

Rosal

PN-AAW-908

WORKING PAPERS



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE OF RURAL WOMEN'S ROLE AND
STATUS: A CASE STUDY OF FAMILY BASED
COOPERATIVE VILLAGES IN ISRAEL

by

Naomi Nevo and David Solomonica
Regional Planning Division
Rural Settlement Department
The Jewish Agency, Rehovot, Israel

January 1983

Working Paper #16

Abstract: The subordination of rural women as a concomitant of the conventional division of labor is a subject being widely researched. It is a crucial question in societies where ideological factors are of paramount influence. Development per se, while changing or blurring the traditional gender-based work boundaries, does not necessarily enhance either rural women's economic role or social status. Even when the development process is ideologically oriented, results are often disappointing. Studies have shown China, as well as Eastern Europe and some Latin American countries, to be a case in point. Israel, with a rural system actually founded on an ideology, provides a pertinent case study. Despite the highly cherished value of equality of the sexes, the central ideological tenet of cooperative villages (as opposed to collective villages) was the supremacy of the family. These two ideological principles proved to be mutually exclusive. The reform of women's economic role did not suffice to ensure their equal status because no attempt was made to restructure female and male roles within the family. The authors conclude that the implementation of ideology in Israel was incomplete.

About the Authors: Naomi Nevo, Ph.D., is a social anthropologist who has done extensive applied research. Her current research interests are in the areas of rural industrialization and rural women. She has participated in a number of international congresses and published "Social Aspects of Industrialization in Cooperative Rural Sectors" as well as the present article in English.

David Solomonica, M.A., is a sociologist who coordinates a team of rural sociologists for the Jewish Agency. His current research interests include the non-cooperative villages now being established in Israel. He was a participant in the Third World Seminar on Community Development, Mexico, 1981, and has published "The Rurban Village" in English.

/

IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE OF RURAL WOMEN'S ROLE AND STATUS:
A CASE STUDY OF FAMILY BASED COOPERATIVE VILLAGES IN ISRAEL¹

INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the role and status of women in the rural sector of Israel and the way in which they were influenced by the process of Zionist settlement. The empirical material presented deals almost entirely with the moshavim (plural of moshav, a producers' and consumers' cooperative village) and the typologies outlined are based exclusively on such villages. The kvutza or kibbutz (collective village or commune) is referred to for purposes of historical comparison but is not treated as part of the case study. This is so not only because the field material and analysis on kvutza would be the work of others² but also because, as an elitist and, to a great extent, utopian form of rural society, the kvutza is irrelevant to rural areas in other parts of the world.

The authors are part of the team of sociologists and social anthropologists that works within the framework of the Jewish Agency, Rural Settlement Department. This team was organized in the late fifties to cope with problems of acculturation and other difficulties arising out of the efforts to absorb the masses of immigrants settled in cooperative farming villages. The findings are distilled from results of twenty years of field and research experience concerning rural settlement in Israel.

Our work over the years did not focus directly on women. When we decided, however, to examine the subject, we realized that we possessed a wealth of relevant empirical material and some fascinating serendipitous findings. Much of this material was gathered during the numerous community and problem-oriented studies conducted by members of our team. Some, however, was abstracted from statistical surveys issued regularly by the Rural Settlement Department (for example, the demography, type of agricultural activity, incomes, and non-farming occupations of the populations of each individual village) and from university studies, including published and unpublished doctoral dissertations, on many aspects of rural settlement.³

The data upon which this paper is based reflect four different research methods.

1. Perusal of relevant literature on the subject of rural women in general.
2. Classical anthropological open-ended interviews with informants. Male and female settlers in each of the moshav types listed in Figure 2 and members of management committees of the moshavim were interviewed. In addition, members of the Central Committees of all the inter-moshav movements, representatives on Rural Regional Councils (local government units), and past and present Jewish Agency functionaries were interviewed.

3. Participant-observation techniques. The behavior of our informants and the context within which it occurred was examined in: the three veteran moshavim that were settled by Jews from Europe; three moshavim that were founded after the advent of the State and whose settlers originated from Islamic countries; and three moshavim that were founded after 1967 by Israeli-born settlers.
4. Examination of documents. Ministry of Interior lists of Rural Regional Councils, Jewish Agency Rural Settlement Department farm contracts, and inter-moshav movement committee lists were among the documents perused. Without doubt, however, the files of the Registry of Cooperative Associations⁴ were the most valuable and the only authoritative source of specific information concerning the membership of moshav management committees. The data on which this paper relies were compiled from a statistically viable sample (40 percent of all the moshavim in the country) for the years 1977-1980.

This review of the domestic, economic, and political dimensions of the moshav women's role shows that, although considerable role change has occurred, it is far from uniform and fluctuates according to situational factors. Similarly, no lasting change can be discerned in the status of women in the family and community or even in the legal and wider political spheres of the rural system. In many respects, the status of women has either remained unchanged or reverted to a traditional model, and we point out the relevant cultural variables and conflicting ideological imperatives.⁵ We maintain that the ideological norm of gender equality has never been completely met.

SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

The division of labor according to gender characterizes most of human society. Whether or not this division is the crucial variable determining the status of women is a subject presently being widely researched. A survey of the literature, including some empirical studies, produces conflicting evidence and the definitive work has yet to be written.⁶ It seems safe to assume, however, that the mutual influence of sociocultural norms and the demands of the productive process is the stuff of which the status of women is made in most societies.⁷ This mutual influence breaks down under conditions of sudden change and, indeed, the sundering may be deliberate as in an ideological context based on the egalitarian ethic where social, economic, and political change is planned.

In recent years it has become disconcertingly clear that, even though societal contexts have been transformed and many normative patterns of both social and economic behavior changed to conform to a new ideology, the status of women has not been enhanced. This is true whether the sociocultural norms pertaining to women have been deliberately flouted by governmental edict (as in Turkey) or whether development imperatives and demographic exigencies have resulted in a new economic role for women ratified by an ideologically inspired, improved legal status (as in Soviet

Russia, China, and Cuba). In fact, there is considerable evidence to indicate that, once the momentum of change has subsided and the pressures eased, women are returned to their more traditional roles which, despite the egalitarian ideology, foster social, and sometimes even legal, subordination to men.⁸

An ideology based on a more equitable distribution of resources but harnessed to the aim of social and economic development⁹ is widely prevalent in the agrarian context. In modern Western terms an underdeveloped society is a rural one almost by definition. It is no accident, therefore, that empirical research on the changing roles of women should be profitably conducted in areas where the social effects of the technological advance implicit in the development process are so dramatic. It is already widely known, however, that not only do few rural women participate in the direction of the development process (and fewer still are aware of the underlying ideology) but also that they are often the victims rather than the beneficiaries of the social and economic change generated. This may be so even when the technological advances and organizational improvements obviate the need for unskilled labor on the farms--which is to say that women retreat into the home, being deemed incompetent to cope with technology. In the West this has resulted in a model of social progress whereby the woman transfers all her activity to the economically non-productive and service oriented but nonetheless physically demanding home, leaving the market-oriented farm to be worked by machines controlled by men.

In the Third World, several case studies have pointed out instances and possibilities of increased female labor being required to harvest the scientifically induced greater yields.¹⁰ At the same time, the obligation to meet the higher standards of hygiene, nutrition, child welfare and education that development has brought redefines rural women's role but immeasurably increases her burden. In neither the Western nor the Third World model are women's managerial or political responsibilities--to say nothing of participation and privilege--commensurate with their new economic and social role. And again, at the risk of reiteration, there seems to be little difference in this respect between societies influenced by ideological factors and those that are not. Israel is a case in point: a society that developed out of an ideology--the ideology of Zionism which is the fulfillment of the national Jewish consciousness.

More specifically, and more sociologically relevant here, Israel is a society whose institutions are still strongly colored by the ideology of agrarian socialism that was laid as a base by what became the most influential wave of pioneering immigrants in the 1920s. Equality of the sexes was a sine qua non and the women pioneers worked side by side with their male comrades in the fields and vineyards of the collective and cooperative villages that were the mainstay of socialist and Zionist ideology. Even if the picture is somewhat flawed (the accounts of women cooking and cleaning in the communal kitchen and nursing the malaria-stricken pioneers in the hospital tent are too numerous--and romanticized--to be discounted),

it nevertheless remains true that the ideological norm came close to fulfillment. The burdens for both men and women were equally heavy and the heavier they were the greater was the prestige of their bearers, irrespective of gender.

It must be pointed out, however, that the signs of erosion had already appeared with the establishment of the first cooperative village (moshav) a decade after the establishment of the first collective village (kibbutz or kvutza). While the latter was organized economically and socially on the basis of equal individual working membership in the commune with collective responsibility for child rearing, the form was organized on the basis of family farms within a producers' and consumers' cooperative village. The moshav founders, older than the kibbutz founders and mainly married with children, were vociferously adamant in their support for equality of the sexes.

Indeed, as early as 1919, Eliezer Yoffe, who was the movement's acknowledged ideological father and who, in another culture, would have been known as its Prophet, took issue with those who claimed that only within the kvutza (collective village) could women achieve equality. Suggesting that the time had come for their movement to go into the whole question of women's status in the new type of village they envisaged, Yoffe condemned the "enslavement" of women to home and children. Pointing out that women were thus prevented from fulfilling themselves as personalities in their own right, he demanded that they be accepted as members of a moshav on the same terms as men, which was to say irrespective of marital status or intentions.¹¹

The central ideological tenet of the moshav movement, however, remained the supremacy of the family. And it was the family which was to be the basic social and economic unit of the new villages. This tenet, the cardinal point of departure from the ideology of the collective villages, meant that in fact the reformed work patterns of women operated within the framework of traditional differential gender roles. Certainly women, as persons, were now committed to productive work and to participation in the political and public life of the community, but they were above all committed to the family. No attempt was made to restructure roles within the family. The man, for instance, was to plough the distant fields while the woman was to tend the poultry which was sited in the farmyard so that she could be near the house and children. Although the prevailing ethic placed emphasis on farm work and not housework, and the founder mothers displayed a socially approved contempt for culinary talents, the pattern began to approximate that of the bourgeois Jewish family of Eastern Europe that these pioneers thought they were ideologically rejecting. The insidious process of this return actually began with a decision taken by the male majority (the then current demographic situation in both kibbutz and moshav society) to exclude the women from the initial stage of breaking ground at the site of the first moshav.

