

# Navigating in Insecure Territory: Attitudes among Islamic Movement Female Activists toward the Israeli Authorities and Culture<sup>1</sup>

Salwa Alinat-Abed<sup>2</sup> 

*Open University of Israel  
Israel*

**Abstract:** This article deals with female activists of the Islamic movement in Israel and their attitudes toward the Israeli authorities and culture. It looks at the complex Muslim existence in Israel, leading to such questions as: What is their opinion about the Israeli space and how do they live as Muslims in a non-Islamic space? And what strategies do they use to bridge the gap between their religious and civic identities? The article presents three main positions of the women activists in relation to the Israeli space: the majority who want to integrate into Israeli society, the minority who reject Israeli society and want to seclude themselves in a community of an Islamic nature, and a group which takes the humanistic position where the emphasis is on the person and not their religious identity, i.e., they prefer not to emphasize their religious identity in the Israeli space, partly because they fear expressing criticism towards Israeli society, assuming that it will lead to persecution and conflicts. Female Muslim activists give a religious interpretation and act according to *Fiqh al-waqi'a* (a religious interpretation according to the understanding of reality) in a subjective, personal way, without any top-down guidance from the (male) leaders of the movement.

**Keywords:** Wala' (loyalty), Bara' (rejection), Islamic movement, Israel, Muslim Female activism

<sup>1</sup> This Research was supported by The Open University of Israel's Research Fund.

<sup>2</sup> Salwa Alinat-Abed (Ph.D.) is a Historian and Researcher of Political Islam in the Middle East, Arab society in Israel, female and religious activism in Israel, and Arab-Jewish relations. She is Instructor and Education Coordinator in the Department of History, Philosophy, and Jewish Studies at the Open University in Israel. Salwa published several articles about female activists of the Islamic movement in Israel, Palestinian children's literature in Israel and the West Bank, and Palestinian women's collective and personal memory of the 1967 war. Contact E-mails: [salwaalenat@gmail.com](mailto:salwaalenat@gmail.com); [alinatsa@openu.ac.il](mailto:alinatsa@openu.ac.il)

## Introduction

In 2016, A'aysha's journey to Islam began. Although she was born into a Muslim family, she led a non-religious lifestyle. In her second year of studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, she joined young activists in the Islamic movement; through them, she reacquainted herself with the principles of Islam; over time, A'aysha became intense, and she wore the hijab. However, it was not enough for her. After less than a year, she changed to the niqab after exposure to Salafi sheiks from Egypt. She completed her master's degree in conflict management with honors but chose not to work in an Israeli workplace.

A'aysha got married and chose to raise her children, believing that in doing so, she was fulfilling her E'bada (religious duties) as a religious woman. Over time, she distanced herself from Israeli cultural markers, did not hang out in shopping malls, and severed ties with her friends who seemed to her to be Israeli. She chose the name A'aysha as a replacement for her foreign last name. A'aysha led a lifestyle aligned with her interpretation of Wala' (loyalty to Islam) and Bara' (rejection of secular Western traditions). Nevertheless, A'aysha was a strange creature in her social and political landscape. Most Muslim women around her, both non-religious and religious, chose a lifestyle that combined religion, tradition, and secularism. She was an exception.

A'aysha was active in the northern faction of the Islamic movement in Israel for two years. She separated from the movement after it was outlawed in 2015. For A'aysha, the movement provided her with a safe framework and a group of belonging. However, the world is significant, and she was exposed to more religious ideas from around the world that came from the internet. It is difficult to determine whether the movement's ideas had a decisive influence on her choices.

Most of the female activists of the Islamic movement in Israel chose a different path than A'aysha's, whose story is most unusual. Although they were religiously clear about the meanings of Wala' and Bara', they mostly did not cut ties with their Israeli environment and adopted diverse action strategies to survive in Israel. In the context of an Islamic movement that is under a non-Islamic rule, loyalty to two frameworks is not self-evident. For that reason, it is impossible to be content with defining the relationship between Muslims and the State of Israel only in terms of integration or divergence. Observing the relationship between activists of the Islamic movement and the state should be from two angles: one religious and the other civil. Islamic movement activists in Israel must abide with both Israeli civil law and religious Islamic law. As citizens of Israel, Arab women are supposed to give their opinions on the issue of civil loyalty while complying with religious laws that define limits between Muslims and non-Muslims through the

laws of *Wala`* (loyalty) and *Bara`* (rejection), i.e., to be loyal to two fundamentally different frameworks. This situation leads to two questions: First, to whom should be given the greater loyalty? Second, how do they express their choice?

*Wala`* and *Bara`* help in the prominence of Islamic identity in the public sphere, among other things. They link the emotional component, i.e., loyalty, with the practical component, i.e., choosing ways of dealing with the state and its mechanisms as an institution and a culture. For Islamic movement activists what stands at the centre is religious loyalty. By exploring these questions, one can understand the complexity of the life of a female Muslim activist living in a non-Muslim environment, who try to match their religious beliefs and social activity to their political views. A unique process of interpretation allows these activists to reconcile their inner and outer worlds, although it sometimes introduces the contradictions and conflicts that characterize an organized culture.

This study is based on 58 in-depth interviews conducted between 2012 and 2015 with women activists in the Islamic Movement in Israel. Participants were chosen based on two considerations: they showed a clear commitment to their religious identity, that is, they were religious women by choice as they defined themselves during the interviews, and they were religious activists, meaning that they wanted to inspire a religious transformation in their society. *Education*: 34 participants completed a post-secondary religious and/or non-religious course of education. Eleven underwent formal religious education at dedicated Sharia colleges in either Um al-Fahm, the West Bank, or abroad. Only 10 had a non-religious education. Two did not have post-secondary education. *Age*: Participants were mainly from two age groups: a younger group between 20 and 30 years and an older group between 40 and 60. The younger women were students in institutions of higher learning in Israel and often had formal religious training. The older women, for the most part, had no formal religious education but, in the framework of the movement, gave classes for younger women in religion.

This article aims to examine *Wala`* and *Bara`*, two central terms in the Islamic faith that clarify how, according to religion, relations between Muslims and non-Muslims should be conducted. The article presents four action strategies of the women of the Islamic movement in Israel. It explains why these strategies helped women maintain their Muslim religious identity while managing relationships with their Israeli environment. In the second part of the article, the discourse about *Wala`* and *Bara`* is presented in the context of the Middle East, with a sample of Islamic movements throughout the Middle East and their relations with the various regimes during the twentieth century.

## Arabs in Israel: A History of Conflicts

As a result of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, the Palestinian political, cultural, social, and economic elite as well as the educated and the middle class, fled or were expelled from their homeland. Most of those who stayed were rural, uneducated members of the lower class (Al-Haj 1997; Ali 2004). In addition, those who remained became a remote, weakened, and excluded minority (Ali 2019). As a minority, the Palestinian population in Israel suffers from underrepresentation across almost all indices of achievement in the country, such as development and welfare. At the same time, it is overrepresented in all indices of poverty. This community is not only marginal in politics, but it is so also in the economy, in society, in communications, in culture, and in virtually all spheres of life (Ibidem).

