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THE INTERSECTION OF STATE, GENDER, AND EDUCATION FOR BEDOUIN WOMEN
LIVING IN THE ISRAELI NEGEV REGION

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ABSTRACT

The Bedouin population currently residing in the Negev region of the State of Israel faces inequality along the axis of state policy and resourcing. Specifically, educational resources and facilities for the Negev Bedouin population are inadequate in providing a quality education on par with the standards found for the Jewish population in state of Israel. This thesis argues that providing educational opportunity for Bedouin girls and women will allow for better integration of the entire Negev Bedouin population into the state of Israel as well as provide the tools to overcome much of the adversity currently faced by the population. In order to support this argument, this thesis will look at the complex history of relations between the Bedouin population and the state of Israel, the strict gender roles permeated throughout traditional Bedouin culture, and the way these components intersect in regard to educational opportunity. Additionally, the work of Non Governmental Organizations effecting the status of education for Bedouin girls and women will be profiled so as to demonstrate the potential for successful integration based off of changing realities already being experienced and impacted in the Negev region. The basis for the argument towards integration of the Bedouin population is the potential to develop equality and justice for all citizens of the modern, democratic state of Israel.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the modern, democratic state of Israel, the Arab Bedouin population who reside in the Negev Desert region face unique inequalities. Today, education and the empowerment of Bedouin women may serve as a solution for such inequalities by promoting integration of the Bedouin population into Israeli society. Education has the ability to serve as a great equalizer among the Bedouin population and Negev region by providing the skills and training necessary for entrance into Israel's public sphere and economy. Furthermore, the opportunities created by education in both the Israeli workforce and overall society have the power to enable social and economic mobility for the Bedouin community, many of whom currently live in impoverished circumstances well below the standards of the wider Israeli population. This thesis will place a specific emphasis on the education of women due to the intrinsic role women have in shaping domestic and familial life. Rigid patriarchal structures and strict gender roles traditionally enforced through Bedouin culture must be overcome in order to allow equal access to education for Bedouin women, and thus equal educational opportunity and potential for integration into Israeli society for the Bedouin population as a whole. Furthermore, this thesis will place an emphasis on the role of Non Governmental Organizations currently working alongside the Bedouin population and Israeli government in bringing educational equality and equality in the region overall to fruition.

The Negev Desert region of Israel has been idealized as a frontier for development and advancement since the establishment of the state of Israel. Today, the arid Negev region makes up 60% of Israel's total land mass, but holds only 8% of the population.¹ The Bedouin population who currently reside in the Negev have been systematically disadvantaged by state policy since the establishment of

¹ Community Building - Our Blueprint Negev Strategy. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.jnf.org/menu-2/our-work/community-building/community-building---our-blueprint-negev-strategy>

Israel. However, a shift in educational opportunity and empowerment of Bedouin women could allow for fuller integration of the Bedouin population within Israel society. As a result, the Bedouin may hold the key for development in the region as education and integration would change the entire demographic of Israel's south as a large minority became fully functional and contributing members of the economic and social structure of the region.

In order to support the case for increased educational opportunity for Bedouin women as a means for integration, this thesis will provide an overview of the historic and contemporary relationship between the state of Israel and the Bedouin population as well as observation on formal education for the Negev Bedouin population. Additionally, the evolving role of Bedouin women from the time of the establishment of the state of Israel to now will be evaluated through a lens that is informed by geopolitical and cultural understanding. This thesis will outline the ways in which providing Bedouin women with adequate access to educational resources is crucial for such development both within their own communities and in the region. Additionally, the following chapters will attempt to present the unique obstacles faced by women of the Negev population as well as the initiatives being made by organizations and the state of Israel in improving quality of life and opportunity for the Negev Bedouin as a whole.

This thesis is structured in a way that will present a chapter on the function of the relationship with the state of Israel, a chapter on the status of women in Bedouin society, and a chapter on the history and contemporary structure of education for the Bedouin population. Once a comprehensive overview is made of each of these factors, they will be evaluated together to make the argument that while Bedouin girls and women face unique obstacles in accessing education, they also hold the key to vast potential for not just the Negev Bedouin community, but the Negev region and state of Israel as a whole.

Brief Overview of Bedouin Way of Life

In understanding the current circumstances of the Negev Bedouin, including their relationship with the state of Israel, it is fundamental to understand the basis of traditional Bedouin culture and way of life. The Bedouin population is sometimes referred to as the “Original Arab”, a phrase that exemplifies the deep history and tradition of the Bedouin people. They have lived in the Middle East and North African region for thousands of years and come in contact with many of the ruling powers that have dominated the region in throughout time. As the region encountered industrialization and globalization through the 20th century, the Bedouin population residing in what is now modern day Israel has increasingly come into contact with governing powers seeking to develop and rule the land on which they reside. Although the State of Israel is the current ruling power over the Negev Bedouin Population, interactions under Ottoman rule and the British Mandate established a precedent for what would eventually become a complex and conflicted relationship between the State of Israel and the Negev Bedouin today.

As a pastorally nomadic people, the Bedouin have spent much of their history residing in semi-permanent structures while moving throughout the region in accordance with the grazing of their flocks and seasonally practiced agriculture.² The Bedouins are a people deep rooted in custom and are known for what today is coined “Bedouin Hospitality” which includes a series of practices and customs relating to the treatment of guests in their homes. Bedouin life is defined by strict social structures based around familial ties. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on gender roles that has created rigid structures of patriarchy that are also intrinsically tied to traditional practices of polygamy.³ Overall, the past century has seen a rapid transition from traditional cultural practices to adaptation and gradual integration into a modern, westernized state. Much of the tension between the Israeli government and Bedouin population

² Meir, A. (1988). Nomads and the state: The spatial dynamics of centrifugal and centripetal forces among the Israeli Negev Bedouin. *Political Geography Quarterly*, 7(3), 255.

³ Rabia, R. (2011). Redefining polygamy among the palestinian bedouins in israel: Colonization, patriarchy, and resistance. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy the Law* 19(2), 459.

that will be focused upon in this thesis has been generated from this rapid transition and a general lack of compromise and understanding by the Israeli government for Bedouin custom.

In the modern state of Israel, there are two concentrations of the Bedouin population, one in the north and one in the south. In the north, the Bedouin population resides in Arab towns and communities that are recognized both by local municipalities and the state of Israel. While both populations share similar origins stories, today their lives look very different from each other. In the North, the vast majority of the Bedouin population has integrated into contemporary Israeli society.⁴ Though there are still instances of culture clash, for the most part the Northern Bedouins live in sedentary communities which are part of municipalities within the state of Israel. They attend Israeli schools, pay Israeli taxes, and some even choose to serve in the Israeli Defense Forces. Within the context of this paper the Northern Bedouins are not being evaluated as their reality and circumstances differ greatly from those of the Bedouin community currently residing in the Negev region. Additionally, Israel provides a truly unique case and example for Bedouin life because it is the only democratic, non-Arab nation in which a Bedouin population currently resides. Though there have been challenges associated with Bedouin populations in other nations as well, Israel's challenges are given a unique dimension as they are occurring within a Jewish state that holds a contentious relationship with many of its Arab neighbors. For the purpose of this thesis, such relations will not be examined. However, the knowledge of their existence does provide important context in understanding the novelty of an Arab population such as the Bedouin residing within the state's borders.

In the history of the State of Israel there has been limited development in improving circumstances for the Bedouin population so as to enable further integration into the social and economic fabric of Israel. Specific challenges to such integration include conflict over land recognition that has left portions of the Negev Bedouin population living without basic infrastructure such as plumbing, electric,

⁴ Marx, E. (2000). Land and Work: Negev Bedouin Struggle with Israeli Bureaucracies. *Nomadic Peoples*, 4(2), 106.

running water, and access to social and municipal services including education. Furthermore, a process of modernization has proved challenging in adapting traditional Bedouin customs and way of life to contemporary society in Israel. These challenges and their effects on the education of Bedouin girls and women will be evaluated in the following chapters. Overall, an argument will be presented that looks to promote integration as a by-product of education as the key to creating a more just and equal way of life for the Negev Bedouin.

Chapter 2

Geopolitics of Negev Bedouin

To understand the origins of the inequality facing the Bedouin population today, it is essential to evaluate the complex history of the Bedouin population within the territory that is now modern Israel as well as the conflict between traditional Bedouin culture and contemporary life in Israel. As will be further discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the status of Bedouin women as well as the status of Bedouin education, are greatly impacted by the geopolitical factors and history between the Bedouin population and the state of Israel. In this chapter the history and process of sedentarization of the Negev Bedouin population as well as the history of the populations relationship with the State of Israel will be surveyed. Additionally, this chapter will highlight the divide between recognized and unrecognized communities by the Israeli government and the implications of such recognition for contemporary Bedouin life.

Overall, it can be concluded that conflict between cultural practices and state policy have resulted in a broken system of development that negatively impacts access to resources as well as economic development and integration into Israeli society. In regards to the central argument of this thesis, the lack of state resources provided to the Negev Bedouin population as result of this phenomena is indicative of the subsequent lack of educational resources provided to the Bedouin population. Additionally, a lack of cultural understanding between the state and the Bedouin has further disadvantaged women in resource access, a phenomenon that will be further evaluated in chapter 3. Recent efforts and initiatives by the Israeli government to commit financial and planning resources to the development of new Bedouin communities in the Negev may have positive results if informed by much of the history outline in this chapter. Much of contemporary Bedouin life is defined by the processes of sedentarization initiated by the Israeli government from the time of the state's establishment, a concept

that will be further explored in this chapter. As a result, land recognition has become a fundamental influence in almost all daily practices and experiences of the Negev Bedouin including education and the circumstances of Bedouin women. The following sections of Chapter 2 outline key facets of the conflict between the Bedouin and the state so as to paint a fuller picture of the realities of Bedouin life for evaluation in following chapters.

From Pastoral Nomadism to Sedentary Life

Pastoral Nomadism is one of the defining characteristics of traditional Bedouin way of life. In definition, pastoral nomadism is the practice of tribal groups migrating with the changing of the seasons so as to follow their flocks and adjust to the land.⁵ For thousands of years the Bedouin people have followed this pattern of movement, traveling around the region relatively uninhibited by state powers.⁶ Instead of contractual land ownership with a state power, traditional customs and concepts of ancestral land influenced and informed what can loosely be classified as land ownership for the Bedouin people. Furthermore, a social hierarchy established along class structure tribal boundaries influenced migration.⁷

As with many pastorally nomadic peoples, geographic circumstances, changing climate, crop yield, and the grazing of livestock traditionally served as parameters around which to migrate for the Negev Bedouin population. The introduction of state recognized borders provides little meaning to a traditionally nomadic people as the conceptual restriction of a state border does not have geographic or tribal relevance.⁸ To understand contemporary Bedouin life and much of the conflict with the State of Israel, it is essential to recognize that for the vast majority of their history as a people, Bedouin's have not

⁵ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 254.

⁶ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255.

⁷ Shmueli, D. F., & Khamaisi, R. (2015). *Israel's invisible Negev Bedouin: Issues of Land and Spatial Planning*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 5-10.

⁸ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 252-253.

lived as sedentary or under the jurisdiction of a state's power.⁹ While the Bedouin population residing in the north of Israel have been relatively sedentary even prior to 1948, it was not until the establishment of the state of Israel that portions of the Negev population began to settle.¹⁰ The vast differences in reality between the northern and southern Bedouin populations today can largely be attributed to such differences in the process of sedentarization and the conflict it created in the Negev that was not felt nearly as much in the north.

Through the eyes of a state power such as Israel, Nomadism may be viewed as a threat to national security, public health, and resource mobilization¹¹. Additionally, a nomadic population living within formal borders of a state may threaten state resources and interfere with the states ability to utilize public lands as it pleases. Due to these factors, the State of Israel has made efforts since its foundation to limit the mobility and land usage of the Bedouin population. In the Galilee region of northern Israel, the process of sedentarization and integration of the Bedouin population occurred at a much quicker and more successful rate. Though not without present day qualms, overall the northern Bedouin population in Israel today does not face the same issues of land recognition as its southern counterpart and thus has had a smoother transition into sedentary life.

