Article

How does it feel to be an anti-martyr's widow? The interplay of religious capital and negative symbolic capital of war widows

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Abstract
This article demonstrates the contrasting experiences of military widows in the modern Jewish Orthodox and the Bedouin sectors in Israel. While fallen Jewish soldiers are honored in a fashion similar to martyrs, Bedouin fallen soldiers are perceived as anti-martyrs; their anti-martyr status causes predicaments for their widows. While Jewish war widows are glorified, their Bedouin counterparts are subject to various modes of marginalization and exclusion. The article offers Bourdieusian theoretical analysis of the differing status of the Bedouin war widows and proposes the concept of *negative symbolic capital* to describe a situation where a social agent not only lacks a certain sort of capital, but instead possesses an intangible attribute which is negatively sanctioned owing to cultural-specific beliefs, values, and circumstances. We demonstrate how widows who possess negative symbolic capital invest much effort in accruing religious capital, in order to cope with their excluded position as widows of anti-martyrs.

Keywords
Bedouin, bereavement, minorities, symbolic capital, widowhood

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Résumé

Cet article démontre les expériences contrastées des veuves de militaires dans les secteurs modernes juifs orthodoxes et Bédouin en Israël. Alors que les soldats juifs tombés au combat sont honorés tels des martyrs, les soldats bédouins tués au combat sont eux perçus comme des anti-martyrs ; et ce statut d'anti-martyr a des conséquences désastreuses pour leurs veuves. Alors que les veuves de guerre juives sont glorifiées, leur homologues bédouines sont sujettes à différents modes de marginalisation et d'exclusion. Cet article présente une analyse théorique bourdeusienne des différents statuts des veuves de guerre bédouines et propose le concept de capital symbolique négatif pour décrire une situation dans laquelle un agent social ne manque pas seulement d'un certain capital, mais à l'inverse possède un attribut intangible qui le sanctionne négativement en raison de croyances, de valeurs et de circonstances culturelles spécifiques. Nous démontrons comment les veuves qui possèdent ce capital symbolique négatif investissent de nombreux efforts pour accroître leur capital religieux, au lieu de se débrouiller avec leur statut d'exclue en tant que veuve d'anti-martyr.

Mots clés

Bédouin, capital symbolique, deuil, minorités, veuvage

Introduction

This article introduces the concept of *negative symbolic capital* as a complementary construct which augments Bourdieusian analysis of power in social life. The balance of power of participants in a specific Bourdieusian field is a result of the relative amount of sources of capital, be it cultural, economic or social, possessed by each party (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In a later work, Wacquant wrote about negative social capital, albeit indirectly, noting that 'Except for totally isolated . . . everyone possesses forms of capital, be it *negative*, if only by virtue of inheritance' (Wacquant, 1998: 28). The present article focuses on symbolic capital in two religious societies, and is aimed at broadening the scope of this concept to include cases where the social agent may not only lack this type of capital but instead possess *negative* symbolic capital. We show how religious modern Orthodox Jewish military widows benefit from a venerated status as they belong to the Jewish majority in Israel, and their husbands are perceived as martyrs because they sacrificed their life for the Jewish people, whereas their Bedouin counterparts suffer exclusionary treatment due to their fallen Muslim husbands' military service in the Israeli army. Bedouins in general, and also our Bedouin informants, identify themselves as Muslim Arabs (Yonah et al., 2004), hence Bedouins serving in an army whose goal is to protect the Jewish population in the land of Israel from fellow Muslims' hostile attacks aimed to free Palestine is perceived as betraying Muslim faith and pride. While the death of Jewish soldiers is widely perceived by their countrymen as the death of martyrs, the fallen Bedouin soldiers constitute anti-martyrs in their community. By using the phrase 'anti-martyr' we do not mean the common usage of it as someone that commits mass murder-suicide; instead we relate it to a person who participated in violent operations made by enemies of his

co-religionists. We show herewith why Bedouin widows maintain their religious capital as a mechanism with potency to reduce the negative stigma attached to them.

In the event that a Bedouin IDF soldier is killed during a military operation involving his Muslim co-religionists, his widow is both recognized and financially compensated by the Israeli Ministry of Defence. Sadly, his life is considered ungrievable by his community. 'Ungrievability' is a concept coined by Judith Butler in her thesis of 'hierarchies of grief' (Butler, 2004); while hierarchy of bereavement is a macro-level phenomenon which is the result of different death circumstances, hierarchy of grief is created through the ethnic and/or religious stratification of ethnic groups, including ethnic minorities in a specific society. Butler points to the selective coverage in the American mass media of the deaths of people of certain ethnic minorities. She coined the term 'grievability' and argues that some lives do not seem to be grievable, as reflected in the shorter mention, if at all, of their death and an account of the circumstances. Butler attributes this lack of grievability to the press's failure to acknowledge the loss of Muslim lives during armed conflicts in the same way as of Americans'. She asks: 'Will those hundreds of thousands of Muslim lives lost in the decades of strife ever receive the equivalent to the paragraph-long obituaries in *The New York Times* that seek to humanize – often through nationalist and familial framing devices – those Americans who have been violently killed?' (Butler, 2004, 12). Butler argues that white Americans do not merely fail to publicly mourn the lives of Muslims, but more fundamentally, that they fail to 'conceive of Muslim and Arab lives as lives' in the first place (Butler, 2004: 12). Inspired by the idea of ungrievability of people of certain ethnic groups characterized by an asymmetric power balance, we consider the ungrievable fallen Bedouin IDF soldiers as 'anti-martyrs' to denote the worthlessness of their lives as perceived by their community, as well as the Bedouin community's derogatory treatment of the circumstances of their death (Bokek-Cohen and Ben-Asher, 2017).