While Palestinian citizens of Israel as individuals have civil and political rights, such as the right to vote and to be elected to political representation, they lack a number of collective rights. As a native Palestinian minority in the Jewish state, they are discriminated against when it comes to distribution and access to land, economic resources, job opportunities, privileges given to citizens who serve in the military, and citizenship rights (Adalah 2011). It is within these boundaries of the opportunities and limitations created by Palestinians' Israeli citizenship and Palestinian national belonging that the Islamic Movement in Israel conducts its activism (Rosmer 2017).

## Wala` and Bara` as Religious Belonging Frames

Wala` (loyalty) and Bara` (rejection) are religious principles which define and shape the relationship between Muslims and a country with a non-Muslim government. The Sheikh of Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (1286-1328) referred to these terms in the Middle Ages and some religious scholars have adopted his interpretation in modern times. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the origin of both concepts is emotional identification: Wala (loyalty) means to love and feel closeness while Bara means hatred and distance. In Wala`, there are three levels: the emotion of love (hub and mawada), support (nusra), and obedience (ittibaà) for Muslims who believe in Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Over time, a debate developed among Muslim religious scholars around the interpretation of the two terms and expressions in the lives of Muslims concerning a non-Muslim country or in their relations with non-Muslims (al-Sinani 2005, 13-38).

Muslim religious scholars have emphasized that emotional identification is not enough and must be accompanied by actions and statements that reflect

it. They consider Wala` (loyalty) and Bara` (rejection) as an integral part of the belief in Islam, values that reflect the loyalty of Muslims to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad. Wala` (loyalty) and Bara` (rejection) are also religious obligations that must be implemented as part of one's lifestyle.

### **Female Activists in the Islamic Movement**

Scholars have referred to the expression Wala` and Bara` according to the context in which Muslims lived. The basic premise is that the origin of Wala` and Bara` is in the hearts of the believers, especially in the case of Muslims living under non-Islamic rulers. When they are required to express feelings of love for Muslims and hatred for infidels, they are expected to consider the broader context. In the times when the expression of these feelings would harm the Muslims, when they live among infidels and are afraid to express their feelings and show differences in the public sphere, they are exempted from expressing Wala` and Bara` in actions. However, they must always hold them in their hearts.

Religious scholars who support this approach condition the expression of Wala` and Bara` on the ability of the Muslims. They consider the power relations between Muslims and non-Muslims which should align with the interests of the Muslims (Maslaha). If the expressions harm these interests or the Muslims are too weak, they are exempt from fulfilling Wala` and Bara` (Ash-Sharif 2010, 2-34).

Religious scholars claim there should not be a generalization and that each case should be examined individually in international, human, and national-territorial relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. There is no prohibition against establishing ties and peaceful relations, even with countries fighting Muslims, if it is in the interests of Muslims. In the case of territorial nationalism, Muslims are supposed to conduct themselves following the common good according to Sharia'h. When it comes to international relations and between countries, here, too, the interests of the Muslims and their needs must be considered (Ibidem).

Religious scholars have clarified that under certain circumstances, Muslims can use the principle of *Taqiyah*, which means caution, or the principle of *Tawriya*, which means concealment, in the circumstances of the oppression of Muslims and their discrimination in a land ruled by non-Muslims (al-Azraq 2010). Sheikh Muhammad Ben Sa'id al-Qahtani made it clear that when Muslims are under the rule of the infidels and when their lives are in danger, they cannot express Bara` because they are exposed to the harm of the infidels. Therefore, they are allowed to speak and behave in a way that does not harm

the fragile relations between them and their infidel lives. These are situations of weakness, threat, and coercion. However, even in these situations, Muslims are not allowed to go so far as to act contrary to the laws of Sharia'h and help the infidels against the Muslims. Their hearts should always believe in Allah and trust in Him, but they do not have to show *Wala`* not to arouse the disbelievers' anger publicly.

This approach seeks to clarify that *Wala`* and *Bara`* do not stem from intolerance or hatred of non-Muslims but are central foundations in the faith of Muslims and other religions. Scholars also claim these foundations strengthen the faith in Allah but, at the same time, do not deny the rights of non-Muslims to meet Muslims. Infidels are not forced to become Muslims; Muslims must treat them with tolerance and respect the contracts between them. However, it is impossible to cancel *Wala`* and *Bara`* from the lives of Muslims because this cancellation will cause Muslims to assimilate and lose their religious identity (al-Qahtani 1985).

On the other hand, some religious scholars rule out *Wala`* expressions among non-Muslims at any time and place. For them, there is no need to consider the circumstances of the Muslims' lives. Ibrahim Sakran is one of them. He is very critical of the view of some religious scholars who put loyalty to the homeland instead of loyalty to Allah at the center. Sakran emphasizes that according to the *Bara`*, Muslims are not allowed to express moral, financial, or military support to unbelievers, accept their norms of life, encourage them, or turn to them for advice. Sakran denies any partnership between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens in the land of Islam. According to Sakran's perception, *Wala`* and *Bara`* are stable and uniform concepts over time and are based on the belief that Allah is at the center and to whom love, identification, and dependence are directed. Muslims should not hide or be ashamed of their religious values (As-Sakhran 2010).

The terms *Wala`* and *Bara`* shape the relationship between Muslims and the government system or country in which they live. They differ from "citizenship," which refers to a legal status (discourse of rights and obligations) and does not always require emotional identification.

### **Wala` and Bara` in the Middle Eastern Context**

The Islamic movement in Israel belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood movement that arose in Egypt in 1928; the movement's leader was Imam Hassan al-Bana. The Muslim Brotherhood movement had established branches throughout the Middle East, and its ideas influenced young men and women. According to the

authorities' policies, the movement adopted different tools in different places.

In recent years, there has been a polarized discourse in the Arab and Muslim world regarding the relevance of *Wala`* and *Bara`* to Muslims in the modern era. There are some who wish to see it as a marginal discourse as it encourages hatred and separation between Muslims and non-Muslims, while there are voices that emphasize its importance precisely now (Nasser 2021). For example, the question of Muslims visiting holy places, such as the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, after obtaining a visa from Israel. In this case, the question of normalization with Israel arises, and to what extent is it an act that conforms with *Wala`* and *Bara`* (al-Fahd 2002, 128-41).

From a study of the action strategies of Islamic movements in the Middle East and the discourse surrounding the question of *Wala`* and *Bara`* (rejection), it can be concluded that there is no evident interpretation on behalf of an Islamic *Marji'eiyya* (reference) as to how a Muslim should behave towards the government or the society in which he lives in all areas of life. There is also no pre-determined way to behave appropriately in spirit. This is also the case with the Islamic movement in Israel: there is no direction from above on how its activists should behave concerning the Israeli government in all areas of life: economy, politics, culture, employment, and more.

