THE MURABITÁT: A WOMEN’S CIVIL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT
IN THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

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ABSTRACT

THE MURABITÁT: A WOMEN’S CIVIL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT
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This thesis aims to discover reasons for the success or failure of civil resistance movements by focusing on a single case: The Murabitát. The Murabitát’s primary declared aim is to protect the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from the Israeli policies and Temple Mount activist’s endeavours, which they consider as threats to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and their right to worship. Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most contentious conflicts in the world and the contestation over Jerusalem and the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa has been one of the biggest obstacles in peace negotiations. In 2010, the Murabitát emerged out of the political void in Jerusalem; turned into an influential actor. Since the Murabitát movement is a locally based and issue specific organization that does not pertain to the governance of the society; it cannot be considered as a political organization. Drawing on seventeen video recordings including life histories of, and six interviews with members, organizers, and supporters of the Murabitát, this study conceptualizes the Murabitát as a civil resistance movement, because the movement has the three main traits of a civil resistance movement.
movement: being confrontational, civilian, and non-institutional. This study argues that, the women and men who lost their privacy in their lives due to the constant infringements of the authorities realized that the retrieval of their privacy requires a fight in the public sphere. This realization facilitated the emergence of the Murabitāt as a women’s civil resistance movement. The silent administrative policies of attrition by Israel and the wideness of the social distance between the Palestinian and Israeli societies blocked the civil resistance mechanism of backfire. However, building a new resistance identity and setting up transnational ties with civil society actors, the movement managed to galvanize the support of the masses.

**Keywords:** Civil Resistance, Israeli Palestinian Conflict, Women’s Movement, the *Murabitāt*. 
ÖZ

*MURABİTAT: KUDÜS ESKI ŞEHİR'DE BİR KADIN SİVIL DİRENİŞ HAREKETİ*

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toplum hareketleri ile ulus ötesi bağlar kuran hareket kitleleri harekete geçirmeyi başarmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sivil Direniş, İsrail Filistin Çatışması, Kadın Hareketi, Murabitât.
To My Beloved Mum
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AICE- American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise
CCTV- Closed Circuit Television
FOA- Friends of Aqsa
IM- Islamic Movement
PA- Palestinian Authority
PLO- Palestinian Liberation Organization
UN- United Nations
UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA- United Nations General Assembly
UNGA Res- United Nations General Assembly Resolution
UNSCOP- United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
UNSC- United Nations Security Council
GLOSSARY OF NON-ENGLISH TERMS

*Har HaBayit*- Temple Mount

*Har HaMoriyah*- Mount Moriah

*Haram al-Sharif*- Sacred Noble Sanctuary

*Jiu-jitsu*- defending oneself not by weapons but by exploiting one's own weaknesses or the opponent's strengths

*Minbar*- the pulpit from which the sermon is delivered

*Murabit*- the person who carry out *ribat*

*Murabitat*- the women who carry out *ribat*

*Murabitoun*- the men who carry out *ribat*

*Mutasarrif*- the governor of Jerusalem

*Qiblah*- the direction to which Muslims turn at prayer

*Ribat*- a stance of consciousness and preparedness against possible offenders

*Satyagraha*- Civil resistance

*Shin Bet*- Israel security agency

*Waqf, Aqaf*- Islamic charitable endowment

*Yom Yerushalayim*- Jerusalem Day

*Zawiya*- an Islamic religious school, a Sufi lodge
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on a single group, namely the Murabitât. The Murabitât’s primary declared aim is to protect the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from the Israeli policies and Temple Mount movements’ activities, which they consider as threats to the well-being of the Masjid and their right to worship. The Murabitât is a movement composed of women who are either Israeli citizens or Jerusalemites with no citizenship because these groups are the only Muslims who can have access to the Site without much trouble.¹ In the beginning, the Murabitât mobilized with the material and ideological support of the Northern branch of the Islamic Movement (IM). This study, with a broader aim of understanding the reasons for success and failure of civil resistance movements, focuses on the case of Murabitât. Regarding the Murabitât as a civil resistance movement, it will examine the extent to which the group was successful and explore the reasons behind the successes and failures of the movement relying on the civil resistance literature. The study also discusses the reasons behind the relative success of the women’s branch of the movement (Murabitât) in comparison to men’s branch (Murabitoun).

The group specified its main area of conduct and issue of concern as Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, which is one of the most contested spaces in the world. Haram al-Sharif- Masjid al-Aqsa / Temple Mount is the trapezoid, walled-in area located in the southeast angle of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Holy Site hosts Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque and also around 100 different structures dating back to various periods, including great works of art like prayer spots, arches, minarets, fountains. The site has been considered as a sacred space in three monotheistic religions. For the

¹ Under the Israeli rule, Palestinians have been facing increasing numbers of restrictions on their movement into Jerusalem and into al Haram al Sharif. When the First Intifada began Israel imposed a closure on Jerusalem, which later culminated in the standard policy. Palestinians without Jerusalem ID have to apply for permits to be able to enter Jerusalem. The process of obtaining a permit is lengthy, arbitrary process while the decision of granting or not granting the permit is not produced through clear procedures.
Jewish and Islamic tradition, it is also known as the place where the Prophet Abraham offered the sacrifice of his son Isaac. For Jews, it is the site of the first and second Temples (AICE 2017). Christians revere it since “it was the scene of several events in the life of Jesus Christ (Gonen 2003, 123). For the Muslims, it is the first qiblah and where the Prophet Mohammed began his Night Journey. Assigning holiness to the site all three religions refer the place with different names. Har HaMoriyah (Mount Moriah) and Har HaBayit (Temple Mount) are the terms Jews used to refer the site, while to Muslims it is acknowledged as Haram al-Sharif (Sacred Noble Sanctuary) or Masjid al-Aqsa (Aqsa Mosque). To avoid the conflict over the naming issue, in this work, I refer the sacred site as the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and I will also use the terms the Sacred Site, the Holy Sanctuary, the Holy Esplanade interchangeably in referring the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa to escape from the repetitiveness.

While introducing the book “Where Heaven and Earth Meet: Jerusalem's Sacred Esplanade”, Zvi Zameret characterizes “Jerusalem's sacred Esplanade” as “the most sensitive subject in the world” (Kershner 2009). Although it is difficult for me to decide whether it is the most sensitive subject, I would confidently argue that it is one of the most sensitive spaces in the world. Therefore, doing research on and writing about a group who attributes an existential value to and operates on the Sacred Site in the East Jerusalem has been a quite challenging task for me. Highly politicized nature of the subject, information pollution about the subject matter, conspiracy theories regarded by conflicting parties as hard facts, confrontational views between and among the opposing groups almost about each and every aspect of the phenomenon, different interpretations of history by opposing groups, hypocrisies coming out of the repressive policies by the states were among the main challenges on the way of my research. Besides all these challenges, to the best of my knowledge, there was no scholarly literature on the Murabitāt movement. For all these reasons, it has been a very difficult task. If I did not quit in completing this masters project while struggling to find a balanced right way to pursuit, it is because of my belief that any scholarly endeavor to

\[2\text{ For details of “the Legends, Beliefs, and Aspirations regarding the Temple Mount” see Gonen (2013), pp. 113-30} \]
make sense of the movement would be a contribution to the literature which so far lacks any work on the important phenomenon in one of the most sensitive places of the world.

The gender relations part of the phenomenon also attracted my attention. The Murabitât movement was not only an important actor of one of the most controversial conflicts in the world, but it was also very remarkable because it was a women movement coming to existence in a highly conservative society in Jerusalem. In the oral histories, interviews, news reports, and opinions shared online; I did encounter men praising the activities of Murabitât. Mustafa Abu Sway, who is the dean of Islamic Studies at Al-Quds University, states that: “There is no similar situation,” … they “found themselves at the front line, and now, they have changed the dynamic” (Hadid 2015a). I found this quite confounding because the women were in public and it was not criticized, rather praised. The women were shouting, beaten and even were stripped of their hijabs under police violence. The historical construction of the Islamic Society draws on “the separation between the public political world of men and the private domestic realm of women” (Holt 2013, 100). Therefore, the case of Murabitât in which the women presence and effectiveness exceeded the men’s presence and effectiveness and the men’s praises about this situation seemed to me as a puzzle waiting to be solved. Besides, it seemed to me that Murabitât constituted a black swan to the social movement literature considering women social movements in Middle East as epiphenomenal or under the complete control of men (Krause 2012, 12).

I learned about the Murabitât movement in May 2015 and decided to write my master’s thesis on the group, in October 2015. The days that I decided on my research topic and began to collect data were the heydays of the Murabitât. It was the first time that they appeared in the media as an influential independent actor on the Sacred Site of the East Jerusalem. Following the rapid increase in its visibility, the Israeli government outlawed the group on September 2015 (The Daily Mail 2015). It was quite difficult for me to envisage where things were going. Two of my interviewees whom I coded as Magenta, who is a researcher on the Murabitât, and Thistle who is a teacher and one of the organizers of the group highlighted, in the interviews I
conducted with them, that the support for the movement increased after Israel banned
the organization. However, I had been following the news on the group and knew that
their activities such as learning circles and remaining on the site no longer continued.
Because both were supporters of the group, I approached this claim with suspicion.
Therefore, my main questions were: 'Did the Murabitāt succeed?' 'If it was
successful what the factors that made them succeed were?', and 'If they failed, what
were the factors leading the failure?'

Rather than confining the examination to a single aspect of the Murabitāt, this study
tries to comprehend the background, functioning, experiences, methods, and
motivations of the group. With the realization that the factors enumerated above cannot
be satisfactorily understood if I do not examine the phenomenon in its
interconnectedness, I attempted to examine the social, political and religious
developments on the issue around which the members of the Murabitāt mobilized.
Since the group defines their raison d'etre as the protection of the Sacred Site, this
study endeavored to examine the history and the social, political and religious
developments on the site. Given the fact that the site is among the most contested
places in the world, has its roots in the history, and the history of the site goes back a
long way, this attempt has constituted a great challenge. Instead of giving a detailed
account of the history of the site, I provided a brief account of the history of the site
and focused more on the recent developments out of which the Murabitāt movement
emerged. Although I found the continuities and ruptures in the religious arguments
and social trends on the various subjects about the contested Holy site as a quite
attentive topic, I could touch upon only very few of the religious debates and social
trends on the site which have pivotal importance in revealing the religious and social
circumstances the movement born out of. Comparing the other aspects, I provided a
more detailed account of the politics around the site. However, my main motivation in
discussing the political developments was to make sense of the location of the
Murabitāt movement in the web of politics. Therefore, I did not elaborate much on the
positions of the actors other than the Murabitāt, and the actors that the Murabitāt
opposed: the Temple Mount Movements and Israel. Since the main focus of the
research is the Murabitât, not the politics around the Holy Esplanade, the other actors such as PA (Palestinian Authority), Hamas, Jordan, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia were not discussed in detail in this research project. Although examining the increasing or decreasing power and impact of these actors would contribute to the understanding of where and for whose benefit the politics around the site heads to, I considered those questions outside the scope of this study.

To the best of the author’s knowledge, there is no scholarly literature on the movement. The attempt to introduce the movement to the scholarly literature has constituted the biggest prospect and challenge for the research. It is the biggest prospect for this thesis because the Murabitât movement is not only an important actor of one of the most controversial conflicts in the world but also very remarkable because it is a women movement coming to existence in a highly conservative society in Jerusalem. So, introducing the movement to the literature can be considered as an important but belated effort. The absence of any scholarly writings on the movement has also been the biggest challenge of the study. Even putting forth the establishment and development of the movement required a great deal of research in the absence of any compiling study on the phenomenon.

1.1 Method

The methodological approach of this research is the in-depth individual exploratory case study. The subject of the study very much determined its method. Case studies comprise a systematical collection of data about a particular case such as a person, event, or a group (Berg 2001, 225). My aim was to understand a particular women group in its complex setting and an in-depth individual case study was needed to bring all the complexities surrounding the phenomenon into the light. However, when I began to investigate the phenomenon, the absence of any scholarly literature led me to undertake the data collection before defining a specific research question, which necessitated the study to be an exploratory case study (Berg 2001, 230).
This study determined historiography as its main data-collection process. In this process, I accessed and relied on both primary and secondary data and utilized different data gathering techniques in pursuit of the effective understanding of the phenomenon. Firstly, I conducted an in-depth online website search in English and Turkish. I also consulted some online Arabic sources and conducted a social media search in Arabic. I did not only research the prominent online newspapers of the Israeli, Palestinian, Arab, Muslim majority countries' and international media; I also consulted to human rights reports, blog entries, conference publications and social media posts of Temple Mount and the Murabitât Movements'.

While doing the online search, I found myself confronting the complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict that culminated in a dialogue of the deaf. There were two sides who perceive the history, the politics, space, the people and what is right and what is wrong about all these. Besides, there were considerable variations in the two sides regarding their positions on different occurrences and phenomena. Coming up with a balanced account out of a comparison of multiple sources representing differing points of views were quite challenging tasks. To provide an objective account on the contested accounts on the contextual information, I attempted to rely on documents. In the historical chapter, I tried to provide historical background by relying on the documents such as UN Resolutions and Security Council decisions, Knesset decisions, Israeli case law, UNESCO decisions. While I tried to do my best to provide a balanced account, it is necessary to note that the complex nature of the context that the Murabitât was located constituted a challenge for this study.

Secondly, I made use of 17 video recordings including life histories and testimonies of the Murabitât members, organizers, and supporters. Table 1 (Appendix A) provides an overview of the oral history documents and Table 2 (Appendix B) provides the list of interviews I conducted. The time I began my research, coincided with the dates when the group was declared illegal, making an interview with the Murabitât members very difficult. With the fear of Israeli repression, the women refused to reply my questions online. Under such circumstances, the reliability of any online interview would be highly questionable. Emine Cinar who is a founding member and executive
board member of the Kudus Bilinci Dernegi (Jerusalem Conscience Association), which is an association based in Ankara, shared 17 video recordings of the Murabitat members and supporters, in Jerusalem, West Bank, and Ramallah, with me and allowed me to use them in my thesis. The 17 video recordings were dated back early 2015, before the Murabitat made an international reputation by Israeli decision to outlaw them on September 2015. Because the group was not banned yet on the date of the recordings, the recordings were relatively reliable. In the recordings, some of the interviewees were declined to be named while some of them saw no harm in providing their names and personal information. However, in this study, because the Murabitat was declared illegal by Israel in late 2015 and the level of repression in the group increased as the time passed throughout this research project, each interviewee was named with a color code for their protection. While staggering under the research topic of which there is not a scholarly literature or any reliable compiling data, the video recordings were a treasure to me. I am sincerely thankful to Miss Cinar. Also, I have to thank the workers and/or members of the Jerusalem Conscience Association who conducted the video recordings. Since the recordings of the oral histories were available to me, and I took the testimonies of two different people being present during the recordings, external validity was not an issue, but I needed to check the documents internal reliability, the accuracy of the meanings it provided. For this purpose, I followed a two-step process. Firstly, I double checked the information and the meanings provided in the recordings with the online search I have conducted. However, in this study, I could not conduct interviews with Israeli officials or Temple Mount activists. Since the beginning of this research, I consider the absence of the primary data by the opposition to the Murabitat movement as a weakness. On the other hand, I have made every effort to maintain the necessary distance and not to allow this to cloud my judgment and prevent a disinterested representation of the Israeli authorities and the Temple Mount Movements that the Murabitat opposes in their resistance. For this purpose, to have a comparative data, I read the Israeli media and

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3 Even before the ban the women were concerned about their security which prevented their freedom of expression, because the level of repression was already high before the implementation of the ban. This resulted in some women’s demand to keep their names anonymous, deny any organic ties or organizational action, not to reveal the organizational dynamics of the movement.
online newspapers and blogs of Temple Mount Movements and activists. Secondly, I conducted six interviews with the Murabitat members, organizers, and supporters of the group, different from the ones with recordings. My interviews were semi-structured. I asked general questions about the establishment, organization, methods, and motivation of the group but also asked about some discrepancies between the meaning in the recordings and the information I gathered throughout my research. The interviews I conducted were fruitful because they gave me the opportunity to check the internal validity of the primary sources and helped me to engage with the data critically.

1.2 Assumptions and Hypotheses

Assumption 1: to analyze a civil resistance movement a synthesis of a moral and strategic approach is necessary.

There are two main approaches to civil resistance movements: the first approach considers non-violence as a moral choice and the second perceives a strategic benefit in the course of non-violent action. The morality centered Gandhian Approach to nonviolent methods argues that the effectiveness of nonviolent methods derives from the moral power of the nonviolent course of action. The commitment to non-violence in the face of regime violence provides the resisters moral power and both domestic and international legitimacy which facilitates backfire of regime violence (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, 8-9). This study is based on the assumption that a civil resistance campaign in search for tangible benefits under the framework of a strategic action plan may be at the same time a fight for and result in the promotion of ethical values. In other words, this study founded on the assumption that aims and results of civil resistance movements can be moral and strategic at the same time. Therefore, both a moral and a strategic approach is necessary to explore the phenomenon. Reviewing the literature regarding the civil resistance as a moral and strategic phenomenon, I determined seven factors and processes affecting the success of a civil resistance movement: Participation, Mobilization, Steadfastness, Mechanism of Backfire,
Tactical Interactions, Socio-psychological Barriers, and Building Resistance Identities.

Assumption 2: to assess success one needs to look the compatibility of the aims of the movement with the results.

Baldwin (2000) proposes a framework for the assessment of foreign policy that evaluates success based on “How effective is a policy instrument likely to be, on which goals and targets, at what cost, and in comparison, with what other policy instruments?” (p. 1). Adapting Baldwin’s framework in analyzing the success and failure of the Murabitât Movement, I have investigated the role of the seven factors in the success of the Murabitât movement.

At the end of the first two phases of my research, I came up with five hypotheses, all of which I will try to test in the third chapter:

Hypothesis 1: Murabitât is a civil resistance movement.

Hypothesis 2: The Murabitât was successful from a moral perspective and failed from a strategic perspective.

Hypothesis 2: The tactical choices of the Murabitât movement and the Israeli authorities determined the success or failure.

Hypothesis 3: Mechanisms of nonviolent action were key in the success or failure of the movement.

Hypothesis 4: Gender provided an advantage for the success of the Murabitât movement.

Hypothesis 5: The success of the women’s movement changed the gender roles in the society.

1.3 The Thesis Plan

In this framework, chapter two explores and brings up the definition of civil resistance and the theoretical context of the thesis. In the first part, after the evolution of the concept of civil resistance is analyzed, the literature on the factors leading a success or
failure of civil resistance movements is reviewed under two categories. Firstly, the factors affecting the realization of particular demands of civil resistance movements, namely participation, mobilization, steadfastness, mechanism of backfire, and tactical interactions will be discussed. Then, factors affecting the realization of moral goals will be touched upon. In this section, socio-psychological barriers as obstacles and the process of building resistance identities will be the two phenomenon this study will try to cast some light on.

The third chapter aims to provide a brief temporal analysis of the theological, archeological, military, legal contestations that have a pivotal impact on the politics around the site. The temporal analysis of the factors is organized of the four time intervals in the late history: (1) the Ottoman Rule (1517-1917), (2) the British Mandate Rule (1917-1948), (3) the Jordanian Rule (1948-1967) and (4) the Israeli Rule (1967 and onwards).

The fourth chapter explains the context in which the Murabitât movement born out of and briefly summarizes the short history of the women ‘s group. Finally, in the fifth chapter, the framework that is used to categorize the literature on civil resistance and the success or failure of civil resistance campaign is used to analyze the Murabitât. A quick look at the literature shows that more than one terms with distinctive inference have been used to refer the civil resistance, such as satyagraha, nonviolent action, unarmed resistance, people power. ‘Unarmed’, ‘civil’ and ‘nonviolent’ resistance will be interchangeably used in this thesis. This study considers four elements as of paramount importance in defining an action as a civil resistance: being civilian, confrontational, non-institutional, and nonviolent. Therefore, this study defines civil resistance as a mode of action which is confrontational and non-institutional; conducted by civil groups relying on nonviolent methods. This definition will be used as an analytical tool in examining the Murabitât Movement. In the third chapter, Murabitât is analyzed regarding each component of the definition provided. In sum, it is argued that the Murabitât movement is a civil resistance movement relying on nonviolent methods; it is confrontational and non-institutional, and the activities are
conducted by civil groups. In the second part of the chapter, the question of the success or failure of the Murabität is quests. In this part, factors affecting the realization of strategic goals and factors affecting the realization of moral goals are discussed separately as it was in the first chapter on the conceptual framework.
CHAPTER 2
THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

After completing the data gathering, question formulation and hypotheses generation processes, I investigated for the best theoretical framework to analyze the phenomenon. In the beginning, I considered social movement theory as the theoretical framework. Regarding their different research traditions and assumptions, there were some tensions between the social movement and civil resistance literature (Schock 2013, 282). Working on the differences between the two concepts, I decided that civil resistance literature would provide more useful insights for my case. There were two main reasons behind my decision. Firstly, the traditional focus of social movement literature has been structural sources and political context while civil resistance literature was more concerned with strategy and mechanism of the non-violent change (Schock 2013, 282). In the first phase of my research, I had realized that it was the tactical choices of the Murabitat movement and the Israeli authorities that determined the success or failure rather than structural sources or political context. Secondly, the Murabitat women were using nonviolent strategies and both in their oral histories and the interviews I have conducted; they emphasized their steadfastness in non-violence in the face of violent repression. Although they were not defining themselves as a non-violent resistance movement, I found this theme very crucial and hypothesized that mechanisms of nonviolent action were key in the success or failure of the movement. While social movement literature does not make a clear-cut distinction between nonviolent and violent action and assumes that both are on the continuum of political action: civil resistance literature assumes that 'nonviolent action represents a distinct break from the violence and conventional politics.' Therefore, instead of the social movement literature assuming that nonviolent and violent action are part of the same
scale, the civil resistance literature regarding them as antithetical seemed to me more convenient for the analysis of the movement.

2.1 Civil Resistance as a Moral or Strategic Choice

The terms civil resistance and nonviolent resistance are interchangeably used in the literature. Although a multiplicity of definitions prevails, the nuances in the definitions do not indicate differences of opinion concerning the essence of the concept, but differences in the ways of expression. Sharp (1973) defines nonviolent action as a "technique of socio-political action for applying power in a conflict without the use of violence" (p.567). In his definition, he emphasizes that the use of nonviolent methods also constitutes the power. With this definition, Sharp (1999) signals that the concept of power would have a central position in his understanding of civil resistance. Among the prominent figures recently studying civil resistance by following the quantitative track, Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) define the nonviolent resistance as "a civilian-based method used to wage conflict through social, psychological, economic, and political means without the threat or use of violence" (p. 9). They enumerate the means applied, which serves for the measurability of the concept. Analyzing the history of the Palestinian civil resistance, Darweish and Rigby (2015) adopt the definition that: "a mode of challenging opponents that are not averse to using violence by civilians, relying on the sustained use of methods that are predominantly nonviolent, unarmed or 'non-military' in nature, in pursuit of goals that are widely shared within the society" (p. 4). With this formulation, they seek to synthesize the available definitions in the literature and provide the more inclusive one.

The implications of the terms civil and resistance should be discussed on an individual basis for further discussions. The term "resistance" suggests both the non-institutional and confrontational nature of the civil resistance campaigns. It is non-institutional in the sense that the civil resistance methods deliberately or compulsorily operate outside the conventional political sphere, and even it may take illegal forms (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011, 12). It is confrontational since civil resistance campaigns aim to deteriorate the opposed ruler's ability to endure a certain policy or even undermine the ruler's legitimacy and power as a whole (Roberts 2009, 3). The notion of civil, on the
other hand, denotes that the action concerned is non-military or nonviolent in character" (Roberts 2009, 2). This study considers three elements as of paramount importance in defining an action as a civil resistance: being civilian, confrontational, and non-institutional. Therefore, this study defines civil resistance as a mode of action which is confrontational and non-institutional; conducted by civil groups relying on nonviolent methods.

There are two main approaches to civil resistance movements: the first approach, which is characterized by Gandhi, focuses on the ethical merit of nonviolence whereas the second approach perceives nonviolence as a strategic choice. Because of the different lenses the two approaches used in examining the phenomenon, the factors that the two approaches study differs. Since the 1930s, there have been considerable theoretical contributions to understand the effectiveness and mechanisms of nonviolent action; and efforts to develop comprehensible strategies for civil resistance. The academic literature on civil resistance was inspired by the victory of Mohandas Gandhi’s struggle against British colonizers in India to a great extent. After Gandhi, civil resistance began to be considered not as an exigency but as a deliberate option to be implemented in the face of opponents. In other words, Gandhi is the one who put nonviolent methods on the political map. Although Gandhi was inspired by Henry Thoreau’s 1849 essay ‘On Civil Disobedience’ and from Tolstoy’s writings on non-resistance, he soon rejected the idea of the “weapon of the weak” and used the term satyagraha (“truth force” or “soul force”). Satyagraha refers to the determination to resist injustice with the aim of converting the opponent and changing its behavior while simultaneously avoiding violence. Since Gandhi’s death in 1948, the literature on the civil resistance movement pioneered by him grew considerably. Differing interpretations were arisen out of the achievement of Indian independence and the theory that Gandhi presented (Carter 2009, 26). Following the nonviolent victory, Gandhian ideas were introduced to the Western thought through several books. There have been some significant works on civil resistance in the 1920s and 1930s. Clarence Case analyzed sociological dynamics of nonviolent coercion; Richard Gregg (1960) introduced the concept of “moral jiu-jitsu”. Having been influenced by Gandhi, Gregg (1960) argued that violent conflict can be transformed into cooperation with the
application of nonviolent resistance methods (p.56). Gregg (1960) explained the mechanism of moral jiu-jitsu as follows: when unarmed resisters do not strike back, the opponents lose credibility, the resisters’ acceptance of pain without responding violently bring shame on the opponents that will give resisters the ability to galvanize the public support (p. 43-66). He furthers his claims by arguing that it is not the diplomacy, but civil resistance that would bring peace, justice and freedom to the world. For this to be achieved, the education of people in the civil resistance movements is compulsory (Tully 15).

The book of Joan Bondurant titled as “Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict” published in 1958 is considered as the first book introducing the Gandhian idea of satyagraha to the Western political thinking and practice (Sharp 1973). Taking satyagraha as a form of social action, he examined Gandhi’s ideas in the context of Indian tradition and Western thought. He studied nonviolence as a strategic and moral choice that produce more enduring changes in the behavior of opponents through civil resister’s winning the hearts of opponents. When the works on civil resistance until the 1970s examined, it is concluded that nonviolent action was considered more as a moral choice. However, in the 1970s, Gene Sharp (1973) came up with a purely strategic understanding of nonviolent action.

Gene Sharp has studied Gandhi’s resistance movement in depth to develop his theory on the phenomenon. Sharp’s theory of civil resistance is based on the assumption that rulers derive their power from people whom they rule; and when an enough number of the people withdrew their support for a significant time, the rule disintegrates (Sharp 1973). Analyzing nonviolence merely as a technique, not a moral obligation, Sharp argues that “Without at least the passive support of the general population and his/ her agents, the most powerful dictator in the world becomes just another crackpot with dreams of world domination” (Sharp quoted in Ratzlaff 2008, 46). He identifies six sources of power: the legitimacy of the rule in the eyes of the people, human resources of the government, human resources keeping business and service systems operate, material resources, cultural and ideological sources to encourage the obedience,
sanctioning power of security officials imposed on the resisters to suppress them (Nepstad 2013, 592). The nonviolent strategy aims to withdraw these power sources until the regime is deprived of its ability to function anymore (Sharp 2013, 52). Then, what are the methods that are at the disposal of practitioners of civil resistance? Sharp (1973) identifies 198 “nonviolent weapons” that may be used. The list of the nonviolent methods is classified into three broad categories: nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation (social, economic, and political), and nonviolent intervention⁴. He pointed out that Nonviolent action includes acts of omission, acts of commission, and a combination of the two. In acts of omission, people reject to do what they are required to do by custom or law while in acts of commission they do what they are forbidden by custom or law (Sharp 2005, 41).

Following Sharp’s theorization of civil resistance researchers began to document and analyze the cases of civil resistance movements. Since 1950s campaigns of civil resistance movements spread all over the world, and the literature on case studies on ‘nonviolent actions’ developed (Carter 2009, 42). It can be argued that since then the gap between the studies on nonviolent action and the academic literature on the cases is decreased. Consequently, in the last decade, researchers began to be occupied with the question that why civil resistance movements fail or triumph.