'Hierarchies of grief' is a concept that is reminiscent of a related phenomenon, namely, 'disenfranchised grief' (Doka, 2002). Disenfranchised grief relates to the grief of a bereaved person which is not socially or culturally acknowledged by her community members or the state. This stands in sharp contrast to enfranchised grief which grants the mourner societal recognition and legitimacy for mourning. Both hierarchy of bereavement and hierarchy of grief reflect macro-level distinctions, whereas 'disenfranchised grief' is a result of a micro-level observation of different types of bonds between the deceased and the bereaved. The grief of the widows and other relatives surrounding the death of fallen Bedouin soldiers is much worse than 'merely' disenfranchised grief. It is a grief that entails schadenfreude, or malicious satisfaction on the part of neighbors and acquaintances which is demonstrated in explicit modes and also in shunning the soldier's relatives. For example, a bereaved father built a mosque to commemorate his son, however, nobody enters this mosque as an expression of censure (Ben-Asher and Bokek-Cohen, 2018).

In order to introduce the concept of *negative symbolic capital*, we first present Bourdieu's forms of capital, then we demonstrate how *negative symbolic capital* decreases the power of social agents in a given social field by presenting a case study which compares the venerated societal position of Jewish war widows to that of the shamed Bedouin war widows. In other words, a military widow's position within societal

hierarchies may stem not only from lacking a certain type of capital, but instead possessing certain attributes that are considered negative, and consequently are negatively sanctioned owing to cultural-specific values, beliefs, and norms. Inspired by Bourdieu's theoretical conceptualization, our analysis exposes a paradoxical phenomenon. We show how Jewish cultural imperatives, as well as the Zionist nationalistic ideology, converge to glorify Jewish war widows, privilege them with societal recognition and appreciation, and grant them a venerated status, while Bedouin war widows are marginalized, boycotted, and relegated to the lowest strata of the inner hierarchy in their community. We conclude by offering a Bourdieusian interpretation for these contrasting positions and propose the theoretical concept of negative symbolic capital.

Theoretical framework

In this article, we focus on Bourdieu's classification of the forms of capital. According to Bourdieu (1984; 1986; 2010 [1972]) and Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), people in advanced societies live in a social space that is differentiated into various spheres of life, such as art, science, the economy, etc. Each one tends to form a distinct microcosm endowed with its own rules, regularities, and forms of authority – what Bourdieu calls *fields.* A *field* is, in the first instance, a structured space of positions, *a force field* that imposes its specific determinations upon all those who enter it. A field is an arena of struggle through which agents and institutions seek to preserve or overturn the existing distribution of capital; it is a *battlefield* wherein the bases of identity and hierarchy are endlessly vied for. Those who occupy the dominant positions in a field tend to pursue strategies of conservation (of the existing distribution of capital), while those are relegated to subordinate locations are more liable to deploy strategies of subversion. *Habitus* refers to lifestyle, the values, the dispositions, and expectations of particular social groups which are acquired through the activities and experiences of everyday life.

The system of dispositions which people acquire depends on the (successive) position(s) they occupy in society, that is, on their particular endowment in *capital*. For Bourdieu (1986), capital is any resource effective in a given social arena that enables one to appropriate the specific profits arising out of participation and contest in it. Capital comes in three principal forms: economic (material and financial assets), cultural (scarce symbolic goods, skills, and titles), and social (resources accrued by virtue of membership in a group). A fourth form, symbolic capital, designates the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1977; 1986). The different types of capital can be acquired, exchanged, and converted into other forms. Hence symbolic capital is directly related to a person's societal prestige, because 'the accumulation of symbolic capital is just as 'rational' as the accumulation of economic capital, particularly since such capital may be freely converted from one form to another' (Bliege et al., 2005: 223).

Some scholars have developed Bourdieu's typology of forms of capital and introduced additional types. Wacquant (1998) wrote about *negative social capital* in relation to the American state structure and policy which led to the degradation of life chances for black Americans. Hakim (2011; 2012) coined the term *erotic capital* to refer to the power an agent can possess thanks to his/her physical attractiveness; she shows that beauty can

impact a person's influence as well as be converted into social, cultural, or economic capital. Iannaccone (1990) called the type of power gained by religious participation 'religious capital'. He sees *religious capital* as simultaneously a condition for taking part in religious activities and also the consequence of such participation. He defines *religious capital* as 'familiarity with a religion's doctrines, rituals, traditions, and members [that] enhances the satisfaction one receives from participation in that religion and so increases the likelihood and probable level of one's religious participation. Conversely, religious participation is the single most important means of augmenting one's stock of religious human capital'. (Iannaccone, 1990: 299).