The only debate where there is a focus of disagreement between the movement activists is the attitude toward Knesset elections, whether one should run in the Knesset elections, and whether one should serve in the Knesset. This debate started in the 1990s and still accompanies the movement's activists during every Knesset election campaign. A controversy within the movement's leadership began during the local council elections in 1989, when Sheikh Abdullah Nimar Darwish and Sheikh Ibrahim Sarsour, the leaders of the southern stream, supported participation in the Knesset elections, while Sheikh Raed Salah and Sheikh Kamal Khatib, leaders of the northern stream, opposed it. In 1996, contention in the Islamic Movement reached such a peak that the organization split into Northern and Southern factions. According to members of the Northern faction, the reason for the split was the controversy over religious legitimacy for participating in the Knesset elections. However, members of the Southern faction ascribed the reason for the split to the power and status struggles prevailing among some of the Movement's members, who preferred to withdraw from the Movement and establish a new faction that they could lead (Al-Rahman 2004).

Since the split, the two factions have distributed leaflets before each Knesset elections reminding the public of their positions. The Southern faction presents candidates for both local councils and Knesset elections, while the Northern

faction lets the voters decide whether to vote in the Knesset elections. Issam Aburaiya argues that the origins of the split were for personal and ideological considerations, as well as for reasons relating to Israeli and regional issues. He points out that some of the controversy between the factions is a reflection of ideologies created in light of important intra-Israeli and regional socio-political developments, most notably the attitude toward the first Palestinian intifada in December 1987, and toward the signing of the Oslo Accords (Aburaiya, 2005).

Supporters of participation in the Knesset elections say that it is a tool to fight for the victory of the Arab citizens in the country (Maslaha), while the opponents of this attitude do not accept the claim that there is success in participating in the Knesset elections and thus show willingness to give legitimacy to Israel (Abu-Riya 2005; Ali, 2006; Abu Ajwa 2012, 81-154). The attitude to the Knesset elections in Israel is an unusual example in which both factions of the movement, the northern and the southern, have instructed their activists on how to behave. They supported their instructions using Quranic verses, Halacha rulings, and the principles of *Wala`* and *Bara`*. When the activists and activities of the northern faction instructed the public of the movement's supporters not to vote in the elections, they explained their instructions thus: The directive was clear, and it was not to vote. In addition, one can find expressions of recruiting supporters for this approach through social networks, where the activists of the movement flooded the networks with explanations and interpretations against the elections, against the elected officials and the benefit behind not voting. An example of this is the criticism surrounding MK Mansour Abbas from the Al-Muwahada party, of the southern faction of the Islamic Movement, who entered the coalition government in 2021.

During an interview with me, Abbas spoke in terms of acceptance of the existence of the Jewish state and the need to integrate into Israeli society.<sup>3</sup> During election periods, the movement's activists urged the Arab public to come and vote in the Knesset elections in order to prevent Jewish extremists from coming to power. Moreover, the activists of the southern faction of the movement supported the Knesset elections. They explained its rationale regarding Maslaha (Palestinian national interest and a way to achieve civil equality). In the discourse of the southern faction of the Islamic movement, the terms *Wala`* and *Bara`* are not used. This is not accidental but reflects a pragmatic approach to the Israeli reality and does not depend on expressing feelings of love or rejection for Israel. Rather strategies, such like *Musiyyara* (flowing with reality and integrating into it) and *Tawriya* (concealment), are employed.

The movement's activity in both factions, like its activists, used different

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Mansour Abbas, May 27, 2023.



strategies that ranged from acceptance to rejection in their relations with the Israeli government. Feelings of Wala' and Bara' have not received many expressions in the Arab-Palestinian space or even in the Israeli space. Protest and resistance exist among Muslims in Israel. However, they are usually not accompanied by explanations from the Aqidah (belief) in Wala') and Bara' but from other explanations such as occupation, a discrimination policy, inequality, unemployment and poverty, frustration, lack of belonging to the state, and more.

### **Female Activism in the Islamic Movement in Israel**

Since its establishment in 1972, the Islamic Movement in Israel has operated on several levels. It has been dynamic and has worked within the Israeli political, social, cultural, and economic context in which it grew. On the organizational level, forming a religious-Islamic ideology and building a national political platform began during the 1980s and 1990s. In the 2000s, the Movement also changed its political journey. The da'wa (religious instruction) was a tool to spread religious ideas and recruit new supporters for the Movement.

On the religious level: protection of the holy places of Islam was central to the Movement's activity after the 1996 split between the northern and southern factions and especially the protection of sacred sites, chiefly the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, mosques, and cemeteries throughout the country. On a community level, including the establishment of welfare relief organizations, health, aid to the needy, charity funds, student councils in Israeli academia and abroad, music and culture communities, sports associations, education, Islamic Kindergartens, and more (Ali 2018; Suwaed and Ali 2016). Between 2000-2005, the northern faction of the Movement provided social services (relief and welfare) to Arab residents, including Christians and Muslims, from the concept of an independent society, thus filling the "social vacuum created by Israel's discriminatory welfare policy concerning minorities" (Eseed 2020).

Muslim women have been partners in developing the Islamic Movement in Israel since its inception. They have supported the men's leadership in the various stages of the Movement. Even when they did not agree to the process of disbanding the Movement in 1996, they continued to support the faction they chose in various ways: opinion, advocacy, and journalism, recruiting companies, fundraising, managing associations, and more (Rosmer 2022; Alinat-Abed 2016).

There are five stages that can be identified in the development of female activism in the Islamic Movement in Israel. The first stage is termed by the activists as the 'glorious stage'. This phase lasted from the beginning of the

1980s until the split of the Movement in 1996. During this phase, activists were committed to Da'awah and devoted all their time to it. During this time, groups of activists were established in various areas of the country, but there was little connection between them. Their activities were neither organized nor intense, however, there was also no competition.

The second phase began with the split of the Islamic Movement into the Northern and Southern factions. This created tension between the supporters of the two factions. The split created a sense of no confidence in the Movement among the Arab population in Israel and hurt female activism. Some activists – albeit a small number – left the movement in protest of the split which, in their opinion, was not justified. However, most women made their decision of which faction to join based on the decisions of the men around them or based on their identification with the leaders. This stage continued until approximately 2000. During this stage, each faction became embedded in the communities/towns that identified with it. Communities of supporters were formed. Female activism was also dependent on the process of each faction forming a new foundation.

The third phase began in 2000. This was characterized by the institutionalization of each of the Movement's factions through the creation of non-profit organizations that were run by the more veteran activists. There are differences between the two factions: first: The Northern faction had more power on the ground than the Southern one. Second, two major patterns of female leadership developed. Female leadership of the Northern faction accepted the hierarchy and authority of the male leadership. The female leadership of the Southern faction, however, created a stand-alone body that was independent of the faction's decision-making centers. These female activists defined themselves as 'independent yet affiliated' with the Southern faction of the Movement. They did not take orders from the top, and they acted at their own discretion. However, they ran into difficulties because their activities were less organized than those of their sisters in the Northern faction. At this stage, the two factions became competitive with respect to recruiting female members and with respect to their grassroots activities. Southern faction activists pointed out that the Northern faction dominated public activities and offered competition that, in their eyes, was not justified. On the other hand, the Northern faction activists were more vocal about their ambitions to expand their activities within Arab society. This completion illustrates how the legacy of the split worked its way down/trickled down to even the lowest levels in the organizational hierarchy. Thus, if one considers the possibility of uniting the two factions, one can see that this ambition is far from reality.

