

SELECTIVE OBJECTION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO SOCIAL
MOVEMENTS IN ISRAEL

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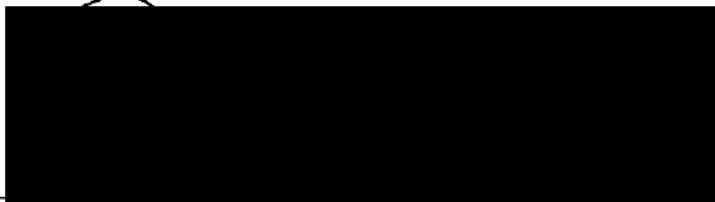
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A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Political Science
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

December 2004

“Selective Objection: A Comparison Between Two Social Movements in Israel,” a thesis prepared by Dana Dar in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Political Science. This thesis has been approved and accepted by:



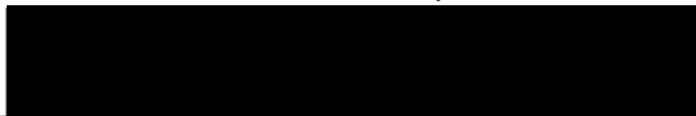
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An Abstract of the Thesis of

Dana Dar for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of Political Science to be taken December 2004

Title: SELECTIVE OBJECTION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO SOCIAL
MOVEMENTS IN ISRAEL

Approved:



Dennis Galvan

Since the eruption of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*, increasing numbers of soldiers have refused to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a form of political protest. Two groups organize these refusers, Yesh Gvul (“There is a Limit”) and “Ha’omez Lesarev” (“the Courage to Refuse”). Using content analysis of public statements by both groups, this study examines their similar political goals and different strategies for mobilization and legitimation. It shows how their different use of cultural resources such as specific symbols, values, discourse and institutions leads to a difference in support and legitimation for each group. Yesh Gvul focuses on a universalistic discourse of justice and morality while Courage To Refuse uses a more realist militaristic discourse. The findings suggest that Courage To Refuse and the use of a realist-militaristic discourse has a stronger public appeal than Yesh Gvul’s universalistic message.

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I. Introduction:

The question of the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 Six Day War is one of great importance and of great impact in Israeli politics. After the disintegration of the Oslo Accords and the eruption of the new *intifada* in 2000, the issue is again central to Israeli politics; and the question of “peace for land” versus “peace for security” is once more a cause of great cleavages in Israeli society and the political system. The country is deeply divided between those calling out for withdrawal as part of a permanent solution and between those refusing to accept any territorial costs. The Peace Movement in Israel has been a significant social movement since the end of the 1970’s¹, calling for retreat from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Since the eruption of the *intifada*, known as the *Al-Aqtsa Intifada*, there has been a growing phenomenon of soldiers refusing to serve in the occupied territories. Although this form of protest is not new, (its roots can be found in the early 1980’s with the refusal to serve in the Lebanese war), it has come back to the forefront of Israeli politics in light of the renewed violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The refusal to serve in what the soldiers term illegal and unjust occupied territories is a form of protest of government policy. It is important to note that this is not a pacifist argument but a selective refusal movement. The refusal is to serve only in the occupied territories of Judea, Samaria and Gaza – not a refusal to serve in the military or a statement against war in general.

¹ “Peace Now”, the largest peace organization was formed in 1978 after Anwar Sadat’s visit to Israel and the beginning of the peace talks between Israel and Egypt.

There are two main groups, Yesh Gvul (“there is a limit”) and “Ha’omez Lesarev” (“the courage to refuse”) that operate under the name of refusal movements. These two social movements are aiming at similar political goals, yet their strategies for mobilization and legitimation are different. They each use different cultural resources, such as specific symbols, norms, values, myths, discourse and institutions, to mobilize supporters and to legitimate their cause.

In this project I examine how the different resources are used, to what effect and with what kind of results. The appeal of each movement is different and this is the main factor that needs to be explained. Both movements call for selective objection, yet differ in the effectiveness of their mobilization and legitimation. I believe the difference lies in their different deployment of cultural resources, and that will be the main focus of this paper. The groups use different sets of public discourse and rhetoric, focus on different types of symbols and values found in the Israeli dominant culture, and use the various institutions (such as the media and the courts) in a different manner. The study focuses on how each movement uses these resources and works within the same cultural and socio-political framework. The difference in their use of the cultural resources determines the refusal movements’ different degrees of effectiveness..

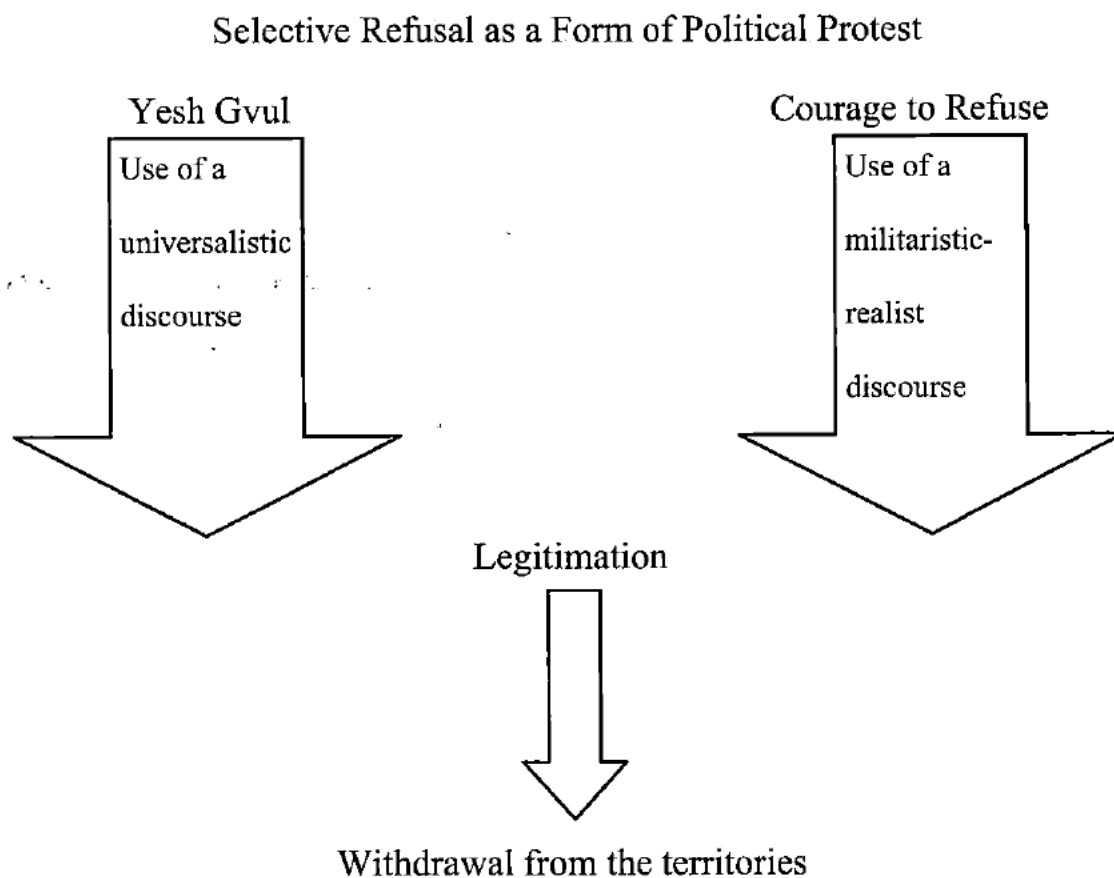
This case study will be a meaningful contribution to the existing literature and integrate different fields which share an emphasis on the importance of culture, the set of practices and beliefs of a given society. Culture is central to society in that it provides individuals with meaning and a sense of belonging to a specific entity (Laitin, 1988). Members of a society share a set of symbols, discourse and ideology that allows them to interact and communicate with each other (Featherstone, 1990). The systems of beliefs

