The Hierarchy of Access:

Examining Police and Community Services for Victims of Domestic Violence in Israel

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This Honors Thesis represents my own work and due acknowledgment is given whenever information is derived from other sources. No part of this Honors Thesis has been or is being concurrently submitted for any other qualifications at any other university.
Signed:

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To my Aunt Hagit, who just one month ago ended her five-year-long divorce process in Israel and has now entered the field of IPDV herself. This thesis is dedicated to you. Your strength, courage, and love have always encouraged me. I also dedicate this to her three kids - my dear cousins - who supported me as I conducted three weeks of intense interviews in Israel.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In September of 2020, right at the start of the Jewish New Year, Shira Isakov was nearly murdered in her own home. Her parents were on the phone and her toddler helplessly watched as her husband of two years stabbed her 20 times and hit her on the head with a rolling pin.[1] Later, as she lay in the hospital, her brother Ofer documented her purple, swollen face, and the entire state of Israel soon knew the name Shira Isakov. On the day of the attack, it was Shira's neighbor, Adi Guzi, who saved her life. Guzi's five-year-old son told his mother he could hear screaming from the backyard. Without thinking, Guzi headed over to Isakov's apartment. She knew something was wrong. Shira's first and only complaint came a year after the wedding. She called the police, and a three-day restraining order was placed. On the night when Shira was nearly killed, one police officer arrived on the scene, and her husband was arrested.

A recent 2-part series documented Isakov's experience; her life before meeting her husband, the warning signs of abuse at the start of the relationship, and what led to the first act of violence. Shira's story even made the New York Times as she became an advocate for survivors and became widely known across Israel.[2] Her story is chilling and difficult to read – but it is also one of many. Just in the first year of the pandemic, the number of interpersonal domestic violence complaints (IPDV) between spouses in Israel increased by 250 percent.[3] A survey

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[1] Kershner, Isabel. "Stabbed 20 Times by Her Husband, She Now Fights Laws Favoring Abusers." *The New York Times*, December 3, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/world/middleeast/israel-shira-isakov-domestic-violence.html.

[2] Kershner, Isabel. "Stabbed 20 Times by Her Husband, She Now Fights Laws Favoring Abusers." *The New York Times*, December 3, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/world/middleeast/israel-shira-isakov-domestic-violence.html.

[3]Yaron, Lee. "The Damages of COVID Will Stay With Israeli Women for Years." *Haaretz*, March 8, 2021. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-03-08/ty-article/violence-and-

conducted in 2020 found that 67% of Israeli-Born Arab women experience violence, followed by 30% of Israeli-Jewish immigrants, and 27% of Israeli-born Jewish women.[4] Data by the Israeli National Police force reveals that the rate of violence against Arab Israeli and immigrant female victims is higher than their proportion in the general population.[5] Lastly, lack of evidence was the most notable cause for a case closed for a non-Jewish woman, at a high value of 89%.[6]

Shira is an Ashkenazi, Secular Jewish woman. She is educated, has a family that supports her, and is financially well-off with a stable advertising career. According to the data and the literature on domestic violence and inequality in Israel, Shira's status in society would have allowed her to access the police or other non-profit and state services. In other words, she could have – or should have – been protected. Domestic violence, of course, transcends boundaries and identities. No matter the racial, ethnic, and/or religious identity of a family, spouses experience all forms of abuse. However, just like any form of violence and crime, domestic violence is shaped by existing inequality in a state.

This leads to a pressing question: what might access to state services look like for a non-Jewish woman or a woman without permanent legal status? In other words, what does access look like for women in Israel who have even *less* state support than Shira? It is a tricky question

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discrimination-pandemic-effects-will-stay-with-israeli-women-for-years/0000017f-e5e8-d97e-a37f-f7ed26630000.

[4] Daoud, Nihaya, Ruslan Sergienko, and Ilana Shoham-Vardi. "Intimate Partner Violence Prevalence, Recurrence, Types, and Risk Factors Among Arab, and Jewish Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Women of Childbearing Age in Israel." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 35 (2017). https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0886260517705665.

[5] Yachimovich-Cohen, Nurit. "Domestic Violence with an Emphasis on Violence Against Women, 2016-2017 Police Data." *The Knesset Research and Information Center*, n.d. https://m.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/DomesticViolenceWithanemphasisonViolenceAgainstWomen.pdf.

[6] Note that the use of the terms "Arab-Israeli" and "non-Jewish" are terms used by the Israeli National Police force reports on domestic violence. During this thesis, I will use different terminology for each demographic, as described later.

to ask. But my purpose in asking it is not to argue that some people experience more "difficult" forms of violence over others, but instead to push the field of IPDV studies to ask: within unequal states, what does access to domestic violence prevention look like across different identity groups?

This puzzle leads me to the central question of my thesis: **why are violence and crime prevention services unequal in a multicultural, proclaimed democratic state?** Second**, how does an individual's background shape their access to the state and to services for addressing interpersonal domestic violence?** By using Israel as a case-study, I seek to first understand whether Israel is an exception in comparison to the broader theory on multicultural violence prevention. Second, I will hypothesize the conditions under which there is unequal access to IPDV prevention services in Israel – meaning, what access looks like for the police and women's organizations across demographics. Lastly, I will analyze my hypothesis and evaluate how to modify my theory based on my findings.

The existing literature on violence and crime prevention services, particularly in multi-cultural states, can be grouped into three categories. First, there is a variety of research on how domestic violence affects women across diverse groups in Israel. Second, literature on multi-cultural policing methods across the world, with the most prominent case-studies focusing on Australia, Canada, UK, and the US. Third is research on women's organization and police interactions in the realm of domestic violence. The goal of this thesis is to bring these different academic fields together. All three categories lack in addressing the key intersection that I argue is most relevant to Israel: understanding the politics of community-police-victim interaction. They also lack contextualizing domestic violence in a state already plagued by inequality and violence, and thus drawing out the marginalization that exists not only among victims, but

among organizations as well. This thesis is specifically interested in outlining the hierarchy that exists across community-police-victim relations – one takes shape in a conflict-ridden country.

To answer these questions, **I develop a theory that focuses on how a woman's religious and citizenship status shapes her access to IPDV services.** Religious identity and citizenship status are already shaping the rights of individuals, as we see across states. I argue that in the context of IPDV services in Israel, these two identity factors play a key role in shaping (1) how a woman experiences domestic violence (2) in what ways she can access IPDV services. Due to the gap between minority groups and state services, women's organizations act as vital mediators between victims of domestic violence and the police. **However, even across women's organizations that represent different identities in Israel, I see levels of unequal access to the state.** In other words, inequity within IPDV exists not just for the women and men trapped within the cycle of violence, but also among organizations seeking to both provide immediate support for women and to create change on a legislative level. My theory is composed of five hypothesis statements that focus on how victims, the police, and women's organizations interact in IPDV prevention. Each hypothesis statement aims to draw out potential differences and similarities between the primary demographic groups of focus in this study: Orthodox Jews, Palestinians, Secular Jews, and vulnerable immigrant women.

To undergo the research, I conducted three weeks of fieldwork in Israel, interviewing 21 members of women's organizations, professors in the field, and social workers. I coded these interviews, tracing out the primary themes that arose in response to my questions about police-community relations, activism, and the factors that shape domestic violence. I attempted to engage with the Israeli National Police but was not able to interview police officers. I chose to not interview victims of violence since this thesis is more interested in mechanisms of access to

the police and organizations. However, I supplemented the missing perspective of police officers and victims by adding evidence found in the media and research papers, including interviews in podcasts, documentaries, articles, and research papers. I used these interviews and media sources as data points to evaluate five hypothesis statements and determine whether each received low, moderate, or strong support.

First, my findings indicate that Secular Jewish victims have more access and have seen more progress in police relations in comparison to Palestinian victims with Israeli citizenship. Orthodox Jews, as a collective, have seen improved access and relations to the police. While there is some evidence of lack of trust from women to the police due to collective-based, religious community values, their citizenship status has allowed for improved levels of access and trust when compared to Palestinians or immigrants with a vulnerable citizenship status. Immigrant communities, which includes Jewish and non-Jewish women, as well as women with and without permanent legal status, have varied interaction with the police that is provided in more detail in H1 and H2. Overall, I find that the type of mistrust and access to the police is different than that of Palestinians; depending on the identity of the immigrant women, we see either (1) fear of discrimination and/or (2) fear of being forced to leave the country.

Second, in terms of organizational connection to the police, I find that women's organizations representing Secular Jewish or Orthodox Jewish organizations have more established connections to the police while Palestinians have more informal, tenuous connections. Third, all the minority demographics in this study find it easier to turn to women's organizations as a first point of access rather than the police. However, an organization's ability to accommodate diverse demographics shapes the degree of access to its services. In other words, not all organizations can accommodate Palestinian, Orthodox, or vulnerable immigrant

communities – thus, women are more likely to connect with organizations that represent their demographic over others. Women without permanent legal status and orthodox women had the least amount of organizational representation. Lastly, I find evidence that Orthodox Jewish groups engage in far less political advocacy compared to Palestinian organizations. While there is a degree of overlap in terms of the community-based social awareness of domestic violence, the Domestic Violence-specific Organizations in this study were far more political by nature.

The rest of this thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 will present my theory, outlining definitions of key concepts, an overview of my hypothesis, and a review of alternative explanations. Chapter 3, the Case-Selection and Research Methodology chapter, is divided into two parts. Part one provides an in-depth analysis of Israel as a case-study and provides the background on domestic violence in the state. Part two summarizes the research design and methodology, including a review of the IRB process, fieldwork, coding method, and ethical considerations.[7] Chapter 4 evaluates each hypothesis using my interviews and other sources of evidence. I review each hypothesis separately and provide a summary and analysis of my findings. Chapter 5 reviews my theory, summarizes my findings, and addresses implications of my research for Israel and other states. Lastly, I will review the limitations of this thesis and outline recommendations for future research in the field.

[7] Please note that the literature review is incorporated into both Chapter 2 and 3.

Chapter 2: Theory

On January 5th, I travelled to the Central Police Station in Yaffo, Tel Aviv in my second attempt to interview a police officer. Yaffo is Israel's second largest mixed Arab-Jewish city, taken over in 1948 and officially annexed to Tel-Aviv in 1950. The previous Arab "metropolis" was eventually transformed from an Arab city to a "mixed" city with a Palestinian minority of 30 percent.[8] Today, it is a prime location for tourists, with the old city style architecture and renovated stores as a unique attraction point. I walked up the stairs and approached the officer at the front desk of the Central Police Station, who after hearing the words "domestic violence" and "women," walked me out, without even letting me past security. We stood a few feet from the entrance of the station – as if he were trying to lead me away. "What do you want to know? There are issues, we put a restraining order." I asked him about shelters and organizations. "What organizations?" he asked, already impatient. I forged ahead and asked him if he knew about WIZO or Na'amat - two of the biggest Israeli Domestic Violence organizations and shelters. He did not, and the conversation eventually ended. I was left to wonder if community-police relations even existed in the state.

While it was intimidating to walk up to a police station and ask an officer about one of the most sensitive topics law enforcements must manage, I knew I was safe. As an Israeli-passing woman, I could walk up to the station with only a few curious glances. As I walked away, I thought to myself, what is it like for a woman who has been experiencing violence at home to approach an officer? What is it like for the 25,747 women in 2020 who submitted

[8] Monterescu, Daniel. "Spatial Relationality: Theorizing Space and Sociality in Jewish-Arab "Mixed Towns." In *Jaffa Shared and Shattered: Contrived Coexistence in Israel/Palestine*, 29–67. Indiania University Press, 2015.

complaints to the police, and had their case unresolved?[9] What is it like for a Palestinian woman, a woman without permanent legal status, or a religious woman closed off from her community? Over the course of my four weeks in Israel, I grappled with these questions, trying to understand what inter-partner violence meant in a state already plagued by ethnic and religious violence, security issues, and discrimination.

To answer these questions, I posit that there is unequal access to violence and prevention services in a multicultural, proclaimed democratic state because of how group membership, particular membership in a religious group, shapes women's ability to access the police or women's organizations. Further, citizenship status determines a woman's ability to access state services and defines her legal, economic, and social rights, and thus can impede equal access to IPDV services. Thus, **in the context of Israel**, group membership, which hinges on the **citizenship status of citizens, coupled with religious identity, determines access to systems of managing IPDV**. I argue that due to the gap between minority groups and state services, women's organizations act as vital mediators between victims of domestic violence and the police. **However, even across organizations that represent different identities in Israel, we see levels of unequal access to the state.** In other words, inequity within IPDV exists not just for the women and men trapped within the cycle of violence, but also among organizations seeking to both provide immediate support for women and to create legislative change.

This chapter will continue as follows. First, I will expand on my theory by reviewing key defining concepts. To define key concepts, I will review the competing theories and definitions

[9] Kapitel, Geri. "ריכוז נתונים על אלימות במשפחה בדגש על אלימות כלפי נשים // Data on Domestic Violence with an Emphasis on Violence Against Women." *Knesset Research and Information Center*, November 21, 2021. https://fs.knesset.gov.il/globaldocs/MMM/309de8d4-68ef-eb11-8114-00155d0aee38/2_309de8d4-68ef-eb11-8114-00155d0aee38_11_18271.pdf.

in the field, specifically regarding why there is unequal access to the state in preventing violence. Second, I will introduce and explain five hypothesis statements. Third, I will summarize the alternative explanations for why unequal access to IPDV services exists in multicultural states.

Defining Concepts:

To develop my theory, it is important to define several key concepts: multiculturalism, citizenship status, religiosity, access, and women's organizations. Multiculturalism has long been debated in the literature and is particularly important to understand IPDV state service access in Israel. Citizenship status and religiosity are the primary identity categories of focus in my theory and have also been defined differently across political science. I define both specifically to the fit the context of IPDV services in Israel. Access is defined in Table 1, where I outline how I will determine the level of "access" between victims, the police, and organizations.

First, **multiculturalism** has been debated and studied by scholars for decades. For this thesis, I will look at multiculturalism in the context of feminism, criminology, and democracy studies. The starting point for my discussion about multiculturalism is with Susan Okin, who defined multiculturalism as the "radical idea that people in other cultures, foreign and domestic, are human beings too - moral equals, entitled to equal respect and concern."[10] Multiculturalism, from her perspective, clashed with egalitarian and feminist convictions, because "...some cultures do not accept, even as theory, the principle that people are owed equal respect and concern."[11] Shachar agrees with Okin's argument, and coins this as the "paradox of multicultural vulnerability." This means that multiculturalism can lead to state policies that leave some group members within the minority groups even more vulnerable to in-group hierarchies and/or

[10] Okin, Susan. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* Princeton University Press, 1999, 4.
[11] Ibid., 4.

discrimination.[12] Erez, Adelman, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian rephrase this dilemma as the clash of the "politics of recognition," which focuses on recognition of the cultural, ethnic, or values of a group, with the "politics of rights," which promotes individual rights.[13] Taylor builds on the importance of the politics of recognition and outlines how culture can become a fundamental way in which people view who they are.[14] Thus, due to this long-debated "clash," in whatever form one defines it, Okin suggests that the only solution is to either have state-enforced equality or have women leave their minority group.[15]

However, as Kymlicka argues, why should women be required to leave their cultural group to enjoy freedom? Instead, "women have a right to their culture, as well as a right to equality, and the challenge is to secure both rights."[16] This is known as multicultural feminism. Multicultural feminists suggest that to overcome Shachar's "paradox of multicultural vulnerability," there needs to be an attempt to create change within the minority group. This is in addition to state-level reforms, such as gender quotas. Kymlicka argues that these two fields must be joined together – meaning, combining the fight for women in "male-defined state norms in mainstream society" with the fight for women within their minority communities.

Democracies are expected to accommodate diverse groups, and often to create responses to minority groups at a disadvantage, but of course, "the degree to which majority social

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[12] Shachar, Ayelet. "On Citizenship and Multicultural Vulnerability." *Sage Publications Social Science Collection* 28, no. 1 (February 2000), 65.
[13] Adelman, Madelaine, Edna Erez, and Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian. "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: 'Community' and the Politics of Exclusion." *Police & Society*, no. No.7 (December 2001): 103–31. 107.
[14] Taylor, Charles. "The Politics of Recognition." In *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, 25–73. Princeton University Press, 1994.
[15] Okin, Susan. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* Princeton University Press, 1999, 4.
[16] Kymlicka, Will, and Ruth Rubio-Marin. "The Participatory Turn in Gender Equality and Its Relevance for Multicultural Feminism." In *Gender Parity and Multicultural Feminism: Towards a New Synthesis*, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198829621.001.0001, 6.

institutions, including the police, succeed in this task" is open to debate.[17] The literature has identified two primary issues with the policing of minority communities with non-majority cultures; either "under-policing" or "over-policing."[18] As Ben-Porat states, an encounter between a police officer and a minority is really an encounter between "representatives of state power" - each with their own prejudices – and a member of a group with their own "personal and collective histories."[19] Erez, Adelman, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian explain that to "transform" multicultural states to societies where law enforcement recognizes the diversity of cultures, culture must be understood "in all its political complexity and history of fixation and change."[20] In other words, the "culture" of a group must be analyzed through a political and historical lens - a nuanced perspective that can create a system of policing that does not fall into the trap of stereotyping or using cultures as an "excuse."

Creating "cohesive" multicultural states has become a focus for western democracies to "strengthen a sense of common citizenship."[21]As Kymlicka explains, multi-national states are states that accommodate other sub-groups through "sub-state nationalist movements territorial devolution, convocational power-sharing, and/or official language status," and are faced not only with the challenge of immigrant "social cohesion" but historic national minorities – including

[17] Adelman, Erez, Shalhoub-Kebork, "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: "Community" and the Politics of Exclusion," 108.
[18] Ben-Porat, Guy. "Policing Multicultural States: Lessons from the Canadian Model." *Policing and Society* 18, no. 4 (2008): 411–25.
[19] https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/policing-citizens/4E8C7DB779934087DF4562DC132EC489 (2)
[20] Adelman, Erez, Shalhoub-Kebork, "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: "Community" and the Politics of Exclusion," 108.
[21] Kymlicka, Will, and Ruth Rubio-Marin. "The Participatory Turn in Gender Equality and Its Relevance for Multicultural Feminism." In *Gender Parity and Multicultural Feminism: Towards a New Synthesis*, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198829621.001.0001, 282.

Spain, Belgium, Canada, or the UK.[22] How does this theory apply to Israel? Since the 1990s, Israeli scholars have theorized of Israel as a multicultural model, and because of the Arab citizens, is considered by Kimmerling as a "de facto bi-national state."[23] Other scholars have agreed with this analysis.[24] Israel has been presented as a country in which the state has to respond to the demands of a multicultural society, consisting of groups with diverse cultural practices. However, unlike other western democracies, Israel's government is defined by religion, with divorce being regulated by orthodox regimes.[25] Therefore, it is an important case to study to see how religious states provide equal services to a pluralistic society.

Building on the theories provided by Kymlicka, Erez, Adelman, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian, this thesis prioritizes the multi-cultural feminist perspective to understand domestic violence. Multiculturalism feminism allows space to analyze the intersecting identity factors of race, "ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability status, religion, class, socioeconomic status, education, background, and experiences."[26] As Wallace argues, these characteristics can derive from a personal, individual level, and can be derived from the social context of the individual – be it his/her family, organizational affiliation, and society. Cultural characteristics, in the context of Israel, must also be understood in the political and historical context that can shape the behavior of family members both on an individual and collective level.

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[22] Ibid., 282.
[23] Mautner, Menachem. "Israel as a Multicultural Society." In *Law and Culture of Israel*, 2011. https://academic.oup.com/book/5053/chapter/147600335, 182.
[24] Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Nissim Leom (2006); Menachem Mautner (2011); Shlomo Ben-Ami (2002);
[25] Adelman, Madelaine. "No Way Out: Divorce-Related Domestic Violence in Israel." *Sage Publications* 6, no. 11 (November 2000). https://doi.org/10.1177/10778010022183613.
[26] Wallace, Barbara. "A Multicultural Approach to Violence: Toward a Psychology of Oppression, Liberation, and Identity Development." In *Understanding and Dealing with Violence: A Multicultural Approach*. Safe Publications, 2003. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231723. 4.

In this thesis, I argue that access to state IPDV services is primarily defined by two features that shape the multicultural society of Israel: religiosity and citizenship status. **First**, I will review the competing definitions of **citizenship**. As Shachar analyzes, under the "modern state," citizenship meant a certain "equality with regard to the rights and duties of membership in the community."[27] The state administers citizenship, and it in short guarantees "nothing less than the right to have rights."[28] A stricter definition might define citizenship as the right of an individual to live in a state without deportation or refusal of entry. In more democratic states, citizenship status can also be equated with having the right to vote, right to welfare, education, and health care.[29] Scholars have typically defined citizenship in two ways: either the "liberal citizenship" or the "republican citizenship" model. The former emphasizes "formal legal status," while the latter looks at "active participation in deliberation and decision-making toward a common good."[30] Behl focuses on "situated citizenship," which looks beyond such formal equality standards and demands to understand how "mediating forces," such as norms or informal rules can "impact citizens' capacity to enact their citizenship rights and to take democratic action."[31] She argues against the "gender blindness" in traditional approaches to democracy and citizenship. The multicultural model of citizenship, in turn, views citizens as

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[27] Shachar, Ayelet. "On Citizenship and Multicultural Vulnerability." *Sage Publications Social Science Collection* 28, no. 1 (February 2000): 64–89. 66.
[28] Ibed., 66.
[29] The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford. "Citizenship: What Is It and Why Does It Matter?," March 28, 2011. https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/primers/citizenship-what-is-it-and-why-does-it-matter/#:~:text=In%20its%20strictest%20sense%2C%20citizenship,%2C%20obtained%20through%20'naturalisation.
[30] Behl, Natasha. "Situated Citizenship: An Intersectional and Embodied Approach to Citizenship." In *Gendered Citizenship: Understanding Gendered Violence in Democratic India*, 2019. https://doi-org.proxy.library.cornell.edu/10.1093/oso/9780190949426.003.0002,17.
[31] Ibed., 17.

having equal rights as individuals while also deserving "differentiated rights as members of identity groups."[32]

For the purposes of this thesis, the context of Israel demands a combination of Behl's "situated citizenship" model with Shachar's "multicultural citizenship" model. In other words, citizenship in the context of this thesis refers to the formal citizenship status declared by the state coupled with the reality of the citizens day to day lives. In other words, I look at the power dynamics that can create inclusive and exclusive citizenship and how citizenship is affected by of gender, religion, and identity. Within the context of domestic violence services, legal status will be relevant when evaluating (1) the rights a woman has to access the police (2) the rights of a woman in family law courts (3) their living "reality" in terms of access to other economic, social, and political rights, and how that might be tied to domestic violence. In this thesis, I primarily focus on the distinction between Jewish Israeli citizens, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and vulnerable immigrant communities.[33] The latter includes recent immigrants to Israel from countries like Ethiopia and Russia as well as women without permanent legal status. Note that women without permanent legal status can include Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank temporarily living in Israel; however, I do not look at Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Second, religiosity as Holdcroft points out, can be difficult to define due to the "imprecise" nature of the colloquial English language, where religiosity can be synonymous with "religiousness, orthodoxy, faith, belief, piousness, devotion, and holiness."[34] Glock and Stark

[32] Shachar, Ayelet. "On Citizenship and Multicultural Vulnerability," 66.
[33] Notes that for the rest of this thesis, I do not use the term "Arab-Israeli" to describe Palestinians living in Israel. Rather, I use the term "Palestinians" as was used by my interviewees and has increasingly been used by Arab-Israelis living in Israel.
[34] Holdcroft, Barbara. "What Is Religiosity?" *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 10, no. 1 (September 2006): 89–103.

defined four dimensions of religiosity: experiential, ritualistic, ideological, and intellectual.[35] Experiential focuses on personal faith; ritualistic on community-based worship; ideological relates to beliefs that arise from the religion; intellectual refers to knowledge about the faith. Fukuyama points to four dimensions cognitive, cultic, creedal, and devotional, which, in order, refer to: religious knowledge, religious/ritualistic practices, person's religious feelings and experiences.[36] Other studies look at a "multidimensional" form of religiosity, which combines topics of the subjective, cognitive, behavioral, social, and culture. This can include private devotion, public or communal practices, and concepts such as "personal sense of the divine" or "existential certainty."[37]

Multidimensional research on religion draws a connection between social identity and religiosity. For example, cultural psychologist Arnett-Jensen defines religiosity as the "affirmative relationship with one or more religions, where a religion typically entails a set of doctrinal beliefs and behaviors that are shared by a community."[38] From a social-identity perspective, religious identity can offer a "distinctive sacred worldview and eternal group membership," with religiosity being marked by the "cognitive and emotional value that religious group membership provides."[39] In the context of religiosity and the state, scholars have long

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[35] Carlos Lemos, Ross Gore, Ivan Puga-Gonzalez, and LeRon Shults. "Dimensionality and Factorial Invariance of Religiosity among Christians and the Religiously Unaffiliated: A Cross-Cultural Analysis Based on the International Social Survey Programme," 2019.
[36] Mueller, GH. "The Dimensions of Religiosity." *Oxford University Press* 41, no. 1 (n.d.): 1–24.
[37] Holdcroft, Barbara. "What Is Religiosity?" *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 10, no. 1 (September 2006): 89–103. 89-91.
[38] Jensen, Lene. "The Cultural Psychology of Religiosity, Spirituality, and Secularism in Adolescence." *Adolescent Research Review*, January 23, 2021, 277–88.
[39] Ysseldyk, Renate, Kimberly Matheson, and Hymie Anisman. "Religiosity as Identity: Toward an Understanding of Religion From a Social Identity Perspective." *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, 2010. https://journals-sagepub-com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/doi/epdf/10.1177/1088868309349693. 1.

debated whether religiosity is incompatible with democracy. Ben-Nun Bloom and Arikan show how on a personal level, religiosity can increase ambivalence towards democratic principles, but at a group level, religion can serve as a "social institution" that can increase support for a democratic regime.[40] In other words, while religiosity can create intolerant attitudes, it can also encourage social-religious networks or communities to become politically active.