In the Negev region, a transition from pastoral nomadism to sedentary life requires a transformation of economy, education, and social structure within the Bedouin community. While some Bedouins may still utilize some of the traditional agricultural and animal husbandry practices, land restriction by the state has been overall successful in preventing seasonal migration. Today, the Negev Bedouin population may be considered "sedentary" due to their limited mobility. However, the permanence of their communities and homes structure is often dependent on the recognition of the land on which they are residing. While some of the Negev Bedouin population now lives in urban communities with infrastructure, permanent housing, municipal organization, and civil services, others

⁹ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 252-253.

¹⁰ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255.

¹¹ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 252.

live in semi-permanent structures without access to even plumbing or electric. Due to these disparities in the realities across the population, it may be challenging to say that the entirety of the population has adapted to sedentary life as portions of the population seem to have settled into an in between that has become problematic for all parties involved.

History of Transition and Tension with the State of Israel

Much of the conflict between the modern state of Israel and the Bedouin population residing within its borders originated not in the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, but going back to rule of the British and Ottoman Empires in the region.¹² In 1858 the Ottoman Empire passed the Land Act, requiring the registration of all land rights in the Negev and creating the first legal distinction between private and public lands.¹³ The first geographically restrictive boundaries placed on the Bedouin population were enacted by a political boundary placed by the Ottoman Empire during the 1890s. From that point on, the territory and freedom of movement allowed to the Bedouin tribes living in the region would steadily decrease through the next century. By 1900, Be'er Sheva had been established as a major administrative center in the region and a centralized location with dealings between the Bedouin tribes and Ottoman rulers. In 1917, 7 of the clans residing in the Negev were assigned to distinct territories which would remain until 1949.¹⁴

Such measures of restricting the movement of the Bedouin population in traditional nomadic patterns were not met without resistance. While there was a large initiative and push to relocated the majority of the Bedouin population to Be'er Sheva, this had very little result as many were hesitant to leave behind the pastorally nomadic ways of the past.¹⁵ Additionally, the Land Registration Act failed to

¹² Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255-260.

¹³ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255-257.

¹⁴ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255-257.

¹⁵ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 255-257.

account for, or inspire the registration of, more than a small percentage of the land in the Negev region. What resulted instead was a sort of status quo over which lands the Bedouin population continued to occupy. Overall, the activity that these restraints had hoped in diminishing, such as Bedouin raids, continued on while the Bedouin population continued to increase in size. As of 1910 it is assumed that there were roughly 45,000 Bedouins living in the Negev region with new clans continuing to emerge and establish power.¹⁶

In the period of the British Mandate which began in the early 1920's, there was an increased effort to monitor and regulate the behavior of the Bedouin population. The territory of Be'er Sheva was further expanded and there was an establishment of a Bedouin police force in the region.¹⁷ Commerce of the Bedouins was impacted by new restrictions that required special permits for growing and harvesting tobacco and salt, both of which were important sources of income and consumption for the Bedouin population.¹⁸ This block of time saw a great increase in both the relationship between and the dependency of the Bedouin population on the local British governance. A major factor in increased sedentarization and cooperation of the local Bedouin tribes stemmed from water access established by the British. Through the construction of public wells and basins, there was a significant decrease in the need for constant movement of the Bedouin population in order to locate fresh water resources. A key result of this phenomena was tribes becoming more centripetally associated to territories in which they had assured well water access in contrast to their traditionally occupied territories.¹⁹

Many of the practices instituted by the Ottoman and subsequent British rule over this time period established a complicated precedent of behaviors and relationships between the Bedouin population and ruling power of the region. As the centuries old way of life for the Bedouin population quickly evolved due to interaction with an outside ruling body, a dependency between the Bedouin population and local

¹⁶ Falah, G. (1983). The development of the 'planned bedouin settlement' in Israel 1964–1982: Evaluation and characteristics. *Geoforum*, 14(3), 311-323.

¹⁷ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 257-260.

¹⁸ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 257-260.

¹⁹ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 257-260.

municipal and state government began to form. While there was a resistance to conforming with sedentary life, newly imposed restrictions established a relationship of dependency as the Bedouin population was forced to rely more and more heavily on the local government for access to resources.²⁰

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 marked the beginning of what would be a new, more restrictive period for the Bedouin population. During the 1940's, the majority of the Negev Bedouin population was concentrated in the fertile Be'er Sheva plain, an area conducive to pastoralism and dry farming and geographically close enough to allow some of the population to work in army camps in the region.²¹ Those who were engaging in farming during this period of time were mostly considered to be settled, while those still engaging in herding maintained a semi nomadic lifestyle. Most of the land in the region was owned by wealthy Bedouin tribesmen, some of whom sold their land to Bedouin peasants, sharecroppers, and even the Jewish National Fund. With the establishment of Israel in 1948, a large portion of the Bedouin population fled to Gaza, Northern Sinai, and the West Bank. Land left behind from those who fled accounts for a portion of formerly Bedouin land acquired by the Israeli government.²² A census from 1950 showed that approximately 11,000 Bedouin remained in the state of Israel. Of the 95 village that existed prior to the state of Israel, only 19 remained with a large enough population to be recognized by the Israeli government.²³

From 1948 through 1966, the state of Israel attempted to limit the movement of the Bedouin population as well as consolidate the land they occupied. Efforts during this time were focused on concentrating the Negev Bedouin population in a restricted area located in the northern part of the Negev known as the Siyag.²⁴ The freedom of movement for the Bedouins during this time was extremely

²⁰ Marx, Land and Work, 109.

²¹ Marx, Land and Work, 108-110.

²² Marx, Land and Work, 108.

²³ Marx, Land and Work, 108.

²⁴ Falah, G. (1989). Israel State Policy Toward Bedouin Sedentarization in the Negev. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 18(2), 78.

restricted and dictated by a strict military pass system. Additionally, land rights given to the population during this time were continually changed, switched, reduced, or switched. As a result, it was not possible for much of the population to acquire land rights based on tenure as land ownership was continually renewed through annual leases.²⁵ Movement and restriction from the Israeli government also created challenges for the population in regard to work, social services, and more. Overall, this period of time was filled with turbulence and displacement for much of the Bedouin population and set a precedent for a complicated relationship with the state of Israel moving forward.

The 1960's saw a loosening in restriction of movement for the Bedouin population leading up to the abolishment of the military government rules and restrictions in 1966.²⁶ This period also saw new developments in initiatives for Bedouin housing and communities. In 1966 the Israeli government developed its first urban housing scheme for the Negev Bedouin population known as Tel Sheva. The community was located around 4 kilometers outside of Be'er Sheva and was made up of relatively uniform housing plots and contemporary housing. Tel Sheva was an initial flop for the Israeli government as it was challenging to convince Bedouin's to purchase the highly subsidized plots. It is possible that the main obstacle for the Israeli government in the development of Tel Sheva was a lack of understanding of or compliance with traditional Bedouin customs or culture. Specifically, the contracts for the plots of land were set so that land would be leased from the state for 49 years, not owned in perpetuity and the government maintained the ability to modify the plots at anytime.²⁷ It is believed that the government eventually learned from the challenges of Tel Sheva which influenced the slow adoption of more urban planning that had freedom of choice for and was more adaptive to traditional Bedouin way of life.

As the Bedouin population began to utilize their newfound freedom of movement, some moved more towards the countries center and settled outside of already existing Jewish communities like Ramle

²⁵ Marx, Land and Work, 110.

²⁶ Ginat, J. (1984). Sedentarization of Negev Bedouin in Rural Communities. *Nomadic Peoples*, (15), 15-16.

²⁷ Falah, Development of the planned Bedouin settlement, 314.

and Lod where they underwent processes of sedentarization and urbanization that were more self dictated.²⁸ An example of this is the Jawarish Bedouin community which settled outside of Ramle. What is interesting to note about the opening of movement post 1966 is that many of the Bedouins who settled or gained land were actually formerly from the peasant class and had never before been land owning. Thus another dimension was added to the complexity of the reality for Bedouin in the Negev.²⁹ Furthermore, those Bedouin who chose to initiate sedentarization themselves near Jewish communities were not always welcome and sometimes faced backlash from the Jewish community.³⁰

Throughout the second half other 20th century and following the loosening of militarily restricted movement, some of the Bedouin population chose to return to ancestral or family land no longer considered to be in their possession, but rather held in possession by the state. Others chose to return to or establish communities unrecognized by the state, assimilate into Arab communities around Israel, move to already recognized Bedouin communities, or move into newly developed Bedouin communities being constructed by the state of Israel. The wide variance in circumstance and dispersion during this time helped contribute to the eventual development of the diverse status of Bedouin living in the Negev today.

Just as the Bedouin population is not unique to Israel, so is the challenge of sedentarization not just an Israeli question in the Middle East. However, where Israel differentiates itself from other middle eastern nations comes from the unique challenges that it faces as a nation state as well as the unique circumstances into which Israel acquired its Bedouin population.³¹ As previously mentioned, the Bedouins have existed within the modern borders of Israel for well over a few centuries and can trace their roots in the MENA region back thousands of years. At the time of the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the Bedouin community had already begun to undergo a process of sedentarization for

²⁸ Ginat, Sedentarization of Negev Bedouin, 16-17.

²⁹ Ginat, Sedentarization of Negev Bedouin, 16-17.

³⁰ Ginat, Sedentarization of Negev Bedouin, 16-17.

³¹ Falah, Israel State Policy, 71-75.

which groundwork was laid first under the Ottoman rule and then continued under the British Mandate. Upon the establishment of the State of Israel, the framework under which the Bedouin population was viewed shifted based on multiple factors.

First, in its inherent nature, the establishment of Israel placed Bedouin land under the jurisdiction of a *Jewish* state. Similar to the exodus of Palestinians, both by choice and by force, many Bedouin's chose to leave their land and fled to Gaza, the Northern Sinai, and West Bank.³² There was a common held belief not just among the Bedouin population but throughout the Arab world that the lifespan of the State of Israel would be short lived and a return to abandoned land was immanent. The present state of Palestinian refugees clearly shows that this is not the case.³³ While under the Ottoman and British Mandate rule the Bedouin population had seen increasing restrictions on mobility and autonomy, the establishment of the State of Israel and Jewish rule prompted the majority of the Bedouin population to abandon their land, thus leaving large, previously occupied plots unattended.³⁴

The second way in which the process of sedentarization differed in the State of Israel is the way in which Bedouin populations were able to acquire and own land. In other Middle Eastern nations undergoing the sedentarization of the Bedouin population, many wealthy tribesmen and clan leaders were often inclined to purchase land which was then used for subsistence farming or animal husbandry by poorer sharecroppers and Bedouin tribe members. This was the case in both Iraq and Syria as well as parts of Saudi Arabia.³⁵ Additionally, following the second Gulf War, Bedouin in parts of the Gulf States found themselves entering the Oil Industry or able to acquire large swaths of land as land value in these regions was primarily based upon oil resources which is very separate from the resources required for subsistence agriculture or animal husbandry. However, the relationship between land value and land

³² Falah, Development of the planned Bedouin settlement, 313.

³³ Marx, Land and Work, 109.

³⁴ Marx, Land and Work, 109.

³⁵ Marx, Land and Work, 106.

ownership in Israel and the Bedouin population differed greatly from the circumstances and dynamics in other Middle Eastern countries.

In Israel, the process of sedentarization of the Bedouin peoples had already begun prior to 1948.³⁶ The establishment of the Jewish state did not bring about a revolutionary policy on encouraging sedentarization and restricting nomadic way of life. Rather, the establishment of the state of Israel brought about a change in policy and recognition of land ownership throughout the Negev as well as a change in planning as to where the state desired to Bedouin population to reside.³⁷ Inherent in the founding of the State of Israel was the desire for *Jewish* cultivation of the land. Naturally, the semi or formally nomadic Arab population spread out across the southern part of the State was not ideal or in alignment with such desires. Thus began an ongoing struggle not just for sedentarization but concentration of the Bedouin population so as the Bedouin lands could be used in other ways that were viewed to better serve the state.³⁸

Impact of Sedentarization, Urbanization, and Modernization

Sedentarization, Urbanization, and Modernization are three of the biggest phenomena that have dictated the integration of the Negev Bedouin into Israeli society. A policy of sedentarization and centralization for the Bedouin population is not solely beneficial or disadvantageous to either party. Rather, there are a myriad of issues interconnected with the process of transition from Bedouin living scattered across the region to an attempt at moving the population into consolidated communities. From the state perspective, it is difficult to regulate, tax, account, and provide for a population living so scattered across a region. Additionally, it is challenging to provide state sponsored infrastructure to individual families living isolated from a centralized community or town. This is not to say that it would

³⁶ Meir, *Nomads and the State*, 257.