and sources of identification are passed on from generation to generation (Geertz, 1973). Culture is a dynamic force in that as it passes through the generations, it goes through an ongoing process of reinterpretation. Geertz (1973) claims that culture is a way to look at the world and if one wishes to explain why a society and its institutions function the way they do, it is necessary to understand the culture they are built upon.

In this study, culture is also used as an instrumental tool in that specific cultural resources are emphasized to further a specific goal. Members of the group recognize their own cultural narratives and this enables the political movements to use cultural factors to mobilize actors and legitimize their actions. This study is a comparison of two movements working within the same political and social context towards an identical goal. Most social movement comparisons are between different movements in different countries, different times, or with different political goals. The difference in this case study is that it will show how in the same existing reality, with the same political goals, two movements operate differently generating different results, which will be seen in their ability to mobilize and legitimize their cause. This emphasizes the importance of cultural analysis because it is the use of cultural resources that makes the difference. Culture as a political tool is the main focus and will be the main determinant in the effectiveness of the movements. It is the choice and use of specific meanings and the focus on specific cultural resources that appeal to the public in a different manner, thus determining the effectiveness of these movements. One group, Yesh Gvul uses a more universalistic discourse of justice and morality while the other, Courage To Refuse uses a more militaristic-nationalistic discourse in trying to appeal to the public. Both groups are vying for the same ultimate goal of withdrawal from the territories, while trying to gain

public support and acceptance of the use of selective refusal as a form of political protest. The difference between them lies in the paths each group chooses to use to gain public acceptance and create political change. The two sets of discourse are both found in the wider context of the Israeli political culture. However, it seems as if the militaristic culture is more dominant than the emphasis on universalistic values. This suggests that Courage To Refuse will be more effective in mobilizing supporters and gaining a degree of legitimation.

Figure 1: *The Refusal Movements' Paths*



The study proceeds in the following steps. First, I will provide a brief literature review on the key concepts that shape the frameworks and wider context under which these movements operate such as collective identity construction, civil disobedience and the use of culture in social movement theory. This chapter gives insight on the importance of culture in the study of political movements and the specific factors that dominate Israeli society. Next, I will give a historical background to the case study. It is important to explain the historical events of the past years. The two groups have emerged under the specific political circumstances of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*. It is necessary to understand these circumstances and the history preceding it to explain why one group might be more effective than the other. Following that will be an explanation of the research design with a description of the independent and dependent variables. The following two chapters are dedicated to an analysis of the empirical findings. Chapter five explains the cultural resources used by each group. This chapter focuses on the independent variables and explains how the two groups differ in their deployment of cultural resources and the differences in their appeal to the public. Chapter six measures and compares the effectiveness of the two groups. It focuses on public acceptance of refusal and also compares the amount of support that each group manages to generate. Finally, I conclude with ideas for additional research of importance to the study of social movement and Israeli politics.

II. Theoretical Frameworks and Literature Review:

The theoretical frameworks that encompass this paper are those of construction of cultural identities, justifications of civil disobedience, and social movement theory with a focus on the specific use of culture. These frameworks provide the theoretical concepts needed to explain the refusal movements' use of cultural resources. It is necessary to explain what elements make up the collective cultural identity to understand the difference between the two movements. Each group focuses on different aspects of the Israeli political culture. They each choose to use different factors that they perceive as more appealing to the public. To assess why one group would be more successful than the other, it is necessary to understand what the collective identity consists of and how it came to be.

Both refusal movements try to legitimize selective refusal as a form of political protest. Since this is an illegal act, it is necessary to explain the theoretical framework of civil disobedience. The link between civil disobedience and the Israeli culture is explained because the groups both try to justify their actions with the different aspects of this discourse. Lastly, social movement theory and the specific use of culture provides one more analytical tool to study the movements. The use of culture in social movement theory is relatively new and it provides additional tools for understanding how the two refusal movements work and why they choose the specific resources that they do. All

three frameworks provide analytical tools with which it is possible to study and explain the differences between the refusal movements.

Collective Cultural Identity:

The formation of the cultural myths and symbols of the Israeli collective identity are at the heart of this study. To understand the different types of appeals that each movement uses it is necessary to explain the development of the Zionist ideology. It is necessary to look at the emergence of Zionism and the cultural values and ideology in the early period of the Yishuv (the early Jewish settlements in Palestine pre-independence Israel), through the inception of the independent state of Israel and as they developed until today. The movements work within this cultural and social framework and in order to analyze their strategies and actions, an understanding of these frameworks is needed. It is important to analyze how these cultural identities came to be and how they can become useful when trying to mobilize and legitimize the social movements' cause and actions. Collective cultural identities are analytical tools to look at group membership and organization based on shared sense of belonging. Collective cultural identities are made up of a variety of elements such as language, religion, territory, shared beliefs, shared values and norms, shared histories, shared informal institutions and practices to name a few. Cultural identities are full of meaning and provide individuals with sense of belonging, making them a strong force in the political world. An analysis of the various aspects of the Israeli collective cultural identities is needed as each group emphasizes a different part in its public appeal. An understanding of the collective cultural identities

provides further understanding of the two movements' choice of the specific cultural resources.