Religion also has its own relationship with policing. Miles-Johnson found that in Australia, while policing is "meant to be free from the influence of religious ideals," officers with high levels of religiosity are likely to even to follow their religion's teachings at work, particularly when it comes to judging minority groups.[41] He further found that while western societies are becoming increasingly secular, police organizations in the West are still guided by "Christian morals and values." Christian or Catholic ideals, in the context of Australia, shapes what is considered "normative behavior." Research has shown that a person's religiosity can shape their interactions with others and their expectations of what is the "normal," and, in the context of officers, can create partial or discriminatory policing.[42]

This thesis takes on a multi-dimensional definition of religiosity, specifically looking at the psychological and political effect of religiosity. The former relates to the extent to which a person practices their religion, implements it in their value and family systems, and the extent to which it becomes a social identity factor. In the realm of domestic violence, these three key elements of religiosity can shape how a partner views their family and marriage. Religiosity in

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[40] Bloom, Ben-Nun, and G. Arikan. "Two-Edged Sword: The Differential Effect of Religious Belief and Religious Social Context on Attitudes towards Democracy." *Political Behavior*, April 11, 2011, 249–76.
[41] Miles-Johnson, Toby. "Religious Policing: How Religion and Level of Religiosity Shape Officer's Interaction with Minority Groups." *SN Social Sciences*, 2022. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-022-00374-z, 1.
[42] 73-74

the realm of politics, however, is more related to the extent to which religion can promote or inhibit political action, as well as the extent to which religion can be used as a tool of inclusion or exclusion by the state. We will delve into the specifics of the Israel case of religiosity in the case-study chapter.

In this thesis, I analyze **access in relation to three dynamics:** DV victim access to the police, DV victim access to women's organizations, and women's organizations access to the police. Table 1 outlines how access to the police in the context of this thesis will be measured. Column 1 shows three primary stages of a victim's interaction with the state; first, the initial complaint stage, when a woman first submits a complaint to the police; second, the phase when multiple complaints have been in place, and the police and/or civil society organizations know about the existence of violence; and, third, the phase when a woman has been separated from her partner – either through the process of an extended restraining order, a shelter placement, or a divorce process. The latter includes divorce-related domestic violence.[43] In each of these stages, I will analyze what a victim-police, organizational-police, and victim-organization interaction might look like based on the guiding questions below.

I will first focus on Column 2 to define access to the police. Measuring access to the police in the context of violence against women will differ based on the country of analysis. Decker et al performed a case-study on Baltimore and offered an "intersectional" framework of factors that shape access to the police, which "recognizes that the social identity domains to which a person belongs can interact to create and reinforce oppressions."[44] To understand how

[43] Adelman, Madelaine. "No Way Out: Divorce-Related Domestic Violence in Israel." *Sage Publications* 6, no. 11 (November 2000). https://doi.org/10.1177/10778010022183613.
[44] Decker, Michele. "'You Do Not Think of Me as a Human Being': Race and Gender Inequities Intersect to Discourage Police Reporting of Violence against Women." *Journal of Urban Health*, 2019, 772–83. 773.

gender and race shape violence against women, the authors divided categories into historic, structural, community, and interpersonal categories that shape access to the police.

I define **access to the police** in terms of the extent to which victims within the family (1) feel comfortable approaching the police (2) have their complaint addressed and investigated. As shown in the victim-police interaction column of Table 1, victim-police interaction might differ from Stage one through three. The nature of police-victim interactions is shaped by how the police respond when a woman first submits a complaint; the attention and reaction received after multiple complaints have been made; and finally, the protection or services received after she partner separation. Thus, the way in which law enforcement responds to a woman in each of these phases will determine the level of "access" she has.

Timeline of Abuse	**Victim-Police Interaction**	**Victim-Organization Interaction**	**Organization-Police Interaction**
Stage 1: First complaint	What is the process by which Israeli Police respond to first complaint? What is the rate of complaints solved and closed? What does interaction with the victim look like?	How and in what ways does an organization provide support for a woman who first reaches out? What do organizations offer in contrast to law enforcement?	To what extent is there interaction at this stage and/or overlap in responsibilities?
Stage 2: Multiple complaints, history of abuse in family established	What is the process when there is a documented history of abuse in the family? What does interaction with the victim look like?	How does an organization provide support for a victim in this stage? Does the organization refer to the police or other state services at this point? What organizations is a victim likely to turn to?	To what extent is there interaction at this stage and/or overlap in responsibilities?
Stage 3: Family separation (via women in shelter, restraining order, divorce processes have begun, etc.)	What is the process of protection, services, and/or communication when a woman is still at risk after separation?	What services does an organization provide to a victim seeking to separate from her partner?	To what extent is there interaction at this stage and/or overlap in responsibilities?

*Includes divorce-related domestic violence	What does interaction with the victim look like?	What does interaction with the victim look like?	

Table 1: Victim Access to the Police and Civil Society Organizations

Lastly, I will focus on **Women's Organizations** and further elaborate on victim-organization and police-organization interaction as defined in Table 1. The literature shows that organizations are key actors in enforcing human rights through providing direct services, advocacy, and political action.[45] They often also take on the role of protecting democracy, or even as "watchdogs" in cases of right-wing extremism.[46] At the same time that civil society organization can be beneficial to democracy, in some cases, they can be harmful; Lundberg offers an interesting graph that lays out the responses civil society might have to right-wing extremism or undemocratic practices - to accept, ban, protest, or engage in dialogue.[47]

Silliman analyzes the cases of women's non-government organizations; while not all the organizations in this thesis are NGOs, the lens in which she describes the groups is relevant. Nonprofit associations may reflect the "state's failure in social development," and may even be viewed as "the" answer to the difficulties the government is facing.[48] Yet as Silliman shows, often NGOs – with women's NGOs being no exception – may be "co-opted through the process of institutionalization," thus creating tensions between "professionalized and bureaucratized NGOs and feminist and grassroots movements."[49]

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[45] Matteo, Claudia, and Roberto Scaramuzzino. "Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against Women with Precarious Legal Status and Their Access to Social Protection in Advanced Welfare Societies: An Analytical Contribution to Reconstruct the Research Field and Its Institutional Development," October 3, 2022.
[46] Lundberg, Erik. "Different Types, Different Reactions? How Civil Society Organizations Respond to Right-Wing Extremism." *Voluntas*, August 8, 2022. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-022-00517-z.
[47] Ibed., 3.
[48] Silliman, Jael. "Expanding Civil Society: Shrinking Political Spaces - The Case of Women's Nongovernment Organizations." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gneder, State and Socity* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 25–53. 24.
[49] Ibed., 25.

Organizing in the context of women's movement in the Middle East, as explained by Al-Alli, are shaped by multiple factors, including links to nationalist movements, modernization and development efforts, and the tensions between secular and religious tendencies.[50] Political activism can include charity, welfare, research, advocacy, consciousness-raising, lobbying, research, and development.[51] Yet as Al-Alli points out, often such a multitude of roles and activism efforts within an already male-dominated and undemocratic political system can create strains in assisting women who face domestic violence.[52] Al-Alli provides the example of Turkey, where founders of the women's shelters had to "be on guard against co-option and annexation of their project by local authorities." Organizations that run shelters and are politically active are trying to simultaneously engage in activism while trying to create "more democratic notions of citizenship."[53]

Thus, **women's organizations** in this thesis must either provide direct services to women or advocate for their rights through political activism. Political advocacy of organizations focuses on broad advocacy regarding women's rights and domestic violence-specific advocacy. The latter can include apolitical form of advocacy that focuses on societal cultural changes and social awareness. This is defined in Columns 3 and 4 of Table 2.

Access to women's organizations is defined in terms of the ability of a victim to take full advantage of the direct services offered to victims, such as shelters, hotlines, online chats, halfway houses, and legal aid. Their ability take advantage of such services might further depend

[50] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1461674032000080576
[51] Al-Ali, Nadje. "Gender and Civil Society in the Middle East." *Nternational Feminist Journal of Politics* 5, no. 2 (n.d.): 216–32. 220.
[52] Ibed., 227.
[53] Pusch, Barbara. "Yeşim Arat. 1999. Political Islam in Turkey and Women's Organizations." *Cambridge University Press*, July 21, 2015, 4.

on the extent to which the organization is oriented towards serving a particular demographic. Further, the political advocacy and domestic violence advocacy of an organization might shape the impression of an organization, and thus might influence whether a victim feels comfortable approaching their services. **Access to the police** by women's organizations is evaluated on a case-by-case basis by analyzing the points of collaboration or entry-points in which members within an organization might interact with the police when a women's domestic violence case arises. This can include direct interaction involving a women's case or broader prevention collaboration, such as training with the police.

Demographic Focus of each organization	Direct Services:	Political Advocacy:	Domestic Violence Advocacy:
• All demographic • Orthodox-Jewish women • Palestinians • Women without Permanent Legal Status	• Residential Shelters • Hotline • Online chats • Legal aid • Community support groups • Halfway Housing provided after leave from Shelter • Children's center	• Lobbying • Research • Activism in the Knesset • Protesting • Media efforts • Grassroots-level organizing • International-level advocacy	• Education efforts in schools, community centers, for religious leaders, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, places of employment

Table 2: Defining Civil Society Organizations

Hypotheses

There are multiple factors that can shape police-community interactions in domestic violence, including race, ethnicity, gender, and economic status. However, I argue that the intersection of religious and citizenship status is particularly important in the context of Israel because of the increasing role religion plays in politics and in the definition of the state. In other words, religion is not just about cultural and family values that shape a woman's private life but

is relevant in terms of her political status – even for secular and reform Jews. This has become increasingly important with the 2018 Basic Nation State Law, which declares Judaism as the national religion of Israel, in addition to the increasing role of Orthodox, radical Jewish politicians, which gives way to a stricter form of "accepted" religiosity in Israel.

Before I started fieldwork, I theorized that religion and citizenship status can be evaluated in a two-by-two table, as shown in Table 3. In this section, I will first define what I meant by high and low religiosity, exclusive and inclusive citizenship, and how that relates to low or high access to the police and the state. I will then introduce each hypothesis statement.

	Inclusive Citizenship Status	Exclusive Citizenship Status
High Religiosity	**Low access to police; high access to the state** *Examples: Orthodox Jews* *Organization: Batmelech*	**Low access to police; low access to state** *Examples: Palestinian Muslims and Christians; Palestinians without permanent legal status in Israel.* *Organization: Na'am, Assiwar, Kayan Center, WAVO*
Low Religiosity	**High access to police; high access to state** *Examples: Secular Jews, Haloni Jews, Mazorti Jews*[54] *Organization: Wizo, Na'amat, No 2 Violence*	**Low access to police; moderate access to state** *Examples: Secular/Haloni Jewish Immigrants from Former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Ethiopia, etc.* --- **Low access to police; moderate access to state** *Example: Non-Jewish women without permanent legal status* *Organization: Itach Maaki, Assiwar*

Table 3: Religiosity and Legal Status

"Religion" in this thesis, as I explained in the definitions section, looks at the psychological and political effect of religiosity. In other words, the religiosity of an individual is defined on an individual and community-level. Individual-based religiosity includes the extent to

[54] Include definition of this

which a person practices their religion, feels it is important to their identity, and uses it as part of their family value system. This can then shape the community-based values of the individual, including collective-based family dynamics, gender roles, family expectations, and even the form of violence. In other words, it is not the religion itself that leads to more violence or inhibits a victim from approaching the police, but rather the way it shapes the values of an individual and their community constraints. This can then shape the relationship a woman might have to the state - in terms of her trust of the police, of non-profit organizations, her engagement outside the household, and/or her own beliefs about her rights. In the chapters that follow, I will draw out the religious dynamics that arise among Orthodox Jews in Israel, Palestinian Muslims and Christians, Secular Jews, and immigrants with various religious identities.[55] This level of religiosity, in the context of Israel, must further be understood in the broader context of the religious values that the state projects in its governance as a state "for the Jewish people." In Table 3, I draw a harsh divide between high and low religiosity to contrast the most conservative religious communities from secular communities.

Citizenship status refers to formal citizenship status and the daily reality of those citizenship rights. In the "Defining Key Concepts" section, I refer to this as a combination of Bahl's "situated citizenship" model with Shachar's "multicultural citizenship" model. In other words, even in cases of "formal" citizenship, a citizen might still be excluded. As seen in Table 3, "Inclusive" means that by Israeli law, a woman is considered an equal citizen and she has land, employment, and voting rights. "Excluded" citizens have blatantly different access to rights and services officially offered by the state – meaning that even if they are considered "equal,"

[55] As a reminder, I use "Palestinian" to refer to Arabs with Israeli citizenship and to Palestinians without citizenship temporarily living in Israel. This thesis does not examine victims of IPDV in Gaza or the West Bank.

they do not have access nor the ability to reach that "equal" status. For example, Arab citizens in Israel officially have equal rights to Jewish Israelis. However, they do not have to serve in the Israeli Defense Force; although some do, those who do not, face economic inequality since they do not qualify for veteran advantages. Access to education, jobs, and services is often lower for Arab-Israelis when compared to Jewish Israelis in mixed cities or across cities. This is also true for many recent immigrants to Israel who do not have formal citizenship. Thus, citizenship status shapes the extent to which non-citizens or citizens with "unequal" rights trust the police and have access to other state resources. Mistrust can arise from how the police treat the community overall, which is further exacerbated by fears of approaching a system that mistreats you. In the case of women without permanent legal status, they may avoid any encounter with the police until it becomes unavoidable.

Thus, as you can see in Table 3, I hypothesize that Secular Jews, because of their inclusive citizenship status and low religiosity, have high level of access to the police and the state. This is due to their ability to "fit in" with a Western-Style policing system that is familiar with their culture and behavior. I hypothesized that they are best represented by the large "mainstream" women's organizations in Isarel. Orthodox Jews are placed in the inclusive citizenship status and high religiosity, which provides lower levels of access to the police but high access to the state in terms of politics and other citizenship rights. Palestinian Muslims and Christians as well as Palestinians without permanent legal status in Israel – specifically those who are more religious – have lower access to the state and the police due to the combination of exclusive citizenship and religiosity. Finally, Jewish immigrants are placed in the lower access to the police and moderate access to the state category, while women without permanent legal status of low religiosity are low access to the state. This hypothesis is simplified to only include

intersecting identities in the hope of understanding how religious and citizenship shape access. My hypothesis statements are built on this table and explore the deeper nuances in the state. To explore how these two factors shape victim-police interactions, I propose the following two hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Secular Jewish victims have more access to the police compared to Palestinian, Orthodox Jewish, and vulnerable immigrant groups.
>
> **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Jewish Orthodox victims are more likely to have access to the state with respect to violence against women compared to Palestinians and vulnerable immigrant groups.

Hypothesis 1 predicts that based on citizenship and religious status, secular Jewish citizens have easiest access to approach the police due to the structure of the Israeli Police Force as a Western-style police force, and further their family dynamics decrease the constraints and family demands of approaching non-family members for support. Jewish Orthodox communities are constrained by collective-based community values while Palestinians are constrained by their both their values and citizenship status. The latter was based on the consistent reporting on violent encounters between the police and the Orthodox Jewish and Palestinian communities. Organizations such as B'Tselem track Palestinian fatalities in Israel from 2000-2022.[56] This is in addition to clashes with protestors, with the most recent ones occurring early April 2023 in the cities of Haifa, Reineh, and Kafr Menda. Orthodox Jewish protest clashes with the police flared up during COVID-19 lockdowns. The same can be seen with the Ethiopian community. Thus, I hypothesized that such strenuous relationships between the police and the wider community influenced the perspective of victims of domestic violence. Whether the wider community relationship with the police overlaps with individual-based trust will be unpacked in Chapter 5.

[56] B'Tselem, "Palestinians killed by Israeli forces," https://statistics.btselem.org/en/all-fatalities/by-date-of-incident/pal-by-israel-sec/israel?section=overall&tab=overview.

Hypothesis 2 aims to draw out the differences that exist between Jewish Orthodox Victims, Palestinians, and vulnerable immigrant groups. In other words, I aim to see the effect citizenship status has on access to the police within collective-based, more closed off communities. Despite Orthodox Jewish collective based community, their citizenship status allows access to political rights.[57] The question of this hypothesis is to see the way in which citizenship might affect Orthodox women who are experiencing domestic violence at home, and whether it creates a drastically different experience from Palestinians and immigrant women with less political privileges.

To answer the second part of my thesis, I argue that women's organizations are formed to address the specific needs of different demographics in Israel, "filling in" gaps of access. Given that communities have different relationships to the state, and thus varying levels of access, women's organizations can be intimately more involved with their local community and thus know the needs of women who face domestic violence. Thus, I hypothesize that women's organizations act as vital intermediaries when there is limited access to the state, leading to the following three hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Organizations representing Jewish Orthodox, Palestinian, and vulnerable immigrants have less access to the police compared to organizations that represent more secular Israeli women.
>
> **Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Jewish Orthodox Groups, Palestinian, and vulnerable immigrants are more likely to turn to women's organizations as their first source of access as opposed to the police.
>
> **Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Palestinian women's groups are more likely to engage in political activism compared to Orthodox-Jewish women's groups.

[57] Kershner, Isabel. "In Power With Netanyahu, Ultra-Orthodox Parties Chart Israel's Future." *The New York Times*, January 9, 2023. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/09/world/middleeast/israel-ultra-orthodox-parties.html.

H3 introduces the idea that just like victim-police relations differ based on demographic of focus, so do organizations that often represent a specific demographic. The reasoning behind this is like that provided for H1; when organizations represent a particular community, and when that community already has strenuous relationships with the police, the representative organization will also have limited access to the police. This might be due to historically difficult encounters with the police, political differences, and/or bureaucratic systems that allow for collaboration. The potential bureaucracy that exists among organizations was discussed by Adeleman, Erez and Shalhoub-Kevorkian, who found that Israeli police officers saw the efforts of Arab women organizations as "too radical" or not "suitable." Even officers who acknowledged the importance of organization thought that the activists themselves were "nor representing their own community."[58] This belief may or may not create negative perceptions of some organizations over others and may increase or decrease opportunities for collaboration. H3 aims to unpack the mechanisms that might privilege some organizations over others and trace the exact points of collaboration between the police and women's organizations in Israel.

This leads me to H4; because of the difficulty in approaching IPDV services, victims from Palestinian, Orthodox, and immigrant communities are more likely to trust women's organizations as opposed to the police. However, once they do begin to interact with these organizations, it may allow for easier access to the police and/or the state if a case demands such access. This can include submitting an official complaint to the police, going through a long divorce process, or receiving state subsidies. Substantial research has shown the effect of women's organizations in supporting greater support for local communities, as seen by research

[58] Adelman, Madelaine, Edna Erez, and Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian. "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: 'Community' and the Politics of Exclusion." *Police & Society*, no. No.7 (December 2001): 103–31. 122.

conducted in Bangladesh, India, and Nigeria in the face of gender-based violence.[59] The 2022 US Strategy to prevent gender-based strategy even centralized and builds on the work of organizations by directly providing financial and political support.[60] Meaning, that globally, there is a recognition of the importance of advocates within the realm of violence prevention. As such, H4 suggests that the same can be seen in Israel, particularly for minority communities.

Lastly, H5 argues that due to the citizenship status of Palestinians, the groups who advocate for them are more likely to engage in political activism than Orthodox Jewish groups. I hypothesize this is the case because Palestinian organization-based activism in Israel is often more pronounced in an attempt to fill in on missing gaps in the community. H5 also relates to the fact that the goal of feminist organizations in Israel differ, in part due to the process of NGO-ization.[61] This was seen for both the early women's feminist groups in Israel, such as WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization), and for Palestinian civil societies.[62] The former refers to feminist and shelter organizations become state-funded. The latter refers to the post-Oslo Accords formation of the Palestinian Authority, which meant that international aid was suddenly available in Palestine. However, such aid transformed grassroots organizations into

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[59] Magar, Veronica. "Empowerment Approaches to Gender-Based Violence: Women's Courts in Delhi Slums." *Women's Studies International Forum* 26, no. 6 (December 2003): 509–23.;Amobi Ilika, and Uche Ilika. "Eliminating Gender-Based Violence: Learning from the Widowhood Practices Elimination Initiative of a Women Organization in Ozubulu, Anambra State of Nigeria" 9, no. 2 (August 2005). https://doi.org/10.2307/3583463.; Chowdhury, Elora. *Transnationalism Reversed Women Organizing against Gendered Violence in Bangladesh*. SUNY Series, 2011.

