complicated way. The second one is that in many cultures, the nature of military activity and family roles are socially constructed in a negative way to each other. In general, when women have greater family responsibilities, they are less represented in the armed forces. In other words, when women marry at a later age, become mothers at an older age, or have fewer children, they have less family responsibilities, so their participation in the military is positively affected. Delaying family formation is important for the participation in the armed forces because of the expectation of youth in the military. In short, the number of children, age factors, and family responsibilities such as being a wife, mother, etc. are important variables that influence the female representation in the military.

After the military variables and social structure variables, culture has a notable impact on women's military roles, since certain roles perceived as appropriate for each gender are socially and culturally determined. In this context, how the culture deals with gender differences changes the approach to gender differences, which can be exaggerated or

minimized in terms of both physical and psychological characteristics. According to this approach, gender-based social roles can be rejected or justified. In this sense, what is important is not what is 'right', but the discourse on gender, because the cultural interpretation of gender attaches different degrees of importance to gender differences and implies specific roles for women, including in the military activities. Therefore, whether cultures determine gender equality or differences between women and men has a strong impact on women's military roles. In this sense, the military roles of women have been more limited when there is more emphasis on construction or fiction by gender or less emphasis on individual differences.

Gender roles can be shaped by cultural change, which has a cyclical character in any society. The causal direction of the relationship between culture and structure is unclear. Sometimes cultural changes trigger structural changes; on the other hand, other times, structural changes, such as women's involvement in jobs that are predominantly determined as male jobs, may be driven by other factors, such as war, and then the cultural changes may serve as a justification for structural changes.[67]

Patriarchal values and norms and perceptions of women in the military determine the cultural and ideological discourse and contradictions. According to this cultural and ideological spectrum on gender, either the involvement of women in the armed forces is opposed or although women serve in the military and wear uniforms, they are considered as civilian and not military as mentioned above- German women in the World War II.[68] In this context, it can be said that when there are more equitable social values, the representation of women in the military will be higher because there will be no public resistance to the military roles of women, which are mainly seen as challenging to the notions of masculinity and femininity and are excluded or limited. The laws prohibiting discrimination based on the basis of gender are also effective in increasing the representation of women in the armed forces. In Canada, for instance, the Canadian

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[67] Karen Anderson, *Wartime women: Sex roles, family relations, and the status of women during World War II*, (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1981); Campbell, *Women at war with America: Private lives in a politic er* ; Alice Kessler- Harris, *Out to work: A history of wage- earning women in the US,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).
[68] Enloe, "Women—The reserve army of Army labour," (1980).

Human Rights Act has broken down some of the barriers to women's full participation in the military.[69] Furthermore, the military is one of the traditionally male institutions that can also be protected by religious fundamentalism and conservatism. When there is a higher level of religious fundamentalism, the representation of women in the military tends to decrease.

Everything related to the family has influenced on the social roles of women. Historically, the primary social function of women has been related to child rearing and reproduction. This primary role assigned by the culture also has an impact on the military roles of women. In this sense, the mothering role has often been perceived as the opposite of the warrior role. Giving life to a living being is seen as the opposite of taking life in war. Also, a child has a long period of dependency on adult caretakers who are traditionally accepted as mothers. Thus, the idea of leaving children behind is not considered as compatible with the family values. However, family structures and perceptions of the family have the potential to change, and when they do, cultural expectations of women's roles, such as devotion to the family and involvement in broader social roles have increased. In many societies, social values related to the family support family forms that differ from traditional structures. When the cultural acceptance of different family structures is high, the expectation to conform to a single pattern is low and gender is less influential in determining social roles.

When traditional family forms are abandoned, the proportion of women in the armed forces tends to increase. This situation does not mean the disappearance of family values, but rather a change in the structures that support these values. Sometimes this includes government support that allows parents to participate in social, political, economic etc. activities without ignoring or neglecting their children. The expansion of different types of families corresponds to the participation of women in military service and in civilian

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[69] Rosemary Park, *Overview of the social/behavioural science evaluation of the 1975- 1985 Canadian Forces trial employment of servicewomen in non-traditional environments and roles*, (Willowdale, Ontario: Canadian Forces Applied Research Report, 1986); Segal and Segal, op. cit., (1988); Stanley and Segal, op. cit., (1988).

employment. In short, the possibility of women's participation in the military will be high if the various family forms are supported by the societies.

In specific national contexts, there are other cultural issues and some individual variables that influences women's roles. For instance, language in Canada and the religion in Israel are important factors in this sense. In some countries, in relation to the military, race is an important factor in determining social policy.[70] For example, the political goals of white elites have allowed women to gain representation in the white South African Defense Force.[71] Similarly, although white women and African Americans have historically been used as alternative sources of military labour, race and gender integration have been compared in the USA. Quotas were even established for black nurses, and they were forbidden to treat white service personnel, but when there was a shortage of military nurses, white civilian nurses were brought in.[72]

1.5. CONCLUSION

In this context, it is seen that there has been a non-linear equation between the participation of women in the army and the factors influencing this. As in many spheres, women are placed in an instrumental or secondary position in the military, which is a masculine institution that makes man a 'man'. In order to understand the deployment of this secondary position, the historical framework of the Israeli army, which undergoes transformation, will be examined in the next chapter. In this framework, Israel's changing understanding of security and its reflections, national objectives and strategies in parallel with the war history of country, are also explained. In doing so, both supportive and obstructive elements regarding to the debate on women's participation in the military have also been included. Thus, the groundwork has been laid for a processual and qualitative assessment of women's participation in the army.

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[70] Enloe, op. cit., (1980).
[71] Jacklyn Cock, "Women and the Military: Implications for demilitarization in the 1990's in South Africa," *Gender and Society* 8, no.2 (1994):152-169.
[72] Darlene C. Hine, *Black women in white Racial conflict and cooperation in the nursing proffesion,1890-1950,* (Bloomington IN: Indian University Press, 1989).

CHAPTER 2- THE HISTORY OF ISRAELI ARMY: FROM COHESION TO CONFUSION

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Israel has the notion of security that is based on intertwined, complex and multivariate parameters, and it generally has a structure that produces distinctive political and military consequences. It can be seen that the concept of security exists in every aspect of foreign policy, domestic affairs, the economy, education and daily life. On the other hand, the intelligence services, the army, and the civil and military measures constitute both the framework of security thinking and the practical phase of the security policy produced in other fields. Therefore, the concept of security for Israel has an understanding that does not lose its priority and continues to exist. While before the establishment of the State of Israel, security was attempted to be provided by unorganized paramilitary structures, in the period following its establishment, these structures were gathered under a single roof and security was attempted to be provided by this structure. It is envisaged that this process of composition will form the basis of the next chapter of this thesis. In addition, by looking at the perception of security and its reflections in a historical framework and in relation to the country's military doctrine, the aim is to explain why women have been included in an institution, particularly the army, that is considered to be masculine, under what conditions they have been included, and how this inclusion has been influenced by the country's military identity. It also assesses how the constant state of insecurity instrumentalizes society -differently according to gender- institutionalizes war, and internalizes fear.

2.2. FROM DISPERSION TO COHESION

The core elements of a state are territory, nation (human community) and sovereignty. Israel has completed its process of statehood by institutionalizing and organizing the sovereignty it offers to the nation and the nation offers to it. This institutionalization and organization were achieved through militarization under the influence of the need for security and land. Therefore, militarization has also gone through a process of institutionalization, as will be seen below.

In this process, *Bar-Giora* was founded as a Jewish paramilitary group of the Second Aliyah, by Israel Shochat. In 1904, on Shochat's order, the Jews emigrated to Syria, which was under Ottoman administration and later became part of the British Mandate of Palestine. This structure was built on loyalty and secrecy with the aim of preparing an armed revolt and to creating an underground army and an independent Jewish state, by using tactics of acting under the chain of command and mobilizing and organizing groups for the ultimate purpose.[73]

In order to form a guild of Jewish guards, *Bar-Giora* was transformed into *Hashomer*[74] at the conference held in Mescha. In forming this first defence organization, no mention was made of methods, tactics or policies. Instead of mentioning these, it was stated that any Jew of sound mind and body with six months' experience of was eligible for membership, but that the person joining the organization had to place his/her duty to *Hashomer* above all personal concerns and swear to obey orders immediately and without question. Guarding was considered as more than a job, on the contrary, it was seen as an essential national service performed as a call to divine duty.[75]

This defence organization was disbanded after the establishment of the *Haganah* in 1920. The protection of Jewish settlements in the Yishuv, and the rescue of Jewish communities and their emancipation from dependence on foreign consulates and Arab guards for their security, were the responsibilities of this structure, despite some obstacles such as a lack of funds, including clothing and weapons.[76] This first defence organization began its activities with only a few dozen people. These dozen people, depicted in records and pictures in Bedouin garb, were the core group of this paramilitary structure. They took

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[73]Yaacov N. Goldstein, "The Jewish-Arab conflict: the first Jewish underground defence organizations and the Arabs," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31, no.4 (1995): 747-750.

[74] The *Hashomer* -Jewish defence organization- meaning 'The Watchman', was founded in April 1909 as an extension of the Bar-Giora group.

[75] Goldstein, "The Jewish-Arab conflict: the first Jewish underground defence organizations and the Arabs," 747-750.

[76] Amos Perlmutter, *Arab Armies in Politics*, (Berkeley: California University, Institute of International Studies, 1966) in Amos Perlmutter, *Military and Politics in Israel, Nation-Building and Role Expansion,* (London: Frank Cass, 1969), 14.

their cue from Bedouin warriors and transformed their behaviour into an ideal prototype of courageous Jewish defenders, ready to act when needed.

At the end of the World War I, the British Mandate offered a brief hope of peace for the Yishuv. The concept of a national home for the Jews was articulated in the Balfour Declaration, but no effort was made to implement it. On the contrary, more coordinated and sophisticated Arab attacks increased while the British could not or would not act in time to stop the bloodshed. While all this was going on, *Hashomer* proved to be inadequate in the face of new security needs and demands, especially the attacks of 1920 on Tel Hai and Kfar Giladi and the attacks of 1920 on Jerusalem and Jaffa.[77] This inadequacy led to debates about strategy and political action. The prevailing attitude that emerged was that all able-bodied Jews, men and women, should participate in defence in a new underground organization called the *Haganah*, which literally means defence.

The *Haganah,* which was responsible for all defence matters, had three objectives. These were to acquire weapons, to provide military training for the members of the agricultural settlements, and to set up self- defence organizations in the towns. The organization faced its first test in 1929, when a new wave of Arab violence swept the country. As a result of this test, a National Command was formed. Membership of the National Command, which had the power to pay permanent cadres, purchase arms, and supervise professional staff, was divided along party lines.[78] The first underground workshops for the local production of arms were also set up, producing hand grenades, bombs, cartridges, and tear gas.[79]

Faced with the growing capabilities of this structure, Britain initially opposed this structure and declared it as an illegal entity. However, after the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939, it supported this structure, although not officially.[80] The *Haganah* supported illegal immigration due to Britain's White Paper policy, which proposed to ban Jewish

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[77]Muhammad Suwaed, "The Bedouins in the Palestinian–Zionist struggle at the beginning of the British Mandate: 1920–1929," *Digest of Middle East Studies* 29, no.1 (2020): 110- 115.

[78] Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The anatomy of the Israeli army*, (London: Batsford Books,1979), 24.

[79] Zeev Schiff, *A History of Israeli Army: 1970- 1974,* (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1974),12.

[80] Ufuk Ulutaş et al., "İsrail siyasetini anlama kılavuzu," *SETA*, (2012): 153.

immigration to Palestine. During the World War II, however, the *Haganah* cooperated with the British. There are allegations that the *Haganah* sent Jews who escaped from the camps in Europe directly to the front.[81]

On May 19, 1941, Emergency Decree No. 2 established the *Palmach*, made up of assault companies, to carry out any special and dangerous task assigned to it by the Haganah High Command. By November 9, 1941, six companies had been set up, four in agricultural areas, one Tel Aviv, and the sixth in Jerusalem. Whereas most of these companies consisted of agricultural settlements, the company established in Jerusalem included kibbutz members, people from the *HISH*, which constitutes the field corps of the *Haganah*, mainly students, and agricultural settlements. They remained core groups to which members were added.[82]

The early days of this organization were marked by ups and downs, mainly due to lack of funding. In the first half of 1942, British offered to help train the members of this structure, particularly with the threat of Rommel in Africa. This aid doubled the number of *Palmach* members. They were deployed in the kibbutzim, where they could work part-time to help pay for the aid, and were trained. This arrangement created a breakpoint for the transformation of the scattered companies into a permanent force, deployed in training bases and living under a military regime.[83]

This elite force, whose aim was to enable Palestine to defend itself against the Nazis, also included some groups such as *Mizrahis* and revisionists within the *Haganah*.[84] They adopted the method of retaliation against the Arabs, as another method used by the *Haganah*.[85] In this sense, beginning from the 1930s, some radical groups in the Jewish community, who began to organize against the Arabs and the British, rejected the *Haganah's* policy of calm, which is based on the rule established by the prevailing Jewish

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[81] Selim Çağlayan, *İsrail Sözlüğü*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 389.
[82] Meir Chazan, "Palmach," *The Encyclopaedia of War*, (2011).
[83] Yehuda Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance: A History of Jewish Palestine, 1939-1945*, (New York: Atheneum,1973),188.
[84] David T. Zabecki, "Is the IDF Invincible?," *Military History*, (February- March, 2009): 30.
[85] Ulutaş et al., "İsrail siyasetini anlama kılavuzu," 153.

political leaders that the *Haganah* was responsible for protecting their communities, but they had no right to counterattack, and adopted the method of retaliation against the Arabs.

In 1943, relations with the British began to cool considerably. Towards the end of the war, the tide of the war was turning in favour of the Allies, and the end date for immigration, set for March 1944 in the White Paper, was approaching. In Palestine, tensions were rising as knowledge of the Holocaust and its scale spread. In the meantime, the search for secret arms caches in the kibbutzim, was again initiated by the British. Lines were drawn by defining purposes. On the one hand, there was the intention of the British to fulfil their immigration policy; on the other hand, there was the intention of the Yishuv to fight against this policy.

Within the framework of the determined intentions and the policy of retaliation, some groups, consisting of revisionists and *Mizrahim* who had left the *Haganah*, founded *Etzel*, also known as *Irgun Zvai Leumi*, which means the National Military Organization.[86] There were differences between the *Haganah* and the *Irgun* in terms of the real meaning of the struggle. In this regard, the *Irgun,* as a separate Jewish military group, was in opposition within the Yishuv. The British were seen as the main enemy, while the Arabs were seen as a force that were provoked by them. The *Irgun* carried out operations against the British. In this context, the *Irgun*, led by Menachem Begin from 1943, declared war on British rule in 1944. However, it was shut down by Ben Gurion in 1948 after the sinking of the *Altalena*.[87]

A more radical group that broke away from *Etzel* was organized as the *Stern Gang*, or as it came to be known, *Lohamei Herut Yisrael* (*Lehi*), that is, the Israeli Freedom Fighters.[88] Founded under the leadership of Abraham Stern, who left the *Irgun* in 1940, the socialist-leaning *Lehi*'s enemy was not the Arabs, but as the British, as it was in the *Irgun* structure.

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[86] Zabecki, "Is the IDF Invincible?," 30; Çağlayan, *İsrail Sözlüğü*, 389.
[87] Çağlayan, *İsrail Sözlüğü*, 390.
[88] Zabecki, "Is the IDF Invincible?," 30.

The purpose of *Lehi* was to establish a Jewish empire stretching from the Euphrates to the Nile in the land promised to the Jews.[89]

During the World War II, 26,000 Palestinian Jews, men and women, served in the British army and fought against the Germans on the Italian, Egyptian and north-western European fronts. The training and experience gained of this Jewish division contributed to the military structure of post-war Palestine. After the war, the *Haganah* allowed survivors of the Holocaust to come to Palestine and receive military training. The *Irgun* and *Lehi* were considered terrorist organizations by many Jews, especially because of their armed actions against the British after the war. In the pre-state period, it is seen that Israel had many military units made up of different ethnic and political groups. This dispersed structure was to be brought together in the process of statehood.

In May 1948, two weeks after Israel declared its independence, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) was officially established. It was announced that all other military structures would be brought under the umbrella of the IDF. Accordingly, it was not difficult for the *Haganah* to join the IDF. On the other hand, some *Irgun* military groups joined the IDF, but *Lehi* groups refused to join the IDF. However, the *Irgun* wanted to dock the illegally armed military ship *Altalena* in Tel Aviv. Begin refused to hand over the ship's weapons to the IDF. In response, Prime Minister Ben- Gurion gave the order to bomb the ship. This incident, mentioned above, led to the closure of the *Irgun*, increased the prestige of the IDF and clearly demonstrated the need for other military forces to join the country's official army.[90]

Israel does not have a military academy or a university department dedicated to the subject. Every Israeli is accepted into the army as a private. Those who successfully complete basic training and wish to enter the military service must pass an examination.[91]

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[89] Ulutaş et al., "İsrail siyasetini anlama kılavuzu," 153.
[90] Zabecki, "Is the IDF Invincible?," 31.
[91] Ibid. 33.

A number of programs were implemented within this framework. For instance, *Nahal*, which means Fighting Pioneer Youth, was a paramilitary program of the IDF, which was a large part of the military activities and has offered a combination of informal educational projects, such as social welfare and youth movement activities, and entrepreneurial training in urban development, so that the establishment of agricultural settlements, especially in the surrounding area, was combined with the military service. So, it can be said that it is a program that combines military service and agriculture, which also means that this program provided economic development, cultural and social integration, and military competence.[92]

As part of this growing military competence, the IDF, which has advanced early warning capabilities and high-tech combat vehicles, has a small and permanent land army, a regular air force and a navy. The regular call-up of the army for training and service, and the rapid transfer of reserves to its units from all over the country in times of war and crisis, give the IDF an advantage. Compared to the armed forces of North African countries and other Middle Eastern countries, it can be said that the IDF is more capable in terms of its conventional capabilities, motivation, material and equipment, and training.

The mission of the IDF is defined as follows:

> The Israel Defence Forces is the military of the State of Israel. Its activities are subject to the authority of the democratic civil government of Israel. The purpose of the IDF is to preserve the State of Israel, to protect its independence, and to foil attempts by its enemies to disrupt the normal life within it. The soldiers of the IDF are obligated to fight and devote every effort, even at the risk of their own lives, to protect the State of Israel, its citizens and residents. Soldiers of the IDF shall act according to the values of the IDF and its commands, while abiding to the law, upholding human dignity, and respecting the values of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.[93]

The point emphasized here is that Israeli soldiers must abide by the values and orders of the army. It is stated that the orders and values of the IDF are faithful to the rules of the State of Israel and the norms that protect human dignity. It is also mentioned that Israeli

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[92] Irving Heymont, "The Israeli nahal program," *The Middle East Journal*, (1967): 317-320.
[93] IDF official website, (Date of Access: 03.01.2024), https://www.idf.il/en/mini-sites/our-mission-our-values/.

rules and values are Judaism and democracy.[94] So, what is the approach within this defined mission and vision? Although it is possible to say that in theory a holistic approach is followed, in practice it is possible to encounter implementations that may disrupt this holistic or integrated approach, both internally and externally, together with the values brought by Judaism.