³⁷ Marx, *Land and Work*, 106.

³⁸ Marx, *Land and Work*, 108-110.

be impossible to determine adequate solution in resourcing such Bedouins, but rather that the headache a semi nomadic population dispersed across a wide geographic region may create for state planning.

Similarly, a population that is dispersed across a large geographic region proves difficult to provide with social services. As explained by Gerald Berman, the traditional provision of social services is based on the idea of locating such services in a centralized, often urban area, from which they can be disseminated outward.³⁹ Space, distance, and limited transportation are all factors that limit the distribution of social services. In the Negev region these factors are defining characteristics of the Bedouin population living outside of established and recognized cities and towns.⁴⁰

Through the eyes of the Bedouin, centralization may be viewed in contrasting ways. On one hand, movement away from traditional and ancestral land into consolidated communities may be seen as disastrous as it ensures the abandonment and proliferation of Bedouin land to future generations. For a people who are used to unrestricted movement across large spaces movement to restricted property and space may be viewed as impossible or an appalling proposition or alternative. Conversely, centralization may not be viewed as negative by all Bedouins as urbanization and a potential increase in resources and quality of life may be enticing. The initial failure of the establishment of the city of Tel Sheva in contrast with the eventual success of the creation of Rahat demonstrates that all propositions of centralization are not synonymous.⁴¹ Rather, a plan of centralization that caters to the desires and traditions of the Bedouin people is more inclined to reach success and serve as an attractive alternative to traditional Bedouin living patterns.

³⁹ Berman, G. S. (2006). Social services and indigenous populations in remote areas. *International Social Work*, 49(1), 98-100.

⁴⁰ Berman, Social services, 98-100.

⁴¹ Marx, Land and Work, 110-116.

Contemporary life for Negev Bedouin including issues of land recognition

It is impossible to examine the history of the Negev Bedouin within the modern day state of Israel without mention of the Israel Land Authority. Today, the Israel Land Authority serves as the government agency working with the Bedouin population. Within the state of Israel, 93% of all land falls into the public domain, meaning that it is the property of the state, Jewish National Fund, or the Development authority.⁴² Land “ownership” in the state of Israel is most often a lease from the ILA that gives the owner right to the property anywhere from 49 to 98 years.⁴³ Understanding the complicated history of Bedouin land ownership, it is important to consider how contemporary concept of land ownership in Israel directly contradicts traditional Bedouin concept of land ownership.

When discussing the plight of the Negev Bedouin population today and its geographic settlement, some of the most popular terminology used is reference to “recognized” and “unrecognized” settlements. While this is not the only language used in differentiating Bedouin land, it is colloquially very common. In the context of the greater discussion of land ownership in Israel and the West Bank, terminology referring to settlements and land recognition is most commonly associated with the broader Israeli – Palestinian conflict. However, in the context of Bedouin land rights, terminology referring to settlements and land recognition is used in reference to the contemporary standings of land ownership between the Bedouin population and the Israeli government. The term “recognized” Bedouin communities refers to land that the state of Israel recognizes as Bedouin property. It encompasses the planned communities established by the state of Israel during initial planning efforts such as Tel Sheva as well as communities and cities like Rahat and Lakiya that have been established and grown over time.⁴⁴

In contrast, the term “unrecognized Bedouin community” references the land inhabited by Bedouin’s throughout the Negev that by the state of Israel is not recognized as legally owned or occupied.

⁴² About Israel Land Authority. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://land.gov.il/en/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

⁴³ About Israel Land Authority. Retrieved from <http://land.gov.il/en/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

⁴⁴ Falah, Israel State Policy, 84.

This can refer to land inhabited by a single family home or a larger community but overall gives reference to land outside of designated Bedouin communities. In the eyes of the Israel Land Agency, the land occupied by Bedouin homes that are not viewed as legally owned is referred to as the Bedouin “dispersal.”⁴⁵ In unrecognized communities, the population does not receive social services from the state government such as plumbing, electric, sanitation infrastructure development, schools, and more. The Israel Land Agency has stated that while Israel does provide “high quality public services” to its citizens, it is not possible to provide such services to those who are not residing in permanent housing.⁴⁶ Furthermore, unrecognized communities are in constant conflict with local municipalities and the Israeli government as a whole. Construction and development of unrecognized communities is often under threat of demolition.⁴⁷ Overall, there is much instability in the lives of Bedouin’s living in unrecognized communities. Due to a lack of resources, unrecognized communities may draw upon the resources of recognized communities in geographic proximity. For those communities already struggling, the added burden of providing for an unrecognized communities population places further strain on already limited funding and resources. As of 2014, of the 224,000 Bedouin documented in the Negev, 55,700 were noted to be living in localities outside of recognized villages and communities.⁴⁸ Based on projections by the Israel Land Authority, the Bedouin population in the state of Israel is expected to hit 300,000 by 2020, making it one of the fastest growing populations in the world.⁴⁹ Rapid population growth among the Negev Bedouin population will only further exacerbate issues of land recognition as birth rates continue to maintain or even increase the number of Bedouin residing outside of recognized villages, thus creating a greater headache for the Israeli Land Authority in its efforts to consolidate the population.

Another point of tension often brought to the surface in evaluation of Bedouin land recognition is the ongoing process of “Judaization” occurring in the Negev and the contradictions between state policy

⁴⁵ About Israel Land Authority. Retrieved from <http://land.gov.il/en/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

⁴⁶ Bedouin Information. (n.d.) Retrieved from http://land.gov.il/en/Documents/Beduin_information.pdf

⁴⁷ Bimkom.org. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://bimkom.org/eng/our-mission/>

⁴⁸ Shmueli and Khamaisi, Israel’s Invisible Negev Bedouin, 2.

⁴⁹ About Israel Land Authority. Retrieved from <http://land.gov.il/en/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

towards unrecognized Bedouin communities' verses promotion and incentivizing of Jewish settlement in the Negev region. Judaization is a term referring to the targeted efforts of incentivizing and supporting specifically Jewish individuals in cultivating and developing a region and its land.⁵⁰ Famously, Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben Gurion stated in an address in 1954, "For those who make the desert bloom there is room for hundreds, thousands, if not millions."⁵¹ Ben Gurion's love affair with the Negev Desert continued after his death, his grave resting at a beautiful outlook in Sde Boker instead of on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem with many of Israel's great leaders. Symbolically, both Ben Gurion's words and resting place indicate an Israeli and Jewish effort to cultivate the land of southern Israel from the time of the states very beginnings. Even more specifically, Ben Gurion's legacy has often been looked to as an example in efforts for the process of Judaization of the Negev.

Just as efforts to consolidate and regulate the movement of the Bedouin population were taken, so too were efforts to incentivize movement of Jewish settlers out of the countries center and into the Negev, all in hopes of turning the arid landscape into thriving Jewish communities.⁵² It is the juxtaposition of these efforts, the regulation of Bedouin land ownership and settlement verses clear efforts to incentivize Jewish settlement and community growth in the region, that add weight to the voices and arguments against the Israeli government and its potentially discriminatory policies towards the Bedouin population.

Specifically, the work of the Jewish National Fund has drawn significant critique on its role in shaping the southern region of Israel. During the early 2000's, a particular campaign launched by the JNF sought to draw a new wave of young, American Jews to the desert through Aliyah.⁵³ Aliyah is a based upon the right of return for Jews around the world to receive Israeli citizenship and come live in the land

⁵⁰ Shmueli and Khamaisi, Israel's Invisible Negev Bedouin, 5-10.

⁵¹ Levush, R. (2018, January 24). David Ben-Gurion – The Man and His Legacy. Retrieved from <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2018/01/david-ben-gurion-the-man-and-his-legacy/>

⁵² Manski, Blueprint Negev, 2-7.

⁵³ Manski, Blueprint Negev, 3.

of Israel.⁵⁴ A look at the history of the JNF and state of Israel's efforts to draw in Jewish immigration from abroad shows a theme of attempting to draw settlement to the Negev in hopes of expanding Israel's development into the periphery. The specific initiative in this example, known as Blueprint Negev, was launched in 2005 and hoped to draw young Jew's to the eastern Negev region to establish what were hoped to be thriving towns.⁵⁵ The slogan for the campaign, "its not a mirage, it's a dream turned reality," played along with the campaigns attempts to depict the newly planned Negev communities as a sort of wonder born out of the desert.⁵⁶

Today, the Israel Land Authority is currently taking actions that they hope will dramatically improve the conflict with the Bedouin population in the Negev. Part of these efforts include the establishment of 13 new Bedouin towns, financial and monetary incentives for those moving to recognized communities, and in some cases free plots of land in recognized areas.⁵⁷ In a publication on its website, the Israel Land Authority advertises the village of Tarabin as one of the first of these new communities to be completed. It boasts that the design of the community and that of subsequent communities has been made while working alongside the Bedouin community so as to best meet their needs.⁵⁸ While it can not yet be said if this initiative will be a success, the implied cooperation and accommodation to the needs of the Negev Bedouin community as well as the 1 billion NIS (New Israeli Shekel) commitment to development for the Bedouin in the Negev region suggests that the Land Authority may be making strides in improving life for, and working alongside of, the Negev Bedouin. Such efforts will not happen over night as the Bedouin population continues to remain dispersed over a large geographic span of the Negev. Additionally, continued legal struggles among many unrecognized villages in gaining recognition or fighting against demolition show that despite best efforts of the Israeli Land Authority, development for the Bedouin in the Negev will not result in total movement to

⁵⁴ What is Aliyah? (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.nbn.org.il/what-is-aliyah/>

⁵⁵ Manski, Blueprint Negev, 3.

⁵⁶ Manski, Blueprint Negev, 3.

⁵⁷ About Israel Land Authority. Retrieved from <http://land.gov.il/en/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

⁵⁸ Bedouin Information. Retrieved from http://land.gov.il/en/Documents/Beduin_information.pdf

recognized villages. Overall, the efforts of the Israel Land Authority indicate a potential progression in the relation between the Bedouin and Israel. The improvement of this relationship and the investment of the Israeli Land Authority in development for the Bedouin population provide a cautious optimism that circumstances for the Bedouin that are intrinsically tied with land ownership and recognition will be improved. This is a point that will be returned to in Chapters 5 and 6 in evaluating contemporary circumstances and projections for the education of Bedouin women.

Chapter 3

Bedouin Women and Traditional Gender Roles

Now that a more thorough understanding of state relations and traditional Bedouin culture have been established, the focus can now shift to the rigid gender dynamics that define the life of Bedouin women. In order to understand the unique status of Bedouin girls and women in education, the status of Bedouin girls and women in traditional Bedouin home life must be understood. The following chapter will present this understanding through both history and contemporary example.

The traditional role of the Negev Bedouin women is one that resides completely within the domestic sphere. However, in all aspects of development, the Bedouin community has not been isolated from modernity. The role of women has been specifically impacted by such developments, especially those of urbanization, modernization, and sedentarization. In understanding the Negev Bedouin population, it is critical to gain such understanding through the context of the strict gender roles and tight familial structure of the Negev Bedouin. Furthermore, the concept of intersectionality as established by prominent feminist scholar Kimberle Crenshaw can give fundamental understanding to the necessity of evaluating the challenges faced by Bedouin women in context with many other factors of their identity. Especially when looking to solutions and positive change for Bedouin women, it is necessary to keep in mind what Crenshaw states in that “Where systems of race, gender, and class domination converge...intervention strategies based solely on the experiences of women who do not share the same class or race backgrounds will be of limited help to women who because of race and class, face different obstacles.”⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review* 43(6), 1246.