Authors such as Benedict Anderson (1995), focusing on the construction of the imagined community and nationalism; Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) who focus on how traditions are invented and constructed; Crawford Young (1976), who identifies how cultural identities play a role in the formation of "new" nation-states, provide some of the theoretical background on how collective cultural identities are constructed². The constructivist view of identity formation is essential to analyzing how the Israeli identity came about and which cultural resources were deployed in the formation of a collective cultural identity group. Each group today is also trying to deploy the known cultural resources to gain public appeal. These theoretical tools also provide insight as to how the two social movements try to construct meaning as well. Each movement tries to tap into a different aspect of the cultural identity in its attempt to generate public support. They too are trying to interpret the Israeli identity in a way that will allow them to mobilize support and legitimate their cause. The construction of a collective identity during the period of the Yishuv and its development once the state of Israel was established helps explain the use of the specific cultural discourses that each movement uses. Each group uses a different cultural discourse and emphasizes different values to mobilize support and legitimize its actions and to explain why one is more successful than the other, it is helpful to trace the development of the discourses and the shaping of the cultural identities.

² It is important to note that other authors, such as David Laitin (1986), Anthony Marx (1998), David Roediger (1991), who also deal with the construction of identity, will provide the theoretical background as well.

Although there were initially different schools of Zionism (religious, political, marxist, cultural and historical, mystical, revisionist and labor), it was the labor Zionist movement that managed to incorporate the cultural elements of the other schools and became the dominant view of the time. The values and norms that were stressed, and which became the dominant view of Zionism during the Yishuv period, were those of the secular Messianism; the connection between man and the physical labor of the land; and a social structure based on socialism and the ideal of a utopian just society. Notions of universal morals, ethics and justice were emphasized during this period (Weissbrod, 2002; Kimmerling, 2001; Gertz, 2000).

After the inception of the state, the values had to shift to adjust to the new social structures. Nation-building and “etatisme” (or "statism") became the first priority as the political structure changed from living under the rule of a British mandate to that of independence; the demographic structure changed as immigration greatly increased; the new reality of war and constant aggression; and the economic structure changed as a working class emerged and agricultural work was less stressed. The changes in the territorial boundaries and the increasing role of the state became the main focus of the labor elite in reinterpreting the collective identity. Kimmerling (1993) and Ben-Eliezer (1998) identify this as the birth of the militaristic culture. Militarism became a cultural phenomenon as organized violence or war was viewed as the optimal solution for political problems. The use of military force became legitimate and was perceived as a positive value and a high principle that is right and desirable; and was routinized and institutionalized within society. The security ethos became the dominant cultural myth, which influenced and shaped the roles of both formal and informal institutions. Cultural

myths are conceptual narratives by which humans orient themselves in their environment. They are symbolic tales and narratives of the past that connect members of a culture to belief systems and values. Cultural myths give justification to a peoples' origin, their social organization, and their cultural practices (Magoulick, n.d.) . The importance of cultural myths is that it gives people a sense of shared past experiences and enhances their sense of belonging to the cultural group..

The role of the military was institutionalized within the civilian structure. Despite the military's dominance in society, it has remained under the jurisdiction of the state and is also actively involved in processes of state-building such as education, and the integration of immigrants (Lissak and Horowitz, 1984; Yaniv, 1993; Barzilai, 1992 ; Maman, Ben-Ari and Rosenhek, 2001). Very quickly after the inception of Israel, the new criteria for membership in the state became the notion of a republican citizenship and a belief in the militaristic culture. The leadership stressed the notion that citizenship could best be realized by service in the national army, thereby strengthening the belief and culture of militarism. Notions of an ideal just society and labor of the land were pushed aside as the primacy of the state and security became the overriding consideration. The militarization of society also increased the gender inequality in Israeli society. Golan (1997), Berkovitz (1995; 1997) and Lieblich (1997) explain how a militarized society emphasizes patriarchal values and how the role of a woman is confined to that of support and loyalty. Overall, there has been an increase and the empowerment of a militaristic masculine culture in Israeli society. This is important in explaining how one movement uses the militaristic values to legitimate itself while the other tries to bring back the earlier notions of universal values.

Another institution that plays an important role in Israeli politics and culture is the legal system. The high court is identified as an important institution in shaping Israeli culture (Barzilai, 2000; and Barzilai, Ya'ar-Tuchman and Segal, 1994). Israel is defined as a Jewish-Democratic state. Over the years, the high court has become the guardian and symbol of democracy and liberalism. Although the courts usually try to avoid rulings regarding security issues, they are still seen as the safeguards of liberal values. The courts play an important role in the shaping of liberal ideology and legitimation of human rights values. In the Israeli context, liberalism refers to the emphasis of individual rights. The high courts are perceived as a place where individual rights are protected and where he or she can turn to when the state infringes on those rights. This will become important when later analyzing the tactics and use of the court by one of the movements.

At present, the militaristic culture and the security ethos are still the main components of Israeli culture and myth. The structural changes of the new territorial reality, the Lebanon War, the emergence of a more liberal-individualistic society, and the demise of the dominance of the labor party changed in part the strength of these ideals but they still remain at the forefront of Israeli rhetoric and cultural identity. The occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have brought about the emergence of the Peace Movement (which questions the justness of the occupation) as well as the Gush Emunim and settlers movements (who regard the occupation as an extension of their God-given right to the land); while the Lebanese war brought about questions of a "war of choice" versus "war of necessity". These two lines of argument are highly contested in Israeli society and serve as a strong ideological divide. However, they still operate under the militaristic culture and the security ethos. The rhetoric and the symbols used still refer

to this strong cultural identity. This shows how the earlier notions of universal values are still part of the culture and that there are those who find it more appealing than the militaristic culture.

The analysis of the cultural myths is needed to show the difference between the two movements in their choice of symbols. Symbols are devices used to transmit ideas between people sharing a common culture. Symbolic forms communicate information between members of a culture and articulate meanings and values. Symbols are not confined to images but can come in a linguistic form as well. The significance of symbols is that any member of the cultural group recognizes it as such and understands the meanings and values that it implies.

Each group focuses on a different cultural discourse and uses different symbols to try to mobilize and legitimate its cause. Political discourse may express group ideologies and other beliefs, especially in collective forms of text and talk (Van Dijk, 1998). Political discourse describes a social-political problem and its solution. Its purpose is to persuade by appealing to logic, emotions, facts or beliefs (Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, 1990). Different sets of discourse can compete for the same audience by using different types of appeal. Peleg (2004) claims that traditionally, in Israel, political public discourse is based on ideological differences of the two political extremes. Ideologies are systems of beliefs that are shared by members of a social group. Meanings are produced by a discursive process and these affect the relations of power. In the Israeli context, the ideological right and left are based on differences in opinions regarding security issues. Traditionally, the ideological left believes in the notion of "land for peace" while the ideological right is more hawkish and believes in the ability to resolve the conflict

without having to make any territorial concessions. After the Oslo Accords, another type of discourse appeared, based on a militaristic and realist security-orientated analysis (Peleg, 2004). Both types of discourse can be found on this study – one of the traditional ideological left and the other of militaristic realism. The notions of an ideal and just society and the notion of a militaristic society are both found in the foundation of the collective cultural identity. The two refusal movements use different symbols, rhetoric, myths and sets of discourse in their public appeal. Each group taps into a different aspect of the wider cultural context in its attempt to mobilize supporters and legitimate its cause.