In this regard, it is useful to have some general information about military service in Israel in order to be able to examine the policies and approaches that have been disintegrated, in particular the participation of women in the military, which will be analysed in the following chapter. According to Israeli law, military service is compulsory for all Israeli citizens, and compulsory military service in Israel begins at the age of 18. While military service is compulsory for Jews and Druze, there are also exemptions for some groups, such as the Ultra-Orthodox Haredim, who are exempt from military service. Compulsory military service lasts 36 months for men and 24 months for unmarried women. It is 48 months for civil servants and 9 years for pilots. Muslims, Christians and Circassians can enlist voluntarily at the age of 17 if they wish, but the military service by Muslim Arabs is not desired by Israeli government officials.

The reserve military capacity is significant in Israel. In this sense, the reserve military force consists of men aged 41-51 and women aged 24. Men are accepted into the reserve military forces until the age of 40, and women are accepted as reserve military forces until the age of 38, except in cases of marriage and pregnancy. In addition, Israel introduced a semi-selective recruitment policy after 1990. Those who are not selected for military service serve in the public sector.[95]

Moreover, what the framework of the country's military doctrine is and how it has been shaped, has been effective in shaping military identity in missionary and visionary terms. Israel's military doctrine is based on the principle of never losing a war. Although Israel states that it does not seek to conquer territory and has a defensive military strategy, it is

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[94] Ibid.
[95] Basic Laws of Israel: Defence Service Law, *The Jewish Virtual Library*, (Date of Access: 07.01.2024), https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/israel-defense-service-law-1986.

observed that aggressive tactics have been observed in practice. On May 26, 1948, the Israel Defence Forces Law came into force. Accordingly, security is not only the duty of the army, and every unit in Israel is involved in the issue of security.

In addition, according to Israeli military doctrine, the war should be waged in enemy territory and the war objectives, including inflicting few casualties as possible, should be achieved as quickly as possible. The IDF, which maintains a large number of reserve forces, make use of its offensive manoeuvrability and ability to launch sudden attacks in war. In this context, the IDF, which operates with an air and armoured combat strategy, has a well-equipped air force, a regular coastal navy, a small, regular land army, and ready and well-trained reserve forces.[96]

The concepts that shape Israel's security doctrine are: geography -lack of geographical depth- and demography -much smaller than the Arab population. In this context, the main objectives of the IDF are to protect the territorial integrity of the State of Israel, to defend the sovereignty of the State of Israel, to fight against all kinds of terrorist activities that threaten daily life, and to protect Israeli citizens. Moreover, it is emphasized that the spirit of the Israeli army depends on its military heritage, the democratic principles and laws of the state, the ancient Jewish tradition and universal moral values. Thus, the core values of the IDF are listed as follows: to protect the State of Israel, Israeli citizens and people living in Israel.

In addition, the IDF soldiers have been advised to act rationally, so as not to endanger themselves recklessly. The bond of fellowship among soldiers is one of the army's values. Accordingly, it is emphasized that a soldier in need of assistance will be helped under all circumstances. It is also stated that those who help must risk their lives if necessary. This shows that every member of the army is very valuable in an organizational sense. In this way, it is possible to understand how the organized structure of the country is maintained.

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[96] Zabecki, "Is the IDF Invincible?," 28.

The people of Israel are described as an army nation. In this sense, compulsory military service ensures the integration of society. Therefore, the IDF is also an important training ground that ensures the socialization of Jews who immigrate from different parts of the world and the harmony of society.[97] In this integration process, the IDF, as the founding power and constructor of society, first tried to teach Hebrew to immigrants coming from different places, and then enabled the formation, structuring and internalization of ethnic perceptions and ethnic codes in society. Thus, it can be seen that the army has acted not only as a repressive state apparatus, which is a part of the use of force, but also as an ideological state apparatus.

However, the IDF has faced with some challenges. In particular, since the end of 1990s, the IDF has for the first time experienced some difficulties in recruiting soldiers for its combat units, due to the public concerns about the loss of life. The 'dependent military mentality' was replaced by the 'contract military mentality'. In this context, it is claimed that the idea of unconditional commitment to the nation has begun to be replaced by individual interests.[98] The other challenge facing the IDF is that religious realities, social obligations and sensitivities affect the structure of the chain of command. As those who had previously served in the military in Israel later participated in the political life, the balance between the civilian and military wings in the country was disturbed and the military wing gained an advantage. In other words, the military actively participated in the political decision-making process and became the main part of this process. Operationally, the country's military doctrine of the country has also begun to change. Technological superiority was used to conduct limited land operations and the use of air power became more important.

At the same time, changes in the level of technology have required more types of expertise. Diversification of technology and specialization has required longer military training, and thus a period of transformation from an army of ordinary citizens to an army of professionals has begun. The line between civilian and military begun to blur. All of

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[97] Ulutaş et al., "İsrail siyasetini anlama kılavuzu," 25.
[98] Eric Ouellet and Pierre C. Pahlavi, "International Analysis and Regular warfare: Israel Defence Force During 33- Day of 2006," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 23, no.1 (2012): 35-37.

this has led to an expansion of the role of the military. The expansion here meant that the army was not limited to all military activities, but was an actor with the characteristics to fulfil the nation-building function. Indeed, it would be ironic if an army in a position to recruit immigrants did not have to make such efforts. In this context, the army has carried out activities aimed at raising national awareness by informing, inspiring and strengthening Jewish culture, as well as training qualified personnel by raising their skill levels before entering the civil service, in order to ensure the smooth integration of soldiers and officers into society after completing their military service.

2.3. PERCEPTION OF SECURITY AND ITS REFLECTIONS

The dynamics of security arise from the interplay between the threats that nations face to ensure their identity and survival, and the elimination of those threats. Some security-oriented states, such as Israel, have the opposite situation. That is to say, the national identity and survival have been constructed through the interaction between the threats that Israel faces to and the security dynamics that are to be used to eliminate those threats. In other words, in order to talk about the phenomenon of identity and to protect and maintain the existence, the existence of internal and/or external threats and perceptions of them are necessary. This shows that in Israel, security and identity, which are inherent to each other, are concepts based on a definition and a fictional association with goals and expectations.

In this sense, the war was associated with the society, and it can be said that the war was not only important for the survival of the small Jewish state, but also meant the conquest, possession and settlement of Palestine. In line with this, military plans were developed to open a living space for the existence of the Jewish state. Therefore, the war was positioned as a building block for both the existence and the achievement of political goals; accordingly, the Jewish community was inevitably mobilized in this direction.

The process of constructing Israel's military identity as a country has developed in parallel with the embodiment of the concept of security. In this framework, the concept of security encompasses not only military needs and regulations, but also social, political and

economic needs and regulations. If security, which is the most basic motive and the most primitive need of people and societies, cannot be met, it is not possible for societies to realize their expectations of freedom and prosperity. Security can be defined as the protection of animate and inanimate things against threats and dangers to them. In other words, security includes all of the legal measures taken to prevent dangers and accidents against the state, society, persons, property and goods, and is the state of taking these measures.[99] On the other hand, security policy can be defined as the purpose, course of action and procedures used by a state to realize its national interests along with the protection of its own borders.[100] For Israel, the security is a very important issue and ranks first in the list of Israel's strategic objectives. The reason for this is that as a result of the forcible settlement of Palestinian land through an expansionist policy, the Palestinian people feel obliged to protect themselves and take precautions to defend their rights. According to the Israeli political and military authorities, the existence of the State of Israel can only be secure in a protected territory.

Since the establishment of Israel, it has been confirmed that the defence of the country can be achieved through attack and conflict. The starting point of this principle is that the attempt to reach an agreement with other countries, especially the Arabs, is described by president of the Jewish Agency, Ben- Gurion, as an insignificant effort and a waste of time.[101] The idea of using force to secure the future of the Jewish state has structured political life and encouraged the people to go to war. This idea is called 'aggressive defence'. Within the framework of this view, which was adopted by ultra-nationalist Jews, the context of the conflict was broadened. This is why the problem of security has been defined as an Israeli-Arab issue rather than an Israeli-Palestinian issue. In this sense, the magnification of the threat allowed the Jewish people to unite around the ideal of defending their country. The main principle here is: "The Jewish people have no friends,

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[99] Ömer Urhal, *Kamu Güvenliği Açısından İstihbarat ve Örgütlü Suçlar*, (Ankara: Adalet Yayın evi, 2008), 31.
[100] Urhal, *Kamu Güvenliği Açısından İstihbarat ve Örgütlü Suçlar*, 71.
[101] Arnold Blumberg, *The history of Israel*, (USA: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998); Yehuda Ben Meir, *Civil-military relations in Israel*, (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1995); Avner Yaniv, "A question of survival: The military and politics under siege," *National security and democracy in Israel*, (1993): 81-103.

their only friends are themselves".[102] By confirming that violence is the only solution for survival, it has always been adopted as a tactical reserve for the next war or conflict.

The turning point that led to the establishment of the State of Israel was the raid on the village of Deir Yass on April 9, 1948, carried out by the Jewish paramilitary structures - *Irgun* and *Lehi*- before the establishment of the IDF, with the aim of deterring the Palestinians by instilling fear. This attack caused Palestinians to migrate to other Arab countries, creating the refugee problem. After this incident, Ben-Gurion defined the principles of security of Israel. In this context, the establishment of settlements, the acceleration of migration, and the increase in the capacity to produce weapons became essential.[103]

Defence Minister Moshe Dayan said:

> It must see the sword as the main, if not the only, instrument with which to keep its morale high and to retain its moral tension. Toward this end it may, no — it must — invent dangers, and to do this it must adopt the method of provocation-and-revenge… And above all — let us hope for a new war with the Arab countries, so that we may finally get rid of our troubles and acquire our space.[104]

In this context, the main security objectives were defined on the basis of an aggressive defence security perception. These goals include preventing a consensus among the Arabs, operating the whistle-blower mechanism in Palestinian society, demoralizing the Arabs and increasing the self-confidence of the Israelis and providing deterrence through retaliation.

In light of all this, it can be said that the State of Israel has had a siege mentality since its inception, which has created a constant sense of insecurity. In this respect, the wars waged by and against Israel since its establishment are the reflections of its perception of

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[102] Norman Bentwich, *Israel*, (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1952); Derek Penslar, *Israel in history: The Jewish state in comparative perspective*, (UK: Routledge, 2007).
[103] Ahron Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*, (UK: Routledge, 2016); Avner Yaniv, ed., *National security and democracy in Israel*, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993); Avner Yaniv, "A question of survival: The military and politics under siege."
[104] Quotes of famous people, Moshe Dayan, (Date of Access: 12.01.2024), https://quotepark.com/quotes/1759371-moshe-dayan-misattributed-israel-must-see-the-sword-as-the/.

security. Addressing this issue makes it possible to understand the country's national and military identity within a historical framework and to observe of the changes over time. This analysis is not only a security policy analysis, but also focuses on the political and social phenomena generated by the country's military identity, the most important of which in the context of this thesis is discrimination, especially the type of discrimination that occurs through the instrumentalization of women by nationalism and the army.

The Jewish National Council, meeting in Tel Aviv on May 14, 1948, immediately after the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, declared the establishment of the State of Israel, and a few hours later, the Arab League declared war on Israel in what is known as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War or War of Independence.[105] Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi forces attacked and made significant progress. However, thanks to Israel's planned defence, the war turned against the Arabs. The war ended when Israel signed separate ceasefire agreements with each Arab country it was fighting against. By the end of the war, Israel had increased its share of Palestinian land from 56% it had received under the 1947 partition plan to 78%.[106] The arrival of Palestinian immigrants at the end of the war and the increase in Israeli turned the demographic structure of the region against the Arabs. These advantages led the State of Israel, under the influence of its siege mentality, to develop with a more controlled and planned security and military mentality.

In fact, the War of Independence consisted of two stages. The first stage was the armed struggle, which was a civil conflict between the Jewish and Palestinian communities, which began in November 1947 and lasted until May 14, 1948, when the British Mandate ended. The second stage, on the other hand, was the war with the Arab states after the declaration of the State of Israel, which was fought as a frontal war and lasted until July 1949, when the last ceasefire agreement was signed.[107] While the part of this process from November 1947 until the declaration of the State of Israel was ostensibly a civil war, it

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[105] Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, *A history of the Arab–Israeli conflict*, (UK: Routledge, 2018); Jihan El-Tahri, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*, (UK: Penguin,1998); Ahron Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Moshe Naor, "Israel's 1948 War As A Total War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 2 (April 2008): 241-243.

was fought in a defensive manner between November 1947 and March 1948, and in an offensive manner from March 1948 until the declaration of the State.[108]

In the context of the War of Independence, Jewish threat assessments included the British, the Palestinians, and the Arab states, to varying degrees and for varying purposes. The main obstacle to the establishment of a Jewish state was seen as Britain, which was the mandatory ruler of Palestine. This led to a number of tendencies, particularly those of David Ben- Gurion. In this regard, the British cannot be trusted; Britain had a pro-Arab policy; and the British used the Jews to maximize their interests with the Arabs.[109] On the other hand, although the British were considered as untrustworthy, there was an awareness that the power that protected the Jewish community in Palestine was not their own existence, but the power of the Mandatory State.[110]

Until the 1940s, the struggle against the British was mainly political and diplomatic. From the second half of the 1940s, however, this struggle was transformed into an armed struggle under the leadership of *Lehi* and the *Irgun*, with the aim of forcing the British to rethink their Palestine policy, which was restricting the aims of the Jews. Ironically, however, until that year, British support had enabled large-scale security concerns to be met and the Jews to concentrate on the armed struggle with small Palestinian groups. The initial security challenge was to prevent and retaliate against daily, small-scale harassment that did not require extensive preparation. The security of Jewish settlements was directly linked to the British presence in Palestine. However, for the purposes of statehood, the Jewish struggle with the British over Palestine since 1946, both militarily and diplomatically, had evolved into the goal of breaking and reducing the British control over Palestine.[111] As a result of the pressure it felt, Britain took the Palestine issue to the United Nations (UN), and on November 29, 1947, the UN Resolution 181 on partition

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[108] Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of The Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999*, (New York: Knopf, 1999), 213-214.

[109] Neil Lochery, *Why Blame Israel?: The Facts Behind The Headlines*, (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2004), 46.

[110] David Tal, *The War in Palestine 1948: Strategy and Diplomacy*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 24.

[111] Tal, *The War in Palestine 1948: Strategy and Diplomacy*, 23-24.

was adopted, which provided for the division of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states and gave the city of Jerusalem a special international status, was issued.[112]

In this process, the threat posed by the Palestinians was discussed in terms of protecting settlements and places of economic importance, wearing down the local population with retaliatory attacks if they showed aggression towards the Jews, hitting their economically important areas, responding in a way that would prevent them from acting, and somehow ensuring the continuation of the stay of the Palestinians who were left out of the conflict.[113] However, the Palestinians did not pose a real threat to life, as their lands were easily seized during the conflicts between December 1947 and May 1948, the first period of the war. On the other hand, the threat to the Arab world from the creation of the State of Israel was more serious. The Arab world was not inclined to make concessions and did not believe that the problem could be solved by peaceful means. In this sense, the Secretary General of the Arab League, Azzam Pasha, defined the war as an extermination and a momentous massacre that would leave marks like the Mongol massacre and the Crusades.[114]

So, for what political purpose and in what kind of struggle was Israel? Bridging the gap between military power and political purpose, the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948. This was the fulfilment of both salvation from exile, a secure Jewish homeland, national identity, social self-confidence, and the promised land of Judaism. But the declaration was also marked the beginning of a war with the Arab world. The state was established, but the decisions, acceptances and actions taken up to that day, and to be taken in the future, regarding the security of the state would determine whether the state would survive or not. These decisions, acceptances and actions would prepare the ground for the implications of security and its reflections. In this context, Israel's retaliatory

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[112] Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*; Bentwich, *Israel*; Blumberg, *The history of Israel*.
[113] Tal, *The War in Palestine 1948: Strategy and Diplomacy*, 57.
[114] Michael Curtis, "Will The Real Moderate Palestinians Please Stand Up," *American Thinker* (20 January 2013), http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2013/01/will_the_real_moderate_palestinians_please_stand_up.html.

operations for self-defence turned into punitive operations and a process of preparation for intervention in Egypt began.[115]

In the 1950s, as the security environment shifted from war to guerrilla warfare, the priority of Israel's use of force shifted to preserving the sense of relative security it had achieved. The main method of doing this was to resort to retaliation. Retaliation was the security response to the threat, along with offensive defence and deterrence. In this context, keeping the people and the army remain in a certain state of tension and thus maintaining the warlike tendency was added to the fiction of national identity and survival. As a natural consequence of the policy of retaliation, the principle that security should not yield to peace and the reciprocal kill-and-be-killed approach have become a security-oriented way of life.