[60] "United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally 2022." U.S. Department of State, n.d. https://www.state.gov/reports/united-states-strategy-to-prevent-and-respond-to-gender-based-violence-globally-2022/.

[61] Nazneen, Sohela, and Maheen Sultan. "Struggling for Survival and Autonomy: Impact of NGO-Ization on Women's Organizations in Bangladesh." *Development*, 2009, 193–99.

[62] Yishai, Yael. "Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Israel." *Jewish Women's Archive: Sharing Stories Inspiring Change*, June 23, 2021. https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/non-governmental-organizations-ngos-in-israel-1948-2000.

"professional NGOs" run by local elites, which also often meant that organizations had to be more "professional" and "depoliticized."[63] This indicates that differences might exist in terms of organizations that have not been as "professionalized" and those that have, ultimately leading to differences in the level of activist engagement. I argue that it is likely that many Palestinian feminist organizations based in Israel rather than the PA territories have more political goals due to the intersectional nature of domestic violence and the lack of access to the police and state.

Alternative Explanations:

The literature on violence and crime prevention services, particularly in multi-cultural states, can be grouped into three categories. First, there is literature on how domestic violence affects women across diverse groups in Israel. Second, literature on multi-cultural policing methods across the world, with the most prominent case-studies focusing on Australia, Canada, UK, and the US. Third, there is literature specific to women's organization and police interactions in the realm of domestic violence – of which are closest to the question of this thesis. The goal of this thesis is to bring these different academic fields together. All three categories lack in addressing the key intersection that I argue is most relevant to Israel: understanding the politics of community-police-victim interaction. In other words, unpacking domestic violence in a state already plagued by inequality and violence, and thus drawing out the marginalization that exists among victims, but among organizations themselves. There is a degree of bureaucracy that exists across community-police-victim relations that takes shape specifically in a conflict-ridden country.

[63] Arda, Lama, and Bobby Banerjee. "Civil Society in Crisis: The NGOization of Palestine." *Business and Society*, February 23, 2022. https://businessandsociety.org/ngoization/.

First, the literature on domestic violence in Israel has focused on the multi-cultural "challenge" in the state. Anat Ben-Porat et al. has compared the Arab and Jewish women experience in shelters, thus identifying ethnicity as a key factor in shaping the experiences of women. Erez, Ibarra, and Gur looked at the "challenges" the police face in responding to DV in Arab communities, which they argue creates a "no-win" situation for the police and leads minority communities to create "informal" means of response. Taratakovsky and Mzhibovsky looked at the experience of Soviet Union immigrants in Israel in comparison to Israeli-Born Arab women. Multiple others have looked at the ultra-orthodox community and how they fit into DV responses in a "western" style of treatment.[64] Other scholars such as Haj-Yahia, Zoabi and Riki Savaya, Alnabilsy and Elias, focused on the strategies of collectivist-based Arab communities.[65] These articles each provide a nuanced, in-depth analysis of the context of each of these communities. However, each of these studies tends to focus on the issues faced by specific communities. The missing gap in these papers is that they focus heavily on the specific attributes of each groups – often, the cultural, collectivist dynamics – that make access to DV services particularly more unique or challenging. While this is still relevant, I argue in this thesis that

[64] Freund, Anat, and Toya Band-Winterstein. "Between Tradition and Modernity: Social Work-Related Change Processes in the Jewish Ultra-Orthodox Society in Israel." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37, no. 4 (2013). https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0147176712001198.; Shechort-Bitton, Mally. "A Glimpse into the World of Battered Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Women in Israel: A Follow-up Study on Women Who Resided in a Shelter." *Health Care Women Int.*, January 2014. 10.1080/07399332.2013.862793.; Kaye, Brea. "Marriage, Div Marriage, Divorce, and Domestic Violence in Isr Ce, and Domestic Violence in Israel's Orthodox Communities," 2018. https://soundideas.pugetsound.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1077&context=writing_awards.; Yogev, Dikla. "Community-Society Equilibrium: Religious Organizations in the Service of a Secular State." *Contemp. Jew*, September 28, 2021, 369–86.

[65] Alnabilsy, Raghda, and Haneen Elias. "Intimate Partner Violence Against Palestinian Women in Israel and the Relevance of the Sociocultural and Sociopolitical Context." *Indiana University Press*, 2019.

often the "collectivist" labels are political in nature and lead to myths about communities. Thus, religious identity must be understood within the context of the political privileges that are granted to some over others in the state of Israel and is directly linked to citizenship status. Thus, access to DV services must be understood not just by looking at X community and labeling it as "closed off," but within the context of a state that creates a hierarchy of access for some religious identities over others, which directly intersects with citizenship rights. This is most closely aligned with Alnabilsy and Elias, who consider socio-political context.

This brings me to the second focus of multi-cultural policing that have existed in some studies that focused in Israel, but most that have existed outside of Israel. For example, Ben-Porat offers the issue of policing in multi-cultural context of Canada and setting up the "under" and "over" policing binary that exists in minority communities. Hong Chui and Regin Ip offer a similar case-study of Queensland, Australia. Others have focused on the US – specifically looking at Hispanic communities and the Midwest. These authors identify that the reason multicultural policing is difficult is due to the gap between ethnic minorities and the police, and the lack of "multicultural" training of the police.[66] While this is relevant to this thesis, when it comes to Domestic Violence, the police and community leaders play only one role – and often, that role can be oppressive towards women. This thesis demands the field of multi-cultural policing to prioritize women's organizations as primary services that need to collaborate with the police, yet still face barriers. Further, Israel is a unique multicultural state in that it is shaped by the intersection of religion, citizenship, and wider national-based conflict. This includes

[66] Casey, John. "International Experiences in Policing Multicultural Societes" 2, no. 3 (February 11, 2000): 165–77.

ethnicity, but it also goes beyond it, which is why many of the multicultural policing frameworks do not apply to DV in Israel.

The third category is research on collaboration between women's organizations and the police. Day and Gill provide an "intersectional framework" to analyze how women's organizations interact with the criminal justice system, and how the "intersections of gender, class, 'race' and immigration status affect the way DV survivors can access and benefit from support…"[67] This, indeed, is the paper that most closely aligns with my research question. However, they focus on London as a case-study. They provide a useful example for how to apply Crenshaw's principle of intersectionality – specifically as seen in her paper on how DV differs across identities. Crenshaw shows that "mainstream feminist and anti-racist organizations rendered DV towards black women effectively invisible."[68] However, just as explained in the second category above, the lack of inclusion of religion as a component, and the unique context of Israel, demands us to again re-apply Crenshaw's intersectional framework. Adelman, Erez, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian provide the best analysis of community-police relations in Israel, arguing that "gendered racism" and "racialized sexism" shape how victims' and police response to DV, and recommend the police use "non-traditional community leaders and organizations" that challenge myths about minority communities.[69] My thesis builds on their argument by revealing what those non-traditional police-organization relations look like, specifically in contrast to more established organizational connections with Jewish organizations.

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[67] Day, Aviah, and Aisha Gill. "Applying Intersectionality to Partnerships between Women's Organizations and the Criminal Justice System in Relation to Domestic Violence." *The British Journal of Criminology* 60, no. 4 (July 2020): 830–50. 830.
[68] Ibed., 832.
[69] Adelman, Madelaine, Erez, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: 'Community' and the Politics of Exclusion," 105-106.

Evidently, my thesis groups together these different field of focus, and offers an alternative explanation unique to the state of Israel by showing the role of religion and citizenship status in directly shaping the bureaucracy of access for both victims and organizations. Further, I reveal the politics of DV service access by investigating advocacy of women's organization, which further affects how they interact with the police.

Chapter 3: Case-Selection and Research Design Chapter

Part 1: Case Selection

I arrived in Lod, Israel on a late Sunday afternoon. It was just a thirty-five-minute train ride from Tel-Aviv. I noticed that not many people got off the train when I did. The train station was clearly just renovated; a short flight of stairs takes you from the platform to a glass passageway that crosses the train rails. As you cross the bridge, there is a small chain café and a few clothing stores. A volunteer at Na'am - the organization I was visiting in Lod – picked me up at the exit. "Welcome to Lod," she said, "the city Israel forgot about." I was immediately struck by the stark difference between the city and the train station. The moment we turned away from the station, I looked up to a series of old apartment buildings; a different world from the Tel Aviv area I came from. I heard Arabic music blasting from cars as we drove, and a few moments later, we stopped as an elderly Orthodox Jewish man crossed the street. Lod is Israel's "mixed" Arab-Jewish city and stands as the perfect symbol for why Israel is the case-study of this thesis.

If you drive deeper into Lod, you would discover two different realities within one city. The town of Kerem Al Tufaah, which is a majority of Arab-Israelis, is rundown and neglected, and "the streets have no names, the houses have no numbers and the roads are unpaved, have no lampposts and are littered with used nappies, soft drink bottles, empty cigarette packs and other rubbish."[70] Just across from it is Ramat Elyashiv, a community that accommodates hundreds of religious and ultranationalist Jewish families. Elyashiv has multi-story buildings with balconies, penthouses, and "sprawling parking lots" as well as "newly paved, well-lit, and clean streets." Part of the reason for this difference is that Kerem Al Tufaah is "officially nonexistent."

[70] Bekker, Vita. "In Israel's Mixed City of Lod, Two Districts so Close yet so Distant." *The National News,* September 8, 2012. https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/mena/in-israel-s-mixed-city-of-lod-two-districts-so-close-yet-so-distant-1.396898.

Although its territory is included in the 1979 plan of Lod, the detailed plan for this neighborhood was never drafted.[71] The neighborhood had only one public space, which was a neglected plot of land that children would play in; but in 2012, the Regional Planning Committee approved the construction of a seven-story municipal police station instead.[72] The drive through Lod to the Na'am office was short. I sat through three hours of free English lessons for young Palestinian girls. One of the girls' mothers was at the center, taking care of her baby. It was hard to imagine that just short of two years ago, the city had descended into civil war. But this is life in Israel. Tensions in mixed cities exist both on a systemic and day-to-day level. Lod, for the purposes of this thesis, provides a good lens for the reader to understand the reality of the conflict in Israel.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part provides essential background and context to the Israel case, answering why I chose to focus on Israel for a thesis on domestic violence. For the background, I will first introduce Israel as a conflict-ridden state, provide a brief overview of current IPDV rates, citizenship rights, and the fight over Israel's "democracy." Lastly, I will outline what policing, specifically of domestic violence (DV), looks like in Israel. The second part provides an overview of research methodology and the ethical considerations of this thesis, including providing insight into the interview selection process, interview protocol, and the primary sources used in analyzing my hypotheses.

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[71] Ibid.

[72] *The Association for Civil Rights in Israel*. "Instead of a Park, Neglected Arab Neighborhood of Lod to Get a Massive Police Station." August 16, 2012. https://law.acri.org.il/en/2012/08/16/lod-police-station-instead-of-park/.

Israel as a Conflict-Ridden State

In May 2021, Israel and Gaza went through eight days of conflict, leaving more than 200 people dead in Israel and the occupied territories.[73] The question is, what led to it? In the case of Israel, military unrest almost always means civilian unrest. On April 13, 2021, the first day of Ramadan and twenty-seven days before the first rocket was fired from Gaza, Israeli police officers entered the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.[74] The police also decided to close off a plaza outside of Damascus Gate, one of the main entrances to the Old City of Jerusalem, which led to massive protests. This coincided with the eviction of six families from Sheikh Jarrah, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem. Thus, as military battles ensued, mob violence erupted in Lod and other mixed cities. Arab youth rioted in the streets of Lod, burning synagogues and cars, while gangs of Jewish vigilantes posed counterattacks with their own fires. Netanyahu declared a state of emergency after a rocket fired from Gaza hit the courtyard of a Palestinian home, leaving a father and 16-year-old girl killed. This was the first time the government used emergency powers over an Arab community since 1966.[75]

Civilian unrest bled into other mixed cities such as Acre and Haifa. The violence was like nothing Israel experienced since the Second Intifada. It even reached Tel Aviv, where Jews beat a driver who was presumed to be Arab, while Bedouin torched Jewish cars in the southern Negev

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[73]Cai, Weiyi, Josh Holder, Lauren Leatherby, Eleanor Lutz, Scott Reinhard, and Karen Yourish. "The Toll of Eight Days of Conflict in Gaza and Israel." *The New Yotk Times*, May 17, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/05/17/world/middleeast/israel-palestine-gaza-conflict-death-toll.html.

[74]Kingsley, Patrick. "After Years of Quiet, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Exploded. Why Now?," May 15, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/15/world/middleeast/israel-palestinian-gaza-war.html.

[75] Sherwood, Harriet. "Israeli City of Lod Descends into 'Civil War' as Violence Escalates." *The Guardian*, May 12, 2021. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/12/father-and-daughter-killed-in-rocket-attack-on-israeli-city-of-lod.

desert.[76] The New York Times documented some of the main unrest seen in Israeli cities.[77] I include this information to make the point that understanding Israel is not just another case of majority-minority discrimination. Lod's gap between Jews and Palestinians described in the introduction of this paragraph is not just about the minority experience in a mixed city. Israel is a conflict-ridden state. Violence is part of the lives of Israelis and Palestinians, with every new eruption leading to what Israelis fear as a "third intifada."[78] From January to March of 2023, more than 60 Palestinians and 14 Israelis have died in incidents in Jerusalem and the West Bank, which coincides with a battle over who will succeed Abbas and protests over the judicial overhaul in Israel.[79]

Our understanding of domestic violence, and of gaps we see between Palestinian and Jewish women, must be understood within this context. Often, as Adelman states, the conflict in Israel is viewed through specific lenses: its "high profile" in international relations, the large aid received from the US, or criticism from the UN. Thus, the violence focused on in Israel is often political and state-based violence rather than domestic violence.[80] These political tensions lead to what Adelman describes as contentious "cultural politics," including disputes over the colors of the flag, the languages meant to be used in court, or the meaning of Independence Day - which

[76] Kershner, Isabel. "In Mixed Israel Cities Proud of Good Relations, a Sudden, Explosive Division." *The New York Times*, May 13, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/asia/israel-lod-arab-jewish.html.
[77] Cai, Holder, Leatherby, et. al., "The Toll of Eight Days of Conflict in Gaza and Israel," (2021).
[78] Harel, Amos. "Violence in the West Bank Is a Nightmare for Netanyahu." *Brookings Institute*, March 6, 2023. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2023/03/06/violence-in-the-west-bank-is-a-nightmare-for-netanyahu/.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Adelman, Madelaine. *Battering States: The Politics of Domestic Violence in Israel*. Vanderbilt University Press, 2017. 27.

Palestinians refer to as the "Nakba" or "catastrophe."[81] It is within this context that we need to understand the tensions between the family and the nation-state. In other words, as Israel faces continuous conflict, and as it is simultaneously facing the struggles of other nation-states in accommodating for a pluralist society, at what points does "national security trump social security"?[82]

Yet at the same time as Israel faces this context, it simultaneously experiences the multi-cultural dilemmas that other countries face. In other words, just because Israel faces this unique political context does not exclude it from democracy's demand for equality before the law. However, political violence also shapes the nature of inequality – particularly the differences across demographics and how the state addresses them. We cannot focus on either national security or social security. I argue that in this thesis, they influence one another.

Domestic Violence in Israel: A Brief History

The history of domestic violence prevention in Israel and the process in which domestic violence was recognized as a social issue provides important insight into the landscape of domestic violence in Israel today. I will first explain the brief history and by the end the chapter connect this to how this relates to bureaucratic issues we see on a civil society level. Adelman and Hofnung trace the history of domestic violence prevention over a few stages. In the Mandate period of British rule of the Israel and Palestinian territories, domestic violence was seen as a "marital trouble" that might be discussed with community leaders or local courts. Fifteen years later, domestic violence is moved into the category of a crime prevention, and cultural myths arose of domestic violence as a "Arab problem." In the mid-1970s, feminist activists organized

[81] Ibid., 27.
[82] Ibid., 34.

against domestic violence and created the first shelter for battered women in Haifa in 1977. [83] This was only three years after shelters were established in the US and Britain (XXX). By 1983, the Ministry of Welfare already funded a shelter in Ashdod, which was viewed as a "pilot" collaboration between the Ministry and the Non-Profit Organization, Wizo. Advocate-based efforts, in other words, became institutionalized. In 1991, the Israeli parliament approved the first piece of legislation to combat violence in the family, which would allow a battered woman to apply for a restraining order. Although an improvement, it still did not properly address the issues faced by victims and also increased workload on social workers in non-profits without increasing budget.[84] By 1995, there were six shelters across the state.

Organizations then are faced with the "bureaucratic integration of new social problems can easily lead to their co-optation."[85] Despite the fact that since 1977, the number of shelters in Israel have almost doubled and state support of violence legislation has expanded, Israel continues to see high rates of IPDV. According to the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry of Israel, during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of interpersonal violence complaints (IPV) between spouses in Israel increased by 250 percent. Domestic violence calls received by the 118 Hotline.[86] Such severe rates of domestic violence are apparent all over the world. Estimates by the World Health Organization indicate that about 1 in 3 women worldwide have faced physical and/or secular IPV or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime.

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[83] Adelman, Madelaine, Erez, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: 'Community' and the Politics of Exclusion," 106.
[84] Adelman, Madelaine. *Battering States: The Politics of Domestic Violence in Israel*, 68.
[85] Ibid., 43.
[86] Avgar, Ido. "Collected Data for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women." *The Knesset: Research and Information Center*, November 22, 2020. https://main.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/ViolenceAgainstWomen--Data.pdf.

In addition to this reality, data sourced from government, police, and media sources shows that groups in Israel are impacted by IPDV (interpersonal domestic violence) differently. A survey conducted in 2020 found that 67% of Israeli-Born Arab women experience violence, followed by 30% of Israeli-Jewish immigrants and 27% of Israeli-born Jewish women (Nihaya, Ruslan, and Illana 2017). Yet, a Knesset report from 2016-2017 using data from the police found that domestic violence complaints were higher among Jewish woman as opposed to non-Jewish groups (Jewish woman compromised 77% of cases as opposed to 23% for non-Jews).[87]

Table 4 introduces comprehensive data from 2016 to 2021. This data is the most comprehensive available in Israel, published by the Knesset Research and Information Center as sourced by the Israeli National Police Force. I provide information on five key data points relevant to this thesis: (1) the number of domestic violence reports received by the police; (2) the number of cases closed by the police; (3) demographic information; (4) homicide cases; and (5) data from the domestic violence hotline.

	2016-2017[88]	**2018-2019**[89]	**2020-2021**[90]
Domestic Violence Reports	11,800	30,117 48,939 offenses	**March – August of 2020**: 13,300 cases opened, 21,000

[87] Yachimovich-Cohen, Nurit. "Domestic Violence with an Emphasis on Violence Against Women: 2016-2017 Data." *Knesset Print and Publications Department*, November 15, 2018. https://m.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/DomesticViolenceWithanemphasisonViolenceAgainstWomen.pdf.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Avgar, Ido. "Collected Data for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women." *The Knesset: Research and Information Center*, November 22, 2020. https://main.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/ViolenceAgainstWomen--Data.pdf.
[90] Kapitel, Geri. "ריכוז נתונים על אלימות במשפחה בדגש על אלימות כלפי נשים // Data on Domestic Violence with an Emphasis on Violence Against Women." *Knesset REsearch and Information Center*, November 21, 2021. https://fs.knesset.gov.il/globaldocs/MMM/309de8d4-68ef-eb11-8114-00155d0aee38/2_309de8d4-68ef-eb11-8114-00155d0aee38_11_18271.pdf.

Received by the Police		(35% = physical violence , 31% = threats, 1% = sex crimes, the rest = other offenses (including but not limited to damaging property, invasion of privacy, disturbing the public order, crimes related to legal process)	offenses; 14,300 offense of violence. **Overall in 2020**: 25,747 cases opened (87% of cases, the victim was a woman; 78% Jewish, 22.5% non-Jewish; 25% of Jewish were immigrants from 1989 and later)
Cases Closed	~9,000 cases Reason for closing: insufficient evidence This was true for 87% of closed cases.	75% closed (14% in an ongoing legal process, 11% reached Judicial Decision)	N/A
Demographic Information	In 23% of the cases, the victim was a non-Jewish women. **Note that this rate is higher than the percentage of non-Jewish women in the general population (18% of adult women). (3) **21% of women's DV complaints were for crimes against immigrant women	In 23% of the cases, the victim was a non-Jewish women. **Physical violence was higher in the non-Jewish population than among Jews. ** Within the Jewish groups, in 27% of the cases, the victim was an immigrant.	78% Jewish, 22.5% non-Jewish; 25% of Jewish were immigrants from 1989 and later) *20,146 of cases. = physical and threatening violence
Homicide Cases	35 women **Half of the victims had previously filed police reports about violence before they were killed.	*No value is available from 2018-2019, but the 2018-2020 value*: 69 women **40 Non-Jewish women, 18 Israel-Born Jewish women, 11 Immigrant Jewish women **Victim's partner was the suspect in 24 of the 69 killings of women.	2020; 26 women killed (15 Arab women, 11 Jewish women) From Jan.-Nov. 2021 - 23 women killed (5 by their intimate partner; 9 Jewish, 3 newcomers, 11 Arab women)[4]

		**Complaints to the Police preceding the murder was especially evident in the non-Jewish population.	
Hotline Data	N/A	March – September of 2019 estimates of calls: 688 DV; 799 Violence between adults who are not couples; 555 Violence against children; 196 DV (generally, not specific to IPV).	March – September 2020: [6] Number of calls received by 118 hotline in Israel more than doubled compared to 2019. Calls regarding IPDV increased by 315%. *118 national call center is operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs; 2,853 IPV; 1,393 Violence between adults who are not couples; 1,169 Violence against children; 365 DV (generally, not specific to IPV); 92 violence against elder

Table 4: Data on IPDV from 2016-2022

As Adelman points out in *Battering States: The Politics of Domestic Violence in Israel*, domestic violence does not exist in a vacuum. Feminists have long since transformed violence against women from an "individualized, personal problem" to a "globalized social issue requiring state-based interventions."[91] As Adelman, Erez, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian explain, solving DV in democratic states has been operationalized primarily through the criminalization

[91] Adelman, Madelaine, Erez, and Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Policing Violence Against Minority Women in Multicultural Societies: 'Community' and the Politics of Exclusion," 106.

model," which means that DV is shaped not just by state legislation, but by the "jurisdiction of the police."[92]

Further, in most states around the world, but especially in Israel, the "family" is not truly a private entity separate from the state. The state of Israel is already involved in structuring the "normative family" and "who counts as a kin" - meaning, who can marry whom, how families are reunited across borders, who cares for whom. [93] States further shape sexual relations, reproductive rights, and marriage laws. Adelman explains that domestic violence is thus political, because it is informed by how the state defines itself, how it organizes its governance and legal system, how it defines borders. This thesis brings in two additional aspects of how domestic violence is political: first, in the relation between the police and battered women, and second, in the role of non-profits. Non-profits can either perpetuate or mitigate inequality, and their relation to the state can further shape their influence.