Conscientious Objection and Civil Disobedience Theory:

The main tactic used by the two movements is that of selective conscientious objection. This type of resistance is theoretically based on civil disobedience literature. The movements are ideologically based on the notion that serving in what they term the occupied territories should be seen as an unjust act. The notion of serving in an occupied territory is conceived of as being morally wrong and therefore demanding civil disobedience. This notion of immorality is based on Just War Theory, on Jewish interpretation of disobedience, and on secular civil disobedience theories. It is the civic responsibility of the citizens of Israel to disobey when called upon to serve in a way which is unjustifiable. This type of disobedience is consistent with elements of the Israeli culture and can be incorporated into the public discourse, despite a strong militaristic culture which demands military obedience from all.

Just War Theory, although proposed by Cicero, is based on the writings of St. Augustine and Thomas of Aquinas and was later developed by other scholars. Augustine

brought about the notion that war is just only when it is used “with the object of securing peace, of punishing evil-doers, and of uplifting the good.” (Augustine, 2000) In the *Summa Theologica* Aquinas presents the general outline for what later develops into the principles of a just war. Jewish law also supports selective conscientious objection. The Jewish tradition is based on the notion of the self and the conscience as identified with religion, moral and spiritual imperatives (Konvitz, 1972) An individual is justified in acting illegally when he or she is requested to act against their conscience. As a development of the early traditions of civil disobedience and Just War Theory, we come to the later secular interpretations of civil disobedience as they were theorized by Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Michael Walzer and John Rawls. All these notions of civil disobedience – the theoretical and moral justifications, the types of action and the consequences – are helpful in that they provide the moral and ideological grounding for the two movements. These theories help the groups justify selective refusal as being part of an ongoing tradition that is historically legitimate.

Sprinzak (1995) adds that in Israel there is an increase of “cultural illegalism” within non-parliamentary groups. This term refers to the fact that despite acknowledging democratic rule and law, ideological groups believe that in some cases the law can and should be disregarded in lieu of higher values. Even if groups do not go to the extremes of violence, ideological extremism in Israel has led to norms of disobedience. Although Sprinzak was studying right-wing non-parliamentary groups, these norms spread and are part of the current political culture.

Selective refusal is a form of civil disobedience. Both groups rely on the different aspects of the theory to justify their actions. The civil disobedience theories provide

insight on how the two groups try to legitimate refusal. Civil disobedience is gaining wide recognition as a legitimate way of action in the Israeli political culture. However, each group differs in the way civil disobedience is portrayed and justified. Although stemming from the same ideological roots and justification, they frame the necessity for disobedience differently. While one group focuses on the secular notions of universal values, the other will use the more particularistic notions found in the Israeli and Jewish historical narrative. The manner in which the groups use the theories of civil disobedience are different yet still consistent with Israeli identity discourse and beliefs.

Social Movement Theory:

A focus on Social Movement Theory and the specific use of cultural resources helps analyze how these two movements operate. The use of culture within social movement theory is different than the theory on the construction of cultural identities. It focuses on how social movements are able to use the different cultural resources at their disposal. While the earlier section focused on the similar context of the values and beliefs that the Israeli identity groups are based on, this section focuses on how social movements can use the different cultural resources to mobilize supporters and legitimize their actions. The movements' ultimate goal is to change policy. They operate under the larger context of the peace movement and yet they are innovative as they use an illegal tool to voice their resistance (selective objection). The study analyzes which cultural tools are used by which movement, how they are used, by what means and to what ends.

The classical social movement agenda focuses on social change processes, political opportunities and constraints, forms of organization, the framing of contention

and the repertoires of contention. (Tarrow, 1998; McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly 2001). The importance of culture is emphasized by authors such as Morris and Mueller (1992); McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996); Benford and Snow (2000) who point to the use of culture within the structures of contention. Social movements raise issues, using symbols and shared values and beliefs to strengthen their demands and try to frame injustices based on the larger context of societal values. To determine what kind of change needs to be made, social movements must recognize and work within the larger cultural context. Repertoires of action are also based on and work within the cultural framework. To mobilize supporters, social movements need to act in a way that people can recognize and accept as a form of legitimate protest. The actions of a given society depend upon the values it places on specific forms of action. For example, if a society does not value a violent demonstration as a legitimate form of protest, then a social movement should not try to call out for violent disruption to further their cause (Tarrow, 1998). The political structure is also important in that it provides opportunities and constraints within which the movements must operate. These structural elements will be analyzed regarding the Israeli case. However, it is necessary to look at the processes of the movements which involve actors, identities and action; and not only the structures that are involved.

Johnston and Klandermans (1995) explain how culture and meaning construction of protest should be used in analyzing social movements. They show how the culture of the larger society is imported, processed and used by the movement's symbol system. Social movements import familiar symbols from the wider cultural context to further their own actions. Symbols can be images or linguistic phrases denoting recognized cultural notions. This is important as the analysis of the two groups depends on their use

and import of the specific symbols and practices of the larger Israeli culture. Culture should be seen in terms of opportunities and constraints, in terms of the framing of action, and in terms of collective identity construction and mobilization. All this is done in relation to the structural dimensions within which the movements operate. Melucci (1996) adds that movements challenge dominant culture codes by reinterpreting them in such a way that best suits their purposes. This is useful when analyzing how the two refusal groups differ in their use of the cultural stock to mobilize supporters, in analyzing how they frame their actions; and in analyzing how they operate within the specific political structures.

The study shows how each group, while working within the same cultural context, uses different cultural tools to try to achieve the same political goal. Working under the same cultural framework of the Israeli collective identity, the groups differ in how they emphasize different values and beliefs, use different sets of discourse and rhetoric, and manipulate different symbols to mobilize supporters and legitimize their actions. The theoretical frameworks mentioned contribute to the understanding of how the groups operate differently and suggest why one group is more effective than the other in gaining acceptance.

III. Background and History of Case Study:

The question over the land conquered by Israel in the Six Day War has led to sharp ideological divide within Israeli society. The main political issue to be dealt with is how to treat these new territories. Traditionally, right-wing hawks wanted to remain in control of the land while left-wing doves preferred the strategy of returning the land for peace. Since the 1990's there has been a growing recognition that there is a need for a two-state solution, one that will grant the Palestinians sovereignty over the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, there is still a wide and at times violent debate as to how this will be achieved – where the borders will run, how to solve the refugee problem, what to do with Jewish settlements in the area, how to solve water issues and other land resources, and the question of what to do with Jerusalem. After 1993 and the Oslo Accords, there was a significant military retreat from the occupied territories, while the PLO was granted more autonomy in the area. In October of 2000, after the failed peace talks of Camp David and after an instigation³ by the opposition leader at the time, Ariel Sharon, the *Al-Aqtsa intifada* erupted. The violence that followed has led to a large amount of casualties on both sides. As of this date, approximately 2778 Palestinians⁴ and 600 Israelis have died, while hundreds more have been wounded (B'tselem, 2004).