In 1956, the Suez Crisis, which was a crisis of diplomatic and military confrontation, with Egypt on one side, the UK, France and Israel on the other side, and the USA and the UN on the third side, happened because of the demand of the Egyptian President Nasser to nationalize the Suez Canal on July 26, 1956; the refusal of the construction of the Aswan Dam by the UK and the USA and the turning of Egypt under Nasser's administration towards the Soviet Union and China. The main purpose of the attack was to overthrow Nasser's government and regain Western control of the canal. One day after Israel invaded Egypt, Britain and France warned Israel and Egypt with a collective ultimatum and then began bombing Cairo. British and French forces left the country before the end of the year, but Israeli forces remained in the country until March 1957. At the end of the war, which showed that world domination had passed from Europe to the USA and the Soviets, Egypt was defeated and Israel was accepted as a tool of Western imperialism in the Arab world. Thus, it can be said that Israel's desire not only to guarantee the security of its border, but also to retain the authority to take the initiative and to somehow expand its borders, has become clear. In line with this, the expectation of conflict was identified with the equation of 'border security= offensive-defence or aggressive-defence'. The victory

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[115] El-Tahri, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs;* Bickerton and Klausner, *A history of the Arab–Israeli conflict;* Yanıv, ed., *National security and democracy in Israel.*

in the 1956 war generally led to an increase in Israeli self-confidence and the decisiveness of marginalization in its security perception. Based on the Israel's principle of deterrence, which encompasses the concepts of military threat, military attrition and full-scale war, disproportionate force or disproportionality became essential for reliable deterrence, and the existence of an absolutely appropriate response to every threat has emerged as a result of this acceptance. As a result, with the 1956 war, the phenomenon of war took shape as an institutional understanding for Israel. The country's political thinking, state mechanisms, economic situation and social structure have also kept pace with this institutionalization. The elements of threat and enemy rather that the element of peace have become the main issues in the country's security perception. Within the framework of such an understanding, the country's defence forces have also been adapted to this institutionalization and given an exclusive character. So, do the defence forces, or more precisely the army, incorporate the principle of marginalization that they use to perceive or identify threats and enemies? Does the country, after having engaged in communal conflicts -both military and social, to eliminate threats, does the country maintain this holistic approach once the threat has been eliminated?[116]

The 1967 Arab-Israeli War (Six-Day War), which began on Monday, June 5, 1967 as a result of the perception of offensive defence, between Israel and its Arab neighbours - Egypt, Jordan and Syria- and lasted for 6 days, ended with Israel's absolute superiority. At the end of the war, Israel quadrupled its territory, taking the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, and the Gaza Strip and West Bank from Palestine. This event is the conflict that has had the greatest impact on many of today's problems, especially the Palestinian issue. In the aftermath of this war, it is seen that Israel's deterrent power should be established, that priority in the allocation of the country's resources should be given to military capacity, and that security conditions are the determinants of domestic and foreign policy. An offensive defence strategy based on surprise attacks was also defined and added to the military character.[117]

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Ami Gluska, *The Israeli military and the origins of the 1967 war: Government, armed forces and defence policy 1963–67*, (UK: Routledge, 2007); Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*; El-

Between 6 and 25 October 1973, Arab states led by Egypt and Syria launched a war, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War against Israel, also known as the Yom Kippur War. The main objective of this war, in which both the USA and the Soviet Union launched massive supply efforts to their allies during the war, leading to an imminent conflict between the two nuclear-armed superpowers, was to gain a foothold on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal and then use these gains to negotiate the return of the rest of the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula. Much of the war, which began with Egypt's surprise attack during the celebration of the Jewish religious holiday of Yom Kippur, took place in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights, which were occupied by Israel in 1967. Following the surprise attack, as the war continued with the successful crossing of the Arab coalition to the Suez Canal, Egyptian forces crossed the ceasefire lines with Israel and moved into the Sinai Peninsula almost without conflict. However, Israel stopped the Egyptian attack three days later by mobilizing most of its armed forces and this situation led to the emergence of a military impasse.

After three days of hot conflict, Israeli forces pushed the Syrians back to the pre-war ceasefire lines. The Israeli army then launched a four-day counter-offensive inside Syria's main borders, and within a week, Israeli artillery was shelling the outskirts of Damascus, - the capital of Syria. Egyptian forces then launched a new attack against Israel, but this too was quickly defeated by Israel. Israeli forces then counter-attacked Egypt, crossing the Suez Canal and entering Egypt, slowly advancing towards the Suez Canal in fierce fighting that lasted for more than a week and caused huge casualties on both sides. This war once again reminded Israel of its existential concerns, as it was a war that it almost lost. This situation made the need for security and threat assessment in an even more important position.

After the 1973 War, Israel decided to stay away from frontline wars and to strike its enemy from a distance with high capacity. In this sense, it can be said that under the influence of the traumatic situation coming back from the brink of defeat, the main goals for ensuring security have also changed in the process, and threats and threat preparation processes

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Tahri, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*; Michael B. Oren, *Six days of war: June 1967 and the making of the modern Middle East*, (Presidio Press, 2003).

have been reviewed. Accordingly, after 1977, within the framework created by Begin, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was defined as a terrorist organization and the sole enemy, and the suppression of terrorism and taking complete control of the region became the main goals.[118]

In the early 1970s, the Palestinian rebellion in southern Lebanon, which had escalated sharply since Lebanon began to use the region as a base for attacks against northern Israel and for hijacking campaigns around the world. Faced with this situation, Israel had to retaliate. During the Lebanese civil war, Palestinian militants not only launched attacks against Israel, but also fought against dissidents within Lebanon. In 1978, the Coastal Road massacre, in which 35 Israelis, including 13 children were killed and 70 injured in an attack on a bus traveling along the coast from Haifa to Tel Aviv was seized, led to a large-scale Israeli invasion known as *Operation Litani*. Soon after this operation, which was the de facto catalyst for numerous conflicts and occupations between Israel and other actors in Lebanon, Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon, but attacks against Israel continued.

The 1982 Lebanon War began with the Israeli government's decision to take sides in the Lebanese Civil War after a Palestinian assassination attempt on an Israeli diplomat in 1982. Most of the Palestinian militants were defeated within a few weeks, Beirut was captured, and the PLO headquarters were evacuated to Tunisia in June following a decision by Yasser Arafat. This was Israel's first experience of low-intensity warfare. In general, the 1980s saw the above-mentioned changes in the Israeli army's security policy. The experience of previous wars, especially the 1973 War, made it necessary to move away from frontline warfare and the policy was changed to strike the enemy from a far distance with high capacity. This change has also relied on the support of technology. The

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[118] Zafer Balpınar, *İsrail: Güvenlik Politikasında Süreklilik ve Değişim (1948- 2008),* (İstanbul: Açılım Kitap, 2012), 9-15; Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*; El-Tahri, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*.

way and extent to which technology is used in the defence forces determines the need for manpower or women power.[119]

Another change was that peace agreements began to be defined as having strategic value. Moreover, as a result of these changes, with the First Palestinian Intifada, which began in 1987 in response to increasing attacks and endless invasions, and the Second Intifada, which broke out after unsuccessful negotiations, it was observed that Israel's use of force was seen as containable, but not eradicable.

Despite these changes, in the period up to the end of the Cold War, under the influence of the concept of security shaped by the perception of existence or non-existence, peace was considered as a period that could come after victory, and the next conflict was seen as inevitable. As a result, the use of force became an irreplaceable tool for ensuring security and for changing the behaviour of the other party.

The cyclical environment of conflict created by the Gulf War (1991) provided a suitable basis for the continuation of Israel's security approach along traditional lines. However, it became easier for the international community to question Israel's military presence in the Palestinian territories by drawing parallels with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The reflection of the emerging complex situation on Israel's security approach has been the continuation of the tradition of using force as the preferred method of providing security and reaching an agreement with the conflicting party through the use of force.[120]

Moreover, the laws that shape the understanding of Israel's security are important. These are the *Defence Regulation Act (1949), the Law on Agriculture in Non-Agricultural Areas (1949), the Law of Return (1950), the Absentee Property Law (1950), the State Property*

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[119] Bregman, *Israel's wars: A history since 1947*; El-Tahri, *The Fifty Years War: Israel and the Arabs*; Bickerton and Klausner, *A history of the Arab–Israeli conflict*; Michael Brecher, *Decisions in crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2023).
[120] Ibid.

Law (1951), the Property Tax and Compensation Fund Law (1961), the National Parks and Nature Reserves Act (1963) and the Mass Housing Projects Law (1964).[121]

Within this framework, security involves the centralization of current issues, but does not ignore the future. For this very reason, while the survival of the newly established state was addressed, the aim was also to raise the individual who would achieve this goal within the envisaged security phenomenon. An attempt was made to train individuals who would ensure the secure future of the State of Israel, in a society whose structure is closely linked to the past in a historical-religious context, and who would be able to predict the security conditions of the future and organize themselves accordingly. In parallel with this, all the historical infrastructure that existed in the past and could be associated with the secure future of the Jews was highlighted and reintroduced into the society. In other words, identity was constructed over the infrastructure of the perception of security.

Within this framework, the War of Independence was given a separate political/social identity and meaning have been attributed to. In this context, this war was referred to as the Hebrew War, rather than the Jewish War, to emphasize that the Jews in Palestine were separate from the Jews in the diaspora and their culture. Those who fought here were referred to as Hebrew Soldiers to distinguish them from the Jewish soldiers who fought in the World War II.[122] Thus, the war for Palestinian land was the beginning of a special identity. If this identity is considered just like the name to be given to a new-born child, the woman gives birth to the child, and the nation also gives birth to citizens who will fight; the man registers the new-born child and the homeland provides the recruitment (or registration, as men do) of individuals for military service by giving them a purpose. As can be seen from the metaphor here, whether identity is individual or social, it cannot be produced separately from either women or men. Israel has chosen to construct a military for its citizens that associates the society with the war. In this regard, raising, caring of or protecting are important parts of the sacred duty. At this point, however, some differences emerge. That is, there is a given upper identity constructed on nationalist and militarist

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[121] Bentwich, *Israel*; Blumberg, *The history of Israel*; Uri Bar-Joseph, "Variations on a Theme: The Conceptualization of Deterrence in Israeli Strategic Thinking," *Security Studies* 7, no.3 (1998): 145-181.
[122] Ibid.

values, but this super-identity has not developed in the same way for everyone. Women are also soldiering to protect the existence of the country, but women have been considered as physically weaker, and emotionally stronger than men, so the involvement of women in the military issues has varied. For instance, instrumentality is one method of including of women in the military, where women are expected to raise children for the future and to serve the men who are engaged in military activities.

It can be seen that the effort that brought war and society together defined every Jew as a soldier of the cause and brought the whole of society together in the context of a military community, ensuring that both nationalist feelings and the concept of security were present in every stage of life. In this way, the war that began specifically for the Jews in Palestine became a war for all Jews, creating a 'fighting nation'. It can also be observed that the process of creating a self-sacrificing society that is created based on unique values and fighting for this cause is an attempt to strengthen Jewish nationalism.

At this point, while the expansion of the Jewish living space constituted the external dimension of security, the creation of individuals whose sole purpose was survival constituted the internal dimension of security. The idea of building a single identity internally created a controversy externally. Israel, which must maintain this contradiction in order to impose its own security conditions, has ensured that the fulfilment of sacred goals is legitimized, regardless of how they are fulfilled. Thus, by institutionalizing the combative behaviour associated with the search for a secure future, an attempt was made to ensure that Jews from different geographical, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds could become a monolithic society. The search for security through the continuity of the conflict has also dictated that Israel rely only on its own knowledge, both in terms of human resources and the production of security tools. This has revealed the need for the country to have a number of capabilities, such as the political power with the power of sanctions that can mobilize people; adequate social capacity, including the education of skilled people, propaganda through the use of media tools, advertisements etc.; cultural capacity especially with regard to religious values; adequate military capacity including organized military units, qualified intelligence services, the training of qualified soldiers, the production of weapons and ammunition, the supply of military equipment;

technological capacity, including the war industry, the use of technological surveillance apparatuses, security and surveillance software; and economic self-sufficiency, including the use of resources to achieve other capacities. This has led to the concept of security being created in the context of both the obligations that will be imposed on the other party and the obligations to which Israel has committed itself.

In this context, security and identity, or the roles attributed to them, have defining elements on the one hand and complementary elements on the other. These are in a structure that produces itself from within. In this sense, the generation that sacrifices itself in war for its country has become an idol. This idol has both introduced the ideal of a safer future to the next generations and offered the current generation a realistic choice between existence and extinction. In this respect, military power has been used as a catalyst to accelerate the realization of hopes by creating of myths that will affect and bind future generations more deeply.

One of those myths is the understanding of "*mamlachtiut*", which reflects the permanent tension between the establishment of the State of Israel as an orderly and limited institutional project and the view of the state as an instrument in a supreme process of liberation, has been positioned above all as the planner and implementer of all processes related to the state and society. Thus, even after its establishment, Israel is to remain to be a "state in the formation," a means of realizing an eternal vision. While this approach, through oppression, dissolves the individual in its own fiction, the ideal of Zionism imposed by religion and history has trapped the individual in a vicious circle that allows him/her to perceive the world only from the perspective of security. In this way, the existence of each individual is directly linked to the continuity of the state. Accordingly, every Jewish individual has been positioned as an active (warrior) object. Beyond the establishment of the state, this fiction has continued to determine decision-making processes regarding both internal and external developments in the post-establishment period.[123]

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[123] Zafer Balpınar, "İsrail'in Devlet Kurgusu Güvenli Bir Yahudi Yurdu mu? Yoksa Güvenlikçi Bir Yahudi Devleti mi?," *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi* 13, no. 26 (2017): 175-177.

2.4. GENDERED MILITARY AND SOCIETY: ON THE WAY OF GENDERED SECURITY

After the process of evolution from dispersed military structures, acting in line with different ideologies and for purposes that change according to the conditions of the time, to an organized army, new institutionally determined goals have emerged, including nation-building, economic modernization, and national integration occurred. To achieve these goals, the army must have a structure that acts as 'an elite class within the elite'. In this regard, there is an invisible but highly conventionalized harmony between the army and society. Therefore, the army, which is based on merit and ability, has two opposing origins which are professionals in the military and volunteers in society.

At this point, with the sharpening of the borders of the country, that is, the period of the nation-state, militarism, which was produced to meet the need to defend the material wealth and humanity of the country, but also to regulate social relations rather than the need for pure defence, was used as a mechanism. This mechanism has usually been developed more in times of peace than in times in war. However, since there is no sharp distinction in Israel between times of peace and times of war, this mechanism has been developed as a control mechanism that is always ready for use. In this regard, Israel has an endless desire to know everything about the lives of its rulers and citizens, to witness and inspect every movement. This has been achieved through the active participation of the army in political and social life, the legitimization of the use of force in settling disputes, the glorification of hierarchy, the identification of masculinity with the use of force and the identification of femininity with protection.

The Israeli army is not just a uniformed, rigidly hierarchical force that stands out in times of war. Here, the army as an institution has long since left the barracks and intervened in civilian life through perceptions of survival of the fittest, the visibility and pornography of violence, and the creation of identities that are artificial but real. In this regard, Israel has followed a pattern of nationalism, racism, masculinism, and sexism intertwined with militarism. The army is used to conceal the asymmetrical relationship established between citizens. The dominance granted to men, who are the bearers of authority, has not been granted to women to the same extent.

Moreover, Israel has tried to find a solution to its problem of insecurity with a gigantic military order, which eventually turned into a mechanism of male domination. This masculine structure emerges through the mechanism of conscription, which is based on the pre-culture that every man should be a warrior. Although there is a conscription mechanism that requires not only men but also women to be warriors, this is an extension of the commitment to collective identity in order to achieve security. In the context the acceptance of the zero-sum game, the insolubility and inevitability of the conflict has been transformed into security policy as can be seen in the historical framework. In this context, the Jewish community was given no choice and all women and men were made to believe in it.[124] Moreover, in order to achieve a second Holocaust effect, every negative attitude towards the Jews was used to facilitate the preparation of the nation for war.[125] At the same time, the general approach, which was created nationally and militarily, was based on the creation of the struggle for 'to exist or not to exist' in the intellectual infrastructure of the society, ensuring national mobilization, and keeping the society in a high state of tension that would produce an immediate reaction by accepting the lack of choice.[126]

The concept of military service in Israel has varied according to demographic characteristics, in a balance that fluctuates between changing political attitudes and social opinion regarding military service. While in many countries the general opinion about military service is that it is a process that must be completed in order to begin working, in Israel this opinion is that military service is a process that must be continued in order to survive. In fact, these two perceptions are intended to prevent disorganization and disorder, because on the one hand, with processes such as starting a life and a family in the flow of life, and on the other hand, with a mobilization and provocation, based on needs and fears, have pushed individuals into order. This is why Israel finds it necessary to create or present a threat in order to maintain its existence. For this reason, individuals who are constantly trying to prove themselves are fictionalized. Military service promises to bring the individual one step closer to this achievement. Israel, which continues to

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[124] Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and Arab World*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 18, 36-39, 97.
[125] Donald Neff, *Warriors for Jerusalem*, (Vermont: Amana Books, 1988), 116; John Cooley, *Green March, Black September*, (London: Frank Cass, 1973),161.
[126] Alan Dowty, *Israel-Palestine*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 293-296.

constantly create discourses for this idea, which involves individuals through coercion or persuasion, has processed the ideas, the foundations of which were laid earlier, into individuals through various practices and repetitions, during the military service. Thus, in parallel with the understanding of being lost in a whole, of disappearing in a single voice, a new, strong and superior position was attributed and a great sense of trust with other commoners under the unity of destiny was constructed. When the attractiveness of military service is reduced or lost, this situation of attributing superior identities and creating a sense of trust is embodied through impositions and sanctions due to the social anxiety and the fear of exclusion. In order to participate in military service, these stages have been passed, the grievances have been overcome, and the level or rank achieved now represents a treasure to be protected. This level or rank can always be withdrawn, but adding and presenting new parts with appropriate values is a reasonable way to maintain this level or rank.[127]

It was important to gain the support of the community, which fostered the desire and need to fight, so that state authority and central power were increasingly used to strengthen national unity socially and politically. Thanks to the structure of the Jewish community, which can run an effective and efficient bureaucracy, it was been not difficult to mobilize national resources. At the same time, as social organizations were defined along with economic activities, the efficiency of the use of resources has supported a suitable infrastructure for the production of security policy.[128]

In this context, it can be said that the creation of a homogeneous nation has been placed at the centre of security expectations. The conditions required the unification of Jews from all over the world under the State of Israel, the gathering together and mobilization of the human resources that will ensure the security of the state, towards a common goal, or the organization of these resources in a such way that they can be activated at any time. The main motivation for this understanding was the feeling of being surrounded by enemies,

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[127] Oren Barak and Gabriel Sheffer, ed., *Militarism and Israeli society*, (Indiana University Press, 2010); Stuart A. Cohen*, Israel and its army: From cohesion to confusion*, (UK: Routledge, 2008).
[128] Naor, "Israel's 1948 War As A Total War," 243; David Tal, "David Ben-Gurion's Teleological Westernism," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 10, no.3 (2011): 352-353.

and the acceptance that there was no other option but to be reactionary aiming at consuming living space in the context of a zero-sum game.

In the Israeli army as a reactionary body of the country, which is based on hierarchy and power, the first rule of peace and stability is obedience, which is shown by the method of '3S- no speaking- no snooping into- no slacking'. This has promoted the idea of power, violence, and competition in the social sphere. This situation paralyzes masculinity and femininity in one way or another. Individuals freeze to take action the moment they receive orders, which is a semi-dead state. When the order comes, action is taken without question, and, here, a new collective way of life has emerged instead of individualism. There is only one truth, which is the action carried out after an order or command. An effective means of discipline, has been to make an individual responsible not only for himself/herself, which means that s/he is responsible for the person next to him/her, in order to ensure unity and the understanding that a whole group can be affected by the behaviour of each individual in relation to the order. Although Israel militarizes most of the social spheres by making individuals feel insecure or feeding on their insecurity, the military itself as an institution is in a security crisis. Therefore, the situation of being a part of a whole mentioned here has necessitated male and female personnel looking out for each other. However, in the region where there are more operations and threats, it is possible, reasonable and not unfounded that there has been an uneven division of authority, responsibility and duty between male and female military personnel.