From this excerpt it can be understood that solutions for the Bedouin population can not be solved uniformly, just as solutions for Arab women as a whole, Israeli women as a whole, or women as a whole can not be solved uniformly. Within the Bedouin population there is much diversity in experience based on the large variances in geographic circumstances, socioeconomic standings, and the traditional hierarchal structure of Bedouin society. Land recognition is one of the most prominent factors in creating these differences of experience and disadvantage for the Bedouin population, thus making it a key factor of defining the background and limitations for those Bedouin women within unrecognized villages verses those in recognized communities.

Bedouin women have seen rapid shifts in circumstance and way of life from the establishment of the state of Israel to present day. This chapter will seek to explore these shifts as well as the meshing of traditional cultural practices and integration into a modernized western state. Keeping in mind the framework of intersectional identity, this chapter will attempt to highlight some of the specific challenges faced by Bedouin women as a result of their marginalization within the state of Israel and in their own communities across multiple axes. Overall, an understanding of the circumstances currently facing Bedouin women will be critical when looking to evaluate education for Bedouin girls and women in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Patriarchy in Bedouin Culture and the role of Women

Tribalism, one of the defining aspects of Bedouin life, is made up of a hierarchical system composed of families and social structures. As a result, the family unit is possibly the fundamental component of Bedouin life. One of the defining characteristics of the traditional Bedouin familial structure is the patriarchal structure in which families are organized.⁶⁰ Patriarchy in the context of the Bedouin can be defined as the way in which Bedouin men exercise dominance over Bedouin women due

⁶⁰ Shmueli and Khamaisi, *Israel's Invisible Negev Bedouin*, 10-12.

to the structural organization of the hierarchal Bedouin society.⁶¹ Prior to integration and sedentarization within Israeli society, Bedouin men and women had clearly defined roles of power. Specifically, men presided over the guarding of land, receiving visitors, and tribal relations. Bedouin women held power and jurisdiction in the areas of farming, domestic responsibility, relationship with neighbors, and influence in decisions of arranged marriages for daughters.⁶² As the Negev Bedouin population have undergone forced sedentarization and integration into Israeli urban economic structures, women have lost much of the power they had due to changing domestic roles and capabilities. As a result, patriarchy among the Negev Bedouin continues to be enforced though the marginalization of women along the axes of minority status being women, a minority in Israel, and members of a patriarchal-tribal society.⁶³

Additionally, the practice of polygamy further limits the already narrow autonomy of women by splitting the power of the wife and mother between multiple parties while the power of the husband and father remains concentrated in the hands of one individual. Psychological study of Bedouin women in polygamous relationships have found that it is the senior wife who is most at risk of developing mental health issues as a result of polygamous marriage.⁶⁴ Instances of domestic violence are also greater in polygamous marriages.⁶⁵ In a society where women are given limited responsibility, splitting said responsibilities amongst multiple wives creates complex power dynamics as well as lessens the value placed on an individual wife. It can be said that polygamy fosters gender inequality by reinforcing systems of patriarchy and undermining a women's power and equality in the institution of marriage.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the existence of polygamy outside of the legal framework of the state of Israel leads to an invisibility of Bedouin women living within polygamous relationships in the eyes of the law.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 474.

⁶² Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 462.

⁶³ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 462-465.

⁶⁴ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 466-468.

⁶⁵ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 467.

⁶⁶ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 467.

⁶⁷ Rabia, *Redefining Polygamy*, 468.

Increases in polygamous marriages amongst Bedouins throughout the Negev over the past 30 years creates a paradox with the phenomena of modernization. Although education rates among women continue to dramatically increase and factions of the Negev Bedouin are seeing increased integration into Israeli society, the increase in polygamy presents an example of modernization as instituted by the state of Israel as failing to break down traditional tribal and patriarchal structures of power. This example provides a possible critique against the state of Israel in its defense of modernization as holistically beneficial for the Bedouin population.

While there is traditionally a large amount of responsibility placed on women in regard to the accountability they are assumed to have for the home, women have almost no power outside of their husband or male relatives. For example, a woman looking to leave her husband, an act traditionally almost unheard of, would be expected to leave her children with her husband and his other potential wives.⁶⁸ It would then be expected that the woman would move back in with her father or brother, unable to live independently or have autonomy for herself outside of a marriage. Furthermore, a married Bedouin woman traditionally does not own property and aspirations of doing so may create isolation from family and community. An overall lack of agency for Bedouin women is specifically enforced by institutions of patriarchy within the Bedouin community. There are a myriad of challenges that may arise from this specifically, some of which will be discussed further in this chapter.

Impact of Urbanization, Modernization, and Sedentarization on Bedouin Women

Modernization, Urbanization, and Sedentarization are three of the biggest factors of influence on the current changing status of Bedouin women. As the Negev Bedouin population further integrates into the fabric of contemporary Israel society, Bedouin women continue to gain more power and visibility outside of the domestic sphere in which they have traditionally remained. Such a shift has not been

⁶⁸ Shmueli and Khamaisi, *Israel's Invisible Negev Bedouin*, 10-12.

without growing pains, and there are many challenges faced by a tribal population that is traditionally nomadic as it looks to integrate into a westernized society. One of the greatest challenges faced by Bedouin women is reconciling tradition with contemporary practice and way of life. Part of the transition from nomadic pastoralism to sedentary urbanization has required a transformation in the subsistence and economy of the Negev Bedouin.⁶⁹ As a result, many Bedouin men have transitioned to working outside of farming and animal livestock and into working in blue collar jobs, enlisting in the military, or generally working outside of the home in Bedouin communities.⁷⁰

For women, this transition has on one hand allowed for more opportunity outside of the community in exposure to such aspects of Israeli life as education. On the other hand, the previous roles and responsibilities held by Bedouin women have been severely limited, thus creating a loss of power within the domestic sphere, the area in which Bedouin have traditionally been able to have power separate from that of their husbands or male relatives.⁷¹ Prior to integration into the urban economy, women maintained economic power and contribution to the household through caretaking of small scale animal agriculture as well as handiwork in creating goods.⁷² A shift in the economic function of the Bedouin population has eliminated much of this role. Specifically, as trends of sedentarization and urbanization encouraged and enforced by the Israeli government have pushed Bedouin into urbanized communities without access to land for previous farming practices, women have been unable to continue traditional practices of farming on the scale previously seen. As a result, women have lost agency and power in their traditional role as men have transitioned to becoming the dominant and sole economic contributor in some households.⁷³

⁶⁹ Degen, A. A. (2003). Roles of Urbanised Negev Bedouin Women Within their Households. *Nomadic Peoples*, 7(2), 109.

⁷⁰ Shmueli and Khamaisi, Israel's Invisible Negev Bedouin, 5-10.

⁷¹ Cwikel, J., Lev-Wiesel, R., & Al-Krenawi, A. (2003). The Physical and Psychosocial Health of Bedouin Arab Women of the Negev Area of Israel: The Impact of High Fertility and Pervasive Domestic Violence. *Violence Against Women*, 9(2), 242.

⁷² Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 242.

⁷³ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 242.

Diversity across the Negev Bedouin population has also created challenges in urbanization and modernization for Bedouin women. In some cases, there is an argument to be made against what can be deemed a “monolithic” process of urbanization in which systems of urbanization are viewed holistically for a population and not based upon gender.⁷⁴ This is an argument made by Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder in an attempt to understand the high drop out rates of Bedouin girls. Abu-Rabia-Queder states that urbanizing in ways that benefit men can result in harm to women based on the clash that may occur at the intersection of modernity and tradition. For example, entrance into the urban sphere may be challenging for women where public resources such as banks, schools, stores, and parks are uncharted territory.⁷⁵ This is further emphasized by the previously discussed phenomena of modernization and urbanization replacing many of the domestic responsibilities once placed upon women, thus rendering them with less responsibility and as result a feeling of less purpose in their traditional role. While modernization has cleared space for men to move and work outside of the village, Bedouin women have not been equipped with the skills or possibly acceptance to step out of the domestic sphere.⁷⁶ While modernization may be beneficial in certain arenas including education and opportunity outside of the household, there seems to be a large curve that Bedouin women must adjust over to gain access to such opportunities. Additionally, not all Bedouin women may receive the resources and support from their families and communities to enter the modern and urban world around them. As a result, for some Bedouin women modernization and urbanization lead to a loss of agency within the domestic sphere without simultaneously granting entrance and access to the world outside of the home. There then becomes a challenging balancing act of defining new gender roles within a culture that is based upon strict adherence to the norms and gender roles establish. At the heart of this conflict is the lack of clarity for Bedouin women in combining Bedouin tradition into the contemporary, modern, and urban world they have been thrust into.

⁷⁴ Abu-Rabia-Queder, S. (2006). Between tradition and modernization: Understanding the problem of female Bedouin dropouts. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(1), 7.

⁷⁵ Abu-Rabia-Queder, Between tradition and modernization, 5.

⁷⁶ Abu-Rabia-Queder, Between tradition and modernization, 8.

An important consideration when evaluating the effects of urbanization, modernization, and sedentarization is the added dimension of considering the effect of land recognition and the variations that it creates in the lives of women. The development of unrecognized villages is a byproduct of policy of development and modernization of the Israeli state. For women residing in unrecognized villages, there is particular strain placed on their role due to the disparities in unrecognized communities. Additionally, a lack of resources that often affects life within the home places strain on women who are viewed as responsible for the domestic sphere. One of the trade-offs of life outside of recognized villages is the potential ability to maintain traditional subsistence farming practices as a means for survival. Due to the high cost of purchasing items, subsistence farming and animal agriculture provide a means for women to make necessary goods at home. However, the labor of doing so in an environment without many resources such as the unrecognized villages lacking proper infrastructure places increased strain on women in such communities on top of the additional pressures.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the structural constraints of economic subsistence generate challenging circumstances for women, despite the monetary advantages that lessen the burden of poverty.⁷⁸ Additionally, the isolation created by life outside of recognized villages may leave women unable to access the Israeli public sphere, thus leaving them further behind in a modern society that continues to develop at rapid rates.

Challenges facing Bedouin women or integration into Israeli Society

When looking toward the integration of the Negev Bedouin population into Israeli society, there are unique challenges that Bedouin women face. Such challenges include overcoming conservative and traditional cultural norms, developing skills and trades useful in the Israeli economy, bridging the language barrier, and more. Much of the challenge for the Bedouin population as a whole arises from the

⁷⁷ Abu-Rabia-Queder, Morris, and Ryan, 2017.

⁷⁸ Abu-Rabia-Queder, Morris, and Ryan, 2017.

challenge of coming from a high context culture in which individual identity defers to the collective family and tribe into a culture where individual autonomy and self identity is emphasized.⁷⁹ For women, this challenge may be especially limiting in integration into Israeli society as in the context of a collective identity, Bedouin women are expected to fill the role of the domestic care taker and never the role of an economic provider or individual outside of the home.

In general, Bedouin men face easier prospects at integrating into Israeli society because there are less Bedouin cultural norms that restrict the way they present themselves and who they interact with. For example, Bedouin men have a much easier time adopting western style dress because there is less concern or threat to modesty for Bedouin men when wearing pants and a shirt. However, western style dress may be a large shift for Bedouin women because it may not allow for the modesty and conservatism typically attributed to and expected of Bedouin women.⁸⁰ Another example of challenges faced by Bedouin women in integration into Israeli society is traditional norms that restrict the permissible interaction of Bedouin women outside of their family or tribe. As there are varying levels of modernization throughout the Bedouin community, so too are there varying levels in the level of conservatism and traditional practice of cultural norms like Bedouin women being prohibited from interacting with outside men so as to conserve their modesty. While some Bedouin communities have integrated to the extent of the other Arab populations in Israel, some still practice much of the long standing traditions and values such as modesty and conservatism. Other specific challenges to integration include a tradition of limited movement and activity for Bedouin women outside of the home. By enforcing the value that women who leave the home must be supervised by a male relative, Bedouin women are thus severely limited in their ability to freely and physically enter the public sphere in Israel. How can one effectively integrate into a society in which they are not even able to visit a shopping mall or bank without close supervision or even at all?

⁷⁹ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 241.

⁸⁰ Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*, 9.