In 1921 the prototype of the Israeli cooperative village was founded in the Jezreel Valley but mothers and children were sent to Nazareth, then the only city overlooking the valley, to live in comparative safety and comfort for eight months while their men coped with malaria, swamp draining, and Bedouin marauders. The women did not easily agree to the frustrations of their enforced absence from the camp and their letters are full of reproach at being "deprived of participation in the actual creation, in the supreme pioneering phase."¹² It is significant that the ideological principle of the participation of both sexes in the pioneering process was quite fragile in the face of social organization based on the nuclear family. Although it cannot be denied that even after the initial eight months there was more than enough hardship in the embryo village to ensure the esteem accorded to the woman settler, the equality to which all paid lip service was questionable. It soon became a fact that a lone female farmer¹³ found it impossible to function adequately in such a framework and, although during the first few years of the moshav's existence women took their places in the decision-making forums of the community, their multiple roles as farmwives (responsible for the farmyard branches), mothers, and housekeepers prevented their continued effective participation in village politics and management.¹⁴

As the cooperative villages began to establish themselves economically and as their prosperity increased, a further erosion of the pioneering ideology took place: fewer women continued to work in agriculture. This development may also be seen in terms of changes in the character of farmyard operations during the last two decades. Poultry changed from chicken to turkey, the hatching of which became an important export activity; milch herds increased in size enormously and this activity became fully mechanized; hothouse cultivation developed; specialization began to characterize Israeli farming in general and the moshav farm (which had been classically based on mixed farming) in particular. We tend, however, to view this change as an intervening variable rather than as a causative factor for women's decreased work in the farmyard. It contributed to the economic prosperity and resulting complex range of consumer activities which is the symptomatic correlate of women's return to the domestic hearth in these villages. In contrast to other ideologically-oriented societies (the Soviet Union, China, and some Latin American countries), Israeli rural women from this type of settlement are able to acquire the skills needed for modern agricultural specialization, having been educated, for the most part, in advanced agricultural schools and having access to extension facilities.

Although not yet normatively legitimized (in most instances the women who cease to work on their farms are condemned by gossip), it is often the proliferation of multi-family farms (inter-generational or sibling partnerships) on the veteran prosperous moshav that results in women's return to the house. The norm of the female stereotype becomes operative; the stereotype is that mothers-in-law, daughters-in-law, or sisters-in-law cause tension in such a framework and, therefore, must be removed from the economic orbit. It is interesting to note how one ideological deviation

leads to another. The moshav ideology decrees "one farm, one family" and, when this is qualified by allowing multi-family farms, a further deviation of limiting women to domesticity occurs.

The pattern of women's participation in the economic life of the village varies according to a number of factors (see Figure 1). The multi-family farm is one factor that seems to favor domesticity, but there are other veteran cooperative villages where ideological orthodoxy prevails. Here within the wider moshav ideology where no hired worker is to be seen, where mutual aid operates smoothly and efficiently, the woman is an equal farming partner and many farming tasks are performed by husband and wife together or interchangeably. Decisions on the farm level are taken together. Lest this be seen as an idyll of gender equality, we must hasten to add that a woman shoulders the domestic burden as she does in other familial types of social organization. Indeed, we once heard a woman member of a kibbutz remark "How I pity the moshav women having to carry out all the ideology." It is probably true to say, however, that it is primarily when the farmer and his wife have been left without their children that they implement egalitarian aspects of the ideology out of sheer necessity if not out of conviction.

Ironically, it is in the veteran moshav, in which ideology has become most weakened, that women may be said to possess the attributes of independent farmers. These are villages that have become suburbs of the rapidly encroaching urban centers and many male moshav members in these villages, flagrantly violating moshav ideals, have found it convenient to work in the cities, leaving their farms to be worked and managed by their wives. We found many women who had built up successful turkey businesses under these conditions, using their husbands as supplementary labor for physically arduous tasks such as rounding up and trussing the turkeys for weighing and marketing. There were other instances in which the woman's work and responsibility were increased because of the man's work outside the village, adding to her domestic burdens. Generally, however, these farms in the veteran villages are part-time and limited in scope and type, thereby facilitating their operation by women. Women enjoy the prestige accorded to management roles and the added income brought in by their husbands compensates them for their increased responsibility. The Israeli experience in this type of part-time farming endeavor (see Figure 1) contrasts with that reported by Boserup in a different cultural and economic context.¹⁵ It should be noted, however, that there are pockets of underdevelopment in Israel where the results are very different and perhaps more similar to those of part-time farming in Asia and elsewhere.¹⁶

It might seem from the different work combinations that occur in veteran cooperative villages that women's statuses, as expressed in the formal organizational framework of the moshav, vary according to their different roles. It is difficult, however, to separate ideological from economic influences. Looking into the past protocols of management committee meetings of some of the veteran cooperative villages founded up

to 1947, it appears that women's exit from economically productive activities coincides with their diminishing activity in the managerial affairs of the village. The founding women, although not numerous, were prominent in management. Their daughters and granddaughters are less likely to argue over, and decide on, the economic and managerial problems of their villages. Even so, in 32 percent of these villages, a woman was elected to the management committee during the years 1977-1980.¹⁷ In many of the villages this was mandatory as a formal expression of the egalitarian ideology.