Within this framework, conflict, violence and war are presented as inevitable and as the ultimate goal. Therefore, a person is trained to sacrifice his/her own insecurity for a higher purpose. In this sense, soldiers need a homeland, but also an enemy. Therefore, mental and spiritual mobilization also means creating a sense threat and directing resentment and hatred towards those who are identified as internal enemies or external enemies.[129]

In such an atmosphere, the complete exclusion of women from military service would also create a major security crisis. It would be too luxurious for Israel, which has always

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[129] Ulrich Bröckling, *Disiplin*, trans. Veysel Atayman, (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2008), 10, quoted in Emre Doğan, *Erkeklik, Milliyetçilik, Militarizm*, (İstanbul: Urzeni Yayıncılık, 2020).

suffered from a fatal demographic weakness against the enemy and has lived in an endless state of insecurity and fear, to exclude half of its population from participation in the army. However, it is difficult to say that women and men are offered the same opportunities to participate in the military, both technically and ideologically. In this sense, even though 90% of combat roles are open to women, there are those who find this inappropriate and object to it. Some Jews believe that women's lives should not be put at risk because they need to be protected and this protection secures the entire population, including the next generations, which is what a small country like Israel needs most. On the other hand, there are objections that women are weaker than men and that the Israeli army unfairly lowers fitness standards to make it easier for them to join combat units. In fact, the army does not consider it appropriate for women to serve in some elite combat units due to the physiological differences between men and women. In the defence on the army against the objections made to the courts, it was stated that some programs for the recruitment of women to combat units were carried out in 2020-2021 and that the rule was made as a result of these practices. As a result of the analysis, it was found that the possibility of women providing the physical strength required by some units was very low. In this context, based on the finding that carrying heavy weapons and walking long distances with heavy packs significantly increase the risk of injury for women compared to men, it was assessed that positions such as mortar teams, where carrying weight is not the primary concern, would be more suitable for women. As a result of these discussions, women have not been explicitly deployed in combat situations, although they are officially classified as combat soldiers. They are expected to intervene in the event of the conflict, but they are not deployed in areas where the risk of conflict is high. For instance, three female infantry battalions and female-crewed tanks have been deployed to patrol the border patrol in the Jordan Valley, and female soldiers have been banned from joining front-line combat brigades in the event of the war. But the body is the platform on which the struggle of life against death and the struggle of death against life is maintained, and this platform is fragile for both men and women, and both are vulnerable. This truth is often forgotten.

In Israel, where there was a relative relief after the initial victories, a law was passed to remove women from frontline positions, and in accordance with this law, all female soldiers were withdrawn to the rear positions or areas, which were considered safer.

However, with the start of the 1973 Yom Kippur War began, women were once again needed at the front and in the field duties due to the rapidly increasing demand for land forces. Due to the shortage of women, women's roles again increased and diversified. This increase and diversity have continued throughout the 1980s, as women began to be promoted to higher ranks, even above the rank of colonel. For instance, Amira Dotan became the first female brigadier general. However, it was more difficult for women to rise through the ranks than for men. For example, to be promoted to the rank of colonel, they had to serve 13 months longer than men in the same position.

By 2000, an amendment to the law[130] stated that the women's right to serve in any position in the Israeli army was equal to that of men. Despite the theoretical equality of opportunity, the question of who and what was eligible for military positions was left to the discretion of commanders on a case-by-case basis. Following the change, female soldiers were appointed as combatants in the artillery corps, combat engineering corps, light infantry, military police, border police and other units. The appointments, which started with a modest number, have been increasing day by day. The number of females in mixed-gender combat battalions serving at the front is also increasing. In 2012, more than 600 women participated in mixed-gender battalions in 2012, 1365 in 2013, 2100 in 2016, and 2700 in 2017.[131]

It is also said that today 20% of the army's combat personnel are women. The *Caracal battalion*, which is 70% female, is the best known of the battalions that offer the best combat opportunities for women. Female soldiers who excel in cognitive skills, creativity and courage serve here. There are two other mixed-gender battalions, the *Lions of the Jordan Valley Battalion* and the *Bardelas Battalion*. The *Oketz*, the IDF's canine unit, also employs women as combat soldiers. Women can also serve in the combat intelligence gathering unit and have the right to serve as search and rescue personnel in the Home

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[130] The Equality Amendment to the Military Service law, *The Library of Congress*, (Date of Access: 11.01.2024), https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2014-03-31/israel-amendment-law-imposes-military-draft-and-national-service-obligations-on-yeshiva-students/.
[131] Women of the Israel Defence Forces: History of Combat Units, *The Jewish Virtual Library*, (Date of Access: 15.01.2024), https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/history-of-women-in-idf-combat-units#google_vignette.

Front Command. Women are allowed to serve as tank crews in the Israeli Border Guard, which protects the borders with Egypt and Jordan.[132]

In addition, the 2006 Lebanon War was the first since 1948 in which female soldiers served alongside male soldiers in the field. However, women in the Israeli army are mostly seen in support roles such as secretaries, clerks, instructors, radio operators, drivers, parachute assemblers, and cooks. Their main role is to ensure that more men can take up combat positions. The army, which is forced to keep more men in military service due to insecurity and fear, has an opportunity to recruit more men to the battlefield by ensuring that women participate in support roles.[133]

Extremely religious people are also not happy about men and women being recruited together in the army. In 1950, the Chief Rabbi declared that it was forbidden for women to join the army. In the 1980s, Meir Kahane, an extreme right-wing rabbi, also strongly opposed women's conscription and suggested that women would be involved in other national services instead of military service.[134] However, experts argued that if women were not drafted, there would be no choice but to increase the length of military service for men to four and a half years. Despite all the fatwas, Israel has needed female soldiers. Moreover, with the revelation of cases of harassment and sexual abuse, according to the report prepared by the Israeli State Ombudsman in 2021, 33% of women serving in the army stated that they were exposed to at least one or more cases of sexual harassment, and 70% of them reported this situation and filed a complaint. According to the report, 44% of these complaints were not properly evaluated and 26% of them were not considered at all. So, the army has a greenhouse for exploitative sexual relationships. There are famous commanders among the people accused, but these people are carefully protected by the system in order to protect the image of the army.[135] However, it can be

[132] Ibid.

[133] Pnina Sharvit Baruch, "Opening All Combat Positions in the IDF to Women," *The Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) Strategic Assessment,* (March 2022), https://www.inss.org.il/strategic_assessment/opening-all-combat-positions-in-the-idf-to-women/.

[134] Idit Shafran Gittleman, "Female Service in the IDF: The Challenge of an 'Integrated' Army," *Foreign Relations and International Law*, https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/female-service-idf-challenge-integrated-army.

[135] Sarah Ben-David, Inna Levy, and Boaz Ben-David, "Sexual harassment in the university and in the army in Israel," *Victimology and human security: New horizons,* (Nijmigen: Wolf Legal, 2012).

said that harassment in the Israeli army has more than one dimension, judging by the exhibitionist posts on some social media platforms such as Tik Tok and Instagram. These posts, mostly in the mood of unhappy teenagers, can actually be seen as a passive and lazy objection to the boring living conditions of compulsory military service. However, Israel has also successfully used them for its own purposes, preferring to be associated with flirtatious and erotic social media phenomena rather than mass murder in Gaza or elsewhere. It is also a unique apparatus for promoting how modern and free a country it is in a bigoted geography. Nor can it be said that they are bothered by obscene expressions such as Israel's hottest gunfighter.

The process of existence and nationalization was initially experienced without the separation of men and women. In this process, the main issues were the question of borders, state formation and security, national coordination and construction of identities, military determination, the action-reaction principle, against the continuity of the enemy, the use of the offensive defence approach as a solution to power inequality, and the association of society with war. In the theoretical framework, some variables of women's participation in the military force are mentioned. According to this, it can be analysed that the participation of women in the army, which is considered necessary primarily on the basis of military variables -national security being the most influential- has later acquired an instrumental character under the influence of cultural and social variables. In fact, it has become both an ideological and repressive apparatus of the male dominance. In this context, the issue of women's participation in the army began with cohesion and then turned into confusion. So, does security have a gendered character? Military power is inherently based on masculine values and therefore sanctifies masculinity. Military service is an institution that forces recruits through the chain of command to do a lot of physical activity and work, whether they want to or not, and that disciplines and restricts personal pleasures (e.g., internet, games, pornography, alcohol, etc.). All these phenomena mentioned here are identified with men, so the military service is seen as the best equivalent to the ritual of initiation into adult masculinity and as a place that has the potential to mature men. In this sense, there is a perception that security, which can only be achieved with a strong army, rests on the shoulders of boys who are raised by their mothers and are on their way to becoming men. Although the need for women in this

regard is not ignored, especially with regard to the variables mentioned in the theoretical framework, there is a gendered attitude and an exploitation of emotions.

2.5. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that, Israel has a sense of insecurity about its enemies, and that Israel seeks to resolve this insecurity by perceiving itself as having a 'strong military' both inside and outside the country. This is why Israel's defence budget is much higher than that of its neighbours. At the same time, Israel, which fears 'total annihilation' rather than being defeated in the event of an enemy attack, cannot bear the loss of land due to its small geography and cannot explain this to its people. Past wars and the aggressive rhetoric of the enemies have, over time, turned this perception into a cultural code and made it a part of the larger group identity.[136] At this point, under the influence of the fear of violence and destruction by the enemy, Israel created a new policy of responding with greater force. In addition, the deterrence of the army was intended to be strengthened by developing an aggressive and malicious image of Israel and the IDF, which is not sensitive to civilian casualties, in the context of a conflict-oriented and security-oriented foreign policy. In this context, it can be seen that there is a provocation of fear in the general public in order to achieve political and strategic goals on an emotional basis and in an organized manner. This provocation of fear can be interpreted as a culture or climate of fear. In this sense, the culture of fear has been deliberately constructed by obscuring reason and intensifying emotions. In this way, demagogic politicians and commanders can easily mobilize the public for their policies. Fears are used to increase the power of politicians and even invented, like a fantasy, by projecting the public's own worst fears as political, cultural, and social assumptions about human vulnerability. These narratives can be seen in various examples throughout history, such as the politics of the US 'war on terrorism' and the politics of Nazi Germany. For instance, Hermann Göring -a Nazi German politician- explained how people could be intimidated into supporting a war they would normally oppose as follows: "The people don't want war, but they can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. This is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are

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[136] Vamık D. Volkan, *Kimlik Adına Öldürmek*, (İstanbul: Evrensel Yayınları, 2009), quoted in Çağlagül Yesevi, *İsrail Ordusu ve İstihbarat Örgütleri*, (Ankara: Kripto Kitaplar, 2018), 88-94.

being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and for exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.".[137]

Accordingly, Israel has exploited perceptions of risk and security and turned them into a method of retaliation to maintain control in both domestic and foreign policy. At this point, it would be more accurate to describe Israel's defence forces as 'comparatively strong', because it is a power that is created rather than existing. Given that, in the context of this thesis, the created image of a strong army cannot gain legitimacy without including all segments of society, women in Israel are expected to participate in the army, which is seen as a male institution. To what extent has this participation been achieved? This extent will be evaluated in terms of a historical framework which is divided into two periods: pre-independence and post-independence, gender equality and military service requirements.

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[137] Gustave M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, (1947); you can also visit
https://quotepark.com/search/?h=Hermann+G%C3%B6ring.

CHATER 3- GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOUR: ILLUSIONARY INTEGRATION IN THE ISRAELI ARMY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Women have participated in the Israeli defence system since its inception. However, throughout the development of Israeli army, they have never been treated the equal to men. In this regard, feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's definition that women are positioned as insignificant and secondary to men and therefore fictionalized as the 'other' of men is also evident here.[138] Therefore, women have become an 'other' class in terms of both defence and social structure. However, women have so significantly penetrated to the military sectors to such an extent that security issues and actions have never been in the hands of men alone. The main issue here is the patterns of the development of the role of women soldiers. Recalling the intersection of feminist and nationalist perspectives on the military roles attributed to women in nation-building and the perpetuation of the nation, women can temporarily be prioritized through militarization. This is where the concepts of front and rear come into play.

The concepts of front and rear, which appear regularly in the military discourse, are part of a dichotomy that reflects the actual preservation of geographical and functional zones involved in the military confrontation. In this context, the front, on the one hand, represents the disputed armed territory where the actual confrontation between the opposing forces begins and where the unity of the struggle in the true sense of word is born; the rear, on the other hand, refers to the area where the most of the members of the fighting unity remain in relative security, protected by prepared and trained fighters for the sake of unity, community, and the territory that belongs to them. Moreover, these fighters not only defend these phenomena, but in some cases seek to extend and glorify them further. Also, the needs of the fighters in the front are supplied by the rear.[139] From a feminist perspective, the concepts of the front and the rear can be considered as one of the most prominent examples of the intertwined culture and ideology of hegemonic

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[138] Beauvoir, *Kadın İkinci Cins I: Genç Kızlık Çağı*, 17.
[139] Nira Yuval-Davis, "Front and Rear: The Sexual Division of Labor in the Israeli Army," *Feminist Studies* 11, no. 3 (1985): 650- 652, https://doi.org/10.2307/3180123.

masculinity and the culture and ideology of hegemonic nationalism. Therefore, within the framework of the feminist approach, the front predominantly belongs to strong, assertive, brave, heroic and stoic men whereas the rear predominantly belongs to weak, diffident, vulnerable, and emotional women for the construction and maintenance of national security and existence.

Within this framework, it cannot be said that the front and the rear have stable structures, because when there is an expansion in the front, this expansion is also seen in the rear, and there is a transformation of some certain areas of the former front into parts of the new rear. However, the certain functions such as service and administration have always been carried out in the rear, while direct combat has always been carried out in the front. According to Enloe's evaluations comparing the roles attributed to women and men as respectable and honourable, it can be said that the front represents the primary while the rear represents the secondary.[140]

In the traditional sense, the territorial front/rear dichotomy significantly coincides to a large extent with the combatant/non-combatant dichotomy. Within this framework, there are always people at the front to carry out non-combatant tasks - medical services, communications and other services- but most people at the front carry out combat tasks. Indeed, non-combat work can be carried out away from the front, although combat-like activities in training and drill often formed a significant part of military activities in the rear. The ratio of combat to non-combat forces and the relationship between the front and the rear have changed with the development of modern warfare. For example, it has been estimated that each combat mission in a modern army requires about twenty non-combat personnel.[141] In areas such as communications, technology and administration, as well as the traditional service and defence roles, more support roles and positions are required. In addition, the need to be physically close to the enemy is gradually diminishing in an increasing number of cases. This means that the front in the 'functional' sense does not always coincide with the front in the 'territorial' sense, and the relatively secure position of the rear is beginning to disappear. However, the front has one consistent characteristic

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[140] Peterson, "Feminisms and International Relations,"581.
[141] Bloom, "Israel: The longest War,"137-139.

that is able to survive despite the changes brought about by the development of modern warfare, and that is that the front retains its position where the most important combat activities for the success of military operations are located, including pressing of a button.[142]

In parallel with the division between the front and the rear, the equal representation of women and men in the armed forces has been disrupted. In this regard, women are considered ineligible for the front line and for combat roles carried out in the functional front. In the military, as in society as a whole, there is a gendered division of labour. From the feminist understanding, this is based on enduring traditions about "appropriate" areas of work for men and women.[143] This is an extension of the almost universal acceptance of gender division. According to this acceptance, men are seen as 'warriors', and therefore do the heaviest and riskiest work. This tradition in modern patriarchal society manifests itself more in the military than in civilian life. Contrary to the image of men as fighters, women are seen as the gears of reproduction and service mechanisms in terms of the criticisms of the feminist perspective and the meanings attributed to women and men by the nationalist ideology. Therefore, they are expected to reproduce the future generation, which is also the labour force, through their role as mothers, and to serve men by meeting their needs, raising their morale, performing tasks that are considered less important in order to meet new emerging demands, while men are perform tasks that are considered more important. Again, women are not the main issue as feminists claimed. Thus, the participation of women in the military activities and the extent of their participation depend on the extent to which the men are needed. From this perspective, the military task may not be specifically defined as 'women's work', but it can be linked to the demands of the military, particularly the male-dominated front, and the pressure on human resources, especially 'manpower'. As deepened by feminist understanding, the increased visibility of women in male-dominated phenomena does not reflect that the shadow cast over them has been completely or partially removed. In this context, the integration of women into occupational roles in the Israeli army that are specifically performed by men does not necessarily mean that the gendered division of labour is

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[142] Yuval- Davis, "The Sexual Division of Labour," 651.
[143] Ibid.

weakening. This situation usually reflects the widening of the fronts, which can be military, economic, political and social.[144] Here, this widening requires that women to fill in for men, but this task of filling in can easily be withdrawn or reversed if these fronts are narrowed. Thus, within the feminist framework, in times of emergency such as revolution and war, gender roles can easily be constructed without discrimination, but when the crisis ends, the gendered division of labour is reconstructed along traditional lines.[145] After all, in such crisis situations, is this not the expected reaction, unity against a common enemy?

3.2. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-STATE PERIOD: TRANSIENCE THROUGH SUBORDINATION

Cynthia Enloe indicates that the inclusion of women in the army is generally defined in theory as part of national security, while in practice, it is an expression of state security policy.[146] This is an important distinction, especially for the Israeli case, where women's participation in the armed forces was initiated in the pre-state period and continued after the establishment of the state.

Although most of its citizens and those under its control are not part of the Jewish national community, Israel describes itself as a Jewish state and initially recruited only Jews, including women, into its army. After the establishment of the state, there have been significant changes in the nature of women's participation in the Israeli armed forces. These changes were primarily related to two aspects of the transformation from the dispersed pre-state military structures to the organized state military. Firstly, in the pre-state period, participation of men and women in the military structures was, at least formally, voluntary and involved only certain segments of the population. Since the establishment of the state, recruitment to the army, with the exception of the small professional army, has been based on the national conscription law rather than on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the state's military policy had to be relevant to all segments

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[144] Segal, "Men after feminism: what's left to say?,"xvii- xxviii.

[145] Rowbotham, *Women's Consciousness, Man's World*; Connell, *Gender and Power*,107-111.

[146] Claire Duncanson and Rachel Woodward. "Regendering the Military: Theorizing Women's Military Participation," *Security Dialogue* 47, no. 1 (2016): 3–21, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26293582 ;
Cockburn, "War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues," 437.

of the state's population, although not in the same way for each segment. Second, the nature of women's participation in the armed forces before the establishment of state was inconsistent, ambivalent and uncertain. It can also be said that in many cases it was ad hoc decisions rather than a planned policy that led to this type of embodiment. Moreover, there were at least three conflicting ideologies regarding the desired nature of women's participation in the military, represented by the *Palmach*, the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), and the religious sectors. After the establishment of the state, there was a possibility for the coexistence of these ideologies as parallel and separate. In any case, a coherent and unified state policy, which need not be homogeneous, had to be clarified.

Developments in Israel's military strategy and strength cannot be considered in isolation from political, non-military, and social factors in *Eretz* Israel. A small number of Jewish religious immigrants came to Palestine. Thus, the role of women in settlements and defence can be better understood by a brief review of immigration patterns, referred as *Aliyah* (wave of immigration) from 1880. However, this was perceived not only as a wave but also as a national movement.