Legal Rights in Israel and the Fight over "Democracy"

To understand legal rights in Israel, we must first understand the demographics of the country, which is categorized in Israel by country of origin and religious status. Religiosity varies widely in Israel. The Jewish sector is divided into secular, traditional, religious, and haredi groups.[94] The most recent Pew Research Survey from 2015 showed that 40% identify as Hiloni (secular), 23% as Masorti (traditional), 10% as Dati (religious), and 8% as Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox).[95] Although, it should be noted that the Haredi sector is likely an under-estimate as the

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[92] Ibid.
[93] Adelman, Madelaine. *Battering States: The Politics of Domestic Violence in Israel*, 20.

[94] Kaye, Alexander. "Defining Israel: The Jewish State, Democracy, and the Law" 39, no. 3/4 (December 2019). https://www.jstor.org/stable/45280815.
[95] "Israel's Religiously Divided Society." *Pew Research Center: Science & Society*, March 8, 2016. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/.

population tends to avoid interviews and surveys. However, as Ben-Rafael and Peres argue, religiosity can also be understood within the context of nationalism.[96] Essentially, nationalism can combine with religious motives, which means that even secular Jews are tied to Judaism, since Judaism is tied to the state itself.

Arab-Israelis, who have also increasingly been using the term Palestinians, make up 20.5 percent of the country's population. Of this 20.5 percent, this group can be divided by religion into 17.2 percent Muslim, 1.7 percent Druze, and 1.6 percent Christians. Of the 257 local authorities in Israel, 86 are Arab.[97] Yet, as represented in Lod, Arab citizens and municipalities have a subordinate status in Israeli society, which defines itself as a Jewish state. The Arab local authorities themselves face issues, with many having a paternalistic culture and a rise in "clan power," known as hamulas. This leaves Arab-Israeli citizens unrepresented. While Israel's declaration of independence recognizes equality across all citizens in Israel, discriminatory laws continue to prevail.

Israel's Basic Nation State Law of 2018 has a few key principles that are important in framing this thesis. First, the law states that the land of Israel is the "historical homeland of the Jewish People," that Hebrew is the language of the state, that it shall strive to "secure the welfare of members of the Jewish People and of its citizens, who are in straits and in captivity, due to their Jewishness or due to their citizenship." The last key point is that the state views the "development of Jewish settlement as a national value and shall act to encourage and promote its

[96] Eliezer Ben-Rafael, and Yochanan Peres. "Is Israel One? Religion, Nationalism, and Multiculturalism Confounded." *Jewish Identities in a Changing World* 5 (n.d.). https://brill.com/display/title/11001?alreadyAuthRedirecting.
[97] Rekhess, Elie. "The Arab Minority in Israel: Reconsidering the '1948 Paradigm.'" *Israel Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 187–217.

establishment..." [98] Arab-Israelis are discriminated against in a series of laws, including but not limited to citizenship rights, land and housing rights, education and language rights, religious right, due process during detention. Such laws have been tracked by Adalah, a legal center for Arab Minority rights in Israel. [99] The Basic Nation State Law also builds on the Law of Return, which grants Israeli citizenship to anyone who is Jewish, which by definition of the Israeli state is a person who was born of a Jewish mother converted to Judaism. [100]

This does not just affect Arab-Israelis. Since middle of the 1990s, the Israeli Government also recruited for non-Jewish migrants who arrived as workers to Israel. This included non-Jewish migrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia; temporary labor migrants from Asia, recruited to replace Palestinian workers; and asylum seekers from sub-Saharan African who crossed the southern border of Egypt since the middle of the 2000s. The introduction of non-Jewish migrants and asylum seekers, in addition to Arab-Israelis in the state, ultimately poses a challenge to the "basic definition of Israeli society as an ethnonational polity that encourages the permanent settlement of Jewish immigrants and discourages that of non-Jewish migrants." [101] Why? Because now migrants also face a series of challenges posed by a Jewish state: difficulties over marriage, burial, and family unification. What we see is a fundamental gap in legal and political equality.

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[98] "Basic-Law: Israel - The Nation State of the Jewish People," n.d. https://m.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/documents/BasicLawsPDF/BasicLawNationState.pdf.
[99] "Discriminatory Laws in Israel." Adalah, n.d. https://www.adalah.org/en/law/index.
[100] Raijman, Rebeca. "A Warm Welcome for Some: Israel Embraces Immigration of Jewish Diaspora, Sharply Restricts Labor Migrants and Asylum Seekers." *Migration Policy Institute*, June 5, 2020. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/israel-law-of-return-asylum-labor-migration.

[101] Ibid.

Now despite such evidence of disparity between the Jewish majority and non-Jewish minority, Israel continues to argue for its democratic values. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2021 Democracy Index ranked Israel 23rd out of 165 countries, and it remains the "only one country that is classified as a democracy" in the MENA region. [102] Whether or not Israel as a democracy has been a particular focus for academics. There are dramatically different frameworks for understanding the state and democracy in Israel.[103] One approach views Israel as a "normal state that doesn't differ much from countries elsewhere."[104] In other words, the issue of inequality between Palestinian and Israeli citizens can be viewed as a majority-minority relations issue found in other countries, and Israel is viewed as a democracy. The opposite approach instead proposes a "postcolonial/colonial framework." As Ariely describes this perspective views Israel as a settler colonial society and argues that "only wide-scale decolonization can transform the Israeli non-democratic apartheid regime into a democracy."[105]

What implications does this context have on domestic violence in the state and on domestic violence research? As Adelman states, the "unsettled nature of its population and boundaries, its ongoing wars and conflicts, and its high-profile international relations....and the frequent criticism it receives from the United Nations, means that Israel is often discussed in the news. Because of this, Israel is most often linked with political rather than domestic violence."[106] Just as there are arguments and myths about how "democratic" the state truly is, there are

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[102] Sokol, Sam. "Israel Has Improved Rating, but Remains a 'Flawed Democracy." *Haaretz,* February 20, 2022. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-02-20/ty-article/israel-has-improved-rating-but-remains-a-flawed-democracy/0000017f-ef77-dc28-a17f-ff770c7c0000.
[103] Ariely, Gal. "Introduction." In *Israel's Regime Untangled: Between Democracy and Apartheid*, 1–10. Cambridge University Press, 2021. doi:10.1017/9781108951371.001. 8.
[104] Ibid.,7.
[105] Ariely, Gal. "Introduction." In *Israel's Regime Untangled: Between Democracy and Apartheid*, 1–10. Cambridge University Press, 2021. doi:10.1017/9781108951371.001. 7.
[106] Adelman, Madelaine. *Battering States: The Politics of Domestic Violence in Israel*, 27.

debates about whether women's rights are truly protected in Israel. Adelman explains the myth of "gender equality," where Israeli women live in an "egalitarian socialist kibbutzim and serve in the army."[107] Myths around violence are often associated with "casting cultural culpability" and seeing violence as racialized – meaning that it prevails in Palestinian, Russian, and Mizrahi Israeli communities. Not many imagine that secular, middle-class Ashkenazi Jewish Israelis would have a problem with violence.

Because of these disputes over defining Israel - as liberal or illiberal, as a democracy or an apartheid state, as a promoter of women's rights or perpetuator of inequality – variation in domestic violence policy becomes difficult to explain. In other words, when the state is arguing over the primary language or voting rights of its citizens, when the international community is fighting over its legitimacy, does that even leave space for battered women? This thesis demands us to identify where the problem of violence against women stands in the context of a geo-political, governmental crisis.

Research on the Police in Israel:

Erez, Ibarra, and Gur provide a thorough analysis of police relations with minority communities. They conclude that minority populations prefer informal ways of responding to DV, and that police/minority victim interaction is likely to be difficult and unsatisfying.[108] Arab Israelis tend to depend on "informal" responses as opposed to the police. Further, the aftermath of police-civilian encounter can "continue to ramify in ways that the police may anticipate, but which will be ultimately suffered by the parties to the scene alone, especially the victim." Thus,

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[107] Ibid.

[108] Erez, Edna, Peter Ibarra, and Oren Gur. "At the Intersection of Private and Political Conflict Zones: Policing DV in the Arab Community in Israel." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 59, no. 9 (May 15, 2014). https://doi-org.proxy.library.cornell.edu/10.1177/0306624X14532602.

the authors urge a form of multi-cultural policing. This literature is then expanded in a comparison of Jewish women and Arab-Israelis in shelters. Ben-Porat, Levy, Kattoura, Dekel, and Itzhaky found that Arab women were exposed to more physical violence and received less family support.[109] The proportion of Arab perpetrators with access to weapons was higher than that of Jewish perpetrators, whereas the proportion of police complaints against Jewish perpetrators was higher than that against Arab perpetrators.[110] However, a gap remains in a comparison between collectivist identity cultures, specifically Jewish Orthodox with Arab-Israeli communities.

Research on Community-Policing in Israel:

There has been plenty of literature on community-police relations and models set up in Israel since its founding. Perry and Jonathan-Zamir analyzed the link between community-policing in Israel with counterterrorism and argued that policing terrorism and police-community relationships cannot be viewed in isolation. Rather, their "studies examining the effects of policing terrorism on police–community relationships suggest that the drop in public support is at least partly the result of an excessive focus on counterterrorism, which…weakened the relationship between the police and Israeli Arabs."[111] The authors also help identify and define community policing, which involves the collaboration of the public in identifying community problems and viewing the police role as "broader than merely enforcing the criminal law," and "using a problem-solving approach rather than simply responding to specific calls for service."[112]

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[109] Anat Ben-Porat, Drorit Levy, Ola Kattoura, Rachel Dekel, and Haya Itzhaky. "Domestic Violence in Arab Society: A Comparison of Arab and Jewish Women in Shelters in Israel" J Interpers Violence (January 2021). https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29294921/.
[110] Ibid.

[111] Perry, Simon, and Tal Jonathan-Zamir. "Lessons from Empirical Research on Policing in Israel: Policing Terrorism and Police-Community Relationships," January 2014. 182.
[112] Ibid.

Other authors have studied attempted models at community-police relations in Israel, none of which focus entirely on domestic violence. Weisburd found that the INP attempted to establish "service centers" for citizens and develop collaborations with city councils. However, lack of organizational commitment, resistance within INP, and rapid implementation led to an ineffective program. The authors argue that "these obstacles are not unique to Israel; however, several characteristics of the INP, such as its commitment to a semi-military, centralized command structure, made the implementation of community policing in Israel all the more challenging."[113] Harpaz and Herzog studied the relationship between the implementation of community policing and police prejudice against minority communities. He identified the main issue as being the "the tension between the principles of community policing, particularly the reliance on public cooperation, and the values characterizing the dominant police culture in Israel."[114] (178). In other words, community policing in some way necessitates a change in culture.

Part 2: Research Design

To understand the role of the state, the police, and non-profits in the realm of domestic violence in Israel today, I conducted 21 interviews with activists, government workers, academics, and non-profit social workers, volunteers, and/or members. I reached out to about fifty organizations, professors, and government workers in Israel, in the hopes of gaining a variety of perspectives. I applied to Cornell University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) that

[113] Weisburd, David. "Community Policing in Israel: Resistance and Change." *Policing An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, March 2002. https://doi.org/10.1108/13639510210417917. 178.

[114] Herzog, S., and A. Harpaz. "Police Officers' Acceptance of Community Policing Strategy in Israel and Their Attitudes towards the Arab Minority." *Israel Affairs* 19, no. 1 (2013). 178.

would allow me to conduct interviews while engaging in field-observation work with organizations and police officers. I decided to use this method because data on domestic violence in Israel is limited. Further, there is not substantial research on the role of non-profits nor their perspective on domestic violence legislation in the state.

There were several ethical concerns to consider when undergoing these interviews. First, I needed to properly represent the opinions of various actors who are working on domestic violence activism in Israel without imposing my own theory/notion. As an American Israeli, secular Jewish woman, I was also concerned with how I would be approached by communities that I am explicitly not part of – particularly Palestinian groups, the Orthodox Jewish community, and even Israeli people who perceived me as a foreigner. Often, there can be "clash" between grassroots efforts on the ground compared to the perspective of a researcher. In terms of accessing Palestinian organizations, I found it a lot more difficult. With all the Arab organizations I encountered, there was an obvious lack of resources and capacity to even interview. There was also more suspicion of my identity, and the nature of the interviews with Palestinians felt far more "political" compared to Israeli interviews that often would explicitly tell me they will be "politically correct" or "don't want to comment on politics." Thus, I worried about misrepresenting the Palestinian communities due to a lower level of access. I overcame these concerns by supplementing missing Palestinian interviews with research and often adjusting my questions when interviewing Palestinians.

My first goal was to schedule interviews with community-based organizations and the police. I started contacting organizations in late November to establish a rapport. In late December, before my departure, I emailed again to try and schedule meetings. These organizations included small non-profits, larger, state-sponsored organizations, and shelters. I

outlined the type of organization I reached out to in the Theory Chapter. I also had to decide between a strategy of only working with one organization or approaching multiple at once. I decided to interview individuals across a few organizations, because spending time with only one organization was too much of a burden for organizations that barely had the time to conduct an interview with me. It would have been unethical to take up more of their time.

I was interested in organizations that represented different demographics in Israel, and soon discovered that most non-profits in Israel either state that they represent "all Israelis," while others focus specifically on Arab women, Ethiopian women, immigrant women, women without permanent legal status, etc. I divided my search into organizations that represented Arab women in Israel, Orthodox Jewish women, women without permanent legal status, and Israeli Jewish women. Most of the interviews were scheduled while I was in Israel. Most of the time, I did not receive a response via email, and I would end up calling organizations and receiving specific emails or WhatsApp numbers. Interviews were conducted over the phone, zoom, or in person.

I was not able to interview police officers due to time constraints and bureaucratic barriers. When I arrived in Israel, I attempted to call the national police line about 5 times in the hopes that someone could direct me to a Domestic Violence unit point person. I first pointed to the Police Spokesperson. I was then directed to the Public Inquiries unit of the Israeli National Police, which only handles public complaints. After realizing this was a dead-end, I called two more times, I was again referred to a police spokesperson email, and the second time, I was told there is no one to talk to. I eventually decided to go to a few police stations in-person in the Tel Aviv-Yafo area.

My first stop was the Yarkon Police Station in Israel, which is the largest station in the Tel-Aviv area. I was not let in past security. The officer at the front desk looked entirely puzzled

after I told her what I was there for. She called over a male officer who did not seem entirely surprised to see me, but asked me a series of questions for around five minutes: "what are you looking for? Why do you want to talk to the police? What University do you come from? How do you speak Hebrew if you're from America? Do you have an Israeli ID?" He told me "There is no one for you to talk to." I continued to explain that I know there are a few Domestic Violence-specific units. He nodded his head, dismissing it, and said "there is no one. Go talk to people in the University, if you want. There are people there who study the police." This – of course – I knew. He directed me to the Yafo Central Police Station, which is in Tel-Aviv-Yafo and has one of the highest rates of police cases opened for violent crimes. [115] At the station, I was again, not let in past security. When I explained to the officer at the front what I was looking for, he escorted me out of the building and told me that when there are domestic violence cases, sometimes they put restraining orders or take a woman to a shelter. I asked him about the connection between the police and organizations such as WIZO – he did not know what WIZO was, despite it being the largest and oldest women's violence organization and shelter provider in Israel.

Thus, I was unable to get the perspective on the police for this study. Yet this one counter shed light on the little knowledge the police might have about NGOs. My understanding of police action to assist with Domestic Violence cases will primarily come from the media and interviews journalists or academics have already conducted with police officers. Almost every

[115] Kubovich, Yaniv. "Police Study: Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Haifa, Ramle and Eilat Israel's Most Violent Cities." *Haaretz*, October 9, 2011. https://www.haaretz.com/2011-10-09/ty-article/police-study-tel-aviv-jaffa-haifa-ramle-and-eilat-israels-most-violent-cities/0000017f-e046-d9aa-afff-f95e7e210000.

organization also commented on their interaction with the police, which I also used to analyzed police-community relations. This, of course, is an inherent challenge to this research paper.

I asked questions that related to each of my hypothesis statements. The interviews were organized so I asked almost the exact same questions to each interviewee, though sometimes I used different phrasing and asked different follow up questions. I had a different set of questions for each "group": one for advocacy and non-profit organizations, one for academics, and one for police officers. My interview questions for each "group" can be found in the Appendix. Each question varied slightly based on context, and often I skipped questions and/or asked follow-ups. Table 5 is a chart of all the interviews.

Organization Name	**Contact Name**	**Location**	**Length of Interview**	**Demographic Focus**
Na'amat	Gali	Na'amat Legal Headquarters, Tel Aviv	43:05	All groups
Na'am	Judy	Zoom	39:31	Palestinian Women
Na'am Interview 2	Sameh	Lod, Na'am Office	13:20	Palestinian Women
No 2 Violence	Ruth Resnik	Phone call	1:31:00	All groups
Wizo	Michal	Wizo Headquarters, Tel Aviv	39:06	All groups, primarily Jewish
Wizo Interview 2	Rivka	Zoom	43:36	All groups, primarily Jewish
Batmelech Interview 1	Illanit	Batmelech Shelter, Jerusalem	39:38	Orthodox Jewish
Batmelech Interview 2	CEO of Batmelech	Phone Call	22:23	Orthodox Jewish
Mavtechot	Itay Breines	Zoom	49:55	All groups
Assiwar	Iamia	Zoom	33:02	Palestinian
Woman to Woman (Isha le Isha)	Naomi Schneiderman	Jerusalem Shelter	36:10	Immigrant and Palestinian
Michal Selah Forum	Idit Codish	Zoom	27:10	All groups
Sheatufim	Yasmin	Sheatufim Offices, Beit Yehoshua	53:03	All groups
Kayan Center	Alhan Nahhas Daoud and Nisreen Tabari	Haifa	55:16	Palestinian women
Haifa Women's Crisis Center	Michal	Haifa	33:27	All groups

Itach Maaki	Anonymous (A1)	Zoom	35:20	Arab and Jewish women
Women Against Violence (WAVO)	Naila Awad	Phone Call	38:40	Palestinian Women
Welfare Office	Allison Ettinger	Tel Aviv	20:00	Welfare Office
Professor at TAU and Social Worker	Dr. Shabar-Shafira Paula Daniela	Tel Aviv University	43:17	N/A
Professor at TAU and Lawyer	Noa Diamond	Zoom	56:00	N/A
Professor at Bar-Ilan Univ.	Anat Ben Porat	Zoom	31:21	N/A

Table 5: Interviews

I transcribed each interview using Otter.ai, and coded each interview on a spreadsheet. The coding involved outlining the first-order theme and second-order theme from each interview and documenting the most relevant quotes for each. The first order theme remained consistent for each interview. This included: state-level vs. organization support, women's experience in finding help, cultural-religious accommodations, organization connection to the police, political activism, COVID-19 accommodations, prevention programs, training programs for professionals and the police, Israeli cultural values, domestic violence from the perspective of the husband, and the perception of the police. Second-order themes differed based on each interview. Half of the interviews were conducted in Hebrew and translated to English. In the next chapter, I will interweave excerpts from the interviews to evaluate each hypothesis. I will further include primary-source evidence from media, including podcasts, documentaries, Youtube videos, blogs, and newspaper articles translated from Hebrew.

Chapter 4: Hypothesis-Testing Chapter

I was sitting on a bench in East Jerusalem, taking in the beautiful landscape, and I did not even realize I was in a settlement. I was on my way to an Orthodox Jewish Shelter, and I had been worried about being on time and finding the right location; it ended up only taking 35-minutes by bus. I looked at google maps and saw that my location was just past the red-dotted line that indicated the West Bank territory. The "settlements," as recognized by International Law but not by the state of Israel, are a bit different depending on where you are – this neighborhood was particularly developed, and not what most people would imagine a settlement to look like.[116] I was looking over my interview questions as I heard children playing in the garden of a beautiful synagogue to my right. I saw a Mosque in the mountain across from where I was sitting, hidden by trees. I only noticed it once I heard the daily call for prayer. It was then that I truly felt I was at the intersection of my thesis question; in a mixed secular-Orthodox community, across the West Bank line, overlooking a Mosque, on way to a state-funded shelter. This part of my journey indicates the way IPDV services must be understood within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; how it shapes the nature of IPDV for Palestinians living in the state; and why I find such high levels of political advocacy for Palestinian organizations.

My hypothesis, as I reviewed in Chapter two, can be understood in two parts. H1 looks at victim-police interaction, predicting that Palestinians, Orthodox Jewish, and vulnerable immigrant communities have less access to the police compared to Secular Jewish counterparts. Despite the barriers existing within the Orthodox Jewish community, H2 predicts that Orthodox Jewish communities do have greater wholistic access to the state when compared to Palestinian

[116] I am not mentioning the name of the neighborhood since the exact location of this shelter is confidential.

and vulnerable immigrant women. H3 through H5 look at the role of organizations, outlining organization-victim relations, organization-police relations, and levels of political advocacy. In this Chapter, I will evaluate whether each hypothesis has low, moderate, or strong support. Table 4 provides a summary of my findings. As I explained in the research methodology chapter, I will be using the following sources as evidence: interviews, observed ethnographic research, media sources, research reports from organizations or government sources, and academic papers.

Hypothesis	Evidence
H1: Secular Jewish victims have more access to the police compared to Palestinian, Orthodox Jewish, and vulnerable immigrant groups.	**Moderate Support.** Data indicates that there is less access to the police for Palestinian and vulnerable immigrant groups but does not indicate unequal access for Orthodox Jewish groups. Negative perceptions of the police are highest in Palestinian communities, followed by Orthodox Jewish, and Secular Jews. The latter two groups show the most "improvement.
H2: Jewish Orthodox victims are more likely to have access to the state with respect to violence against women compared to Palestinian and vulnerable immigrant groups.	**Strong Support.** Despite shared collective-based community between Orthodox Jewish communities and Palestinian communities, citizenship status affords the Orthodox communities with greater access to state resources.
H3: Organizations representing Jewish Orthodox, Palestinian, and vulnerable immigrants have less access to the police compared to organizations that represent more secular Israeli women.	**Low support.** Instead, Secular Israeli and Jewish Orthodox organizations have more established connections to the police; Palestinian organizations have more informal, tenuous connections to the police.
H4: Jewish Orthodox Groups, Palestinian, and vulnerable immigrants are more likely to turn to women's organizations as their first source of access as opposed to the police.	**Moderate support.** Orthodox Jews and Palestinians find it easier to turn to community groups which are **already oriented towards their demographics**. Information on vulnerable immigrants is limited in this regard.
H5: Palestinian women's groups are more likely to engage in political activism compared to Orthodox-Jewish women's groups.	**Strong support.** DV Palestinian organizations engage in more political advocacy in contrast to DV-specific Orthodox Jewish organizations.

Table 6: Summary of Findings

As presented in the Theory Chapter and in the Appendix, Table 1 measures access to the police for both victims and organizations. As you can see, access to the police for both organizations and victims can be divided into three phases – the initial complaint, multiple complaints, and post-separation phase. I will be using this table as a reference point throughout the chapter, particularly for Hypothesis 1 and 2.