The fourth stage began to clearly take form in 2008, when the process of

'academization' of female activities in both factions began. This has attracted into the ranks of both factions' students and graduates of Israeli learning institutions who are searching for a safe framework within the academic Israeli sphere in which they can express their Islamic identity. They found this in the non-profit's organizations associated with the factions of the Islamic movement (see, Alinat-Abed 2016).

The fifth phase began in 2015 when the state outlawed the northern faction of the movement. That affected the activities of women in both factions. The women's activity in the northern part weakened, and it took several years for them to recover and establish new independent organizations without identification with the movement. The activity of the southern faction remained faithful from the start. Another significant change took place at the top of the southern faction. The men adopted the idea that women should be included in the higher ranks of the movement. An expression of strengthening that trend was the inclusion of Eman Khatib. Khatib became a Knesset member in 2019 and was supported by the leadership of the southern faction of the movement.

Two key insights are relevant from reviewing the development of women's activity in the Islamic movement in Israel. First, the division of the movement is a defining event among activists. The division was on ideological, political, and religious grounds. The debate between the two factions revealed their relationship with the state. Both accepted the country's legal framework, but the northern faction sought more independence in managing the Muslim community. In contrast, the southern faction sought to strengthen civil discourse and integrate into the state. Secondly, interviews with Female activists in both factions of the movement revealed gaps between the formal perceptions of the movement factions and their realization on the ground.

The differences prove that there is no indoctrination of each faction to instill its doctrine; moreover, the activities have their own discretion, which is the source of their power. From a religious point of view, the activists are ordinary women and are not leaders with supreme religious authority. At the same time, female activists chose to belong to one faction or to drop out of it. They have their positions when the issue that guides them as a religious activity is how to reconcile the gaps between their lives and the religious commandments. The activists do not pretend to present an ideal world. In this context, the Islamic Movement is vital in creating a security envelope for them. It helps them feel safe facing external factors in their society.

### Three Approaches to the Israeli Setting

One of the characteristics highlighted in the study is the movement's pragmatism, its ability to mobilize supporters and create a commitment to its activities and participation in its demonstrations and the conferences it organizes. Researchers who examined the movement's ambition to rule by the laws of Islam in the Israeli context showed that the movement managed to mobilize many supporters and bring them closer to the religious precepts (Mohend and Assad 2018, 58-59). However, the northern faction of the movement could not get its supporters to disengage from Israeli society economically due to a lack of resources and infrastructure (Reches 2011). Despite the alienation of the Islamic movement due to the state's attitude, researchers believe that the movement will strengthen the civil components in its activity as a way of protection that replaces the traditional structures (Tal 2011, 10-152).

Female activists of the Islamic movement in both factions understand that they live in a complex reality, a Jewish and secular state at the same time, in which they are a homeland minority, and they also belong to a Middle Eastern region with a Muslim and Arab majority. Their religious identity is fundamental to them, but Israeli society does not accept this identity and sometimes even threatens it. They are also members of a movement whose relations with the regime have gone through ups and downs. The low point in relations between the state and the northern faction was in 2015, when this faction was outlawed.

From the interviews with 70 female activists in the Islamic Movement, diverse voices emerge regarding Israel as a society, political and security establishment, and culture. They answered questions about their attitudes to Israel. The results reflected three approaches: *a.* 62% of the activists expressed a desire to integrate into the state; *b.* 27% of the activists rejected the possibility of integrating into the state, and *c.* 11% expressed fear of expressing a clear position concerning the state.

The perceptions of the activists ranged between two extremes - one is the acceptance of Israel as a state and the other - is the perception of Israel as an occupying entity. Those who accepted the Israeli state were not similar regarding how far it is possible to live in it and apply shari'ah law. The study's premise is that pointing to dilemmas indicates that the movement's activists are interested in integrating into society and trying to reconcile the contradictions that arise from being a Muslim minority in a Jewish country. On the other hand, those who see Israel as a conquering entity of Islamic land see it as an entity that should not be recognized and, therefore, cannot be integrated into.

*a. Willingness to integrate into Israeli society*

Through this approach, Islam is seen as a religion that can be integrated into a multicultural setting. They want to move the Islamic discourse from the Arab society and into the general Israeli society. Suhad was a former activist in the Islamic Movement's Southern faction. She studied in Jerusalem from 1999-2004 and emphasized that Islam needs to 'get out from under the shadow.' She said:

“As an Arab and Muslim woman, I have been exposed to multiple levels of oppression in Israeli society. Our society is known as oppressive. Muslims need to get out from under the shadow and to be confident that this is the correct model for the Muslim. Muslims need to go out and prove themselves in learning. They need to get out of the shadow and the bubble. I don't think there are any barriers beyond that. My experience proves my opinion.”

Suhad graduated cum laude from Hebrew University. She was proud of her accomplishments and believes she represents the right way of Islam. She said that despite the difficult political situation in Jerusalem, she received a lot of respect in the Knesset. She did not shake the hands of men wanting to congratulate her, and the public applauded her as a sign of respect. She said:

“This is the way in which a Muslim woman presents herself. She excels dressed in her hijab. She challenges the difficulties and discrimination in the university. It demonstrates how a Muslim woman holds on to her religion and her ideology.”<sup>4</sup>

Suhad, like other activists from the younger generation in the Islamic movement, wants to work, study, and integrate into the country while maintaining her religious identity. One expression of this identity is the hijab. They wanted to be visible in Israeli society through their religious clothing. They wanted acceptance and inclusion in Israeli society. Activists, most of them academics in Israeli learning institutions, showed the need to open to Israeli society and not to segregate themselves from it. Yasmin, a young activist of the Movement's Southern faction, accepts the state as a Jewish and democratic state, and through this acceptance, she points out, it is possible to fit in:

---

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Suhad, November 10, 2012.

“Our relationship with the Jews is as partners. We live in a country that is not Muslim. We want to maintain our Islamic identity, traditions, and heritage. It’s important that my son knows the Quran by heart, that my children have education and knowledge. This is a good thing that we take with us. Last year, I put my three-year-old girl into a Jewish learning center, where she learned computers. I have no problem having contact with Jews. If they are ‘different’ from us, what does that mean? Look, we are studying in schools run by the Ministry of Education, we get paid by the State. [...] We cannot separate ourselves from this country. Just like you cannot refuse to send your kids to school. You can’t live out of your reality. I studied at an Israeli university that is recognized throughout the world. You can’t live in a bubble. Most of the people I learned from were Jews, not Arabs. It doesn’t matter if the source of your knowledge is Jewish, Christian, or Muslim. The most important thing is to benefit from the information.”<sup>5</sup>

Yasmin expressed a desire to integrate and implements it daily. Yasmin does not see a contradiction between her Muslim religious and Israeli civil identities. Yasmin’s opinion is not unique; Activists who supported integration in Israel did not see a contradiction between Israeli laws and Sharia’h law. Um Yassar, a veteran activist, does not think that Israeli society places a barrier to implementing Sharia`ah. Rather, “it depends on the degree of awareness of Muslims of their religion. Having a deep and true understanding of religion will lead to optimal implementation in society”. Um Yassar, who was instructing a group of young academics about Da`awah amongst women, suggests that the most critical issue that comes up in her meetings with the women of the younger generation is ‘how to be religious and modern at the same time’. She wondered:

“How am I supposed to keep my religion? When girls come to ask me what is allowed and what is prohibited, I am happy, because very few really pay attention to their actions. It is not easy for us to try to live as a modern woman while still adhering to the laws of Sharia`h.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Jasmine, July 28, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Um Yassar, April 26, 2012.