³ Despite warnings of tension in the area, Sharon decided to go up to the Temple Mount, which lies in the same place as the Al-Aqtsa Mosque. Despite warnings from the security forces and intelligence that violence could be a result of this symbolic visit, Sharon decided that he has a right to visit this sacred place (to both religions) as an Israeli citizen. The implications of this visit are still felt today.

⁴ This number does not include the Palestinian suicide terrorists who were killed as part of their own actions.

The election of the Likud government, headed by Ariel Sharon, and the increasing violence has led to a reconquering of the territories. The military has re-established its presence and there is an increase in the number of reserve soldiers being called upon to serve in the territories as part of the new campaign. The Israeli Defense Force depends on reservists as its main source of power. It is built on their service and that is what makes the army function properly. As a form of protest to the occupation, a growing amount of reserve soldiers are refusing to serve in the territories. This has led to the emergence of the refusal movements onto the political scene. The reservists see the occupation as unjust and illegal and the means used against civilians and the population as being immoral.

This is not a new phenomenon in the narrative of Israeli history. What is new and different about the current wave of objectors is their growing number; the appearance of Courage to Refuse as a new mobilizing social movement, and the growing legitimization of this action in the Israeli public discourse, as this study shows. The first time selective objection was used as a political protest occurred in the Lebanon War of 1982. This was the first war that was perceived as a “war of choice”, and not a “war of necessity”. Historically, Israel had gone to war because it was deemed as necessary for its survival. In 1982, a lot of criticism was thrown against the Likud government and despite its insistence that this was a “necessary war”, it was considered otherwise. During this war the first selective objectors appeared on the scene as political actors. Reservists, believing that the war in Lebanon was unjust, refused to serve. The refusal movement, “Yesh Gvul” was formed and was a controversial movement at the time. Even the left-winged Peace Movement believed that protest should be shown in other ways and that refusal to

serve was a dangerous phenomenon. “Peace Now”, the largest peace organization, refused to support selective refusal. Civil disobedience was not legitimized by the more institutionalized protest movements, and Yesh Gvul was marginalized even by those most opposing the war. Their views on the immorality of the war were accepted yet their tactics were seen as detrimental to the security of Israel. Peace Now tried to remain within the legal boundaries and participated in the war while simultaneously protesting it. However, as the war progressed and its public legitimation decreased, Yesh Gvul managed to mobilize support by focusing on the unjustness of the war and questioning the actions of the leaders. In 1983, Israel withdrew from Lebanon (although there was not a full withdrawal until July of 2000, the war was considered as over).⁵

After the formal withdrawal, Yesh Gvul continued operating on a low profile basis. In 1987, with the eruption of the first *intifada*, they resurfaced and again, a phenomenon of selective refusal reappeared. Yesh Gvul continued mobilizing and supporting these objectors as a way to protest the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Again, it focused on issues of the justness of the occupation and of the Israeli military presence. During this period, refusal was not a widespread phenomenon and it was still not seen as a legitimate form of protest by the public or the other peace movements. During the 1990’s and after the 1993 Oslo Accords, it seemed as if Yesh Gvul disappeared from the political map. They stopped their campaigning and hardly any selective objectors were registered during this period. After the eruption of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*, Yesh Gvul resurfaced as a social movement calling for selective refusal in the occupied territories. The movement has remained consistent over the years and still

⁵ It is important to note that Yesh Gvul believes that their actions led in part to the withdrawal.

adheres to its initial values and tactics. It uses the same type of appeal that it started out with and remains within the boundaries of its original discourse of universalistic values. It is still trying to appeal to the questioning of the justness of the occupation and to the moral issues involved.

In January of 2002, 51 reserve combat soldiers published a letter in the newspapers claiming that they refuse to serve in the territories. After serving in the territories and after being exposed to the harsh situation, they stated that selective objection is the only way to successfully protest government policy and to stop the occupation. These soldiers were the beginning of what became “The Courage to Refuse”. In the following two years Courage to Refuse has managed to mobilize a growing number of supporters and to increase public legitimation of their cause. They are essentially made up of combat soldiers (including pilots and elite unit forces). The very fact that these are all combat soldiers and their use of militaristic images and rhetoric has a strong appeal to the public. Courage to Refuse did not merge with Yesh Gvul because of their difference in opinion regarding the use of public discourse and its public image. Despite the fact that Yesh Gvul was gaining more legitimacy, it was still perceived as being part of the far marginalized left and being part of the traditional “old school” peace movement (which is perceived by the mainstream as being “idealist liberals”). The appearance of Courage to Refuse brought about a new militaristic and realist discourse, which they hope will gain them more credibility and legitimacy in the public eye.

The appearance of a new social movement and the growing number of objectors and supporters leads to the question of why now. Why is it that this form of protest is increasingly becoming legitimized in the public discourse? Part of the reason is the

external circumstance of a new *intifada* and public despair at a “no solution” type existence. This can be seen also in Peace Now’s reaction to the phenomenon. Whereas in the past they were opposed to selective objection, today they refrain from taking a position on the issue but “leave this question to the individual consciences of each and every one of its activist” (Peace Now, n.d.). The changing political atmosphere is one important factor in the growing legitimation. However, since both groups work within the same political context, it is necessary to compare between the differences in their tactics and strategies, and their specific use of the resources available to them. Each movement uses different tools to try to achieve the same political goal. It is the appeal to the different aspects of the political culture and the different use of the specific cultural resources that determine the different degrees of effectiveness..

IV. Research Design:

The two refusal movements use selective objection as a way of protesting and voicing their resistance to government policy. However, each group tries to appeal to a different component of Israeli culture thus resulting in a difference of effectiveness. The approach to the research is a comparison between the two groups to evaluate their effectiveness. They both operate under the same structural context and both aim at achieving the same political goal using selective objection as a form of protest. The questions arising out of this observation are: Is one group more effective in mobilizing and legitimating itself; and if so, why is it so?

Each refusal movement, while working within the same cultural context, uses different tools to try to achieve the same political goal. The various variables analyzed determine which one is more effective in deploying cultural tools to achieve a political goal and change government policy. My hypothesis is that Courage to Refuse is more in mobilizing support and legitimating its cause. It focuses on the militaristic culture and myths, which is a stronger force in the contemporary Israeli discourse. Yesh Gvul is still perceived as being representative of the liberal left and part of a marginalized and old discourse. A realist discourse and a security orientated analysis are more appealing to the mainstream public than universal values rhetoric. I believe the security ethos to be a stronger force in Israeli culture than that of building a just society. Therefore, the specific

appeal and use of militaristic symbols and rhetoric provide a more legitimate base and can mobilize greater support for selective refusal.