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis I evaluated examines differential access to police among different sub-groups of the Israeli society. I theorized that:

> **Hypothesis 1 (H1): Secular Jewish victims have more access to the police compared to Palestinian, Orthodox Jewish, and vulnerable immigrant groups.**

To evaluate H1, I will focus on the questions guiding the "Victim-Police Interaction" column in Table 1. Support for Hypothesis 1 must reveal three key points. First, that there is a greater number of domestic violence cases for Palestinian, Orthodox Jewish, or vulnerable immigrant groups that the police cannot solve. If we see that there are equal number of domestic violence cases solved for each group, H1 would not be supported. Second, the experience and perception of the police from Palestinians, Orthodox Jewish, and immigrant women is substantially different and/or more negative than that of Secular Jewish women from Stages 1 through 3. If we see that the experience and perception of the police by Palestinians and Orthodox Jewish women is not substantially different or more positive than Secular Jewish women, then H1 would not be supported. Third, there is an indication of moderate progress in police responses to domestic violence cases by secular Jewish women and less from Palestinian women, Orthodox Jewish women, and immigrant communities. If we see that there is no progress for secular Jewish women compared to other demographics, then H1 would have lower

support. The remainder of this section is divided into these three arguments. I will review each argument and identify whether H1 receives low, moderate, or strong support.

Evaluating H1, Argument 1: The Data

When analyzing data available on domestic violence from the Knesset Information and Research centers, it is evident that there is a higher rate of cases for non-Jewish women compared to their percentage in the general population. Data reports from 2016-2019 reveal that 23 percent of the cases opened was by a non-Jewish victim, which is a rate higher than the percentage of non-Jewish women in the general population (non-Jewish women over 18 make up 18% of the population).[117] In 27 percent of the cases submitted by Jewish women, the victim was an immigrant, which, again, is slightly larger than the percentage of immigrant women among all Jewish women (in 2017 immigrant women made up 24 percent of the population).[118] This 27 percent from 2019 data was an increase from the 2016-2017 data, in which immigrant Jewish women made up 21% of closed cases. Data from 2019-2020 also showed the number of women in shelters by religious status; as seen in Table 5 below, the highest number of women in shelters was Jewish women, followed by Muslim and Christian women. Note the Arab and Christian demographic can include Palestinians; also note how high the number of Muslim women is to Jewish women despite being a minority.

Religious Demographic	2019	2020

[117]Yachimovich-Cohen, Nurit. "Domestic Violence with an Emphasis on Violence Against Women: 2016-2017 Data." *Knesset Print and Publications Department*, November 15, 2018. https://m.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/DomesticViolenceWithanemphasisonViolenceAgainstWomen.pdf.3.; Avgar, Ido. "Collected Data for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women." *The Knesset: Research and Information Center*, November 22, 2020. https://main.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/ViolenceAgainstWomen--Data.pdf.

[118] Avgar, Ido. "Collected Data for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women." *The Knesset: Research and Information Center*, November 22, 2020. https://main.knesset.gov.il/EN/activity/mmm/ViolenceAgainstWomen--Data.pdf.

Jewish	298	332
Muslim	252	294
Christian	69	76
No religion	26	18
Druze	7	2
Bedouin	1	1

Table 7: Number of Women in Shelters, 2019-2020

The second important point is that in cases closed for non-Jewish and immigrant women Jewish women, "lack of evidence" is a particularly "notable cause" for closing a case – standing at a rate of 89% of cases, in comparison to 78% for the Jewish population.[119] This is in contrast to a value of 9% that was closed because of "circumstances unsuitable for investigation." [120] This ultimately shows that the police have a particularly difficult experience in managing non-Jewish cases. The third relevant data point is that the type of violence faced by each demographic are different. Notably, the 2016-2017 data reveals that, among the types of violence committed against non-Jewish women and Jewish immigrants, physical violence compromised more cases as opposed to Jewish women who faced more "threats."[121]

These three data trends are further exacerbated when looking at homicide cases. Most of the murder victims of domestic violence cases are not Jewish. For example, of the 69 women murdered in 2018-2019, 40 were non-Jewish, 18 Israel-born Jewish women, and 11 immigrant Jewish women. It should be noted that the victim's partner was the suspect in 24 of the 69

[119] Ibid., 19.
[120] Ibid., 19.
[121] Ibid., 16.

women killed, because for many of the non-Jewish women killed, the perpetrator is from within the family or community rather than their partner, particularly for Arab women. Nevertheless, in 73% of the cases in which a complaint had already been filed, the victim was non-Jewish, and in all five DV-specific cases from 2018-2019 where a woman was murdered and the case was solved, the victim was non-Jewish.

Immigrants face a similar situation. For example, data from the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Social Services showed that women of Ethiopian descent were a higher percentage of killed victims as opposed to their share in the population in 2018-2020.[122] Thus, while homicide cases are not the focus of this study, the nature of DV-specific cases in which a woman died, as well as the percentage of previous complaints, shows that the results of police interaction with each community are not equal. The data shows some sort of gap in police responses to each demographic. A more comprehensive list of the data available from each year can be seen in the Research Design Chapter and in the Appendix.

The data reveals three important points. First, there are more cases of Palestinian, non-Jewish women, and Jewish immigrants compared to their general population. Second, that "lack of evidence" is a higher reason for closed cases for non-Jewish women as opposed to Jewish women. Lastly, the nature of the violence is different for each group, with non-Jewish women facing higher levels of physical violence and higher rates of homicide. This acts as evidence in moderate support of my first point. I list this as "moderate" support because the data lacks in two key ways:

1. The data does not collect levels of religiosity for Jewish women. Meaning, we have no information specifically available on the Orthodox Jewish Community. Thus, we

[122] Ibid., 2.

do not know if Orthodox Jewish women truly have less or more access than secular Jewish women.

2. The data does not reveal in enough detail the religiosity of immigrant women. There is only a data category available for "Jewish immigrants." Further, there is no category available for whether the immigrants have permanent legal status or not, which means that we do not know the true comparison between women without permanent legal status and the other groups.

Evaluation of H1, Argument 2: Experience with the Police

As I am editing this, it is the first night of Passover and two weeks since the start of Ramadan. On April 5, Israeli police raided Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque to "clear groups it said were barricaded inside, leading to clashes with worshippers and triggering an exchange of cross border fire with Gaza."[123] Al-Aqsa is Islam's third holiest site. Videos show police entering the building with firecrackers which exploded in the darkened Mosque. More than 350 people were arrested. A similar incident already occurred in April 2022, where officers fired rubber bullets and stun grenades, leaving about 30 Palestinians injured.[124]

When I spoke with Nalia Awad, the General Director of the Association of Woman Against Violence (WAV), she explained to me not only the role of the organization – which I will address more deeply when discussing Organization-Police relations – but also the way she

[123] Al-Mughrabi, Nidal, and Sinan Mayzer. "Violence Erupts Again at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque." *Thomas Reuters*, n.d. https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/cross-border-fire-gaza-after-israeli-police-raid-al-aqsa-mosque-2023-04-05/.
[124] *Al Jazeera*. "New Israeli Raid at Al-Aqsa Mosque Leaves Palestinians Injured." April 22, 2022. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/22/new-israeli-police-raid-al-aqsa-leaves-palestinians-injured.

perceives the police and the way victims might perceive the police, as a Palestinian woman herself.

> "But now, with the racism and fascism of Ben Gvir – of course, I won't participate [with the Police]. Whoever sees an Arab as a ticking bomb and looks at us as terrorists, I cannot see [as] someone who will protect the lives of women. Especially the lives of Arab women.
> ...How will a woman who experiences violence at home feel comfortable going to people who ruin their homes, or to the same officers who allowed other Jewish settlers to ruin her home?" – Nalia

In other words, Nalia asks, why would I trust someone who does not trust me, and more than that, does not show respect for my life, or the life of my people? This leads us to an important discussion about Palestinians not wanting to "air their dirty laundry" to the public, which is a sentiment many minorities hold when accessing the state. This means that minority groups often prefer to not expose their inner-group problems to the majority in fear of judgment or in fear that it ends up negatively affecting their community. This has two important implications. First, it creates what Nalia describes as the inability to trust the police due to the "protracted conflict between Arabs and Jews." [125] More specifically, she is referencing increasing settler violence in the West Bank, attacks on Palestinian homes in Jerusalem, and what is often perceived as the complicity of the Israeli police. The second implication is the fear that victims might have in approaching the police due to the social consequences. Erez, Ibarra, and Gur, who researched the challenge of policing in multicultural societies and its effects on Arab

[125] Erez, Edna, Peter Ibarra, and Oren Gur. "At the Intersection of Private and Political Conflict Zones: Policing DV in the Arab Community in Israel." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 59, no. 9 (May 15, 2014). https://doi-org.proxy.library.cornell.edu/10.1177/0306624X14532602. 941.

women, interviewed Palestinian actors in the realm of DV.[126] This interview, along with others provided by Erez, Ibarra, and Gur, reveals that Nalia's perspective is prevalent across the Palestinian community:

> "Publicizing private issues such as violence against women bears deeply on how Jews perceive us…We should not hang our dirty laundry in front of them...Why should we resort to Israeli law or police to solve our problems? It will only contribute to their statistics and to their perception of us as violet individuals..."

In other words, when a Palestinian victim approaches the police in Stage 1, she fears the police due to existing violence against her community; she fears acting against the movement of her community; and further, she fears "social marginalization" by her own community.[127]

I spoke with the Lamia, the Director of Assiwar, an Arab women's organization that assists with sexual and domestic violence. She described what might happen when a Palestinian woman decides to approach the police:

> "Just imagine to yourself, an Arab woman who goes to the police, so there are all these types of responses, like "*you don't look like you've been hit, look, you have gold on your hands, you are perfectly fine*." A dad who went to submit a complaint, they asked him "*how do you allow your daughter to be on Facebook*," like all these responses that you can't even imagine!"

Lamia explains that the complaint is not taken seriously or just simply closed. This was again re-affirmed by Nisreen, the Hotline Coordinator in the Kayan Legal Center in Haifa, who described that the police ask awkward questions that can drive a woman away, or she doesn't even attempt to approach the police because she hears about the experiences of other women in her community.

[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid., 942.

Lamia went on to also explain the unique dynamics that often exist between minority groups and the police by providing the example of Druzi women.[128] Since there is a high percentage of Druzis in the police, a woman might fear submitting a complaint since her family can easily find out.[129] While Druzis are not the focus of this thesis, her comment leads us to the system of policing in Arab villages that structurally leave women more vulnerable to violence.

For example, in the early 1990s, an "Advisor for Arab Affairs" was set up to coordinate government policy among minorities – Arabs, Druze, Circassians, and Bedouins. According to a research paper co-sponsored by Women Against Violence, "even though the last Arab Affairs Adviser in the Prime Minister's Office finished his duties in 1999, it appears that the practice of using such an advisor continues to this day." In the minutes of the Committee for the Advancement of Women's Status, Merav Michaeli questions Meri Berkowitz on why these advisors still exist in Arab villages if it is no longer an official position, stating "It's a male advisor who obviously works with the men in the family [of the women who has experienced violence]."[130]

In my conversation with Nalia, she explained that often there is a reliance on male leaders within Arab villages to coordinate DV issues rather than the police, thus disrupting a path towards accountability of the perpetrator. Nalia explained that in the Negev, instead of sending women to a shelter, they will send her to the "tribe leader - the

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[128] "For example, if a Druze woman who goes to submit a complaint, her entire family can know in a second, because there are a lot of Druzis in the police...like a Druzi woman who comes to us, and needs to go to the police, it's entirely just a complicated problem." - Lamia

[129] Ibid., 942.

[130] Batshon, Shirin. "Israeli Police Law Enforcement." *Women Against Violence, Al-Tufula Center, and the Israel Women's Network,* n.d.

oldest male in the tribe. In other words, "instead of having the welfare department deal with the violence, they pay money to the tribe leaders to deal with the violence - but they send them [the women] to someone patriarchal, someone who will return her to the abusive husband." There is substantial research on the lack of crime prevention in Arab communities; their approach is often labeled as a matter of "cultural sensitivity."[131] Thus, an Arab women's experience of approaching the police in cases of domestic violence is shaped not only by distrust, but by law enforcement systems that in the aim of "cultural accommodations" leave women more vulnerable in their community.

I do not have access to every data point on police-victim interactions; in other words, I do not know how many Palestinian women approached the police in the past year due to an incident of Domestic Violence and received a response of the exact nature described by my interviewees. However, based on my six interviews with Palestinian women, each 35-60 minutes long, all expressed the same exact sentiment when asked same question about police interactions with their community.

When I asked the same question to non-Palestinian interviewees, only five of the fourteen interviews brought up the negative relationship between the Arab community and the police. However, in eight of the fourteen interviews with non-Palestinians, a broader negative sentiment about the police was brought up; this was usually in reference to the Jewish population or a broad comment on the Israeli police. Among those that mentioned the negative relationship between Arabs and the police, two brought up a

[131] Much, Afif. "Bedouins Say Israeli Police Ignoring Violence in Their Communities." *Al-Monitor*, June 8, 2020. https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2020/06/israel-arabs-bedouin-police-idf-violence-gunfire-youth.html.

different perspective on why Arab-Police relations are not ideal. Allison, who works for the Social Welfare office, said that based on her work and life in Yaffo:

> "the Arab community, they don't like to listen to any rules, like they're gonna drive in the opposite direction, and they're gonna drive during the red light. And, you know, they're breaking a lot of laws, not just violence, and they don't care... It's for sure, a sensitive relationship...it can be problematic. But when it's needed, for sure the police are involved..."

Allison's comment reflects broader division in opinion about law enforcement between Jews and Arabs. According to data from 2021, when asked what the "main reason for the high crime rate in Arab society," 58% of Arabs believed it was because the state does not invest enough resources in crime, as opposed to 30% of Jews. Further, a higher percentage of Jews stated that Arab leadership does not cooperate with the police.[132] In other words, in the context of domestic violence, some Israelis, like Allison, might believe that police responses is not the fault of the system, but the fault of the Arab community. Professor Anat-Ben Porat, an Israeli Jewish Professor at Bar-Ilan University, emphasized concerns from the police perspective, stating that "the police are afraid to go inside [Arab villages in Israel], especially the last few years that the violence is increased." This again indicates a gap in the perception of the police from Palestinians and Israeli Jewish women.

Professor Shebar-Shapira, lecturer and social worker at Tel Aviv University, explained the differences and overlap that might exist between the Arab, Orthodox, and secular Jewish community, stating that "in the Arab community just like in the Orthodox community, they are very punishing of women that go to the police because the police is

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[132] Hermann, Tamar. "A Conditional Partnership: Jews and Arabs." *The Viterbi Family Center for Public Opinion and Policy Research*, 2021. https://en.idi.org.il/media/17869/final-conditional-partnership-2021-website.pdf.

like the representation of the system." She states that Orthodox women also face the fear of "cleaning" their dirty laundry outside and facing the consequences within their community. This is also due to the long history of disputes between the Haredi and secular community in Israel.[133] In my interviews with Bat Melech Orthodox Women's Shelter in Israel, there was a general acknowledgment that for Orthodox women, it might be more complicated to go to the police. CEO of Bat Melech explained that an Orthodox woman might not feel comfortable approaching the police because "of the environment and culture she came from" and because a "police officer cannot understand what the problem is, because he's not familiar with the culture."

Speaking with Illanit, a social worker who works at the Bat Melech shelter in Jerusalem, she did not really mention a specific attribute of Orthodox Jewish "culture" that might get in the way of access to the police. Instead, she mentioned what was broadly mentioned by other Israeli interviewees:

> I will say that for some women, it's very complex, because if some of the treatment is about recognizing post-trauma, and if she goes to the police and the police say "you have no evidence," so she doesn't receive that recognition that she wants, and then [she thinks] "maybe there wasn't violence, maybe it wasn't

[133] This might raise a question for readers – if the state of Israel is a Jewish state, why might Orthodox women fear exposure to the state? Dikla provides an explanation that the Haredi community acts in solidarity, and that "at least to some extent, anti-Zionist, considering Zionism a secular heresy that advocates political action instead of waiting potential for the Messiah…as such, Haredim, to some degree…have historically expressed a general distrust…toward Israeli society." "Anti-secular" protests – against allowing stores to do business on the Sabbath, against permission of non-Kosher restaurants, against compulsory draft for women and men, building a soccer stadium in Jerusalem – have existed since Israel's founding in 1948. This has also led to violent encounters with the police. This was most recently seen with anti-lockdown protests during COVID-19; Dikla, Yogev. "Religion and Police Legitimacy: The Case of Israel's Haredi Community." *University of Toronto,* 2022. https://www-proquest-com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/dissertations-theses/religion-police-legitimacy-case-israel-s-haredi/docview/2741089909/se-2.

that bad, maybe I'm imagining it ..." and then she lives in a circle of violence, and of gaslighting…."

The Orthodox community also subscribes to rigid family structures, or as Band-Winterstean and Freund term it, to "traditional-authoritative-patriarchal" values of specific gender roles – the women provide for the "men's early need" while the men study Torah. In the context of violence, Orthodox women may experience "spiritual abuse" in addition to the main types of IPDV abuse forms. Spiritual abuse means that in a man might limit a woman and "force her to go against her spiritual conscious," (3004). Professor Shebar-Shapira expanded on this by mentioning Lashon Hara.[134] This makes it difficult for Orthodox women to describe instances of violence in detail to the police, such as details of rape. Nevertheless, CEO of Bat Melech, noted that when the shelter started 25 years ago, "nobody knew anything [about the Orthodox community], and women who get help couldn't find appropriate services that they could ask for help. Now it's better, and a lot of rabbis know about it, and also police officers."

Indeed, in recent years, data has shown increasing cooperation and trust between the Haredi community and the police.[135] Survey results show that Orthodox Jews belief in improved relations with the police is lower compared to the general population. Further, Orthodox Jews are more likely to believe that they are treated worse by police than others. However, the overall score on police work is equal.[136] Dikla attributes this

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[134] Palant, Esti. "A Shelter for Orthodox Jewish Women in Israel: The Experience of Helping Religious Women Escape Domestic Abuse." *Journal of Reliigon and Abuse*, October 12, 2008, 19–29.

[135] Dikla, Yogev. "Religion and Police Legitimacy: The Case of Israel's Haredi Community." *University of Toronto*, 2022. https://www-proquest-com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/dissertations-theses/religion-police-legitimacy-case-israel-s-haredi/docview/2741089909/se-2. 1-2.

[136] Ben-Porat, Guy, and Fany Yuval. "The Religious Factor: Ultra-Orthodox Jews." In *Policing Citizens: Minority Policy in Israel*. Cambridge University Press, n.d. 156.

"westernization" and the increasing number of Orthodox Jews serving as police officers or represent the police in internal discussions about police work. Dikla offers an anecdote from a senior police officer who explained the integration of Haredi figures into the police force:

> "We know how to speak with the community in the same language... If there is a missing person, hundreds of volunteers immediately jump in… and then the police becomes your friend... they realize not every [police officer] eats non-Kosher…they enlist… female investigators… Someone comes to file an abuse complaint and sees a woman that looks like his child's teacher, he immediately trusts her." (30-31, Dikla)

There is also evidence that the police have been ensuring that Orthodox Jewish women who file reports with the police are interviewed by Orthodox female officers (38-39).

Yet despite suggestions of improvements, there is limited information or data available on a women's experience on going to the police. None of my interviews – except for the short quotes I provided above – could truly provide insight into the Orthodox women's experience. Diklas reflection on increasing cooperation reflects on the Orthodox Jewish community at large but **does not necessarily indicate an improvement in a victim's experience**. Orthodox women still face issues such as rabbis and community leaders turning a "blind eye" to abuse, and overall fearing the social isolation that will come with exposure.[137] Evidence of women's focus groups indicate a sentiment that the police will only respond to some needs in the Orthodox community.[138]

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[137] Batmelech, "In Israel's ultra-Orthodox community, abused women are finding a way out," "https://www.batmelech.org/in-israels-ultra-orthodox-community-abused-women-are-finding-a-way-out/?lang=en.

[138] "I personally feel that if I call the police they will not treat me as a decent person."; Ben-Porat, Guy, and Fany Yuval. "The Religious Factor: Ultra-Orthodox Jews." In *Policing Citizens: Minority Policy in Israel*. Cambridge University Press, n.d. 115.

In focus groups where they discussed police violence in demonstrations, Orthodox Jewish women viewed the police as far more violent than Secular Israelis. Those interviewed drew a connection between demonstrations and the lack of trust in domestic settings:

> No one complains [on sexual predators] because we will not receive the response we need from police. If we had the opportunity to reach out and receive the help, these people [predators] will be more afraid. Today, they can do anything they want (Hanna, women's focus group, Jerusalem).[139]

As a result of the sentiment expressed in the above article, ultra-Orthodox women launched an anti-domestic violence campaign just in 2019, whose mantra was: "if you are scared, that is not shlom bayit."[140] Thus, what we have as an indication that Orthodox women feel the need to advocate and encourage women in their community to reach out for support. Ultimately, in contrast to the secular Jewish community, Orthodox Jews seem to be showing increasing cooperation with the police on an equal level to that of the secular Jewish community. However, due to the sentiments expressed by the Bat Melech interviewees, as well as data indicating increasing cooperation, it seems that Orthodox Jewish access to the police is only at a slightly lower level than secular Jews, as they are only inhibited by collective-community based values.

Women without permanent legal status were mentioned in 4 out of the 21 interviews; one by a professor who is an expert on the field, two by Palestinian organizations, and one by a multi-cultural Shelter in Haifa. Professor Noa Diamond explained that women without permanent legal status exist in a trap in which they are dependent on their Israeli spouse for their visa and thus afraid to leave an abusive relationship. As a result, she might only complain when things are "really, really bad." If they don't have a visa, then Professor Diamond described how

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[139] Ibid., 164.

[140] Vardi, Alexandra. "Israeli Ultra-Orthodox Women Launch Anti-Domestic Violence Campaign." *The Times of Israel*, November 21, 2019. https://www.timesofisrael.com/ultra-orthodox-women-launch-anti-domestic-violence-campaign/.

they will already be worried about going to the police in fear of being arrested, on top of the fear of their complaint not being taken seriously. Professor Diamond also stated "I don't know what it would be like if an immigrant woman suffering only, quote unquote, from emotional violence, how the police would treat her. And if they would treat her differently than an Israeli woman coming with that kind of case, just because it rarely happens. They leave [their partner] only when they feel that their life is in danger, and they have no other they have no other choice." [141]

Other Jewish immigrant groups, who I still categorize as particularly vulnerable in Israel, despite their Jewish status, include the Ethiopian Jews, who were only mentioned in one interview. According to Edelstein, Ethiopian immigrant women in Israel experience the most amount of Inter-Partner homicide, and women are killed at 16 times the rate of the general population.[142] The study also concluded that Ethiopians, while coming from a patriarchal background, exhibit similar problems in the world of IPDV as other immigrants. Regarding the police, Ethiopians experience an interesting paradox. A study by Abu, Yuval, and Ben-Porat reveals that levels of trust in the police are higher among Ethiopian Israelis than veteran Jewish Israelis, but still, Ethiopian Israelis show negative perceptions of the police and feel levels of discrimination.[143] Thus, what we see is low trust, but desire for integration.