Religiosity and religious behavior and observance are considered a form of cultural capital, which may be transformed into other types of capital if rational thought and intention are invested. According to the rational choice theory of religion (RCTR) (Stark and Bainbridge, 1985; Stark and Finke, 2000), 'human beings desire some benefits that seem to be unavailable by most natural means'. These include such desires as the wish to have life after death and the longing for assurance of the ultimate meaning of existence. Immediate access to immortality and cosmological order cannot be provided by exploitation of the planet's resources. Therefore, human beings turn to compensators, or beliefs 'that a reward will be obtained in the distant future or in some other context which cannot be immediately verified' (Stark and Bainbridge, 1985: 6). The rational choice approach to religion enables social scientists to predict and explain human behavior in the religious sphere of life. It offers a useful and concise way to understand human religious action at the individual level, because religious behavior and observance are viewed as a matter of intentionally motivated decision, rather than a matter of pure socialization. This view recognizes the agency of the individual, instead of highlighting the structural aspects and motives behind religious life.

Military widowhood in Israel

Jewish war widows are perceived as undertaking a large share of the burden of maintaining national security (Bokek-Cohen, 2014a). Women who lost their husbands in wars benefit from a higher status in the 'bereavement hierarchy' compared to women who lost their husbands in civilian circumstances (such as road accidents, severe illnesses, etc.) (Bokek-Cohen, 2014b). Accordingly, the IDF widows belong to a distinct social category (Shamger-Handelman, 1986) and enjoy higher prestige and status than women whose husbands died in civilian circumstances (Ben-Asher and Lebel, 2010). War widows are expected to serve the Zionist ideology and fulfill the cultural function of a 'national symbol', as a continuous commemoration of the dead hero. In return for this service, the Israeli government demonstrates great concern for their wellbeing, by providing economic support for the widows and orphans (Bokek-Cohen, 2014b).

Since there are also Bedouin soldiers serving in the IDF, we show how the widows of fallen Bedouin soldiers are perceived by their society, given the fact that there is an ongoing armed conflict between the Jewish majority in Israel and the Muslim minority. We examine the societal position of Bedouin war widows as compared to that of their Jewish counterparts in order to illustrate our concept of *negative symbolic capital*. Since most of our interviewees spoke in terms of honor or shame regarding their subjective

experience of being a war widow, we found the concept of symbolic capital in Bourdieu (1989; 1990) and Bourdieu and Thompson (1999) highly useful in the interpretation of their narratives.

Military widowhood around the globe

War widows are subject to poverty and sometimes sexual violence in post-conflict settings. Therefore, war widowhood is usually a time-dependent state, because widows prefer to remarry quickly in order to gain economic and personal security (Brück and Schindler, 2009). For example, Parmar (2003) studied remarriage patterns of widows who lost their husbands in India's Kargil War of 1999. She argues that although the Brahminical code that prohibited widow-remarriage was the dominant model in Hinduism, there are some findings that indicate that, following the social reform movements in the 19th century, there has been an acceptance and celebration of widow-remarriage. Under levirate marriage, a widow has to marry her husband's younger brother. In her study of Kargil war widows, she estimated that 80 to 90 percent of the widows were remarried. Most of them wanted to keep their second marriage a secret because they did not want the government to stop their pension. All the remarried widows were married to their husband's brother, while most married a brother who was already married, thus becoming second wives.

Zahedi (2006) interviewed Iranian war widows in Iran. She contended that young Iranian widows were encouraged to remarry; however, the cultural significance of virginity limits these widows' chances of remarriage. In addition to that, married female friends and relatives are threatened by war widows because Islamic laws allow polygyny. The regime encouraged young unmarried men to marry war widows, as a national and religious duty. These widows were not entitled to receive a pension after their remarriage. To facilitate remarriage, the government supported the revitalization of a marriage foundation and called it a 'Marriage Bureau'. Most of the war widows who succeeded in finding second husbands married either disabled single men or childless married men.

In some cultural settings, the fallen soldier is perceived as a martyr (Ben-Asher and Bokek-Cohen, 2018); the death of soldiers is a source of great grief and pain. However the pain may be somewhat relieved by the honor shown to martyrs, and consequently to their widows and additional close family relatives. Rahbari (2013) distinguishes between a 'regular' death and a martyr's death: The former is considered to be an inevitable fact while a martyr is considered to be passing to the highest stages of human spiritual accomplishment. A martyr in Iranian culture is perceived as a man who was completely devoted to his people and therefore sacrificed his life in armed conflict when required to, such as during the Iran-Iraq war. Similarly to their deceased husbands, the widows sacrificed their own well-being and refrained from remarriage, because they believed such remarriage would not be good for their children. They preferred to live in poverty and take on the roles of both father and mother rather than remarrying. They chose to remain unmarried because they were inspired by religious beliefs about reuniting with the deceased husband after physical death (Rahbari, 2013). Sande (1992) investigated the impact of martyrdom of Palestinian martyrs who died during the first uprising in 1989 in Israel, on their widows' psychological reactions and well-being. These widows

have two demanding and contrasting roles: one is that of the mourning wife who suffers pain and loss while at the same time is expected by society to fulfill an additional role and serve as a religious and national symbol.