Other Obstacles facing Bedouin Women

The intersectional lens established by Crenshaw is what allows for understanding in how the circumstances and identity of Bedouin women is a dominant factor in a myriad of factors of life for Bedouin women. For example, it is impossible to discuss the challenges Bedouin women face in accessing education without also accounting for factors such as access to child care, women's health resources, issues such as domestic violence or sexual assault, and other issues that are defined by the identity and circumstance of being a Bedouin woman in the Negev region. Furthermore, these issues can be examined on an even more micro level by evaluating them in context with defining factors such as land recognition, marital status and polygamy, socioeconomic standing, and more. Other factors that contribute to the identity and evaluation of such issues include the marginalization of Bedouin women within Israeli society as minorities in the state and within the Arab community.

As a marginalized population within the state of Israel, Bedouin women are especially vulnerable to a lack of agency both within their own communities and within the state of Israel as a whole. Kimberle Crenshaw refers to this phenomena as intersectional political disempowerment.⁸¹ Specifically, intersectional political disempowerment emerges as a result of an individual identifying within more than one marginalized groups seeking political change. Disempowerment emerges from this dynamic especially when the ideologies and outcomes for each of these groups does not align or focus on the specific issues of those existing at the intersection of such identities.⁸² For the women in the Negev Bedouin population, identity is tied to multiple marginalized groups in the state of Israel including identity as women, as part of the Arab community, as part of the Bedouin community, and as part of the non Jewish minority in the state of Israel. Overall, the intersection of all these identities may lead to a particular disempowerment politically and socially.

⁸¹ Crenshaw, *Mapping the Margins*, 1246.

⁸² Crenshaw, *Mapping the Margins*, 1246.

This loss of power for Bedouin women contributes to many of the specific obstacles Bedouin women face today. For example, instances of domestic violence within the Bedouin community occur at higher rate than those within the greater Arab and Israel societies.⁸³ Domestic violence specifically can be attributed to such defining characteristics as the rigid patriarchal structure within the Bedouin community and a view of women as reflective of the conservative and traditional values of the community as a whole.⁸⁴ Other influencers on domestic violence within the Bedouin community include findings that during periods of rapid social change such as what has been recently experienced by the Negev Bedouin population, increased pressures may influence a rise in domestic violence for which women bear the brunt of such pressures.⁸⁵ Additionally, organizations working in the Negev region such as Ma'an have seen that the high levels of restriction placed on Bedouin women from conservative homes may prevent women from accessing resources for support in combatting domestic violence because of inability to leave the home at all or with accompaniment from a male relative.⁸⁶ Overall, domestic violence is a system reinforced by the familial dynamics at play in some Bedouin communities in the Negev including strict patriarchy, polygamy, and the use of women as representative of a communities honor as a whole. Domestic violence creates severe obstacles for Bedouin women and may serve as a deterrent in accessing education, economic mobility, independence, health, and happiness.

Another significant obstacle faced by Bedouin women is the conflict between modernization, urbanization, and integration into Israeli society with the preservation of traditional cultural practices and norms. Specifically, women who become active outside of the traditional Bedouin domestic sphere may struggle to reconcile traditional cultural practices with those of the social structure in modern Israel. For example, a Bedouin woman who has achieved high levels of education and a degree may still feel

⁸³ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 241-250.

⁸⁴ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 241.

⁸⁵ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 241.

⁸⁶ *Ma'an - The Forum for Arab Women in the Negev Annual Report* (pp. 6-20, Rep. No. 13). (2017). Beer Sheva: Ma'an.

pressure to have children so as to maintain her social status within the Bedouin community as a woman's social status is defined by marriage and the ability to have and raise children.⁸⁷ Additionally, reconciling traditional values of modesty in dress and behavior with the public sphere in a modern society may prove a far greater challenge for Bedouin women than Bedouin men as Bedouin women are often used as a signifier for the modesty and honor of their family. The attempted isolation of Bedouin women from modernity and society so as to preserve this honor creates challenges not only for integration into Israeli society, but for the attainment of education and the pursuit of a career and role outside of the domestic sphere.

⁸⁷ Cwikel, Lev-Wiesel, and Al-Krenawi, *Physical and Psychological*, 242.

Chapter 4

Education at the Intersection of State and Gender

Education for Bedouin girls and women is a powerful tool that has the potential to greatly change the dynamics at play in equality and integration in the Negev region. Due to traditional gender roles previously discussed in Chapter 3, it can be understood that Bedouin girls and women face significant obstacles and disadvantages in accessing education not seen by their male counterparts. In suggesting that education for Bedouin girls and women holds the key to transformation of the Negev region, it is essential to closely evaluate the way in which education acts at the intersection of inequality generated from state policy and action as well as the gender dynamics of traditional Bedouin culture.

In this chapter, the history and many factors that impact education for Bedouin women will be discussed. Through observation of the history of Bedouin education as well as the specific impacts of Bedouin education on women, a thorough understanding for the reality of education for Bedouin women today can be discussed. Without the context provided from this chapter, it would not be possible to suggest education for Bedouin girls and women as a solution to integration for the Bedouin population as a whole. Additionally, this chapter highlights the rapid changes that have been seen for Bedouin girls and women in regards to education since the founding of the state of Israel. It is in these rapid changes and their current trajectory that there is a sense of optimism for the education of Bedouin girls and women in the unique factors of their circumstance are considered.

History of Bedouin Education

Today, it is impossible to look at the status of education for Bedouin Women of the Israeli Negev without viewing it through an intersectional lens that accounts for geopolitical relationships, patriarchal and traditional gender roles, and historical context. Furthermore, to understand the status of education for Bedouin Girls and Women today it is fundamental to understand the rapid progression over the past 60

years in which formal education for Bedouin women has transitioned from being almost entirely nonexistent to Bedouin women rivaling and outnumbering their male counterparts in higher education.⁸⁸

Prior to all sedentarization and urbanization of the Bedouin population, traditional education for Bedouin boys and girls was tailored to the gender roles expected to be fulfilled by Bedouin men and women.⁸⁹ For example, boys were trained in animal husbandry, heavy agricultural tasks, defense and raiding, hunting, and dispute resolution. Such trainings were intended to prepare boys to become the heads of their families and potentially tribes as well as prepare for a semi nomadic life based around animal husbandry, herding, and seasonal agriculture.⁹⁰ While Bedouin boys were learning traditional responsibilities for Bedouin men, Bedouin girls were trained in domestic tasks such as child rearing, cooking, caring for domesticated and flock animals, weaving, and preservation and preparation of dairy products.⁹¹ The intention of traditional education for boys and girls was to prepare them for traditional Bedouin way of life and thus there was marginal change to educational practices as traditional customs were maintained for hundreds of years.⁹²

From the time of the Ottoman Empire and through the British Mandate, a shift began to occur in educational practices as Bedouin communities began to make closer contact and become more integrate into the contemporary practices of the ruling powers in the region. It is important to note that while there began to be a slight shift towards some form of more formal education, this shift was solely for Bedouin boys and men and even more specifically for wealthy Bedouin boys and men. One way in which the Bedouin population began to become introduced to some semblance of formal education was through

⁸⁸ Pessate-Schubert, A. (2003). Changing from the margins: Bedouin women and higher education in israel. *Womens Studies International Forum*, 26(4), 285-298.

⁸⁹ Abu-Saad, I. (2006). Bedouin Arabs in Israel: Education, political control and social change. *The education of nomadic peoples: Current issues, future prospects*, 141-158.

⁹⁰ Abu-Saad, Bedouin Arabs in Israel, 145-148.

⁹¹ Abu-Saad, Bedouin Arabs in Israel, 145-148.

⁹² Abu-Saad, Bedouin Arabs in Israel, 145-148.

study at traditional Muslim schools called Kuttabs where Bedouin young men would learn Quran under the guidance of a respected sheikh.⁹³

Under the British Mandate which lasted from 1921 to 1948, for the first time there was the establishment of formal schooling accessible to the Bedouin population.⁹⁴ These schools were very limited, each only having one teacher with coursework limited to mathematics, reading, and writing. Due to the populations high levels of mobility during this time, attendance was sporadic and low, thus discouraging further investment in schools for the community. Following the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the Compulsory Education Law was enacted in 1949. This law mandated free and compulsory education for every child in Israel to be provided through the Israeli government.⁹⁵ However, the geographic dispersion and military regulation of the Bedouin population made the establishment of schools accessible to Negev Bedouin youth much slower than what was seen in the rest of the state. It was not until 1969, twenty years after the Compulsory Education Law was put into place, that a school accessible for every major Bedouin tribe was established.⁹⁶ As a result, A large portion of an entire generation of the Negev Bedouin population came of age in the state of Israel without any formal schooling or education. After the enactment of the Compulsory Education Law in 1949, 1953 saw the passing of the Law of Education, part of which outlined a mandate for the mission of education in all Israeli schools which state the intent:

“To base education on the values of Jewish culture and the achievements of science, on love of the homeland and loyalty to the state of the Jewish people, on practice in agricultural work and handcraft, on pioneer training and on striving for a society built on freedom, equality, tolerance, mutual assistance, and love of mankind.”⁹⁷

⁹³ Abu-Saad, *Bedouin Arabs in Israel*, 145.

⁹⁴ Abu-Saad, I. (1991). *Towards an understanding of minority education in Israel: The case of the Bedouin Arabs of the Negev*. *Comparative Education*, 27(2), 236.

⁹⁵ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 236.

⁹⁶ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 238.

⁹⁷ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 238.

A reading of this excerpt from the Law of Education foreshadows much of what would become the main challenges in education for the Arab population in Israel, of which the Bedouin population is a part of. Specifically, an emphasis on Jewish values, history, and learning would prove to create an educational system leaving much of the country's minority population and its needs unaccounted for or inadequately resourced. Additionally, a lopsided exchange where Arab students learn the language and history of Jewish students but there is little reciprocation of Jewish students learning Arabic or Arab history and culture may indicate much of the challenges to come in future decades generated by a lack of understanding of the culture, customs, tradition, and needs of the Arab population and specifically the Negev Bedouin. 1969 was also the year that saw the establishment of the first high school for the Negev Bedouin Arab. Shortly after in 1972 the state of Israel made education compulsory for an additional two years, up through the 9th and 10th grades. By the end of the 1970's, two more high schools were opened in recognized Bedouin settlements.⁹⁸

One of the largest cultural shifts in Bedouin education occurred in 1967 when once again Bedouin were able to have open movement to Gaza and the West Bank. This opening of borders allowed for contact with friends, relatives, and other previous members of the Bedouin community. What the Negev Bedouin found was that many of the connections had seen the benefit of formal education and access to it over the previous 20 years. While the education of the Negev population had remained stagnant or even regressed during the time of the military rule, the Arab populations living in Gaza and the West Banks had seen great benefits in formal education, some continuing on to higher education and professional degrees.⁹⁹ Those who moved back into the Negev following the opening of borders encouraged an increase in formal education by both example and also intermarriage back into the Negev Bedouin community.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 237.

⁹⁹ Abu-Saad, *Bedouin Arabs in Israel*, 148.

¹⁰⁰ Abu-Saad, *Bedouin Arabs in Israel*, 148.

Although there was a newfound push for education emerging throughout the 1970's, such desires were met with varying levels of ease depending on geographic location and recognition. The Israeli government used education as an attempt to incentivize movement to planned settlements and recognized communities by focusing the already limited resources allotted to Bedouin education on government planned villages. This coincided with a period of time where movement to recognized, government planned villages was relatively stagnant as such housing and community plans were not designed to accommodate traditional Bedouin way of life and customs. As a result, opportunity for access to education was sporadic throughout the region with many Bedouin youth left behind in the development of new schools that were geographically inaccessible to them.

Bedouin Gender Roles in relation to Education

Bedouin women are uniquely impacted by the educational system in Israel. Challenges faced by the Negev Bedouin community overall in regards to education are felt with much more significance for Bedouin women as they face such challenges with the intersectional identity of being minority Arab Women in a Jewish state. Furthermore, Bedouin women face challenges in accessing education due to the operation of education outside of the private and domestic sphere to which Bedouin women have traditionally remained. As education has become of greater significance and emphasis among the Arab and Bedouin population in Israel, there has been a need to reconcile traditional practices of conservatism and strict gender roles with the function of the school system. The impact of the challenges to education faced by Negev Bedouin women can be seen in comparative observation of drop out rates for Bedouin girls and women compared to the larger Bedouin population and the Israeli population as a whole. Additional trends and challenges for Bedouin girls and women include the gender dynamics upon a return to the community following education as well as the reconciliation with education and the public sphere with the traditional responsibilities expected of Bedouin women in private and domestic life. Bedouin

girls and women residing in unrecognized communities are the ones most specifically disadvantaged when it comes to access and attainment of education, thus exemplifying an additional challenge for unrecognized communities as a result of state policy and position.