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[141] Note that women without permanent legal status primarily include Palestinians temporarily living in Israel, labour migrants, and refugees. Labor migrants are "foreign workers" working under legal work permits, and should be understood within the context of the global labour migration.

[142] Edelstein, Arnon. "Intimate Partner Jealousy and Femicide Among Former Ethiopians in Israel." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 62, no. 2 (June 20, 2016). https://doi-org.proxy.library.cornell.edu/10.1177/0306624X16652453.

[143] Ben-Porat, Guy, Fany Yuval, and Ofir Abu. "Race, Racism, and Policing: Responses of Ethiopian Jews in Israel to Stigmatization by the Police" 17, no. 5 (August 23, 2016). https://doi.org/10.1177/146879681666475.

In other words, we don't have the data or information to exactly point out the difference between a secular Jewish woman or a woman without permanent legal status and what the police reaction would be. Ultimately, an immigrant woman without permanent legal status is at once worried about her visa, dependent on her spouse, and thus trapped in her marriage – and thus only approach the police when they have no choice.

How do the narratives about Palestinians, Orthodox Jewish women, and women without permanent legal status compare to that of Secular Jews? [144] This leads us to our final section.

Evaluation of H1, Argument 3: Secular Jewish-Police Relations

Based on interviews with Israelis, there is a sentiment that police treatment of domestic violence is **improving**. I spoke to Itay, a social worker who works at a government-organization called Maftehot, a treatment center for perpetrators of violence. His perspective captured the perspective of multiple other interviewees. Six interviewees indicated that they believed there has been improvement and agreed with Itay. Eight Israelis indicated that there is still much to be done. He stated that the police are "changing," less "narrowminded," and starting to understand that domestic violence is not just like any other type of crime, but something that needs particular focus:

> "For example, they started to bring investigators that work with domestic violence, and give them special training. And one of the things they do in training is that they invite us to go and meet them, and talk with them and tell them about our perspective. And we go there with a patient that tells them about his experience and what he did [to his partner]."

The second half of the quote refers to how police officers are interacting with victims directly, which the organization Isha le Isha and WIZO also provided me an

[144] It should be noted that religious diversity varies in Israel. Explain that + why you are just focusing on Haredi Jews and not Conservative Jews, etc.

example of. Yet while there is an acknowledgment of the changing efforts of the police, there is still a pessimistic sentiment among Israelis. The Head of Legislation and Counseling at Na'amat, Gali, explained that despite attempts by the police, there are still ongoing issues. First, she sees inequity across the state by location, with Tel Aviv having more advanced police units compared to other cities. She stated that you might go to places "away from the center like Tel Aviv" and see things you thought police officers can't say anymore – things like "*why are you making him mad*" and "*maybe you can try to work it out."* Second, there is a rising belief that women are going to the police are falsely accusing their partners. Third, she expressed concerned about the current state of Israel: "But these...we're very much concerned that we will go backwards…"

Michal, a social worker at WIZO expressed a similar sentiment and introduced the idea of a "national authority" that centralizes all domestic violence services. She stated:

> "You believe that they have a strategy? I don't think that there is a clear enough policy. That is another [reason] why we need a national authority that will combine and integrate all the services, and the police will be there as well. And we need to train policeman, we need to train judges, we need to train others..."

Much of the improvement interviewees referred to is related to special police units that focus on domestic violence, a program approved by the Ministry of Homeland Security in 2017.[145] As part of the program, the police established family units in 15 police stations across the country, where investigators, officers, and social workers who specialize in sexual and domestic violence are all centralized. I was unable to access

[145] *Ynet News*. "Domestic Violence: A Unique Family Department Will Be Established at the Kfar Saba Police Station." June 17, 2020. https://kfarsaba.mynet.co.il/local_news/article/m_177584.

police interviewees from such special police units, however, a recent documentary released by Roni Kuban reveals the development of the unit and its limitations in helping women. It should be noted that this documentary does not include Arab or Orthodox Jewish women as part of the film, but rather solely focuses on secular Jewish women.

Kuban visits the Family Unit police station in Zevulun, Haifa, which oversees over 30,000 residents. They receive about 1,000 cases of violence per year. A conversation between Shirin, the Head of the family unit in the station, and Kuban reveals the nature of what the police are able to do in helping victims:

> Shirin: "You have to understand that the services of the police are limited. I don't have the ability to send a police officer to every woman who is in danger. We'll place put visits of police cars, we'll call her once a week...but there is no full coverage."
> Kuban: "if you know a woman is bound to be killed, can you promise her that she won't be killed?"
> Shirin: "I can't promise anything. I can promise to her that I will do my maximum, and the maximum of my investigators…in order to try and protect her. But I can't promise her anything."

At one point, there is a meeting between the head of the family unit, a social worker, a police officer, and a woman whose husband was being released from prison. In the documentary, we hear a life-threatening voicemail he left her after being released. She appears to be a secular Jewish woman, but her identity is hidden. Shirin explains that the only thing she can offer her is (1) a police car to visit her home three times a day (2) importing bars on her windows (3) adding cameras. The latter two are provided by the social welfare department. This means that if something were to happen between police patrol visits, they can't do anything about it. This leads Kuban to ask:

> "how can it be that a woman that is so assertive, sober-minded, that does everything possible after years of hell, that she is living with him, and she's already divorced him**, how can it be that she is still the weak one in this story? The system keeps her weak. That's the horrible thing.**"

Robi Kuban and other famous journalists in Israel produced documentaries covering the stories of Michael Sela, Shira Isakov, and Diana Raz. It is important that these were secular Jewish women, and just like in the short documentary described above, there is limited to no discussion about the limitations and differences in access to resources for women of different cultural backgrounds. These are the stories that according to Itay, the first interviewer I introduced in this section, have motivated the public and politicians to want to make a change.

The stories of Michal, Shira, and Diana are chilling narratives that expose the red flags that can arise in marriages, as well as the lack of state resources available to these women, despite their identities. For Michal Sela, there had been no previous interaction with the police or organizations. [146] Her family stated that "they were a couple in love and we didn't notice anything unusual. It's a tragedy." [147] Then suddenly, in October of 2019, her husband stabbed her 11 times in front of their baby daughter. Shira Isakov survived an attack by her husband in September of 2020.[148] Her story even made the New York Times. She had previously submitted a complaint to the police a year into their marriage when he hit her for the first time. Diana Raz also "sparked a national reckoning" over domestic violence when she – as a woman who had worked on domestic violence

[146] Rabinowitz, Aaron. "Israeli Man Indicted for Brutal Murder of Wife in Front of Baby." *Haaretz*, November 13, 2019. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2019-11-13/ty-article/.premium/israeli-man-indicted-for-brutal-murder-of-wife-in-front-of-baby/0000017f-f1ab-d487-abff-f3ffcf890000.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Kershner, Isabel. "Stabbed 20 Times by Her Husband, She Now Fights Laws Favoring Abusers." *The New York Times*, December 3, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/world/middleeast/israel-shira-isakov-domestic-violence.html.

cases and how to form better relationships with partners – was beaten and shot by her husband in front of her three children.[149]

To conclude, the secular Jewish community is facing an entirely different battleground when it comes to domestic violence. First, there does seem to be increased acknowledgment of issues as seen by the rise of media coverage of the stories of women. Second, my interviews show that a lot of people see improvement in the police service. Third, the more secular Jewish demographics has not focused on the issues faced by Palestinian or women without permanent legal status – either because they do not have enough information on it, or it is not a topic they want to delve into. In contrast, it should be noted that in my interviews with Palestinians, most did not bring up different forms of violence nor mention "improvements" with the police. I also noted some of the limitations of my data: first, there is not enough evidence from the Orthodox Jewish community of what access for women is truly like, and if it is less than that of Secular Jews. The same is true for women without permanent legal status, who were rarely brought up by my interviewees. As a result, I find moderate support for H1.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Jewish Orthodox women are more likely to have access to the state with respect to domestic violence compared to Arab-Israeli and vulnerable immigrant groups.

In H1, I found three important findings about the Orthodox Jewish community; first, that there is little evidence to compare Orthodox Jewish women to Secular Jewish women. Second, that there is some overlap when comparing Palestinian and Orthodox communities. Third, there is an indication of some broader improvement in police-

[149] Schwartz, Yardena. "Diana Raz's Murder by Husband Sparks National Reckoning over Domestic Violence." *The Times of Israel*, n.d. https://www.timesofisrael.com/diana-razs-murder-by-husband-sparks-national-reckoning-over-domestic-violence/.

orthodox relations outside of the realm of IPDV. In H2, I seek to answer the following questions: despite the similarities that might exist between minority communities, does the citizenship status of the Orthodox community change the victim's experience? Does it allow the Orthodox community to better reach the state in contrast to Palestinians and vulnerable immigrant women?

In H2, access to the state can broadly be interpreted as access to the police, state-sponsored organizations, and politics. My interviews did not compare the Orthodox and Palestinian community other than the one quote provided by Professor Shebar-Shapira in H1, in which she states that both groups are closed off. Thus, I will evaluate H2 using research papers and media sources. Support for H2 would mean that despite collective-based community values, there are improved relations in the relationship between Orthodox Jewish women and the state due to their citizenship status. Support would also indicate that the citizenship status of Palestinian and immigrant women leads to less access to the state. If there is substantial overlap between the three demographics, despite differing citizenship status, then H2 will receive low support.

As I began to explain in H1, there is increasing cooperation between the Orthodox Jewish and Secular community; cultural sensitivity-based practices, while looked down upon by the Palestinian interviewees, is more "embraced" by the Orthodox Jewish Community. According to Ben-Porat, for Orthodox Jews, "the idea that the state and its institutions would respect their way of life was expected."[150] Ben-Porat continues to show the example of Orthodox Jews:

[150] Ben-Porat, Guy, and Fany Yuval. "The Religious Factor: Ultra-Orthodox Jews." In *Policing Citizens: Minority Policy in Israel*. Cambridge University Press, n.d. 165.

> Cultural sensitivity, as one of the participants explained, could be summarized in one word: "Modesty. That is all you need to know" (Shira, women's focus group, Jerusalem). This related not only to the way officers approach Haredi women and the required discretion described above, but also to the objection to women police officers patrolling the Haredi neighborhoods, especially when paired with male officers or wearing pants. [151]

Overall, in comparison to Palestinians and even Ethiopians, Orthodox Jews seem to "less concerned as individuals of being targeted and arrested of vulnerable to crime, and more concerned as a group regarding police behavior in demonstrations."[152] This is because Orthodox Jews are not as likely to be subject to racial profiling, as Ben-Porat explains, but rather have the privileges of "being part of the Jewish collective." Further, interviews showed the community was less concerned with questions about the security apparatus and the overlap between the police and the military. Thus, while there was a level of concern towards the police on a collective level, it did not exist on an individual level, as I saw with interviews with Nalia, Lamia, and Nisreen in H1.

This is closely related to the citizenship status of Orthodox Jews. Ben-Porat argues that they have what he terms "reluctant" citizenship – meaning, they have increasingly been integrated into the labor market and higher education, been exposed to consumer culture, have embraced culturally-sensitive community practices, have shown empathy towards the state in times of terrorist violence – but still showed preference to their community and slight distrust with the police. This contrasts with the Palestinian and immigrant groups who face different citizenship hurdles and exclusion from the state. According to Kritzman-Amir, "citizenship status" has a strong impact on exclusionary attitudes compared to "ethnic origin" – meaning labor migrants without permanent legal

[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid., 114-115.

status faced the highest amount of discrimination and suspicion, followed by Israeli Arabs.[153] This translates into the realm of IPDV; a study in 2006 with 78 Jewish Israeli social workers found that trainees felt more threat when treating an Arab client in comparison to Jewish Ultra-Orthodox clients, and "expressed concern that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would impact negatively" on their encounter.[154] This attitude is coupled with the lived reality of citizenship status for Palestinians in Israel such as lower levels of education, reduced employment, lower socio-economic backgrounds, and less access to municipal services in mixed cities.[155]

Women without permanent legal status, in turn, face another legal issue that keeps their citizenship status in an uncertain place. In 2007, Israeli implemented a regulation that allowed non-citizens who were victims of domestic violence and had left their abusers to obtain permanent status. However, research has shown that this regulation has still not been implemented, and instead there has been increasing reluctance by the state to allow non-citizens to stay. [156]Advocates such as Naomi, Professor at Tel Aviv University, argue that this is due to the misreading of the 2007 Regulation, and an

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[153] Raijman, Rebeca. "Citizenship Status, Ethno-National Origin and Entitlement to Rights: Majority Attitudes towards Minorities and Immigrants in Israel," n.d.
[154] Baum, Nehami. "It's Not Only Cultural Differences: Comparison of Jewish Israeli Social Work Students' Thoughts and Feelings about Treating Jewish Ultra-Orthodox and Palestinian Israeli Clients" 31, no. 5 (September 2007): 575–89.
[155] Robinson, Kali. "What to Know about the Arab Citizens of Israel." *Council of Foreign Relations*, March 9, 2023. https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-know-about-arab-citizens-israel#:~:text=Arab%20citizens%20have%20the%20same,experts%20attribute%20to%20structural%20discrimination.
[156] Webber, Irit. "You Shall Note Mistreat Her." *Hotline for Refugees and Migrants*, August 2018. https://hotline.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Eng-WEB-HRM-IRAC-Domestic-Violence-2018.pdf. 47.

indication of just how "cynical" the Ministry of Interior is for creating "narrow interpretations of the law."

> "What they [the ministry of interior] do is just interpret their definitions in the courts definitions in such a narrow way that barely anyone crosses a threshold…But our, our problem is with their interpretation. And also with the process… the bureaucracy is a nightmare. We're not talking, like finishing this thing within a few months, we're talking, leaving the husband, going to a shelter, applying for humanitarian status. And then the whole thing takes years, first of all, waiting for a decision can take. I had clients that were waiting for two, three years for an initial decision. And they keep you know, renewing a temporary visa all the time while waiting. And, and then after three years, the Ministry of Interior gives a decision and they say, well, you're fine now."

According to data from the Social Services Ministry, 12 percent of the women who lived in shelters due to domestic violence lack legal residency, which is 87 out of 723 women. Of these, 44 had foreign passports, 13 arrived with documents from the Palestinian Authority – and the rest lacked documentation. Despite this data, the Ministry of Interior has excluded "foreign" women, with most applications for "humanitarian status" rejected – since 2011, no applications have been approved for women without children. [157] Professor Noa Diamond explains that this is in part due to the courts not understanding the "ongoing consequences of trauma." In the Haaretz article in the footnotes, one woman's status was rejected "when the police representative on the committee claimed that "the father is not mentally healthy and the relationship between him and the minor is not in the best interest of the minor, and therefore it is recommended that they return to their country of origin in order to lead a normal and safe life." [158]

[157] Peleg, Bar. "The State Claimed That Foreign Women Who Suffered Violence Receive an Adequate Response. The Evidence and Data Tell a Different Story." *Haaretz*, December 6, 2021. https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/education/2021-12-06/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/0000017f-f763-d460-afff-ff672c2b0000?lts=1671909229825.
[158] Ibid.

This is coupled with the fact that the Ministry of Interior does not include foreign women in the Istanbul Convention, with concerns about granting resistant status to women without permanent legal status and providing compensation to victims of violence.[159]

Evidently, non-Jewish immigrants, particularly labor migrants, and women without status, face a unique set of citizenship challenges that further shapes the nature of domestic violence. I conclude that H2 receives moderate support due to the citizenship status benefits of the Orthodox Jewish communities that creates more security and access for victims, despite collective-based community beliefs that may indicate communities with the Arab community.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Organizations representing Jewish Orthodox, Palestinian, and vulnerable immigrant groups have less access to the police compared to organizations that represent more secular Israeli women.

To find support for H3, I need to find evidence from interviews and research on each organization that the above three demographics have less direct connections to the police than more secular Israeli women. This means that organizations representing Palestinians, Orthodox Jewish women, and women without permanent legal status, would have less direct relations with the police and less of the ability to connect with them, as opposed to organizations that represent the Jewish majority and might have more access to trainings with the police, referrals, and

[159] "Israel's New Government Agrees Not to Sign Istanbul Convention on Violence Against Women." *Haaretz*, December 26, 2022. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-12-26/ty-article/israels-new-government-agrees-not-to-sign-istanbul-convention-on-violence-against-women/00000185-4da2-d75d-a5d5-6fabc6570000.

immediate contact. If this is true, H2 will be supported. If I instead find that all groups have the same type and level of access, then H2 would not be supported.

In this section, I will focus on a few organizations per demographic. For the Secular-Jewish population, I will focus on WIZO, Na'amat, and No 2 Violence. For Orthodox Jewish women, I will focus on Bat Melech. For Palestinian women, I will focus on Assiwar, WAVO, the Kayan Center, and Na'am. For women without permanent legal status, I will focus on the Haifa women's shelter and Isha le Isha, the two multi-cultural shelters in Israel.

In my first interview with Professor Shebar-Shapira, she explained to me that from her perspective, the police are not a "crucial participant in the game of family violence." She stated that many time the finger is pointed to the police, when in reality domestic violence is a complex issue that the police cannot always handle – particularly when it comes to verbal, emotional, and economic violence. As a result, she expressed that the police "is not our problem and the is not our solution." Focusing too much on the police creates too much of an idea that perpetrators of violence are "criminals," and that the police need to "take care of them." She goes on to state:

> "There is 200,000 abusive men in Israel, and they're not criminals, they are husbands and fathers and they work in places, and they walk here and they may be my neighbor and my father and my brother. And all the time looking what the police is doing wrong, means we are not looking at what we are as a society doing wrong. "

I include this as a reminder that the police only form one part of the actors who take part in domestic violence prevention. However, it is still important to evaluate (1) in cases where organizations do need to contact the police, are they able to do so successfully? (2) do they focus on building closer relations with local police officers or local stations to improve police responses to domestic violence victims? Even though the police don't always play a role in domestic violence assistance and prevention, these interactions are important to analyze, and

further, the way these interactions across demographics differ will perhaps indicate why or how different demographics have different levels of access to the police.

Among the Jewish Israeli organizations, there overall seemed to be improvement in police interactions and more established connections, although they were slightly different for each. Michal from Wizo explained that WIZO has social workeres employed in police stations, who I attempted to contact. Unfortunately, they were not willing to be interviewed. There is also the social workers who work in WIZO shelters who go to the police when needed, acting as "os mishtara." WIZO also mentioned that they were interested in holding trainings with the police but in recent years have not succeeded, and thus have instead turned to focus on training with professionals, lawyers, and educators. In my interview with Gali from Na'amat, they had succeeded in holding lectures with the police in the academic and have had high officers visit the shelter for lectures. Similar to WIZO, she stated that Na'amat interacts closely with the police in high profile cases, and the legal advisors in the shelters works closely with the police on a daily basis. Ruth Resnik from No 2 Violence described a "close connection" with the police as well as a series of lectures, seminars, and workshops with police officers and even the IDF.

Bat Melech, as an organization representing Orthodox Jewish women, in turn stated the following:

> " But our work has nothing to do with the police, at all...it could be that a woman arrives here, and she didn't even complain in the police about the violence. Does this mean there wasn't violence? No, it doesn't say anything. It could be that she was scared that she didn't see someone in the police who can help her, and for most...we don't go in. Meaning, we will tell her that she has gone through very difficult violence, and we will ask if she wants to complain in the police, but we will not force her. We have no direct connection to the police to tell her "okay, go to this or that police officer and complain." In other words, the interaction with the police is at a minimum because Orthodox Jewish

women face such a variety of violence that the police will not always recognize a victim's case. Sometimes the police can refer a woman to a shelter and she doesn't even need to be in the

shelter. During our interview, Illanit gave me one specific example of a woman who was sent to the shelter after her husband broke into her home. She was already separated from her husband at the time, but instead of putting a restraining order, the police told her to come to the shelter:

> But the fact that the police told her to arrive here doesn't mean that she really needed...it's like she understood that if she arrived here, the police will recognize her complaint, but that doesn't really mean much. It's like you arrive here in order to be safe, but she arrived here and felt like she was in some sort of jail.

Noach Korman, the Director of Batmelech, told me in our interview that they do conduct trainings with the police, but did not specify the type of training that is held or the extent that it is held at.

Palestinian organization interactions with the police are primarily through two avenues: escorting a woman to the police or tracking complaints. Aside from that, there is no evidence of trainings or relationship-building. However, more than all other organizations, the Palestinian women heavily emphasized the way in which they directly – as directors of the organizations – interact with the police for the sake of the women they represent.

The Kayan Center, located in Haifa, provides support to victims of violence through three steps, as described by Nisreen, the Hotline Coordinator of the center. First, through emotional support as a form of preparation prior to going to the police. As Nisreen states, "she needs to know what she deserves, what they [the police] are not allowed to ask, what they need to give her..." Second, they escort the women to the station. A woman might need an escort because she feels its hard to go to the station by herself; she might be afraid, shy, or not have full control of the language. According to Nisreen, even if the investigator speaks Arabic, she might go in with her to the investigation room. Legally, she is not allowed to talk, but can ask for permission to translate. Nisreen told me exactly the words she will say to a victim before entering the room:

> "I tell her – if there is something you don't understand, you can ask, and I will ask for permission to translate, not just in terms of language, but the content of what they are

> saying... If you feel like you can't breathe and is breaking down, hold my hand, and I will understand that I need to ask to take a break, to drink water, and to come back."

According to Nisreen, just her mere presence will force the investigator to look into the case more closely. The third part of police interaction is keeping track of complaints. For example, if a case is closed without reason, or closed due to "lack of evidence," then Nisreen and the legal aids will get involved – they will call, send letters, ask to open the case again, demand to know exactly what type of evidence has been collected. They will confirm whether the perpetrator of the violent act has been investigated, or if the police "just said they did."

Assiwar, the sexual violence prevention organization, explained that while many other organizations try and work with the police, they do not, since as Lamia explained, "the complaint to the police is always disappointing, always disappointing, alas the situation in the country is a situation of chaos." She instead focused on the overall difficulties of accessing the police at all, but when needed, a volunteer will escort a woman to the police. However, usually, Lamia finds "alternative paths." My interview with Nalia from WAVO revealed that she personally had a similar disappointment and hopelessness that Lamia held ("But now, with the racism and fascism of Ben Gvir – of course I won't participate.") However, WAVO engages with the police primarily by escorting women to make sure they know their rights; assisting women who go to court. Nalia also mentioned Arab social workers that work within the police stations, which she described as something that gives her "hope" and lowers the barrier for entrance to the police.

Na'am, the Arab women's organization located in Lod, is led by Samah. I was unable to interview her since she runs Na'am as part of her part-time job. The second time I contacted her for an interview through voice-memos on WhatsApp, she was unable to respond due to a violent incident that erupted with one of the women and she described that she had been at one of the police stations still late at night. One of the American volunteers at Na'am, Judy, was able to talk

to me instead and described to be in part the nature of police-community dynamics. Samah, according to Judy, has to work on both side. First, in terms of building trust with the police so that Arab women feel comfortable approaching the police in Lod, which is difficult due to all the reasons explained in H1. She is trying to reform the system, overall, so an Arab woman receives equal justice as a Jewish woman. On the other hand, as Judy states, "she is also the person who of a life of a women is threatened, they're calling the police," because sometimes she "has no choice." She will work with the police, on her own, and even call five times just to get a response. Samah, as the leader of Na'am, also holds the view that Lamia and Nalia have, which is that a woman who faces violence faces a variety of issues at once – and they need to approach it holistically.