2.2 Factors and Processes Affecting the Success of Civil Resistance Movements

Apart from the fact that success and failure are difficult to assess, there is also no common understanding on the meaning of success and failure. There are a number of reasons that make determining the success or failure of a civil resistance campaign a complex issue. As Robert explained plainly “...[C]ivil resistance, while it has had many successes, can sometimes contribute to adverse, or at least ambiguous outcomes” (Roberts 2009, 1). In other words, in the course of the events, the resistance may trigger a process leading deterioration of the circumstances of the resisters and strengthening the policy or the regime they resisted. The ambiguity of the outcomes is derived from

⁴ Description and historical examples of all 198 methods of nonviolent struggle can be found in volume two of The Politics of Nonviolent Action, by Gene Sharp, Boston, Sargent Publisher, 1973.
the fact that in some examples the outcomes are shaped by other conditions, which makes difficult to locate the civil resistance campaign in the chain of events. Furthermore, there is a quite amount of literature devoted to civil resistance movements who achieved their goals while few of them are focused on the ones that failed. This gap in the literature constructs an obstacle in the way of uncovering the factors paving the way for the success or failure. To fill the gap, comparative studies of both ‘succeeded’ and ‘failed’ cases are necessary to develop.

Much has written about the success and failure of certain political endeavors. Baldwin’s conceptualization of success provides a useful tool to determine whether a civil resistance campaign is successful or not. He critiques the dichotomy of success-failure and argues that more nuanced assessments are necessary. According to Baldwin (2000), there are certain questions to be answered to determine the success: “How effective is a policy instrument likely to be, concerning which goals and targets, at what cost, and in comparison with what other policy instruments?” (p.1). In their insightful book “Why Civil Resistance Works” Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) use a very similar framework with Baldwin to assess the success of a civil resistance campaign. According to them, the conditions that have to be met for success are: “the full achievement of its stated goals (regime change, anti-occupation, or secession) within a year of the peak of activities and a discernible effect on the outcome, such that the outcome was a direct result of the campaign’s activities” (p.14). Chenoweth and Stephan can be considered as members of a line of academics who consider civil resistance as a strategic choice rather than a moral obligation forming an end in itself. This underlying assumption makes target-outcome, cost-benefit analysis an adequate way to measure the success of a resistance campaign. However, this thesis considers civil resistance as not just a strategic unconventional warfare but also a moral commitment. Since the goals of resistance are both moral and strategic, what has to be counted is the difference between moral and strategic goals and moral and strategic outcomes.
Civil resistance campaigns are initiated to promote different policy objectives. Different groups of people forming civil resistance movements may have different strategic goals. The goals range from attempts to appeal to the adversary to undermine the adversary’s sources of legitimacy and power completely; from increasing personal liberties to the national independence of an ethnic group. The underlying objective of resisting party could be increasing the costs of implementation of certain policies, deteriorating the adversary’s capacity to continue with a particular policy, bringing about dissension and defections in the adversary’s regime or merely arising domestic or international awareness to weaken its basis of support (Roberts 2009, 3).

Trying to cast some light on why nonviolent resistance is more powerful and more expedient than physical coercion Richard Gregg (1949) argues that implementation of nonviolent resistance methods in the face of violent repression causes the violent opponents to lose their moral balance. He argues that the opponent

\[\ldots\text{suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him. He plunges forward, as it were, into a new world of values. He feels insecure because of the novelty of the situation and his ignorance of how to handle it. He loses his poise and self-confidence. The victim not only lets the attacker come, but, as it were, pulls him forward by kindness, generosity and voluntary suffering, so that the attacker loses his moral balance (Gregg 1949, 22).}\]

On the other hand, the very same process keeps the resisters’ moral balance, since they have the power of a superior wisdom to mollify the violent tactics of adversaries. To sum up, the use of nonviolent methods attacks moral balance of the violent adversaries while at the same time provides moral superiority to the resisters.

Semelin (1993) also focuses on the moral gains that the civil resistance process-independent of the consequences of the campaign resulted in. For Semelin, the resistance begins when the resisters “find the strength to say ‘No’ without necessarily having a clear idea of what one wants” (Semelin 1993, 5). What is new in this approach is that it is possible to talk about the success of a campaign even before the
campaign decided on the goals they wanted to achieve. For example, the objective of the unarmed resistance against the Nazi occupation was not overcoming them he argues, but “to preserve the collective identity of the attacked societies” (Semelin 1993, 3).

These remarks open a new window into the discussion about the success of civil resistance, because they point out the existence of a new process going along with the ongoing process in the quest for particular benefits. A civil resistance campaign in search for real benefits may be at the same time a fight for some values. From this point of view, irrespective of the difference between the outcome and the aim, the campaign set forth, the nonviolent action process itself, can be considered as a success in itself. The ability of people to come together under the umbrella of a nonviolent method is itself an indicator of empowerment of the collectivities taking part in the movement. In the absence of any strategic goal people decided on, the compatibility of the consequences with the goals cannot be assessed. However, it can still be argued that it is a success that the people managed to come together to resist, since coming together and deciding to resist in a nonviolent way itself is an arduous business and provides moral superiority to the resisters.

Although defining the success of a civil resistance campaign depending on the difference between the outcome and the aim set forth has a practical value, I argue that this is not enough to analyze the broader context and repercussions of the resistance. What is needed to be done to determine the success of resistance is to uncover the compatibility of the consequences with the strategic and moral goals respectively.

2.2.1 Participation

The participation rate is among the most important factors determining the success or failure of any social movement. It is considered that when the numbers of individuals who join a movement increase, participation threshold of additional members decreases which results in an acceleration in the growth of the movement (Granovetter 1978, 1441). Kuran (1989) explains this process from the rational choice perspective,
and argues that as the scale of the movement increases the cost of the collective action decreases. It is the decline in the cost of collective action that increases the participation rates (p. 51).

Chencoweth and Stephan (2011) define participation more inclusively and define participation as “the active and observable engagement of individuals in collective action” (p. 30) and they establish that nonviolent resistance campaigns are more likely to appeal higher participation due to the fact that physical, informational, commitment, and moral barriers to participation is lower in nonviolent resistance (p.32). In other words, the use of violent means requires more physical and informational materials and they are more difficult to be morally justified. However, nonviolent methods require less physical, informational materials, and it is easier to legitimize them in the eyes of the people. Due to the comparative ease in nonviolent methods, the participation rates are higher than the violent methods. Their findings show that “major nonviolent campaigns have achieved success 53 percent of the time, compared with 26 percent for violent resistance campaigns” (Stephan ve Chencoweth 2008, 8-9). They identify two reasons behind the relative success of nonviolent method and both reasons are related to the issue of legitimacy. Firstly, they argue that a campaign’s use of nonviolent means boosts its domestic and international legitimacy and leads broad-based participation to the resistance. Secondly, the government’s violent repression of the nonviolent resisters will pave the way for a legitimacy problem in the government side, which is more likely to affect the government officials’ commitment to the orders of the government.

All these findings on participation are based on the rational choice theory and consider social movements as aggregate of behaviors of individuals who make their individual choices based on cost benefit analysis. However, drawing on methodological individualism in explaining nonviolent resistance is quite problematic considering the fact that nonviolent resisters are the ones who embrace pain. If individuals base their behaviors on cost benefit analysis, why would they use themselves as shields in the face of violence they were exposed to? The willingness of the nonviolent resisters to
suffer and even to die for the sake of their cause, constitutes a strong case against the explanatory power of the rational choice theory. The rational choice theory could have an explanatory power over many cases, but the behavior of nonviolent resisters cannot be considered among them. Therefore, appreciating the importance of participation rates for the realization of strategic goals of civil resistance movements, this study approaches the explanations grounded on rational choice theory with suspicion.

2.2.2 Mobilization

Mobilization can be defined as organization of a group of people to take collective action to achieve a particular goal. Mobilization of people is an important factor leading to the success of a civil resistance campaign. While the intensification of grievances has been pointed out as the main reason triggering the mobilization of masses in the revolution literature, social movement theory assumes that the prevalence of grievances and deprivation does not necessarily result in mobilization. Instead, they focus on other factors leading the masses to mobilize around a particular objective such as resource mobilization capacity, framing, mobilizing structures, and political prospects and threats (Schock 2013, 282).

Goldstone identifies three types of mobilization: traditional, informal, and elite directed forms of mass mobilization. Traditional mobilization refers to the mobilization came into being through the formal ties of individuals. Traditional mobilization takes place in workers’ guilds or religious communities. High levels of commitment and a tendency to defense rather than change are observed among the group. Instead of formal ties like urban workers’ guilds, informal mobilization occurs through informal ties like friendship or neighborhood. Such informal mobilization usually occurs in the face of a crisis; friends then mobilize themselves to take unusual actions. Finally, when elite establishes some organizations and gives a direction to the discontent among the masses through these organizations, the mobilization is referred to as elite directed mobilization (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 143). 1979 Iranian Revolution may be considered as an example of informal revolution (Skocpol 1982, 21
278), and Communist Party mobilization in 1940s China as elite-directed mobilization (Keating 1997). Goldstone and Tilly (2001) argue that traditional and informal mobilization are not revolutionary, they may create change if an elite opposition to the regime collaborates with the mobilized masses (p. 151).

2.2.3 Steadfastness

The phenomenon that is mostly referred as steadfastness has been articulated as stubbornness, fearlessness, persistence, resilience or perseverance of the resisters in the literature. Schock (2013) defines resilience as “the ability of a challenge to withstand and recover from repression; that is, to sustain a campaign despite the actions of opponents aimed at constraining or inhibiting their activities” (p. 283). Although widespread participation and mobilization are necessary factors contributing to the success of a civil resistance campaign, steadfastness of the mobilized masses is crucial for the mobilization of the masses to achieve its goals. Putting aside the differing wording of the phenomenon, it should be noted that what is agreed on is that resisters’ steadfastness is among the main factors determining the success or failure of the resistance campaigns.

Gandhi considers three conditions necessary for the success of a nonviolent action: firstly, a resister should not have any hatred against the adversary; secondly, the cause must be true and substantial, and thirdly the resister “must be prepared to suffer till the end” (Merton 2007, 43). The first two factors Gandhi took into account will be discussed in the following section under the heading of “The factors affecting the realization of moral goals”. The third factor he mentioned provides crucial insights for understanding the place of steadfastness in the nonviolent action. Participants to nonviolent action must be prepared to suffer because standing up to an authority which monopolizes the legitimate use of power requires the awareness that there could be violent repression of the campaign. Therefore, Gandhi concludes that, the preparedness of the masses to suffer is one of the main factors determining the success of a resistance campaign. So for the success to be achieved resisters should remain steadfast. However, it cannot be argued that only the steadfastness of mobilized masses
brings about success, since the result of the campaign is a product of some other contextual determinants. For example, Brockett (2005) argues that both the concentration and context of the suppression of the nonviolent resisters influence the result. If the authority seems to be at the edge of the abyss, then the suppression of the masses increases the determinacy of the masses. However, if the regime is considered as steady, then violent repression of the resisters may bring about a decrease in the steadfastness (Brockett 2005, 271).

In certain circumstances, the longevity of the time the resisters persisted can be considered as a disadvantage. Stephan and Chenoweth (2008) conclude that “the longer the campaign endures, the less likely the resistance is to achieve full success. This is especially true for nonviolent campaigns, although the substantive effects are not sizable” (p. 24). McAdam (1983) in his analysis of the trajectory of the US Civil Rights movement, emphasizes how the resilience of a campaign depends on tactical interactions between challengers and opponents. McAdam argues that “expanding political opportunities and mobilizing structures influence movement mobilization, but the skill of activists in devising effective protest tactics and the opponent’s ability to counter those tactics determine whether mobilization is sustained” (McAdam quoted in Schock 2013, 283).

So, it can be argued that the steadfastness of the campaign does not serve the purpose alone. On the contrary, the fact that “the longer the campaign endures, the less likely the resistance is to achieve full success” (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, 24) reveals that there are some other factors that affect the result, not that persistence and determination of the resisters may constitute a disadvantage.

2.2.4 Mechanism of Backfire

Civil resistance literature is quite rich in explaining in which contexts states’ repression policies backfire. Gregg (1960) defined the mechanism, through which nonviolent resistance of masses put shame on the repressive regime as moral jiu jitsu. Renaming Gregg’s concept as political jiu-jitsu, Sharp (2013) argued that nonviolent action
simultaneously operates on psychological, political, social, and economic domains (as cited in Martin and Hess 2006, 1). He also pointed out that violent repression of unarmed civilians may cause third party support to the resisters leading a decrease of the support for the opposed states. Furthermore, when this process takes place, security officials may reject to obey the orders of repression or elites in the society, and international actors may break ties with the regime (Nepstad and Kurtz 2012, 592)

Many rebellions demand reform rather than overthrowing the regimes. In some cases, state reforms raise revolutionaries’ spirits while in other cases mass mobilizations are ended by state repression. Social movement research also indicates state repression may undermine the movements as well as strengthen them. In 2006, Martin and Hess uncovered three conditions making backfire more likely. The first condition is the stubbornness of resisters not to apply violence in the face of violent repression of the regime. The second condition is the ability of the resisters to communicate what has been happening to a wide and relevant audience, and the third one is whether the audience is powerful enough to make any change in the policy of the regime (Martin and Hess 2006).

What is the relationship between repression and steadfastness of resisters? There are Machiavellian explanations in answering to this question, arguing that the influence of repression on the resilience of the resistance is a matter of degree and context. A powerful repression of a small group may be considered as a sign of state power and effectiveness, but a repression that is not strong enough to crush the resistance in an unselective manner in which great number of civil people are persecuted including the ones public sees representatives with legitimate objectives, can quickly undermine regime’s effectiveness and legitimacy (Goldstone and Tilly 2001, 180). When the effectiveness and legitimacy of the regime began to be questioned by the public, then the backfire mechanism begins to operate.

The ability of the resisters to communicate their goals and the regime’s repression is crucial to the success of the resistance campaign. Schock (2013) uses the term leverage to highlight the mechanism. He advocates that
Leverage refers to the capacity of a challenge to sever the opponent from the sources of power upon which it depends, either directly or through allies or third parties...Leverage is a potential that may be realized when challengers are sufficiently organized to threaten or actually withdraw support from the opponent or when their actions contribute to the threatened or initiated withdrawal of third party support upon which the opponent depends (p. 283)

The second condition Martin and Hess (2006) set forth is communication of the information to the audience. A violent repression of the resistance triggers the backfire mechanism when the information about the event is communicated. However, the communication of the information is not adequate by itself. The information has to be communicated to a receptive audience, who perceive the event as unjust, which is the third condition of the mechanism of backfire. The receptive audience should also be powerful enough for the oppressive regime to take it into account and reconsider their policies. It should be pointed out that, in the course of the process, if resisters decide to shift to violent means this decision will disrupt the mechanism of backfire.

2.2.5 Tactical Interactions

The determination in the application of nonviolent methods of struggle would require strategic capacity. The strategic capacity may be defined as the ability of the leadership of the resistance movement to comprehend what is at stake in the conflict, the goals set forth, and what kind of nonviolent methods could be implemented in the face of changing repressive policies of the adversary applied throughout the process. Drawing on this definition it is possible to discern three main tasks of the leadership of the resistance. Firstly, they should know the array of opportunities the adversaries hold in their hands to counter their resistance movement. Secondly, they have to be aware of the possible nonviolent methods they may use in the face of the policy tools of the adversaries. There is quite a lot alternative from demonstrations to vigils and petitions; from strikes, go-slows, and boycotts to sit-ins, occupations and creation of parallel institutions to a government (Roberts 2009, 3). Lastly, they should have the strategic awareness to decide on which nonviolent mechanism best suits the rapidly changing context. Then the question is what the array of opportunities adversaries have?
The backfire of the resistance campaign is very much depended on the tactical interactions between the resisters and the opposition. In his analysis of the trajectory of the US Civil Rights movement, McAdam (1983) emphasizes how the resilience of a campaign depends on tactical interactions between challengers and opponents. He maintains that the ability of resisters in formulating or choosing effective tactics and the adversary’s ability to counter those tactics will determine whether mobilization of the resisters is maintained (McAdam 1983, 735). So, what is crucial for the maintenance of the mobilization is the tactical adaptation of the nonviolent resistance campaign to the different oppressive policies applied by the opposed regime. Schock (2013) argues that “when challengers implement diverse methods of nonviolent action and can counter regime repression of methods of concentration, such as demonstrations, with methods of dispersion, such as boycotts, then resilience is more likely” (p.283). In other words, the first tactical calculation of the resisters should be the sustainability of the mobilization without shifting to violent methods, in the face of repression.

What are the factors behind the strategic shift from nonviolent to violent means then? There are a great number of studies focusing on the reasons behind resistance campaigns move between violent and nonviolent tactics. Analyzing the reasons behind the shift of the Northern Ireland activists from nonviolent to violent means, Maney (2012) claims that state reforms may weaken the nonviolent movements, as it happened in the Northern Irish case, where state reforms pushed some activists to work within the political system, as others felt that nonviolence was not sufficient method to bring the change (p. 181). On the other hand, Dudouet (2012) examines the reasons behind the strategic shift from nonviolent means to violent methods of struggle. For her, a shift from a nonviolent to a violent struggle occurs out of an assessment of internal factors. Changes in the leadership, quest of new supporters, demands of supporters who suffer the violent repression are among the factors assessed by Dudouet (2012, 96)
What are the tactical choices of nonviolent resisters in the face of different repression methods? Sharp (2013) categorizes nonviolent resistance methods into two broad categories: acts of omission, acts of commission, and he argues that the nonviolent tactics consist of either these two categories or a combination of both. What they would do is to adapt their campaign by applying different methods available in the nonviolent action repertoire. Besides, resisters may also shift between methods of concentration and methods of dispersion. Methods of concentration require the mobilization of large numbers of civil resisters in public spaces while methods of dispersion require mobilization over a wide area, such as boycotts, and go-slow protests in the work places. When the repression comes through various tactics it would be more important to enhance the adaptability of the campaign by shifting between acts of omission and acts of commission; and methods of concentration and dispersion.

It is possible to talk about the factors enabling or inhibiting tactical adaptation. Besides the ability of the leadership to come up with skillful tactical shifts, there are also structural determinants of the tactical adaptation of resistance campaign. Firstly, the social fabric of the campaign is an important factor affecting strategic capacity of the campaign. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) argue that “the greater the number of participants from different societal sectors involved in the campaign, the more likely the campaign is to produce tactical innovations” (p. 55). Secondly, the nature of opponents is another structural factor having an impact on the tactical adaptation of a civil resistance campaign. An authoritarian regime which applies repressive tactics, does not rely on foreign support, and has abundant resources would be more difficult to cope with (Chenoweth ve Stephan 2011, 66)

Besides the bare violence through which authoritarian governments may repress civil resistance movements, there are other ways that may construct real limitations for unarmed campaigns. Legal restrictions, misrepresentation of the movement through media monopoly and financial circumscription can be counted among the opportunities the governments have in their hands to counter the civil resistance movements (Zunes 1994, 420). Coming up with the concept of “privatization of the
repressive apparatus”, Stephen Zunes (1994) argues that governments who rely on external support and whose legitimacy and power base would be fatally damaged as a result of the violent repression of the nonviolent activists “allow or encourage private vigilantes, often with the direct support of elements of the police and military, to violently suppress leaders and participants in nonviolent movements as a means of terrorizing the population into submission” (p. 421). The key point here is the fact that the vigilantes who violently suppress the members of the resistance campaign by terrorizing people are distinct actors from the government officials. Therefore, no matter the nonviolent activists blame the government for the violent repression; foreign actors would continue to support the regime that is considered to be a moderating actor trying to manage the extremism of the both sides (Zunes 1994, 421). Since the aim of a nonviolent action is not to fight the outcomes of the power but to fight the basis the power is grounded on, the violent repression by the opposed regime is a factor contributing the resisters to achieve their goals.

2.2.6 Socio–Psychological Barriers

The concept of the ‘chain of violence’ that Johan Galtung developed explains the process in which there is too much social distance between the resisters and the adversaries. When the social distance amounts to the extent in which the resisters and the adversaries could not recognize and communicate with each other, the campaign cannot succeed in influencing internal actor. Then, there emerges a need for intermediaries, who can arbitrate, and exercise some leverage over the resisters and their opponents. Galtung (1996) argues that any rule is dependent on the ruled community politically, economically, and morally. One of the main mechanisms civil resistance operates is through disturbing the moral dependency relationship by delegitimizing the regime. Which factors affect the moral dependency relationship? Galtung (1996) argues that moral dependence is associated with the social distance between oppressors and resisters (p. 118). “The shorter the social distance, the more likely that nonviolent action will succeed; the greater the social distance, the less likely is success” (Schock 2013, 284). Then, the question remains as to the factors behind the emergence of such a huge distance between the groups. It is possible to argue that
socio-psychological barriers among groups lead the emergence of such great social distance.

Socio-psychological factors that maintain the conflicts constitute powerful barriers on the way of peaceful arrangements. Pre-existing beliefs and emotions towards opposing groups result in the distortion of the communication process of information. Preventing the acceptance of information that offers an alternative view about the conflict, the opposed party in the conflict or general worldviews and ideological beliefs, result in selective and biased processing of information (Bar-Tal, Halperin, and Oren 2010, 67). Furthermore, the conflict supporting beliefs do not easily change since they are frozen (Kruglanski and Webster 1996, 271). Bar-Tal, Halperin, and Oren (2010) enumerate some factors that contribute to the freezing of the beliefs. According to them, fulfilling important functions in the societies and producing negative intergroup emotions, such as fear and hatred, these beliefs are central to the social imagination of society members who carry the beliefs with confidence (p.72). All these functional, motivational, and structural factors pave the way for the freezing of the beliefs constituting an obstacle on the way of any possible reconciliation. The frozen barriers among conflicting groups would be an important factor behind the failure of any civil resistance campaign. Because for the success of a civil resistance campaign what is crucial is the communication of the grievances and demands of the resisters to the society they live in or susceptible and powerful third parties it will be apparent how important the socio-psychological barriers between the resisters and the audience.

2.2.7 Building Resistance Identities

For Gandhi, nonviolence was not a simple political tactic, but a product of inner freedom. Civil resistance movements do not only affect the outside world but also bring changes to the inner worlds of their members. Arguing that “Nonviolence is impossible without self-purification” (Merton 2007, 59) Gandhi draws on the idea that aiming to bring changes to the outside world social movements are both results of changes in the inner worlds of people, and also they result in changes in self-realization
of the participants. For Gandhi, civil resistance serves both as an end and as a means. What is just is the nonviolent man and nonviolent society. Therefore, a just society can be built on the principle of nonviolence. From this point of view, it is possible to argue that, irrespective of the material outcomes of a civil resistance campaign, the decision of people to take nonviolent action can be considered as a step towards a just society. The process individuals who participate in the nonviolent collective action go through, will serve for self-purification and self-realization of individuals. Since the nonviolent movement turns out to be a school of moral education, even if the civil resistance campaign did not achieve its material goals, it may achieve its moral goals.

In addition to the moral consequences, civil resistance campaigns also have political results distinct from the end results. Forming a resistance block serves for the preservation of the collective identity of the oppressed groups. Semelin (1993), in his book called “Unarmed against Hitler” argues that the resisters to the Nazi occupation were quite aware of the fact that they would not be successful in defeating the Nazis, so the aim of the nonviolent resistance to the Nazi occupation was not to defeat them but,

to preserve the collective identity of the attacked societies; that is to say their fundamental values. ... When a society feels less and less submissive, it becomes more and more uncontrollable. Then, even if the occupier keeps its power, it loses its authority. This expresses how much civilian resistance consisted primarily of a clash of wills, expressing above all a fight for values (Semelin quoted in Darweish and Rigby 2015, 5).

Therefore, irrespective of the end result of the civil resistance campaign lunched against the oppressors, finding the strength to say no and being able to mobilize around this sense of resistance is a gain in the part of the resisters. Semelin argues that the first act of resistance is to gain the strength to say no even if there is no clear idea in the resisting group’s mind about what they really want (as cited in Darweish and Rigby 2015, 5). Independent from the processes of participation, mobilization, the operation of the mechanism of backfire, the tactical interactions of the movement with the opponent regime and the end result of the movement as a result of all these processes,
the decision formulation in the minds of resisters can be considered as a success. Because deciding to resist requires gaining confidence and strength, even if all the processes mentioned above result in a complete failure of the movement. Another important political consequence of civil resistance campaigns is the identity formation process that people who participate in the collective action passed through. Identities are not primordial, but they are socially constructed, especially the protest identities. “Social identity is a self-conception as a group member” (Abrams and Hogg 1990a, 2). It is possible to argue that civil resistance campaigns work as facilitators of such identity construction.

In order to create and maintain identities relevant to revolutionary action, elites and states must produce and cement novel identifications for people who normally just think of themselves as workers or peasants, friends or neighbors. Making certain identities more salient, indeed creating protest identities—that is, a sense of being part of a group with shared and justified grievances, with the ability to remedy those grievances by collective action—is a considerable project (Polsby 2001, 153).

Creation of collective identities is seen as crucial for the movement to conserve itself in the long term. Otherwise, the movements may be inclusive in the beginning but it would be precarious.

Mobilization along with the lines of a resistance movement constructs a collective identity, which would have political consequences. Even new social movements, in which political and ideological bonds are denied, serve for the construction of new protest identities by defining “the other”. Examining new protest movements such as Occupy and Indignados which do not identify concrete demands and a clear idea of who constitutes the movement, Decresus (2013) explains how they “contributed to making society ‘readable’ or interpretable again in terms of we/them distinctions” (p. 147). In these cases, the identity formation does not begin with identifying self but with defining the other, be it in a very vague way. “The Indignados, in the opening lines of their manifesto, also try to establish a ‘we’ in opposition to a ‘they’. The adversaries are ‘bankers, politicians and businessmen’ that leave us ‘helpless and
without a voice’. Within the Occupy movement, a similar attempt to create an adversary can be noticed. By choosing ‘we are the 99%’ as a central slogan, the movement considered the wealthy ‘1%’ as their adversary” (Decres 2013, 139). Appearing to be without a structure, political or ideological unity in their demands, and leader new protest movements serve for the building of new collective identities. I will argue that civil resistance movements constructing new collective identities can have a considerable impact on the long term politics even if they fail to achieve their declared goal of the specific resistance campaign.

To sum up, there are two main approaches to civil resistance movements: the Gandhian approach focusing on the ethical value of nonviolent course of action: the strategic approach considering nonviolence as a strategic choice. With the conviction that aims and results of civil resistance movements can be moral and strategic at the same time. In the literature review, I adopted the view that both a moral and a strategic approach is necessary to explore the phenomenon. Reviewing the literature regarding the civil resistance as a moral and strategic phenomenon, I found and elaborated on seven factors and processes affecting the success of a civil resistance movement in the literature: Participation, Mobilization, Steadfastness, Mechanism of Backfire, Tactical Interactions, Socio-psychological Barriers, and Building Resistance Identities. Trying to uncover the ways in which the factors affect the success of a civil resistance campaign in this chapter, I will provide a brief history of the politics around the site to provide a historical background for the Murabitát, in the third chapter.
CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF THE POLITICS OVER THE SITE

As Simon Goldhill (2011) rightly pointed out the conflict over Jerusalem in general and the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, in particular, is a conflict that comprises "archaeologists as much as soldiers, theologians as much as politicians, artists as much as zealots- the passionate and the casual, the thoughtful and the unthinking, the foolish and the wise" (p.174). The contestation over the site has theological, archeological, military, legal aspects, which requires an integrated approach enabling to grasp all these aspects. Excluding any of these aspects, an analysis of the politics of the site would blur our vision, which would prevent us from locating the nonviolent action and the Murabitât in its contexts. The motivations, factors behind the steadfastness of the Murabitât, and the nature of the demands of the movement would not be comprehended in the absence of the understanding the settings mentioned above. However, it should also need to be considered that in this master thesis there is no room for extensive accounts of the theological debates about the prohibition of the Jewish ascension to the site, implications of archeological excavations beneath the site, violent conflict over the site or the legal status of the holy places in the city. Instead, this study intends to provide a brief discussion with regards to the factors mentioned above influencing the politics around the site out of which the Murabitât as a civil resistance movement emerged. The historical developments in the theological, archeological, military and legal contestations over the Old City of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa will be briefly summarized under four periods: The Ottoman Rule (1517-1917), The British Mandate Rule (1917-1948), The Jordanian Rule (1948-1967), and the prevailing Israeli rule since 1967.