The dominant theories in social movement studies use a structural approach. They explain movements based on collective action dilemmas and resource mobilization theories. The cultural approach adds to the previous structural theories in that it includes non-material cultural resources such as values, beliefs, solidarity sentiments and determination to mobilize activists (Benford and Snow 2000). This approach provides additional analytical tools to study social movements. This study analyzes both the structural differences and the more specific cultural differences. The two refusal movements operate under a similar social and political structure yet differ in how they use the resources at their disposal

Each refusal movement uses a different appeal to mobilize supporters and legitmate its actions. Each group has chosen to use a different version of the Israeli cultural identity – one focuses on universal values of justice and morality while the other rests on particularistic and militaristic values. Yesh Gvul prioritizes civilian and universal humanistic values, while Courage to Refuse stresses notions of militarism and soldiery. In studying the two refusal movements, I looked at the mechanisms, as specified by social movement theory that apply to the mobilization processes and contentious action. The structural variables I looked at were repertoires of action, who the intended audience is (for both mobilization and legitimation purposes), how the groups use the political and intellectual elites, and their references to other refusal movements in history and time. Each refusal movement uses different repertoires of actions as a strategic choice. They each try to appeal to a different sector of society, and each group differs in its use of the

elites and its reference to other social movements. The differences lead to an observation that Yesh Gvul remains consistent with its universalistic appeal while Courage To Refuse focuses on a particularistic and militaristic appeal.

In addition to the structural factors, I looked at the more specific use of cultural resources. A close analysis of each movements' use of symbols, discourse, rhetoric and institutions shows how the groups differ in their appeal. Each group emphasizes different values and beliefs found in the Israeli political culture. Each group uses a different aspect of the historical narrative, chooses to harp on different symbols and uses a different set of discourse to mobilize supporters and legitimate itself. Yesh Gvul uses a universalistic and humanistic discourse of moral values and justice while Courage to Refuse uses a militaristic realist discourse to justify refusal.

The analysis of the differences between the two movements is needed to determine which group is more effective. The different appeals are what lead to their varying degrees of effectiveness. The dependent variable in this paper will be the effectiveness of the social movements. Both groups are trying to mobilize supporters and legitimate their cause in order to eventually influence government policy. They each believe that by using the different cultural resources they can be more effective in this attempt. Therefore, it is necessary to measure their effectiveness. The two refusal movements' use of cultural resources is what differentiates between them and this study measures which one has a higher degree of effectiveness. The groups are trying to affect society and to change government policy. Therefore, by their own aspirations, the dependent variable focuses on how effective each movement actually is.

Effectiveness was determined as a result of two factors. The first is the mobilization of members that each group is able to enlist. The second is of legitimation and support. The refusal movements each wish to influence government policy. Both believe that social and political change is a result of public pressure on the government. The more soldiers who refuse to serve in the territories and the more public support they are able to generate, the more likely it is that the government will implement a change in its policy and withdraw from the territories. To succeed in their task, each group must mobilize a large number of activists and gain public legitimation.

Therefore, the first measurement of effectiveness relies on the actual number of members each group mobilized. Mobilization was measured by looking at the number of people who support the movement. Support was divided into active and passive support and was measured in two ways – one (active) is the number of actual objectors (reservists); and the other (passive) is the number of people who sign the petitions and who show up for protests and demonstrations. These numbers can be found on the various web-sites provided by the movements and through official media reports.

Another measurement of effectiveness is public legitimation. Legitimation in this study is a product of public acceptance and support. If refusal is accepted as a legitimate form of protest, then the claim that the movement achieved legitimation can be made. To determine whether the public accepts refusal as a legitimate form of protest, three important factors were looked at. The three measurements are mobilization, public opinion polls and media portrayal. The first factor was the ability of the groups to mobilize supporters. The more people a movement is able to mobilize, the more it is

publicly accepted. This is similar to the previous mobilization measurement. The number of passive and active supporters indicates whether the movement is publicly accepted.

The second measurement indicating whether refusal is perceived as a legitimate act is public opinion polls. Direct questioning of the public as to their opinions regarding the refusal movements indicates whether they are perceived as legitimate political actors. During the time period of the study, several public opinion polls were taken by two of the country's research centers, the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies and the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research. Although the polls did not refer to the specific movements but to the overall phenomenon of selective refusal, an analysis of the results indicates the effectiveness of the movements. An increase in public acceptance of refusal as a legitimate form of protest suggests that the movements were able to influence and sway public opinion, which indicates an increase in public legitimation of the refusal movements, therefore indicating effectiveness..

The third measurement determining legitimation is the media's portrayal and depiction of the movements. The first two measurements are a result of numbers collected by independent entities (the movements' official websites, formal public records and the research centers). The third, the analysis of media portrayal, is a result of personal research specific to this study. The media can portray the movements as being part of a marginalized political discourse, or they can depict them as being part of a legitimate mainstream debate. An increase in the coverage of the movements' actions, detected over the time frame of the study, places the issue of refusal in the mainstream public debate. A content analysis of media depictions of the movements was done to

measure how the media perceives them. If the media portrays the movements' actions in a favorable way then it can be inferred that they are gaining legitimation in the eye of the public. Favorable media portrayal indicates media legitimation, which suggests a move towards public legitimation. The way the media portrays events has an impact on public opinion. Media legitimation of the debate over refusal and a legitimation of the actions taken by the two movements can lead to public legitimation. The media both shapes and reflects public opinion. In this case, if the media shapes public opinion, then its legitimation of the refusal movements will lead to public legitimation. If it reflects public opinion, then an increase in media legitimation is an indicator of public legitimation. In most cases, the relationship is a dialectic one in which there is an ongoing process of both shaping and reflecting public opinion. Therefore, the media's portrayal of each of the refusal movements can only suggest and point in the direction of public legitimation. If the media favorably portrays each movement, it is an indicator of media legitimation, which in turn can lead to public legitimation. I looked and interpreted the editorials published in the two leading daily newspapers to analyze the media's portrayal and legitimation of the refusal movements.

The main method of measurement for the independent variables and the media portrayal is the use of content analysis. Johnston (2002) explains how the method of discourse analysis can be used on the level of individual speech of the activists, participants and the media in studying social movements. This method is useful in showing the relationship between a movement's culture and the broader culture. A content analysis of the discourse used by the movements and by the media shows the

difference between the two refusal movements and the difference in the responses towards them.

The independent variables in this study are the different deployments of cultural resources by each refusal group. I measured this by looking at the use of symbolic forms and the use of cultural myths through rhetoric and public discourse; the use of the legal system; use of the media; and publications of the two movements. Symbols and myths provide meaning and can communicate the values and beliefs of a social group. By analyzing the symbols and myths used, it is possible to determine which aspect of the collective cultural identity the movements try to appeal to.