The *first Aliyah* (1882-1903) consisted of members who came to Palestine as families, strongly attached to their heritage and hoping to the reproduce their Jewish spiritual life in the physical atmosphere of that heritage. These members capitalistically inclined and mostly in need of outside funds, settled in villages. The *second Aliyah* (1904- 1914) consisted of members who also came from Russia, and were young, fresh, and revolutionary in the sense of socialist change. This was a counter-force to the earlier settlers. Their main aim was not just to settle, but to build a new society. They grew up in emotionally and economically supportive families. They created the image of the pioneer who could sacrifice himself/herself for the sake of the community, the *halutz*. It was this group that gave Zionist colonialism its particular character, pursuing dispossession rather than exploitation with the aim of excluding the Palestinian natives. The *third Aliyah* (1919-1923) strengthened the pioneering ideal both ideologically and practically. In this sense, the collective settlements *Kibbutz* and the agricultural settlements the *Moshav* were established, in which individuals were trained to do basically anything for the country. The *fourth Aliyah* (1924-1931) consisted of the members of the middle class, who entered

commerce and industry, and artisans. The *fifth Aliyah* (1932-1944) consisted of members, mostly victims of the Holocaust, with skills and capital for the development of trade, industry, and agriculture. As qualified individuals (physicians, lawyers, musicians, etc), they were carriers and infusers of the Western culture. These diverse groups formed the Yishuv- producers of defence and security organizations, fighters in the War of Independence and founders of the state. The pioneering spirit was shared by these groups, but their methods and goals were not identical. In addition, the work of the military was crucial to the ideological and political goals of the bourgeois, middle class, urban and religious Zionist groups.

Within this framework, there were three main slogans that fostered their ambition to create a new state and society. These were: *"conquering the land", "conquering the labour market", and "conquering the production market".*[147] This strategy had two consequences that influenced women's participation in the military when analysed within the feminist framework. The first one was the emergence of conflicts with the Palestinians, who were unhappy with this new phenomenon, and as time went on and the Zionist settlement developed, the Palestinians began to feel more and more threatened. This confrontation, which started at a local level, gradually grew into a national movement, so that the military preoccupation became central. In this regard, Israeli society was a 'war society' from the very beginning and in a way that created a constant pressure to acquire and recruit trained labour and loyal helpers. The second consequence was the consideration of women as equal members of the new society, but this consideration remained in ideology rather than in practice. From the beginning, this ideology ensured the potential participation of women in the human power resource to be used to meet the needs of the military.

Confrontations with not only with the Palestinians but also with the British and the Arab world increased the pressure for women's involvement in the struggle. Under the influence of demands for the immediate establishment of a Jewish state, Jewish women had to participate in all struggles to meet the economic, national, military, and social

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[147] Dvora Hacohen, "Mass immigration and the demographic revolution in Israel," Is*rael Affairs* 8, no. 1-2 (2001): 182-184.

needs. However, before the 1940s, the military activities were carried out by the Zionist settlers on a part-time basis in the local settlements.

Hashomer, as an exception to this manner, carried out military activities as full-time guards and included women among its members, adopting a romantic version of Bedouin lifestyle and dress to defend Jewish settlements in the early period. However, the participation of women had a passive character, women were integrated as views of guards. Only a few women were allowed to fight alongside men.[148]

As time went on, number of *Hashomer* members grew and the works of the guards increased. Therefore, the role of women became a hotly debated issue. While some men supported the idea of equal participation with women, others opposed this idea of equality and even found it absurd and ridiculous. As always, women were role innovators because they had no one to follow, so it was impossible for them to know which way was better and which was worse, which work to do and which not to do.[149] They demanded to take active part in the defence and to be given equal responsibility. There were constant discussions about their rights, but the results were not always successful.

In fact, within *Hashomer*, two different types of roles were envisaged for women. In this sense, the first type of role was represented by full-fledged members such as Manya Shochat and Rachel Yanait. These full members attended in meetings and were relied upon to negotiate organizational and operational issues such as the purchase and hiding of weapons. On the other hand, the 'views' of the *Hashomer* members, who formed the second group, were clearly relegated to second-class status. They were not even allowed to attend the above meetings. At the annual conferences, the training and the use of weapons by women was discussed. Despite persistent efforts to have women trained and able to use weapons, there was little success in getting women to participate actively. The women of *Hashomer* tried to instil the concept of equality into the national spirit. They also showed men that they would settle for less than what they demanded. Because of the

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[148] Dafna N. Izraeli, "The Women's Movement in Palestine, 1911-1927," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 7, no.1 (1981): 90-92.
[149] Izraeli, "The Women's Movement in Palestine, 1911-1927," 96.

contradiction between ideology and behaviour, it can be said that they created a confused mythology.[150]

The *Haganah*, which started in a decentralized manner and local sense in in the 1920s and 1930s and became a centralized organization between 1936 and 1939, at the time of the Arab rebellion, allowed women to take part in the guard shifts.[151] However, the participation of women in these guard shifts was less than of men, as women also had to take shifts at home as well for their families and children. Women were trained in the use and care of weapons, but they were mainly assigned to the jobs that concentrated on communications and medicine, such as first aid jobs and signalling. With the change in the military strategy, from defensive to offensive, women were relegated to protecting the settlement and children, while men were sent to the 'front', only a few kilometres from the settlement field.

Despite the development of the National Command by the *Haganah*, its authority was not fully established. This limited and ineffective authority was closely linked to the location of training and activities and to volunteer membership rather than professionalism. In this relatively loose structure, the role of women was mostly determined by the local situation.

Despite the limited resources for describing the role of women in the *Haganah*, (because it was a clandestine organization that made its decisions, plans and strategies in secret), there are interviews, diaries, and testimonies from individual members. According to the reported pattern, girls of about 17 years old joined the *Haganah* in two ways: membership in a youth movement and vouching by two persons regarding for a female recruit as being trustworthy, able to keep secrets, responsible, strong, and dedicated to the cause. The number of female recruits was few. Girls were first taught discipline and organization, then how to handle weapons and how to clean and maintain them. General training

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[150] Precise figures of women members and wives are discrepant. Sepher Hashomer includes 28 women out of 100 members. Cf. Meged *Sepher Hashomer,* quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[151] Allon Yigal, *The Making of Israel's Army, (*London: Valentine, 1970); Yehuda Bauer, "From cooperation to resistance: the Haganah 1938–1946," *Middle Eastern Studies* 2, no. 3 (1966): 182-210; Haleh Afshar, *Women, State and Ideology: Studies from Africa and Asia*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1987),655.

included communication and first aid. They were first taught and then given tasks in these areas, such as transmitting messages, using transmitters, signalling, stringing wires for telephone connections, training carrier pigeons, medical assistance, and organizing medical facilities. It can be said that there was a process of individual training and then organizational training.[152] For instance, Shoshana Ron, who participated in the *Haganah* in high school, joined the communication service and was trained in the use of weapons, particularly their cleaning. She was then given, the task of storing weapons in her place and then organizing the production of weapons in Tel Aviv. When the riots began in 1936, she was sent to the 'front' and was in charge of organizing first aid.[153]

Moreover, Mina Ben Zvi, in Haifa, mentioned the direct link between *Hashomer* and *Haganah* women, who set an example for her, by nurturing and encouraging her and her generation. She participated in the *Haganah* and fought against the segregation of male and female recruits. However, some of those who were sent to provide first aid job and make sandwiches, did not support the idea of mixed platoons of men and women. She said: "We wanted to take part in combat and fought for the same training… I was then sent to Juara for officer training, where there were about four women to forty men."[154]

On April 19, 1936, anti-Jewish attacks began in Jaffa and continued for the next three years. In response to this challenge, a small and unofficial mobile unit called *Nodedet*, which means Patrol, was formed from the young volunteers of the *Haganah*. The aim was to attack Arab guerrillas stationed in their own villages. This was a departure from the *havlagah*, which was known as the practice of restraint or fighting only for defence. In the *Nodedet*, Shoshana Spector, who later served in the *Palmach*, was the 'one girl among Yitzhak Sadeh's (*Nodedet*'s founder) boys. Together with the friends she grew up with, she went to the mission as a first-rank commander. She said: "In this course, practical experience was in the field. We had a village to defend, and naturally, I went out with

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[152] Schiff, *A History of the Israeli Army: 1870-1974*, 13.
[153] *Sepher Toldat Ha- Haganah*, in Hebrew, (The History of the Haganah), vol.3, (Tel Aviv: Ma'arachot, 1956), quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[154] Interview with the Haganah officer Mina Ben Zvi, September 1978, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

them- it was natural that I was in the course- and natural that I went out with them because that was the experience of the course."[155]

During these years, fighting was unavoidable, which made the participation of women in the course necessary. In this context, Sarah Kahn, a member of *Kibbutz Ein Hashofet*, was appointed by her Kibbutz for the first national course for women commanders. She was to train other women in this course. During the riots, she was among the first group of five women and twenty-five men assigned to guard the site. She stated that women and men had equal roles at that time, such as holding positions for everyone, shooting, and carrying their own weapons. During this task, sites were guarded in the home area, but it was understood that the enemy had to be pushed out of the home area. This meant that some had to go out while others had to stay in. Therefore, with the change in tactics from the practice of restraint to the retaliation, the roles of men and women changed, and women became the guardians of the home ground.[156]

The other full-time military structure, consisting of commando battalions, was the *Palmach*, which had an informal egalitarian basis. However, in the early days of the organization, the Chief of Staff of the *Haganah* explicitly forbade the participation of women. This order was disregarded by the commander of the Jerusalem Company[157]-Israel Livartovsky, during the winter of 1941-1942; and he gathered together a small group of Jerusalem girls, which was the first formation of women within the *Palmach*. However, this situation was brought to court because of the illegal recruitment of these girls. On May 3, 1942, the participation of women was legitimized by a decision of the National Command, despite the formal restriction that imposed a fixed quota of female recruits.[158] This quota corresponded to 10 percent of the membership.[159] However, no

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[155] Interview with Shoshana Spector, August 1978, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

[156] Geraldine Stern, *Daughters from Afar*, (New York: Bloch, 1958), 151- 152.

[157] As mentioned in the second chapter, *Palmach* consists of six companies. The Jerusalem company is the sixth one which includes kibbutz members, people from the *HISH*, constituting the field corps of the *Haganah*, mainly students, and agricultural settlements. For more information, you can visit "Synopsis of Palmach history: Background and brief description of Palmach activity," *Palmach*, (Date of Access: 08.05.2024), https://palmach.org.il/en/history/about/.

[158] Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance,* 401.

[159] Nancy L. Goldman and Karl L. Wiegand, "The Utilization of Women in Combat: A Historical and Social Analysis of Twentieth-Century Wartime and Peacetime Experience," *Technical Report 563 of the University of Chicago*, (1982): 8-9.

mention was made of the positions in which women would serve. It was also striking that was that this restriction was not always adhered to. When the need for personnel increased, the quota was exceeded.

Initially, women were distributed among the various available units and received the same training as men. However, some tensions and difficulties arose after this attempt at equal treatment, as women felt that they had to prove themselves in terms of their abilities, *stronger than men*, under increasing social pressure. According to Sarah Braverman, women recruits saw themselves as guinea pigs because of the belief that female members (*Havera*) could do any activity that male members (*Haver*) did, which led to the proliferation of a handful of women as individuals, one in a squad (*kita*), two in a platoon (*machlaka*). In this sense, female recruits were trained in all occupations, such as using pistol, rifle, sten, grenades, and physical training, although they formed more or less a unit in each company. Even though female and male recruits had shared all the experiences, there was a disproportion between their efforts due to the uncertainty of the job description.[160]

In order to evaluate past experiences and plan future actions, the *Palmach* women met for the first time in Mishmar Haemek in September 1943. They knew that the failure of one woman would cast doubt on the whole group, and the failure of ten percent would lead to the end of women's presence in the military. At the end of this convention, a resolution was passed calling for the training of women in separate units, including separate courses for commanders. It was also decided specialization in some areas such as first aid, signalling, driving, patrolling; and all administrative, social and cultural functions should be concentrated in the training of women. In this context, it can be said that women and men of the *Palmach* continued to go to the front together, but their roles in the battle were clearly not the same. The role of the female soldier was defined as an auxiliary to the male soldier and as a non-combatant. Moreover, it can be seen that identical formal military roles were not enough to ensure equality between men and women, especially in terms of the general ideologies and practices of gender relations. In this sense, Braverman points

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[160] Sarah Braverman, *The Army and War in Israel and the Nations*, in Hebrew, ed. by Zvi Raanan, (Tel Aviv: Sirat Poalim, 1955), 767-769, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

out that those who underestimate women as combatants should not forget that only the full participation of the human potential, which is very small in all respects, can constitute the defence of the country. To forget this truth is to underestimate the fifty percent of the Yishuv's fighting potential.[161]

At the beginning of 1944, the *Palmach*'s membership system was changed in order to solve some problems such as funding and internal recruitment problems. By the end of 1943, the *Palmach* had 113 members, well below the target of 5000. British financial support was no longer forthcoming. It was therefore decided to set up *Hachsharot*, which was made up of groups from the youth movement, to prepare for settlement in the kibbutzim. In this way, the training was financed by the kibbutzim, and the cost of the trip was covered by the members of the *Hachsharot*, who worked part-time. In other words, these two groups were put together. This composition included young boys and girls from urban middle class or well-established working-class families who were brought up in the spirit of socialism, especially with the ideas of collective life and dedication to public service. An ideological enthusiasm was instilled in the *Palmach* by the close social bonds that developed on an individual level, under high moral and cultural standards.[162]

Female recruits made up the half of each core group (*garin*). In 1944, the *Palmach* and the youth movements signed an agreement guaranteeing the recruitment of all girls and the autonomy of each group. As Bauer stated that, "Throughout 1944-1948, the *Palmach* became the home address for all young Jewish men and women who were ready to fulfil what they themselves called 'the duty of our generation'"[163] Despite their small percentage in the young generation, the youth movements became trend-setters in their age group. The ideology of the parents of these young people was strengthened, as the youth lived out their parents' dreams of a homeland, indeed, they came very close to making the dreams come true.

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[161] Braverman, *The Army and War in Israel and the Nations*, 768.
[162] Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance*, 292-304.
[163] Ibid. 304.

In addition, women were involved in smaller dissident organizations, the *Irgun* and *Lehi*, which had a policy of a much stronger military confrontation with the enemy and the specialization in acts of terrorism and sabotage.[164] These organizations, especially the *Irgun*, did not have a socialist basis, and their members were mostly urban, oriental, and from strong religious families. As a result, their attitudes towards women were more conservative and 'chivalrous'. On the other hand, since their personnel needs were much greater, their policy towards women in practice were similar to that of the *Haganah*. Thus, women were involved in front-line duties, but mainly in support roles such as first aid, carrying weapons, and guarding etc.[165]

In the last days of the *Irgun*, it had five thousand members, but the number of female members involved in actions as the struggle escalated, was less than 20 percent of the total group.[166] These four hundred female recruits were distributed to deal with various issues such as education, propaganda, information, medical and combat matters. They put up anti-British posters on walls, transported the ammunition and kept in touch with the underground members. These missions were often dangerous because of the need for confidentiality, the risk of being caught, and the proximity to explosives and weapons. In this sense, Rachel Ohevet, a member of the *Irgun*, was the first women to be caught with bombs and served seven years her fifteen- year sentence.[167]

Despite the great reluctance of men regarding to involve women in direct combat activities, some women were placed in combat units. For instance, when the unit attacked at the Ramallah radio station on May 17,1944, a number of women, armed and trained for such actions, took part.

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[164] Menachem Begin, *The Revolt: The Story of Irgun*, (New York: Dell Books, 1977).

[165] Anne R. Bloom, "Women in Israel's Military Forces," in *Calling the Equality Bluff: Women in Israel*, eds. by Barbara Swirski and Marilyn P. Safir, (New York, 1991); Elran Meir and Gabriel Sheffer, eds., "Military service in Israel: challenges and ramifications," *Institute for National Security Studies*, (2016): 54-55; Tami Amanda Jacoby, "Women in Israeli Military," in *Women in Zones of Conflict: Power and Resistance in Israel*, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 44-45.

[166] Interview with E. Lankin, August 1978, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

[167] Yehuda Lapidot, "Irgun Zeva'i Le'ummi (I.Z.L.)," *Jewish Women's Archive*, (Date of Access: 03.03.2024), https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/irgun-zevai-leummi-izl.

In this context, a member of the Irgun High Command, E. Lankin, claimed that women, who were fearless, did not hesitate, and performed incredibly well under difficult conditions, were not more often involved in such operations or action because of the reluctance of the men. Although women took on more responsibility and made more effort than the men, and even some women were better in operations or actions, men insisted on the issue of women not participating directly in combat actions.[168]

During the World War II, despite the inconsistency in the Yishuv, women volunteered for the British Army, serving in the ATS and the Women's Auxiliary Air Force Service (WAAFS).[169] The military experience of these women was quite different. This voluntary participation of women was consistent with the policy of the Yishuv during the war against the Nazis. This was summarized by David Ben-Gurion as follows: "We shall fight the war as if there is no White paper, and shall fight the White paper as if there is no war".[170]

In addition, women voluntarily served in the British army served mainly in the ATS, some 4.000 women, 900 of whom served in the WAAFS, as Britain was reluctant to send its own women to the Middle East. The 1941 National Service Act was passed to conscript unmarried women between 20 and 30 into the ATS. Many volunteers were recruited made either directly by British officers or by Jewish authorities. The age of conscription was between of 18 and 50. The original British pattern was followed, so that first the cadre of women selected and trained. They would serve as officers and privates to train the next batch of recruits. The sixty-six of the first group, including 3 Christian Arabs, 3 Americans, 60 Jews, were selected. Half of the Jewish recruits were *Haganah* members, while the others were recruited on the recommendation of various women's organizations. Attempts were made to include kibbutz women in this unit, but these were resisted, mainly by men who felt that women's service should be kept in a local sense or, if it was not limited as such, they could serve as doctors and nurses, not as the drivers for

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[168] Interview with E. Lankin, August 1978, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[169] Jacoby, "Women in Israeli Military," 45.
[170] The Jewish Agency, (Date of Access: 04.03.2024), https://archive.jewishagency.org/ben-gurion/content/23436/ ; if you want to learn more selected quotations of David Ben- Gurion, you can visit https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/select-quotations-of-david-ben-gurion.

officers.[171] Although most women did not agree with these arguments, they accepted the decision of the kibbutz authorities. On the other hand, some kibbutz women revolted against these attitudes. This revolt was expressed as follows:

> I became ashamed, remembering all our discussions around the question of women's recruitment. Our friends regard this as a matter of 'women's question': should women be defended; should a protective arm be created around them? They have not regarded this as the expression of the independent woman who knows her identity.[172]

Recruitment continued without kibbutz cooperation, attracting mainly city dwellers and the members of the *Haganah* and *Histadruth* (General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine), who joined either for the chance to fight Hitler as a part of a more global reaction, or for the chance to find their lost relatives. Participation in the unit was also seen as a chance to gain skills.