Um Yasser was aware that Israeli society permits men and women to come into contact at work, school, and even in public places. She is also aware that the Israeli consumer culture is already part of the Muslim culture in Israel and that it is impossible to disconnect from this context. Within this given reality, it is necessary to teach the younger generation how to behave. But it is also important to create common ground with those who are not devout Muslims, the major goal being to maintain a Muslim identity while maintaining continuity between generations. She claimed that the younger generation want modernity: young girls want to dress nicely, to get to know their boyfriends well during the engagement period, to have weddings with music and dancing. They also want to be linked into the social networks. She believed that the role of the older female generation is to guide them in these matters and to encourage them to check every move they make to see if it meets the principles of the religion.

On the other hand, some activists from the younger generation did not think that they needed any guidance. They belonged to the *New Muslims* trend. They were affected by Israeli culture. It is not easy for them to give it up. Remah was an activist from the younger generation. She used to be active in an Islamic student Movement in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She described the characteristics of the New Muslim:

“She is an educated, academic Muslim woman, exposed to different types of knowledge. She defines herself critically and thinks deeply about religious texts, accepts criticism, and listens to others.”<sup>7</sup>

Remah was a student of Hebrew literature and education, a woman who has acquired a formal Western education. She lives an independent life far from her hometown in the north of the country. She describes the New Muslim woman: she is not a traditional young woman in a village or traditional religious woman. She said:

“The New Young Muslim woman wants to dress up and go to restaurants; to have open social relationships on social networks without feeling guilty or limited. The New Muslim woman wants to go to cafes and cinemas and to meet people, not only Muslims – also non-Muslims. To travel to other

---

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Remah, March 24, 2012.

countries without the escort of a male relative. Such a woman is ready to work and fit into any Western society. She is willing to express her Islamic religion. She has an Islamic perception, she prays, and is ready to pray even in a public place. In a mixed-gender setting, she retains her identity and her Islamic presence; she is flexible but does not give up her principles easily. This leads to internal conflict.”

These comments indicate that women of the younger generation are not willing to give up their Islamic identity but want to integrate it into Israeli society. However, as Remah noted, “The Israeli environment has a negative influence on Muslim society. Many break away from their Islamic identity and Palestinian nationalism.” Movement’s activists realized there was a need for integration in the country; at the same time, they were aware of the contradictions and dilemmas in this integration. They chose the *Musayiarah* (matching) strategy. *Musayiarah* is a strategy that allows Muslims to flow with existing reality and not have to fight it to survive within it. The activists did not actually mention this strategy specifically, but from their statements, it may be concluded that they seek to integrate into society by virtue of this strategy. The attitude of the movement’s activities towards Israeli society as a multicultural society in which it is possible to maintain their Islamic identity, with the awareness that there are dilemmas and contradictions in the encounter with Israeli culture. Most female activities used the *Musiyrah* strategy to flow with the existing reality, while maintaining the precepts of the religion and the Islamic identity. Most of the movement’s activists chose these options in the absence of direction from the leadership of the Islamic movement.

The question that arises is, what does this mean in terms of *Wala`* and *Bara`*? That means that most of the movement’s activists did not observe the separation between *Wala`* and *Bara`* according to the instructions of Muslim religious scholars. They acted out of their *Fiqh al-waqi`a*, that is, out of their understanding of the complexity of their reality. They preferred to express *Wala`* to keep their Islamic identity, meaning a desire to maintain their identity through visibility in the Israeli space while maintaining religious dress and behavior rules. They did not want to confront the state by expressing *Bara`*, such as rejecting Israeli laws, values or culture. Most female Muslim activists internalized that they were part of a national and religious minority in the country and conducted themselves according to rules that guide minorities in national majority countries. They acted out of success and a desire to survive the Israeli reality.



*b. Rejecting the Israeli Culture and Role*

A minority among the movement's activists reject Israel as a government and culture, considering it a colonial rule. For them, Israel dispossessed the Palestinian land and the Palestinian people's national identity. They treated themselves as part of an occupied nation under foreign control. This is expressed in two ways: the rejection of Israeli culture and strengthening the relationship with Al-Aqsa. These female activists showed another voice that was more assertive. They consider reality to be a conflict where one side – the Jewish one – dominates the other side – the Muslim.

Kawther, a veteran activist from the Southern faction, lives in the Tel-Aviv Jaffa area. She is a social worker, a graduate of Bar-Ilan University. She was a member of a group which perceives Israel to be an occupying force that threatens Islamic identity: "We live in an Israeli occupied state that is based on non-Islamic laws. The main challenge is the challenge of identity."<sup>8</sup> The issues that Kawther raises are connected to Muslim behavior in a non-Islamic setting, whose values intrinsically contradict Islamic values in all areas of life:

"Israeli culture influences Muslims. Openness in relations between men and women is legitimate. The problem is that it creates values that are in opposition to those of the religion, but the Muslims accept them as legitimate, natural things. Gradually, even a single parent is finding legitimacy in Arab society because of the influence of the country and feminist organizations."

Kawther, like other activists in the movement, emphasizes that there is a cultural conflict between the Muslims and the State. They criticize the Movement, which they feel does not try hard enough to explain itself to the State, and thus contributes to the fact that Muslims are exposed to racism and oppression from the State. At the same time, Muslims are influenced by the dominant culture of the country whose values contradict Islamic values. They are living in ignorance.

Um Hassan, another veteran activist of the Southern faction, accuses Israel of having a policy that distances people from their religion and promotes religious ignorance:

---

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Kawther, November 8, 2012.

“Since the founding of Israel, there has been no Islamic religious education in schools. Parents have placed religion on the side-lines and allowed superstition to take its place. The mosques were opened only for the elderly. The women wanted to imitate the dress of the Jews.”<sup>9</sup>

In her estimation, the Israeli occupation of Palestine has been able to divert the people from their religion. She sees Israel to be a country that has subjugated the Islamic identity:

“We are in the reality of occupation, and therefore the pressures on us are great. Nevertheless, parents want their children to be religious because it protects them. That way, they will protect themselves, their dignity, and their religion. The Islamic movements have a vital role in raising awareness. Faith is in the heart of every Muslim, but it must be ignited.”