The sociocultural context of the two segments

We wish to examine the lived experiences of IDF widows in each sector; specifically, we are interested in exploring the widows' perceptions of their societal position, being an IDF widow in the context of the values and belief system of the communities they live in. According to Abu-Rabia-Queder (2007), the position of Bedouin women is marginal in two aspects: first, they are members of an ethnic religious minority group; and second, they are marginalized as women in a patriarchical society. We may observe a third dimension of marginality, namely belonging to the Bedouin sector which constitutes a minority group within the Muslim Arab minority group. In contrast to the threefold marginality of the Bedouin informants, the Jewish widows belong to the majority group of what is widely perceived as the oppressive colonialist Jewish Israeli regime. Like their Bedouin counterparts they are also religious; however, they have much more influence and impact in the domestic sphere as well as in the public, community, municipal, and political spheres. While Bedouin women usually do not work outside their household, most religious Jewish women are employed in various occupations; some are professionals and work in prestigious jobs, earning no less money than their husbands or other men of their socioeconomic class. Finally, all of the Bedouins live below the poverty line and are located at the lowest decile, whereas most religious modern Orthodox Jews are located at the fifth to the tenth deciles of socioeconomic status (Ben-Asher and Bokek-Cohen, 2018; Bokek-Cohen and Ben-Asher, 2017).

Methodology

Prior to beginning the study, ethical approval was secured from the IRB of the universities where the authors are employed. We embarked on a phenomenological research project aimed at exploring the subjective experiences of fifteen modern Orthodox Jewish women and seven Bedouin women whose husbands died while they were serving in the armed forces of the state. The authors are secular Jewish women employed in Israeli academic institutions; the first author's knowledge of the Bedouin culture is limited to what is written in academic articles, while the second author has had numerous interactions with Bedouins over the past three decades, both in daily life and in professional circumstances. Hence, the analysis and interpretation of the narratives of the Bedouin interviewees necessitated a thorough and extensive reading about Bedouin culture in general, and military bereavement and the social status of women in particular. In contrast to our relatively limited familiarity with the Bedouin culture, we have been working with many modern Orthodox religious Jewish colleagues and have had hundreds of modern Orthodox religious Jewish students attending our classes at university. We both live in villages where modern Orthodox religious residents and seculars reside together, and both of us have many such neighbors and friends. Hence we have come to know their value system, norms, and beliefs quite well.

Findings

We present the experiences of the Jewish war widows in the first subsection of the Findings section and then continue to describe those of the Bedouin widows in the second subsection.

How do Jewish war widows describe the experience of being a war widow?

Analysis of the narratives of our Jewish interviewees have led us to conclude that they feel admired and appreciated by their close relatives, by members of the wider network as well as by the rabbis who are the opinion leaders of their community. They feel their societal image is illuminated by the ennobled aura of their deceased husbands as heroes who sacrificed their lives to the collective security and the enduring survival of the Zionist state. We can learn about this subjective perception from their answers to several questions directed at them; for example, when Le'a is asked how she feels society treats widows who lost their husbands in military circumstances as compared to civilian, she says:

> There is a difference, both socially and politically, between an IDF widow and a woman who was widowed in civilian circumstances. Beyond the private mourning, there is national mourning . . . You leave your anonymity and are more exposed to the eyes of your close society, which wants to help; you become a 'celeb' without choosing to do so . . . A widow due to national circumstances affects a wider circle. If someone was killed in the service of the nation or because he was a Jew, then it's no longer a private matter - for better and for worse – he is also a fallen soldier of the Jewish people. There is a certain glory, I can't explain it.

Nitza conveys similar feelings:

> Being an IDF widow has a status in our country . . . I can't explain it. Before I was an IDF widow myself, whenever I heard of an IDF widow, I too always thought what a heroine she is, someone who gave up her husband for the sake of the Jewish people. You become a symbol, you are a symbol, or a kind of symbol. You have some sort of national duty on memorial days because you are the representative of the bereaved families now. I tried to flee from it, it doesn't help, Memorial Day will affect me even if I run away abroad. There are songs on the radio, flags, a person's personal bereavement, everyone wants to touch it. . . . I said that I don't treat it as my personal day. You fall into it because of the general atmosphere in the nation, also abroad, you are like the representative and your private bereavement comes up. You have no control over it.