In this context, this first experience of serving in the regular army was an excellent model for the future role of women soldiers in the *Zahal* (IDF). Both organizationally and functionally, the role of women serving in the ATS was clearly defined, in contrast to the *Palmach* and *Haganah*. In particular, the organization of the women was different, as they were separated from the men and divided into units consisting of fifty or sixty female soldiers who lived in special quarters on large army bases. However, these units of women in the ATS took part in offices, hospitals, shops, and communications. Again, this means that there was an exclusion of women from combat roles and from the front. This exclusion here had another internal marginalization within the feminist context. There was a partial prohibition for Yishuv women in the ATS for some support jobs such as clerk, nurse or doctor, and secretary, which were open to the British women. Although Yishuv women in the ATS could serve as drivers, they were not allowed to work as

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[171] Orna Sasson-Levy, "Research on gender and the military in Israel: From a gendered organization to inequality regimes," *Israel Studies Review* 26, no. 2 (2011): 77; Jacoby, "Women in the Israeli Military," 46.

[172] Rivka Rabinowitch, "On the Women's Recruitment," *Givat Haim Diary*, (March 27,1942), quoted in Yoav Gelber, "The Meeting Between the Jewish Soldiers from Palestine Serving in the British Army and "She'erit Hapletah," *She'erit Hapletah*, (1944, 1948): 450-481; Chava Dinner and Goell Yohai, "A selected and annotated bibliography for 1992: The history of Zionism and the state of Israel," (1993): 219-302.

ambulance drivers. Interestingly, they were able to drive three-ton lorries, but were not considered as competent to drive an ambulance.

On individual level, there were many obstacles for women. Indeed, women joined the ATS were accused of being loose women. Although they were not explicitly labelled as prostitutes, they were seen as adventure seekers, eager to find a husband or willing to escape from unhappy marriages. Many families whose women joined the unit were marginalized in society. Women were unlikely to join the unit if they did not have the support of their families, especially from their fathers. Contrary to the fears that their women would be exposed to the temptations of rude and immoral soldiers, there was relief in the Yishuv when reports came that the ATS women were performing their dual duties with distinction.[173] The women's dual role included carrying out official British tasks and meeting their own national needs by protecting and consolidating their identity as a Jewish community and continuing to carry out tasks requested by the *Haganah*.

Although women's participation was limited in terms of numbers, their involvement had a symbolic significance for the community. For instance, the special unit of the *Palmach* consisting of twenty-five men and three women, carried out a secret mission to help British prisoners and Jewish refugees escape from conquered Europe; after parachuting behind enemy lines in Europe, nine members of this special unit, including two women (Hannah Senesh and Haviva Reich) and seven men, were captured, tortured and executed. This shared heroic story of men and women came to symbolize the image of national sacrifice and the egalitarian nature of women's participation in war.

In the records, officials praised the women of the ATS. However, the work done by female soldiers was always discussed in the context of comparison (with British female soldiers and with male soldiers in terms of their ability to carry out orders, etc.). For instance, a British colonel stated that: "I tried my own soldiers, but they did not do half of what your girls do. A lot of hard work has got to be done… and I thought your girls would be too

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[173] Major Lewis Rabinowitz, *Soldiers from Judea: Jewish Units in African campaigns, 1941- 43*, (London: Gollancz, 1945), 48.

gentle to be ordered about, but they do it and stand for no nonsense."[174] Due to the confusion caused by British influence, the image of the ATS did not have the same atmosphere of heroism as the image of women in other paramilitary organizations such as the *Palmach*. However, thanks to the experiences gained in this unit, it contributed greatly to the creation of the *Chen*-women's corps.

The War of Independence marked the transition from Yishuv to statehood. This transformation changed the participation of women in the military, as the dissident paramilitary structures and the *Haganah* were transformed into a regular army. As explained in the historical framework, the War of Independence consisted of two phases. In the first phase, which lasted six months, assault, surprise attack and infiltration were the main areas of training, and women were involved at all levels. Women were also given command and leadership roles, both in combat and in training, the participation of women was provided. In this respect, 5 women commanded combat units. All of them remained in *Palmach* units until the end of the war. Indeed, some women commanders were remarkable. For instance, Major Dvora Spector, commander of the central training camp, where most of the raw recruits were men, was described as a 'real professional'.[175]

One of the most important tasks was performed in the field of communication. Meir Pa'il, a member of the Knesset and a colonel in the reserves, reports that the women performed excellently and that there was no inappropriate behaviour by female soldiers under fire.[176] the main focus was also on the control of roads, because of their importance for the transfer of units or forces and supplies to different settlements. It was during this phase that women were most active. In most cases, they did not take part participate in the work at the bases or outposts, although they fought alongside the men; and they were sometimes involved in combat roles, such as snipers and convoy escorts, but mostly in support roles such as signallers and nurses. In the Battle of Roads, for instance, women made up a third of the *Fulmanim*, the convoy escorts. They carried out some activities such as hiding ammunition, operating radios, administering first aid, and fighting if attacked. These roles

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[174] Moshe Shertok, "The Path of Glory," *The Pioneer Women*, (May 1943), 4-6.
[175] Interview with Meir Pa'il, August 1978, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[176] Ibid.

were demanding and dangerous. However, women were agile in the sense of action. In one veteran's report, a female radio operator was assigned to a convoy every day for four and a half months, was deployed in the first armoured car; during an attack, a male commander froze and she took the command as the link between Jerusalem and the others in her convoy.[177] As can be seen, there was an ambivalent perception of women in combat.[178] Accordingly, a pressure has emerged for female soldiers to continue their existence in a male-dominated world, and a parallel dilemma of acceptance and imposition has emerged. In this context, women have had to prove that they are just as good, talented, capable, and as tough and strong as the men. As is often the case, women were considered to be as good as men, but this idea was never quite enough to manifest itself in practice. Therefore, there has been a state of hesitation and concern about women's participation, which should be overcome in order to move from acceptance to imposition. The main reason for this state of concern and hesitation is that women, as part of the productive mechanism, are vital to the continuity of the nation. In this sense, according to male soldiers and commanders, there was a higher risk for female soldiers in the combat, particularly in the case of capture and rape by the enemy.

In the second phase of the war, the army became a regular and permanent institution, recruited nationally rather than on a voluntary basis. As the military expanded and the balance of power shifted in Israel's favour, the distinction between male and female roles continued to widen. In this framework, orders were given from headquarters to remove women from the front line.[179] Due to the geographical smallness of the country, this would not provide complete security, but it was an attempt to reduce the likelihood of women being captured alive by the enemy. On bases and outposts, women's roles were mainly administrative, secretarial, culinary, cultural, and educational. In the context of the use of the army as an ideological apparatus, mentioned in the historical framework, women also assisted in the activities of teaching Hebrew to the new immigrants who volunteered to join the combat units. They also assisted in the basic military and vocational training of

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[177] Interview with a Palmach woman, June 1980, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[178] Bloom, "Women in Israel's Military Forces," 34.
[179] Goldman and Wiegand, "The Utilization of Women in Combat," 18.

other female soldiers. It was after the end of the war that the army took its final version in terms of its institutional aspects and the roles of its units and personnel.

In the pre-state period, women served in the *Palmach*, the most active branch of the Yishuv forces, in close association with the largest number of men, and during the conflict, they continued to perform the roles for which they had been trained. In other structures, however, the story was different; women's involvement shifted from a relatively full participation at the beginning of the conflict to a more specialized and limited division of labour. By February 1948, the *Palmach* group had grown to 4035, with 20% of the group consisting of female recruits of the highest physical ability and 10% of the group consisting of boys and girls of lesser ability.[180] *Palmach* women were divided into four categories: (1) those who participated in combat as fighters and/or commanders; (2) those who participated in operations as saboteurs, radio operators, and medics; (3) those who were assigned to outposts (*nishlatim*) to look after the needs of the fighters, to serve as drivers on welfare and cultural missions, as teachers for soldiers from abroad who would settle in Israel (*Gahal*), and to prepare meals; and (4) those who participated at the base to cook, teach, train and perform clerical and administrative tasks. In addition, the *Palmach* had mobilized 6000 members at the beginning of June 1948, including 1200 women. On the other hand, the exact role of women in the *non-Palmach Haganah* has yet to be documented. It is known, however, that these women were distributed among the battalions as secretaries and adjutants. In this regard, Hanna Eshel, who participated in a fighting battalion consisting of approximately 800 men and 20 women, stated as follows:

> Women performed as signallers, nurses, secretary in the battalion. I was trained in signals course; we carried 17 kilos on our back and went with them to attack in Jaffa. We were in the battle, but never used our guns to attack- we were at the front with radios. This was true at Tel Hashomer, and at Lod Airport, I was up in the tower with my Walkie- talkie- a few women, mostly with the men.[181]

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[180] Jacoby, "Women in the Israeli Military," 45; Meir Pa'il, *Min Hahaganah L'Zva Hahaganah*, in Hebrew, (The Emergency of Zahal), (Tel Aviv: 1979), 241, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."
[181] Interview with Hanna Eshel, April 20, 1980, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

As a result, *Palmach* women were largely kept in combat until the end of the war, while *Haganah* women were not involved to the same extent. The main ideology behind this was that for every man in the front line, so many were needed in the rear. Since the male soldiers, according to authorities, were better fighters, the deal was to take the *Haganah* girls out of the fighting units as much as possible. In the end, this ideology has prevented female soldiers from getting good jobs in the army, and kept them in lower ranks and out of decision-making positions. From now on, women became the part of the state's human power that could build a regular army. This was a critical shift, from a volunteer-based defence to an official state defence, in terms of the eventual role of women in the IDF when analysed from the feminist perspective.

3.3. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE POST-STATE PERIOD: THE PERPETUATION OF SO-CALLED EQUALITY

After the official proclamation of the establishment of the State of Israel, the main aim was to unite the Jewish fighting forces to form a professional and depoliticized army, modelled on the British army, and to preserve and consolidate the pioneering spirit. Inevitably, debates about women arose in this new state. The first issue to be discussed was whether women should be involved at all, and the second was how they would perform if they were indeed involved.

The religious bloc primarily questioned the inclusion of women. Indeed, Rabbi Levin argued that women's military service was in incomplete contradiction to the spirit of Israel, although there is no religious law prohibiting women from carrying weapons.[182] The main reasons for opposition were based on social and moral frameworks and related to the definition of 'women's place'. On the one hand, there was the secularist concern to offer women equality and on the other hand, there was the belief that women should be in their rightful place. In this regard, Ben-Gurion stated that:

> We are told that women are not drafted into any other army in the world. We, too, have no intention of putting women into combat units, though no one can be sure

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[182] David Ben- Gurion, "Statements of Arab Knesset members regarding to conscription of women," in *Israel: A Personal History*, trams. Nechemia Meyers and Miklos Pinther, (Funk & Wagnalls, Inc. / Sabra Books, 1971), 373- 374; Cf. https://en.idi.org.il/articles/48099.

that, should we be attacked and have to fight for our lives, we should not call on services of every man and woman. But the law in question deals with a peacetime situation, and we went to give women only the most basic training.[183]

On September 8th, 1949, the Defence Service Law of 1949 was passed by the Knesset. However, the law has been amended several times. Since 1959, the law has stipulated that: (1) women who have reached the age of 18 are eligible for the compulsory military service for 24 months; (2) married women, women with children, and women whose religious beliefs prevent them from serving are exempt; (3) women who are studying in institutions recognized by the army are allowed to defer their service. Irrespective of their future marital status, full military service is compulsory after graduation; (4) reserve service is compulsory. After completing the national service, a woman had to serve in the reserve military until the age of 34 (in reality, women serve in the reserve military only until the age of 24) or until the birth of her first child; (5) unmarried doctors, dentists, surgical nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists serve in the military until the age of 34.[184]

As the army developed, so did the policy of recruiting and using women. A number of special units have been set up to this end. *Chen* (Women's Corps) was founded in 1948 as one of the goal-oriented command units of the *Zahal*. The emergence of *Chen* was parallel to the general structure and character of the *Zahal*. In this sense, there were two sides: those who wanted to implement the British Army model and those who wanted to implement the *Haganah* and *Palmach* model. It was the debate between them that led to the creation of this unit. One of the basic disagreements was the extent to which women would be involved in the command units, which would be segregated as in the British army, or mixed as in the *Haganah* and *Palmach*.[185] This was resolved by a sort of 'comprise', but interestingly, all the commanding officers were former ATS personnel from the unit's inception until 1970. The name of the command unit was also a compromise between the warring parties. The first proposal was to call the unit the

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[183] Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History*, 376.
[184] CHEN, *Israel Defence Forces Spokesman*, (February 27, 1980); DEFENCE SERVICE LAW https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/israel-defense-service-law-1986.
[185] Interviews with the former CHEN officers and soldiers, in which anonymity was requested, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War."

Auxiliary Women's Corps (*Che'e'n*), but in the end, it was decided that the name of the union would be the Women's Corps. There were two reasons for adopting of this name. The first one was that the initials of the name, *Chen*, meant 'charm' in Hebrew, so the feminine character of the unit was emphasized. The second one was that not using the term of 'auxiliary' would create more egalitarian connotations.[186] So, was the concern to appear more egalitarian a step towards being truly egalitarian when considered under the feminist context? While the names given to military units should be about being fearsome, strong or invincible, the concern here is about attractiveness, specifically female attractiveness. Is the unit given a feminine name or a sexy name? This shift in concern shifted the focus to sexual locations rather than the qualifications or skills of the unit's members.

All women in *Zahal* were formally members of *Chen*, in which women's membership was more partial then men's, because most of the female soldiers were under the authority of male officers in other units, and this authority was more of a temporary and day-to-day in nature. Female soldiers were assigned to perform various duties not by *Chen*'s decision, but by personnel decisions of the General Headquarters and the various command units, which consisted entirely of men. For *Chen*'s senior officers, only advisory functions were allowed to be performed in the General Headquarters and the various command units and branches of the army. Therefore, in the 1950's, there was a combination of senior officers in advisory positions and junior officers in command positions.

This command was associated with two areas of particular concern to *Chen*, which are basic training and legal power. All female recruits underwent basic training, which usually lasted about three weeks. During this training period, female recruits were trained in physical fitness and the use of weapons. Lectures were also given to female recruits on a variety of subjects, ranging from Zionism to cosmetics, and these lectures were mostly geared towards military discipline. The legal authority was given to *Chen* officers, who alone could judge women regarding accusations of other military offences, although most

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[186] Zwi Shif and Eitan Haber, *Lexicon of the Security of Israel*, in Hebrew, (Tel Aviv: Zmora Bitan, 1976), 216- 218, quoted in Yuval-Davis, "Front and rear: the sexual division of labour in the Israeli army," 660.

complaints were made by the men, under whom they worked. In addition, *Zahal* women were not allowed to live in areas without separate showers and minimal facilities, *Chen* officers stationed at major army bases were often responsible for the separate living quarters of female soldiers and for guarding them.

In *Zahal*, the length of service for female soldiers generally ranged from eighteen to twenty-four months, which was four months to one year shorter than for men. The required reserve service of women has determined in terms of pregnancy, marriage, and age factors, while the same service provided for men was determined apart from their marital status or fatherhood. Besides, at various times, this reserve status was only symbolic, unless women possessed the necessary military skills. Some women, constituting less than 10 percent of the military and mostly concentrated in the lower ranks, continued to serve in the professional army. Salaries and benefits for female soldiers were also the same as for men of the same rank, even though until few years ago there was a tendency to discriminate in terms of social benefits in favour of male soldiers.

3.4. MILITARY ROLES OF WOMEN: COMBATANT OR NON-COMBATANT?

Female soldiers were equal in value, but not in function. Therefore, after the 1973 War, the idea that women were belonged on the home front and men on the front was officially proclaimed, which is the proof of the dichotomy of private and public spheres emphasized in the feminist discourse. The dominant norm was to give priority to combat activities, which represented the highest prestige. In this sense, only fifteen percent of the army went into battle, but a powerful image was created. The role of women in this image was to free up to men for combat. This kind of participation was presented to women as liturgy for a sense of belonging in terms of nationalist values. In this framework, when the IDF was organized, women were kept out of combat jobs under poor conditions and jobs that were considered to be very physically demanding for female soldiers, but in reality, women performed their duties better than men even before going into the field. For instance, since 1977, female soldiers have become tank instructors, teaching how tanks work, how to drive and repair tanks, and how to use equipment in tanks, in classrooms and tanks, not in the field. Female instructors were not allowed to go into the field for

training, while male instructors were. However, it was felt that women would make better instructors if the course was taken to the next level by being in the field.[187]

The 1973 government publication crystallized the military goals for female soldiers in the *Zahal*. According to it, female soldiers were to be used to strengthen the fighting force by being assigned to professional, administrative and support roles, thus freeing up combat roles for male soldiers; female soldiers were to be trained to defend themselves, their families and their homes and to be integrated into Israel's security efforts, even after the end of active military service. In addition, female soldiers were served as teachers in educational activities to educate recruits, raise the moral of unit members and care for them.[188]

In 1980, out of 850 military professions in the *Zahal*, only 270 were held by women.[189] According to data from 1977-1978, there were approximately 790 professions open to men, while there were 210 professions open to women. Approximately 50 percent of combat roles were closed to women. Half of the roles open to women were clerical. However, according to some people, this percentage does not represent the actual numbers, the actual percentage of female soldiers integrated in the clerical roles was 65%, while the remaining 35 percent of female soldiers were engaged in mechanical, technical and operational tasks.[190] According to Shuli Eshel, the percentage of female soldiers engaged in the clerical roles was even higher.[191]

The military roles in which female soldiers served changed according to the needs of the *Zahal*. Within this framework, the 1952 Law for female soldiers in the regular army listed twenty-five roles. However, since the roles designated for women were flexible, the law

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[187] Interview with the two instructors in armoured corp, July 1, 1980, quoted in Bloom, "Israel: The longest War".

[188] "The Government Report of the Committee on the Position of Women," *Discussion and Facts* (Jerusalem: Office of the Prime Minister, 1978), 89; Jessie Montell, "Israeli Identities: The Military, the Family and Feminism," *Bridges* 2, no.2 (1991): 99-108.

[189] "The Government Report of the Committee on the Position of Women," 97.

[190] Bloom, "Women in Israel's Defence Forces," 46.

[191] Interview with Shuli Eshel, producer of a documentary film on women in *Zahal* called as *To Be a Women Soldier: The Role of Women in the Israeli Army;* If you want to learn more about the documentary, you can visit https://lilith.org/articles/women-in-the-israeli-army/.

also declared that a female soldier could perform any military duty if she agreed in writing. Over the years, women were effectively excluded from various tasks such as heavy artillery, throwing hand grenades, and driving, despite innovations. Many female soldiers who were not involved in clerical work were involved into the welfare duties and educational activities such as teaching Hebrew, arithmetic, and basic literacy to new immigrants or recruits from Israel's most disadvantaged Jewish communities. Women who lacked of these skills were not recruited into the army. Women were appointed not only to the role of military service, but also to the other roles of national importance. In this sense, female soldiers were employed as teachers in developing towns and villages. Women were also appointed to work in kibbutzim and other border settlements. In the 1970's, they were allowed to take part in the special units to strengthen the police, especially the border police.