The site has been sacred for Abrahamic religions. For the Jews, it is the site of first and second Temples, for Christians it is the center of recreation, and for Muslims, it is where Prophet Muhammad's night journey begins. Assigning holiness to the site, all
three religions refer to the place with different names. Har HaMoriyah (Mount Moriah) and Har HaBayit (Temple Mount) are the terms Jews used to refer the site, while to Muslims it is acknowledged as Haram al-Sharif (Sacred Noble Sanctuary), and called Mount Zion by Christians. Being one of the most sensitive and contentious locations on earth Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa sanctuary is undoubtedly is a microcosm of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Lehrs 2016, 179). The Second Intifada, also known as Al-Aqsa Intifada, started when Ariel Sharon together with some Likud politicians and hundreds of Israeli police made a “provocative” visit to the site in a demonstrative gesture of control. Following this visit, the Second Intifada began and resulted in more than four thousand deaths. For decades Al-Aqsa sanctuary has been a flashpoint between Israelis and Palestinians and the political contestation around the site has been increasing incrementally for two decades.

3.1 The Ottoman Rule, 1517-1917

Since 1187, the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa has been administered under the Waqf system. For over 14 centuries the Sacred Site has been acknowledged as an Islamic property reserved for Muslim prayers. Ottomans ruled the whole Palestine from 1517 till 1917. The term “status quo” in the holy places in Jerusalem is dated back to the Ottoman rule. Status quo is a special technical term for the regime of binding arrangements regarding the ownership, usage, and ceremony at the holy sites. The Ottoman Firman in 1852, froze claims of possession by religious communities in the Holy Places and banned any construction or alterations to holy places (“Ottoman Firman” 1852). This arrangement is known as the status quo. In the British Mandate, the status quo included The Western/Al Buraq Wall and the Rachel Tomb. An Ottoman Firman dating back to 1852 introduces the status quo arrangement. The term status quo was used for the first time in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin. It is pointed out in the Treaty of Berlin that “It is well understood that no alterations can be made in the status quo of the Holy places” (“Treaty of Berlin” 1878). The Article 62 of the Treaty of Berlin (1878) then declared the 1852 firman to be unbreakable and declared it the “Status Quo of the Holy Places,” and also extended it to non-Christian holy places. According to the international legal perspective, the protection of the “status quo” on
the Holy places is necessary as it protects the prevalent rights to worship and prevents conflict (Paz 2017). Therefore, states ruling Jerusalem after the Ottoman rule committed themselves to the protection of the status quo at the beginning of their rule.

In 1850s Ottomans issued a decree allowing non-Muslims with official approval to enter the site. However, as a response to this decree, an interdiction on the Jewish entrance to the site was passed by the Jewish rabbinic establishment, stating that due to the Jewish Legal code Jews were banned from entering the site (Dumper 2015, 4). Reiter (2008) points out that the Jews who do not obey the ban and want to enter the site were able to gain access to the site. Therefore, in the Ottoman times, in the absence of any political mobilization for ascension to the site, individual Jews were able to quietly pray on the Esplanade (Reiter 2008, 55).

3.2 The British Mandate Rule, 1917-1948

After the British occupation of Jerusalem in December 1917, the prevailing custody of the Islamic Waqf over the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was confirmed by British authorities in Article 9 and 13 of the League of Nations’ provision for a Mandate in Palestine. Terms of the Mandate of 27 July 1922 included the issue of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, declarating that the Mandatory rule was responsible for the Holy Places, the preservation of the existing rights in the holy places, free access to and worship in the places, and also public order. The British policy in the mandate years was to maintain the status quo by protecting the existing rights in the Holy Places. However, with the increasing numbers of immigrants in Palestine and the emergence of Zionists

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5 Article 9: “Respect for the personal status of the various peoples and communities and for their religious interests shall be fully guaranteed. In particular, the control and administration of Waqfs shall be exercised in accordance with religious law and the disposition of the founders” (Laqueur and Schueftan 2016, 33). Article 13: “All responsibility in connection with the Holy Places and religious buildings or sites in Palestine, including that of preserving existing rights and of securing free access to the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites and the free exercise of worship, while ensuring the requirements of public order and decorum, is assumed by the Mandatory, who shall be responsible solely to the League of Nations in all matters connected herewith, provided that nothing in this Article shall prevent the Mandatory from entering into such arrangements as he may deem reasonable with the Administration for the purpose of carrying the provisions of this Article into effect; and provided also that nothing in this Mandate shall be construed as conferring upon the Mandatory authority to interfere with the fabric or the management of purely Moslem sacred shrines, the immunities of which are guaranteed” (Laqueur and Schueftan 2016, 33).
as a powerful force this policy faced serious limitations. The Western/al-Buraq Wall “became the focus of national and religious tensions” under the British mandate rule (Dumper 2002, 77)

One of the boundaries of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa which was both revered by the Jews and Muslims were at the center of the contestation in the British era. Jews called the Wall, Western Wall, and revered the wall since it was the only remnant of the Second Temple (Reiter 2008, 16); while Muslims call it al-Buraq Wall, and revere it because it is a part of the Sacred Site, and it is also the place where the Prophet Muhammad tethered his mount before his ascension to heaven (Reiter 2008, 27). In 1920s Jews began to seek to extend their right to worship at the Western/al-Buraq Wall and also the possession of the Wall. On 23 September 1928, Jewish officials attached a screen in front of the wall blocking the public access to the area to meet the demands of Revisionist Zionists (Lundsten 1978). This act caused disturbances on the side of Muslims, and the conflict over the Western Wall/al-Buraq Wall turned into “a test of which religious community was dominant in Jerusalem” (Dumper 2002, 78). On November 1928, a White Paper was released by the British authorities which indicated that the wall was “legally the absolute property of the Moslem community and the strip of pavement facing it is Waqf property” (Shaw Commission 1930). The Paper settled the question of the worship accessories as followed:

[T]he Jewish community have a right of access to the pavement for the purposes of their devotions, but may bring to the Wall only those appurtenances of worship which were permitted under the Turkish regime. Whenever the Moslem authorities have preferred complaints that innovations have been made in the established practice, and the Palestine Government on enquiry have satisfied themselves that the complaints were well-founded, they have felt it their duty to insist that the departures from practice which gave rise to the complaints should be discontinued (Shaw Commission 1930).

The contestation between the Jews trying to gain the possession of the wall and the Muslims trying to protect their possession continued throughout the 1920s reaching its peak in 1929. On 14 August 1929, 6,000 Jewish youths demonstrating against Palestinian attempt of repair work near the wall, by shouting “the Wall is ours,”
provoked a counter-demonstration by Palestinians. Tensions built up following the
demonstrations and the violence spread all over the country from Jerusalem, resulting
in the death of 133 Jews and 166 Arabs, before the British suppressed the events (Shaw
Commission 1930). To investigate the conflict an international Commission was set
up in 1930, which released the “Report of the Commission on the Palestine
Disturbances of August 1929” in May 1930. The report that is also known as the Shaw
Report concluded “Legally, the wall is the absolute property of the Moslem
community and the strip pavement facing it, on which the Jews stand when making
their devotions at the Wall” (El-Farra 1968, 73). Restating the findings of the White
Paper of November 1928, the Commission stated that Muslims had “the exclusive
legal ownership of the Wall,” and Jews had “the right of free access to the place as to
a religious site” (Shaw Commission 1930). The British Mandate Rule restored the
status quo after the report. However, 1929 riots indicated the structural changes and
tensions between the two communities, as a result of the Jewish National Home policy
of Britain (Dumper 2002, 78). Besides, the 1929 conflict revealed the power of religion
“as a prime driver of resistance” (Darweish and Rigby 2015, 18). The masses who
were not set in motion by ideals such as nationalism or self-determination mobilized
when they perceived a direct threat to their ideational, spiritual, and material interest.
It can be argued that it was the first time that religion came to the stage as an
authoritative force that facilitates mobilization of the Muslim masses.

After the Second World War, Britain decided to hand over its responsibility to and
requested the General Assembly to consider the issue of Palestine. The General
Assembly appointed the Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), which
adopted the Resolution, no 181 on 29 November 1947, calling for the partition of
Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. Part III of the Resolution was about Jerusalem,
projecting a corpus separatum (a separate entity) that would be administered by the
UN through a trusteeship council and a governor, which would be appointed by the
UN. According to the Resolution, the status quo arrangement was to be assured, and
the holy places and the respect for the prevailing rights in the holy places was to be
protected. The Resolution was considered to be a legal basis for the establishment of Israel by the Jews in Palestine but rejected by the Arabs.

3.3 The Jordanian Rule 1948-1967

On May 14, 1948, following the end of the British rule, the Jewish community in Palestine declared the establishment of the State of Israel. Immediately after the declaration, armies of the five Arab states attacked Israel. When the battle for the Jerusalem ended, Jordanians had the control of the eastern parts of Jerusalem while the Israeli forces had the control of the western parts of the city. King Abdullah aimed to bring Jerusalem where his father was buried and which constitutes one of the historic capitals under his rule. For this purpose, he wanted “to act on the basis of the partition plan, to enter into those territories allotted to the Arabs, and he informed the Jewish leadership accordingly, through various channels” (Sofer 1976, 75) On January 1949, an Armistice Agreement was signed between Israel and Jordan. The contracting parties agreed on the establishment of a special committee that would plan the free access to the Holy Places in Jerusalem in the armistice agreement (Lapidot and Hirsch 1994, 33). However, this committee has never been established. At the end of 1949, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion declared Jerusalem as an inseparable part and the eternal capital of Israel, which was approved by the Knesset in the following months (Lapidot and Hirsch 1994, 81-105). After the declaration of the Prime Minister, Jordanian King proclaimed the annexation of Jerusalem to the Kingdom of Jordan in a conference in 1950 to which notables of the areas that Jordan conquered was attended (Lapidot and Hirsch 1994, 145) and this decision was confirmed in the Jordanian Parliament. A great majority of the Palestinians regarded the King Abdullah as “a traitor to the Palestinian cause, because of his readiness to accept the partition plan, the internationalization of Jerusalem, and because of his direct contacts with the Jews” (Sofar 1976, 76). A number of negotiations conducted in following the 1948 war till 1952. However, the negotiations were fruitless, and states did not recognize the Israeli and Jordanian rule over the areas they have conquered.
Dome of the Rock and Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was in the East Jerusalem and therefore administered by Jordanians from the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 till the 1967 war. The Jordanian administration maintained the Muslim Waqf system in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa as it was under the Ottoman rule, and as did the British mandate. The Jordanian policy during the Jordanian rule was to increase the Jordanian political authority over the site while at the same time protecting the city’s Islamic and Arab character.

King Abdullah frequently went to Jerusalem for Friday prayer, did not allow Jewish visits to the Western/al-Buraq Wall contrary to the armistice agreement and resisted the pressure exerted by the UN for the internationalization of Jerusalem (Mayer and Mourad 2008, 245). On December 1950, King Abdullah appointed Ragheb Nashashibi as the “Custodian of the Holy Places and Protector of the Haram al-Sharif” with the title of the Minister (Mayer and Mourad 2008, 248). However, the office of the custodianship did not last long. In 1952, the custodian Dr Khalidi ruled against the Greek Orthodox in a dispute between Greek Orthodox, Latins, and Armenian Orthodox. When the Greek Orthodox appealed the decision to the Ministry of Interior in Amman, it reversed the decision of the custodian. The Governor of Jerusalem (mutasarrif) then assumed all the responsibilities of the custodian including the responsibilities of the Holy Places. In 1955, King Hussein issued a decree splitting the position of mutasarrif into two: the office of Mutasarrif and the office of muhafiz, which was to rule the holy places in the city of Jerusalem. The administrative changes Jordanians made were seen by foreign states as attempts to strengthen Jordanian authority over Jerusalem. Jordanian officials answered the concerns raised by diplomats of foreign states by arguing that the only aim of Jordan on the Holy Places was to preserve the status quo (Mayer and Mourad 2008, 257). Jerusalem remained divided between Jordan and Israel while the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa under the control of Jordan until 1967. During this period Israeli Jews could not enter the Holy Places in the East Jerusalem.
3.4 The Israeli Rule 1967-

The 1967 Third Arab-Israeli War took place from 5 to 10 June 1967. On 7 June 1967, Israel captured both West Bank and the East Jerusalem, and dislocated the Jordanian army. Simon Goldhill (2011) expresses the moments in which Israeli soldiers gained access to the Temple Mount with an exciting language:

Motta Gur, later Israeli Chief of Staff, looked down over the city, grabbed the microphone of the signal transmitter of his jeep and gave his brief speech to the troops: ‘The Temple Mount, The Western Wall, the Old City. For 2000 years our people have prayed for this moment. Let us go forward to victory.’ The troops drove on, and soon he sent his famous message to the HQ Central Command: ‘The Temple Mount is ours: repeat, the Temple Mount is ours!’ As the soldiers fought through the streets and alleys, a paratrooper yelled, ‘The Western Wall! I can see the Wall’, and from the Temple Mount and elsewhere his comrades rushed down to join him. They had fought for thirty-two hours, and now they leant against the wall, wept, and prayed (p.171).

Capturing the Temple Mount the Israeli soldiers felt relieved in front of The Western/al-Buraq Wall which was the only spot on the site of Solomon’s Temple they reached after two thousand years.

After the occupation of East Jerusalem during the 1967 War, the Israeli commander Mordechai Gur declared: “The Temple Mount is ours.” However, the Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was aware of the fact that the creation of the State of Israel, on the lands where Arabs believe that it is theirs’, was already a heavy blow for the Arabs. That being the case, the conquest of Haram al-Sharif would be conceived as an “ideological usurpation” and “desecration of its sanctity,” which could result in a major conflagration with the Islamic world (Gonen 2003, 149). He was aware of the fact that Muslims would not come alongside with the Jewish rule over such a major holy site. The political reasoning was matched by a message broadcast by the Chief Rabbinate warning that Jewish ascension to the site was prohibited according to religious law. Under these considerations, Dayan decided the reassurance of the status quo arrangement through which the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was to be administered by Islamic Waqf officials serving under the Jordanian Department of Holy Sites. The
internal order was to be maintained by the Waqf officials on the site. On June 17, 1967, Dayan called Muslim religious authorities in the city for a meeting at the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa, where he declared this decision to respect the status quo. The decree envisioned that Jews together with other non-Muslims had the right to visit the site “unhindered and free of charge as long as they behave decently and observed the religious feelings of the Muslims” (Gonen 2003, 150) which was also officially authorized by the Prime Minister Levy Eshkol. This understanding accepting the site as exclusively a place of Muslim worship with rights of visits by non-Muslims, and the Western/al-Buraq Wall with the exclusive place of Jewish worship is referred as the status quo, and most Israelis and the international public agreed with it.

Ordering the Israeli flag to be taken down from the Dome of the Rock, Moshe Dayan declared full Israeli authority over the Western/al-Buraq Wall and Plaza. Mughrabi (Moroccan) neighborhood, which was first constructed over 700 years ago in the age of the Ayyubids and Mamluks, demolished for the expansion of the Wall plaza by the Israeli state in the days immediately after it conquered East Jerusalem. The Western Wall itself has been a place of Jewish worship for several centuries. However, the current space before the wall is a recent invention, which was created with the destruction of 135 homes and two mosques in the adjacent Mughrabi neighborhood, displacing over 650 people (Abowd 2000, 7). In this regard, Torn Abowd (2000) argues that

this former space represents a site where practices of ethnic cleansing and wholesale dispossession have been combined with Israeli discourses of "the sacred" as well as others which promote exclusivist, trans historical notions of Jewish entitlement to the city (p.6).

The public access to the Wall was restricted under the British rule for Jewish worship, but the British declared that the right to ownership of the Wall was of the Muslim Waqf as it was in the status quo. In this sense, the Jewish claim of the exclusive possession of the Wall can be considered as the most important deviation from the status quo until then. The International Crisis Group, in Crisis Group Middle East Report dating back to June 2015 stated that:
With deteriorating coordination and competing interpretations of the status quo that leave stakeholders to protect interests by precipitating crisis—by stones, security forces, or diplomacy—the status quo conceived in June 1967 may seem obsolete, but remains the only consensus about the Esplanade. To shore up the site’s stability, it must be shored up (p.2).

When the history of the politics around the site is assessed, it is observed that the very proposition that the Crisis Group came up with was the one recognized by the British, Jordanian, and Israeli authorities. The preservation of the status quo over Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was considered as the key to preserve the fragile calm in the city by the authorities. Both the British mandate and Israeli authorities declared that they would ensure the status quo arrangement on the holy site. However, the activities of civil society actors and the responses of the ruling authorities to the de facto situation on the ground resulted in changes to the status quo. The first example of this prevailing trend was the process of the changing status of the Western Wall. The British confirmed the sacredness of the Wall for Muslims, never denied the exclusive right of ownership of the Wall of the Muslim Waqf. Despite this, during the British mandate Wester/al-Buraq Wall became a de facto exclusive Jewish worship place because of the policies implemented in response to the civil society activities. During the Jordanian rule over the East Jerusalem, the Jordanian authorities prevented Israeli Jews’ from accessing to the Wall. Then, the emerging de facto situation under the British rule was legalized in the new status quo agreement between Israelis and the Muslim religious authorities in Jerusalem following the 1967 occupation.

When the 1967 war was over, the Israeli government made a series of amendments to the legislation and administrative directives extending Israeli jurisdiction over the East Jerusalem without declaring the annexation of the city and granting Israeli citizenship to the residents of Jerusalem. The Knesset passed the Law and Administration Ordinance (Amendment no 11), 5727-1967 Law. It also amended the Municipalities Ordinance allowing the expansion of the scope of authority of Municipalities to “any part of Palestine which the Minister of Defense has defined by proclamation as being held by the Defense army of Israel” (Lapidot and Hirsch 1994, 167). Then the
Government issued a decree ordering the Israeli Law to enter into force in the East Jerusalem, which was included within the Jerusalem Municipality jurisdiction. The Israeli citizenship was not given to residents of Jerusalem but granted to them only when they applied for it. The Israeli citizenship was only granted to a limited number of people. Most of the Palestinians living in Jerusalem today hold the status of ‘permanent resident’ in Israel, which does not ensure citizenship rights. The Knesset also passed the Law for the Preservation of the Holy Places 5727-1967 ensuring the protection of, and the freedom of access to the holy places (Ibid 169). The authority of the police in the preservation of security and public order in the holy places was recognized by the Supreme Court of Israel (Ibid 500). The international community did never recognize the annexation of the East Jerusalem by the State of Israel. Contrary to the public opinion of the international community, the Israeli authorities argued that it was not an annexation but only administrative and municipal re-integration (Lapidot and Hirsch 1994, 172). From 1967 onwards, the Israeli courts considered the East Jerusalem as under the Israeli jurisdiction as a part of State of Israel (Ibid 502).

3.4.1 Reactions of International Organizations

Since the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem in 1967, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted numerous resolutions stating that Jerusalem was under Israeli military occupation, declaring the concern over Israeli attempts to change the status of the Jerusalem, and calling Israel to comply with international law. Each of these new UN resolutions on this issue recalled the previous resolutions and called Israel to comply with them. The Israeli policies attempted to change the legal status of the city. The UN has criticized a number of issues, including the illegal settlements in the city, the declaration of Jerusalem as Israeli capital and its actions in accordance with this declaration. When analyzing its Resolutions, the UN appears to be determinant on its position as follow:

"any actions taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem are illegal and therefore null and void and have no
validity whatsoever, and calls upon Israel to immediately cease all such illegal and unilateral measures” (UNGA Res 64/20).

After the destruction of the Mughrabi neighborhood, the UNGA called Israel to reverse the measures changing the status of Jerusalem (UNGA 1967b, UNGA 1967b). On November 22 1967, the UN Security Council adopted The Resolution 242 calling for the “[w]ithdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict” (UNSC 1967). However, the Resolution did not identify which territories that Israel had to withdraw from, thus allowing Israel to remain in control (Ibid). In addition, there was no special reference to Jerusalem (Ibid).

In the face of all these United Nations resolutions, the Israeli Government continued with its initiatives re-configuring this highly contested city, and the policies of erasure and segregation. The Israeli settlements built on the Palestinian lands, which were expropriated or confiscated, in and outside of Jerusalem, has been among the most controversial policies. The Israel’s settlement policy has been changing the demography of the city and has been rejected since it violates international humanitarian law. Creating Jewish only places on the occupied lands makes the removal of the occupation more challenging. After two years of Israeli occupation, the UNSC Res 267 on July 3, 1969 strongly denounced all the measures taken by Israel to change the status of Jerusalem; denoting that “all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel which purport to alter the status of Jerusalem, including expropriation of land and properties thereon” were invalid. The UNSC Res 267 of 3 July 1969 (UNSC 1969) and Resolution 298 of 25 September 1971 (UNSC 1971) expresses its regret at the failure to implement the United Nations resolutions on the protection of the status of Jerusalem.

On August 21, 1969, Dennis Michael Rohan, an Australian Protestant who follows an evangelical sect set al-Musalla al-Qibli⁶ on fire (Rabinovich 2014). In the arson attack, the 1000-year-old precious and historic minbar that was presented in the 12th Century by Salahaddin Ayyubi was reduced to ashes. After the arson attack, Rohan declared

⁶A mosque located in the southern part of Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa.
that "god wanted him to build the new Temple and that he was set to become the king of Jerusalem" (Druckman 2015). However, according to Palestinians eyewitnesses, the arson was conducted "in coordination with Israel's occupation authorities and its military forces" (Hussein 2015). During and after this fire left a question mark in the minds of the international community as follows: "Was the attempt to destroy Al-Aqsa Mosque the work of a "crazed" individual or was it planned by the state?" (Hussein 2015). On August 21, 1969, the UN Security Council Resolution 271 expressed concern over the extensive damage caused by arson under the Israeli military occupation (UNSC 1969).

In reaction to the US support of Israel in Yom Kippur War, many Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia, cut their sales of oil to the US in 1973-1974. Under this new dynamic in the international relations of the Middle East, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted many important resolutions regarding the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa in defiance of Israel. Following the destruction of the Mughrabi neighborhood by Israeli forces and the large-scale excavations fueling anxieties about the historical places, the UNESCO strongly condemned and called Israel to desist from any archaeological digs in the City and from any change of its historical character. The suspension of all forms of assistance to Israel followed the UNESCO condemnation in 1974. On 7 November, the UNESCO Commission for Social Sciences, Humanities, and Culture invited the Director General of UNESCO "to withhold assistance from Israel in the fields of education, science and culture because of Israel's persistent alteration of the historic features... of Jerusalem" (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1974). The UNESCO General Conference on 20 November adopted this Resolution. On 21 November, the UNESCO excluded Israel from its European regional group. In another UNESCO resolution the Director General called Israel to cooperate with the Arab states and the PLO in matters of education and culture for Arabs living in the territories that Israel administer. In an attempt to take Jerusalem under the protection of the World Heritage Committee, the UNESCO added
Jerusalem the old city and the walls to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1981, and the World Heritage List in Danger in 1982.⁷

Due to fundamental disagreements on the subject between the conflicting parties, the status of Jerusalem was not referred to anywhere in Camp David Accords in 1978. In 1980, the Basic Law was passed in the Knesset declaring Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel; the seat of the President of the State, the Knesset, the Government, and the Supreme Court; and the Holy Places in Jerusalem were to be protected. Although the law did not change the legal status of Jerusalem in Israel due to its declarative voice, it aroused a harsh resentment in the international community. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 478, reprimanded Israel’s declaration of Jerusalem as the capital and stated it as the violation of international law. The Resolution added that “all legislative and administrative measures” by Israel” that “altered or purport to alter” the status of Jerusalem was “null and void and must be rescind forthwith” (UNSC 1980). Finally, in the resolution the Security Council called the withdrawal of the embassies in Jerusalem (Lapidôt and Hirsch 1994, 351). After the Resolution, all of the embassies, 13 embassies, were transferred to Tel Aviv (Lapidôt and Hirsch 1994, 313-321-353).

In October 1990, 18 Palestinian were killed in the clash between Israeli police and Muslims who attempted to protect the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa against the Temple Mount Faithful, a Temple Mount movement aiming to reconstruct the Third Temple on the Temple Mount / Masjid al-Aqsa, coming the site to lay a cornerstone of the Third Temple (Baker 2015). Taking Israel as the responsible of the incident Security Council condemned Israel (UNSC 1990).

⁷Threats to the Site were elaborated as following: (1982) (cf. Document CLT 82/CH/CONF.015/8)“[…] they considered that the situation of this property corresponds to the criteria mentioned in the ICOMOS note and, in particular, to criteria (e) (significant loss of historical authenticity) and (f) (important loss of cultural significance) as far as “ascertained danger” is concerned, and to criteria (a) (modification of juridical status of the property diminishing the degree of its protection), (b) (lack of conservation policy) and (d) (threatening effects of town planning) as far as “potential danger” is concerned. [...]”
Since the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967, Israeli archeologists began excavating tunnels beneath the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa to find remnants of The Western/al-Buraq Wall. The excavations had been an issue of concern among Jerusalemites because of the proximity of the diggings to the Sacred Site and the impact of the digs on the foundations of the houses. In September 1996, Israeli occupation authorities opened a large tunnel under the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, leading violent clashes with Palestinians who think that the excavations could lead to the collapse of the masjids within the Site. Archeological excavations and tunnels made by Israeli authorities constituted a serious concern for the UNESCO. Including Jerusalem and its wall in its List of World Heritage in Danger in 1982 UNESCO rejuvenated its decision multiple times, and identified the increasing threat to the site since the 2000s. The graphic, provided by UNESCO, illustrates the changes in the number of reported threats to the site:

Table 3: Reported Threats to Jerusalem and its Walls (UNESCO Executive Board 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
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<td>1985</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UNESCO has produced several decisions condemning Israeli policies in and around the site. These condemned policies so far include the archeological excavations
damaging the historical site, the Israeli refusal of cooperation with the UNESCO on preservation of the cultural heritage, the persistent storming of the site by Israeli extremists, continuous violence by Israeli security forces against civilians, forceful entry to the site, the obstruction of necessary construction materials, the unilateral design of the Mughrabi Gate to the site. Documenting the Israeli policies threatening the well-being of the site, the UNESCO also indicates that its monitoring the violations in the site was prevented. It also depletes the Israeli failure of the implementation of the reactive monitoring mission to the Old City and its Walls, refusal of the appointment of a permanent UNESCO representative in the East Jerusalem. The Resolution of UNESCO on November 13, 2016, appears to use an increasingly strong language about the Israeli policies (UNESCO 200 EX/PX/DR.25.2 Rev).

The eighth and ninth paragraphs of the decision target the Israeli policy of regulation of the access to the site as follows:

8. Strongly condemns the escalating Israeli aggressions and illegal measures against the Awqaf Department and its personnel, and against the freedom of worship and Muslims’ access to their Holy Site Al-Aqṣa Mosque/Al-Ḥaram Al-Sharif, and requests Israel, the occupying Power, to respect the historic status quo and to immediately stop these measures.

9. Firmly depletes the continuous storming of Al-Aqṣa Mosque/Al-Ḥaram Al-Sharif by Israeli right-wing extremists and uniformed forces, and urges Israel, the occupying Power, to take necessary measures to prevent provocative abuses that violate the sanctity and integrity of Al-Aqṣa Mosque/Al-Ḥaram Al-Sharif (UNESCO 200 EX/PX/DR.25.2)

The paragraph 9 of the decision refers to a new phenomenon constituting the source of tensions in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqṣa since the 2000s. The UNESCO defined this dynamic as “continuous storming by “Israeli right-wing extremists.” Who are these extremists? Why their visits to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqṣa are regarded as “provocative abuses”? This new dynamic on the site is rooted in the social

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and religious trends in Israeli society, and Religious Zionist civil society activities in particular. Changes in theological interpretations regarding the ascension to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and activities of Temple Mount movements, which dates back to early 1980s, has to be known to understand the new dynamics of the conflict in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa.

3.4.2 Socio Religious Trends in Israel (1980-2017)

All Orthodox Jews agree on the centrality of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, in the Jewish religious ceremonies and texts. However, there is a huge difference between them regarding whether Jews would be allowed to enter the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa; and whether, how, and when the Temple would be built. There are two main religious perspectives on the issue. Ultra-Orthodox rabbinic authorities, who control the states chief rabbinate strictly opposes the Jewish ascension to the site. They believe that the Third Temple would be shaped from heaven and entering the site before is a breach of the religious law (International Crisis Group 2015, 14). In the early August 2017, 1,200 Jews visited the sacred site for remembrance of the destruction of the Temple. Chief Sephardi Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef recapitulated the traditional view of the Chief rabbinate in the face of high numbers of Jewish visits to the site by issuing warning prompting the Jews that "Halacha [rabbinic ruling] forbids ascension to the Mount, and those Jews who do ascend desecrate the holiness of the Mount" (Sadan 2017).