Our observations in the field, however, convinced us that female members were not nowadays expected to be really active in the decision-making process. On the contrary, a very active and knowledgeable woman is unlikely to be nominated for election. As one male moshav member expressed it, "We look for a womanly woman." In contrast to the past, women who speak out on subjects other than those considered to be within their purview (e.g., health, education, consumer products) at a general meeting of the community meet with social disapproval from both sexes. This was so even in those villages in which women came nearest to the model of independent farmers. Women with definite economic interests to be advanced or with definite ideas on general policy made their voices heard through informal channels. They visited the treasurer, the secretary, or other members of the committee and talked with them privately. They activated their networks, but only rarely would a woman put herself up for election in order to propagate her ideas or defend her interests.

The central place occupied by the family in moshav ideology, with its consequent connotations on the role and status of the women members, seems to have outweighed the value on gender equality. It should be emphasized again that at no stage in the sociological development of moshav society has there been any attempt to redefine the male role in the domestic sphere. Thus it is not surprising that, in the process of socializing and acculturating the masses of immigrants who came to Israel after the advent of the State of Israel in 1948, the ideological imperative of raising the status of women was minimized by settling many immigrants in the moshav type of village.

The immigrants who poured into the country during the decade of 1948-1958 were of two types: survivors of the European holocaust and emigrants from the Islamic countries of the Middle East and North Africa. A number also arrived from India and, although not as numerous as the other two groups, they consisted of the entire Jewish community of Cochin and almost the entire sect of Bnei Yisrael, Jews originating largely from the Bombay area. Clearly, these new immigrants lacked the specific ideology of the generation that had founded the collective and cooperative mainstream of Israel's rural society.

The wider ideological framework of Zionism (in broad terms, the nationalism of the European Jews and the messianism of the Oriental Jews) may be ramified into components of personal motivation that are shown in

Figure 2. Apart from wishing to mold the new immigrants in its own ideological form of producer and pioneer, the absorbing society saw the moshav framework as, on the one hand, providing the physical, economic and social security needed by the European holocaust survivors and, on the other hand, ensuring the continued solidarity of the extended family organization of the Oriental Jews.

Within a short period of time, many of the cooperative villages settled by holocaust survivors resembled their veteran counterparts. The settlers worked hard and succeeded economically. They used agricultural extension services to the full. The women, approximating the Jewish female stereotype of the Eastern European townships, were no less involved than their husbands--and sometimes even more so--in making a living for the family. The women participated in the decision-making process and in the daily work of the family farm. The specific family and demographic structure of these survivor families was a contributing factor to this pattern. Often the marriage was a second one for both partners; their comparatively higher ages and the presence of only one or two children necessitated the full partnership of the woman. Nevertheless, we found that in only nine percent of these moshavim was there a woman on the village management committee¹⁸ as compared to the thirty-two percent found in the more ideologically oriented veteran moshavim.

There are almost 400 moshavim in Israel today; only 60 of them were established before 1948. Of the approximately 350,000 people living in them, the majority are either themselves from Islamic countries or have parents or grandparents from Islamic countries. The great challenge during the first years of the State was to absorb and socialize the immigrants from the Middle East and North Africa, from rural areas like the Yemen, Kurdistan and the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, whom we have classified¹⁹ in Figure 2 as traditional, as well as those from the more urbanized surroundings of Egypt and the Maghreb whom we have classified as transitional.²⁰ These are social contexts which, despite obviously significant differences, lend themselves to comparison with populations of developing areas elsewhere in the world and particularly to populations exposed to ideological change.

As in the wider Islamic society so in the Jewish society on its periphery, the status of women was greatly inferior to that of men. Even in countries where ascribed roles were gradually being diluted, few women were able to participate in the formal system of government and management. Despite some minor changes, such as a higher age of girls at marriage and a certain access to educational facilities among urban girls, the role of women remained rigidly traditional with a correspondingly low formal status. There were considerable differences between communities--fifteen percent of the Moroccan Jewish women worked outside their homes in contrast to one percent of the Jewish women from the Yemen--but none indicate concrete differences in role and status.²¹

With the possible exception of the Kurdish Jews, in no Jewish community from an Islamic society was there an ideology of work on the land. On the contrary, such labor was seen as carrying extremely low status, and one of the expectations of these Jews was that their emigration to their own State of Israel would accord them a status comparable to that of their Moslem neighbors, or a status as high as that of the Western colonial administrators in their countries of origin. Thus, it may be imagined, even without a complete description and analysis here, that the whole process of social and economic change that their settlement in rural areas triggered was most traumatic and, in some cases, led to severe social anomie and even individual psychopathological disturbances.²²

Both administrators and planners, as well as the team of sociologists working with the land settlement institutions, soon realized that some cushioning had to be provided if positive transformation was to be achieved by the directed process of social change. The first, and perhaps greatest, contribution of the sociologists to this new conception was to introduce the policy of homogeneous villages. From the early fifties onward, moshavim have been settled by ethnically homogeneous and, as far as possible, culturally homogeneous populations. In addition, it was considered desirable to preserve the social fabric of such communities and, insofar as the extended family was also an economic cell (as was often the case in the Islamic society from which the immigrants came), this fit very well into the cooperative framework of the moshav although as a model somewhat different from the classic veteran model. The social structure of this type of moshav dictates its organizational framework to the extent that the management committee will either be constituted exclusively from the strongest extended family or will represent an expedient coalition of members from all families. In either case the dangers may be considerable. In the former, favoritism and discrimination may be the order of the day; in the latter, social and economic paralysis may be the result.