The widows invest much effort in preserving the glory inherited from their husbands. The ultimate way is holding a yearly commemoration ceremony, and inviting dozens of friends and relatives; if the deceased husband was a senior officer they usually invite respected figures such as chief commanders and ministers. In doing so the widow reproduces her own prestigious status, as the formal heir of his symbolic capital.

Besides that, the widows keep their former family name even if they remarry. According to Rom and Benjamin (2011), one of the main elements that indicate a

woman's self-identity is the family name she chooses after her marriage. The trend for a woman to keep her maiden name and add it to the new husband's family name is relatively new in Israel and began only in the late 1980s. Similarly, the choice to keep the dead husband's family name after the remarriage dates back to these years. Younger interviewees chose to register at the Ministry of Interior with both the first and the second husbands' family names. The 'declared' reason is that they wish to have the same family name as their children who were born to the first husband. However, all of them use the first husband's name (which is known to every member of their social network) in everyday life when interacting in informal communication with other people.

How do Bedouin war widows describe the experience of being a war widow?

Analysis of the narratives of our Bedouin informants have led us to reveal the experience of being a Bedouin war widow as inferiorized, excluded and boycotted. The war widows in Bedouin villages suffer communal exclusion, shaming, and strict control over their life. The involvement of the extended family and community in the widows' descriptions of their daily lives appears to be quite intensive; instead of being perceived as supportive either emotionally or in monetary and other kinds of assistance, the extended family and the community at large is perceived negatively as intrusive and abusive. Perhaps the most indicative account that attests to the marginalized status, to say the least, of IDF Bedouin widows in their community is reflected in the following excerpt: 'I arrived at my son's school and the teacher said: 'Your child knows his father betrayed his people'. The widows feel that members of the tribe she lives with are envious of the money she receives from the Ministry of Defence or the new car she bought with the aid of this pension. However, envy is just the tip of the iceberg; we heard similar stories from several widows about their husband's brothers who aggressively asked for or actually took a large part of the money given for the purpose of rehabilitating the widow and her children.

Sahar relates to this issue: 'My neighbors look only at the money I receive . . . or if I bought a new car . . . they do not care how I feel'. Naserin told us of a bereaved mother who was divorced, whose husband then remarried and took the entire pension for himself. She herself also remarried, and was disappointed to find out that her new husband does not live with her at all; he arrives to ask for money whenever he wants, while ignoring the new babies she gave birth to with him. Amira told about her oldest son, who apparently felt he must replace the paternal figure. He started beating his sisters after he heard some gossip about their alleged inappropriate behavior; we interpret his behavior partly as driven to please the surrounding community members and be 'one of theirs' like any other 'normal' family in the village. The family members feel as if they live under a magnifying glass and hence try to conform to religious as well as traditional ways of behavior as much as possible. The Bedouin informants wished to be like any other member of their community, and religious observance and practice help them in downplaying their otherness. Therefore all of our Bedouin informants strictly follow all religious imperatives, or in Iannaccone's (1990) words,

accrue and preserve their religious capital. The metaphor of living under a magnifying glass reflects their awareness of being socially judged, but not only on specific occasions: they feel they are being judged all the time. The ongoing life-long concern not to be judged negatively is in itself a source of stress and pain.

In the Bedouin tradition, there are three days of mourning during which the close relatives of the deceased stay at home and accept visitors who arrive to express their consolation and support. On the 40th day it is customary to organize a wide-scale memorial ceremony which includes serving a traditional dinner to the guests. Manal tells about her monetary and physical difficulties in preparing and organizing this dinner, whose cultural importance for the bereaved widow is ignored and not given any support by her extended family and community:

> During those days I was at the beginning of a pregnancy, but I prepared the dinner for the memorial day by myself. I bought many sheep and soft drinks, a lot of rice and cooked everything by myself. I do not have a car to carry all this things and we live about 5 km far from the main road. There was an old Jewish man who helped me and arrived with his car twice and helped me carry and deliver everything.

Disappointment and deep sorrow were conveyed in this narrative: In contrast to the strong ties in the social network of each individual belonging to the Bedouin community, Manal's story illustrates her isolated position within her society, isolation which is emblematic of the dismissive and derogative treatment given to IDF widows. Only one person, an elderly Jewish man, helped her deliver the sheep and the other ingredients for the dinner.

The widow feels she and her children are constantly being monitored regarding where they go and with whom, or who visits them; they must be accompanied by a relative if and when they leave the tribe's geographical space; the extended family relatives and also neighbors watch every move they make. Furthermore, some widows reported that their husband's relatives expropriate the financial support from the authorities, further increasing their emotional and economic vulnerability; Others who did manage to retain control over their pensions and obtain them in full from the authorities felt that people are jealous of them for receiving a monthly pension, and they were therefore forced to support men from their family of origin. The widow usually needs financial support from family relatives, but she is nonetheless expected to support others, and this is a source of additional tension and conflict within the extended family.

After describing the Bedouin widows' feelings of marginalization, we turn now to analyze the prevalent meanings and beliefs that entail the contrasting experiences of widows of the two sectors.