There are multiple factors that may be explored in order to understand the intersection of gender roles and education for the female Negev Bedouin population. The first factor may be conflict between classroom structure and traditional Bedouin culture which has highly segregated domains between Bedouin men and women. For those Bedouin still living a highly traditional lifestyle, co-ed classrooms may serve as an obstacle to enrollment or completion of education past puberty.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, traditional Bedouin custom places women in the privacy of the home so as to avoid contact with men outside of their own family and tribe. Attendance at a public school may place Bedouin girls and women in a position to have direct encounter with boys and men who are not part of the same family or tribe. Familial pressure to uphold such traditions and customs may result in the removal of Bedouin girls and women from school, thus impacting the high dropout rate among Bedouin girls and women.¹⁰²

Geographic distance and inaccessibility may also be a factor that effects education for girls and women more severely. For members of the Bedouin community who still strictly adhere to traditional conservatism, schools that require a long commute for Bedouin girls may be ruled out as an option because of an unwillingness to allow girls and women to travel great distances unaccompanied by an adult male relative. The communities that are most geographically isolated also tend to be those who are the least modernized and assimilated into Israeli culture. As a result, it is the girls and women in such communities facing the most adversity in regard to accessing education. They face the strictest regulations in regard to self agency as well as the least accessible resources for education. Such a dichotomy results in leaving girls and women living in remote Bedouin communities the most at risk for not receiving educational opportunity.

¹⁰¹ Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*, 8.

¹⁰² Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*,5-8.

Impact of Israeli Educational System Including Contemporary Developments

While there are many obstacles to education that emerge from within the Bedouin community, there are also existing critiques on the impact of integrating the Bedouin community into a western educational system like that used throughout Israel. Furthermore, the educational system available for Jewish Israelis compared to those for Arab Israelis are different in many ways that have been highlighted as imbalanced and potentially discriminatory. Furthermore, the structure of the Israeli education system caters towards the Jewish population and its needs. For example, the school system for Jewish Israelis is pluralistic, meaning that there are separate school systems for religious and secular Israeli citizens. Comparatively, the Arab school system in Israel is monolithic, thus leaving no distinction between or accommodation for the culturally traditional or religious Arab children attending school.¹⁰³

For the Bedouin population, this imbalance is especially problematic as the co-ed classrooms used in a monolithic school system are not conducive to the rigid cultural norms that separate Bedouin boys and girls after puberty. Although not all of the population practices such strict gender segregation, for those who do, co-ed classrooms may serve as motivation for removal from school, thus influencing the high dropout rate seen by Bedouin girls.¹⁰⁴ It is important to note that girls are those who are specifically impacted by co-ed classrooms as the segregation of gender is based upon the maintained of purity for Bedouin girls that can only be properly protected through the prohibition of exposure to males from outside of the family or tribe.¹⁰⁵ Thus, here is a specific example in the ways that the Israeli school system is not conducive or adaptive to Bedouin way of life.

¹⁰³ Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*, 8.

¹⁰⁴ Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*, 5-10.

¹⁰⁵ Abu-Rabia-Queder, *Between tradition and modernization*, 15.

The education system in the state of Israel is financed, designed, and directed by the Ministry of Education and Culture which is based in Jerusalem.¹⁰⁶ It is through this governmental office that teachers and administrators are paid and appointed and resources and funding for schools is dispersed.¹⁰⁷ The state of Israel is organized into districts which are overseen by a Jewish administrator. For example, the Negev Bedouin population is accounted for in the southern region.¹⁰⁸ It is this structure of organization that may serve as explanation for why Bedouin schools do not comply with Bedouin cultural norms. It is challenging to consider the nuances and needs of a Bedouin population in the context of the entire southern region, especially if the administrator overseeing the region does not have exposure or understanding of the Bedouin culture themselves. Here lies an essential argument for integration of the Bedouin population. Integration is essential in preventing the othering of the Bedouin minority and allowing for cultural understanding that then influences appropriate accommodations under the law.

One of the greatest challenges facing the Bedouin population in regards to education is access to and provision of facilities and resources. Specifically, Bedouin youth residing in unrecognized villages are the most disadvantaged when it comes to having their educational needs met. It can be seen through resourcing and establishment of schools that the state of Israel uses education in an attempt to incentivize and force movement to and sedentarization in recognized Bedouin communities.¹⁰⁹ There are a limited number of schools, especially high schools, that are accessible to unrecognized villages. A lack of infrastructure for the schools themselves, including plumbing, electric, classroom space, and learning resources, coupled with a lack of infrastructure in the unrecognized communities themselves including adequate roads or transportation results in poor or inaccessible learning environments.¹¹⁰ As a result, it is the Bedouin youth living in unrecognized villages that are most vulnerable to the Israeli utilization of

¹⁰⁶ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 237.

¹⁰⁷ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 237.

¹⁰⁸ Abu Saad, *Towards an understanding*, 237.

¹⁰⁹ Abu-Bader, S., & Gottlieb, D. (2009). *Poverty, education and employment in the Arab-Bedouin society: A comparative view*. Jerusalem: National Insurance Institute, Research and Planning Administration. 5-7.

¹¹⁰ Abu-Bader, S., & Gottlieb, D, *Poverty, education, and employment*, 1.

education as a means to incentivize compliance with policies of sedentarization for the Negev Bedouin population.

An additional obstacle to education faced by the Negev Bedouin population is the high drop out rate of Bedouin students compared to what is found in the rest of Israel. In 2009, the dropout rate among the Bedouin population was 32% among the Negev Bedouin population and over 50% among the Negev Bedouin population residing in unrecognized communities.¹¹¹ These numbers compare to the 20% dropout rate among non-Bedouin Muslims.¹¹² While these numbers reflect current challenges in education for the Negev Bedouin population, evaluation of the dropout rates for members of the Bedouin community over the age of 44 compared to members of the Bedouin community under the age of 20 shows that there have been visible improvements in dropout rates in recent decades.¹¹³

One of the greatest developments in the education of Bedouin women in Israel that has been seen over the past few decades is the sharp, visible increase of women not only receiving educational opportunities, but excelling beyond primary education up through secondary and higher education programs. A rise in female enrollment in higher education serves as indication for the slow progress being made in garnering support from the community for Bedouin girls and women's enrollment in school. As identified by Anat Pessate-Schugar in her study of young Bedouin women enrolled in higher education, some of the burden associated with such is enrollment is the inter-generational gap between parents who did not attend school and young girls who are now challenging the traditional status-quo not just in receiving formal schooling, but in pursuing it as a woman.¹¹⁴

However, increasing enrollment rates for Bedouin girls and women demonstrates their resiliency in overcoming such obstacles. Furthermore, when considering the achievement these girls and women

¹¹¹ Abu-Bader, S., & Gottlieb, D, Poverty, education, and employment, 8.

¹¹² Abu-Bader, S., & Gottlieb, D, Poverty, education, and employment, 8.

¹¹³ S Abu-Bader, S., & Gottlieb, D, Poverty, education, and employment, 8.

¹¹⁴ Pessate-Schubert, Changing from the Margins, 287.

have been able to accomplish with the challenge of growing up in homes of parents who did not have access to education, there is great hope when thinking about the achievements that the daughters of these Bedouin women will be able to have as a result of having educated parents.

Chapter 5

Reality of Education for Bedouin Women Today

As presented in previous chapters, the circumstances faced by Bedouin women living in the Negev today are radically shaped by policy, resources, and rigid cultural norms often rooted in patriarchy. With this understanding of the circumstances currently facing Bedouin women, it may seem that the outlook for improvements in education, and thus integration, are dreary. However, there are visible, positive shifts occurring in the Negev today that provide hope. Specifically, there are many organizations working in partnership with the Bedouin population and the Israeli government so as to address many of the needs of the Bedouin that have previously been neglected. There can be seen a gradual shift in the nature in which the Israeli government addresses the question of the Negev Bedouin. New plans for development of the region seem to hold consideration for the unique needs and practices of the community in ways that the government has historically not considered.

Also to be considered is that in the Negev today there is tension between the government, Bedouin population, integrated Arab population, and Jewish population. Much of this tension centers around lack of understanding between each of these factions as well as the inability of many Bedouin, and especially Bedouin women, to truly enter the Israeli public sphere. As presented in Chapter 4, education can be used as a vehicle to allow for integration as it provides the tools needed to function and succeed in modern Israel. Currently, the two greatest obstacles facing women in succeeding in the classroom are the effects of land recognition and the inequality generated by access to adequate learning resources and schools as well as the cultural norms within traditional Bedouin society that seek to keep women in the domestic sphere as caretakers in the home.

Even considering these challenges, the balance of life in the Negev has begun a gradual shift. Within this chapter, organizations whose work is shaping the status of the Negev Bedouin population

today will be profiled. Currently, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) working in the Negev are able to address the needs of the community outside of state resourcing and support. It is through the progressive work of these organizations that some of the greatest obstacles, including education and systemic patriarchy, are able to be addressed, and hopefully one day, overcome. The work of these organizations gives agency to the Negev Bedouin population in dealings with the Israeli government. Additionally, much of the challenges discussed in previous chapters are taken into great consideration with the efforts of these organizations and the way they choose to work with the Bedouin population. With consideration both for the circumstances highlighted in previous chapters as well as the work of organizations within the Negev region, this chapter will provide example for the ways in which change is already taking hold in the Negev region as well as the hopeful outlook in future developments for integration and eventual equality of the Bedouin.

Organizations working with Bedouin Population

The following profile of three different organizations provides example of the ways in which their work is contributing to the betterment of lives for the Negev Bedouin as well as the advancement of education for Bedouin women. Although the work completed and structure of the organizations may be vastly different, each organization is either directly or inadvertently impacting the ability for Bedouin girls and women to better access educational resources. As a result, the work of these organizations is directly contributing to the advancement of the status of the Bedouin population overall as well as integration for Bedouin girls and women into Israeli society and empowerment for Bedouin girls and women within their own communities.

Although the work of NGO's is not a holistic solution to the challenges faced by Bedouin girls and women in accessing education, it makes up a fundamental chunk of the work that is currently shaping the realities of the region. Additionally, the work of NGO's bridges the gap between governmental and

community divide, working and maneuvering in the gray area between policy and daily reality for the Bedouin population. Overall, such organizations are able to impact change through the hands on and daily efforts made in work that is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the Bedouin population in which they are attempting to serve. Furthermore, such organizations are able to advocate for policy change and development in ways that differ from efforts coming from within the community alone. The following profiles provide insight into three different structures of NGO's working with the Negev Bedouin population as well as explanation for the ways in which such work provides hope for increasing educational equality for Negev Bedouin today.

The Desert Embroidery Center – Lakiya

There are many organizations working with the Bedouin population who are able to serve as a middle man or third party in mediating between state policy and reality of daily life. The Desert Embroidery Center differs from these type of organizations in a very fundamental way. Rather than those outside of the community stepping in to help address the needs of Bedouin women, The Desert Embroidery Center was founded from within the community as a group of Bedouin women organized to best resource their own community in ways that were previously lacking. Additionally, The Desert Embroidery center is not located in Be'er Sheva or even Rahat, two of the largest urban centers of Bedouin life. Rather, the center is located in Lakiya, where it services the community of Lakiya as well as the surrounding unrecognized communities.