I analyzed the cultural resources that each group uses to mobilize and legitimate its cause. I interpret their use of rhetoric (in interviews and publications); their public discourse (in the media and the publications); and the attempt to use the high courts as a cultural resource. The data analyzed is the recent interviews I conducted with the leaders of the two movements and the two groups' publications. The appearance of terms that relate to the notion of "justness", "illegality" and "civic responsibility" imply the appeal to the notions of building an ideal society. Terms that are also related to notions of universal ideals of "justice", "ethics" and "morality" also indicate the notion of building a universally just society. If the terms used however, refer to security issues and have cost-benefit "realist", "militaristic", and "Zionist" tones to them, then it implies that there is an attempted appeal to the militaristic-realistic culture.

The interviews I conducted with the leaders of the two refusal movements reveal a conscious attempt at appealing to the different aspects of the Israeli identity. They knowingly try to appeal to the two different set of ideals as they each believe that that is

what will grant them success. The different appeals and use of the cultural resources are found in the content of the interviews. Each group has its own publications which it puts out to the public. Again, a content analysis of these publications was made to see what rhetoric and cultural myths are used to mobilize support.

I also analyze the recent legal suit that Courage to Refuse brought against the state. This legal case is a failed attempt of using a cultural resource to further their cause. The high courts in Israel serve as an institution that is used in the construction of a collective identity and shaping ideology. Their approval or disapproval of the use of this type of resistance is a type of cultural resource. The use of the high court as a cultural resource is important and I will explain why the fact that the courts overruled the prosecution's claim did not help the legitimization of the process of refusal.

Media portrayal was also measured with a method of content analysis of the editorials and articles written in the two popular dailies, *Ma'ariv* and *Yediot Aharonot*. The two newspapers were chosen because they have the largest distribution numbers in Israel and are considered to be politically unbiased, therefore representing the mainstream opinion. *Yediot Aharonot* (founded in 1939) has the highest circulation with almost two thirds of all Hebrew newspaper readers and *Ma'ariv* (founded in 1948), holds the second highest circulation numbers (Limor, 2000). The two dailies do not belong to or represent any political party and employ writers from both ends of the political spectrum. These newspapers were chosen because they are relatively politically unbiased and represent the mainstream view points and because of their high circulation.

Editorials, written by full-time employees of the newspapers, were gathered and their content was analyzed to determine the movements' effectiveness. The specific

movements were usually not mentioned by name. However, by analyzing the discourse used by the writers, it is possible to infer which appeal is more effective. The type of statements and arguments made, the tone of the articles, the symbols and rhetoric used by the writers were analyzed. The different types of discourse used to support or oppose selective refusal reflect upon which movements' appeal is more useful in achieving media legitimation and therefore indicating which discourse might be gaining greater resonance with the public as the public's filter for information, the media, begins to see the movements as more legitimate.

I will show how each group, while working within the same cultural context, uses different tools to try to achieve the same political goal. Each group is analyzed to determine which one is more effective in deploying cultural tools to achieve a political goal and change government policy. The following chapter focuses on the differences between the two groups. It explains the different appeals each groups tries to use to gain public support.

V. Differences Between the Two Movements

General Differences:

This chapter focuses on the difference between the two groups. The differences between the two groups explain and determine their different degrees of effectiveness.. The first part of the chapter focuses on the general and structural differences while the second part explains the cultural differences. The structural factors help explain and reinforce the difference between the movements and the cultural differences are emphasized since I believe they are the main determinants that influence their success. The structural approach to social movement theory claims that the appearance and rise of movements depends on political opportunities and constraints. According to this view, the political environment enables groups to appear so long as the opportunities are visible and perceived as such (Tilly, Tarrow & McAdam, 2001). Opportunities are based on the relationship among the different institutional actors and on the political climate, which enables the opening and closing of political space (Gamsen & Meyer, 1995). The external events and institutions affect how participants perceive their positions, possibilities and limits of change (Robnett, 2002). In this case, it is the specific political climate which brought about the rise of the two groups. On an institutional level, the diminishing strength of the political left opened up the space for non-parliamentary action. Since the mid-1990's, the political left has seen a decline in its electoral power as the parties have been slowly losing seats in the Knesset. The general atmosphere is one of distrust and

apathy within the leftist supporters. The void left by the left-winged political parties has allowed for the appearance of non-parliamentary movements. The cultural climate has also affected the political opportunities. The disintegration of the Oslo Peace Accords brought about a new political reality of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*, the rise in the number of terrorist activities and the re-entry and increasing presence of the military in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These events created an atmosphere of frustration and despair. This political atmosphere of desperation coupled with the inability of the political parties to act created an opportunity for the social movements to appear. The appearance of the two political movements is due to the structural factors mentioned. With an identical political environment, it is necessary to look at the specific tactics and strategies that each group employs.

Refusal as a tactic

Both movements support the idea that selective refusal is a legitimate form of protest. The fact that the protestors are people who normally contribute greatly to society (either in the past as soldiers or in the present through their economic activities), makes them feel that it is their right to criticize society and the government. They believe that their voices are the ones that should be heard because they act out of a desire to protect their country and its ideals. Selective refusal, as opposed to total refusal, can be justified because it is a form of critique. Total refusal is perceived by society as betrayal whereas selective refusal can be interpreted as an act of patriotism. Selective refusers are the same soldiers who have traditionally served in the reserve forces and have contributed to the military force. And so, refusal is their way of voicing their highest objection to the

government policy that they wish to change. However, despite the use of the same tactic, each group goes about it in a different way and uses a different cultural framework to appeal to their audience. I will first focus on the general differences between the two movements and then go into the more specific differences in the use of cultural resources.

Goals

The two groups differ in how they see the goals of the movement. Although the final goal is withdrawal from the territories, their short-term aspirations differ slightly. Yesh Gvul claims that its goal is to create a public debate by making service in the territories a central issue. They wish to ignite other peace movements and to “awaken” the political left. The past few years have seen a decrease in the activities of the leftist/peace movements (such as Peace Now). Yesh Gvul, by making the refusal a public issue, and by stirring feelings regarding its legitimacy, wishes to increase the public’s awareness and “bring back the issue of the legitimacy of the occupation to the table” (P.K. personal communication, January 1, 2004). Yesh Gvul claims that they want to re-awaken the left, to make those whose voices have been absent loud again, and to provide another channel for those in the political left to voice their opinions and reservations regarding the occupation. Refusal is used as a tactic to increase public debate and re-awaken the political left. However, this is not to say that refusal is only a strategic act of protest, there is a substantive element involved. Yesh Gvul believes that the occupation is unjust and therefore justifies this type of protest. Service in the territories is morally wrong and therefore it is not only strategic but also an act that they wholeheartedly believe in. They truly believe in the right to disobey when required to act immorally.