As in the civilian labour market, women's roles in the military were concentrated in office work. In principle, women were assigned to lower-ranking positions than men in office jobs. These positions ranged from the 'purely advisory' role of a few senior female officers to the ordinary private, or even sergeant, and secretary. These staff were mostly under the authority of male bosses and were responsible for office work that often went beyond telephoning, filing and typing. In February 1981, the military prosecutor ruled that making coffee and washing the floors could not be considered as outside the legitimate duties of military secretaries.[192] The power relations between the boss and his officer, again similar to those in civilian life, often create patterns of relationships that are not independent of the sphere of sexual relations. Here, however, there is an additional component here to the power imbalance in favour of the boss/men, namely the military authority. The authority to judge women was, as mentioned before, only given to the *Chen* officers. This authority was sometimes used to curb the power of the bosses mostly complained about the soldier and/or her disregard for military regulations. At this point, it is not possible to accept resignations in the military sector, as in the civilian market.

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[192] *Report in Ha'aretz newspaper*, in Hebrew, (February 1981), quoted in Yuval- Davis, "The Sexual Division of Labour," 663.

Another issue that needs to be discussed is the explicit sexual relationship between male and female soldiers. This issue is formally ignored except in the case of pregnancy of a female soldier and the knowledge of this situation by the military authorities. In this case, the female soldier's service is quickly terminated, but with the right to have two free abortions. On the other hand, the implicit sexual relationships have been officially encouraged by the *Zahal* since the main expectation of the military authorities from female soldiers is to rise the morale of male soldiers and to make the army a home away from home, in parallel with the domestic role of women. In fact, during their basic training, female soldiers were instructed to display their feminine characteristics, to be well-groomed and to use cosmetics appropriately. This situation is assessed by the *Zahal*'s own spokesman as *Chen*'s contribution of elegance and charm to the *Zahal* and the instrumentalization of this unit for humanitarian and social activities.[193]

Within this framework, female soldiers are also instrumentalized, and this ultimately promotes the subordinate position of women, both in military and civilian life, in the feminist context. This subordination reduces the role of women in the military, such as being there for the sake of men and their comfort and happiness, and the humanization of military service. However, this reduction has been disguised by giving some kind of power, which mostly occurs in the execution of educational and welfare activities in which women are involved as a reflection of the feminine mother role. This situation, which generally occurs as an extension of class prejudice, stems from the fact that the recipients of female soldiers who serve as teachers and social welfare workers are generally men of a lower-class than themselves, although women and men in office are usually from the same class.

Due to the pressure on human resources in the *Zahal*, which increased significantly in the 1970s, the role of women in the army was expanded. A number of reports and statements issued by the government committee regarding to the position of women. According to these documents, the new occupations opened to women were mainly realized in two areas. The first included military occupations in the field of combat, but were carried out

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[193] Martin Van Creveld, "Armed but not dangerous: Women in the Israeli military," *War in History* 7, no. 1 (2000): 90-93.

by female soldiers in non-combat situations. For instance, female soldiers were taught to drive tanks in order to train male soldiers and transfer experienced male soldiers to the front. The second included maintenance and electrical tasks associated with the new technological improvements brought about by sophisticated armaments. For example, the new roles in the ammunition and air force command units were opened to women, as in line with the developments arising in the civilian market -mainly related to the military industry in Israel.

With these new roles opened for women, problems have arisen regarding the length of service of women in the regular army. In this sense, due to the relatively unskilled nature of the military roles assigned to women has increased the possibility of releasing women from the army earlier than men, but their short period of service has been an obstacle to assigning female soldiers to the professional jobs requiring long-term training. This is a complete 'catch- 22' situation. As a temporary solution to this, women who agreed to take part in such jobs had to commit themselves to serve in the professional army for another year after completing their regular military service. The army also tried to improve pre-army training courses in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour. These courses were prepared for the use of female soldiers released from the army in relevant professional occupations and in parallel work in industry. Some of the women who attended the pre-military courses were those who would not normally be recruited for 'qualitative' reasons. Also, the rate of new and higher status positions opened for women was insignificant, when compared to the rate of ordinary military roles filled by female soldiers. However, as this type of work performed by women develops, the nature of women's participation in the military may also change. For the first time, professional jobs requiring longer training periods have been opened to women. With this new professional status, the problem of the dispensability of women at the front in emergency situations arose in addition to the problem of length of service.

It should also be noted that the fact that the division of labour in the *Zahal* is based on gender does not necessarily mean that all military professions are designated as either female or male, under the feminist context. Over time, new military techniques have been introduced and other aspects of military service have changed. As a result, there have

been changes in the range of specific jobs performed by men and women in the military. In parallel with this change, there has been a shift in the relative degree of correspondence between female and male roles. In this context, the critical element in determining the gendered nature of the military is the definition of each task at each point in time as being suitable for either female or male soldiers, and this type of a description is inherently the crucial component of the job description. Based on feminist claims, although progress has been made in terms of military roles opened to women and men, the assigned gender division is not accidental and is directly related to the dichotomies, both social and military, that arise from the distinction between ordinate and subordinate, primary and secondary, superior and inferior, core and periphery, and front and rear.

Since the War of Independence, women have not been allowed to remain at the front after the declaration of the state of emergency and the actual operation of the front. The authorities stated that in 1973, three female soldiers lost their lives because they disobeyed explicit orders and remained illegally at the front. It was also stated that among the hundreds of soldiers who died in the Lebanon War as a result of disobeying orders, there were no women. In other words, on the one hand, the new military roles were opened for women, on the other hand, a glorification of so-called egalitarianism was promoted by trying to keep them away from combat roles. In fact, in its reports on the position of women, the government committee recommended opening up all professions except combat roles at the front, thus promoting egalitarianism. Because of the increased demand for recruits in the recent years, the participation in the combat roles has increased relatively. However, this has not completely eliminated the gendered division of labour in the military. This does not mean that the majority of male soldiers do not carry out activities in the rear, on the contrary, they take part in many peacetime positions; but what it can be inferred is that female soldiers have been excluded from the front.

The reasons for exclusion can be summarized in some categories: religious, family, and physical and qualitative aptitude. In this sense, some women were not called up for military service, about 48.5%, and they were exempted from service for medical reasons (2%), administrative reasons (0.5%), and personal reasons (such as marriage before the age of recruitment, which accounted for 8% and death or other unavailability, which

accounted for 0.5%), lack of condition and education (19%), and religious and conscientious objection (18.5%).[194] Indeed, the majority of women released from the service were those who were considered 'qualitatively' unfit by the army with regard to some requirements, including knowledge of Hebrew and a minimum level of education, no criminal record, and passing psycho-technical tests. Dismissal for qualitative ineligibility is much higher among women than among men.[195] In fact, one fifth of female recruits are classified as having an officer quality, while only one tenth of male recruits are included in this classification. This differentiation of status between women and men in the military shows that the roles assigned to female recruits are less heterogeneous than those of men. In addition, there is a direct correlation between the high percentage of women excluded from the army for one reason or another and their involvement in the intense social and national integration process in the *Zahal*. Due to the constant military conflicts and the relatively small size of the Jewish nation, the mobility of individuals within and outside the army is required at a maximum level. This mobility was encouraged by a slogan "There is no alternative."[196] Therefore, the army, as the main mediating mechanism, has created a powerful symbolic correspondence between the people and the state to glorify the national consensus. Women, both those who serve in the army and those and who never serve, either partially or completely excluded from this national integration. Moreover, while Israeli men can serve in the military for at least one month a year until the age of fifty, almost no Israeli Jewish women serve in the military after their early twenties, apart from a few people in the professional military. The cohesiveness of the Israeli Jewish nation has thus been constructed through the patriarchal bond of the male-dominated military. At the same time, the military role of Israeli men is also their most important national role, both symbolically and practically. In this sense, it is no coincidence that women's involvement in the military is seen as a violation of a male domain and is restricted accordingly, from the feminist perspective.

In terms of the national roles of Jewish society, on the one hand there are men as brave soldiers, on the other hand there are women as reproducers. There is even a common

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[194] Yuval Davis, "The Sexual Division of Labour," 666-667.
[195] Montell, "Israeli Identities: The Military, the Family and Feminism," 100-101.
[196] Meir and Sheffer, "Military service in Israel: challenges and ramifications," 50.

saying for pregnant women: "Congratulations! I see you are soon going to bring a small soldier into the world.".[197] Thus, the most important national role of Jewish women is considered to be motherhood, especially motherhood of a boy, and this is a definitely a military role as well. This connection is explained by Geula Cohen, a member of the Knesset and former member of *Lehi*, as follows:

> The Israeli woman is an organic part of the family of Jewish people and the female constitutes a practical symbol of that. But she is a wife and a mother in Israel, and therefore it is of her nature to be a soldier, a wife of a soldier, a sister of a soldier, a grandmother of a soldier-this is her reserve service. She is continually in military service.[198]

With regard to the military role of women, Ben- Gurion also explains this hegemonic ideology in terms of two factors. First, nature has not decreed that only a woman can give birth to a child, but has given women such a special and sublime duty and has also given them a sacred grace. Second, women, like men, have their own personalities, so women should have the same rights and responsibilities as men, except for motherhood.[199] Thus, until they become mothers, women have been the 'honorary' participants in the military.

The IDF's approach to women's involvement into military service has reached a breaking point with the Alice Miller case in 1995. Alice Miller was rejected as a candidate for the pilot due to her gender, and she took her case to the High Court of Justice.[200] The Court ruled that the Army's policy of excluding women from serving as pilots was unacceptable and that women were entitled to equality in military service and the feminist literature, both formally and in practice.[201] With the profound impact of this ruling, the IDF decided to open its units to women, including those that had previously been an all-male monopoly. However, the rupture caused by the verdict was not merely procedural. The IDF was ordered to integrate women into its ranks on the basis of a commitment to the

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[197] Yuval – Davis, "The Sexual Division of Labour," 669.
[198] Quote of Geula Cohen in Lara Hazelton, *Israeli Women-the Reality Behind the Myth,* in Hebrew, (Idanim, 1978), quoted in Nira Yuval- Davis, "The Jewish collectivity and national reproduction in Israel," (Date of Access: 21/03/2024), https://libcom.org/article/jewish-collectivity-and-national-reproduction-israel-nira-yuval-davis#footnote47_21h7xqg.
[199] Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History*, 323-334.
[200] Meytal Eran-Jona and Carmit Padan, "Women's combat service in the IDF: the stalled revolution," *Strategic Assessment* 20, no. 4 (2018): 98-99.
[201] Ibid.

principle of equality and the needs of defence and security. However, the principle of equality cannot be fully upheld as long as the phrase of 'defence needs' is emphasized. In this sense, Judge Tova Strasberg-Cohen stated that when the values of the principle of equality and national security and military needs contradict with each other, the latter can be considered a higher priority, despite the importance of the former. Its weight varies according to the level of security and the nature of the threat. However, national security is not an absolute priority and does not take precedence in all cases or circumstances.[202] Within the feminist framework, the principle of equality should generally take precedence in actual integration constructed by greater acceptance for women's military roles.

So, after the ruling, has there been a significant increase in the number of units open to women or in the percentage of women enlisting in the military? For the former, it can be said that the process has accelerated, but for the latter, the rate has actually decreased. What has changed is the motivation for including women in army units and the principle of integrating women into the IDF and maximising their potential. Following the Miller case, the Defence Service Law was amended on January 1st, 2000. It stated as follows: "Every woman, just like every man, has the right to serve in any position in the army, unless the nature of the position inherently requires otherwise."[203] Within this framework, new positions were gradually opened to women. In 1995, the first new position to be opened was that of air force pilot. In 1996, women were recruited as combat soldiers in the border police. In 1997, women joined the military as combat soldiers in anti-aircraft units and as naval officers. In 2000, they were recruited as combat soldiers in the *Caracal Unit* in the Combat Rescue, Evacuation, and Airborne Medicine Unit; and in the Artillery Corps. In 2001, they were deployed as parachute instructors. In 2003, they participated as combat soldiers in the *Oketz*-Canine Unit, and as Battalion Communications Officers. In 2004, the *Caracal Battalion* was established as the first mixed- gender infantry unit. In 2006, they became combat soldiers in the Field Intelligence Gathering Unit. In 2015-2017, they served as combat soldiers in the Lions of the Jordan Valley unit. In 2018,

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[202] HCJ 4541/94 Miller vs. Minister of Defense, 49(4) P.D. 94 (1995), (Date of Access: 03.03. 2024), https://versa.cardozo.yu.edu/sites/default/files/upload/opinions/Miller%20v.%20Minister%20of%20Defense.pdf; Anat Maor, "Women in Israel," *Jewish Virtual Library Publications*, (March, 2010): 9-11.
[203] "Jewish Israelis and the IDF in 2022 - A Special Survey," (Date of Access: 03.03.2024), https://en.idi.org.il/articles/24554.

combat naval positions on *"Yasur 6"* missile ships were opened for the first five women. At the end of basic training, another female soldier would join the others. In 2019, a woman was appointed as a Battalion Commander in a regular regiment (Northern Bashan Regiment) and as a Commanding Intelligence Officer (Central Command). In May 2020, the first female Battalion Commander was appointed in Artillery Corps.[204]

The expansion of women's roles has in fact assigned them 'masculine' roles. This means that the roles of female soldiers are shaped according to the hegemonic masculinity of the combat soldier through three interrelated practices within the framework of gender identities. The first is the imitation of the bodily and discursive practices of combat soldiers; the second is the distancing from 'traditional femininity'; and the third is the trivialisation of sexual harassment.[205] These practices, which represent both resistance to and adaptation to a militarily segregated gender order, contradict hegemonic norms of masculinity and femininity, while at the same time cooperating with the male-dominated norms of the military. Therefore, even if female soldiers individually transgress gender boundaries, they internalise the masculine ideology and values of the army. This internalisation also teaches them to identify with the patriarchal order of the army and the state. This creates a model of 'limited inclusion' that confirms their marginalisation and prevents the development of a collective consciousness that would challenge the gendered structure of citizenship.[206]

Imitation does not mean the transformation of women into men. In fact, the behaviour of male soldiers is imitated, thus creating a new gender identity that requires them to wear large uniforms, carry rifles, and speak in a harsh and rude tone of voice. In this context of showing the reflections of these interrelated practices, there is a study conducted by O. Sasson-Levy on the in-depth interviews with fifty-two male soldiers and forty-seven

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[204] This part is summarized from the Table of Combat Positions Opened to Women, by Year in Idit Shafran Gittleman, "Women's Service in the Israel Defense Forces," *Jewish Women's Archive,* https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/israel-defense-forces ; Idit Shafran Gittleman, "Women's Service in the IDF: Between a 'People's Army' and Gender Equality," *The Israel Democracy Institute*, (Date of Access: 04.02.2024), https://en.idi.org.il/articles/24554; and Idit Shafran Gittleman, "Women Go For It!,", *The Israel Democracy Institute,* (Date of Access: 02.02.2024), https://en.idi.org.il/articles/38429.
[205] Sasson-Levy, "Feminism and military gender practices: Israeli women soldiers in "masculine" roles, 447.
[206] Ibid.

female soldiers within a year of their release from the army.[207] Tali, one of the interviewees, describes the first practice as follows:

> Mom says I started to talk more dirty and much more abrasively and more aggressively [during the service]. That's what she said. I didn't even notice that it had happened. But she says I wasn't like that before the army, that I was more delicate. She says that now, I'm starting to be like I used to be. I mean, that now I'm losing the toughness and the armor.[208]

The very act of holding a weapon is a source of feeling pride, self-confidence and determination, which are seen as the 'masculine' traits necessary for engagement in the public sphere. The imitation of combat soldiers was described as a 'drag show' by Nadav, one of the male soldiers interviewed, who served in the elite commando unit. He explained this as follows:

> We arrived at the training base really early in the morning. We had no idea where we were or where we should go. Just then, a group of women soldiers in an infantry-training course woke up. On their way to the showers, with just towels around them, they stood in a line about 20–30 meters from us with their guns between their legs, barrels pointing upwards, and shouted, "We want to fuck" . . . We were embarrassed, we were in shock. We didn't understand what we'd done to deserve it. It was kind of like seeing ourselves in the mirror at other times, to see how embarrassing it is. Because there was something so masculine about them, it was shocking to see.[209]

Also, in Antonio Gramsci's terms, social institutions and practices construct meanings and values that 'spontaneously' create consent to the patriarchal status quo, i.e. the hegemonic ideology will maintain its power, the gendered division of labour and chauvinistic culture in the army construct 'spontaneous' consent to the hegemonic masculine ideology not only for men but also for women. Thus, female soldiers assigned to 'masculine' roles tend to identify with the military's masculine ideology and display anti-feminine attitudes.[210]

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[207] Ibid. According to this study, out of all the women interviewed, twelve were serving in 'masculine' roles, positions formerly occupied only by men, but they were not deployed in combat roles.
[208] Ibid. 448.
[209] Ibid. 450.
[210] Ibid. 452.

Viewed as a sexual objects rather than as a professionals, but somewhat flattered, most female soldiers ignore sexual harassment or see it as 'part of the job'. In fact, since the use of women in 'masculine' roles poses a threat to male privilege in combat roles, sexual harassment can be seen primarily as a way of reinforcing male power over women. While most female soldiers' response to sexual harassment may be an effective on a personal level, this does not change the fact that they have been subjected to sexual harassment and that remaining silent will not end the harassment or mitigate its severe consequences for female soldiers. For instance, Ruti, who served as a clerk, mentioned a song that male soldiers in her platoon sing when they see her: "Rutti is a whore, Rutti gives head to the whole company." Rutti reacted very mildly".[211]

In addition to expanding women's roles, the IDF has taken steps to change of its overall approach towards to women's military service. As part of this change, the Women's Corps was disbanded in 2001 and replaced by the position of Advisor to the Chief of Staff on Women's Affairs, later known as the Advisor on Gender Affairs, with the aim of promoting equal opportunities for female soldiers.[212] So, has it really been possible to ensure that there is no gender-specific treatment of women's issues? Indeed, the main requirement for both male and female soldiers should be subordination to commanders in all respects. However, this inherently promotes male domination, as it is still mostly male soldiers who are assigned to command positions. Even when equal opportunities are mentioned, the exceptions are emphasized over the characteristics, energy, and abilities that are unique to women and men. In this sense, from the feminist perspective, it can be said that while men become the servants of the people, women become the servants of men. The Segev Report is also an important step in changing the perception of women in the IDF, which should be promoted apart from the interests of the security itself. In this sense, the goal is to have women in the IDF not for the sake of women's right to equality, but for the sake of increasing the ratio of more efficient use of resources, which is considered to be mutually beneficial for the women and the military. However, this can

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[211] Ibid. 453.
[212] Gittleman, "Women's Service in the Israel Defense Forces,"; Idit Shafran Gittleman, "The Decade in Review: Women's Service in the IDF," *The Israel Democracy Institute*, (Date of Access: 10.02.2024), https://en.idi.org.il/articles/29506.

be achieved by transforming the principle of using human resources into the principle of 'the right person in the right place', eliminating the placement of women and men in terms of gender, instead promoting their placement in terms of relevant criteria determined by the needs of the IDF and the individual qualities, abilities and motivation of the recruits.[213]

It would not be wrong to say that all these transformation processes are consistent with the feminist discourses on equality. However, as can be seen from recent developments, the subordinate position of women has not completely disappeared in practice. It can be seen that the rate of integration of women into combat roles previously held only by men has increased, i.e. to reach the status of hegemonic masculinity, which is mainly identified with the good citizenship, but the process of opening these 'masculine' roles to women is not a linear progression. On the contrary, there has been a cyclical process in which female soldiers are first integrated into the combat roles for a short period of time, then excluded for a long period of time, and then reintegrated for a short period of time, as in the American army.[214]

3.5. OCTOBER 7 ATTACK

The participation of women in the Israeli army has patterns that have changed over time. Although these patterns take different forms in appearance, the underlying idea is the same when viewing from the feminist lens: to protect present and future generations through the subordination of women. Therefore, although women were able to perform the same duties as men in the army, this did not create full equality in real terms, but became a paradox that inwardly reinforced their subordinate position, as remarked by the feminist discourse. The Israeli authorities claim that they have opened up combat positions to women, but the responsibility assigned to women in such positions is that of monitoring or recording as observers.