Whereas 30 years ago, the rabbis of the religious Zionist camp categorically reject Jewish ascension to the site, today they are split on this question. New theological interpretations were emerged among the rabbis encouraging Jewish presence in the site. They de-emphasize the authority of rabbinic establishment, encourage the Jewish ascension in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, and advocate the immediate reconstruction of the Third Temple. The activist messianic attitude in the Religious Zionism was initiated by Rabbi Abraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook, who envisioned the aim of the reconstruction of the Third Temple as a Zionist project. For Rabbi Kook “the process of national revival of the Jewish people was perceived as a Revealed end,
and was ultimately due to lead to the full redemption of Israel” (Inbari 2009, 18) The Jewish Underground plotted to blow up the Dome of the Rock in 1984. Yehuda Etzion, who was one of the plotters, argued in his defense statement that “his plan to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount was developed against the background of the refusal of the State of Israel to perform its duty in terms of the deterministic destiny of redemption” (Inbari 2009, 68). The failure of the ‘Jewish Underground’ to explode the Dome of the Rock (Lis, Shragai and Yoaz 2004), was considered as a result of the public’s being blindsided to the cause and strengthened the idea that public opinion has to be shaped before replacing the Dome of the Rock. Hence, when Yehuda Etzion, who was one of the plotters of the bombing, released from prison, founded Chai Vekayam Movement, which declared its aim as raising public awareness about the necessity of the construction of the Third Temple (Ibid 28). Apart from Chai Vekayam, since 1980s many organizations aiming to raise awareness in the public opinion about the necessity of a change in the status quo at the Temple Mount were established. Creation of this awareness has been seen as a prerequisite of the construction of the Third Temple on the Temple Mount (Be’er 2013, 28). The list of the registered organizations promoting the Temple agenda is provided below. They aim to provide the ideological, religious, social, material conditions necessary for the construction of the Third Temple on the Sacred Site. Encouraging ascent to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa is among the ways they try to achieve these goals.

Activities of the Temple Mount Movements vary. Ascending to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and encouraging the Jewish people to visit the site among are the main activities of the Movements. Temple Mount Faithful applies to the police for ascension to the Mount on Jewish holidays whereas Chai Vekayam visits the site on a regular basis (Reiter 2017, 187). The scope of the activities of the movements varies from demonstrations to conduct of religious ceremonies on the compound; from organizations of circling the Gates of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa to the reconstruction of Temple accessories. The Temple Institute has been constructing Biblically appointed vessels to be used in the Holy Temple in preparation for the construction of the Third Temple on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa for more than
Using source materials like gold, silver, and copper, the Institute produces the worship accessories that would be used in the Temple according to strict biblical standards. Exhibiting the accessories, the Institute declares that “each year 100,000 visitors come to see learn about and experience the promise of the Holy Temple” (The Temple Institute 2012). The most impressive work of the Institute is the “half-ton solid gold Menorah” which is on display looking to The Western/al-Buraq Wall. The Institute asserts that it “provides a taste of some of the incredible Temple treasures to be found in the exhibit” (The Temple Institute 2012). The exhibit is the material evidence that “some practical steps towards building the Third Temple are in advanced stages” (Be’er 2013, 39).

**Table 4: The List of the Registered Associations Promoting the Temple Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Registration</th>
<th>Name of Association</th>
<th>Association’s Self-stated Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>The Temple Mount Faithful</td>
<td>“To realize the Jewish people’s belief and historic calling, anchored in the Jewish Torah, that Temple Mount is the religious, national, and spiritual center of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>The Temple Institute</td>
<td>“To learn the laws of the Temple” and “to marshal religious, scientific, public, and financial resources to promote the construction of the Temple.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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9 The shadowed rows represent the most active and visible organizations, while others are in chronological order.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Organization/Project</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>El Har Hamor</td>
<td>&quot;To initiate and encourage any activity that strengthens the Jewish connection to the Temple Mount according to Halacha. To encourage, increase and spread Jewish awareness of this subject, to encourage studies and publications on the subject and to act to build a college for deepening the Jewish connection to Temple Mount.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>The Movement for Temple Renewal</td>
<td>&quot;To build the Temple and renew worship as in early days.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Chai Vekayam</td>
<td>&quot;Raising public awareness of the necessity of the Temple and fighting for the right of Jews to pray on the Temple Mount.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Har Habayit Shelanu Website</td>
<td>&quot;To Judaize the Temple Mount and build the Third Temple on the Temple Mount, capturing Temple Mount from the evil thieves of the Temple. Temple Mount is home.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>El Har Hashem</td>
<td>&quot;To stimulate public awareness of the sanctity of Temple Mount as the single, central holy site of the Jewish people.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Midreshet Kidmat Yerushalayim</td>
<td>&quot;A midrasha for the study of Jerusalem and the Temple via tours of Jerusalem within the Old City walls and curriculum on Jerusalem, Temple Mount, and The Temple.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>The Midrasha of Temple Knowledge</td>
<td>&quot;Educational projects on the subject of Temple awareness in Jerusalem.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Tzur Yeshuati</td>
<td>&quot;Publication of books and periodicals about the Temple.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Organization / Project Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Center for the Study of History of the Temple in Jerusalem</td>
<td>&quot;Dissemination of historical information in Israel and around the world, including Europe, about the Temple, its function, location, and archeological excavations at the site, based on Jewish sources.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Machaneh Shekhina</td>
<td>&quot;Construction and maintenance of a luxurious and sophisticated ritual bath for provision of purification services to pilgrims to the Temple Mount; guiding for visitors to the Temple Mount complex.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>The Center for Temple Studies at Mitzpeh</td>
<td>&quot;Creation of a model of the Temple and its sacred vessels; publishing of halachic and educational materials about the Temple.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Temple Awareness</td>
<td>&quot;Information and intensive education about the Temple.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Women for the Temple</td>
<td>&quot;To unite women from various Jewish groups around the Temple; to fulfill the positive precept to build the Temple; to deepen awareness and knowledge of the meaning and significance of the Temple.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Lev Ha'uma</td>
<td>&quot;To deepen awareness of the temple as a central site of the Jewish people; to strengthen the connection between the Jewish people, the State of Israel and the Temple Mount in order to realize Israel's full sovereignty on the Temple Mount for the benefit of the Jewish people and the Land of Israel.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Sanhedrin-large tribunal of 71</td>
<td>&quot;To establish the Jewish law among the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Chen Beit Hamidash</td>
<td>“To promote Temple affair through study, lectures, books, and publications; to illustrate the Temple and tabernacle; to administer seminars for the study of Temple affairs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Tzur Yeshurun Yerushalayim</td>
<td>“To convey Jewish heritage and culture, especially related to the Temple, throughout the Jewish population.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The Mount Yeshiva</td>
<td>“Gathering groups of newly wed yeshiva students to study-with a focus on the laws of sanctity and purity- next to the Temple Mount during hours open to visitors (in observance of law); promotion of public action to build a synagogue, a study house, a yeshiva and a kotel on the Temple Mount.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Moses Park</td>
<td>“Illustrating the Second Temple for the general public; the Temple illustration project.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: I made the table as an extension of the table provided in the “Dangerous Liaison: The Dynamics of the Rise of the Temple Movements and Their Implications Report” (Be’er 2013) and based on the information provided in the report.

During the 1900s, the rabbinical authorities and the Chief Rabbinate advocated the prohibition of the entrance to the Temple Mount with the concern of protecting its sanctity (Y. Cohen 1999). Because the ascension to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was strictly forbidden, very few religious Jews entered the Holy Esplanade until the 1990s. Therefore, early activists of Temple centered religious ideologies did not advocate political mobilization for ascension to the site or rebuilding the Temple, rather they spent efforts to lay the theological basis of constructing a new Temple (“The Status of,” 2015, 6). In February 1996, the Committee of Rabbis of Judea and Samaria declared that they would actively encourage the entrance of the Jews to the
holy site. Until this point, Jewish ascension to the holy site was promoted by some marginal religious groups. However, after 1996 declaration, the marginal groups began to acquire the mainstream national-religious authorities which paved the way for broader political mobilization (Inbari 2009, 2). Taub and Hollander (2012) argue that two main realpolitik concerns led a considerable number of rabbinic authorities to change their point of view as First “it [the prohibition] was impacting the sanctity of the Mount due to the presence of non-Jews. Second, it was leading to the loss of a conscious link of Jewish proprietorship over the Mount, weakening the aspirations for rebuilding The Temple” (p.141).

Despite the fact that Chief Rabbinate still prohibits the Jewish ascension to the site, the number of rabbis drawing on realpolitik reasons and advocating the ascension increased. An increase in the first two streams’ political and ideological weight and representation in the media, correlated with the acceleration in the numbers of Jews who advocate the entrance to the site and the reconstruction of the Temple Mount. All these social, political, and religious trends paved the way for a spectacular increase in the number of Jewish visitors to the site (Baker 2015). Writing from 2012 Tab and Hollander (2012) point out that:

In 2008, on the first day of the Succot Festival, hundreds of yeshiva students and their teachers paid an organized visit to the Temple Mount. This, in combination with private visitations, constituted an unprecedented number of visitors in one day since Israel’s occupation of the Temple Mount in 1967. Moreover, in the early 1990s, only a few dozen people even promoted the idea of Jewish pilgrimage to the Temple Mount, yet by the end of the twentieth century, the number of visits had grown to approximately 1000. Presently, about one decade later, one can say that Jewish presence on the Temple Mount has become a matter of routine (p.139).

More importantly, being considered as marginal in the 1990s, these groups managed to become increasingly more powerful. “Today a significant share of their demands has entered the mainstream” (Shani 2017). Aiming to change the status quo arrangement, the religious Zionists have found allies in fellow compatriots, who accuse the government of failing to impose its sovereignty over the holy site in Jerusalem. Much of the right wing and secular politicians support the religious Zionists.
demands on the Temple Mount based on the claim that if Israel is the sovereign over Jerusalem and the holy site, then it must fully apply its laws there. Over past two decades, Knesset members increasingly have advocated Jewish rights on the Esplanade on the basis of sovereignty claims (Ronan 2013). The right-wing politician and a member of the Knesset Moshe Feiglin (Likud) initiated a debate in the Knesset on 25 February 2014 with the heading of “the Loss of Israeli Sovereignty on the Temple Mount”. Ahead of the debate that provoked mass protests on the site, in Jerusalem and Amman; Feiglin visited the site and stated that:

Behind the back of our people we gave up on any vestige of Israeli sovereignty on the Mount. Every terrorist organization can wave their flag there, but the flag of Israel? It must not be mentioned. Reciting a psalm is grounds for arrest. Even wearing a skullcap [at the site] is inadvisable by police standards (as cited in Sterman and Fiske 2014).

The statement of Feiglin, among many other accounts of politicians and activists, illustrate how Jewish ascension and prayer on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa is considered as an issue of sovereignty; as a way to declare that the city of Jerusalem and the holy places in it were under the Israeli State’s ownership.

Israel seems to implement a twofold policy towards Temple Movements; it supports the movements but at the same time implements a containment policy out of security concerns. It supports the Temple movements that openly work to revoke Muslims right on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, by allowing them to register as official associations. Moreover, Israeli ministries directly fund numerous activities of the Temple movements (Seidemann and Friedman 2012). Security forces protect the demonstrations of the Temple Movements and guard the Temple Mount activists while ascending to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. The Ministry of Education regards the educational material that the Temple movements produced as an official material in the education system (Be’er 2013, 57). There are strong ties between some Knesset members and Temple Associations, and some Knesset members regularly visit the site. On the other hand, the Israeli police prevent activities of Temple Mount activists when
they foresee a threat to public security. The security forces also ban the entry of certain prominent Temple activists to the Temple Mount.

3.4.3 Domestic Law in regards to Jewish Entrance / Worship to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa

The Israeli domestic law protects the Jewish rights to visit the site but does not allow the Jewish worship. Following the Six Day War, Israel passed the Protection of Holy Places Law 5727 stating that

The Holy Places shall be protected from desecration and any other violation and from anything likely to violate the freedom of access of the members of the different religions to the places sacred to them or their feelings with regard to those places. Whosoever desecrates or otherwise violates a Holy Place shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of seven years. Whosoever does anything likely to violate the freedom of access of the members of the different religions to the places sacred to them or their feelings with regard to those places shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of five years (the Protection of Holy Places Law 5727).

There are many disputes with regards to the interpretation of the 1967 law. In the Nationalistic Circles case, Justice Simon Agranat concludes that the law ensures the freedom of access of the Jews to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, but not right to pray (Breger, Reiter and Hammer 2009, 33). There comes the question, given the fact that the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa for exclusively Muslim Worship, how to prevent the prayer as the believers got access to the site. The Public Security Minister Avi Dichter solves the problem by saying that “A Jew is not allowed to pray in any overt manner whatsoever on the Temple Mount, even if he is just moving his lips in prayer” (Shragai 2008). Then Breger and Hammer (2009) ask: “[c]an one have the right to pray ‘in one’s heart, but make no visible intimation? Can this legal position be sustained?” (Breger, Reiter and Hammer 2009, 34).

In 1993, the Supreme Court ruled (2725/93 and 4044/93) that non-Muslims have the right to pray on the site if there is no concrete threat of public disorder. However, the police reaction to the Supreme Court decision was that essentially there had been such an alert every day. Since then, Courts in general changed their interpretation on the issue of Jewish ascension to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from a legally
enforceable right to visit the site to the understanding of it as an abstract right which needs to be in accordance with the public order for its implementation (Breger, Reiter and Hammer 2009, 34). What threatens public order? Courts leave the issue of the definition of the public order and the determination of the acts that violate it to the discretion of the police forces. The commonly held legal opinion in Israel regards Jewish access to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa contingent upon the police decision based on the concern over public order (Breger, Reiter and Hammer 2009, 34).

In May 2014, Knesset members of the Likud and Labor Parties pushed for a bill that would allow the Jewish worship on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa (The Times of Israel 2014). Although the bill was not voted, the debates on the bill got extensive coverage in the Arab media, thus triggering amid anxieties.

It is possible to draw five main conclusions from the brief historical overview that I provided. Firstly, for decades, the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa has been a flashpoint between Israelis and Palestinians and the political contestation around the site has been increasing incrementally for two decades. Secondly, the legal status of Jerusalem and the determination of the sovereign authority over the site are difficult questions due to the complexities on the ground. The United Nations does consider Israel as occupying power in Jerusalem, does not accept Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel. However, Israel governs Jerusalem, continues its policies to change the demographic, cultural, and legal status of Jerusalem to the detriment of Palestinian Muslims for the benefit of Jewish settlers as an infringement of the international law. Thirdly, as a product of certain social, religious, political trends in Israel the Jewish demands in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa increased. The growth of Temple Movements advocating the construction of the Third Temple on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa encouraged Jewish ascension to the site, which resulted in increasing numbers of Jewish visitors. Fourthly, the Jewish prayers on the compound are forbidden in the Israeli domestic law, and contrary to the understanding between Palestinians and Israelis, Temple Mount activists have been increasingly attempting to pray or do provocative acts. Fifthly, in parallel with the increasing numbers of Temple Mount activists storming
the site, the restrictions on the Muslim access to the site also exponentially increased and diversified. It can be concluded that all of these processes fueled the prevailing anxieties over the protection of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and the exclusive Muslim right to worship on the compound.
CHAPTER 4

MURABITÂT AS A PRODUCT OF THE CONTESTATION OVER THE SITE

Following the Israeli occupation of the East Jerusalem in 1967, a political symbolism emerged around the Sacred Site. The Holy Sanctuary has become a central motive in the nationalist aspirations of both Israeli and Palestinian societies. Dumper and Larkin (2012) express the centrality of the Site in the Israeli and Palestinian discourses as follows:

[T]he Western Wall (and Temple Mount) has become central to nationalist discourses of Yeṛusḥalayim — the "unified" "eternal" capital of a Jewish State — and integral as an iconic space for the performance of military ceremonies, political inaugurations, and national-religious festivities. For Palestinians, the Haram al-Sharif (al-Aqsa mosque) has similarly emerged as a sacred national emblem. It serves as the emotive scene for the violent outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising or "Al-Aqsa Intifada" in September 2000 and a potent symbol to mobilize local, regional, and global opposition against Israel's "Judaization" policies in Arab East Jerusalem and ongoing occupation of Palestinian land.

The nationalist discourses built around the Sacred Site had not only constituted a central theme in the politics, but also it resulted in a wave of social activism in Israeli and Palestinian societies. The most influential one in its activities in Jerusalem is the Northern branch of the IM, led by, Sheikh Ra'ed Salah\textsuperscript{10}, who is among the founding members of the Murabitât Movement.

\textsuperscript{10} Sheikh Ra’ed Salah is among the founders of the IM, and one of the prominent Arab leaders in Israel. The decision of the northern branch of the IM to participate in the 1996 Knesset elections led the movement to split from Israel’s IM. After the split in 1996, Salah led the “Northern Branch” of the Movement, based in Umm al-Fahm. He also held the position of mayor of Um al-Fahm from 1989, when he was elected with 73 percent of the vote till he resigned in 2001. For more information, see Jamil Dakwar, “The Islamic Movement inside Israel: An Interview with Sheikh Ra’ed Salah,” Journal of Palestinian Studies, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Winter 2007), pp. 66–76.
4.1. The Contestation over the Holy Site

The dispute about who would be sovereign over the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa emerged as the main obstacle to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. In the Oslo Accords, Israel and Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) agreed to leave the issue to the final status negotiations. In 2000, the issue of Jerusalem was officially addressed for the first time during the Camp David Summit, which failed due to the dispute over the Sacred Site (Lehrs 2016, 182). Although the Annapolis Conference in 2007 reintroduced the final status negotiations, the Jerusalem issue was not addressed (Lehrs 2016, 184). Israel, Jordan, PA, Hamas may be considered as the four main state and non-state actors who may have power in Jerusalem. Israel remains as the occupying power in the city. Ruling East Jerusalem between 1948 and 1967 Jordan, has a privileged status in the Sacred Site, because the Waqf administration, which is associated with Jordan, is the only body that Israel recognizes in the East Jerusalem as part of the status quo agreement between Jordan and Israel in 1967. Jordan struggles to preserve its guardianship status on the Holy Site because it is an important source of the legitimacy of the Hashemite dynasty in Jordan. In the absence of any agreement on the dispute over Jerusalem, a political void has emerged, and this has been increasingly used to its advantage by Israel after the Oslo Accords. Especially after the Second Intifada, the PA was removed from the city while the influence of Jordan decreased because of the weakening diplomatic relations. Being considered as a terrorist organization, Hamas could not play a significant role on the Esplanade (Cook 2016). As the Israeli pressure on the Palestinian residents and the status quo on the Holy Site heightened, the ineffectiveness of Jordan, PA, and the Hamas leadership to help the residents of Jerusalem and to protect the Muslim rights became evident. The Islamic Movement (IM) and the Murabitat as a women civil resistance movement stood for filling the political vacuum that the above-mentioned state and non-state actors left.

The Israeli policies perceived as damaging the status quo arrangement on the Sacred Site constituted the main agenda of the IM, in Jerusalem. Between 1992 and 2000, the
policies of Israel undermining the Islamic presence in Jerusalem through house and land acquisitions, archeological excavations, reconstruction projects, construction of the separation wall and house demolitions had direct and indirect effects on the status quo in the Holy Site. The pressure on the Palestinian residents imposed by all of these policies reached unprecedented levels. Sharing the common concern over the holy site, the Jerusalemites who are suffering under the intensifying Israeli policies mobilized over the issues related to the status of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. It can be argued that the most revealing example of the extent to which the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa provides an important source for mobilizing people was Al-Aqsa Intifada. In the Camp David negotiations, the Sacred Site emerged as one of the biggest obstacles on the way of the agreement between the PLO and Israel. Against the background of the failed negotiations, Ariel Sharon and six Knesset members from Likud visited the site under the protection of Israeli soldiers on September 28, 2000 (Jube 2015, 23). The visit attempting to signify the Israeli control over the site provoked tremendous anger among Palestinians. The violence erupted on the Esplanade spread over Palestine and sparked the Second Intifada, which is known as Al-Aqsa Intifada. 3,307 Palestinians and 972 Israelis died during the Second Intifada (Gutman, Rieff and Dworkin 2007, 49). The status quo in the site has dramatically changed after the violence of the intifada years ceded.

One of the major fractures from the status quo in the 2000s is that Israel gained an absolute control of the access to the holy site. Previously the Islamic *Waqf* was in control of the non-Muslim access to the site by selling tickets for a fee. After 2003, it was no longer able to determine the size and rate of the entry of the Jewish groups or prevent the entry of the Temple activists. While the groups of Jews up to twenty people were allowed to enter the site by Israeli authorities, since 2011 the number raised 50 (Dumper 2015, 128). The number of Israeli visitors to the site increased dramatically. While Temple Mount activists’ visits to the site with uniforms were forbidden, since 2012 not only soldiers with uniforms, but also high-ranking Knesset members, and ministers began to enter the site (Dumper 2015, 128). Since the attempts of prayer or other “provocative” activities and statements of the Temple activists trigger angry
protests of Muslims worshippers in the mosque complex, Israel emerging as the sole authority in the access to the Esplanade began to restrict the activities and numbers of the Jewish visitors out of security concerns. Despite the fact that the restrictions on the Temple activists made them resent to the government policy, the incidences creating anxieties and anger in the Muslim population increased in the meantime.

Together with the increasing number, the provocative activities and statements of the Temple activists in the Esplanade, the high-profile visits of Israelis to the site accelerated the fears among the Palestinians. The Minister of Construction Uri Ariel advocated the construction of the Third Temple in the Temple Mount. Violating the status quo, Ariel prayed at the site for many times (The Jerusalem Post 2006). The senior figures on several occasions approached the Dome of the Rock and declared Israeli sovereignty over the entire site. A short film that was produced by the Israeli Foreign Ministry on January 29, 2013, showed the replacement of the Dome of the Rock with the Third Temple (Al Arabiya 2013). In the film, the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister, Danny Ayalon stands in front of the Dome of the Rock. The Dome of the Rock disappears and transforms into a Jewish temple. The film was banned from official publication due to the fear of the anger among the Muslims, but Ayalon uploaded the film onto his YouTube channel (Ayalon 2017). The film was regarded as a reflection of the practical steps taken on the ground to construct the Temple in place of the Dome of the Rock and fueled anxieties for the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa ("Muassasat Maqdisiyah," 2013). The release of the film illustrates how the visions of transforming "Haram al-Sharif" into the "Temple Mount" began to be called out by senior figures and explains the reasons behind the increase of anxieties in the Palestinian side.

In addition, while the number of Jewish visitors increased, the limitations on the entry of Muslim worshippers to the site also augmented. The policies such as banning their entries, limiting based on gender and age, preventing the entrance of Palestinians from West Bank and Gaza Strip decreased in the number of worshippers who are allowed to enter the holy site.
The third change on the status quo emerged in the area of supervision of maintenance and archeological works in and around the site. The Israeli supervision and intervention in the works of the Waqf increased. The Israeli authorities began daily patrolling of the Waqf works; forbid the use of some mechanical tools such as trucks, tractors, and electrical generators (Dumper 2015, 128). The limitations on the maintenance projects on the site are put forth, due to the complaints of some Israeli groups advocating that the Waqf’s maintenance work destracts the antiquities in the Esplanade (M. Klein 2017). The Waqf officials, on the other hand, argue that the limitations constitute a major challenge to the maintenance work, which endangers the well-being of the historical site. Implementing severe restrictions on the Waqf maintenance activities, Israel hastened its unilateral designs and archeological excavations around and beneath the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa (Shaveh 2017). The Israel’s reconstruction of the Mughrabi Bridge on the ramp leading to the Mughrabi Gate paved the way for a series of a diplomatic crisis with Jordan. Turning a deaf ear to the Jordanian and Palestinian concerns over the Israeli design of the Mughrabi Gate, and the UNESCO’s calls for a dialogue between Jordan and Israel regarding the restoration of the bridge, Israel materializes its ambitious plan of a larger bridge enabling Jews’ access and connecting the site to the City of David.

Dumper and Larkin (2013) argues that “the al-Aqsa mosque has been employed, particularly by Ra‘id Salah as a symbol for political empowerment; a scene of public contestation…[A]nd a focus on religious renewal through local activism and Islamic tourism”. With the efforts of the movement, Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa turned into a rallying cry for defending Jerusalem and Palestine (Murphy 2010). The IM began to play a major role in Jerusalem and perceived as a key actor in the politics over the site and debates over the status of the city. Hence, as early as the late 2000s, the impact of the movement on the negotiations and the future policy were officially recognized (Dumper 2009). Israel’s IM considered Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa as the focal point of their agenda and put some different projects in motion for the cause. The IM began to mobilize Jerusalemites with the “al-Aqsa is in danger” campaign and carried the struggle onto the international platform via media channels (Girit 2016). The IM
supplied the \textit{Waqf} by mobilizing funds and supplying volunteer labors to renovate the Solomon’s Stables and transformed it into larger prayer spaces. After completing these restoration projects, the movement changed its focus from the restoration of the buildings to the improvement of the functions of the mosque.

The number of the Temple Mount activists ascending to Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa compound was exponentially increasing while the Palestinians were prevented from visiting the compound by several Israeli policies. Since the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza are not able to enter Jerusalem, and the separation wall prevented great numbers of Palestinians from visiting the site, the only Palestinians who are allowed to visit the site were “the Palestinians living in Israel”\textsuperscript{11} and Jerusalem (M. Klein 2004, 53). Considering the cost of the long journey to Jerusalem and their economic problems, not surprisingly, the number of the Muslim worshippers at the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was limited as a result of the Israeli restrictions on the freedom of the movement of the Palestinians. Increasingly believing that the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa was in danger, the Muslims felt the urgent need to populate the compound to lay claim to the Sacred Site. For this purpose, the movement organized daily bus convoys carrying people to Jerusalem free of charge.

“The Convoys of Beyarik” is the project of the organization of daily bus convoys from the Israeli territories. The declared aims of the project were enabling regular visits to Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa, facilitating their prayer, raising the Sacred Site awareness of the visitors by organizing learning circles on the compound, protecting the Sacred Site by ensuring the presence of Muslim groups, preventing the Temple Mount activists to enter the compound, supporting the Muslim craftsmen in Jerusalem (Demirci 2017). Beginning on April 4, 2001, the convoys started to carry people from al Celil, Al Muselles, El Niqab, Akke, Hayfa, Yafa, Al Ludd, and many other village and cities. Initially, only one bus took the road, but the number of buses quickly

\textsuperscript{11} The status of the Palestinians who continued to stay in Israel and became Israeli citizens after 1948, is highly problematic and politicized issue. Israel refers them as “Israeli Arabs” but most of the Palestinians prefer to define them as “Palestinians within 1948 borders” or “Palestinians inside the Green Line” referring to the armistice lines of 1949. In the oral histories and my interviews with the Murabitāt, they mentioned the Murabitāt members with Israeli citizenship as “the Palestinians in 48 lands”.

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increased, and the monthly average of the number of people visiting Jerusalem in Beyarik convoys reached 30,000 (Ozkan, Sen and Tahir 2009, 235). The implementation of these projects paved the way for an increase in the awareness of the Muslims which brought about a new dynamic of the politics over the site (Dumper 2009). In 2010, a new grassroots activism emerged with the inspirational and material support of the northern branch of the IM led by Ra’ed Salah: Murabitoun and the Murabitūt, which constitutes the case of this thesis.
4.2 A Brief History of the Murabitát

The movement was organized under two branches. The men’s branch that was consisted of men above the age of 50 was called the Murabitoun while the women’s branch consisting of women of all ages was called the Murabitát. Surprisingly, the number of women who volunteered for ‘ribat’\textsuperscript{12} was higher than the men’s, and for a number of reasons the effectiveness of the women remained far more than of men’s throughout their resistance. The Murabitát overshadowed the Murabitoun in their resistance and visibility (Purple 2016, Thistle 2017, White 2017). Beginning in 2010, the Murabitát went to the compound every morning, attended the learning circles at the compound as teachers or students, and kept their eyes on the Temple Mount activists. When the Temple Mount activists attempting to perform religious rituals, put forth sovereignty claims or took any other “provocative” action, the Murabitát began to demonstrate until the Temple Mount activists leave the compound (Hadid 2015a). The number of the Murabitát and Murabitoun increased day by day, and in 2014 it reached 1200 (Thistle 2017). The presence and activities of the Murabitát very much upset the Temple Mount activists who enter the Esplanade escorted by the Israeli police. They demonstrate to declare that in spite of the violations of the Israelis, the Holy Site was still in the hands of Muslims. The words of an old lady summarize the gist of the Murabitát befittingly as:

I live in the Old City, and I used to come here just for the prayers at night time. But when I saw the settlers come every day and saw how much they want to be here, that they want to have the Dome of the Rock destroyed, I realized that I have the right to come and that therefore I should come. [I come] to make a point: we will not leave this place, this place is ours, and we won’t go anywhere (Staton 2014).