Finally, in terms of women without permanent legal status, the multicultural shelters explained of Isha le Isha and the Haifa Women's center had basic interaction with the police through the Social Welfare Department. Since there are not any DV-specific organizations that focus on women without permanent legal status, it is difficult to evaluate the organizational relation to the police for this demographic.

In conclusion, it seems that Jewish organizations have more established relationships with the police. Palestinian organizations do not have established connections and instead are more based on escorting/immediate support for women who have no other choice. Based on all the interviews, however, they were able to offer the most concrete details of day-to-day police interaction, while Israeli Jewish women were not involved with the police as much daily. Bat Melech, as the only case for Orthodox Jewish women, has training with the police but workers at the shelter seem to interact with the police at minimum.

As a result, H4 receives low support. Instead, I would conclude that Secular Israeli and Jewish Orthodox organizations have more established connections to the police, while Palestinian organizations have more informal connections to the police primarily by working with women on a case-by-case basis. This might have also been because the people I interviewed who were Jewish are part of large organizations, while three of the four Palestinian organizations I focused on are grassroots-based. In a grassroots environment, volunteers and workers get the opportunity to closely interact with a woman's case and advocate for her to the police. The Jewish Israeli interviewees did not have this experience, and/or worked in a strong, well-funded, bureaucratic setting win which their interaction with the police is not needed due to the involvement of the social welfare department.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Jewish Orthodox Groups, Arab-Israeli, and vulnerable immigrant groups are more likely to turn to women's organizations as their first source of access as opposed to the police.

To find support for H4, I focus on three arguments. First, if I find that Palestinian, Orthodox Jewish, Palestinian, and women without permanent legal status turn to community-based advocacy groups at higher rates than they turn to the police, then H4 will receive strong support. If I instead find that these three demographics turn to community-based advocacy groups at lower rates or at an equal rate, then H4 would not be supported. Second, based on interviews with leaders or members of each organization interviewed, all three demographics must find it easier to turn to community groups. If I instead find that some groups prefer to turn to the police, then H4 would not be supported. Overall, strong support of H4 would indicate that community-based organizations act as vital mediators between victims and the police, and more broadly of the state, and thus would support my theory about the role of women's organization in providing IPDV services in Israel.

Evaluation of H4, Argument 1:

As I explained in the Case-Study and Methodology Chapter, each organization I interviewed is different, ranging from grassroots-based to state-funded shelters. All of the organizations I interviewed, even the state-funded shelters, also provide supplemental community support that a woman can access for free. For example, while WIZO has a shelter, they also have a 24/7 hotline for any woman in crisis. For an organization like Na'am Arab Women Center, they have an open-door policy where any woman can join any of the initiatives, primarily because it's already structured as a grassroots organization. However, for organizations that are provided funds by the state, there is a level of bureaucracy involved – meaning, a woman who faces violence cannot just walk into a shelter. First, she must be referred to it by either the police or the Social Welfare Department.

This was not always the case. However, once shelters transitioned from being completely grassroots to being supported by the state in 1983, each shelter had to meet certain professional requirements. By 2002, when Israel became more of a market-based economy, the Ministry of Welfare and shelters switched to a Tender-Based system where shelters worked with the Ministry through state contracts.[160] Thus, many Jewish-based shelters in Israel are restricted by the types of staff that can work, the amount of money received from the state, and when and how a woman can access them. This contrasts to grassroots-based initiatives like Assiwar, Na'am, and the Kayan Legal Center.

As a result of the existing structure of IPDV services, it is difficult to measure whether a woman is more likely to approach organizations as opposed to the police. When it comes to accessing shelters, she must go through the police or the ministry of social welfare which will

[160] Hofnung, Tamar. "The Politics that Shape DV Policy in Israel." Powerpoint Slides at Youtube, May 18, 2022.

determine whether or not she needs a Shelter. Most organizations could not provide me with data on the number of women who approached their organization, thus making it nearly impossible to compare numbers to data published by the Israeli National Police force. Further, another important data point would be measuring the type of violence a woman goes through – and whether she approaches an organization or the police. This includes physical, emotional, verbal, or economic abuse. As a result, argument 1 of H4 receives no support. I cannot measure the rate in which a woman would approach the police as opposed to an organization. Instead, we can understand whether a victim might find it easier to approach an organization based on the stories of domestic violence victims and through the narratives provided by women who work in organizations, which will be the focus of Arguments 2 and 3.

Evaluation of H4, Argument 2:

In this section I will first evaluate the experiences of Orthodox Jewish women in approaching community-based sources as opposed to the police. I will begin this analysis with my interview with Illanit from Bat Melech. When I asked Illanit about the connections of Bat Melech to the police, she responded that she does not interact with the police much. From her perspective, her work is entirely separate from law enforcement, because the shelter focuses on issues that the police do not even address:

> "The fact that she [a victim] arrived here does not mean that if she goes to the police that they will recognize her complaints…a lot of people who come here go through emotional violence, economic violence, which are not recognized by law."

She proceeded to provide an example in which a woman was referred to the shelter by the social welfare department or by the police. The social workers at the welfare department conduct a "danger" test that evaluates how at risk a woman is, in which case she can avoid going to the police at all. This shows that the police cannot always be relied upon by women to provide

security in cases of non-physical violence, and that organizations like Bat Melech offer a more wholistic treatment plan.

At the same time, Illanit explained that a shelter is not always an attractive option for victims. As she states, "maybe in English, the word shelter is better, but in Israel, there is a connotation of war, of a basement, and so it's not a good connotation." Overall, it is a difficult experience for a mother and her children to pick up their lives and move to a shelter.[161] Additionally, sometimes women believe that leaving their partner will "break their spirit, their connection to God," leading her to stay in the harmful relationship. As a result, social workers like Illanit need to explain to women what a shelter is to begin with, and offer her not only a sense of safety and religious security. By creating a strictly religious space, the shelter is "accepted" by rabbis, and thus a woman feels she is "allowed" to enter without being ostracized by her community. As a result, in order to maintain the security and promise of religious space approved by rabbis, a woman who comes to Bat Melech must maintain the Sabbath, wear a head coverage, dress modestly, and be secure in her religious identity. As a result, interviews with ultra-Orthodox Jewish women who had been in shelters reveal that the majority viewed the shelter as a positive, strengthening experience.[162]

Outside of the shelter, Bat Melech also provides resources that allows members of the community to interact with the organization without the welfare department or the police, thus

[161] As written by a young girl who was in a Bat Melech shelter with her mother: "Why me? A young girl of thirteen had to leave the city she grew up in. Her home. Her school. Her neighbors. All this to move to a shelter? I screamed at my mother that she did not know what she was doing. That she was ruining our family" (https://www.batmelech.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2021-Bat-Melech-Social-Impact-Report.pdf)

[162] Shechort-Bitton, Mally. "A Glimpse into the World of Battered Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Women in Israel: A Follow-up Study on Women Who Resided in a Shelter." *Health Care Women Int.*, January 2014. 10.1080/07399332.2013.862793.

serving as mediators. For example, a phone number is available on the website for free legal consultation meetings, in addition to a Hotline. The organization states that this is provided because normally, Orthodox women "do not take advantage of the social services that are available to abused women" because of the stigma associated with welfare services, distrust of non-religious services, and the affect it will have on their family. As a result of the difficult in approaching state services, Bat Melech also created the "Itach" Project, which establishes "ambassadors" who are volunteers from the community to assist women suffering from violence and act as a close, safe mediator when a woman does not know where to turn.[163]

While I cannot gather direct evidence from Orthodox Jewish female victims to know the extent to which they find it easier to approach organizations as opposed to the police, my interview with Illanit, as well as my research on services provided by Bat Melech, indicate that the organization fills in vital gaps in the community. Indeed, just in 2023, $214,000 was needed just for the legal and social team staff working on the emotional and legal helpline as was as the legal materials, supplies, and overall maintenance.[164] Combined with evidence about orthodox Jewish women experience in approaching the police as discussed in H1, it seems that it is easier for Orthodox women to approach Bat Melech as opposed to the police. The recent creation of projects such as "Itach" is also evidence that the organization itself acknowledges the needs of the community.[165]

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[163] The website states that the project "received the blessing of rabbis, Rebbetzins, therapists, and marriage counselors." Batmelech, "The Itach Project," https://www.batmelech.org/the-itach-project/?lang=en.

[164] https://www.batmelech.org/financial-reports/?lang=en

[165] While the focus of this hypothesis is on Orthodox Jews, it should be noted that as gathered from my interviews, Judaism doesn't just affect the lives of Orthodox Jewish women. Even for more "secular" Jewish women, Jewish values shape societal expectations of marriage and partnerships. This influence how people view women in abusive relationships, how the women

The case of Palestinians indicates two key ideas: that the two Arab shelters in Israel are essential resources for Palestinians, and that community-based resources are not only an alternate option from the police, but are often preferred over accessing the police. Lamia, director of Assiwar, explained that because of her direct connection to the community, she is able to assist women in ways that the police cannot by calling the perpetrator of the violent act directly:

> "We find alternative paths to deal with the issues. I am capable of calling a man and telling him, "*you having something to lose if you continue to threaten this woman*," because I go into his Facebook and Instagram, and I look for what he can miss. There are some who have nothing to lose. There are some instances when the man, the abuser, his status on Facebook is with a gun; what can I do in this instance? I know that also the police can't do anything because they don't want to do anything."

Assiwar specializes in providing sexual violence services, which Lamia explained significantly intersects with domestic violence. As she states, "you cannot today say domestic violence is to one side and sexual violence is to the other...everything is hybrid." As a result, they broadened their mission of just focusing on domestic violence; they thus provide a hotline, anonymous online chat service, education projects, psychological and legal support, etc. Because

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view herself, and further the types of services available to her. If a woman, as Illanit explains above, is experiencing non-physical violence – will she even recognize the verbal violence as abuse? Will the police recognize emotional abuse, when it arises? As Professor Shebar-Shapira explained in an interview with me, Judaism shapes the idea the "the family is sacred...that you shouldn't break it or change it and not divorce," as well as the importance of having at least three or four kids. A criminologist and social worker, Sakrelet, who works with WIZO, added to this narrative by explaining the way the IDF contributes to a particular "chauvinistic" culture that further shapes family dynamics, where men are taught to not share their emotions. This shapes the way both Israeli men and women view their role in relationships. This is exacerbated by the fact that the official definition of domestic violence in Israel does not include economic, verbal, or emotional violence. As a victim explained in a podcast titled "The Epidemic," "*What is there to do? What, will I break up a family based on the fact that he yells a bit? That he curses a bit? And how will it look? I couldn't run to the police stations...anyways, no one will believe me!*" (9:55, Episode 1)

they are not a shelter, they are built by volunteers and view themselves as fighting all types of oppressions at once. Lamia explained that their mission is not only to support Palestinian women, but women without permanent legal status, and people of the LGBTQ+ community.

Nalia, the director of WAVO, runs one of the only shelters available for Palestinian women. Because they receive state funding, her organization is not limited to being funded by volunteers. According to Nalia, Palestinian women do not want to be directed to just any organization. They will actively seek organizations oriented towards them. Nalia explains this is because shelters oriented towards Arab women provide specific services that Jewish-run shelters lack:

> "If I am a victim of domestic violence trauma, it is easy to speak in my native language...If I don't have someone to understand my native language or to communicate with me (letaksher), it can create a barrier. When the kids won't be integrated into their environment in the Arab community, they will miss out on their studies, and if they are in the shelter, it will create pressure for the same women who doesn't have people around her who speak her native tongue. And if her children don't integrate into the shelter, it creates pressure and barriers that can lead her to decide to leave the shelter and go back to her abusive husband."

Nalia explained that if an Arab woman is sent to a Tel Aviv Shelter, away from her community, and she has young children in school, the children will be "stuck"; they will either not be able to attend a new school or be forced to integrate into an Israeli school. Another layer to the experience of Arab women is the lack of trust with the police and state services in general. I asked Nalia about "cultural sensitivity" - meaning, is it possible that there are Israeli shelters to adapt strategies that will accommodate for their needs? Is there a way the police can better adapt to the needs of Arab women? This was her response:

> "There is no such thing as cultural sensitivity. In the Negev, their "cultural sensitivity" is that a woman should not leave to a shelter, but instead they bring her to the tribe leader - the oldest male in the tribe. He holds patriarchal values….In other words, instead of having the welfare department deal with the violence, they pay money to the

> tribe leaders to deal with the violence - but they send them [the women] to someone patriarchal, someone who will return her to the abusive husband.

As a result, it could be safer for a Palestinian woman to approach a shelter for Palestinians women in WAVO. They further offer even more free resources than Bat Melech and interact more deeply with the community, so that a woman doesn't have to wait to be referred by the welfare department in order to access a multiplicity of resources. According to the latest update on their website, in 2013, they received 780 approaches for sexual assaults and violence, 357 approaches for consultations, and provide 88 women with assistances through the judicial process.[166] A woman can call the WAVO hotline and be offered moral support, legal counseling, or escorts to the hospital, and be directed to the shelter if needed.

An organization such as the Kayan Center is similar to Assiwar in that it provides grassroots-level community support, with no questions asked.[167] When it comes to supporting victims of domestic violence, they provide a combination of hotline support and victim aid. As described on their website, the legal service is "essential" for the security of Palestinian women because many "are not economically independent and need support in the Arabic language." Additionally, they state that their lawyers bring a unique "feminist perspective to their work, and an intimate knowledge of the context and status of Palestinian women." The hotline runs seven times a week, and if there is something urgent, a woman can call at any time. As Nisreen, the hotline coordinator, explained to me – "we work in a holistic way":

> We try to understand all the issues that are tied to the violence, and thus me and Alhan, always talk together about every situation. Why? Because many times woman who come to us have a hard time expressing and sharing, because they do not know us on a personal level. We also feel, from the first referral, "you don't have to say your name, you don't

[166] WAVO, "The Crisis Center to Assist Victims of Sexual Assaults," https://www.wavo.org/en/posts/358-_%E2%80%A2_The_crises_center_to_assist_victims_of_sexual_assaults_.html.
[167] The Kayan Feminist Center, "What we Do," https://www.kayanfeminist.org/about.

have to give us your phone number, your city, you can speak with a hidden name. Until you feel secure enough, and you decide to share everything with us.

Thus, I find strong support for my second argument with an added qualifier: all three demographics find it easier to turn to community groups which are **already oriented towards their demographics**. In other words, a woman will not be able to turn to any shelter or any organization and find a solution, because each organization is structured differently. Despite not having access to surveys or exact data points that answer H4, I argue that I find moderate support because of the unique, demographic-specific services provided by each organization that will make it easier for women to approach community-based organizations more than the police. Another limitation is that I did not have interview-based information on immigrant women since there are no DV organizations in Israel that focus specifically on immigrant women or women without permanent legal status; further, they were not discussed enough interviews. This shows the overall lack of research available on vulnerable immigrant communities.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Palestinian women's groups are more likely to engage in political activism compared to Orthodox-Jewish women's groups.

To find support for H5, I must find evidence that Palestinian organizations engage in more political activism compared to Orthodox Jewish organizations, including but not limited to protests, parliamentary reforms, educational campaigns and/or trainings, collaboration with other organizations across Israel, and international advocacy. If Orthodox Jewish prove to have the same level of activism or higher levels of activism as Palestinian based groups, such as engaging in the same efforts for legislative change, then H5 would not be supported. To analyze Orthodox Jewish group advocacy, I will use Bat Melech as a case-study. To analyze Palestinian advocacy, I will focus on the Kayan Center, Na'am, and WAVO.

The case-study of Bat Melech revealed two themes. First, that political the organization engages in more domestic violence awareness rather than direct political activism. Second, that any sort of political engagement was contained to the field of IPDV legal rights in courts, but was limited to more "apolitical" topics. When I asked Noach Korman, the CEO and Founder of Batmelech, about political advocacy or legislative reforms Bat Melech focuses on, he did not have any examples to provide me with. Instead, he started off his response with the following explanation:

> "I think Bat Melech, we are seeing that in Israel, there are very good laws and different women's rights, there is no problem for women in Israel. There is the Jewish law that nobody has changed for thousand years...maybe there is a way to do it better, but by court system or civil law, okay? It has to come from inside. And of course, if there will be more awareness and pressure about the rabbinical system, they will maybe find some solutions..."
>
> "We are not acting against the system, but we try to find solutions to these problems and how we can defend women's rights and victims of domestic violence."

He continued on to explain that the problems faced by the Orthodox Jewish community is "same in Brooklyn, or in Toronto, or Buenos Aires," or in other similar places where there are "closed communities." This again signaled that Korman viewed the issue in the Orthodox Jewish community in Israel as something other Orthodox communities on a global level could relate to, rather than something "unique" in the context of Israel.

Despite the quote above, however, he also briefly mentioned the focus of the organization on educational awareness of domestic violence within the Orthodox community. This is part of a larger goal of increasing familiarity with the shelter so that it becomes less stigmatized. They also host lectures with medical professionals, the police, rabbis, family therapists, and others, as well as cross-disciplinary conferences with rabbis, social workers, and mental health

professionals to focus on prevention in the ultra-Orthodox sector. Korman himself created a booklet to cite the halakhic prohibitions of domestic violence.

Although Korman did not mention political activism, according to the Bat Melech website, representatives of Bat Melech engage in Knesset Committees and write articles for the larger Israeli public. They also engage in campaigns such as video testimonial campaign in which an Orthodox woman tells her story, the Jerusalem Marathon for Bat Melech, and other fundraising events. They hosted international collaborations with other Orthodox women's organizations in New York.[168] They held a meeting with the Minister for Communal Advancement and have "no doubts that we will have a lot of cooperation in the future."[169] Thus, there is engagement with politics and the international community, but it is within the confines of domestic violence awareness rather than "radical" advocacy or legislative advocacy for other forms of gender-based or group rights.[170] When I asked Illanit, a social worker at Bat Melech, about this activism, she was not aware of it and instead asked me for more detail. This signaled to me a disconnect between parts of the organization that manage social awareness campaigns and political engagement from those who provide direct services in the shelter. This was also a

[168] https://www.batmelech.org/impact-of-covid-19-on-domestic-violence-in-new-york-and-israel/?lang=en

[169] https://www.batmelech.org/the-minister-for-communal-advancement-met-with-bat-melech-leaders/?lang=en

[170] This is not to say that the Orthodox Jewish community does not engage in activism. In fact, organizations such as "Nivcharot" and "Kolech" advocate for more space for Orthodox Jewish women in politics. Nivcharot launched an anti-domestic violence campaign in 2019 with the slogan "if you are scared, that is not Shlom bayit." This was alongside their other forms of advocacy. Kolech focuses on other forms of gender equality, such as advocating for the right of women to serve in rabbinical positions. However, because these organizations are not defined as domestic-violence or gender-based violence advocacy organizations, I do not include them as a case-study. https://www.kolech.org.il/en/category/activism-and-public-discourse/.

contrast from larger Jewish organizations interviewed that were advocating for reform of the Istanbul Convention and the electronic bracelet, both of which are more "political."[171]

To understand Palestinian activism, I will focus on the Kayan Center, Na'am, and WAVO, organizations that engage in a variety of activism while also providing immediate support to Arab women. The Palestinian activist efforts have three key themes. First is the belief in the intersecting nature of issues that Palestinians face. In other words, the belief that violence is connected to other forms of oppression, including the occupation. Second, they are grassroots-based – even the state-funded shelters run by WIZO. Third, their activism is inherently feminist. The first theme was best captured by Nisreen, the Hotline Coordinator at the Kayan Center, who stated that they don't "have a preference" of focusing on some issues over others:

> "All of the issue of violence can be seen through a wide perspective. When I talk about religious courts, I am talking about violence. When I talk about education in the school systems, I am talking about violence. When I talk about arbitration procedure, I am talking about violence...violence against women is only becoming stronger, and also the data we get from the field and the referrals we get support [this]…so we had a decision, that across all subjects, we also raise the topic of violence – sometimes emotional violence, physical, economic, "cultural" violence, sometimes political violence."
> The Kayan Center uses a two-fold approach that focuses on community and legal work.

In both these efforts, they combine immediate service support with a broader mission of empowerment and political activism. The community work "mobilizes women to challenge gender discrimination at the levels of family, community and society" by encouraging women to participate in public life. Thus, they strengthen community organizing and civil society organizations run by Palestinian women. One of these projects includes addressing violence against women, but also women's health, land and housing rights, the rights of return, and

[171] "Israel's New Government Agrees Not to Sign Istanbul Convention on Violence Against Women." *Haaretz*, December 26, 2022. https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2022-12-26/ty-article/israels-new-government-agrees-not-to-sign-istanbul-convention-on-violence-against-women/00000185-4da2-d75d-a5d5-6fabc6570000.

women in local politics. They do this by hosting leadership trainings, providing frameworks of organizational collaboration, and supporting community organizing efforts. Evidently, they see violence as an intersecting topic, one that cannot be "separated" from other spheres that involve women's empowerment.

Their legal work includes free legal consultation and representation for Palestinian women. This includes informing women of their rights through the legal hotline and launching advocacy campaigns that "target key political and religious institutions." [172] Advocacy work in the legal sphere includes meetings with court officials and Ministry of Justice officials, high-court petitions, producing research papers submitted to the Knesset, launching campaigns to increase social pressure and awareness, and engaging with the media. For violence-specific focused advocacy, every year the Kayan Center creates a "local version" of the 16 Days Campaign against Gender-Based Violence by choosing a different theme every year and collaborating with organizations across the country. They conduct workshops, create social media posts, and spread the word about their past publications - such as a manual training about gender-based violence - and publicize video content.

[172] https://www.kayanfeminist.org/about

Figure 1: Kayan Center's 16 Days of Activism Protest Against Gender-Based Violence (Source: The Kayan Center)

The Na'am Arab Women's Center, located next to a small store in Lod, Israel, is entirely grassroots-based and operates at a lower capacity than the Kayan Center. In Arabic, Na'am translates to "yes we can," and is rooted in the same feminist, empowerment-based advocacy as the Kayan Center. Founded in 2009 by Samah Salaime, a social worker who specifically wanted to focus on Lod, Ramla, and Yaffo – mixed Arab-Jewish cities – it is run primarily by volunteers and on a "shoestring budget and tiny office in Lod." They offer direct assistance to any women who approaches the center, support groups for women and girls, training for various services in the Arab sector, legal advice, and smaller initiatives such as English lessons to young girls.

Because they are small, Judy, the volunteer I interviewed, described that Samah carries most of the responsibilities, even though leading the center is her part-time job. Similar to the Kayan Center, she combines immediate services to women with political advocacy, including demonstrations, publishing material, and advocating in the Knesset. According to Judy, there are "something like fifty women just in Lod and Ramallah who are considered living in danger...and

ten of whose lives are considered in immediate danger." She described what this experience is like on a daily basis:

> "I've taken phone calls from her when it's 3am her time, when she's dealing with a woman who needs to be removed from her home immediately, and when they don't know where to go to, they go to Samah. She's actually trying to get the organization to the point where other people will be doing those things."