Cushioning the abrasive effects of drastic change by such measures enabled change to take place more smoothly in other spheres of life. The occupation of farmer became an accepted one. The technical skills required by modern agriculture were gradually mastered. The cushioning, however, has lingered long after the need has vanished. The neophyte farmers who came from Islamic countries thirty years ago were not able to accept the principle of joint ownership of man and wife. The principle of membership based on a contract with individuals, be they male or female, had no place in their value system. The settlement authorities, with the passive agreement of moshav ideologists, did not always insist that in these communities both husband and wife sign the contract giving them possession of their farm and equipment.²³ This ideologically anomalous situation perpetuates the traditional status of the woman as a dependent in two ways.

First, the widow or divorcee is thrown on the mercy of her remaining menfolk and there are cases on record where pressure by the extended family forces the woman to leave the village with only a small amount of money as compensation. Her farm is then allocated to another member of the family.

Second, membership of the moshav in its corporate entity is, in most cases today, contingent on farm ownership. Whereas in the original moshavim membership was accorded to all residents above the age of 18, the trend has for many years been toward the principle of "one farm, one vote." The economic and social cell of the moshav is the family farm unit. It has always been recognized that this in itself, despite the initial completely equal distribution of the factors of production, implies potential economic differentiation.²⁴ Particularly when achievement was proportionate to the amount of labor, i.e., the size of family input, was this noticeable. Today, economic differentiation depends more on the amount of capital available to the family rather than on its labor supply, but the effort to prevent the translation of economic inequality into social and political terms is as intensive as in previous phases of development. In moshavim in which the population originates from a traditional or even transitional society,²⁵ nuclear families are large and the technique of "one farm, one vote" is justified as an attempt to neutralize the political weight carried by a large number of family votes. Where the woman is a member, she has voting rights and in the moshavim in which the signatures of both husband and wife are on the contract, she is at least legally able to demand membership and therefore alternate with her husband in meetings and in the voting booth. The reality we found in the field was that, because of the situational constraints of domesticity, she rarely does so. The woman in the traditional type of moshav is further constrained by the patriarchal familial norms.

There are, of course, exceptions. We did find some widows who managed their own farms and who had performed the conscious act of signing the contract and claiming their membership rights to participate in elections to moshav offices. We emphasize the exceptions as an element to be considered by those who would say that it is the female genetic constitution which impairs an ideological change of role. But today, 30 years after the settlement of these moshavim, in only 1.4 percent²⁶ of the moshavim originating in an Islamic social context (which constitute the majority of the moshavim) is there a woman on the management committee. The explanation may well lie in the reluctance of the moshav ideologists to enforce the principle of gender equality for fear that it would endanger adoption of the Israeli value system of the rural work ethic. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that there has been some change in these women's economic roles. The idealized image of the moshav family--the husband and wife working together, the baby in the playpen beside them--has a factual basis. The cultural norm of the limitation of women to the domestic courtyard, which was initially met by placing certain branches of the market economy, such as poultry and milch herds, within it, has given way to an acceptance of the Israeli extension workers' belief that female participation in more distantly sited farm work contributes to farming success. Economically productive work even out of the farmyard is undertaken by women at certain stages in the life cycle (see Figure 3), but this conformity to the Israeli work ethic does not ensure women the benefits of the rest of the ideological framework.

An ideology is seemingly most effective when sanctioned by law. It is not within the scope of this paper to trace the social and political repercussions of formal legislation, but we have already pointed out how an ideological lapse can result in a legal loophole for the continued exclusion of women from public life in moshav society. Inheritance laws of the wider Israeli society do not permit sex discrimination, and a moshav farm may be inherited by a daughter as well as by a son. As in other agrarian societies,²⁷ an heir to a moshav farm is usually chosen during the parents' lifetime and our data point to the preponderance of male heirs in all categories. In veteran moshavim a son-in-law is accepted as a surrogate son. Although we have no knowledge of an available male heir being deliberately rejected in favor of a single daughter, a married daughter, in the absence of available male heirs, is accepted with equanimity, as is an unmarried daughter on the assumption that she will soon marry.

On the basis of one case study in depth,²⁸ it would seem, however, that the normative gender-based roles in veteran moshav society condition women not to fight for their inheritance. The moshav populated by Jews from Islamic countries contained no cases at all of an unmarried daughter inheriting a farm and the few examples of a son-in-law being accepted apply exclusively to situations where there was no available male heir. This norm of excluding the unmarried daughter is now effectively institutionalized. The land settlement authorities frequently permit an unmarried son to inherit or otherwise acquire a farm, despite moshav customary law which mandates that moshav farms be settled by family units. Up to the year 1980 we found no contracts signed by an unmarried daughter in these moshavim. Thus, despite an ideology reinforced by legal provisions, technological possibilities (which provide mechanical substitutes for arduous physical labor), and educational facilities, there are clear indications that the owners of farms in cooperative villages are and will continue to be men. Thus, the ideology of traditional values overcomes that of an egalitarian value system in perpetuating gender status differentials to the detriment of women.