Um Hassan and others, as Muslims, reject such a cultural practice outright and sees it as a "threat" and having negative impact. In fact, she sees her role in the Movement as part of a structure related to her self-definition as an Islamic woman and activist. Alaa defines herself ‘a Muslim Palestinian Arab’. She gave this definition:

“I am in my country and my home. I am Arab because I do not see myself as Muslim and Arab like everywhere else. Belonging to my homeland is especially important to me. Sometimes, when I travel to Mecca or South Africa, I immediately miss my homeland. This is my country of my birth like an embracing mother. This land was a Waqf to the prophets of Allah for the Muslims. I see myself in the courtyard of Al-Aqsa Mosque and want to be in this place that has terrific value for prayer.”

Among the activists of the movement, there was a debate about the importance of Palestinian national identity compared to Islamic religious identity in the struggle for liberation from Israeli control. Some consider the national identity complementary to the religious identity, and some consider it a contradiction to religious identity. Despite differences, all the activists consider religious identity as an identity that stands at the center of their individual and collective identity.

---

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Um Hassan, November 21 2012.

Alaa claims that the combination of national Palestinian identity with Islamic religious identity strengthens her and gives her pride. She, like most of the younger generation who have been educated in academia, has created her religious and national identities at the same time. She does not see a contradiction in their combination. Despite that, some veteran activists consider the national identity as a "colonialist invention" that should not be embraced and that even contradicts Islam. Kawther noted that one of issues that confuse Muslims today concerns nationality and religion:

“Religion has turned into folklore. Some see themselves as non-religious Muslims. What is this creation? There is no such animal. But because there is a lack of awareness, people allow themselves to see themselves as a mixture of things that contradict each other without seeing the problem with such an approach.”

Activists of the Islamic movement who rejected the Israeli government and culture debated the position of the occupied Palestinian and the Muslims in colonial power relations. Some blamed Israel for the distance of Muslims from their religion, and others claimed responsibility. They did not accept themselves as victims of national, religious, and cultural occupation and sought to strengthen their consciousness and religious activity.

Al-Aqsa Mosque was a holy place for activists for empowering religious identity and encounter with Israeli authorities. Activists in the Islamic movement in both factions supported women's prayer at the Al-Aqsa Mosque and encouraged women to come to the mosque and become Murabitat (Shadd ar-Rihal). Since 2000, their activity has grown more robust in the mosque. Alaa was an Al-Aqsa activist from the Northern faction, she said: “I see there is a role for women in defending the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It is a sacred place. She has a role in protecting the land and the motherland. The women act when the men are not allowed to go into the mosque. In our eyes, this is a particularly important mission.”

Alaa attributes an essential role to women's activities for Al-Aqsa Mosque. That is a phenomenon of recent years. Religious Muslim women came to the mosque not only to pray but also as a political act, protesting Israel's control of the mosque. Their activity in the mosque is known as the politics of provocation. They tease Israeli police officers and Jewish worshipers to convey the message that the mosque belongs to Muslims. They receive sympathy and identification

from Palestinian society and the Arab and Muslim world. That is how they strengthen their position in their society (Alinat-Abed 2021).

Female activists of this type consider Israeli cultural influence as a threat to the Islamic religious identity. They deal with this threat by emphasizing and strengthening their religious identity, adding to it a national territorial component (*watani*). *Watani* is the connection between the land and the homeland; thus, it has a double value – religious and national. It is conceivable that the activists would like to split from the land through the creation of a community-religious autonomy. Emphasizing the superiority of the Islamic identity on the consciousness of the activists, becomes an expression of their political protest of Israel's conduct of the Palestinian occupation, and a blunt condemnation of Israel's dominance and superiority.

They used two strategies to deal with the Israeli threat system and culture: *Hasanh* (immunity) and *Muqawamah* (resistance). The women's choice of Islamic identity is a resistance to the occupation of their consciousness by Israeli culture. As far as the activists in both factions are concerned, belonging to the Islamic Movement gives them a sort of *tahsen* (entrenchment and preserving Muslim identity in the face of Israeli political and cultural threats). It gives them a safe place to cultivate their personal and collective identity. Their presence in Al-Aqsa Mosque (Ribat) is an example of their resistance. Education is also a means of creating cultural *Hasanh* and resistance to Israeli control in the minds of Muslims and Palestinians. The activists associated with the Northern faction, feel that the Movement provides them with a political alternative to that of the State. The Northern faction presents clear boundaries between 'us' and 'them'. The institution of the Northern faction helps strengthen the collective identity of the activist, and through them, to strengthen the Islamic identity of their target audience.

Rejection of the Israeli culture and system and using resistance and subterfuge strategies expressed an understanding of *Wala`* and *Bara`*. Thus, the movement's activists expressed their *Wala`* loyalty to the Muslim nation (Ummah), through a desire to protect its Islamic identity by defending the Al-Aqsa Mosque. They expressed *Bara`* from Israeli culture if it contradicts the commandments of Islam. In other words, movement activists followed the definition of Muslim religious scholars who consider *Wala`* and *Bara`* as two terms of Islamic belonging that does not depend on place or time. A significant motive for rejecting Israel was its perception as a colonial entity that conquered the Muslim people and land in Palestine.

*c. The Humanitarian Approach*

Some Movement activists of both factions point to caution in expressing how they relate to the Israeli reality. They prefer to talk about humanitarian values. They assume that could make a common ground for Muslim and Jewish citizens in Israel. Hiba, a young activist of the Northern faction, tried to find a balance between her activities within and without the Movement. She wanted to go out into a society that has a different set of rules of conduct from those that she learned in the Movement. What helps her is her financial independence. She is not financially dependent on the Movement for a scholarship or a part-time job. Her new job in the school for special education allows her to reflect on her position in the Movement. Her distance from the Movement allowed her to think of more creative ways to support it. For instance, how to fill the void left by the educational consultant who nurtured Hiba on the professional level in her village in the Galilee.

Hiba demonstrates caution in her relations with the external environment. That is expressed by distancing herself from controversial topics or meetings that might raise anger or fear on the part of others. She is especially careful not to get into arguments that concern religion with non-religious Arabs. In her relations with her Jewish surroundings, Hiba has developed a humanistic approach. This provides a common ground for co-existence between her Islamic identity and the non-religious character of the State. She refuses to make value judgments about other human beings. She declares that her relation to others is based on the other being 'a human being before he is different or an enemy'. Her remarks seem to convey criticism of the Islamic Movement: "They provide beautiful slogans about how to survive within Jewish society, or about our rights to the land, but they do not give its activists or supporters tools for dealing with everyday conflicts"<sup>10</sup>. One can assume that the humanistic approach, which characterizes many of the activists – both younger and older, and from both factions – is merely an attempt to give meaning to the lives of Muslims in a non-Muslim society. It is a way to move beyond the concept of 'them' or 'us'. It is a way where a Muslim tries to cope with the complex reality of a Jewish and secular country using Islamic religious principles.