Discussion

We expose here a social phenomenon whereby the societal aspects of military widowhood are experienced quite differently depending upon the sociocultural context in which the widow lives and the belief system in which she and her relatives are embedded. Our findings demonstrate how symbolic capital constitutes a major factor in shaping war

widows' experiences as well as their societal position. Jewish IDF widows benefit from the honor of martyrs' widows, while their Bedouin counterparts suffer shame and derogation because their husbands are anti-martyrs. In contrast to a martyr who sacrificed his life for the sake of people of his religious group, an anti-martyr died during operations conducted against people of his religious group, therefore he may be perceived as a traitor.

Matryrs and martyrs' widows, as well as anti-martyrs and their widows, are subject to social judgment by community members. Because of the great significance of symbolic capital to the understanding of differences between social actors, Wacquant published Bourdieu's manuscript about this topic eleven years after the death of Bourdieu. According to Bourdieu (2013) social judgment has a crucial impact on one's social position as it shapes the symbolic capital of the person being judged. Wacquant elaborates and cites Bourdieu's words:

> The symbolic capital of those who dominate high society…does not depend solely on disdains and refusals . . . in sum, on the whole game of reciprocal judgments . . . Social groups . . . exist twice . . . they exist in the objectivity of the first order . . . and they in the objectivity of the second order, that of the contrasted classifications and representations produced by agents on the basis of a practical knowledge . . . the representations that agents form of their position in social space . . . is the product of a system of schemata of perception and appreciation (habitus) (Bourdieu, 2013: 296).

We learn from this eye-opening observation that inequality in general, and location in a societal hierarchy in particular, is contingent upon cognitive representations of a specific social actor as judged by members of his group. Therefore inequality as a universal social reality is frequently the outcome of social judgments regarding various types of ascribed or inscribed attributes.

Martyrs' widows are appreciated for serving the Zionist ethos of the Jewish resilience, by constituting a national symbol of sacrifice to the collective Zionist project and demonstrating unquestionable loyalty to the Jewish state, army, and people. However, war widows who share the same circumstances of widowhood but in a different ethno-religious sector in the same state are denounced and derogated within their social network, owing to their husbands' willingness to serve in the armed forces of the state to which their community harbors some animosity. Gayle Rubin (1975) called attention to a public discourse about the phenomenon of 'exchange of women' that is reflected in treating women as a commodity: 'women are given in marriage, taken in battle, exchanged for favors, sent as tribute, traded, bought, and sold' (1975: 175). The present study sheds light on another way of treating women in a way that expropriates their dignity. Explicit social control of Bedouin widows lies at the basis of their public shaming, as a way to signal what is considered as 'normal' and 'socially accepted'.

Negative symbolic capital

Our research project exposes the silent suffering of Bedouin war widows and their experience of being both marginalized and excluded by their communities, while their

Jewish counterparts are privileged with societal appreciation and glorification. We therefore propose the concept of *negative symbolic capital* to account for the tainted and tarnished aura attached to individuals performing unacceptable behaviors and/or having unwanted affiliations in a specific society. We propose the term *negative symbolic capital* to denote any attributes, behavioral patterns, or institutional affiliations of a person, which contrast with the hegemonic belief system of a society to which this person belongs, be they religious, nationalistic, cultural, or any other kinds of abstract attributes.

The *negative symbolic capital* proposed by us should be seen as an objective component of the power structure in a given society. However, the conceptualization of this construct is based on a phenomenological study of subjective experiences of individuals, namely, the military widows of two sectors in the same country. We base our theorization on Dreher's (2016) recent work about the social construction of power. According to Dreher (2016) who analyzed Berger and Luckmann's (1989 [1966]) attitude toward power relations in society while incorporating Bourdieu's criticism of their work, power is concurrently both an objective facticity in a given society or social space and a subjective experience of individuals living in this society, as he puts it: 'The decisive point in this conception is the fact that power is constructed within the dialectical relationship of objective and subjective reality' (Dreher, 2016: 61).

The power relations in a given society are formed in accord with the various types of capital possessed by each individual member or group (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). Society is experienced as a subjective reality as its members share internalized understandings, values and knowledge, including those related to sources of structural power and power dynamics. Individual perception and experience are, in major parts, determined by power structures, as is the case with the venerated status of the Jewish IDF widows and, in contrast, with the inferiorized position of Bedouin IDF widows. Hence, the subjective experiences of these widows illustrate '… the fact that power is constructed within the dialectical relationship of objective and subjective reality' (Dreher, 2016: 61). A major contribution of Bourdieu's theory is revealing what he calls 'forgotten fields of power' (Dreher, 2016) 'Forgotten fields of power' relate to hitherto unexplored or unthought-of factors and forces that shape the power relations in social entities. Dreher stresses that forgotten fields of power are the subjective perceptions of categories and hierarchies of power; this is due to the acknowledgement that their constitution occurred contingently upon objectively established concrete expressions of power in real rather than realized social life (Dreher, 2016).