Agreeing with Elsa M. Chaney, who writes that emancipation means "equal access for women--in law and in fact--to responsible roles in political and social life. . .,"²⁹ we examined not only the moshav woman's role in the public life of her own village as expressed by the number of women on the management committee but also her role in the wider rural system of Israel. First, we inquired into the number of women represented on the committees of inter-moshav management organizations³⁰ and discovered results as low as those of the moshav management committees already reported. The largest moshav movement affiliated with the Labour Party has an inner secretariat, or cabinet, of four members and all four are men. Its wider secretariat, consisting of twenty-nine members, includes five women, the largest female representation in all the movements. Another movement, affiliated with the National Religious Party, has a governing secretariat of 33 members, all of whom are men. Second, we inquired into the composition of Regional Rural Councils, within the framework of Local Government, and discovered that, out of a total of forty-eight such

councils, only one had a woman (a kibbutz member) at its head. The second most important post in each of the forty-eight Regional Rural Councils, that of Secretary General, had three female incumbents--one Council was in a veteran moshav area, the second in a kibbutz area, and the third in an immigrant³¹ moshav area. The latter is perhaps the exception which not only proves the rule but proves that it can be done--the woman is from a transitional moshav community and is an immigrant from a Moslem country.

It has frequently been remarked that women are often prominent in periods of social and political upheaval. Women are active in ideologically inspired reform movements, in revolutions, and in national uprisings.³² We do not venture into theoretical speculation on this phenomenon although Chaney's comments³³ are meaningful in the case study of Israel. Chaney refers to events "which called forth women to share the risks and tasks of society side by side with men," but points out that, after the challenge is over, women revert to the traditional image of their proper role.³⁴ The veteran moshavim seem to be apt illustrations of the tendency to "return home" when the emergency has passed.

The original role of women in Israel's past heroic era as pioneering entrepreneurs with qualities of leadership may be seen today in the movement of extreme nationalism known as Gush Emunim. This movement, based on an ideology of settling the whole area specified in the divine promise contained in the Old Testament, consists mainly of devoutly religious people, a cultural coloring that would be expected to operate against the prominence of women. In 50 percent of their rural settlements (most of which, although closed and selective, are not cooperative in character) women are represented on the management committees. In two out of sixteen villages women chair these committees. The inner secretariat of Gush Emunim has three women members of a total of eight.³⁵ In contrast to the other organizations referred to above, the Gush Emunim women do not confine their political activities to the traditional spheres of female interests, such as education, health and welfare, but are often the leaders of political demonstrations and public protests against the Government policy. At the same time, their role of motherhood is stressed; large families are the norm of this religion-based value system and the principal economic role of women remains that of homemaker.

CONCLUSIONS

It appears that, just as the role and status of women in other ideologically inspired societies have not changed permanently, in Israel's ideologically motivated rural frameworks women's role seems to have reverted to its previous dimensions. But, whereas in other societies ideological principles were later qualified or even drastically changed in order to meet conditions of current expediency, in Israel's moshav sector the seeds of the present reversion were sown by the central place the family occupied in the ideology. The expansion of female roles to include full and equal participation in the economic productive process doubled the burden imposed on women by the family system and, therefore, could not

be sustained without a corresponding change in the male role so as to include domestic and service tasks. Apologists for the system explain that the female domestic role has been accorded a new importance by moshav ideology and, thus, a return to it actually elevates the status of women. But, as we have shown, this is not expressed by the indices of political and managerial responsibility that high status normally merits except in the presumably ephemeral situations of social challenge or national emergency. The case study of Israel indicates that, in an ideology that emphasizes the family, both the male and the female roles must be redefined if gender equality is to be achieved. The conclusion must be that the implementation of ideology in Israel was incomplete because this role definition within the family did not occur.

FIGURE 1. Female Role on the Farm and in the Community

Function	Moshav Type	Explanatory Comment
Non-active	(a) Prosperous veteran <u>moshav</u> ; particularly <u>multi-family</u> (siblings or intergenerational families).	(a) In order to avoid inter-family tension.
	(b) Mass immigration from Islamic countries; particularly large nuclear families.	(b) Woman occupied fully as mother and housewife; affected by cultural norms.
Working but non-participation in formal decision-making process	(a) Post-1967 Israeli born (not yet economically well established).	(a) In effort to ensure democratic norms--one farm, one vote--reality results in male decision making since woman's double role (domestic and economic) prevents her participation.
	(b) Mass immigration from Islamic countries; small families (both young and residual).	(b) Cultural norms.
Working and participating in formal decision making process together with husband	(a) Holocaust survivors	(a) Ideological norms based on European Jewish female stereotype (concern with economic activity of family).
	(b) Veteran <u>moshav</u> with strong ideological motivation; particularly residual families.	(b) Ideological norms of socialist democracy.
Participation in formal decision making process but non-worker on farm	Veteran <u>moshav</u> ; particularly young families where time and energy of women devoted to child rearing.	
Independent management decision making and work	(a) Veteran <u>moshav</u> where husband works outside and the farming is therefore part-time monobranch only (generally poultry).	
	(b) Widows and divorcees in all <u>moshav</u> types, excluding those 20 to 35 years of age.	Those 20 to 35 years of age succumb to social pressure to quit <u>moshav</u> .