The Murabitát became much effective in resisting the Israeli policy on the compound. The Israeli authorities began to use draconian measures against the women ranging from emergency laws preventing the entry of women to arbitrary arrests and detentions (Kutttab 2014). Besides, as the women of the Murabitát remained resilient in their

\textsuperscript{12} Ribat is a political-religious-social term which will be elaborated on the p.86-88.
presence on the compound, the Israeli abstention from harming the women gave its place to violent oppression of the women. The Israeli police began to take forceful measures to contain the protests of the Murabitât, and the tensions in the compound arose (Reuters 2015). The reports of the women of the Murabitât being chased, hurt, and arrested by the police in Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa mosque compound began to be covered by the international media (Reuters 2015).

During the 2014 Gaza War, Palestinians organized demonstrations in Jerusalem to protest the burning alive of Muhammed Abu Kdeir, who was a Jerusalemite, by a Jewish extremist. The violent conflict between Israeli police and the Palestinians lasted for weeks during which stabbing and car-ramming cases by individual Palestinians took place. Netanyahu blamed the IM for the violence without providing any evidence, and it has been reported in the Israeli media that Netanyahu ordered a Shin Bet investigation on how to ban the IM (Cook 2016). Claiming to disperse Palestinian youths carrying stones and fireworks Israeli forces, threw stun grenades and tear gas canisters inside the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Many members of the women of the Murabitât were injured. With the rising tensions on the compound, a series of reports were released on the Israeli violation of the status quo agreement on the holy site. The Israeli police imposed harsh restrictions on the access of Muslims and Jews. Given the fact that Jews were permitted to circulate in the site, Palestinians conceived the high number of Muslims who were prevented from entering the site as the imposition of a new access regime by Israelis.

During Succot (7-17 October), a new phenomenon was observed in the Israeli policy. Until then restricting the access of young and middle aged Palestinian men to the compound with security reasons, the Israeli authorities this time banned the entrance of Muslim women of all ages to the Esplanade. The Murabitât was burst with pride because they read the ban on women as the result of the effectiveness of their resistance (Purple 2016, White 2017). They began to protest on the doors of Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. On Fridays in Ramadan, tens of thousands of East Jerusalemites whose entrance to the mosque was prevented prayed in the streets leading to the Old City.
On October 29, Yahuda Glick\textsuperscript{13} who is an American-born Israeli Orthodox Rabbi, one of the prominent Temple Mount activists, and former director of The Temple Institute was shot by a member of Islamic Jihad and wounded, in the aftermath of the annual conference of Temple Mount loyalists held by the Seekers of Zion Organization, across the entrance to the Begin Center on Nakhon Street (Wohlgelelnter 2017). After the assassination attempt, Israel closed Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa to all Muslims as a punitive measure (Eisenbud 2014). In response, Jerusalemites declared a general strike, and Jordan withdrew its ambassador from Israel in protest of the increasing Israeli violations in the Sanctuary.\textsuperscript{14} The U.S. rapidly intervened to the crisis, and the Secretary of State John Kerry convened a meeting between the Jordanian King Abdullah and the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu (Ravid 2014). The visit to Jordan was to acknowledge the Jordanian position in the compound as opposed to the civil movements turning into more effective actors on the ground (A. Eldar 2015). While no document was signed in the meeting, it has been reported by Jordanian journalists that Netanyahu promised to prevent the Jewish ascension of political figures, Knesset members and Temple Mount activists to the site, to end limitations on the entry of Muslims based on age and gender (International Crisis Group 2016b, 3). Following the 2014 understandings between Israel and Jordan, the Jordanian ambassador returned to Tel Aviv. On 2 November, the Police Commissioner Asst.-Ch. Bentzi Sau banned visits from Knesset members to Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa compound pointing out that the visits would increase the tensions on the Mount (Hartman and Harkov 2015).

Israel failed to comply with the requirements of the declared clauses of the agreement. The pressures on the Murabitāt increasingly continued. Restrictions on the entrance of the Muslims also prevailed while Israeli forces were still guarding the Temple Mount

\textsuperscript{13}"Two months after being shot, Glick announced that he was running again for the Likud primary. Having been No. 56 on the Likud list in the previous election, Glick now challenges for the 33 slot, reserved for a representative from Judea and Samaria... Come March 17, the Likud wins 30 seats, Glick is three away. Fourteen months later, after three MKs have left the Knesset, Glick is sworn in as Likud MK No. 30 on May 25, 2016" (Wohlgelelnter 2017).

\textsuperscript{14}The decision to recall the Jordanian ambassador was taken "in protest at the increasing and unprecedented Israeli escalation in the Noble Sanctuary, and the repeated Israeli violations of Jerusalem", Jordan's Petra news agency said.
activists during their visits. The demonstrations of the Murabitât was not only upsetting the Temple Mount activists visiting the compound and the security forces escorting them but also it attracted the attention of the media to the ill-treatment of the women by the Israeli forces. Despite all the policies permitting of torture, ill-treatment, and arbitrary detention, they continued to carry out ‘ribat’ on the compound (Tait 2015).

In 2015 late August, the Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan asked the Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Ya’alon to outlaw the Murabitât and Murabitoun by saying that: “[T]hese organizations stalk Jewish visitors to Temple Mount, yelling impassioned and inciting things and blocking the visitors’ way on the Mount,” (Cohen 2015). Shortly after Erdan’s call, the Israeli forces began preventing the entrance of almost all Muslim women. They were permitted to enter after 11 A.M only if they give their ID cards as a deposit.\(^{15}\) This ban was then changed, and Israeli police assembled a “blacklist” with the names of some 40 (then rose to 52) Palestinian women whose entry is specifically prohibited (Jubeh 2015, 33). The women on the “blacklist,” which they call “the golden list,” began to demonstrate on the Chain Gate. On September 9, 2015, Defense Minister Ya’alon signed the decree outlawing the Murabitoun and the Murabitât, thus punishing the participation to the group and funding the organization (Hatuqa 2015). The Defense Ministry declared that the Murabitoun and Murabitât constituted a central figure in creating violence on the Temple Mount and Jerusalem and banned to protect national security and public order (G. Cohen 2015).

After the ban on the movement, in his statement, Yehuda Glick told Breaking Israel News that: “It is really wonderful to see, after so many years that we have been begging, the government took this step. Thank God, after many meetings, the government finally understood the great need to take action against this major obstacle

\(^{15}\) Collection of ID cards is an issue of concern among the Murabitât women. My interviewees claimed that the identity information gathered by the security officers at the gates were used for the policies of attrition by Israeli authorities against the Murabitât women and their families. Besides, the ID check in itself is a policy of attrition because a worshipper has to use the same gate of Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa while leaving after prayer. Considering the fact that the sacred compound is large, walking back to the gate of entrance may be time consuming effort for the women and a serious challenge for the old women in the group (Cyan 2015).
to peace and public order in Jerusalem" (Speyer 2015). As Glick pointed out rightly, the ban came after a long-heated debate over the Murabitât issue, in the Israeli public. When I conducted an online search on the representation of the Murabitât in the Israeli media, I observed three main traits of the representation of the movement in the Israeli newspaper and online news websites. Firstly, they are depicted as the main reason behind the escalation of violence on the compound. Secondly, their activities are reduced to and depicted as shouting vulgar words and harassing all tourists visiting the Sacred Site. Thirdly, their aim is presented as an attempt to change the 'status quo.' Fourthly, they are regarded as paid employees of the Northern branch of the IM, rather than activists. I will try to elaborate on these traits.

Banning the two branches of the movement the Defense Ministry declared that the activities of the Murabitât "form a central component in the creation of tension and violence on the Temple Mount in particular, and Jerusalem in general." It is noteworthy that neither the Israeli government nor the Israeli media accused women of being violent, but they claimed that they are behind the escalation of violence on the site. That is to say; they argue that the Murabitât is responsible for the increase in the violence on the site, despite the fact that the Murabitât does not use violent means in their struggle. The logic behind this perception can be understood by elaborating on the third trait. The Israeli government and the Israeli media state that the aim of the Murabitât is to change the 'status quo.' Then who tries to challenge the established arrangement that protects the fragile peace, he becomes responsible for the violence emerging out of the crisis. This line of logic can be detected on many news pieces. For example, Ben Porat (2015) points out that: "The purpose of their [the Murabitât] activity is to destabilize the status quo on the Temple Mount, and they have succeeded in creating escalation on the Mount, and in making the security situation there untenable'. At the very least, Temple Mount activists demand the Jewish right to prayer on the Sacred Site which is contrary to the recent international law and international agreements of Israel. On the other hand, the main declared aim of the Murabitât is to prevent any violation of the status quo. A comparative analysis of the meaning of the term 'status quo' in the accounts of Temple Mount activists and the
Murabitât members' helped me to understand where the discrepancy came from. I will argue that what Temple Mount Movement activists consider as 'the status quo' is not the legal status quo of the Temple Mount/ Masji al-Aqsa but the political status quo on the site. In other words, Murabitât declares that it aims to protect the legal status quo over the site, which considers the Sacred Site as the Muslim place of worship and obliges Israel to respect that. On the other hand, the Temple Mount activists seem to mean political status quo when they regard the Murabitât as an actor disturbing the status quo. Also, banning the organization, the Israeli government acts in defense of the political status quo, which is characterized by the Israeli attempt to change the demographic status of Jerusalem. Since they act in defense of the political status quo, they end up defining the Murabitât as a central figure threatening the status quo and 'creating escalation' on the Sacred Site.

In the oral histories of the Murabitât women, they mention that they began to protest when they see 'intruders.' While analyzing the recordings, I was not sure about what they meant by intruders and assumed that the term referred to all non-Muslims visiting the site. Since I read, in the Israeli media and government releases, the claim that the Murabitât say vulgar words and harass all tourists (A. Eldar 2015) visiting the Sacred Site, I asked direct questions to my interviewees on the claim. When I asked this to White who is a Murabit herself, and Thistle, who is an organizer, both firmly denied that and stated that whom they protested is the Religious-Zionists community and "Temple Mount activists." "We have nothing to do with non-Muslim tourists," White (2017) said, "They continue to visit the Masjid al-Aqsa peacefully." They also denied the use of vulgar words and highlighted that the only slogan they chanted was "God is Great." However, Cyan (2015) stated in her account that "He [a police officer at a gate] told me: 'Go! Otherwise I will arrest you', and I cursed him and his family". Although,

16 For the details of the political status quo on the site consult to p.57.
17 A Murabitât member also told to AlMonitor that: "Those who come here as innocents [tourists] and visitors, we greet with words of welcome to Palestine and Jerusalem, but to the occupiers we say, "Get off our land." They should go away from our Al-Aqsa. We fight mainly against the settlers" (S. Eldar 2015).
the Murabitât members claimed that they say nothing more than “God is Great”, the accounts of Cyan shows that “vulgar words” may be used by the women.

It was claimed in the Israeli media that the women were paid employees, whose primary motive was getting a certain amount of stipend. According to Haaretz, paid activists in the Murabitât and Murabitoun earned 3,000-4,000 shekels ($771-$1,028) per month (G. Cohen 2015). In the Palestinian media and in the oral histories of the women I had not encounter any reference to the stipend. However, the two researchers that I have interviewed stated that the Northern branch of the IM pays a certain amount to the Murabitât members. Besides, at a conference I attended in Istanbul, I witnessed the speakers call people to provide financial aid to the Murabitât members (“Turuq” 2016). I had the chance to ask Thistle, who is an organizer of the movement about this issue. He admitted that the IM supports “whoever calls herself/ himself a Murabit,” and added that these volunteered women were able to travel long distances and able to spend all day without working for their daily expenses thanks to the financial support of the IM. Thistle (2017) argued that Israel banned the IM as it thought that the deprivation of the women from the financial sources would decrease the popularity of the movement. When I asked White, who is a Murabit herself, that “It has been told that you received money to protest. Do not you think that it is a bad reputation that creates doubts about your sincerity in your cause?” While answering my question she harshly reprimanded me. In her long heated speech, she told that they were remaining steadfast every day from morning till the evening, in the cold, under the rain, leaving their children behind, in the face of the violent repression of the Israeli forces, facing the threats to their lives and security. She concluded her vehement speech by saying that “No one accepts to be the subject of such threats and treatment for earning a living” (White 2017). However, the Israeli government was of different opinion.

On November 17, 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu’s government announced the decision to outlaw the Northern wing of the IM in Israel, who is seen as the financial base of the Murabitât movement (Cook 2016). Any organization or person affiliated with the Northern branch of the IM or assisting it would be committing a criminal offense and
could be imprisoned (Ravid 2015). Following the ban, some organizations\(^\text{18}\) affiliated with the movement were closed. Israeli authorities seized their documents and funds, froze bank accounts. However, implementing the ban on the IM turned out to be a quite problematic issue since the movement had thousands of members and relations to welfare associations and charities across Israel. It has been argued that the implementation of the ban on the IM may stimulate its supporters, since it may be “seen as a victim of an overly zealous Israel” (Hadid 2015c). Cook (2016) argued that to avoid this possibility the Israeli authorities decided not to implement the ban with draconian measures, but “exploiting the new situation to isolate, harass and possibly imprison Salah’s inner circle, and find ways to defund the movement’s activism in Jerusalem.” The pressure exerted on the Murabitât movement increased after the ban. Hence, Zeinat Jilad, a 64-year-old lady residing in the East Jerusalem, became the first member of the Murabitât who came under arrest after the ban (Gancman 2015). It has been reported by the members of the Murabitât that their husbands and fathers were also arrested and interrogated, and the tactic of punishing family members worked well that some members of the Murabitât had to leave the ribat because of family pressure (Hassan 2015). Ra’ed Salah who is the leader of the northern branch of the IM began to serve a nine-month jail sentence on May 8, 2016, with the conviction on charges of “incitement to commit violence” (The Jerusalem Post 2016). Besides Ra’ed Salah, many prominent figures were exposed to measures of arbitrary arrests and detentions as a policy of attrition.

After being denied entry to the Sacred Site, the Murabitât initially held daily gatherings outside the Chain Gate. Due to the Israeli repression involving beatings, and verbal and physical harassment, they began to carry out ribat outside The Gate of Remission (Hassan 2015). However, the demonstrations outside the gate did not last long. Israeli officers dispersed them by using disproportionate force (“Israel Denies”,

2015). The women gathering on the gates of the site were beaten by the Israeli police, dragged along the ground and the forces used fire sound bombs to disperse them. However, all these grievances of women did not receive adequate international media coverage. Furthermore, Israel used different repression mechanisms functioning far from the eyes. These silent repression mechanisms took very different forms such as the imposition of heavy taxes on the family members of the Murabitát, arbitrary arrests of the family members of the Murabitát, domiciliary visits causing heavy damage to the homes of the women (“Turuq”, 2016).

It was difficult for me to track the precise effect of the bans onto the Murabitát. After the bans, admitting any organizational structure or ties with the IM were constituted crimes punishable by imprisonment. My endeavor to make sense the recent dynamics in the Murabitát got more and more difficult as the pressure on the movement increased. I could not find much media or social media posts revealing the recent dynamics of the relationship between the groups, changes in the funding opportunities and effect of the financial factors on the mobilization and steadfastness of the women. However, during my online search throughout 2016, I realized that the activities of Murabitát on the sacred site were incrementally decreased. However, in his speech at a conference in Istanbul, Hisham Yaqoub argued that the ban did not attenuate the resistance movement, rather paved the way for the strengthening the steadfastness of the group and increased the number of the Murabitát (“Turuq”, 2016). Thistle (2017) also confirmed Yaqoub and also argued that this measure decreased the funding possibilities but never undermined. The northern branch of the IM continued to fund the women; the Palestinian society embraced the Murabitát. They organized their daily travels from their villages to the site, but such efforts were not sufficient. (Thistle 2017).

Since the establishment of the Murabitát an exchange of ideas has been going on between the Murabitát and the transnational civil society they established relationships (Purple 2017; Magenta 2017). On the other hand, throughout its resistance, the movement served for the education of thousands of women as the Palestinian Muslim Jerusalemite nonviolent woman resisters. The identity-making process taking part in
the learning circles and the transnational ties they have established constituted the two main assets the movement produced throughout its struggle, and the two factors would have long term repercussions on the conflict over Jerusalem and its holy places. The events in mid-2017 showed that the two of the assets I mentioned already began to shape the course of the events.

For the last years, it has been accustomed that during Jewish and Muslim religious holidays tensions rise and quite often turn into violence in and around the site. However, in 2017, certain factors that will be culminated in the rise of the tensions in the city independent of the accustomed period. Firstly, 2017 constituted the 50th anniversary of the occupation of the Old city of Jerusalem by Israel and therefore hosted several celebrations by the Israeli state or civil society organizations. Secondly, Trump’s election to the Presidency catalyzed debates over the international recognition of Jerusalem as the “eternal capital of Israel”, disturbing the Palestinian public opinion.

Jerusalem Day (Yom Yerushalayim) is an Israeli national holiday celebrating the establishment of Israeli control over the Old City in the June 1967 War. 2017 marks the 50th anniversary of the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, when Israel occupied East Jerusalem. Therefore, different from the previous Jerusalem Days, numerous ceremonies and state events celebrating the 50th anniversary were organized throughout the year. The Flags Parade took place on May 24 in which “young nationalist Jews paraded through the Arab Quarter singing and waving flags in front of the Palestinians, most of whom closed their shops in protest or fear” (Fisher 2017). Whereas, by the Jewish lunar calendar, May 24 is the Jerusalem Day; on a standard calendar, the date of the Israeli occupation of the Old city is June 7. Ofer Zalzberg, a senior analyst at the International Crisis Group, a think-tank based in Brussels that carries out field research on violent conflicts worldwide19, predicted at the beginning

19 International Crisis Group was founded in 1995' with the motto of “Preventing War, Shaping Peace” by George Soros, Morton I. Abramowitz, Mark Malloch Brown, Baron Malloch-Brown, Stephen J. Solarz. Following the events on the Sacred Site closely, the ICC publishes reports on the state of the tensions in the site which were made use of and cited multiple times, in this thesis. In this reports ICC calls Israel and Jordan to protect the status quo on the site for the protection of the “fragile peace".
of the year that 2017 would be much more explosive since the 50th-anniversary events would take place in the first week of June (Zalberg 2017, 2). What made the temperament in 2017 more explosive was the fact that the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Israeli occupation would take place just after the Passover and in the first week of Ramadan. Passovers are the time periods in which more Temple activists who oppose the ban on the non-Muslim prayer on the compound seek to pray on the Holy Compound. Ramadans are the time periods in which the number of Muslims showing favor to mosques and especially the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa increased. While the succession of Passover and Ramadan were already a factor increasing tensions, the Israeli celebration of the occupation of the Old City added to that atmosphere catalyzed the conflict.

The election of Donald Trump to the United States Presidency constituted another factor increasing the political tensions in Jerusalem in the last months of 2016 and the first half of 2017. During his election campaign and since he moved into the Oval Office, Trump has said he would consider moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem (Paton 2017). The possibility of a reversal in the six decades old American policy heightened the hopes of the Israelis waiting for the over turn of the US policy and also the anxieties of the Palestinians who consider Jerusalem as the future capital of Palestinian state (Ostrovsky 2017). Since the decision to move the American embassy to Jerusalem would be regarded as a support to Israeli sovereignty over the city, Trump's statements fueled anxieties over the inflame of tensions in the Middle East. However, on the first of June 2017 Trump administration declared that the US Embassy in Israel would be kept in Tel Aviv, but also pointed out that it was just a temporary postponement (Labott and Merica 2017).

The actions of some members of Knesset and some decisions of Knesset on particular subjects constituted sources of tension in Jerusalem since the beginning of 2017. In

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20 On March 21, 2016, while addressing the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Trump stated: "We will move the American embassy to the eternal capital of the Jewish people, Jerusalem". For the details of his speeches and how his views have evolved, see Schallhorn (2017).

21 Numerous protests were organized in Palestine calling Trump not to relocate the embassy ("Palestinians protest," 2017). On June 01 when Trump signed the Jerusalem Recognition Act Waiver keeping the American Embassy in Tel Aviv rather than moving.
January 2017, a number of Knesset members declared that they would visit the Temple Mount in the next Ramadan, and on February 1, however, Knesset Ethics Committee decided to uphold the ban on the visits of Israeli ministers and Knesset members to the site ("Israeli Knesset", 2017). One controversial decision of Knesset was the ban on the use of mosque loudspeakers, which passed the preliminary Knesset vote on March 8, and fueled bitterness among Muslims resulting in many protests in Palestine ("Palestinians won’t", 2017). The bill, which is known as the muezzin bill, has been widely criticized, but Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu supported the bill on the grounds that the calls for the prayers made excessive “noise”. The ban and the protests taking place in Palestine attracted international media attention ("Thousands of", 2017; "Thousands march", 2017).

In the first half of the year, archeological works beneath and around the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa continued to be among the sources of Palestinian anxieties for the protection of the Sacred Site and anger towards Israel. At the same time, Palestinian Authority and Jordan stated their concerns over the archeological excavations and accused Israel of attempting to destroy Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. As sinkholes appeared in the south of the Sacred Site, PA Minister of Waqf and Religious Affairs stated, on 26th February, that excavations under the site damaging the mosque could result in a war that Israel provokes ("Minister: Israel’s,” 2017). In the first day of March, Jordanian government protested the "Israeli construction work activities s in the Umayyad palaces area adjacent to the southern wall of the Al-Aqsa” and demanded to end of the works ("Jordan protests,” 2017). However, these warnings did not result in any policy change in Israel.

Given the brief account of the prominent events around the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and Jerusalem, it can be argued that the usual sources of tensions were fueled by peculiar conditions of the year 2017, which is the year that Trump administration

[22] The 2014-2015 understandings between the King of Jordan Abdullah and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was meant to end the contemporary political unrest on the site which was defined by some analysts as the 'Jerusalem Intifada', in the meetings with the King Netanyahu committed to prevent the entry of all Knesset members including the ones attempting to pray and thus provoke the Palestinians on the compound, to the site.
began and that is the 50th anniversary of the occupation of the Old Jerusalem. The political unrest did not only present itself in the peaceful demonstrations but also violent attack and conflicts took place. On March 13, two Israeli border police officers were stabbed and injured by a resident of the Eastern Jerusalem neighborhood of Jabal al-Mukabar and were injured in the attack in the Old City of Jerusalem. A third officer reportedly shot and killed the man (“2 Israeli Police,” 2017). In May, Israeli police killed a 16-year-old Palestinian girl at Damascus gate. Israeli Police claimed that she tried to attack them with a knife (Reuters 2017; “Fatima Hjeiji,” 2017). On May 13, a 57-year-old Jordanian man was killed after stabbing a police officer near Lions’ Gate (Hasson 2017). What triggered the explosion of the state of tension was the event taking place on July 14.

On July 14, three Palestinian citizens of Israel killed two Israeli police in the Lion’s Gate entrance of the Old City of Jerusalem. Israeli security forces chased three men inside the compound, shot and killed them. Following the event, Israeli authorities closed the Sacred Site to Muslims who gathered for Friday prayers. On July 16, Israel installed metal detectors and closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras at entry points to the Site. The closure of the Site to Muslims and installment of the surveillance were viewed as a move to assert further Israeli control over the site (Husseini 2017) and resulted in a two-weeks resistance by Palestinians (“Al Aqsa Mosque,” 2017). An organization committee composed of highly respected religious leaders in Jerusalem23 called on Palestinians, to refuse to enter the sacred site by passing through the metal detectors (“Al-Marjieiat al-Islamiat,” 2017), and the Palestinians complied (Melhem 2017). For 13 days, Palestinians have protested night and day, refusing to pray inside the compound after Israel installed metal detectors at its entrances. They held prayers in the streets and just outside the gates of the Sacred Site. Kuttab (2017) points out that Mohammed Daraghmeh, a conspicuous analyst of Palestinian affairs, depicted the new resistance dynamic in the following words: “It was a popular movement in that entire

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23 “The organizing circle includes the head of the Supreme Islamic Council, Akrama Sabri; the grand mufti of Jerusalem, Muhammad Hussein; the director of the Islamic Waqf Council, Azim Salhab; and Judge Wasif al-Bakri, all of whom are religious leaders who enjoy the respect and trust of Jerusalemites” (“Fi Mu'tammar,” 2017).
families participated in the daily prayers outside the restricted mosque’s gates. People figured out how to deal with highly political issues as well as with basic mundane but necessary issues like food and water, and at the same time were keen on creating rotating committees that took care of the cleaning afterward.”

Clashes have broken out during nonviolent protests over the measures, leaving five Palestinians dead and hundreds more injured (“UN envoy,” 2017). The images and videos of the bloody scenes from the nonviolent campaign attracted regional and international public attention. On July 20, the United Nations envoy on Middle East peace voiced deep concern over the violence around the Sacred Site of Jerusalem’s Old City and called for “de-escalation of the situation” (“UN envoy calls,” 2017). The Palestinian Authority came to the scene late. Arriving China on July 17, President Mahmoud Abbas returned to the Palestinian territories on July 19 and on July 21, one week after the outbreak of the resistance, Abbas announced that they froze all contacts with Israel in anticipation of the removal of the metal detectors (Mortimer 2017). After a security cabinet meeting on July 24, a statement released by Benjamin Netanyahu’s Office accepting the implementation of technologies other than metal detectors.25

The *murabitát* women played a crucial role in turning the course of the July 2017 events. When Israeli authorities removed the metal detectors and the cameras at the gates the religious leaders decided to enter the mosque, but the women protested and did not accept to enter the esplanade Israel opened the Lion’s Gate (Jundi 2017b).

However, the resistance of the Palestinian masses continued till Israel “removed surveillance equipment and other obstacles from the gates leading to holy site”

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24 Buttu (2017) was one of the columnists depicting the story as of the story of nonviolent action: “Yesterday, thousands of Palestinians came to Jerusalem to perform the most simple, most peaceful act: prayer. Palestinians - Muslims and Christians, women and men, young and old - prayed in the streets after refusing to enter through the new metal detectors and barricades erected by Israel in front of the al-Aqsa compound. Israeli forces, armed with live ammunition, stun grenades, sound bombs, water cannon and tear gas, came prepared to kill. And they did.”

25 It is stated in the Security Cabinet Statement, on July 25 2017, that: 'The Security Cabinet accepted the recommendation of all of the security bodies to incorporate security measures based on advanced technologies ("smart checks") and other measures instead of metal detectors in order to ensure the security of visitors and worshippers in the Old City and on the Temple Mount' (“Security Cabinet,” 2017).
("Palestinians met," 2017). The withdrawal of Israeli measures in the face of the organized, steadfast civil resistance created a sense of great accomplishment among Palestinians. Commenting on this sense of accomplishment Tzidkiyahu told to Haaretz that "All of a sudden they've received a connection, a sensation of communalism, a hope that it can be different. The Palestinian media is filled with calls to draw conclusions from this victory. The first conclusion is that Israel cannot stand up to organized, mass, nonviolent actions" (Shani 2017). Ra'ed Salch said that this was a victory for Palestinians. He told Al Jazeera that: "We never saw this kind of win for our people. People are coming from everywhere just to support us in this occasion... The Israeli government will now understand that Palestinians from Jerusalem will not accept everything they [Israelis] will tell them. We control ourselves, no one is controlling us" ("UN envoy," 2017).