Veteran activists of both factions are more cautious of criticizing Israeli policy than the younger activists. As Movement activists, they are mostly in contact with women in the Arab communities. They have never faced any

---

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Hiba, May 5, 2011.

interference on the part of the establishment. They prefer not to talk about their lives in relation to Israeli society. Some argue that they have no criticism. Some say it is impossible to speak due to self-censorship or fear of persecution by the authorities, even when they emphasize that they do not break any laws. Others simply say that Israeli society will not accept their opinions, and there is no reason for them to bother to explain themselves. One can add that these women are mature women, between 40-60 years old. They have never worked outside their communities. They never had any access to formal academic studies in Israeli institutions.

On the other hand, activists with formal religious or non-religious education emphasized that there is a risk in their being Muslim activists in the country. According to Salam, a veteran activist from the Negev region:

“There is some risk to being a da’ayah (religious activist) in the Jewish State. Women fear for their lives when they go to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. They are afraid of coming under fire. We are careful about every word for fear of State reprisals. It is not easy to be a Muslim in the State of Israel.”<sup>11</sup>

One of the difficulties in living in Israel is that all Muslim women – whether an activist or not – have become ‘suspicious objects’ to security personnel on public transport or in public places like malls, streets, or airports. Activists in the Movement have reported that they feel discriminated against when compared to Jewish citizens in the country. They consider this discrimination to be racist.

According to Halima, a veteran activist of the Northern factions:

“There is no argument that there is racism against Muslims on religious or national grounds, and females are also exposed to this racism. They become objects of suspicion. We are checked in shopping malls and on public transport. Sometimes they are not accepted for employment. There are other cases of discrimination.”<sup>12</sup>

Dima, another veteran activist from the Negev region, senses a distinction between Muslims and Jews in the public sphere. She is careful not to go alone to

---

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Salam, March 20, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Halima Tayeh, March 2012.

places where there is a Jewish majority and does not drive at night:

“I have fears. There is no stability in this country. There is conflict between Arabs and Jews. Muslim women, in this context are strong and can trust themselves to get along. Muslim women express their objections (muqawamah) through their children’s education, their home economics, and their manner of dress”<sup>13</sup>.

Tawriya (concealment) is a strategy that was mentioned openly by activists such like Hiba, Halima, and Dima. That principle allows one to disregard areas of dispute between them and the Jews and not to confront them. For example, Dima uses strategy of Tawriya (concealment):

“In Israeli society we cannot say everything within us. We cannot tell them they are infidels. We must protect ourselves and our identity. It’s not hypocrisy but self-defence. It is acceptable according to our religion. It is not a Shi’ite principle. We simply restrict ourselves from saying things that might lead to unwanted tension.”<sup>14</sup>

Tawriya (concealment), as Dima explains, is used to defend Muslims from the Jewish majority. Her words demonstrate the threat that activists of the Movement sense because they live in Israel. It is important to note that Dima was the only activist that referred to this principle openly and directly, perhaps because she has religious knowledge and can conceptualize based on the religion. Most of the activists alluded to the principle and used terms to blur it. They said things such as: ‘they are fearful’, ‘they limit themselves’, ‘they are cautious’, or ‘they feel oppression, discrimination and racist treatment by the State’. However, they stressed that they do not want to provoke the State or its Jewish citizens.

From the point of view of the activists of this type, Israel is a given fact that cannot be ignored, even if they do not define themselves as citizens of the country. It is reasonable to assume that denying their inclusion in the country is the way they express their political protest. This is how they, as Muslim women, protest

---

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Dima, November 26, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem.

the State's ruling policies or secular culture, which do not take their religion into consideration. At the same time, they are strengthening their dependence and loyalty to their religious framework and to the Islamic nation to which they feel they belong.

The caution in their voices with respect to the State of Israel illustrates the sense of threat and persecution that activists feel by being religious Muslim activists in a Jewish setting. Their voices reflect the difficulty of assimilating into the Israeli setting. It illustrates how the country has created feelings of alienation and foreignness among both the older and younger generations. The women deal with these feelings by adopting an identity that is considered, from the outset, anti-Israel. But this also creates an alternative awareness to their situation. These invisible voices, of fear and self-censorship, express their desire that the State separate from them, and not that they separate from it.

Tawriya allows activists to hide their feelings of anger toward the State of Israel, and thus avoid problems. As citizens – Muslims, Palestinians, or Arabs – these women found themselves a way to live in a non-Muslim world while preserving their identity. The movement's activists used the Humanitarian approach along with the Tawriya strategy. They blurred the boundaries between *Wala`* and *Bara`*. Out of a desire to survive life in Israel, out of apprehensions of fear, they kept their *Wala`* and *Bara`* in their hearts. They treated life in Israel as a kind of emergency which motivated them to maintain themselves as a persecuted national religious minority.

### **Conclusion: Creation of Survival Identity**

Female activists of the Islamic movement in Israel belong to a national, ethnic, and religious minority native to Israel. They are part of a Palestinian people who have struggled for more than a hundred years to establish a national state and are in an ongoing conflict with Israel. They are part of the Middle East which has a Muslim majority. Many studies have discussed the discrimination and oppression experienced by Palestinian citizens of the country and the authorities' policies towards them. Also, dozens of studies have discussed the oppression of Arab and Muslim women in Israel. Some called their oppression a triple oppression and some referred to their marginalization and claimed it was a triple marginalization.

There is a connection between the definition of the self and the collective identity of Muslim activists and their choice of how they will integrate into the



State of Israel or separate from it. The assumption is that the more the activists emphasize their Islamic identity and downplay their Israeli civil affiliation, the more they choose the option of separation from Israeli society. On the other hand, the more they emphasize their desire to integrate into the state institutions and create a dialogue with them while maintaining their Islamic religious identity, the more they will express a desire to integrate into it.

The female activists used four strategies that allowed them to deal with Israeli society while at the same time maintaining their Islamic identity. In different cases, they used different strategies: *musayyara* and *tawriya*, which are relevant in cases where Muslims feel persecuted or under threat and they can hide their opinions. Therefore, they are careful in what they say. They prefer to keep private any emotions of hate, anger, or dissatisfaction with how the State treats them. They keep their emotions hidden so as not to raise the anger of the Jewish majority or their community. In other cases, activists used *hazanh* (immunity) and *muqawamah* (resisting the occupation of consciousness). The activists described their experiences as being religious Muslim social activists in a non-Islamic environment, without having to abandon or try to break away from this identity.

According to their world perception, as Muslims, limited integration into Israeli society is of benefit to them, according to the model of a heterogeneous country. Accordingly, *Wala'* is intended for the Muslim community to allow the creation of a coherent community that can be declared publicly. On the other hand, *Bara'*, that is, feelings of hatred and non-acceptance, is not expressed openly. Instead, it is expressed by maintaining one's Islamic identity without contaminating oneself by Jewish society.

These strategies are taken from their religious and spiritual world based on their religious interpretations. They exercise independent judgment, collect information from various sources, and try to reconcile contradictions and dilemmas individually and collectively. In the end, through these strategies, they develop their survival identity (*Hawiyat al-Baqa'a*), no longer as a Palestinian identity or an Israeli identity or both but as an Islamic identity that stands in the center and to which layers of identity adhere and dissolve. Sometimes these layers include an Israeli, universal identity, Palestinian national, Arab, gender identities, and more.