FIGURE 2. Women in the Moshav

Moshav Typology: Geographical origin, culture, values and motivation

Period	Pre-State--Veteran (1921-1947)	Mass Immigration (1948-1953)	Post 1967 War
<u>Geographical Origin</u>	Eastern & Central Europe	(a) Islamic Countries (b) Europe (Holocaust Survivors)	(a) Israeli born (b) Western Countries
<u>Culture</u>	European modern	(a1) Traditional, e.g. Yemen, Kurdistan, Atlas Mountains (a2) Transitional, e.g. North African urban, Iraq, Egypt	(a) Modern Israeli (predominantly Western born, some transitional) (b) Modern Western
<u>Values and Motivation</u>	Socialist-Zionist Personal Realization Self Labor	(a) Improvement of political and economic situation. Lack of alternatives ensured immigrants' agreement to settlement in rural areas directed by the Government. (b) Jewish national identity. Weakening socialist aspects concomitant with increase of family orientation.	(a) Economic, ecology, farming as vocation. (b) Jewish national identity. Zionism equated with pioneering settlement on the land, fulfillment of religious precepts.

FIGURE 3. Female Labor

Place of Occupation	Moshav Type
Farmland (poultry, dairy, hothouse)	Pre-State veteran; post 1967 Israeli born; young growing families from mass immigration Islamic countries; holocaust survivors.
In the home as housewife and mother	Veteran economically prosperous; mass immigration Islamic countries; large nuclear families.
Earning living outside farm	Mass immigration Islamic countries, particularly from the Yemen.
Within village or outside, career as personal fulfillment (teacher, nurse, social worker)	Veteran, particularly the young woman on two-generation farm; post 1967 Israeli born.

NOTES

1. An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the 5th World Congress of Rural Sociologists, Mexico City, August, 1980, and also published by the Settlement Study Centre, Rehovot, Israel as Working Paper No. 4, 1981.
2. This is not to imply that the material presented would be less reliable but merely that it would be less real for us. Had space and time permitted, we would certainly have taken issue with the sociological conclusions of Tiger and Shepherd's immensely interesting investigation of the role of gender in the kibbutz (see Tiger and Shepherd, 1975).
3. The great majority of the Rural Settlement sociological and statistical reports are written in Hebrew, as are the university studies, but among the few published in English is a collection of studies edited by Shapiro, 1971.
4. The Registry of Cooperative Associations (in Hebrew--Rasham Agudot Shitufiot) in Israel is the official authority for registration and dissolution of all cooperative associations in both the rural and urban sectors. The Registrar supervises internal elections; he has the power to dismiss an elected management committee when convinced of its malfunction and to appoint another. To appeal the Registrar's decisions the case has to be taken to the Supreme Court.
5. By ideology we mean an aggregate of ideas and beliefs that characterizes a group (or an individual). Ideology may have a conscious basis that precedes the formation of a group--as it was in the case of the moshav founders operating within the wider ideological framework of agrarian socialism--or it may be the manner of thinking and way of life determined and conditioned by the existence of the group and its traditional habitual activities--as it is in the case of the ideology of the family.
6. See, Boserup, 1970; Larguia, 1975; Pala, 1976.
7. The mutuality is treated as an analytical concept in the investigation of the status of women. We are not here referring to the well-known tension inherent in the formula as seen empirically.
8. To talk of reversion immediately introduces the dimension of history. But we are not prepared to conclude that women were always and everywhere dominated by men and we refer to history, therefore, only in terms of the twentieth century.
9. They do not necessarily coincide--as land reform programs in the Middle East and Latin America show.

10. See Overseas Liaison Committee (OLC) papers on Women in Agriculture, particularly Spencer, 1976.
11. Yoffe, Eliezer: Ysod Moshvei Ovdim Sifriat Ha'aretz V'haavoda Yaffo, 1919. Hebrew. The paragraphs paraphrased, in English, above are taken from extracts from Ysod Moshvei Ovdim republished in Kitvei Eliezer Yoffe ("Writings of Eliezer Yoffe") in Hebrew, Am Oved, Tel Aviv 1947, Vol. 1, pp. 75-76. All translations and paraphrases are the authors' unless otherwise stated. It may be useful to mention here that the moshav framework was institutionalized, years before an actual village existed, according to most of the ideological principles spelled out in Yoffe's pamphlet. The values of gender equality and family organization were not the only ones to prove mutually exclusive in practice. See Nevo, 1982, particularly pp. 18-21.
12. From a letter written in Hebrew in 1921 by one of the founding women of Nahalal (the first moshav). Amitai, M., 1971, p. 97 (Hebrew).
13. Although family based, the original constitution (long since changed) permitted the distribution of farms to unmarried farmers of either sex, relying on a supporting system of mutual aid to ensure economic functioning.
14. Nevo, 1982, pp. 6, 7, 222.
15. Boserup, op. cit., p. 81.
16. Ibid.
17. As listed in the Registry of Cooperative Associations.
18. Registry, op. cit.
19. Weintraub, 1971, pp. 237-248.
20. Ibid. Also see Eaton and Solomonica, 1980.
21. Data for the Yemen compiled from Cohen, 1972, p. 101 (Hebrew) and data for Moroccan Jewry from Bensimon-Donath, 1968, p. 45.
22. Shokeid, 1971.
23. As the land is nationally owned the farms are actually on a long-term lease. For all intents and purposes the farmer is the owner, but he cannot dispose of his property on the open market without permission.
24. This is one of the important differences between kibbutz and moshav society.
25. Weintraub, op. cit.