In the July 2017 events, Murabitât, who were removed from the Sacred Site and not heard of much in 2016, "returned to play a central role in leading Palestinian resistance to Israel" (Miller 2017). The women of Murabitât were on the frontlines in the July 2017 resistance. The images and videos of the Murabitât women protesting in front of the Lion’s Gate, chanting slogans, prostrating “on prayer mats they had brought with them and spread on the stone floor of the Old City” were given place in the media coverage of the events (Jundi 2017a). Being quite active during the resistance campaign the Murabitât women who were banned from entry to the site entered the site. The organized participation of the Murabitât women to the July 2017 resistance with high numbers and on the front lines showed that the ban on the movement was not effective in ending the movement.
CHAPTER 5

ASSESSMENT OF THE MURABITÂT AS A CIVIL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

After providing the conceptual framework and the historical background of the conflict over Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, in this chapter, the Murabitât movement will be described and analyzed. The concept of civil resistance, and the historical background of the conflict are indispensable parts of this analysis. The analysis of the movement is based on the concepts explained and historical processes provided in the first two chapters. In this chapter, the Murabitât will be defined as a women’s civil resistance movement, and analyzed based on the definition that civil resistance was a mode of action relying on nonviolent methods, confrontational and non-institutional and conducted by civil groups. The last part of the chapter assesses whether the Murabitât succeeded in their resistance. The conceptual framework which was provided in the second chapter will be used in the analysis of the case in the second part of this chapter.

5.1 The Murabitât as a Women’s Civil Resistance Movement

In this thesis, relying on the different definitions produced by Sharp (2013), Roberts (2009), Stephan and Chenoweth (2008, 2011), civil resistance is defined as a confrontational and non-institutional action which is conducted by civil groups relying on nonviolent methods. The Murabitât is conceptualized as a civil resistance movement based on the definition provided above. First, this study argues that the Murabitât Movement is confrontational; second, it is civilian in terms of its composition and implementation of nonviolent methods; third, it is a loosely organized, informal, and non-institutional organization. In the first part of this chapter, these claims will be substantiated.
5.1.1 Confrontational

The motivation of the Murabitât at the compound is to confront the Israeli attempts to change the status quo and to revoke exclusive Muslim rights on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. In the last decade the salience of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict increased due to a sharp change in the status quo over the Esplanade. The status quo on the Sacred Site has changed in three ways. Firstly, Israel got the complete control of the Muslim and non-Muslim access to the site. Secondly, the number of the Israeli visitors and the Jewish religious appearance on the site dramatically increased while Muslims increasingly faced with gender and age restrictions. Thirdly, Israel began to impose major restrictions on the restoration and maintenance works of the Waqf while precipitating the unilateral archeological and maintenance works in and around the site.

The change in the status quo is acknowledged by several scholars. According to Daniel Seideman:

Today, in very real, concrete terms, the Temple Mount is being transformed from a Muslim place of worship (which may be visited by non-Muslims but not for the purposes of worship) into a highly contested site. This is happening in a context where Israeli politics are shifting dramatically in favor of the far right, and in which Israeli security authorities who control access to the site are acting in ways that are demonstrably favorable to shifting the Status Quo in favor of greater Jewish access, including for the purposes of worship (as quoted in Houk 2015, 114).

Highlighting the phenomenon of the transformation of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from a Muslim sanctuary into a disputed place of worship Seideman takes the Israeli state responsible for the change. He argues that it is the Israeli state policies that limit the Muslim access and facilitate the Jewish presence in the site and shift the status quo.

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Some other scholars, on the other hand, tend to see the phenomenon as a product of the increased activity of Temple Mount activists. Ir Amim’s “Dangerous Liaison” report indicates that:

Over the past several hundred years, a Status Quo has been maintained according to which the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif area is an area reserved for Muslim prayer and the Western Wall is a prayer area reserved for Jews. Over the last decade, the status of these areas has gradually shifted, driven by a revival of activity by Jews determined to strengthen the status of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif complex as a Jewish religious center and to marginalize the claims of Muslims to the Mount (Be’er 2013, 5).

According to the report, the gradual transformation of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa into a Jewish center and downgrading of the Muslim presence in the site, is a product of Jewish activism. Referring the activists’ and organizations’ aim to forcibly realize Jewish worship on the holy site, the report states that:

[B]uilding the Temple is an action plan and a theological and practical operational order. Considering the Temple Mount/ Haram al Sharif’s religious, cultural, political and symbolic status, and in light of past attempts to alter the status quo, a force and unilateral change of arrangements violates the right of Muslims to determine worship arrangements for their holy sites and therefore has a tremendously explosive potential (Be’er 2013, 9).

The report argues that the growing activities of the Temple Movements led to the transformation of the status of the Sacred Site.

It can be concluded that there is a consensus that the status quo on Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa has eroded, which means the violation of the Muslim right to worship and administer Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, making the compound increasingly a subject of contestation between Jews and Muslims. The aim of the Murabidät is to confront this erosion of the status quo. However, there is no consensus on the person or the entity holding the responsibility. Is it the increasing activities of Temple Mount activists, or the government policies that bring about the violation of the Muslim rights on the site? Different from these two ways of understanding, the
Murabitât Movement regarded Temple Mount activists’ activities as coordinated efforts with Israel. Voicing this understanding Ra’ed Salah declares that:

Although there are many extremist Jewish organisations out there that are trying to destroy our holy places in Jerusalem, in reality these organisations are only part of the larger Israeli government designs. It is the Israeli government that put forward the policies and schemes to divide and eventually destroy al-Aqsa Mosque, then uses Jewish extremist hate groups to execute its policies (as quoted in Younes 2015).

Regarding Temple Mount activists as Israel’s cat’s paw, the Murabitât considers standing up against Temple Mount activists as resisting the Israeli occupation of the Sacred Site.

A great majority of the Murabitât emphasized that they intent to carry out the ribat by coming to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. When reciting Quran at the compound, one of the women that were interviewed told that:

We are making ribat with the sisters that you see now. We are sitting exactly this part of the Masjid Al-Aqsa, because the assaults of the Jews begin on the Mughrabi Gate. They begin by inciting us with evil tongue and vulgar words. Sometimes they pretend to pray Salah. We aim to prevent them. With the help of Allah, we do not let them do that (Green 2015).

Making sense of this account and understanding the motivation behind the women depends on the exploration of the idea of ribat, which constitutes the main motivation for their participation in the movement.

Murabitoun means the people who carry out ribat, while Murabitât means the women who carry out ribat. The name that the movement chose for itself reveals significant information regarding its motivations and methods. They define themselves as women who are mobilized to carry out ribat. Indeed, when the members of the Murabitât in this research were asked about their motivation; they repeatedly underlined their aim as carrying out ribat at the compound. Due to its centrality in the self-identification of the movement, it is essential to comprehend the lexical meaning and terminology of ribat. When the lexical, figurative meanings and the terminology of the concept
considered, it is discovered that the term was quite rich in meaning. The word *ribat* is formed from the Arabic verb (م - ـي - ر), which means to tie something, to stay, to anchor. When it is used in its figurative meaning, *ribat* means taking up a position, strengthening moral force, standing guard against the enemy (Cetinkaya 2003).

Within the Islamic world, the term *ribat* is used as a religious and military concept. *Ribat* as a military concept has religious sources. There are references to *ribat* in two verses in the Quran and in many hadiths. Firstly, the word *ribat* takes place at Surat Ali Imran: “O you who have believed, persevere and endure and remain stationed and fear Allah that you may be successful.” (Quran 3:200). The verse calls Muslims before war, to be patient, consistent, precautionary, and ambitious to preserve their perseverance. Some scholars interpret *ribat* as the resistance to the enemy, standing guard in the frontiers, and remaining stationed. Regardless of whether it means ‘standing guard’ or ‘patience’, the term does not refer to an offensive action against the enemy, but rather a preparedness in a case of conflict, being stationed and conscious in the face of possible attacks. It can be concluded that *ribat* amounts to a stance of consciousness and preparedness against possible offenders, which could prevent offensive acts of enemies. The preventiveness of *ribat* is emphasized in the second verse in which it comes in the form of “*ribat-ul khayf*” which literally means “horses of *ribat*”. The verse says that:

> And prepare against them what force you can and horses tethered (fed for war). Thereby you may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides them. You do not know them but Allah knows them. Whatever thing you spend in the Way of Allah, it will be paid back to you fully and you shall not be wronged (Quran 8:60).

And if they incline to peace, then incline to it [also] and rely upon Allah…” (Quran 8:61). Therefore, *ribat* can be understood as being stationed with a consciousness of the threats and the belief that preparedness of a *murabit* would deter the offender.

There are a number of hadiths praising *murabits*, the ones carrying out *ribat* to which the *Murabitât* make use of. The *hadiths* of the Prophet are frequently articulated by
the Murabitât interviewed in this project. For example, the following hadith is referred many times in the life stories of and interviews with the Murabitât:

Shall I not tell you of something by which Allah erases sins and elevates ranks?" They (the sahabah) said, 'Of course, O Messenger of Allah!' He said, "To perfect ablution even in trying conditions, to go towards mosques very often and to wait for the next Salah after offering one. This is ribat (guarding the frontiers) (Khan 1979).

When the verses are considered together with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, the religious meaning of the term becomes clearer. This hadith considers ribat as patience in the face of difficulties standing in the way of worship. In this context, ribat is not a military activity, but an act of steadfastness whereas a murabit is not a soldier, but an ordinary Muslim. Under the light of this hadith, as a religious term ribat amounts to perseverance in the acts of worship (Al-Nawawi 1999, 1030). Hence, the functions of the ribats as institutions reflect this understanding.

Following the revelation of the verses on ribat, the concept found its institutional formulation. The tents alongside the frontiers in which soldiers standing guard against enemies tethered their horses were called ribat while the volunteered soldiers gathered in the ribats to do good deeds were also called murabis (Yigit 2008, 76). In time the tents turned into fortified buildings. The murabis were spending their times in military training, learning circles and prayers. Ribats were the places that the soldiers mobilized and civilians took shelter in times of war. However, when the frontiers changed and the conquests decreased the ribats began to lose their military function and continued to serve the religious and social functions. Ribats turned into social institutions such as khankah, zawiya, and caravanserais, where the poor, travelers, pilgrims were hosted, and Sufi lodges where students were educated (Cetinkaya 2003). While the term murabit meant guardians, it began to be used as dervish and saint (Yigit 2008, 78).

It would not be wise to assume that all the Murabitât that replied the question of their motivation with the rhetoric of ribat knew the lexical, figurative meanings and terminology of the word ribat. However, getting the gist of the word ribat is essential for us, outside readers, to discern the discourse structured around the word for
centuries. Only if we understand that, we can analyze the motivations and methods of the movement. To illustrate, the cover of the Palestinian Media Watch, which is an Israeli Research Institute that monitors the Palestinian Authority through its media, reported that Mahmoud Abbas saluted Murabitoun by saying that: “We bless you, we bless the Murabitin” (“Abbas: We,” 2015). While reporting the speech, the institute properly explained the term Murabitin as “those carrying out ribat”. However, translated the term ribat as “religious conflict/war to protect land claimed to be Islamic” (“Abbas: We,” 2015). Ribat has multiple meanings, but does not mean war in any case. No analysis would be reliable depending on this false translation because the term neither coincides with the historical construction of the term nor the understanding of ribat the Murabitāt has.

5.1.2 Civilian

Murabitoun consists of elderly men and women whose ages change from 18 to over 70 (Hassan 2015). Since the beginning, both the number and effectiveness of women carrying out ribat has been more than men.

Being women has been the very phenomenon that attracted attention to the civil character of the movement. The power of civil resistance campaigns is based on the fact that civilians defend their causes by using nonviolent means at all cost. The term “moral jiujitsu” refers to the resisters’ acceptance of pain without responding violently which would bring disgrace on the opponents and generate public support of the society, public officers, or the international community. In the case of Murabitāt, the women resistance movement proved to be more successful because the audience is less likely to have a clean conscience about a picture of an old woman beaten by the police (Dagli 2015). Associating the old ladies with violence, by nature, is not a viable option. Hence, the videos of the women who are beaten by the Israeli forces created serious concern and anger in the Muslim countries. The fact that the women demonstrators are only harmless housewives emphasized in some news reports (TRT Diyanet 2015). The videos showing the Israeli violence against the nonviolent women drew attention to the Israeli occupation of Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. The
Murabitât voice this slogan on the gates of the site: “[y]ou ask who we are. We are the women of Palestine. You ask who we are. We are not terrorists” (Shiraz 2017). However, their mere presence at the compound is the stronger manifestation of the slogan. They use their mere presence as a means of civil resistance indeed.

There are three main means Murabitât devised all of which constitutes a way of nonviolent resistance: going to Al-Aqsa and being situated there; teaching or studying in the learning circles on the compound; demonstrating when the Israeli activists visit the site. The women put more emphasis on one of the three methods while explaining their motivation behind attending the Murabitât. The ones who put greater emphasis on the method of “being situated” and demonstrations regard Murabitât more as “the first line of defense” of Al-Aqsa whereas the ones highlighting the importance of the learning circles among methods considers the group as a school in love with learning and a circle of friendship and unity. What is common in both groups’ understandings is their manifestation of their love for the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and Jerusalem.

The main objective of the women is to enter and remain in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. This basic activity turns into an act of resistance, due to the harsh restrictions on the entrance to the site, time limitations in the site, and the use of disproportionate power by the security forces against the women. A woman from Murabitât explains the importance of just being present at the Sacred Site with the following words:

I was born in Jerusalem. I am from Jerusalem and will remain in Jerusalem till the last day of my life. We will remain here, will not renounce our right in the Masjid Al-Aqsa, and we will not renounce our right in our homes. In spite all the pressure we were exposed to...We will remain here, here is our home and our right....There is nothing more precious than Al-Aqsa. Neither shopping nor the shops are more valuable than being at Aqsa. The sit-ins should be staged by taking turns. If somebody comes to the noon prayer, the other should come for the afternoon prayer. The settlers come to here at those times. If there were a lot of Muslims praying at the compound, they [Temple Mount activists] would not be wandering in the compound that comfortably (Orange 2015).
Orange (2015) simultaneously describes the trouble she goes through because she could not receive a building permit for her home and the occupation. Even it is difficult to discern whether she referred to his house or the Sacred Site when she said “my home”. In her language “the home” refers to the building her family strives to live in and the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa in which they strive to remain and pray. As the home turned a place which requires resistance to hold on to, the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa also appears to be a place to hold on to, in the accounts of the women.

The women resist the Israeli occupation by not leaving the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Believing that Israel wants to divide the Sacred Site between Muslims and Jews spatially or temporarily as a first step to the full annexation, the women resist the Israeli authority by remaining in every inch of the compound through the whole day. Enumerating the limitations on the access of Muslims to the site Azure (2015) claims that as a result of the Israeli policy there were a few Muslims in the compound. Depending on the fact that there were small numbers of Muslims they try to present Muslims as a minority. To resist this Israeli policy, she thinks that the necessary actions would be to “crowd the compound and give life to the compound with Islam and Muslims” (Azure 2015). Azure expresses the importance attached to being stationed at the compound by alleging that

When they [security forces] chased out us in the Masjid Al-Aqsa to the gates, I was hardly beaten, and the scars are remaining on my hand [shows her hand]. The doctor told me that I need surgery. Insha Allah, all things belong to me shall be sacrificed for Aqsa. Who will defend Masjid Al-Aqsa if we abandon it to its fate? The ones who are afraid of their positions or hiding behind their seats, or the Arab states who clutch each other’s throats? I do not think that they were able to defend Al-Aqsa. Insha Allah we will remain steadfast here till we gain the victory. We will remain here and will not renounce our rights (Azure 2015).

The accounts of Azure illustrate that the women see themselves as the last but the only actors capable of preventing the occupation of the Sacred Site. This approach of the women points out their disappointment with the leaders and also the political void
emerged in Jerusalem. The residents of Jerusalem lack any political leadership, which adds to the deep disappointment or disillusionment of the women of Murabitât.

Learning circles is the second major method of resistance by Murabitât (Halawani 2017b). A team composed of teachers and administrators organize the learning circles while some local and international civil society organizations provide bursaries to the students and stipends to the teachers in the courses (Nisaul Aksa Dernegi 2016). The murabits attending the learning circles were only allowed by the Israeli forces to enter the site from 7:30 am to 11:00 am every day, and the Israeli forces supervise the dismissal of the classes at 14:45 (Tokus 2015). Initially, the illiterate women are taught reading, writing and the Arabic language. The learning circles organized in three levels. In the first level the lessons on “knowledge” and “ribai”; in the second level the lessons on “Emr bi-l Ma’ruf” took place. Besides, in the undergraduate level, the women take classes on different subjects such as the History of Jerusalem, the Islamic Theology and the Islamic Culture. In the curriculum building, a resistant identity is prioritized to the enhancement of the knowledge of the women. Hence, Fatima Abd Rabbu who is one of the students in the learning circles points out that: “[a]ll the courses she took bounded her to Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem in one way or another” (Nisaul Aksa Dernegi 2016).

Some of the murabits present attendance to the learning circles as their main motivation while others stated that they managed to enroll at a university thanks to the courses they attended in the learning circles. Some of the women interviewed declared that they learned reading and writing in the learning circles. Thus, for example, Cyan who is a 76 years old lady tells that: “I was not able to read because I never went to school and I wanted to receive an education. I come to Haram al-Sharif to learn Qur’an al-Kareem” (Cyan 2015). Being proud of her improvement in reading, Cyan expresses her anger towards the security forces preventing her from entering the site. She

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26 A religious, moral and legal concept that is used to refer the all activities enjoying to good and forbidding the evil (Cagrici 1995, 138-141).
considers the repression of the forces as an endeavor to prevent her worship and education in the compound.

Demonstrations are the last but not the least method the women implemented. They demonstrate when the Temple Mount activists who are guarded by Israeli Police enter in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Typically, the Murabitown and Murabitât confront such Jews by demonstrating near them and crying out “God is Great!” (Nisa’ al-Aqsa 2014). Facing serious and ever burgeoning restrictions and pressures exerted on the women they also demonstrate against the restrictions imposed on them (Gharabli 2015).²⁷

The women interviewed attract attention to the restrictions on the entrance of the Muslims and the Israeli protection of the Jewish visitors. The sense of unjust treatment and the burgeoning threat against the Muslim right on the Esplanade appears as the two main sources of motivation for the demonstrations of the Murabitât. Azure (2015) summarizes the sense of unjust treatment with the following words:

> It is very difficult to enter the Masjid Al-Aqsa to pray, read Quran, give lessons on hadith or just to pay a visit. However, the Israeli settlers enter the site under the protection of the security forces. They conduct their religious ceremonies, celebrations, propaganda and harmful activities. We, as the Palestinian Muslims, try to prevent them from conducting their ceremonies by challenging them.

The women consider the act of Jewish worship not as a right to worship but as a declaration of the Israeli sovereignty over the Esplanade. Turquoise (2015) summarizes the sense of burgeoning threat against the Muslim right of worship on the Esplanade with the following words:

> We are carrying out ribat here with our sisters. We are sitting here because the assaults of the Jews begin in the Mughrabi Gate. They began their assaults by inciting us with vulgar words. Sometimes they pretend to pray Salah. We go and prevent them. We do not and will not let it happen Insha Allah.

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²⁷ A photograph of some Murabitât and Murabitown, protesting Temple Mount activists visit by shouting slogans and holding Quran, preventing them from entering the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa.
Based upon these accounts, I argue that the demonstration of the women is against both the Temple activists and the Israeli forces under whose protection the visits of the activists were facilitated.

5.1.3 Non-institutional

As I indicated in the second chapter, methods of civil resistance movements are non-institutional. By the term non-institutional, I mean that civil resistance movements operate outside the conventional political sphere, either deliberately or compulsorily. I define the Murabitât Movement as a non-institutional organization because it operates in the Sacred Site in the Old City of Jerusalem, which is not a conventional political space. Murabitât is an organized movement without strict rules of leadership and membership. It is a loosely structured movement which serves two purposes. Firstly, this protects the movement from the Israeli repression. Secondly, it enables the movement to include masses to the campaigns of the movement.

Because of their fears for the state repression on the Palestinian civil society organizations, the Murabitât chose to deny the presence of any organizational structure at all. There was no reference to the support of the IM to the Murabitât or the way of the participation, and methods of mobilization in the oral histories I have studied. None of the women defined their activities within an organizational framework, but they claimed that their task was an act of worship, as if all acted individually. When I asked Thistle (2017), one of the leaders of the IM and organizers of the Murabitât, that “how the Murabitât organized”, he strongly opposed my choice of wording. Then he replied as follows: “The Murabitât is a group of people who mobilized around their love in Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. It is not an institution but a group of people who came together to worship”. When I insisted on the presence of an organizational framework, he pointed out that “if it was an institution [it can also be translated as an organization], it would end when it was banned. For example, if it was an association it would be ended when Israel declared it illegal, but it did not” (Thistle 2017). Despite

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28 In the wording of my question, I used the Word muassasah, which means an establishment or an institution. The aim of my question was to understand the way of organization of the movement, not to define it. However, he found the word muassasah so crucial and talked about the issue for a long time.
the fact that the *Murabitât* is an organization, the *Murabitât* members and organizers deny any collective or organizational dynamic to escape from Israeli repression. Hence, in the face of my insistent questions he told me about how the IM leaders organized bus trips to Jerusalem and financially supported the *Murabitât* (Thistle 2017).

The second tactical move of the *Murabitât* movement has been remaining as a loosely structured informal organization. The *Murabitât* is not a registered association; it has no office, there is no clear membership or leadership structure, but a network of women. It is more difficult to fight against an informal loosely organized movement with no clear leadership and organizational structure. It is partly due to this fact, the Israeli authorities failed to end the group’s activities and their resistance by declaring the group illegal. Following the Israeli ban on the *Murabitât* the visibility of the *Murabitât* steadily decreased on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. However, their strong presence in the July 2017 resistance campaign showed that the ban did not end the movement but led them to go underground (Khater 2017).

My interviewee from the leadership is not alone in declaring the non-institutional way of organization. Many women interviewed strongly emphasized that they volunteered to carry out *ribat* and they did not have any allegiances to any organization. According to Zina Amr the group has no leadership or central structure. To quote: “I’m not affiliated with any political group or party or organization” (as quoted in Hassan 2015). Although the members of the group strongly deny the presence of any leadership, there was a leadership especially in the initial mobilization and organizational stage (Thistle 2016). However, after the movement gained momentum, the movement functioned in a decentralized mode. However, throughout my research I could not reach data revealing the details of the organizational framework of the movement. Although the members of *Murabitât* received financial support from various Palestinian and transnational civil society and the government institutions through the intermediary of the IM, they did not have a formal tie. Thus, Umm Ihab who is one of the prominent figures among the *Murabitât* stressed that “My sole and only affiliation is to Jerusalem and al-Aqsa.” (as quoted in Hassan 2015) Due to its decentralized way of action and
non-institutional structure, Murabitāt was not affected in the way some civil society institutions accused of being affiliated with the banned IM, which was closed following the ban. A 23-year-old woman from Murabitāt tells the Haaretz correspondence that “[w]e are not even an organization but you declared us illegal—that’s so ridiculous. It is like saying that prayer is illegal” (Prince-Gibson 2015). On the whole, it is argued that Murabitāt is a non-institutional organization, which does not only make it a civil resistance movement but also makes it survive the restraining orders.

5.2 Factors and Processes Affecting the Success of the Murabitāt

In this study, Baldwin’s (2000) framework for the assessment of foreign policy success based on “How effective is a policy instrument likely to be, on which goals and targets, at what cost, and in comparison, with what other policy instruments?” (p.1) will be used to analyze the success and failure of the Murabitāt Movement. Adapting Baldwin’s framework in analyzing the success and failure of the Murabitāt Movement, I have investigated the role of the seven factors in the success of the Murabitāt movement: Participation, Mobilization, Steadfastness, Tactical Interactions, Mechanism of Backfire, Socio-psychological Barriers, and Building Resistance Identities.

5.2.1 Participation

The numbers of Murabitāt reached 1200 at the end of 2016 (Thistle 2016) and its majority is Israeli citizens from Galile and minority of them is the residents of East Jerusalem (Prince-Gibson 2015). The participation rate had a pivotal impact on the movement and the Israeli policy successfully inhibited the power of the movement. When the two graphics, one illustrating the numbers of the murabitis banned from entry to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and the other illustrating the number of Temple

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29 The ban on the IM itself also proved inefficient since the IM carried out its activities through a loose network of groups that provide free or funded assistance in various fields.
Mount activists entering the Sacred Site are analyzed, the pivotal impact of the participation rate can be observed (Durziin 2016)\(^{30}\). The two months in which highest numbers of *Murabitât* were banned from entry also constitute the months in which highest numbers of Jewish visitors entered the compound (Halawani 2017a). In regards to the period between August 2015 to July 2016, the highest numbers of *Murabitât* banned from the entry is 70 women in April conforms with 1908 Jewish visitors which is the highest number in the period. The second highest point for the bans also conforms to the second highest point for the visitors. In the absence of the data on durations of the bans and consequently the total number of the *Murabitât* banned it is difficult to base it on the correlation between the two trends, but two main conclusions may be derived.

Table 5: The Numbers of the *Murabis* Banned from Entry to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from 1/8/2015 to 1/8/2016

![Bar Chart]


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\(^{30}\) The graphics are based on the data that International Jerusalem Foundation released in the 10\(^{th}\) Report of the Eye’s on Aqsa.
Table 6: The number of Jewish Visitors to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from 1/8/2015 to 1/8/2016

![Bar chart showing the number of Jewish Visitors to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa from August 2015 to July 2016.]


Given the fact that one of the main aims of *murabit* was to obstruct the visits of the Temple Mount activists, an increase in the number of the Jewish visitors can be considered as a failure while a decrease in the number of Jewish visitors can be counted as a success. Firstly, the graphics show that *Murabit* was successful in their aim to deter the Temple Mount activists to visit the site. Secondly, the Israeli policy to prevent their entrance to the site was also successful in prohibiting the activities of the *Murabit* and facilitating the access of Temple Mount activists.

5.2.2 Mobilization

Gender dynamics played an important role in the mobilization of the *Murabit*. From the very beginning the participation rate of the women was higher than the men's (Thistle 2016). The presence of women in the conflict worthy of attention, because the specific historical construction of the Islamic Society draws on "the separation
between the public political world of men and the private domestic realm of women” (Holt 2013, 100). Due to this idea of separation, even the women’s worship at the mosques has been a legal issue (Katz 2014, 17-110). In such a social environment, it is quite interesting that a women group turns out to be one of the most visible actors not just in a regular public space but also in a conflict which is of pivotal importance. Furthermore, in the case of Murabitât, the women presence and effectiveness in the public sphere exceeds the men’s presence and effectiveness. In this part, I will try to uncover the socio-political dynamics forcing the women to take the field, and then try to bring some light into the effect of their gender on their movement.

Firstly, there are two main practical reasons facilitating the higher numbers of women on the site: age and gender restrictions on the visitors of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa which Israel has been implementing and the responsibility of men to maintain the household. Israel has been imposing restrictions on the entrance of men whose age is below fifty for security reasons. Even if they intended to carry out ribat on the compound, Palestinian men would not be able to enter the site every day, since the restrictions on the men below 50 have been prevalently held (Siyasi 2005). Secondly, Palestinian men have to earn a living for their family. Since the ribat required the whole time of a person, the men would not have the opportunity to work. The last but not the least, the women interviewed pointed out that the women were less likely to be arrested and beaten by the security forces. The dynamic of women’s civil resistance movements that Principe (2017) explains in her Report titled “Women in Nonviolent Movements” uncloses the special dynamic women’s civil resistance movements as:

A mass gathering of women poses a particular moral dilemma to security forces and militaries, who are trained to respond aggressively. Women, however, along with children and the elderly, are deemed innocent victims during conflict and political strife, and statistically women do suffer disproportionately from conflict overall. This widely accepted notion creates a shield under which women can maneuver to disrupt the status quo, such as in Argentina and the Palestinian territories (p.5).
In her article titled “Defending Their Land, Protecting Their Man”, Richter-Devroe (2012) argues that “[t]his allows them to be more confrontational with the army, making them succeed in defending or even freeing their men from tanks and soldiers” (p. 189). This specific dynamic left the Palestinian women as more effective actors than men in the protection of the Sacred Site.