The Desert Embroidery center is part of a larger organization whose official title is The Association for the Improvement of Women's status. Desert Embroidery gained official recognition in 1996 as the first Bedouin women's non-profit located in southern Israel.¹¹⁵ Today, Desert Embroidery continues to serve the Bedouin community in the Negev as an organization run by Bedouin women, for

¹¹⁵ About the Association. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.desert-embroidery.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=155&lang=en

Bedouin women. Upon its initial founding, Desert Embroidery was created to “address the issue of women's status in the Bedouin community by focusing on the need for developing alternative sources of income through the creation of an industry based on traditional skills to restore the contribution of women’s earning power to her family.” The establishment of the home-style embroidery center in Lakiya has provided Bedouin women from Lakiya and the surrounding unrecognized villages to utilize their skills in traditional embroidery for profit both in the selling of handmade goods and the function of the center as a cultural tourist center.¹¹⁶

Providing an outlet for Bedouin women to utilize traditional skills such as embroidery is especially beneficial for women from an older generation who did not receive formal education and have spent much of their lives living in accustom to traditional Bedouin practice. The center provides both a community for these women as well as an outlet to utilize their skills and a means to profit from their skills in the modern Israeli economy. The center also provides community for younger Bedouin women to learn traditional embroidery practices, thus helping pass on an important piece of traditional Bedouin culture for women.¹¹⁷

In regard to education, the Desert Embroidery Center facilitates education within the Bedouin community in multiple ways. First, the center provides a vehicle to provide informal education to women within the Bedouin community. Previous initiatives include education and awareness on issues such as genetic diseases caused by kinship marriage, the importance of education for adults as well as male and female children, prenatal care, home economics, women’s health, and more.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, the center provides literacy classes for older women as well as support for younger women returning to school. Outside of adult education, one of the larger projects of the center is the mobile library which serves the

¹¹⁶About the Association. Retrieved from http://www.desert-embroidery.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=155&lang=en

¹¹⁷ About the Association. Retrieved from http://www.desert-embroidery.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=155&lang=en

¹¹⁸ About the Association. Retrieved from http://www.desert-embroidery.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=155&lang=en

Bedouin youth population both in Lakiya and in the surrounding unrecognized villages. The library provides reading materials in both Arabic and Hebrew as well as material for women living in isolated areas to help improve their literacy. In addition to the library there are many other initiatives taken on by the center including summer camps, a monthly lecture series, tutoring in English and mathematics, and young leadership training for girls. ¹¹⁹

The Desert Embroidery center is not the only non profit that is run by Bedouin women for Bedouin women. In fact, in Lakiya alone there are other organizations with a similar model that help Bedouin women with other traditional skills like weaving find ways to enter the marketplace and provide financially for themselves and their families. Organizations with grassroots within the Bedouin community have both unique advantages and unique challenges. On one hand, organization from within the community establishes a safe space and inherent precedent of understanding of cultural norms and circumstances. It is easy to identify the needs of a community when those trying to help also share those same needs. On the other hand, an organization run by Bedouin women faces many of the challenges that Bedouin women themselves face in everyday life. For example, it may be challenging to work with local municipalities outside of the Bedouin community due to traditional patriarchal structures that place men in charge of such dealings. Additionally, Bedouin women from the Desert Embroidery Center may face backlash within their community, especially from those in the surrounding areas of Lakiya that are more remote and traditional. Other challenges faced by the organization include the strain of serving unrecognized villages outside of Lakiya that have significantly less access to resources than those living in Lakiya where the center is located. As a result, the center must provide for a varying and diverse level of need and obstacles.

Overall, the work completed by the center and those like it demonstrates Bedouin female empowerment from within. The center can serve as an example of combining both traditional and formal

¹¹⁹ About the Association. Retrieved from http://www.desert-embroidery.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=79&Itemid=155&lang=en

education so as to meet the cultural, social, and economic needs of its own population. Furthermore, through serving as a cultural tourist site, the center is able to promote coexistence and understanding within the larger Negev community as well as promote contact for Israelis with the Bedouin community. The promotion of such coexistence is beneficial in the plight of the Bedouin for integration into Israeli society as a whole.

Although an organization such as The Desert Embroidery Center will most likely not effectively change policy alone, the work that the center does is fundamental in addressing much of the symptoms of the patriarchy that has long existed in the Bedouin community. It is through the addressing of such issues including the prejudice against women entering the public sphere, economy, and classroom, that is slowly getting to the root of the issue and shifting cultural norms for Negev Bedouin. Furthermore, it is necessary to have organizations such as The Desert Embroidery Center working from within the community so as to create a cultural shift that will welcome access to better schooling and educational opportunity when that access comes.

Tamar Center – Be'er Sheva

The Tamar Center is an organization that demonstrates the effectiveness of an organization structured in a way that members from both within the Bedouin community and outside of it are working together around a central and specific issue, education. The Tamar Center is an organization located in Be'er Sheva that works to serve the educational needs of the surrounding Bedouin population. Its goal is to bridge socio-economic gaps existent between the Bedouin community and the rest of Israeli society through educational empowerment. The vision of the Tamar Center is as follows:

“Tamar Center Negev believes that the future of the Negev depends on the success of Bedouin children. Tamar Center Negev encourages personal responsibility and initiative, cultivating a culture of

excellence and creating opportunities. These values are the key to a better, shared future for Bedouin society, the Negev and the State of Israel.”¹²⁰

Through its founding principles, Tamar focuses on cultivating high levels of achievement in high school STEM education, building community, foundation, corporation, and government partnerships, driving leadership and personal accountability among Bedouin youth, and creating opportunities for Bedouin youth that will allow them to integrate and succeed in Israeli social and economic life.¹²¹ Overall, Tamar serves as a vehicle to either provide or connect Bedouin youth with the resources they need to succeed academically and overcome many of the unique obstacles they face. Tamar does not work alone, but rather with many different organizations and foundations including social organizations, Israeli governmental offices and authorities, philanthropic foundations, and companies and groups within the business sector. Furthermore, the staff of Tamar is made up of both Jewish Israelis and Bedouin Israelis all working to advance the circumstances of the Negev Bedouin population.

Tamar works to serve its mission through the different initiatives offered through the center and throughout the region. Each initiative aims to tackle a different component of the obstacle to educational excellence. The initiatives include instruction for high school students looking to complete a high level of STEM coursework, support and training for educators to assist their students in completing the highest levels of matriculation in science and mathematics, engaging Bedouin parents in their children’s education, improving Hebrew language literacy and proficiency, and reducing drop out rates.¹²² Furthermore, Tamar has its own research unit which focuses on compiling research conducted by various independent researchers, Israeli research institutions, and other various research institutes. Tamar sees value and need in this work in order to make a large breadth of research accessible to those fundamental

¹²⁰ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

¹²¹ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

¹²² Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

in instituting change and improvement for the status of the Negev Bedouin population.¹²³ In these efforts, Tamar is not only addressing the immediate educational needs, but also working towards benefiting the future of Bedouin education through their research that will hopefully influence policy. Although the Israeli government is not a direct partner of Tamar in their work, the work of Tamar through research will hopefully positively impact the relationship between the Israeli government and the Bedouin population by pushing for legislation that will best accommodate the needs and obstacles of obtaining education as a Bedouin in the Negev. In this way, the Tamar Center is able to serve as a strong example of an NGO working in the Negev whose work is currently addressing educational inequality for Bedouin girls and women and thus providing the tools that will hopefully allow for increasing integration Bedouin girls and women into Israeli society. Additionally, the center focuses on raising focal educational issues of the Bedouin population to the public. In this way, Tamar is comprehensively addressing much of the tension in the region both through efforts directed at policy change via legislators as well as a shift in public perception of the Bedouin population that would allow for greater public support of policy that would benefit Bedouin education.

Instead of one main function, Tamar instead works to tackle many of the complexities that contribute to educational inequality among the Bedouin community. It seeks to utilize education as a vessel for change through impacting the future generation of Bedouin adults. These efforts are not without challenges. First, Tamar is facing many cultural norms that may work against the efforts the center is seeking to take. For example, a high drop out rate and traditional emphasis on informal education may create environments at home for students that do not encourage or actively negate the importance of formal education. Furthermore, Tamar is working with a population who has been systematically disadvantaged by the Israeli school system. As a result, to help students excel they must first fill in fundamental gaps that have been generated through the public school system. Additionally, they are

¹²³ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

facing many of the other obstacles to education faced by the Bedouin population including geographic isolation and poverty. The issues of land recognition also factors in to the work of Tamar. Although the organization seeks to improve education overall for Bedouin throughout the region, it is still challenging to reach those living in unrecognized villages and land who lack access to basic infrastructure such as plumbing or electric. How can one make a convincing argument to place priority on improving STEM education when basic human needs are not being met?

While Bedouin society is traditionally riddled with extreme patriarchy, Tamar offers a space for girls and women to succeed in a role outside of the domestic sphere. As a result, the most dominant demographic within STEM coursework at Tamar is not boys, as found in STEM classrooms in much of the developed world, but rather girls.¹²⁴ As the Bedouin community continues to align more closely with contemporary Israeli society, the classroom serves as a safe space for Bedouin girls to excel beyond their traditional gender roles. This is seen not only in the classroom, but also in the matriculation of Tamar students into higher education as well as the staff and teachers working at the Tamar center. Although female empowerment is not the sole focus or effort of the center, it is certainly a byproduct of the initiatives taken to improve the status of Bedouin overall.

The Tamar Center serves as an example of an organization operating both from within and outside of the Bedouin population in order to improve the educational status and subsequent overall status of the community.¹²⁵ It is this cooperation within the organization that demonstrates ways in which the Bedouin are able to successfully work within the greater public sphere in Israel as well as the ways in which even those who are not part of the Bedouin community are able to work towards bettering the circumstances for the Negev Bedouin. As an organization, Tamar serves a microcosmic example of what integration can look like in the region as a whole. Furthermore, the work of the center is taking active

¹²⁴ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

¹²⁵ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

measures to bridge educational gaps between the Bedouin population and greater Israeli population now, rather than waiting for state resources to come along and do this work instead. As a result, Tamar is an excellent example of an organization directly contributing to positive change for education of Bedouin girls and women in the Negev.

Bimkom – Jerusalem

Bimkom - Planners for Planning rights, is a recognized NGO operating out of Jerusalem. In contrast to The Desert Embroidery Center and Tamar Center, Bimkom is an organization that works in partnership with the Bedouin community but is not made up of any Bedouin community members. The group was founded in 1999 and is made up of planners and architects who are committed to “strengthen democracy and human rights in the field of spatial planning and housing policies, in Israel and in Area C of the West Bank, which is under Israeli control.”¹²⁶ As stated by the organization, “Bimkom advances the development of planning policies and practices that are more just and respectful of human rights, and responsive to the needs of local communities.”¹²⁷ Overall, the organization serves as a partner for Jewish and Arab communities in Israel in working with local and state government. They provide support through research and reports, community planning, and working with planning authorities. As an organization, Bimkom has assisted communities on a myriad of issues including home and community demolition, affordable housing, and infrastructure development.¹²⁸

One of the main pillars of the work done by Bimkom is the role of spatial planning in determining the quality and function of daily life. For the Bedouin community specifically, Bimkom has compiled a comprehensive report examining the circumstances of the Negev Bedouin population. The report looks at barriers to development in recognized and unrecognized communities as well as disparities between Jewish communities and recognized Bedouin communities as well as between recognized Bedouin

¹²⁶ Bimkom.org. Retrieved from <https://bimkom.org/eng/our-mission/>

¹²⁷ Bimkom.org. Retrieved from <https://bimkom.org/eng/our-mission/>

¹²⁸ Bimkom.org. Retrieved from <https://bimkom.org/eng/our-mission/>

communities and unrecognized Bedouin communities.¹²⁹ In addition to the report, Bimkom is continuously working in partnership with Bedouin communities residing in the Negev region so as to improve access to resources as well as advocate for the community in working with the Israeli government. Bimkom has been a valuable ally in working with the state of Israel to create urban planning for Bedouin communities that is effective, sensible, and fair. As an organization, Bimkom has been able to develop a relationship based on trust with the Bedouin population which allows for a better understanding of the needs of the community as well as empowerment in hearing the voices of the Bedouin in conversations with local municipalities and the state government.

In looking at a solution for the circumstances of the Bedouin population living in the Negev, organizations like Bimkom serve as a strong example for ways in which outside support from the Israeli Jewish community are important and impactful to bringing equality and improvement to life of the Negev Bedouin community. Bimkom is able to serve as a voice for the Bedouin in spheres they are not familiar with or are often seen in such as where policy is made or enacted. Additionally, Bimkom is able to provide council, both legally and in urban planning, to the Bedouin community. Such council is incredibly important in navigating the complex legal framework of land recognition as well as working with the Israeli government and local municipalities to ensure planning and access to resources that is equitable, sustainable, and conducive for Bedouin way of life.