Muslim activists did not offer any alternative to the democratic ruling authority. Also, they did not express their aspirations to establish an Islamic country that implements Sharia law. Some of the positions raised by the women

exist within the Movement's discourse. Others they adopted on an individual basis. This shows that, on the one hand, the Movement is central to their lives and offers security from external threats. On the other hand, the activists sometimes have opinions that contradict the movement's policies. This indicates that they are not merely passive tools for recruiting voices to the Movement.

The positions of the movement's activists concerning Israel were not affected by their location in the northern or southern faction, so one can find women from the northern faction's activists who adopted the approach of integration in the state or conversely, one can find among the women of the southern faction activists that adopted the approach of rejection, or *bara'*. A key conclusion in this context is that there is no evident indoctrination that goes from the movement's leaders to the activists regarding the attitude to the state. In this way, each activist or activity group is able to take a position based on their interpretation of the Israeli reality - not against *Bara'* – and, based on this interpretation, adopt the appropriate strategy.

## References

- Abu Ajwa, Ahmed. 2012. *The rule of participation in the Knesset in the Zionist entity*. MA thesis. Um al-Fahm: Faculty of Daa'wah and Islamic Sciences. [Arabic]
- Abu-Riya, Isam. 2005. "Concrete Religiosity vis-à-vis Abstract Religiosity: The 1996 Split of the Islamic Movement in Israel." *Mega'mot* 43, no. 4: 682–98. [Hebrew]
- al-Azraq, Ibrahim. 2010. "A Critical Reading of the Contemporary Concepts of Wala' and Bara'." *Al-Bayan*. <http://www.albayan.co.uk/StrategicReportView.aspx?Id=122> [Arabic]
- al-Fahd, Nasser bin Hamad. 2002. *Explaining the dangers of normalization on Muslims*. Riyadh.
- Ali, Nohad. 2006. "Religious Fundamentalism as Ideology and Practice: The Islamic Movement in Israel in a Comparative Perspective." Ph.D. dissertation. University of Haifa. [Hebrew]
- Ali, Nohad. 2018. "The Islamic Movements' Way of Coping with Their Status as a Minority: The Independent Community as Case Study." In *Muslims in the Jewish State: Religion, Politics and Society*, edited by Meir Hatina, and Muhammad Al-Atawnah. Tel-Aviv: Hakibutz Hameohad. [Hebrew]
- Alinat-Abed, Salwa. 2016. *From Leadership to Empowerment: Women in the Islamic Movement in Israel (1980-2013)*. PhD dissertation. Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. [Hebrew]
- Alinat-Abed, Salwa. 2021. "The Politics of Provocation: Islamic Female *Ribat* at the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem." In *Holy Places in the Holy Land: Anthropological view*, edited by Lior Chen, Omer Hacher and Nurit Stadler. Ra'anana: The Open University. [Hebrew].
- al-Qahtani, Muhammad Ibn Sa'id. 1985. *Wala' and Bara' in Islam*. Saudi Arabia: Dar Taiyba Li Nashir wa al-Tawzi'a. [Arabic]
- al-Sinani, Essam. 2005. *Abbreviated The truth of Wala' and Bara' in the Book and the Sunnah Between the distortion of Extremes and the Interpretation of Ignorants*. Saudia Arabia.
- Amara, Muhammad and Kabha Sufyan. 1996. *Divided Identity: Political Division and Social Reflections in a Divided Village*. Givat Haviva: Peace Research Institute. [Hebrew]
- Ash-Sharif, Hatem Bin Araf Bin Nasser. 2020. *Wala' and Bara' Between Exaggeration and Indolence in the light of the Book and the Sunna.*, Makkah: Um al-Qura University. [Arabic]
- As-Sakhran, Ibrahim. 2010. "Re-read Wala' and Bara'." *Ad-Durar as-*

- Suniya*, March 2010. <http://www.dorar.net/article/434> [Arabic]
- Eseed, Rana. 2020. "Social Service Provision by Minority Religious Organizations: A Case Study of the Islamic Movement in Kafr Qassim." *Journal of Social Policy* 49, no. 3: 507-24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S004727941900062X>
- Hafez, Sherine. 2003. *The Terms of Empowerment: Islamic Women Activists in Egypt*. Cairo: American University of Cairo Press.
- Mahmoud, Saba. 2012. *Politics of Piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mohend, Mustafa and Ganem Assad. 2018. "The Islamic Movement in Israel: Political Islam in a Jewish State." In *Muslims in the Jewish State*, edited by Mouhmad al-Atawnah and Meir Hatina. Israel: Hakibbutz Hameuhad. [Hebrew]
- Nasser, Bassam. 2021. "The Syrian preacher Muhammad Habash in a comprehensive conversation with a Syrian thinker: Wala` and Bara` are an Emergency Terms in Islamic Fiqh," *Arabi*, August 14, 2021. <https://rb.gy/n70d3u>
- Reches, Eli. 2011. "The Islamization of Arab Identity in Israel: The Islamic Movement, 1972–1996." In *Muslim Minorities in Non-Muslim Majority Countries: The Islamic Movement in Israel as a Test Case*, edited by In E. Reches and A. Rudnitsky. Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 2011. [Hebrew]
- Rosmer, Tilde. 2022. *The Islamic Movement in Israel*. Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Suwaed, Muhammad, and Nohad Ali. 2016. "Education, Identity, and Ideology: The Islamic Movement and Muslim Religious Education in Israel." *Social Identities* 22, no. 4: 426-49. [Hebrew]
- Tal, Inbal. 2011. "Female Activism in the Islamic Movement in Israel 1983-2007: Influences, Characteristics and Implications." PhD dissertation. University of Haifa.
- "Wala`, and Bara`." The official historical encyclopedia of the Muslim Brotherhood. [http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title=%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A1\\_%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1](http://www.ikhwanwiki.com/index.php?title=%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A1_%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1)

Салва Алинат-Абед

## ***Кроз несигурне територије: ставови чланица Исламског покрета према израелским властима и култури***

**Сажетак:** Овај рад бави се феминисткињама у Исламском покрету у Израелу и њиховим ставовима према држави и култури. Рад проматра сложеност муслиманског живота у Израелу, који води ка питањима: шта је њихов став према Јеврејском простору и како они као муслимани живе у не-исламском простору? Које стратегије користе да прескоче јаз између њиховог верског и грађанског идентитета? Овај чланак представља три главне позиције феминисткиња према јавном простору: већина која жели да се интегрише у друштво, мањина која одбија јеврејско друштво и жели да се осами у исламској заједници, и једну групу која прихвата хуманистичку позицију у којој је фокус на особи а не на верском идентитету, тј. они не желе да истичу свој верски идентитет у јавном простору, делом због тога што се плаше да критикују јеврејско друштво јер мисле да ће доћи до прогона. Феминисткиње муслиманке дају верску интерпретацију и понашају се у складу са тим како религија разуме реалност, и то на личном нивоу без консултација са (мушким) лидерима покрета.

**Кључне речи:** Wala` (лојалност), Вага` (одбијање), Исламски покрет, Израел, муслимански женски активизам