Secondly, it is observed that the occupation has already breached the privacy of the Palestinian lives. As Richter-Devroe (2012) wrote from 2012 “[t]he Israeli policies of fragmentation, separation and mobility restrictions have systematically dispossessed, occupied and destroyed Palestinian living spaces” (p. 188). It became harder to protect the realm of private from intrusions coming from the public. As the split between private and public is arguably deconstructed the separation between the public political world of men and the private domestic realm of women are also deconstructed; the Murabitāt got her foot in the door as the most powerful civil resistance movement in Jerusalem. The women and men of Palestine realized the fact that there remained no home in which the private life is protected; the separation between the realm of private and public was deconstructed. When their motivation behind carrying out ribāt asked, almost all of the women narrated their personal stories full of grievances as a result of the occupation first, and the most painful experience in their lives emerges as the breaches on their private lives, families, homes. For example, Sepia (2015), who is a murabit herself, narrates the story of the forced displacement of herself and her family in 1967 when Israel demolished the Mughrabi neighborhood.

When the neighborhood (Mughrabi) was demolished, the residents were forced to leave. I was forced to leave Jerusalem to Jordan, then moved to Morocco, and lived there for seven years. I managed to come back with my four children after my husband died, but my brother Ahmed lives in Morocco, and Hussein lives in Jordan. Their arrival to Jerusalem was prevented because they did not have the necessary documents. There were no documents in times of war. My mum died, but they never saw her before. They suffer a lot. And me… All praise belongs to Allah I come to Al-Aqsa in most of my time…Morning, evening prayer, night prayer…I spend my spare time by teaching Quran in the learning circles. The moments that we spend in Al-Aqsa provides us psychological
ease and happiness. The pressure the occupation put on us inflicts pain. My message is to Arabic, Islamic world, and humanity: My brothers and sisters! Please listen to our voices! See our tragedies! (Sepia 2015)

She considers the Sacred Site as a place of prayer, socialization, and psychological therapy, a place to resist the Israeli occupation and to make her grievances heard. Throughout the interview, Sepia (2015) did not specifically mention the protection or the guardianship of the Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa, or the Temple Mount activists aim of construction of the Third Temple on the Site. She narrated her personal history and talked about how the Israeli occupation made her suffer by interfering her private sphere, namely her home. To understand the processes making the women miserable and insecure at homes the city planning policies of the Jerusalem Municipality has to be known.

The Jerusalemites have to receive building permits for any change including “new construction, residential expansions, adding balconies, pergolas, elevators etc.” (“Building licenses,” n.d). However, the implementation of the policy of granting building permits serves the reduction of the Palestinian population living in Jerusalem by exacerbating their housing conditions. The extremely high costs of the building permissions force many Palestinians to construct their houses without a permit. Haaretz reports that “[o]ver the past five years, there have been 11,603 building permits issued, only 878 of which were for Palestinian neighborhoods...Only seven percent of the building permits issued in Jerusalem over the past few years have gone to Palestinian neighborhoods” (Hasson 2015). Therefore, for Palestinians in Jerusalem obtaining construction permits are almost impossible and getting more difficult (Ibid). The severe planning restrictions on repairs and maintenance led to illegal, badly constructed and hazardous additions and repairs; then they face a threat to receive demolition orders. Construction planning costs are extremely high which leaves Palestinians no choice but to build without any permit and face the risk of high charges and home demolitions. According to a report from Amnesty International, “[i]n the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Israeli authorities demolished 1,089 homes and other structures built without Israeli permits, an unprecedentedly high number of
demolitions, forcibly evicting more than 1,593 people” in 2016 (“Israel and Occupied,” 2016/2017). Pointing out that 2016 was a “peak year for demolitions”, IR Amim, Israeli left-wing nonprofit organization, reported that in the East Jerusalem 203 units including 123 residential, 80 non-residential units (“East Jerusalem,” 2017).

Examining the gendered memory of Palestinian women in her book Kassem (2011) shed some light on the meanings and emotions that the women attached to the concept of home. She points out that Palestinian women attribute multiple meanings to home as follow:

These range from an idea of the home in terms of special organization and social affiliation to the home as a concrete physical presence or a place rich with symbolic meaning. Over time, home is simultaneously seen as a place of safety and abundance, as well as a battleground coming under attack” (p.190).

The conception of home as a battleground under an attack dominates the accounts of Murabitât interviewed. The Murabitât denoted the sense of home as a private space, which is under constant penetration resulting in a feeling of despair in the face of the insecurity.

Cyan (2015) is another woman who begins to tell her motivation by narrating her insecurity and unrest at her home. Her house was sealed by Israel in 1968 for 24 years. Then she presents her case against the confiscation of her home and wins the case and takes back her house after four years of struggle. After beginning to live in her own home she frequently comes to the Israeli authorities, making her miserable at home as she furthers.

We are using a common roof with the settlers’ school. The main problem is when we have troubles with them Israeli forces never touch them but arrest Palestinians. At nights, Israeli security forces break the doors and arrest children. Their aim is to intimidate them to prevent them from resisting the occupation in the future. We reside very close to Haram al-Sharif. They even take away our right to worship. Going to Masjid Al-Aqsa for praying, reading Quran, giving hadith lectures is very difficult. However, the Israeli settlers enter the Aqsa under the protection of Israeli security forces. They
conduct their religious ceremonies, propaganda, celebrations and any harmful acts. We, as the Palestinian Muslims, challenge those persons and try to prevent their performances (Cyan 2015).

The narration of Cyan (2015) reveals that the women draw a parallel between the desecration of their privacy in their homes and the desecration of the sanctity of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Their resistance in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa seems not only a resistance campaign to prevent incursions to the home of the God, but also to their own homes. As it is in many interviews, Cyan (2015) presents her serious concerns over the maintenance and the Muslim right to worship in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. This was her main driving force to take the stage. What deserves careful attention is her frustration in the face of the sense of insecurity in their private domestic realms as an accompanying factor paving the way for their stepping up into the public space.

A-53-year old *murabit*, declares that the occupation of the compound would be the straw that breaks the camel’s back by declaring that “I do not care if my home was destroyed, or if they took my money. The Aqsa mosque is a red line. If they take Al-Aqsa, the rest of Jerusalem will not be okay either” (as quoted in Staton 2014). Her comparison between threats against the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and destruction of her own home is not accidental. The idea that made the women run a civil resistance campaign is that the sanctity of the Site is in a higher position than the sanctity of the private realm in the hierarchy of norms enabled the women to step up to the public realm as *murabits*. The words of Blue (2015) uncover the place of Temple Mount/Masjid Al-Aqsa in the hierarchy of norms from the point of view of *Murabitoun*: “[F]or us to get back our freedom and dignity, to reacquire our real power and sovereignty, to be free as we were when we were born, we have to free Masjid Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem from the Israeli occupation”. The rhetoric that Blue used affirms the analysis that “al-Aqsa has become virtually the sole address for Palestinian politics in Jerusalem, and more broadly, the only Palestinian national symbol left to protect” (International Crisis Group 2016a, 12). In such a context, the women with the
realization that for the retrieval of their privacy passes by a fight that would be put up in the public sphere took the stage.

*Murabitât* stands for the security of their private realm. This found its strongest manifestation in their debate over whether to stop demonstrations in protest of the visit of Temple Mount activists which lead security forces to resort to violence or not. Being worried about the Israeli reactions and for the sake of the continuation of the learning circles in the compound, one group in the *Murabitât* suggested to continue with a lower profile resistance in the compound with no chanting, but with the continuation of learning circles. The majority of the women agreed on the second opinion which found its formulation in the words of one of the *murabis*: “[w]ould not you cry when they break into your home. *Haram al-Sharif* is more important than our homes. We have to cry when outsiders break into” (Purple 2017). The *Murabitât* support the second view and decide not to change their means of resistance. The decision of the *Murabitât* on conducting a confrontational demonstration is not only an important turning point in the course of the process of tactical interaction between the government and the movement but also a strong illustration of the main argument in this chapter so far. The interviews conducted with the members of *Murabitât* revealed that the sense of desecration of the sanctity of their homes and the insecurity of the women they already felt at their private realms constituted an important factor leading the women to resist the violent measures security forces implemented. They believe that the protection of the private is possible with resistance in public. They believe that their safety and security at their homes will be possible only if the Israeli occupation ends. Being the only national symbol of Palestinians left and the most powerful religious symbol in the city, the Sacred Site, becomes a place they could resist the occupation and it turns out to be a home for the women who lost their homes because of the Israeli occupation.
5.2.3 Steadfastness

Steadfastness, in Gandhi’s words, the preparedness of the resisters “to suffer till the end” is considered as the key factor determining the success of a civil resistance campaign (Merton 2007, 35). Interviewing the members of Murabitât, reading the transcriptions of the interviews, analyzing the news, I have found out two main factors facilitating the women’s steadfastness in the face of the escalating repression imposed by the Israeli forces: the memory of the shared past and the belief in the rightfulness and sanctity of the cause.

In the interviews conducted with the members of Murabitât, the memory of the women of the shared past appears as a factor stimulating the steadfastness. The memories attached to the catastrophic events for the Jerusalemites such as 1948 Al-Naqba and 1969 occupation still linger strongly in the women’s memories. Sepia was a member of one of the families residing in the Mughrabi neighborhood which was demolished by Israel in 1967. She explains her motivation for carrying out ribat by telling two parallel stories: the story of her struggle to hold on the land she had right to and the story of her struggle to pray in the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa she has right to (Sepia 2015). On the other hand, Sepia (2015) who indicates that she was “born 76 years ago in Jerusalem and she has been praying the morning prayer in the Masjid al-Aqsa for twenty years” declares the absurdity in the Israeli forces’ collecting her identity at the gates of the Sacred Site every day. These women are the embodiment of the memory of the Israeli occupation and the inventory of the losses and sufferings stemming from the occupation. The mere existence of the old ladies in the movement strengthens the resistance identity and fuels the steadfastness of the women.

In this regard, Holt (2013) comments that “Palestinian refugee women recall a ‘shared past’ regarding history, community and belonging. The memory of Palestine whether real or inherited, sustains them in exile but also provokes unbearable anguish” (p. 86). Different from the women in exile, the women of the Murabitât recall a shared past, but their vision promises an improbable hope of recovery, which makes them steadfast. The women’s belief in the rightfulness and sanctity of their cause is the main source
of this hope. As Abdellatif claimed: “Israeli authorities think that if they hit us [the Murabitât], or ban us from the compound, then we will ultimately stay at home. But these actions only make us more determined to come back and stand up for what’s right” (Hatouqa 2015a).

The Israeli policies of coercion resulted in the strengthening of the steadfastness of the women. It is analyzed that five main clusters of policies of coercion imposed on the women by Israeli authorities: excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment, administrative policies of attrition, banning from entry to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. The implementation of the last measure came on the failure of the previous ones as a last resort, and therefore, is the manifestation of the steadfastness of the women in the face of the policies of attrition. In this part, I will provide a brief account of the Israeli policies in the face of the civil resistance movement’s will.

Since security forces tend to use more violence against men than women, their gender provided an advantage for the women resisting in the compound. According to Sharp (2013), “repression is acknowledgement of the seriousness of the challenge” (p. 88). Hence, the security forces’ abstention from inflicting violence on the women left its place harsher measures against the women in the first half of 2015. Interpreting the phenomenon in the way that Sharp (2013) explained, Murabitât also see the increasing violence as a result of the women’s attainment to “man’s estate” (Purple 2017). The interviews conducted with Murabitât reveal how the women refused submission before the excessive use of force. For example, Turquoise (2015) speaks while she was carrying out ribat on the compound:

We came here on the second day of the Holiday. They did not let us pray the Morning Prayer, because it was their holiday, because a dirty person would enter. The police were behind a barrier, and we were outside. We pushed the barrier. We were thousands of people. I swear they attacked us with bombs and gas. My leg and my clothes burned, I was injured. Tooth of a woman teacher was broken. I saw some girls injured. We were screaming that they were wounded. The girls managed to escape. [The security forces] began to truncheon the injured. They used tear gas. We had problems in seeing for a week.
Excessive use of force against the women increased the fearlessness and perseverance of the movement whereas it also resulted in an increase in the support to the movement.

Arbitrary detention of the women was another policy of coercion conducted by the authorities as a method of intimidation. However, the number of the arrests and the cases brought against them increased the fearlessness of the women. They talk about the arrests and the pending cases as casual instances, which do not affect their resistance. To quote Turquois (2015):

I was coming out of Masjid Al-Aqsa. The police stopped me I was innocent. They have arrested me and brought to Beyt Eliyahu. Beyt Eliyahu is the closest police station. They made me take off all my clothes. They treated me as if I carried bombs. I was leaving the Masjid. They stripped me off. They delivered me to a bigger police station. I remained there through the whole day. Among them the ones were yelling, cursing at me, and insulting me. I swear they were ugly my sister.

Turquois (2015) swears to convince that she was ill-treated. However, Orange (2015), a 55-year-old woman from Murabitāt, does not have to pledge, instead she claws her sleeve off saying that “[w]hen they [security forces] chased us from the compound to the gates of Masjid al-Aqsa, I was beaten quite severely. The marks of the beating remain in my hand. The doctor told me that I needed surgery. I told him that I would in the next summer.

Almost all of the women interviewed voices the ill-treatment they were exposed to by the security forces in the compound, at the gates, in the police stations and detention centers. Some of the women tell the stories of the old wounds while others show the injuries with which they will have to live with. Although the arrests did not affect the perseverance, they served the purpose of keeping the women distant from the fields. Especially, the removal of the prominent figures among the group had adversary effects on the mobilization of the movement.

The visits of the women are made difficult by ID checks at the gates of the Sacred Site. Azure (2015) explains how the ID checks policy works as follows:
They violate our right of worship. When we want to pray the morning prayer, Israeli police blocks our entry and asks for our IDs. They collect our IDs and give us numbers instead. On the way back we exchange the number with our IDs. So, you do not have the chance to step out of the Masjid through another door. There are eight gates of Haram al-Sharif. Even if one of the gates is closer to you, you are not able to go out through the gate, and may be obliged to walk a tiring path to the gate. 

The policy of ID collection at the gates makes the visits more difficult especially for old ladies like Miss Azure. Besides, collecting the ID information of the visitors itself serves as a method of coercion itself. An interviewee declined to be named explains that “they search our purses by strewing all over. They give us this in exchange for our IDs, a piece of paper on which a number is written. We need to give it back while leaving. Their aim is to bring us under control” (Turquoize 2015).

Having been easily identified at the gates, the women increasingly faced administrative policies of attrition, especially by the Jerusalem Municipality. Umm Ihab points out that failing to deter Murabitât by violent coercion the authorities “resorted to other tactics like blackmailing us, trying to tarnish our reputations, punishing our family members, threatening to freeze our social security benefits and so on.” (as quoted in Hassan 2015). Imposition of heavy taxes on the members or families of the members of Murabitât, and the house demolition orders for the houses of Murabitât are among the administrative policies of attrition. She admitted that the tactic of punishing family members of the women worked well and in many cases resulted in the women’s returning to their homes with the pressure coming from their fathers or husbands. For another example, Yaqoub (2017) refers to a member of Murabitât, whom he abstains from naming due to fears of oppression, “Israeli authorities imposed a one-million-dollar tax on the shop of her brother and husband”. As Yaqoub (2017) explained, the heavy taxes imposed on the families of Murabitât, began to constitute a huge financial burden on the shoulders of the movement. Hartman (2015) reports the speech of the Israeli acting Police Commissioner Asst.-Ch.Bentzi Sau uncovering one aspect of the Israeli policy of attrition as follows:

Sau said that he is keenly aware that images of police raids on the Temple Mount to stop rioters barricaded in al-Aksa
Mosque “can lead to rioting and harm the political relations with Israel and neighboring countries, in particular Jordan... Sau recounted some of the new tactics put into effect by police during the current escalation of violence, such as compilation of lists of Temple Mount rioters. Agitators from outside of Jerusalem – for instance the Galilee or the Negev – are now placed under the supervision of officers from the police station nearest to their hometowns, who then are responsible for preventing them from reaching the Temple Mount.

Administrative policies of attrition prevent the functioning of the backfire mechanism. The success of a nonviolent action depends on its ability to appeal the conscience of the national, international public opinion, or the officers in charge of the repression. However, if the regime implements silent repressive policies unbeknownst to the public, then the resisters will not be able to communicate their grievances, which will prevent the mechanism of backfire. It can be argued that the administrative policies of attrition retarded the movement while the policies of violence and arbitrary arrests forced its pace.

Banning from entry to the Sacred Site came as the last but most efficient policy of coercion. Previously banning all the women from entering the compound in times of heightened tensions, security forces began to ban the entrance of specific names to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. This measure worked efficiently as the detentions worked. Banning almost all the members of Murabitāt from the entrance, the forces controlling the gates ended their activities on the compound. Therefore, bans on individual names proved to be an efficient way of blocking the activities of the movement. Hence Zeina Amro explains the influence of the bans from entry as follows: “They arrested me at my home, from the compound gates. I have been beaten in the face, interrogated- but being banned from the Masjid is the worst punishment. This place is part of me, of who I am. It helps me get closer to God. This is the harshest punishment” (as quoted in O’Toole 2017).
She considers the bans of entry as the harshest punishment because the Murabitât women increasingly identified themselves with this new occupation. Therefore, not being able to carry out ribat may create an identity crisis for this conspicuous murabit.

5.2.4 Tactical Interactions

Sharp (2013) draws a parallel between war and nonviolent action on the importance of tactics. Writing in 2013, Sharp (2013) comments that “[a]s in war, strategy and tactics are used in nonviolent action so that the courage, sacrifice, and numbers of nonviolent resisters may make the greatest possible impact” (p.66). Our interview with Blue (2015) reveals the way in which the Murabitât movement came into being as a tactical reply to the Israeli plans on the compound. He says that:

In 1998, the US President Bill Clinton said that “The above of Masjid al-Aqsa is of Muslims’ and the below of Masjid al-Aqsa is of Jews”. We were worried about that declaration, because it meant that they wanted us to give Al Musalla Al Marwani, the old Aqsa, Musalla Al Khadr and Musalla Al-Burk which were below the Dome of the Rock to Jews. Therefore, we took action to restore the Al-Musalla Al-Merwani, and began to repair the Old Aqsa, and opened the door for prayer. We managed all these under the sponsorship of the Islamic Endowment of Masjid al-Aqsa. Then the occupant Israel began to voice the separation of Masjid al-Aqsa. They wanted to construct the so-called monument. We furnished the area with a parquet floor and began to pray there too. As the insidious Israel understood that we ruin their plans in 2000 Israel barred us from bringing infrastructure materials in the compound. Then we asked ourselves what we should do after the construction is banned. Then we understood that we needed to build up the mosque by people. We needed to fill the compound with men and women. That’s why we put the project of Beyarik in motion...Then Israel began to open the doors for Israeli intruders. To take a stand against the intrusion we mobilized men and women who carry out ribat in the Masjid by attending learning circles. These groups are protecting Al-Aqsa (Blue 2015).

These lines are important not just because they discover the background of the emergence of the Murabitât, but also because it exposes how the leadership of the
movement conceives the story as a history of the interaction of tactical choices. Deriving multiple conclusions from this quote is possible. First, the leadership cadre of the movement defined a specific goal to secure the Sacred Site from the Israeli occupation policy. Specificity of the goal is a strength for the movement. Second, the creation of the women groups for the protection of the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa emerged as a tactical reply to the Israeli policies. Therefore, analyzing the resistance movement in solitary would not be an effective choice because as it emerged as a tactical response; new Israeli policies following the establishment of Murabitât would require them to adopt new tactics. Thus, the success of Murabitât as a civil resistance movement needs to be addressed in this process of tactical interactions.

5.2.5 Mechanism of Backfire

When resisters do not use violent methods in the face of the violent repression of authorities, regimes’ effectiveness and legitimacy began to be questioned by the national/international public or the regime’s officials, then the violent repression of the authorities results in a loss of legitimacy of the authority (Nepstad and Kurtz 2012, 592). To recall the conditions prompting the mechanism of backfire that Hess and Martin uncovered: stubbornness of resisters not to apply violence in the face of violent repression; the ability of the resisters to communicate their cause with a wide, relevant and powerful audience that would make change in the policy of the regime (Martin and Hess 2006). In the case of Murabitât, the first factor was strongly present while the second important factor was lacking till the implementation of the ban on the movement. The voice of the movement of the Murabitât did not receive international media attention until Israel declared the organizations illegal31. Unsatisfactorily, the

31 Until the ban on the two organizations, international media did not pay attention to activities of the Murabitât and Murabitown. But the Israeli ban on the movement attracted the attention of the international media to the movements which considered as a serious threat (“Jerusalem’s al-Aqsa,” 2015; Hadid 2015b). For instance, BBC constantly refrained from mentioning the names of the two organizations in its news covering the clashes over the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. When Israel banned the two organizations, BBC, avoiding the usage of their names, referred to the incident as ban of the “two Muslim groups”. BBC’s constant refrainment from covering the news regarding the ban on the two organizations is also criticized by the website “monitoring BBC coverage of Israel for accuracy and impartiality” (“Another Temple Mount,” 2016).
limited number of news articles on the movement was far from shedding light on the demands and grievances of the women. The piece of news from the *New York Times* illustrates how the media coverage is tangent to the essence of the resistance of the women:

Suddenly a woman hollered “Settlers!” referring to religious Jews. ‘God is great!’ the women chanted, raising scarves and books to form a faceless choir…After the confrontation, the women settled back in their circle. One woman passed around sweets. Another continued knitting a yellow poncho for her granddaughter. Mona said she had joined the study circle because she had nothing else to do. “It takes me two hours to clean the house. Then what?” she said. She said she enjoyed the bird-chirping, pine-scented tranquility of the compound. “I’m not relaxed, except here,” Mona said, kissing her fingers in a sign of gratitude. “This is the gateway to heaven.” Asya, 27, a single mother of a 4-year-old, said she had joined the study circle because “Al-Aqsa is the only place my father lets me go” (Hadid 2015a).

Being very successful in depicting the civil character of the movement, this news article, reduces the women who resist the harsh coercive measures of the authorities to “housewives” searching for leisure time activity. Besides this type of choice of depiction, the movement receives more attention from the international media when the Netanyahu government banned it. Although the fact that the Israeli government considered the women as a threat to its sovereignty and banned the group, was considered as newsworthy; the processes paving the way for the ban and details about the movement itself could not find a place for itself in the news coverage of international media (*Canadian Press* 2015).

The *Murabitât* movement secured its place in the coverage of the local and regional Arab media. Producing quite satisfactory content on the group in Arabic, Al-Jazeera and Al-Monitor introduced the group to the international community with its content in English. The limited capacity of the movement to communicate their cause with the world restricted the scope of its success. However, the July 2017 events32 were different from the previous protests of the *Murabitât* and *Murabitoun*. It can be argued

32 The details of the July 2017 events is provided in the page 25-29
that, in the July 2017 events the two conditions that Martin and Hess (2006) explained were met, and mechanism of the backfire worked. The nonviolent steadfastness of the masses could not result in a significant change in the Israeli public opinion or the Israeli officers, but attracted the attention of and covered by the international media. Especially the Al Jazeera coverage of the events communicated the voice of the resisters to the international public (Hatqua 2015b, Jundi 2017a, Jundi 2017b). Ayoob Kara, Israeli communication minister, stated on August 6, that he wants to ban Al Jazeera from Israel because it was “used by militant groups to "incite" violence” (The Independent 2017). Although no steps taken since the statement, it indicates the influence of the Al Jazeera broadcasting of the events. The July 2017 events also showed that socio-psychological barriers between the Israeli and Palestinian societies constitute an obstacle for the Israeli public to recognize the suffering of the Palestinian resisters. Besides, it also highlighted that the Murabitât movement was quite successful in building resistance identities. I will briefly discuss these two points respectively in the next parts.

5.2.6 Socio-Psychological Barriers

Civil resistance campaigns aim to deprive rulers of their sources of power. For the success of a civil resistance movement, as the civilians stand against the brutal repression of the authority without applying violence, the rulers lose their legitimacy inside and outside. The literature on civil resistance indicates that the greater the social distance between civil resisters and the opponents the less possibility of the opponents to retreat. Either the authorities lose the human and economic resources inside or they face a threat to lose the support of their allies in the international sphere (Sharp 2013). The resistance of Murabitât runs into the stone walls in its relations with international public and Israeli society. The social distance between the two communities and the Murabitât created a firm obstacle on the way of the communication of the demands and grievances of the women. Writing in 2017, Nagar and Maoz (2017) systematically determine that perceptions of threat and distrust towards Palestinians constitute a powerful obstacle to the basic moral act of recognizing the Palestinian pain and
suffering. Because of the width of the social distance between the Israeli society and the Palestinian society the Israeli public, bureaucracy or the security forces failed to develop empathy towards the Murabitāt women. In other words, the sufferings of the resisters stumbled the perceptonal bias of the Israeli society towards Palestinians. As Darweish and Rigby (2015) pointed out, the Murabitāt movement is not the only nonviolent resistance movement facing the wall of the social distance:

Palestinian popular resistance since The Second Intifada appears to have exercised virtually no significant influence on large sections of the Israeli public. Protests were not covered by Israeli media, and it was reported to us that if events were covered in the news programmes, people might switch channels in order to avoid exposing themselves to such unwanted items. Despite this lack of impact on the Israeli public and decision makers, it has touched and affected wide network of activists throughout the world-links in the chain of non-violence with the potential to act as intermediaries and points of leverage in relation to the Israeli public and decision makers (p. 149).

In the case of Murabitāt, the wideness of the socio-psychological distance between Murabitāt and Israelis, created a strong barrier preventing the voice of the women to be heard. This created a formidable obstacle on the way of the Israelis’ understanding of the sufferings of the women.

There are also socio-psychological barriers between the Murabitāt women and the international public. One barrier is the western prejudices about Middle Eastern women. Broadly speaking the civil society scholarship on the Middle East lacks the women civil society organizations. It can be argued that an over-emphasis on oppressive norms and policies in the studies and the disregard of activities of women in the literature “contributed to the view that women in the Middle East are passive or too oppressed to have real political impact” (Krause 2012, 12). The perception that the women of the Middle East are too oppressed to be able to organize and bring a change may have led the researchers to treat the women civil society epiphenomenal. Although women in the Middle East, like elsewhere, form themselves into groups for political purposes, they have been depicted as desperate victims of traditions who are not able to organize. Despite the fact that women political organizations do exist,
they are not considered worthy of research because they were considered as to a great extent organized by men and operate in the sphere that the Middle Eastern governments allow their activities in (Chatty and Rabo 1997, 1). As a result, even if they were more visible than men, even if they injured in the face of the police violence, the images of veiled women stumbled the Western perception of the veiled women in the Middle East.

The use of the religious terminology and religious values enabled the mobilization and steadfastness of the resistance movement. However, the very language that ensured resistance also constituted an obstacle for them, because the international community could not easily construe the underlying motivation and methods of the movement. Even understanding the self-identification of women as Murabitât depends on one's understanding of the idea of ribat. When the historical roots and lexicology of the word ribat analyzed it is understood that the concept stands for a form of nonviolent resistance. However, understanding what ribat means requires an effort for someone unfamiliar with the religious, social, and military concept structured in the Islamic culture in the course of the history. The movement declaring that they are carrying out ribat needs the world to make sense of what ribat means. The world had needed piles of commentaries and explanations to understand what satyagraha meant. In the absence of such an effort to communicate the meaning of ribat, the use of the religious terminology by the Murabitoun, full of verses and hadith, only prevented its interaction with the non-Muslim world they need to communicate.

5.2.7 Building Resistance Identities

Civil resistance is a fight for morals as much as it is a fight for certain demands. Different from a civil resistance campaign as a fight for demands, the success of a campaign as a fight of morals is evaluated regarding the process it went through not the results it produced. In other words, moral gains are earned through the process, but not reaped at the end of the day. Semelin (1993) explains the moral gains of resistance to the Nazi occupation in an impressive way. He argues that the goal of the unarmed resistance against Nazi occupation was not defeating them but, “to preserve the
collective identity of the attacked societies; that is to say their fundamental values...When a society feels less and less submissive, it becomes more and more uncontrollable” (Semelin 1993, 3). He considers the moral goal as a distinct phenomenon from material demands. Even in the initiation of the campaign ‘to find the strength to say NO without necessarily having a clear idea of what one wants” is an act of resistance, which is precious in itself (Semelin 1993, 27). Therefore, the first step of the women, their decision to come to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa no matter the authorities do is an act of resistance, and success in itself.

Finding the strength to say “No”, the women did not only demonstrate on the compound but also attended learning circles. Throughout the years that Murabitât were able to organize classes on the compound, many women learned to write, many of them studied Islamic sciences, graduated from university, some completed their graduate studies. Throughout this education process, irrespective of the level of study they followed a curriculum that establishes or strengthens an identity of a “Palestinian Muslim Jerusalemite nonviolent woman resister”. Blue (2015) emphasized the success of the movement in structuring this identity.