26. Registry, op. cit.
27. For example, Ireland. Arensberg & Kimball, 1948.
28. Nevo, op. cit., pp. 271-279.
29. Chaney, 1975, p. 473.
30. There are six such organizations affiliated to different political parties. The figures concerning representation on all the bodies mentioned refer to 1980.
31. A term used colloquially to denote the communities we have referred to as traditional and transitional.
32. Again, Eastern Europe, China and some Latin American countries are relevant. Most recently, Iran provides us with the paradoxical example of women fighting for an ideology that represses them.
33. Chaney, op. cit., pp. 475-476.
34. Ibid.
35. Figures valid for 1980.

REFERENCES

- Amitai, M. (ed.).
1971 Nahalal, Sefer Hayovel. Tel Aviv: Mifalei Hatarbut Vechinuch (Hebrew).
- Arensberg, Conrad M. and Kimball, Solon T.
1948 Family and Community in Ireland. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bensimon-Donath, Doris.
1968 Evolution du Judaisme Marocain sous le proterat Francais 1912-1956. Paris: Private Publication.
- Boserup, Ester.
1970 Women's Role in Economic Development. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Chaney, Elsa M.
1975 "The Mobilization of Women: Three Societies." In R. Rohrlich-Leavitt (ed.) Women Cross Culturally - Change and Challenge. Chicago: Aldine.
- Cohen, Chaim.
1972 Yehudim Bemizrach Hatichon. Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad (Hebrew).
- Eaton, Joseph and Solomonica, David.
1980 The Rurban Village. Rehovot: Settlement Study Centre.
- Larguia, Isabel.
1975 "The Economic Basis and Status of Women." In R. Rohrlich-Leavitt (ed.) Women Cross Culturally - Change and Challenge. Chicago: Aldine.
- Nevo, Naomi.
1982 Social Change in a Veteran Moshav Ovdim. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International.
- Pala, Achola D.
1976 African Women in Rural Development - Research Trends and Priorities. Washington, DC: Overseas Liaison Committee (OLC Paper, 12).
- Shapiro, Ovadia (ed.).
1971 Rural Settlements of New Immigrants in Israel. Rehovot: Settlement Study Centre.
- Shokeid, Moshe.
1971 The Dual Heritage: Immigrants from the Atlas Mountains in an Israeli Village. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Spencer, Dunstan S. C.

1976 African Women in Agricultural Development: A Case Study in Sierra Leone. Washington, DC: Overseas Liaison Committee (OLC Paper, 9).

Tiger, Lionel and Shepher, Joseph.

1975 Women in the Kibbutz. New York: Harcourt Brace Janonovich.

Weintraub, Dov.

1971 Immigration and Social Change: Agricultural Settlement of New Immigrants in Israel. Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press.

Yoffe, Eliezer.

1919 Ysod Moshvei Ovdim. Jaffo: Sifriat Haaretz V'haavoda (Hebrew).

Yoffe, Eliezer.

1947 Kitvei Eliezer Yoffe. Tel Aviv: Am Oved (Hebrew).

M I C H I G A N S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y
WORKING PAPERS ON WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Published by the Office of Women in International Development at Michigan State University and partially funded by the Ford Foundation and a Title XII Strengthening Grant

EDITOR: Rita S. Gallin, Office of Women in International Development and College of Nursing

EDITORIAL BOARD: Marilyn Aronoff, Department of Sociology
Peter Gladhart, Departments of Family and Child Ecology and Resource Development
Mary Howard, Department of Anthropology
Susan Irwin, Department of Anthropology
Nalini Malhotra, Department of Sociology
Ann Millard, Department of Anthropology
Barbara Rylko-Bauer, Department of Anthropology
Judith Stallmann, Department of Agricultural Economics
Paul Strassmann, Department of Economics
Patricia Whittier, Department of Anthropology

MANAGING EDITOR: Margaret Graham, Office of Women in International Development

EDITORIAL POLICY: The series of Working Papers on Women in International Development publishes reports of empirical studies, theoretical analyses, and projects that are concerned with development issues affecting women in relation to social, political, and economic change. Its scope includes studies of women's historical and changing participation in political, economic, and religious spheres, traditional roles within and outside the family, gender identity, relations between the sexes, and alterations in the sexual division of labor.

MANUSCRIPTS (in duplicate) should be submitted to the editor, Rita S. Gallin, Ph.D., WID Publication Series, Office of WID, 202 International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824. They should be double-spaced and include the following: (1) title page bearing the name, address, and institutional affiliation of the author(s); (2) one-paragraph abstract; (3) text; (4) notes; (5) references cited; and (6) tables and figures. To further the rapid dissemination of information, a timely schedule of manuscript review and publication is followed.

TO ORDER PUBLICATIONS OR RECEIVE A LISTING OF WORKING PAPERS, write to the Office of WID, 202 International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.