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[213] Pnina Sharvit Baruch, "What is the Appropriate Model for Female Service in the IDF?," *Institute for National Security Studies*, no. 156 (2016): 80-84.
[214] Orna Sasson-Levy, "Individual bodies, collective state interests: The case of Israeli combat soldiers," *Men and Masculinities* 10, no.3 (2008): 301- 303.

The Hamas attack on October 7 is a proof of the subordinate position of women and also highlights the correlation between the dynamics of war in the past and the involvement of women in the military units under the feminist context and nationalist ideologies. For years, the young female conscripts, known as "Israel's eyes on the Gaza border", had only one job: to sit for hours at the observation base, watching for signs of anything suspicious. In the months leading up to the attack, they began to see some unusual activity, including assault drills, hostage-taking exercises and strange behaviour by farmers on the other side of the border zone fence. One of the women in charge here, Noa, not her real name, but that is how she is referred to in the sources, says that they passed on what they saw to intelligence units and senior officers, but that they were powerless to do more. She described the trajectory of Hamas is planning something big, as "like a balloon about to burst". More and more suspicious activities were observed and reported, but the authorities did nothing. Nor were these women the only ones to warn of attacks. What is worse for women soldiers who fear who will be on duty when the inevitable attack comes? To lose their lives or to be ignored in the only mission they have been given? Because of the location of their base, the women of this military unit, known as *Tatzpitaniyot*, which means 'watchful', were among the first Israelis to be reached by Hamas militants from Gaza, and more than 10 surveillance soldiers were killed, and some were taken hostage.[215]

There are several of these units along the Gaza border line, where women sit in rooms close to the border and watch for hours the images coming from the cameras along the border fence and the balloons that are flown over Gaza. In their free time, the young women, all in their 19s and early 20s and all unarmed, take dance classes together, eat together and watch TV. The women say that they are like sisters during their days in the army, away from their families, but they also take their responsibilities seriously. Noa defines this as follows: "Our job is to protect all Israelis. We have a very difficult job. You sit on your shift, and you are not allowed to blink or look away, not even for a moment. You have to be focused at all times."[216]

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[215] Alice Cuddy, "They were Israel's 'eyes on the border' - but their Hamas warnings went unheard," *BBC News,* (Date of Access: 28.03.2024), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67958260.
[216] Ibid.

Within the chain of command, there is a dialogue between the female soldiers and the commanders, in which the commanders simply arrive, give them an assignment if there is one, and then leave. Some of the female soldiers shared their disappointments and concerns with their families, saying "If no one is going to listen, why are we here?"[217]

Experts see this incident as only a weakness of the intelligence services and interpret the problem as the army's inability to collect the pieces. However, there are other important points that need to be questioned within the scope of this thesis. Why is such 'vital and serious' information considered 'insignificant and non-serious' when the officers in the Border Defence Units are doing their duty, keeping their reports, producing the necessary intelligence and submitting it to the relevant commanders? Is there really sexism behind this unresponsiveness? In other words, if the reports came from male soldiers, would anything be done? If there is such sexism in the Israeli army and it is known, why is nothing done? Is there any profit or interest to be made from this chaotic situation?

According to the American New York Times, Israeli officials were aware of the Hamas's plans for than a year before 7 October, but the action was deemed 'too pretentious' and ignored.[218] In fact, Hamas and other armed organizations announced their drills on their social media accounts. There were signs, but women did not get the attention they deserved. This may have been due to the self-confidence of senior officers (claiming to be knowledgeable, experienced, and seeing the strategic picture), or it may have been due to sheer chauvinism. In both cases, women are seen only as eyes and not as soldiers, so their actions are considered as less professional when evaluated under the feminist discourse. But it should not be forgotten that when people on the border are doing their job, when they have concerns, when they see something that needs to be looked at and evaluated, you have to listen. Because they are professionals. They are the eyes of the force.

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[217] Ibid.
[218] "Israel Knew Hamas Attack More Than A Year Ago", *New York Times*, (Date of Access: 28.03.2024), https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html.

However, the Israeli authorities have retreated from their initial policy and are sending more female soldiers into the hot war. Once again, an Israeli policy that is pragmatic enough to ignore the gender division of labour is seen in the face of the need for national security. This pragmatic change in attitude has created a symbolic sense of acceptance among female soldiers with nationalist sentiments.

In this framework, 21-year-old Marom, one of the first Israeli female soldiers to serve in the Gaza war zone, says that: "We can now see the change in the Israeli army. We can see that women are also accepted to participate in the war."[219] As part of this more active process for female soldiers, they discovered and destroyed a Hamas tunnel in Khan Younis/Gaza. In addition, it has been observed that more women want to serve in the war when they reach the age of 18, due to the so-called increasing acceptance of female soldiers.

Active participation has also given women a chance to speak out, to express their thoughts that were previously ignored and not listened to. For example, 20-year-old Eliora who is one of the border guards, evaluates the initial policy and finds it inappropriate for an army that is defined as a 'people's army'. Similarly, 23-year-old Shana, who serves as a battalion commander, believes that the war has shown everyone that women can play a more active role in the army. She also says that male soldiers find this situation strange, but they (female soldiers) are ready to do what they have been trained to do. [220]

In the past, women soldiers were restricted to positions such as nurses or radio operators, but now they are allowed to serve in almost any unit, including some combat units. So why does the practical implementation vary according to circumstances and national interests? According to data compiled by the Israel Democracy Institute, the number of female combat soldiers increased by 350 percent between 2013 and 2017.[221] However,

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[219] "Israeli Women Take On Greater Military Role in Gaza War," *France24*, (Date of Access: 28.03.2024), https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20240120-israeli-women-take-on-greater-military-role-in-gaza-war.
[220] Ibid.
[221] "İsrailli kadın askerler artık savaşın ön saflarında," *Euronews*, (Date of Access: 28.03.2024), https://tr.euronews.com/2024/01/20/israilli-kadin-askerler-artik-savasin-on-saflarinda.

the quantitative increase must also be accompanied by a qualitative increase, because over time, the restrictions on women's participation on combat have been imposed not only quantitatively (fixed quotas for female recruits), but also qualitatively (the domain of auxiliary roles considered to be more suitable for female soldiers). Unfortunately, with the attack of 7 October, it seems that the quantitative increase in women's participation in the army is still not supported by qualitative capacity building.

3.6. CONCLUSION

As a result, the nature of women's participation in the military, unlike that of men, has been reflected on the reduced grounds, especially in relation to women's roles as soldiers and women, within the feminist framework.

In this chapter, this reduction is evaluated in terms of the transformation of the military from the pre- to the post-state, in parallel with the change in strategies and objectives, as well as service requirements. As a result of this evaluation, it is seen that the military cannot be considered completely separate from other areas of the Israeli society. Therefore, women in the military have performed similar professional tasks, such as education, clerical, and social services, as in the civilian sector, as part and extension of the gendered division of labour in the civilian market. In this sense, the position of women as 'helpmates of men', as emphasized by the feminist discourse, has been maintained. In nation-building and in the maintenance of national existence, women have been positioned as integrators, educators, and morale-boosters of men. It is no coincidence that in a country like Israel, which has a small population and a high need for security, women's participation in the army is compulsory, but this participation does not provide real integration.

CONCLUSION

Over the years, women have been allowed to serve in more positions, including combat roles like naval officers, pilots, and combat soldiers deployed in border units. The IDF still maintains separate selection and recruitment processes are still conducted for men and women. According to 2022 data from the Institute for National Security Studies, an Israeli think tank, women make up 17 percent of the army.[222] About 86 percent of positions are open to women, while positions in elite commando units, assault forces, and pioneer units are not open to women.[223]

In general framework, the two main arguments against the integration of women in combat roles have been: the protection of women from danger, injury, mental stress, the risk of combat and capture; and the belief that the integration of women would undermine the performance of combat roles. It is also argued that the number of suitable candidates for the combat roles is insufficient to justify the investment required to recruit them. These arguments confirm the feminist approach, which recognises gender prejudices, attitudes, reactions and treatments and beliefs about the difference between the sexes as the mainstay of what promotes and sustains the social construction of gender.

The need to protect women stems from the assumptions about men and women constructed by patriarchal structures. In particular, women are mainly considered to be weaker and more emotional than men, so the emotional and physical strain of combat roles is considered to be too much for women. However, this perception ignores the shared helplessness of women and men emphasized by J. Butler, indicating that all human bodies are essentially both physically and emotionally vulnerable and dependent.[224] From a physiological point of view, there is no need to deny the relationship between the risk of injury and the level of fitness, but in order to ensure this, it would be sufficient to provide some preliminary training for men and women without discrimination. Moreover, the physical strain is correlated with the use of equipment, which can lead to serious injuries due to the unsuitability of the equipment for women's physiology, but this risk

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[222] "Jewish Israelis and the IDF in 2022 - A Special Survey."
[223] Baruch, "Opening All Combat Positions in the IDF to Women."
[224] Butler, *Precarious Lives: The Power of Mourning and Violenc*e.

can be reduced or even eliminated by providing suitable equipment, thanks to advanced technology, a proper diet containing vitamin D, iron and calcium, which help to strengthen the muscular and skeletal system, and the early reporting of injuries. Similarly, the perceived higher risk of war captivity for women is a product of paternalistic construction that has no substantive basis, so this perception should disappear. However, when one considers the intersection of women's reproduction capability and the Jewish beliefs, it is difficult for Israel to abandon this perception, and it can be said that policies are implemented in parallel. On the other hand, the emotional strain is not only related to the emotionality at the personal level, but also to factors at social level, such as the social support, usually expected from families, fellow soldiers, and their commanders.

The perceived effect of integrating women into combat roles as weakening the performance of the unit is based on the claim that women will undermine the professional level and damage the cohesion of the unit, known as a 'band of brothers', because they will not be able to cope well with combat situations. According to those who defend this claim, the inclusion of women simply means lowering standards to make them acceptable. But this is a false assumption. As NATO recommends, the establishment of uniform physical standards for all candidates, without discrimination, helps to reduce the risk of injury and improves the level of fitness of those recruited.[225]

On the other hand, it can be said that the number of suitable female candidates is negligible level because of the pressure to internalize masculine attitudes and hide feminine ones, and to participate in stereotypical positions for women, as remarked by feminist discourse. In this regard, there is a direct relationship between women's motivation to serve in the IDF and their status in the military. How they are treated, their ability to hold important positions, and their prospects for progress or advancement, are critical variables. Even if women have high qualifications and potential, they know that they will be discriminated against due to several challenges such as the constant need to

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[225] Jessica Darden Trisko, "Assessing the significance of women in combat roles," *International Journal* 70, no.3 (2015): 454-462.

prove themselves, social and cultural (religious) pressures, and sexual harassment, so they are less interested in the combat positions.[226]

So, why is women's commitment to combat so important within the feminist framework? What would happen if this commitment were undermined? Based on the claims of Enloe, who generally defines the inclusion of women in the military in theory as part of national security and in practice as an expression of state security policy, the denial of the opportunity for women to serve in combat units does indeed have some consequences beyond the loss of the opportunity to serve in combat roles.[227] Firstly, the combat roles are at the core of the IDF's activities and are of great importance to national security, so by assuming that all women are not suitable for such important positions, the potential for suitable women to fill the positions and maintain national security is eliminated without seeing the whole picture. Secondly, only graduates of combat units are assigned to the central position of senior staff, especially to operational field duties, so if women are not allowed to hold combat positions, they will also be prevented from holding such positions and rising through the ranks. Thirdly, restricting women's access to the senior positions also undermines their civilian life, as military service also provides opportunities after discharge for the advancement in civilian life after discharge (i.e. former senior military personnel have a head start in the employment world), especially in business and political elections. Fourthly, operational experience is often required to express professional opinions on matters of national security, so preventing women from gaining operational experience removes them from decision-making mechanisms. This leads to the exclusion of women in several dimensions. Fifthly, the military service plays a crucial role in the construction of personal identity as a determining factor in maturation and development; therefore, if it is constantly imposed that women are less capable than men, this misperception will become a part of their identity and haunt them. Finally, the prevention of women's participation in combat roles, both during and after the military service, creates an invisible, formidable, and indestructible wall that would affect all areas of life. Moreover, women's involvement in the combat roles is mutually beneficial for the

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[226] Baruch, "What is the Appropriate Model for Female Service in the IDF?," 86-89.
[227] Duncanson and Woodward. "Regendering the Military: Theorizing Women's Military Participation," 3–21; Cockburn, "War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues," 437.

IDF and for women. As noted in the Segev report, the participation of women, who make up half of the Israeli population, harnesses use of resources (in most areas) by unleashing women's potential.[228] When all this is evaluated within the feminist framework, the shadow cast on the visibility of women in male-dominated phenomena is better understood.

Giving that the IDF is defined as the people's army, and that service is compulsory for both men and women on liberal and egalitarian military grounds, the right to equal opportunity as a component of military service is a kind of an obligation determined within moral and ethical contexts. Otherwise, it would create a sectoral, discriminatory, segmented army instead of a people's army. Each person and each position should be evaluated individually, because a certain man or woman is not the representative of all men and women, and all positions have their own requirements that can determine the standards and training. Otherwise, the dignity of the soldier and the military institution is not respected. Also, the value of equality and the victory are connected, so when women are employed throughout the IDF, it brings the country one step closer to the victory.[229]

Within this framework, gendered practices of hyper-masculinity underlined in the feminist understanding have been implemented in the Israeli army in a complex process of top-down and bottom-up change. According to the findings, masculinity in the Israeli army is constructed and reconstructed through common practices that both transform and maintain its dominance. The inclusion of women in the military, and the extent of this inclusion, fundamentally challenges the hegemonic behaviours through the acceptance or rejection of new gender attitudes under the feminist context. This also reflects how the army mobilizes masculinity in a collective and harmonious way. Its sphere of action, as always, determines that of women or 'others'. Therefore, it can be seen that there is no specific job description for women's involvement in the military. In other words, this is not only the case of the construction of gender relations individually, but the consequence of the mutually and socially constructed action of the army. Within the feminist framework, the army as an institution contains two types of hegemony: the external

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[228] Baruch, "What is the Appropriate Model for Female Service in the IDF?," 84- 86.
[229] Baruch, "Opening All Combat Positions in the IDF to Women."

hegemony which is embodied in the superiority over women, and the internal hegemony which is embodied in the superiority over men. For Israel, such an institution requires superior professionalism to ensure national security and existence, so the inclusion of women means that 'softer' elements enter in the army. Therefore, it is seen that women's participation in the army, their roles in the army, and the duration of these roles are not only determined by security reasons, national interests and the needs of the army. In fact, the norms that determine what is 'right' and 'appropriate' for a 'real man or masculinity' are among the factors that influence them, when viewed from the critiques of feminism.

In conclusion, this thesis has examined the roles attributed to women, with the aim of going beyond the constant categorization of women, as a result of the easy assumptions in which women are mostly classified as 'civilians' and 'victims', within conflict and defence phenomena. The dynamics of combat units and their activities change the extent to which the direct or indirect support of women is required. In this regard, the role of women in combat has been determined by the gains they have made in the strategic planning of defence activities. These benefits have shaped the ways in which women are involved in recruitment and how women are managed and led in the military institution. However, in the scope of feminist literature, it is seen that women have been given illusory gains in terms of conflict dynamics that influence the conduct and duration of war.

In light of the conflicts that the State of Israel has experienced throughout its history, as the level of severity of situations threatening the security and national interests of the state increases, women are placed on the front lines of the conflict, while as this level decreases, they are easily relegated to the rear lines, which can be considered secondary to men. Within the feminist discourse, this misleading or deceptive perception of equality answers the question of why women are more likely to benefit from crisis and emergency situations. It is, therefore, a natural consequence that women were less discriminated against in their roles in the disorganised paramilitary structures that existed prior to the establishment of Israel (i.e. the active participation of *Palmach* women in the War of Independence). Accordingly, it can be sad that the roles of women in the armed forces as combatants or non-combatants in conflict and post-conflict environments differ. Depending on situational and individual characteristics, the roles attributed to women in

wartime may be maintained in the peacetime or may be completely abandoned. Indeed, the 'attack of 7 October' is a proof of this situation, because at first women's warnings were ignored, then the crisis grew, and women began to be deployed on the front lines. After all, not only gender but also political, cultural, socio-economic, communal, religious, national, generational and other differences have determined women's participation in the armed forces, because they all intersect at some point. Considering gender as the sole factor or lens through which women's participation in the military is viewed only reinforces existing assumptions about women. This thesis, on the contrary, aims to contribute to the literature by assessing the issue differently from the conventional security or gender analysis because in the context of de-gendering and re-gendering military, the pyramidal military order has undergone some structural changes for the sake of national interests, but the binary gender order has not experienced major changes to reinforce these structural changes and destroy the perception of positioning the warrior role in the army, whose identity is constructed over hypermasculinity, as the only possible and desirable identity for soldiers.[230] Thus, the integration of women in the army with contested masculinities has increased the status and presence of women in the army and the institutional legitimacy in the public image, but it is difficult to say that this integration has been a complete success due to its inherent contradictions.

In order to assess the participation of women in the army, both before and after the establishment of the State of Israel, from a feminist perspective and in the context of nation-building, the following statement will serve as a summary for this issue: The inclusion of women in the army is a case of to be or not to be. So, what is it to be? It is to 'to exist'. For something to exist, it must be physically heard and felt. But the existence of a human being is much more than a physical existence, because they are thinking creatures. Therefore, in order to exist, a person must be able to think, understand and realize. But this is a two-way situation, so a person must be able to make others to think, understand and be perceived. In this case, women participate in the army to the extent

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[230] Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz, "Gender integration in Israeli officer training,"128.

that they are noticed. As long as women are not noticed or recognized, their participation in the military appears to be real.

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