We began to reshape our lives...We will reshape ourselves individually, our society and our movement. Jerusalem for example, I am sure that, all Muslim households in the world began to occupy themselves with. It turned out to be a place on which every Muslim individual want to pray before he/she passes away.

One of the masterminds behind the movement, Blue (2015) drew attention to the possible, for him inevitable, impact of the new identity that the women acquired and the impact of the women’s movement had on the society that learned about their struggle.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The 20th century witnessed the transformation of civil resistance movements from disorderly, non-strategic phenomenon into organized, strategic activism. The downfall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989, the prevention of a coup attempt in the Soviet Union in 1991, the abolition of the Apartheid regime in South Africa in 1990s, the overthrow of Serbian ruler Milosevic in 2000 and many other successful examples of nonviolent resistance introduced the nonviolent action as an effective method. In the 21st century, the nonviolent action began to be considered as an even more effective\textsuperscript{33} method of a struggle than violent methods (J. Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, 8-9). For example, in Palestine, the first Intifada, from 1987-1993 was largely unarmed and much more successful in harnessing the support of both Palestinians and the international community, than the earlier violent attacks by the PLO and also The Second Intifada in 2000 through which more violent tactics used.

Since the spread of civil resistance movements all over the world, numerous case studies on ‘nonviolent actions’ were produced. Following Sharp’s theorization of civil resistance, researchers began to document and analyze the cases of civil resistance movements. Since then, the gap between the studies on nonviolent action and the academic literature on the cases decreased. Consequently, in the last decade, researchers began to be occupied with the question that why civil resistance movements fail or triumph. Although there is a quite amount of literature devoted to civil resistance movements who achieved their goals, few of them are focused on the ones that failed. This gap in the literature constructs an obstacle in the way of uncovering the factors paving the way for the success or failure. Therefore, I

\textsuperscript{33} The findings of Stephan and Chenoweth show that “major nonviolent campaigns have achieved success 53 percent of the time, compared with 26 percent for violent resistance campaigns” (Stephan and Chenoweth 2008, 8-9)
considered the study’s focus on a civil resistance case that is not an apparent success story among the strengths of this thesis.

This thesis aims to provide an answer to the question of “Why civil resistance movements succeed or fail?” by focusing on a single case study: the Murabitât movement in Jerusalem. To the best of the author’s knowledge, there is no scholarly literature on the Movement. The attempt to introduce the movement to the scholarly literature has constituted the biggest prospect for the research. It is the biggest prospect for this thesis because the Murabitât movement is not only an important actor of one of the most controversial conflicts in the world, it is also very remarkable because it is a women movement coming into existence in a highly conservative society. Understanding the conflict over and politics on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqṣa is of pivotal importance in understanding the Murabitât which is an issue specific movement. As known, the legal status of Jerusalem is among the major issues dividing Israelis and Palestinians since Israel and Palestine want to have Jerusalem as its capital since it is home to the holiest sites of Judaism and Islam. Despite the fact that Israel declared Jerusalem as its capital almost no-one recognized the decision and the UN Security Council has been condemning both the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem and its efforts to change the demography of the city. Since the 1993 Oslo Accord, The PA is no longer able to pay a visit, organize meetings or fund activities in Jerusalem. In such a contested space, while no other state or non-state actors were able to operate this women movement remarkably fills a politico-legal void left by international states system and constitutes an example of the steadfast civil resistance. So, introducing the movement to the literature can be considered as an important and belated effort.

Does the Murabitât constitute a political or a civil movement? I argue that the Murabitât is not a political organization based on two reasons. Firstly, Murabitât is an issue specific organization, without a political agenda concerning the society as a whole. When I analyzed the motivations and activities of the Murabitât movement, I observed that both motivations and activities of the movement were issue specific. The demands of the group do not bear upon the society as a whole and its claims do not pertain to the governance of the public. Murabitât means the women who carry out
Ribat. The term ribat is a central theme in the self-identification of the women. I briefly discussed the lexical meaning and terminology of the concept and concluded that it was a religious term which means the perseverance in the acts of worship, which is quite revealing the motivations of the movement. The main declared aim of the movement is the perseverance in the Temple Mount/Masjid al Aqsa. Secondly, the activities of the Murabitât take place outside the scope of the conventional political sphere. Prayers, lectures, and shouting God is Great in the masjid are not conventional political activities and houses of worship are not conventional places of political activism. I argue that, since the Murabitât movement is a locally-based and issue specific organization that does not pertain to the governance of the society as a whole; its activities fell outside the conventional political sphere; it is not a political organization. Then, how can the Murabitât movement be conceptualized?

This study defines The Murabitât as a civil resistance movement based on the definition of civil resistance as “a confrontational and non-institutional action which is; conducted by civil groups relying on nonviolent methods”. This definition of civil resistance attributes existential importance to three factors: being confrontational, civilian, and non-institutional. I investigated whether the three factors apply to the Murabitât movement, and concluded that all three have explanatory power regarding the movement, making possible to consider the Murabitât as a civil resistance movement.

Firstly, the Murabitât movement is confrontational because the declared aim of the group is to confront the Israeli attempts changing the status quo and to canceling exclusive Muslim rights on the Temple Mount/Masjid-i Aqsa. After the Oslo Accords, three main changes occurred in the status quo arrangement. Israel got the complete control of the access to the sacred site. The number of the Israeli visitors on the site radically increased while Muslims faced with gradually more gender and age restrictions. Israel began to impose major restrictions on the restoration and maintenance works of the Waqf, while at the same time, conducting archeological works fueling anxieties among Palestinians, in and around the site. Although there is a multiplicity of arguments about whether the change in the status quo was a product
of activities of Temple Mount movements, or the Israeli policies, the Murabitât Movement regards Temple Mount activities as coordinated efforts with Israel.

Secondly, the Murabitât movement is civilian because it is composed of civilians implementing nonviolent methods. There are three methods of the movement: being situated steadfast on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa, organizing learning circles on the sacred site, and demonstrating when Temple Mount activists enter the site. The simple act of entering and remaining in the site turns out to be a way of resistance in the face of time and age limitations, ID collections in the entrance and, the use of disproportionate power by the security forces against the women. The curriculum of the learning circles served the construction of a "Jerusalemite Muslim woman resister identity". The teachers and students in the learning circles are funded by some local and international civil society organizations mostly with the intermediary of the IM. The financial support to the Murabitât created doubts about the motivations of the women. In the Israeli media, the women were portrayed as paid employees of the IM. Demonstrations constitute the most influential and controversial method of the group. The women began to demonstrate when the Temple Mount activists who are escorted by Israeli Police enter in the Temple Mount/Masjid-i Aqsa. Typically, the Murabitoun and Murabitât confront them by chasing them and shouting "God is Great!".

Thirdly, this study considers the group as a non-institutional organization, since its activities take place out of the scope of the conventional politics. The Murabitât is a loosely organized informal organization without a strict leadership and membership structure. However, the members of the group firmly deny any organizational framework and claim that all the women act individually. This denial serves two purposes: protection of the organization from the Israeli repression and inclusion of masses to the campaigns of the movement. It is partly due to the non-institutional informal loosely organized structure of the movement that, the Israeli authorities failed to end the Murabitât by declaring the group illegal.

The Murabitât was composed of women residing in the territories occupied by Israel in 1948 and East Jerusalem. The movement enjoyed high participation rates until the Israeli policy preventing their entrance to the site, which was successful in prohibiting
the activities of the Murabitât. Gender dynamics played an important role in the mobilization of the Murabitât. From the very beginning the participation rate of the women was higher than the men’s (Thistle 2015). There were three reasons behind the higher rates of participation of women. Firstly, this study appears to demonstrate convincing arguments that the Israeli occupation has breached the privacy of the Palestinian lives, and protecting the realm of private from intrusions coming from the public began to be seen impossible. As the split between private and public is deconstructed, the separation between the public political world of men and the private domestic realm of women are also deconstructed. Besides, the idea that the sanctity of Al-Masjid-i Aqsa is in a higher position than the sanctity of the private realm in the hierarchy of norms enabled the women to step up to the public realm as murabitês. The women with the realization that the retrieval of their privacy passes by a fight in the public sphere, took the stage and overshadowed the men in the struggle.

The Murabitât conceive their homes as a private space turning into a battleground under constant attacks of Israel. The implementation of the policy of granting building permits serves the reduction of the Palestinian population living in Jerusalem by worsening their housing conditions. The extremely high costs of the building permissions force many Palestinians to construct their houses without a permit, leading illegal, badly constructed and dangerous additions and repairs; which face a threat to receive demolition orders. The women see a relationship between the desecration of their privacy in their homes and the desecration of the sacredness of the Temple Mount/Masjid-i Aqsa. The Masjid’s being in a higher position than the private realm in the hierarchy of norms enabled the women to mobilize in the public realm.

Secondly, the men had to earn a living for the family, so not able to spend the whole day in the Masjid. Thirdly, security forces were initially more cautious in arbitrary detention and violent repression of the women. However, this abstention left its place to harsher measures after the women turned out to be more effective than men on the ground. The women had to confront the repressive policies of the security forces. The abundance of the examples of the repression illustrates that the violent repression
tactics employed by the security forces proved inefficient in deterring the women to participate the movement.

I have identified five main policies of coercion Israel imposed on the women: excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment, administrative policies of attrition, banning from entry to Al-Aqsa. Examining the effects of the five Israeli policies on the organization, I concluded that the excessive use of force, torture and ill-treatment increased the support to the movement while boosting the steadfastness and activities of the group. Two factors appeared of paramount importance in the preservation of the steadfastness: the memory of the shared past and the belief in the rightfulness and sanctity of the cause. The banning from entry to the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and arbitrary arrests and detentions increased the support to, and steadfastness of the women while inhibiting their activities in the site. Finally, administrative policies of attrition were effective in decreasing support to, steadfastness and activities of the Murabitât.

The violent repression by the opposed regime is a foreseeable reaction which would undermine the regime’s legitimacy if the events communicated well, and carry the resistance campaign to success. The nonviolent action repertoire is rich enough to reply the violent repression. However, Zunes (1994) argues that when the regime relies on third parties to violently suppress the campaign, the local and international public who are unaware of the hidden alliance, consider the state not as a party to the conflict but as an arbitrating force between the conflicting sides. In this process, the mechanism of civil resistance is successfully by-passed by the opposed state. In the case of the Murabitât, the regimes silent repressive policies served a similar purpose with the violent third parties. Israeli administrative policies of attrition, prevented the functioning of the backfire mechanism, and blurred the role of the Israel for the public opinion. It can be argued that the administrative policies of attrition retarded the movement while the policies of violence and arbitrary arrests forced its pace.

The ability of the resisters to communicate what has been happening to a wide and relevant audience facilitates the backfire of the regime repression (Hess and Martin 2006). The international media did not cover the Mura
declared the movement illegal in late 2014, and it was the first time that the movement reached the international public via media and scored a tactical success in the July 2017 resistance campaign. However, there remain three main socio-psychological barriers between the Murabitât women and their audience. Firstly, the wideness of the socio-psychological distance between Palestinians and Israelis created a strong barrier preventing the voice of the women to be heard. The second barrier is the western prejudices about Middle Eastern women, and the third barrier is the use of the religious terminology that is difficult to be conceived by the Western audience.

As I wrote these lines, it has been a couple of weeks since The Murabitât, who was removed from the Sacred Site in 2016, played a central role in taking the lead in the Palestinian resistance to Israel. The curtain of the mystery over the mobilization of the masses in the July 2017 events remains. However, the conclusions that some analysts drew from the role of the Murabitât in the July 2017 events signal that the importance of the Murabitât in the politics around the Temple Mount/Masjid al Aqsa began to be appreciated. For example, Miller (2017) wisely underlined the tactical mistake that Israel made in dealing with the Murabitât movement, which he considers among the main factors paving the way for the success of the July 2017 resistance:

Al-Aqsa Mosque and the entirety of historical Palestine are, in the Palestinian consciousness, often compared to a woman, and the role of the man is to defend her honor. Halabi compared Palestine to an orphaned teenage girl who has been abandoned by her brothers (Arab countries) to a fate of living under a cruel man (Israel) “without children, who does not know how to treat children.” A caricature published on Al-Resalah’s Twitter handle last week portrayed Al-Aqsa as a crying woman who has had a Star of David carved into her face by a monstrous hand. The women’s awakening around the Temple Mount is an expression of a spontaneous desire to take part in the national struggle over a religious site, yet is also an effective and volatile tool for enlisting the masses. The police would do well to be sensitive to the role of gender in the Palestinian struggle in Jerusalem.

34 For the details of the July 2017 events see p.27-29
The July 2017 events showed that "the women's awakening around the Temple Mount" did not end with the Israeli ban. The tactical interaction between the Murabitât civil resistance movement and the Israeli authorities seems to continue to shape the politics around the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa.

I will be glad if this thesis makes a contribution to the existing literature on the civil resistance. My thesis will be, hopefully, helpful for explaining the motivations, methods, achievements and flaws of the Murabitât and the role of the women's movement in the politics around the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. It can be regarded as a beginning point for further research and studies. However, it cannot be claimed that my thesis is free from mistakes and inadequacies. On the contrary, it has some apparent shortcomings. Because I do not know Hebrew and my time was limited, the research was done through the news sources having English, Turkish or Arabic websites. This kind of research can be enriched with more news items and literature review in the Hebrew language. Particularly, Temple Mount movements' sources would be useful to understand the relations between Temple Mount movements, the Murabitât movement and Israel.

The focus of the research was the Murabitât movement. I collected data about the movement and the context in which it was born. In this study, I considered the Israeli state and the Temple Mount movements as contextual elements. However, since the Murabitât movement shaped its methods and activities in a tactical interaction with the Israeli government and Temple Mount Movements, a study that includes Temple Mount movements and the Israeli state not as contextual elements but as integral parts of the analysis would be more revealing in terms of the conflict over the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Apart from that, my exploratory case study on the Murabitât movement can be used to make comparisons with Temple Mount movements. It would also be very interesting to hold interviews both with the Murabitât members and Temple Mount activists, and to compare and contrast their perspectives and motivations.
The women taking the field were opposed by some conservatives in the Palestinian society. However, the success of the *Murabitât* prevented the voices of the opposition. The women appear to have managed to overcome the opposition of conservative voices who do not approve women’s visibility in the public sphere. However, in my thesis I could not cover the processes taking place regarding this aspect. So, the effect of the *Murabitât* movement on the gender dynamics in the Palestinian society also constitutes a research question for further studies on the phenomenon.

It would be desirable for further research on the role of the Israeli authorities in dealing with the state and non-state actors operating on the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa. Declaring the *Murabitât* as an illegal organization and implementing violent and nonviolent repressive policies against the women, Israel openly opposes the *Murabitât* movement. On the other hand, the Israeli relationship to Temple Mount movements seems to oscillate between its concerns about the Israeli sovereignty over the Temple Mount/Masjid al-Aqsa and providing security on the site, which requires more research on the topic.
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Violet. 2015. Interview with president of an association supporting the Murabitât. Jerusalem.


Yellow. 2015. Interview with supporter of the Murabitât. Jerusalem.


APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of Life Stories

Emine Cinar who is a founding member and executive board member of the Kudus Bilinci Dernegi (Jerusalem Conscience Association), which is an association based in Ankara, shared 17 video recordings of the Murabitat members, organizers and supporters with me, and she allowed me to use them in my thesis. The 17 video recordings were dated back early 2015, and conducted in Jerusalem, West Bank and Ramallah, by the workers and/or members of the Jerusalem Conscience Association. In the recordings, they told their stories without direction or interruption. In the recordings, some of the persons were declined to be named while some of them saw no harm in providing their names and personal information. However, in this study, each person was named with a color code for their protection.

Table 1: List of Life Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Interview Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sepia</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cyan</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Azure</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Turquioze</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Orchid</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Child of a Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit, Organizer</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Violet</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Murabit, Organizer</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Pink</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Beige</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Supporter from West Bank</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Crimson</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supporter from West Bank</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Gray</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Supporter from Ramallah</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Ivory</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Orange</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Lavender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Yellow</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: List of Interviews

I conducted six interviews with members of and experts on the group. I conducted six interviews in Turkey, and they were semi-structured in-depth interviews. I took notes during the interviews and I recorded the interviews apart from the interviews with Magenta.

Table 2: List of Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Magenta</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Magenta</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thistle</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Murabit</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Hareket üzerine yapılmış her hangi bir bilimsel çalısmının olmayışı aynı zamanda tezin önündeki en büyük meydana okumadır. Vakanın oldukça hassas güncel bir konu
oluşu çalışmanın nüde aşılmayı bekleyen bir engel teşkil etmektediydi. Hareketin kuruluşu ve gelişmesinin ortaya konulması, olgu üzerinde kapsamlı bir çalışmanın yokluğunda, çok ciddi bir araştırma sürecini gerektirdi. Çalışmanın betimleyici kısmı için Türkçe, İngilizce ve Arapça içeriklerde, derinlemesine bir internet araştırmalı yaptı. Buna ek olarak Murabitat üye, yönetici ve destekçilerinin öz yaşam öykülerini kullandım ve mülakatlar yaptım.

Murabitat hareketi siyasi bir hareket mi yoksa sivil bir hareket mi? İki temel sebebe dayanarak Murabitat hareketinin siyasi bir organizasyon olmadığını savunuyorum. İlk olarak, Murantat hereketi toplumun genelinin yönetimine dair iddiası olmayan, belirli bir mesele etrafında örgütlenmiş bir harekettir.

Bu çalışma sivil direnişi “siddet icermeyen yöntemlerle, sivil gruplar tarafından gerçekleştirilen; çatışmacı; kurumsal olmayan bir hareket bicimi” olarak tanımlanmış ve bu tanımı dayanarak Murabitat’i bir sivil direnis hareketi olarak kavrumsallastırmıştır. Mezkur sivildirenis tanimi uc unsura varolussal degere atfeder: kurumsal olmayan yapı, çatışmacılık ve sivil karakter. Bu uc temel unsurun Murabitat hareketi için sozkonusu olup olmadığını arastırdıktan sonra, bu uc unsurun da Murabitat hareketini niteleme noktasında aciklayıcı gucu oldugu ve bu sebepten Murabitat’in bir sivil direnis hareketi olarak nitelendirilebilecegi sonucuna vardırm.


İkinci olarak, Murabitat hareketi sivil bir harekettir, çünkü barışçıl yöntemler kullanan sivillerden oluşmaktadır. Hareketin uyguladığı üç yöntem vardır: İsrail hükümetinin baskılarına rağmen Mabet Dağı/ Mescid-i Aksa’dan bulunmaya kararlı bir şekilde devam etmek, kutsal alanda ders halkaları organize etmek ve Mabet Dağı aktivistlerinin alana girmeleri halinde protesto gösterisinde bulunmak. Aslında basit ve sıradan bir eylem olan Mabet Dağı/ Mescid-i Aksa’ya girmek ve orada bulunmak,
İsrail'in girişlerde uyguladığı zaman, yaş ve cinsiyet temelli sınırlandırmaları, girişlerde kimliklere el koyma uygulaması ve protestolar sırasında İsrail güvenlik güçlerinin orantısız güç kullanımı karşısında bir direniş eylemine dönüştüştür. Ders halkalarının mütredatı yeni bir direnişçi kimliğinin inşasına hizmet edecek şekilde organize edilmiş, Okuma-yazma dersleri, Kudüsülüklük bilinci, kutsal korumunun önemi, temel İslami ilimler gibi derslerle "Kudüsülü Müslüman Kadın Direnişçi" kimliği yaratılmıştır. Ders halkalarına katılan öğrenci ve öğretmenler yerel ve uluslararası sivil toplum örgütleri tarafından, çoğunlukla İslami Haleket aracılığıyla finansal olarak desteklenmiş, bu finansal destek Murabitat hareketinin motivasyonunun ekonomik olduğu noktasında şüphelere sebep olurken, Murabitat kadınları İsrail medyasında İslami Haleket’in paralel çalışmaları olarak resmedilmiştir.

Mabet Dağı aktivistlerinin kutsal alandaki faaliyetlerine yönelik gerçekleştirilen protesto gösterileri hareketin en etkili ve tartışımalı faaliyetini teşkil etmektedir. Kadınlar İsrail Polisinin koruması altında kutsal Alana giriş yapan ve ibadet etme girişiminde bulunan Mabet Dağı aktivistlerini gördüklerinde onları takip ederek ve Allah-u Ekber diye bağırarak protesto etmekteydi.

Üçüncü olarak, faaliyetleri alışlagelmiş siyasi alanın dışında gerçekleştiği için Murabitat hareketini kurumsal olmayan bir hareket olarak değerlendirilerek mümkündür. Murabitat sıkı bir liderlik ve üyelik yapısı olmayan ve resmi olmayan gevşek yapıları bir organizasyondur. Ancak, Murabitat üyeleri her tür organizasyonel bağın varlığını kat’ı olarak reddetmektedir. Bu reddediş ve gevşek yapılmasına iki amaca hizmet eder: organizasyonun İsrail baskısından korunması ve kitelerin hareketin amaçları etrafındaki mobilizasyonunun sağlanması. İsrail’in Murabitat hareketini yasadışı olan etikten sonra bile hareketi sonlandırmayışi büyük ölçüde bu reddediş ve geviş yapılmasına sayesinde olmuştur.

Murabitat hareketi İsrail’in 1948’de işgal ettiği topraklarda yaşayan İsrail vatandaşı veya Kudüsülü kadıllardan oluşur. İsrail kadınlının Mabet Dağı/ Mescid-i Aksa’ya girişini yasaklayana kadar Murabitat’a katılım oranları gayet yüksektdi. Ancak mabedde girişin yasaklanması Murabitat’ın kutsal mekandaki faaliyetlerinin önünde önemli bir engel oluşturdu. Cinsiyet dinamikleri Murabitat hareketinin örgütlenmesinde önemli


İkincisi, erkekler ailenin geçimi için çalışmak zorunda olduğundan, bütün günlerini Mescid'de geçirememekte, bu da kadınları, ribat için daha elverişli hale getirmektedir. Üçüncü olarak, güvenlik güçleri ilk başta kadınlara karşı şiddetli basturma ve keyfi gözalttı konusunda daha temkinli davranmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, kadınlara karşı şiddetten kaçınma politikası, kadınların sahadada daha etkili oldukları ortaya çıkıktan sonra yerini daha zorlayıcı tedbirlere bırakır. Kadınlar güvenlik güçlerinin baskıcı politikalarına karşı koymak zorunda kaldırlar. Baskı örneklerinin artan sayısı, güvenlik
güçleri tarafından uygulanan şiddetli baskı yöntemlerinin, kadınları hareke
tahtlara zorlamakta yetersiz kaldıklarını göstermektedir.

İsrail'in kadınlara karşı baskı kurması konusunda beş temel politikasını tespit ettim:
Bunlar aşırı güç kullanımını, keyfi tutuklamaları ve gözaltılar, işkence ve kötü muamele,
idari yıpratma politikaları, El-Aksa'ya giriş yasağıdır. İsrail'in beş politikasının örgüt
tüzerindeki etkilerini incelediğimde aşırı güç kullanımı, işkence ve kötü muamele
hareketi destekleri artırmak, grubun kararlılığını ve etkinliğini yükselttiğini tespit
ettim. Direniş kararlılığını korumada, iki faktör ön çekmaktadır: ortak tarih hafızası
ile dağınık halklığı ve küsallığı olan inanç. Tapınak Dağı/Mescid-i Aksa'ya giriş
yasağı ve keyfi tutuklama ve gözaltılar, kadınların kendi sahalarındaki faaliyetlerini
engellemeler rağmen harekete desteği ve sadakati artırdı. Son olarak, idari yıpratma
politikaları Murabitât'ın kararlılığına ve faaliyetlerine verilen desteğin azaltmasında
etkili olmuştur.

Karsıt rejimin öngörülebilir şiddetli baskı, olaylarının kamuoyuvicdanında yara
çarşısı halinde rejimin meşruyetini zayıflatacak ve direniş kampanyasını başarıyla
sonuçlandıracaktır. Şiddet içermeyen eylemler şiddet baskıına karşı koyacak düzeyde
bir potansiyele sahiptir. Bununla birlikte, Zune (1994), rejimin üçüncü tarafları
devreye sokarak, üçüncü taraflar eliyle sivil direniş hareketini şiddetle bastırdığı
zaman, gizli ittifaktan habersiz olan yerel ve uluslararası kamuoyunun devletin
çağışmanın bir taraflı olmadığını; çatışan taraflar arasında arabadan bir güç olduğunu
düşündüğünü ortaya koymuş. Bu süreçte, sivil direniş mekanizması karşı devlet
tarafından başarıyla baypas edilir. Murabitât konusunda, rejimin sessiz baskı
cotikaları, şiddet yanışı üçüncü taraflarla benzer bir amaca hizmet etmiştir. İsrail'in
idari yıpratma politikaları, geri tepme mekanizmasının işleyişini engellemiş ve
kamuoyu nezdinde İsrail'in rolünü bulunmaktadır. Şiddet ve keyfi tutuklamalar
hareketin huzunu yavaşlatırken, idari yıpratma politikalarının hareketi yavaşlattığı
söylenebilir.

Direnişçilerin şiddetli baskı karşısında barışçıl yöntemlerle sebat içinde direniş-
devam etmesi uluslararası kamuoyunda direnişçiler lehine ve şiddette başvuran baskı
rejimi aleyhine işleyerek, rejim baskılarının geri tepmesini sağlamaktadır (Hess ve
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Bu satırlar yazarken, 2016'da Murabitât'ın Kutsal Siteden çıkarılarak yerinden edilmiş olmalarının üzerinden birkaç hafta geçti. Hareket bu sırada İsrail'e karşı Filistin direnişinde liderlik etmede merkezi bir rol oynadı.35 Temmuz 2017 olaylarında kitlelerin nasıl organize olduğu sorusu üzerinde, sis perdesi henüz arananmış değil. Bununla birlikte, bazı analistlerin Temmuz 2017 olaylarında Murabitât'ın rolüne dair değerlendirmeler, Murabitât'ın Tapınak Dağı / Mescid El Aksa üzerindeki siyasi çeşme_PROFILE_öneminin anlaşılmaya başlandığına işaret ediyor. Örneğin Miller (2017), İsrail'in Murabitât hareketi ile uğraşırken yaptığı taktik hanının Temmuz 2017 direnişinin başarısına yol açan ana faktörlерden biri olduğunu altını çizmiştir:

El-Aksa Camii ve tarihi Filistin'in bütünü, Filistin bilincinde, sıkı sıkı bir kadınla kıyaslanır ve adamın rolü onun onurunu savunmaktır. Halabi, Filistin'i kardeşleri (Arap ülkeleri) tarafından "cocuk sahibi olmayan acımasız bir erkeğin (İsrail) altında yaşamak" için bırakılan yetim kalan bir genç kızla karşılaştırdı. Geçen hafta Al-Resalah'nın Twitter hesabında yayınlanan bir karikatür, El-Aksa'yı canavar eliyle yüze bir

35 Temmuz 2017 olaylarının detayları için bkz. S.27-29

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Davut Yıldızı oyulmuş ağlayan bir kadın olarak tasvir etti. Tapınak Dağı'nın etrafında kadınların uyanışı, dini bir alan üzerinde ulusal mücadeleye katılmak için kendiliğinden bir arzuyu ifade etmekle birlikte, kitleleri seferber etmek için etkili bir araçtır. Polis, Kudüs'teki Filistin mücadelesinde toplumsal cinsiyet rolüne duyarlı olursa daha iyi sonuç alır.

Temmuz 2017 olayları, "Tapınak Dağı'nın çevresinde kadınların uyanışının" İsrail yasağı ile bitmediğini gösterdi. Murabitât sivil direniş hareketi ile İsrail makamları arasındaki taktik etkileşim Tapınak Dağı / Mescid-i Aksa çevresinde siyaseti şekillendirmeye devam edecek gibi görünmektedir.
Appendix D: Tez Fotokopisi İzni Formu

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü □
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü ✗
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü □
Enformatik Enstitüsü □
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü □

YAZARIN

Soyadı: Yıldız Yücel
Adı: Süneyra
Bölümü: Uluslararası İlişkiler

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce): THE MURABİTÂT: A WOMEN’S CIVIL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

TEZİN TÜRÜ: Yüksek Lisans ✗ Doktora □

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. ✗
2. Tezimin indekser sayısı, özett, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. □
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. □

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: 21-12-2017