Indeed, I was unable to interview Samah twice due to unexpected incidents in the neighborhood she had to address. The first time was when I visited, and Judy explained that Samah has been at the Police station for hours, assisting another woman. The second time was via WhatsApp message, when she was unable to respond to me due to "four incidents of shooting" and a woman who was injured next to the Na'am center in Lod, indicating the high level of crime and unique attention needed in mixed Arab-Jewish cities. For Samah, her international and domestic advocacy in the Knesset is part of her larger mission of changing how policy is written. In an article published on the Fathom Journal, she explains that programs for Arab women are often "copied from the UK or the US or from a Jewish city like Tel Aviv," which she argues cannot be applied in Arab villages. She goes on to explain:

> "There is a better way: policy and practice should emerge from the state's close engagement with Arab women. Yes, this needs to be done carefully, because sometimes the Arab communities are wary of cooperating with the Israeli authorities for fear of being accused of being 'traitors.' Yes, it's complicated. But the effort must be made or the Arab woman ends up trapped between her family, her community and the state."[173]

[173] Salaime, Samah. "Feminism in Israel | 'There Is a Place for Everyone in This Feminist Struggle for Life': An Interview with Samah Salaime." *Fathom Journal,* February 2018. https://fathomjournal.org/women-and-feminism-in-israel-there-is-a-place-for-everyone-in-this-feminist-struggle-for-life-an-interview-with-samah-salaime/.

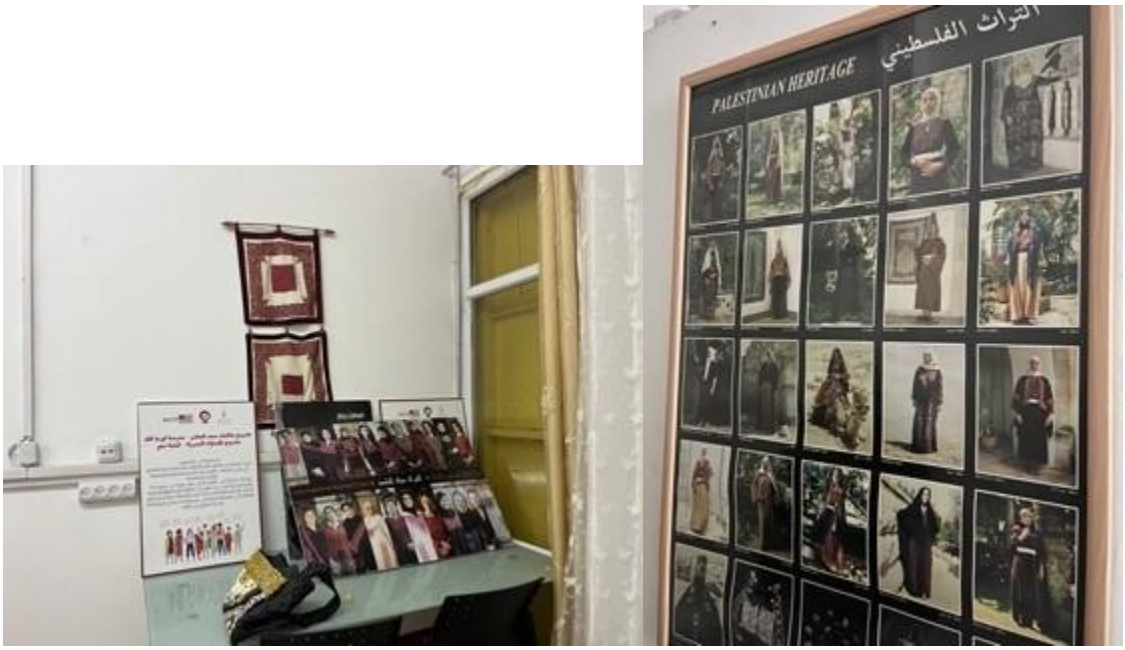

Figure 2: Images from Na'am Arab Women's Center in Lod, Israel.[174]

Besides the political activism, the center is overall a source of empowerment for women because it is rooted in activism and further a sort of departure from community expectations. A Palestinian woman at the center explained to me how she came to join Na'am, and how people in the neighborhood view their work:

> ""I went through violence when I was 18 years old, my ex, so I didn't have a place to turn to, didn't have someone to explain my experience to…It's very important for a place like this to exist. Listen, Na'am started 13 years ago, and before then, there was no women's rights center here, it was the first one to rise…you should know that from the perspective of the men, this organization is ruining women, that it's not good for women to arrive here, because they are developing, they know their rights, and it's better for them [the men] if we did not to go into all that."

WAVO, which is the Association of Women Against Violence, runs the only two Arab women's shelters in Israel. They opened the first shelter for Arab women and the first 24-hour crisis hotline in Arabic, as well as two halfway houses with government funding. However, although they do receive state-funds, the nature of their work overlaps with that of the Kayan

[174] The posters showcase women in the center wearing Traditional Palestinian Clothes, and Hand-Stitched pieces Produced by Women. Image source: Ainav Rabinowitz

Center and Na'am. The shelter is run with 2 permanent staff and 60 regular volunteers. Yet as they do this, the also engage in national and international advocacy to raise awareness about "the multiple levels of discrimination" Palestinian women face. This advocacy focuses not just on violence, but on women's political influence, participation in public life, workforce participation, and educational reform. WAVO also runs a media project within the Palestinian community to expand discourse about gender-based violence within the community, a men's project that creates discussion about masculinity. They've published research papers, such as a Shadow report on ICCPR to the Human Rights committee or research on Israeli polices. [175]

Like Bat Melech, WAVO also runs educational programs to host lectures in schools and train teachers. Even within the education sphere, however, there is a degree of politics involved. Nalia, the Director of WAVO, explained that in March 2021, the Ministry of Education sent out a form to organizations like WAVO that provide resources to schools. WAVO had to declare, in Nalia's words, that "Israel is a Jewish and democratic state…and that Independence Day is a day of joy and you are not allowed to remind that it is a day of Nakba and sadness. You are not allowed to participate in those sorts of activities." Nalia refused to sign the form, explaining to me that she cannot fight for gender-based violence without talking about the "state policy of the occupation." She criticized that other feminist organizations often focus solely on immediate issues without looking at the wider picture, which in her eyes, is the occupation. Without focusing on both, simultaneously, she argues we will never solve IPDV in Israel. This is why WAVO define their goals not only in terms of eliminating gender-based violence, but in terms of changing "the position of women in Palestinian society," deepen "the understanding of the

[175] https://www.wavo.org/en/rcat/1-publications.html

feminist ideology," and to "raise the status of women in the social, political, economic, and legal spheres."

In conclusion, while both the Orthodox Jewish and the Palestinian community engage in educational awareness and campaigns oriented towards fundraising or discussing violence as a phenomenon, there are two primary differences that makes Palestinian activism more political. First, Palestinian organizations engage in a variety of issues, not shying away from more "political" topics such as the occupation, women's representation in politics, women's employment, issues of crime, and discrimination. They also view these issues as intersecting with domestic violence rather than something "separate." Second, the type of activism in the Palestinian organization are far more expansive, including not just campaigns, but also demonstrations, international advocacy, and grassroots based efforts that aim to facilitate change both within the Palestinian community and Israeli society. H5 is thus strongly supported given the more political-based activism of Palestinian organizations compared to Bat Melech.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

My theory posits that there is unequal access to violence and prevention services - specifically in the realm of domestic violence - due to the intersecting nature of religion and citizenship status in Israel. I argue that both play a role in shaping access to the police and women's organizations, thus creating a hierarchy of access. Due to this hierarchy, I argued that organizations act as vital mediators between minority groups and the state. As explained in the Theory Chapter, I initially presented a two-by-two table of inclusive and exclusive citizenship status and low to high religiosity. Chapter five reveals my hypothesis are far more nuanced than the two-by-two table first assumed.

Summary of Findings

H1 and H2 revealed that Palestinian face the highest levels of barriers to access to the police. Through interviews with Israeli Secular Jews, my findings indicate a few key points. First, there is an acknowledgment of improvement with police-victim interactions, particularly with the development of Domestic Violence Police Units. Second, there are still some negative views of the police, but simultaneously, there exists a belief that the police are not the "primary" actors in the cycle of DV. This can especially be seen with the rise of organizations that were not incorporated into H1, such as Sheatifum and the Michal Sela Forum, which are NGO-initiatives aimed at creating a holistic approach to preventing violence.[176] Sheatifum created a coalition of government ministries, businesses, social organizations, academia, and community leaders; an initiative that essentially looks beyond the police.[177]

[176] The Michal Sela Forum was created by Lili Ben Ami, the sister of Michal Sela, who was murdered by her husband. The organization focuses on developing technological methods of IPDV prevention and hosts yearly "hakathons."
[177] https://sheatufim.org.il/en/ourwork/drawing-the-lines/

Palestinians still have a negative perception of police and low levels of trust, and view access to the police as challenging. This re-affirms what much of the literature on Palestinian-Police relations. However, H1 also revealed that Palestinians face systemic issues of crime management in their communities, and that the fall back on "cultural sensitivity" still has harmful effects on women today. Orthodox Jews, as a collective, have seen improved relations with the police. Victim-specific evidence on the Orthodox community varies, but overall, it indicates that Orthodox Jewish women are still affected by being in a closed-off community. Attempts at improved relations and police-community relations, however, are being made. Lack of information on vulnerable immigrant communities and lack of discussion on immigrants within my interviews reveals the complexity of immigrant-police relations are different for non-Jews and Jewish immigrants. Jewish immigrant communities face cultural-specific issues while also facing stigmatization and a desire for integration, as seen by Ethiopian Jews. Non-Jewish immigrants, in particular labor migrants or women without permanent legal status, face citizenship inequities that is discussed more in H2.

H2 reveals the significance of citizenship status. While Orthodox Jewish, Palestinians, and some immigrant groups face specific in-group cultural barriers to access to the police, such as the patriarchally and collective-family unit structure, citizenship issues for Palestinians, as well as barriers to recognition for women without permanent legal status after separation from Israeli partners, reveals that Orthodox Jewish victims might have more access to the state.

H3 revealed that organizational access to the police is more established for Jewish Orthodox and Secular Jewish organizations than for Palestinian organizations. Vulnerable immigrant groups are missed in both data points since I did not interview an organization that represents immigrants specifically. Based on interviews and case-by-case analysis of each

organization, Palestinian organization leaders were intimately involved in assisting women when there is a need to approach the police – in an informal way. They had established systems of escorting, some of which I witnessed during fieldwork. Israeli interviews were less directly involved with the police, since many of their organizations already had established social worker figures working in police stations, and/or collaborating with the shelters. Thus, I noticed a degree of separation from the Palestinian women leaders as opposed to interviewees working in WIZO. This reveals two key points. First, that organizations in Israel work at different capacities, with organizations such as WIZO and Na'amat working on an international scale, while Palestinian organizations – even WAVO, which receives state funding – works at a grassroots level.

Second, it reveals that Palestinians rely on informal mechanisms to support each woman on a case-by-case basis. There was a sense, throughout the interviews, that the Palestinian leaders in organizations (1) had no fear in approaching the police, (2) had criticism of the law enforcement access, yet (3) would do anything necessary to assist a woman who wanted to approach the police and hold her partner accountable. Overall, H3 and H4 reveal that women's organizations in Israel that focus on domestic violence are also focused on a **different set of conditions**. Meaning, when each organization is aimed at just addressing a specific demographic, they also face a different set of issues and focus areas. This was revealed by how different Palestinian organizations comments and interactions were with the police as opposed to Jewish organization leaders.

H4 reveals that Orthodox Jews, Palestinians, and immigrant communities are likely to feel more comfortable to turn to women's organizations before turning to the police. However, the type of organization heavily shapes how and who each demographic turns for assistance. In other words, they are likely to turn to organizations already oriented towards their demographic.

This reveals that there is a level of trust yet to be built between Jewish organizations such as WIZO and minority communities. Note that while Israeli Jewish organizations I interviewed stated that they are aimed towards "the entire state of Israel," they also lacked key components of accommodating different demographics, and/or the knowledge of how to answer questions about Palestinians or immigrant communities. This reveals how important community-based, free resources are for women who are not ready to enter a shelter, for women who experience forms of non-physical violence, and particularly for women from minority groups.

H5 reveals different priorities for Palestinian as opposed to Orthodox Jewish groups in terms of activism. While both engage in DV focused activism, such as educational awareness within the community, Palestinian organizations purposely engage in multiple forms of activism as a form of larger resistance to the state. The political engagement of Bat Melech was more limited to specific forms of court-based reforms. In contrast, political activism of Palestinian organizations was aimed towards larger state reform and justice for the Palestinian people. I further found that even Palestinian social awareness campaigns were political by nature, as seen by the quote provided by Nalia, the director of WAVO, who refused to sign a form that would recognize the Palestinian Nakba as Israeli Independence Day. Overall, politics was part of the daily work of Palestinians as opposed to a separate component of their work.

Is Israel a Unique Case? Looking at IPDV Today

One of the last questions of this thesis is whether this theory can be applied to other countries. In March 2001, the Israeli National Police co-sponsored a conference on "policing in multicultural" societies with the National Institute of Justice of the US Department of Justice. It was held in Jerusalem. A special issue was devoted to the topic with academic collaborators to submit an issue on the topic. The aim of the issue was to address the "challenge for the police in

multiethnic, liberal, democratic states." (11). The paper includes articles on Canada, England, Australia, Israel, USA, and Germany, in an interest to compare democratic states. The theory of this thesis centers on the intersecting nature of religion and citizenship status that creates not only a challenge for the police, but a challenge for victims of domestic violence to approach the police, and a challenge for women's organizations. In the context of Israel, where religion determines citizenship status, I argue that Israel's policing "challenge" is not aligned with other "democracies." Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Basic Nation State Law shapes the lives of non-Jewish women without equal citizenship status, and thus is not an equal context to the country representatives that attended the March 2001 conference. Rather, Israel's policing methods must be compared to other governments rooted in religious nationalism and increased militarization of law enforcement, two themes that on a larger scale, shape the interaction between victims, the police, and organizations. Ultimately, my interviews revealed that while there is an acknowledgment of the international crisis of domestic violence, there was also an acknowledgment of the unique context of Israel. Palestinians mentioned the occupation as the "unique" context, while Israelis mentioned the Israeli culture shaped by strong Jewish family values and the IDF.[178]

At the heart of this paper is a demand to closely analyze domestic violence in a state that is known for a "conflict" that has lasted over 60 years. It is further a demand to closely analyze the effect of religious-based-nationalism on citizenship status and rights. These two settings of

[178] Sakrelet, who works on educational awareness in WIZO, explained the following: "the army [shapes] the behavior that we want from kids…. [the army] wants a lot, the soul of them, okay? And especially the ones that are in the combat area…They need to be a warrior, soldier…in purim, they get costumes you know of brave soldier….most of the time we make the mistake that we say to the kids, you have to be a man and you have to be strong and after that, when they're growing up, and we get married with them. We say to them, Why aren't you talking? Why can't you express your emotions?"

state plagued by religious nationalism and consistent security conflicts, creates a unique and context for women facing violence at home.

If you conduct light research on "domestic violence in Israel," you will soon discover that the issue of IPDV in Israel has become mainstream. This thesis thus directly touches on some of the most urgent policy issues currently unfolding in Israel, namely the strike-down of a law proposal for electronic monitoring bracelets, the Istanbul Convention, and Netanyahu's changing coalition. The Electronic bracelet is a bill that allows the court to issue bracelets to a person it thinks are in "high danger" from a family member or if there is a concern that the perpetrator will break a restraining order. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir voted against the bill, leading women in the opposition party held the electronic bracelets in their hand and yelled out that "Women's blood should not be shed in vain."[179] Just on April 23rd, it was announced that the new bill introduced by Ben-Gvir would only allow bracelets for perpetrators who "have already been convicted of violence."[180]

Simultaneously, Itamar Ben-Gvir, the newly appointed National Security Minister, proposed a Police bill which expands his ability to control the police. The law would subordinate the Israel Police to the government and allows the Minister to "set policy regarding investigations," although the Israeli Police Chief stated that "the police is not the army."[181] This

[179] Breuer, Aliab. "Israeli Coalition Rejects Electronic Tags for Abusers Bill by One Vote." *The Jerusalem Post*, March 22, 2023. https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/politics-and-diplomacy/article-735089.

[180] *The Times of Israel*. "Ben Gvir Said to Defang Bill on Electronic Tagging of Domestic Violence Offenders." April 23, 2023. https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/ben-gvir-said-to-defang-bill-on-electronic-tagging-of-domestic-violence-offenders/.

[181] Williams, Dan. "Israeli Jurists Warn against Ben-Gvir's Bid for More Powers over Police." *Thomas Reuters*, n.d. https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israeli-jurists-warn-against-ben-gvirs-bid-more-powers-over-police-2022-12-14/.

coincides with weeks of protests in Israel over the judicial overhaul, now at 16 weeks.[182] Most Palestinians sit out of these protests.[183] Violence between Palestinians and Israelis continues.[184] Where does this leave women? The electronic bracelet monitor is a policy that most of organizations I interviewed actively advocated for, in addition to the Istanbul Convention. However, my thesis indicates that these two policies are only a starting point for wider recognition of the DV issues in Israel. My findings instead point to a need for organizational collaboration across demographics; eliminating "cultural" accommodations that leave Palestinian women vulnerable within their own community; as well as a lack of funding and resources available to Palestinian organizations. On the level of organizational change, there is also a need for improved integration. When I talked to the Director of the Haifa Women's Shelter in Israel, a Jewish Israeli woman, explained why organizations lack in multicultural accommodations:

> "I think that they [other women's organizations in Israel] don't want to. I don't think it's hard. It's a matter of will and awareness…It's more comfortable that Arab women will just be in a weak or lesser place; it's not as easy to place them in a position that is equal to you. In my shelter, I put in charge an Arab woman to work right under neath me, and people were shocked. How is this possible? She will tell the Jewish women what to do? Yes! What's the problem? It's not a problem for my workers either. The problem is external. They say, how can you sacrifice yourself? I'm not sacrificing myself at all, I chose the best and most appropriate professional."

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[182] *Thomas Reuters*. "Israelis Protest Planned Judicial Overhaul Ahead of 75th Independence Day." April 23, 2023. https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israelis-protest-planned-judicial-overhaul-ahead-75th-independence-day-2023-04-22/.

[183] Goldenberg, Tal. "Israel's Palestinians Mostly Sit out Democracy Protests," March 30, 2023. https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-netanyahu-protests-courts-overhaul-occupation-8a3d4cbe3c19074d24c9db82c990c946.

[184] Salman, Abeer, and Jo Shelley. "Palestinian Teen Killed, Israeli Woman Dies of Wounds as West Bank Violence Simmers." *CNN*, April 10, 2023. https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/10/middleeast/palestinian-teenager-israel-west-bank-intl/index.html.

Limitations and Future Research:

This thesis is limited in several ways. First, I was unable to interview police officers or gain access to domestic violence specific units in the country. Second, for most organizations, especially Jewish and Orthodox-based organizations, I was unable to access members who directly interact with the police, such as social workers in police stations. Third, the study would benefit from further incorporation of the victim perspective. As a result, the study is limited to the perspective of community organizers, a few academics, and social workers in other government organizations. I was also limited in terms of access to representatives of immigrant communities; thus, it would have benefited from further incorporation of organizations that focus on migrants and/or immigrants who could reveal IPDV dynamics.

Future research should focus on a closer study of police training and methods of approaching IPDV. Due to the lack of data collection on DV rates, a survey-based research study that looks at the number who approach the police or women's organizations as well as the type of violence encountered. Further, more demographic information should be collected on religious status, citizenship status, and ethnicity. A specific focus should be put on the Orthodox Jewish community, vulnerable immigrant groups, and Palestinians. A case-study of specific cities in Israel, such as mixed Arab-Jewish cities, would particularly be helpful. This thesis also covered a broad range of topics, and future studies could exclusively focus on just one aspect that I discuss: either just one demographic, one city, one organization, or one police station. Future research can also be oriented towards comparative analysis of how militarization, conscription, political violence, and security-based conflicts shape domestic violence. As Adelman states, IPDV must be studied from a holistic perspective that goes beyond just analyzing the marriage. My thesis shows the necessary collaboration between the state and

advocates on the ground, across demographics. In my three weeks of fieldwork in Israel, I understood that IPDV demands cross-field collaboration, and that as multiple interviewees stated, activism must be tied to the root cause of issues, rather than just immediately "covering the wound."

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Appendix:

Interview Questions:

Community Groups	Academics and/or "Experts" in the Field	Police Officers
1. Who are your main clients? From which communities and/or backgrounds? 2. How would you explain your main "role" in X community? 3. What values shape how you interact with victims within these communities? 4. To what extent do victims within your community access the police? Which groups of people are more likely to have access to the police and why? [SPECIFICALLY in X area, but feel free to expand] 5. Does your organization form connections with the police? In what ways? 6. Do you raise awareness about domestic violence in the broader community? How do you raise awareness about Domestic Violence?	1. What factors do you find to be most salient in shaping the experiences of women who face domestic violence, specifically in Israel? 2. How would you describe access to the police in Israel in the realm of domestic violence? Are you aware of their training? What might shape the attitudes and behaviors of police to different demographics in Israel? 3. What is the role of the community-resource groups and in the realm of domestic violence? What is the role of activists? Why/how does DV involve multi-disciplinary, multi-professional solutions? What are other important actors for women who face DV on a day-to-day basis? 4. How might community-resource groups/legal-aid	1. Who is involved in the Domestic Violence unit in the police station? How is it structured? 2. What does the process look like when a case comes in? What happens after? Can you narrate the sequence of events? What factors shape how you go about cases of domestic violence? 3. What sort of training did you go through when it comes to domestic violence or gender-based violence cases? Does training differ by community or region? How has training evolved over the past five years? 1. What are the overall strategies used in cases of domestic violence? 2. What types of cases of violence normally come in? What type of people are more likely to report to the police? 3. How does Israel's multi-cultural society affect your work and/or training? How do you go about training how

7. Do you engage in any activism? What sort of activism do you engage in more generally? 8. To what extent is your organization in touch with community leaders in cases of DV?	groups balance political advocacy while handling specific cases? 5. How would you describe the influence of politics in shaping the lives of women who face DV in Israel? 6. What are police-community relations like in Israel? How would you describe it compared to other countries? 7. What is one policy recommendation you would have to improve high rates of domestic violence? 8. What is data on DV like in Israel? What data have you collected? Do you have data on DV rates in Israel divided by demographics? 9. Do you have recommendations for other people to connect to who are active in community-based organizations/non-profit organizations?	to navigate different demographics/cultures? 4. How did COVID-19 affect your work as a ____ when it comes to domestic violence cases? What did you notice during the pandemic? 5. To what extent, if it all, do you interact with community-based organizations? In what ways? 6. What community organizations does the police work with when it comes to domestic violence? To what extent do you rely on community members to help bring cases to the police of domestic violence for specific cases of violence? 7. In what ways is the police looking to grow/expand in areas of addressing cases of DV?