Although Bimkom does not specifically target the issues of gender or education for Bedouin women, both of these facets of Bedouin life are a by product of the work that Bimkom does in regards to shaping land recognition and ownership rights in the Negev. As presented in Chapter 2, a lack of land recognition and cooperation between the Israeli government and Bedouin population has played a critical role in generating many of the inequalities experienced by the Negev Bedouin today. As a result, the work of Bimkom is essential in addressing the root of the lack of adequate schools that are accessible and conducive to learning for the Bedouin population. Initiatives of urban planning for Bedouin communities

¹²⁹ Bimkom.org. Retrieved from <https://bimkom.org/eng/our-mission/>

that are currently spearheaded by Bimkom along with the work Bimkom does with the Israeli government are critical to long term change and geopolitical shift in the Negev region.

Education Projections based on population growth, modernization, and integration

As the growth of the Bedouin population continues at a rapid rate, it is crucial that educational infrastructure and resources are developed within the Negev that are both accessible and accommodating to the needs of the Bedouin population. As the Israeli government continues to take on dramatic initiatives to incentivize settlement in recognized communities, so too must it prioritize the establishment of adequate schools designed to effectively service the population. Additionally, a comprehensive educational plan would include the provision of attainable, state sponsored education for those residing outside of recognized communities. This recommendation is far less likely to come to fruition as it would make life outside of the recognized Bedouin communities more comfortable, a prospect that goes against the governments previous strategy of leveraging access to infrastructure and resources in order to pressure movement into recognized communities. As a result, the work being done by NGO's in the Negev is especially critical in changing the precedent of the educational resourcing provided to the Bedouin population. Due to the rapid rates of growth amongst the Bedouin population, an inability to generate a solution to providing education will result in an ever increasing portion of the population who is unable to move above the poverty line or successfully integrate into modern life, thus placing greater strain on social services and further fracturing the relationship between Israel and the Bedouin community.

In regards to modernization and development within the state of Israel, increasing educational resources and opportunity for achievement among the Bedouin population would provide the state of Israel with a large, rapidly increasing work force that could contribute to development of the Negev and country as a whole. In the state of Israel, compulsory military service for the Jewish population upon the age of 18 pulls most high school graduates away from higher education and the workforce until at least

their twenties. However, the Bedouin population faces a unique prospect where instead of following the traditional Israeli path of post high school graduation enlistment, as part of the Arab community the Bedouin are not mandated to serve. If the entire Bedouin population were to be provided adequate primary and secondary education that prepared them for matriculation into higher education, Israel would potentially see a dramatic demographic shift in those who are able to enroll in university level institutions immediately following high school graduation. Additionally, with many Bedouin educational programs currently placing emphasis on STEM achievement, the Bedouin population could become a valuable resource to the advancement of Israel as the self proclaimed “high tech and start up nation.” It is in this possible outcome that the value and potential of integration through education can be seen.

Education as an equalizer in the region

Within the Negev region, the Bedouin population continues to grow at a rapid rate as one of the fastest growing populations in the world. With over 2/3 of the population under the age of 21, education for the youth population hold the keys to transforming the reality and circumstances of the entire Bedouin community.¹³⁰ Currently, the Bedouin population falls behind much of Israel in regards to education, employment, and socioeconomic status. Much of their struggle is tied up in the complexity of the issue of land ownership and conflict with the state of Israel over such matters of restricted sedentarization and urbanization. As a population, it was not until relatively recently that individuals were able to receive a comparable education to what is provided for Jewish Israelis. As a result, the impact of marked increases in education within the Bedouin community has just begun to be felt.

One of the first ways in which education may eventually work to elevate the status of Bedouin residing in the Negev region is in the emergence of educated advocates from within the Bedouin

¹³⁰ Tamar Center Negev - About Bedouin Empowerment through Education. Retrieved from <http://mtamar.org.il/en/about/>

community. For much of the history of the Bedouin population under the rule of the state of Israel there has been an inability for the community to adequately advocate for itself due to a lack of resourcing and education. Today, there are still great disparities between the Bedouin community and the status quo for contemporary Israeli society. However, those Bedouin who have been able to overcome such disparities are now in a position to advocate for their communities and cross previous barriers that separated and complicated the relationship between Israeli bureaucracy and the Negev Bedouin community.

Literacy, and specifically Hebrew literacy, is fundamental in the political and bureaucratic process. It is also a fundamental tool in the day to day function in economic and social life in the state of Israel. Increases in education and specifically literacy tools for the Bedouin population opens doors to further integration into life outside of the Bedouin community. Literacy opens doors in higher education as well as in the workplace and government. In order to equally function and contribute within the Negev region, Hebrew literacy is essential for the Bedouin population. As education rates increase, the literacy gap will continue to close, thus increasing the status and integration of Bedouin in the region.

Education serves not only as an equalizer between the Bedouin and greater Israeli society, but also within the Bedouin community. Specifically, education is a tool of empowerment for girls and women in overcoming rigid patriarchal structures that have been systemically enforced over time through Bedouin cultural practices. Education and skills gained in the classroom enable economic independence by providing Bedouin girls and women the ability to enter the workforce should they so desire. Although it is not a singular solution to the complex dynamics of Bedouin life, the classroom provides an outlet for girls and women outside of the home where they can achieve more than home making and find value in achievements outside of domestic work and care.

Currently, the state of Israel uses educational resources as incentive for Bedouin from unrecognized communities to move to recognized communities. However, this leaves thousands of children across the Negev suffering as they lack the basic educational opportunities that are meant to be provided for every Israeli child. As the population continues to grow, it is critical that action is taken to

enable access to adequate education for the Negev Bedouin population. If this is not done, the cycle of poverty and tension with local municipalities will continue as a growing population continues to face limited mobility both socially and economically in Israeli society. The work being done by many of the NGO's in the region, including those highlighted in this chapter, becomes especially pertinent in bridging the gap for education between recognized communities and unrecognized communities as policy and consideration by the Israeli government lags behind. While organizations like Bimkom work to increase recognition and the construction of schools in communities currently going without, organizations like Tamar and The Desert Embroidery center are seeing to provide educational support outside of the classroom to bridge the educational gap for Bedouin students. It is this prospect that makes the work of NGO's today critical, both in the ways they are aiding the Bedouin community on the ground and in the ways they are influencing policy change and cooperation with the Israeli government and local municipalities. Although there are many challenges in place to achieving integration for the Bedouin population in the Negev, slow change that is already occurring gives hope for eventual equality. Due to the additional challenges faced by Bedouin girls and women, it is fundamental that initiatives focused on the needs of Bedouin girls and women are continued not just by organizations from within the community like The Desert Embroidery Center, but by all stakeholders in the Negev.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

As seen throughout this thesis, education for Bedouin girls and women has the potential to radically change the landscape of the Negev region through integration for the Bedouin population as a whole. The impacts of education are far reaching and have the ability to increase development and strengthen Israeli society with the contributions that are possible should there be a large demographic shift in the Negev as a result of Bedouin education. Overall, the rapid changes in way of life for the Negev Bedouin population since the establishment of the state of Israel are astounding. Changes from pastoral to sedentary life as well as urbanization and modernization for the Bedouin population within the state of Israel have begun to create shifts away from cultural norms such as rigid patriarchy. It is important to note that such shifts are very gradual, often times creating complex dynamics that leave Bedouin girls and women struggling at the intersection of tradition and integration into modern Israeli society. As a means to successfully facilitate such integration in the future, education for Bedouin girls and women plays a critical role in developing the skills and empowerment needed for equality in their own communities as well as integration and subsequent equality in Israeli society as a whole.

Unlike some of the rapid change initiated by the Israeli government in the past, this shift in reality for Bedouin women will not come just from state legislation, but also from within the population and the many organizations working to advance quality of life in the region. As a modern democracy, it is essential that the state of Israel takes a hard look at the status of its Bedouin population and makes adjustments to the resources and support like education that it provides, so as to become a more just society and ensure equality for all of its citizens, including the Negev Bedouin. In order to create an educational system that is fair and equal for all Israeli children, fundamental gaps between educational

resources for Bedouin, and especially Bedouin residing outside of recognized communities, will need to be filled. These gaps can be bridged through changes in policy and state resourcing as well as resolution over the many Bedouin communities that are currently unrecognized in the Negev region. Today, many NGO's working the Negev region or in partnership with the Bedouin population are making tangible impact on the circumstances of the population, including education and the status of women. It is the combination of this type of work along with state plans for development in the region that provide a sense of hope for the Bedouin future.

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ACADEMIC VITA

EDUCATION AND ACADEMIC HONORS

The Pennsylvania State University / Schreyer Honors College / College of Liberal Arts / Class of 2019
Majors: Global and International Studies (Culture and Identity), Studio Art / Minor: Political Science
Dean's List: Fall 2015 - Fall 2018

EMPLOYMENT

- Intern, THE DAVID PROJECT, University Park, PA** Jan 2017 – Present
- Cultivate relationships and coalition building between leaders in student government, political clubs, religious groups, and LGBTQA organizations.
 - Participated in 2017-2018 Israel Uncovered Trip to Israel as a Jewish Student Leader to evaluate and gain better understanding of the multitude of narratives surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Desk Attendant, PENN STATE LIBRARIES COMMON SERVICES DESK** Nov 2017 – Present
- Aid patrons in locating, checking out, and returning library materials and in utilizing library services.
- Trip Staff, PENN STATE HILLEL, BIRTHRIGHT INTERNATIONAL** June 2018, Dec 2018
- Co-Staffed 10 day immersive Israel experience for 35 participants, assisted in coordination of trip preparation and logistics.
 - Facilitated programming surrounding personal and Jewish identity and Israeli culture and history.
- Communications/ Research Intern, THE ISRAEL PROJECT, Jerusalem** June 2017 - Aug 2017
- Worked under Director of Communications in establishing contact with foreign journalists and diplomats.
Assisted with the interviewing of field experts and the distribution of such interviews.
Composed reports regarding a myriad of issues faced by Israel and its neighbors in the Middle East.
- Counselor, YMCA OF DELAWARE CAMP QUOWANT, Wilmington, DE** May 2014 - Aug 2016
- Managed the daily activities for a group of campers as well as maintained their well being and safety.
- Hostess, TEXAS ROADHOUSE, Concordville, Pa** May 2013 – April 2015

LEADERSHIP AND CAMPUS INVOLEMENT

- PENN STATE DANCE MARATHON (THON)** Sept 2015 - Present
- THON is the world's largest student-run philanthropy. Its mission is to enhance the lives of children and families impacted by childhood cancer. Efforts culminate each year in a 46-hour dance marathon. THON 2018 raised over 10 million dollars for THON's sole beneficiary, Four Diamonds.
- Crowd Entertainment Captain (4/2018 – present)**
- Lead a committee of 30 passionate members dedicated to creating an engaging environment for all participants, spectators, and stakeholders of pre-THON and THON events.
 - Coordinate execution of small and large scale events for up to 16,000 individuals at a time.
- Administrative Assistant and Inter Committee Liaison Entertainment Captain (9/2017 – 3/2018)**
- Collaborate to execute audio visual entertainment, live performances, and interactive crowd experiences.
 - Facilitate interaction and coordination with other Captain Committees, Committee Members, and volunteers outside of the internal organization of THON.
- Dancer Relations Committee Member (10/2015 – 2/2017)**

Student Supervisor, *PENN STATE HILLEL SOUP DELIVERY PROGRAM* Sept 2015 - Sept 2018

- Supervised team of 12 deliverers in delivering free soup to students who are ill.
- Coordinated delivery of 450+ orders a semester while managing scheduling, training, and soup cooking.

Executive Council Member, *PHI SIGMA SIGMA – BETA ETA CHAPTER* Dec 2016 - Dec 2018

- Sisterhood Chairman (12/2017 – 12/2018)
- Standards Board Member (12/2018 – 12/2018)
- Dated Functions Chairman (12/ 2016 – 12/ 2017)

Vice President of Membership, *STUDENTS SUPPORTING ISRAEL* Sept 2016 - June 2018

Internal Development Captain, *PENN STATE HOMECOMING* Feb 2016 - Oct 2016