In his later work, Bourdieu addressed the issue of 'stigmatized populations' who remain within the social field in which they are stigmatized: 'In the hierarchy of worth and unworthiness, which can never be perfectly imposed on the hierarchy of wealth and powers, the nobleman, in his traditional variant, or in his modern form is opposed to the stigmatized pariah who, like the Jew in Kafka's time or, now, the Black in the ghetto or the Arab or Turk in working class suburbs of European cities, bears the curse of a negative symbolic capital'. (Bourdieu, 2000: 241). Bourdieu explicitly equates stigma with negative symbolic capital. His analysis corresponds to Goffman's (2009 [1963]) seminal work on stigma. According to the Goffmanian conceptualization of stigma, the stigmatized person is perceived as different from all other people in the negative sense, usually but not only on the basis of racial, religious, or national affiliations. He is

evaluated as being of lower value and therefore the allegedly 'normal' members of his society do not accept him. This person usually invests efforts to conceal his distinctiveness in social interactions in order not to find himself standing alone vis-a-vis a world that rejects him. Most stigmatized people tend to experience changes in their self-esteem and are characterized by a low self-image and low self-confidence (Goffman, 2009). Goffman's analysis implies that negative stigmatization is an inevitable result, because 'Any capital, whatever the form it assumes, exerts a symbolic violence as soon as it is recognized, that is, misrecognized in its truth as capital and imposes itself as an authority calling for recognition…' (Bourdieu, 2013: 298–299).

Bourdieu refers to negative symbolic capital at the macro level, as he contends that ethnic minority groups gain lower prestige as compared to the dominant ethnic sector of a specific country. In our conceptualization of Bedouin widows' negative symbolic capital, we refer to the concept at the micro level and suggest that individuals may be negatively stigmatized. In so doing, we expand upon the original concept coined by Bourdieu and demonstrate additional contexts in which it can be applied. No man is an island, and similarly, no widow lives in a social vacuum: their relative weakness and vulnerability is a product of their negative symbolic capital, which is in itself a product of social judgment according to the belief and value system of society. This understanding is based also on the meaning of differences between members of a certain society. Bourdieu stresses as follows: 'Any difference that is recognized, accepted as legitimate, functions by that very fact as a symbolic capital providing a profit of distinction. *Symbolic capital . . . exists only in the relationship between distinct and distinctive properties . . .* For a practice or a property to function as a sign of distinction . . . *it is placed back into the symbolic universe of practices and properties* that . . . retranslates economic differences into distinctive marks, signs of distinction or social stigmata [italics not in the original]' (2013: 297).

Our concept of *negative symbolic capital* illustrates the complex social reality in which objective reality is reflected in subjective experience and vice versa. According to Dreher (2016), the concept of habitus bridges between objective social reality and the subjective perception of this reality. Habitus is a set of dispositions which constitute a structure of the mind and emotions characterized by a set of acquired schemata, sensibilities, dispositions and taste (Bourdieu, 2010). The contrast between the venerated status of Jewish IDF widows and the inferiorized position of Bedouin IDF widows aptly illustrates how different habitus stem from different power structures. Hence, while the concept of habitus is able to explain the reproduction of power structures but does not provide a theoretical framework which could explain the processes by which actors struggle against and transform established power structures (Dreher, 2016: 114), our concept of *negative symbolic capital* has much potency in enhancing our analysis of power dynamics of this kind.

The Jewish widow enjoys the 'prestige of suffering' (Mitchell, 1994; Sered, 1994) whereas the Bedouin widow receives no societal recognition. Instead, she feels exceptional and consequently, shameful because of her husband's death circumstances. Shame as a core concept describes their self-perception and social identity. This resonates with Giddens's (1991) acknowledgement of the central role of shame in a person's self-identity. Shame and honour are also acknowledged in the Bourdieusian framework;

according to Sayer (2005): 'Class inequalities mean that the 'social bases of respect' in terms of access to valued ways of living are unequally distributed, and therefore that shame is likely to be endemic to the experience of class'. (Sayer, 2005: 954–955). Hence, the subjective sense of shame and disrespect from others accompanies negative symbolic capital.

The Bedouin widows' habitus of perceiving themselves as inferior corroborates Betty Friedan's (1963) claims about women's '*self othering'.* This rationale may be the reason why Bedouin IDF widows constitute the '*other*' in their own community. While Bedouin women who are married to a living IDF soldier enjoy his protection from societal marginalization, widows remain vulnerable and unprotected from the community's hostility. The traditional order based on affinity to the Muslim faith and resentment toward the IDF widow would not be reproduced without the habitus of identifying the Bedouin IDF widows with the generalized excluded *other.* The *othering* of Bedouin IDF widows is facilitated by the understanding that, as Giddens (1979) contends: 'All social agents are knowledgeable about the social systems which they constitute and reproduce in their action' (1979: 5). This understanding is shared by both the IDF widows and their community leaders and members.

Othering is a consequence of negative stigma against the 'other'. Our analysis is based on the rational choice theory of religion (RCTR) (Stark and Bainbridge, 1985; Stark and Finke, 2000). Therefore, we conclude that the rationalistic wishes of the Bedouin widows to resemble other woman in their village and their unwillingness to become 'others' leads them to adhere to religious practices, imperatives and lifestyle; the religious capital gained and maintained by them helps them in achieving the goal of belonging to the collective and conceal, as much as they can, their otherness. Religious capital for them can be equated with belonging; when a widow's belonging is questionable it is highly important for her to preserve the existent religious capital. For example, all of our seven Bedouin informants continued to wear the traditional hijab; in another example, during one of the interviews the TV was on, showing a religious ceremony of thousands of Muslim men in white galabias [hooded robes] circumambulating the Kaaba in Mecca. The woman being interviewed said she has already been there and she would like to return and listen to the prayers.

Another critical factor that relates to the socio-cultural context is the unique culture of bereavement of both the Jewish and the Bedouin and Palestinian societies. With regard to Jewish bereavement the death of a soldier is thus imbued with a heroic significance that carries socio-national dimensions (Rubin et al., 2012). Valor and sacrifice being viewed as essential for the continued existence of the Jewish people in the land of Israel, the symbolic immortality of those who have given their lives in war is given social recognition on such occasions as the Day of Remembrance or through the erection of monuments across the country (Bokek-Cohen, 2014a). Israeli widows whose husbands died during their military service belong to a special social category within Israeli society, receiving three types of social recompense: financial compensation, power, and status (Shamgar-Handelman, 1986). The circumstances under which their husbands died directly affects the way they are regarded in their social circles, much greater social esteem being granted them than that gained by 'civilian' widows – i.e., those whose husbands died in car accidents or from ill health (Ben-Asher and Lebel, 2010). The

Israeli culture of bereavement is characterized by national participation in the mourning for the fallen person and governmental provision of a broad spectrum of support networks (Rubin et al., 2012). The Bedouin bereavement represents a diametrically opposed reality, where the widow must cope with non-honored grief although it is recognized by Israeli policy and law. This bereavement and loss is dismissed, devalued and characterized by shame, inferiority and a total absence of public or national recognition. Some members of the community may actually show their delight when a Bedouin soldier dies during his service in the IDF.

We propose the term *negative symbolic capital* as the societal mechanism underlying the exclusionary practices of the Bedouin informants, but we nonetheless acknowledge that there are potentially alternative explanations to the paradoxical and painful experience of the Bedouins' widowhood. For example, it can be suggested that Bedouin IDF widows are liminal figures and their liminality is what creates the response of recoil by their community members, as is the typical response to liminal people. We believe that the conceptualization of negative symbolic capital as the negative attitude of community members toward our informants has greater potency in explaining the social dynamics, because it considers additional factors and attributes and constitutes a dynamic account, rather than a static one as the option of liminality analysis. Negative symbolic capital provides us with a more holistic and systematic account, as it takes into consideration the wider religious and nationalistic context, while liminality analysis may offer a reductionist stance and focus on daily face to face interactions on the micro level. The concept of negative symbolic capital, in line with all Bourdieusian concepts, enables a profound and comprehensive elaboration and enhancement of our understanding how it feels to grieve for a beloved husband while he is socially ungrievable. Love and grief, pride and shame, wealth and loneliness altogether and simultaneously play a major role in shaping the social status of both Jewish and Bedouin religious IDF widows.

Conclusion

Being an IDF widow entails derogatory and marginalizing treatment by members of the Bedouin community, although this inferiorized status has no religious basis; rather, a nationalistic narrative lies at the core of exclusionary norms against Bedouin IDF widows. Negative social stigmas against Bedouin IDF widows, conceptualized as possessing negative symbolic capital, is one among other distinctive marks that constitute a sign of otherness in the collective consciousness of the Bedouin society. The negative symbolic capital of Bedouin anti-martyrs derives its meaning from the position of the predispositions and presuppositions described above, which the widows strive to counteract by gaining and preserving religious capital. Thus, the negative symbolic capital of the Bedouin IDF widows paradoxically strengthens the domination of the legitimate hegemonic Jewish population, who have already succeeded in inscribing their values, tastes and beliefs among all Israeli citizens. Therefore Bedouin IDF widows can never belong to the legitimized class, owing to the contrast between the negative symbolic capital ascribed to them and the ungrievability of their husbands, vis-a-vis the commonly accepted notions of a respected and grievable life.

Our contribution to the academic literature is twofold: one is on the micro level and relates to elaborating on the experience of widowhood in military circumstances, as presented above. On the macro level, we propose the concept of *negative symbolic capital*, a construct that may enhance the understanding of social phenomena in many other realms and populations. Based on our empirical findings, we have shown that an individual's position within the inner hierarchy of his community is not impacted only by possessing economic assets, valued cultural features, or approved social resources. It may also be affected by being negatively evaluated owing to a culturally-specific context whereby certain identities, attributes, behaviors and affiliations are considered conflicting with the core values underlying a given society.

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