Courage To Refuse phrases its short-term goals slightly differently. They are aware of the fact that they are part of the radical marginalized left and that their support comes from those who belong to that end of the political spectrum. By moving the end margin of what is considered to be the radical left further to the center, they hope to shift the entire political spectrum to the left (A. D. personal communication, December 29, 2003). Their goal is that of legitimizing the act of refusal and making it a more mainstream and acceptable phenomenon. Once this act will become more accepted, the entire political spectrum and society will move to the left, therefore withdrawal will seem a more plausible option. Courage To Refuse believes that the mainstream public has been slowly moving towards right-winged opinions over the years whereas Yesh Gvul believes that the left still exists only that it has been dormant for too long. The subtle difference between Courage To Refuse and Yesh Gvul's goals lies in the fact that Courage To Refuse hopes to move the entire political spectrum whereas Yesh Gvul is more intent on "awakening" and reinvigorating the existing left and calling for more political action.

Members and Support

Another difference that points to the different appeals of each group is who they support. Yesh Gvul supports all objectors. In addition to supporting reserve soldiers refusing to serve in the territories, they support draftees who refuse to enlist in the military due to their objection to serve in "an occupying army", and also total objectors (those who refuse to serve because of pacifist beliefs). They also support women who

refuse to serve. Israeli military law does not require women to serve as reserves⁶ and it does allow draftees an option of refusing on the basis of moral grounds.⁷ However, lately there has been an increase in women refusing to enlist and serve in the military on grounds of refusal to serve in an “occupying army”. They have opted not to use their option of refusing to serve on grounds of conscientious objection, as provided by military law. An advertisement that Yesh Gvul published begins with “Soldiers, men and women...” (Kidron, 2004) referring to the widespread public it wishes to address. The anthology of testimonies, *Refusenik!* supported by Yesh Gvul and edited by a Yesh Gvul activist, includes in it testimonies of the “shministim” (the Hebrew term for high school seniors and it is also the name of the organization of the 18 year olds who selectively refuse to serve in the territories). Although it is a movement made up mostly of reservists, they do not disregard the other refusers and fully support them (both financially and emotionally). The inclusion of both types of conscripts suggests that they view the battle of those who are not reservists as part of the overall refusal movement justifying their support. This wide support of all objectors, regardless of gender or type of military service, points to Yesh Gvul’s universalistic approach. They value objection as a universal moral act and therefore their appeal is to a wider group of people.

Courage To Refuse on the other hand, does not support all objectors. They only allow and accept reserve fighters as active members of their movement. In Israel, the distinction between soldier and civilian is blurred within the reserves. Once their mandatory service is completed, men (until the age of 45) are called upon on an annual

⁶ After the age of 24 and even before that, it is only a handful of women who are called up to serve.

⁷ According to clause 39c of the Defense Service Law, women (and only women) can object on grounds of conscience.

basis to serve their reserve duty. Eleven months out of the year they are full civilians while during one month (approximately), they must become soldiers. They can be called upon at any given moment when the government feels it necessary to enlarge its human capacity. The mindset of every Jewish citizen not exempt from service is that of being a civilian and soldier at the same time. Since the reservists act simultaneously as both civilians and soldiers, the movement feels that these men are the only ones who can legitimately choose selective refusal as an act of protest.

Courage To Refuse also limits their support of refusers to combat reserve fighters. This excludes women and non-combat soldiers from participating in the act of refusing. Courage To Refuse only justifies refusal of these specific types of soldiers, not of any other. One refuser explains that “there is a chasm between those who were there [in the territories] and those who were not” (Chacham, 2003, p. 54), therefore justifying the exclusion of non-combaters. The sense of superiority amongst those who did serve in the territories prevails and it is their voice that is stronger and more legitimate. Their reasoning is that since they are the soldiers who actively have to serve in the territories it is only these soldiers who can refuse to serve. They do not wish to make the act of refusing a legitimate universal cause but only the act of refusing to serve in the territories as a way of protesting the military’s presence. By allowing only a specific type of active participants, they enlist and enforce the militaristic culture that is so deeply rooted in Israeli society. By allowing only “fighting men” to refuse, they appeal to the public by using militaristic terms. It is the fighters who have been in the territories and therefore it is their prerogative to refuse. Despite the fact that Israel requires mandatory service for women, theirs is a different type of service. This is in accordance with the militaristic

culture that dominates Israeli society. *Courage To Refuse*, by only supporting male combat soldiers, appeals to this masculine militaristic culture.

In terms of public support, they hope for a wide variety of the population to support their cause – including women and non-combaters. This is still compatible with the militaristic culture because Israeli culture is rooted in notions of women and non-fighters supporting the “boys who go off to war.” These social norms derive from the Jewish tradition and the early Ben-Gurionian years when the notion of it being the mothers’ national duty to support her soldier husband and sons came to be. The inequality in service and the laws stating that women are not required to serve in the reserve forces, create a culture of masculine militarism. The notion of the “republican motherhood” became ingrained in Israeli culture. Jewish women are encouraged to become mothers as a way of entering and realizing their citizenship. Since women do not serve in the military on an equal basis, their greatest contribution to the country came in the form of their ability to give birth and solve the demographic problem by maintaining a Jewish majority. A discourse of mothers and wives became widespread within a dominant patriarchal society. Those who are not on the front lines are expected to fully support and encourage the fighters (Berkovitz, 1995). And so, by expecting women's and non-combaters support even without accepting them as part of the active movement, *Courage To Refuse* remains within the boundaries of the masculine militaristic culture.

“Marketing” Strategies

Each refusal movement uses different repertoires of actions and different cultural resources to mobilize supporters and legitimate their cause. Tarrow (1998) defines

repertoires as both cultural and structural concepts that tell people what to *do*, define what they *know how to do* and inform them on what others *expect* them to do. Each group focuses on different repertoires as a strategic choice they believe the public can relate, recognize and participate in. Yesh Gvul remains within the conventional boundaries of collective action and focuses on education while using an informative marketing strategy. Their aim is to explain the dilemma to soldiers who are called upon to serve. Their main audience is soldiers. Their reasoning is that soldiers are the ones who ultimately have to make the decision of whether they wish to participate in the refusal or not therefore they are the ones that must be targeted as an audience. Yesh Gvul's philosophy is that "an army based upon conscription creates scope for efforts to educate its soldiers and teach them their legal and political responsibility" and add that "it is vital to create organizations independent of government or military control to undertake the task of educating soldiers, teaching them that compliance with the orders of their superiors is proper and correct under normal circumstances, but also teaching them that obedience must have its limits, which are defined and dictated by the moral conscience and social awareness of each individual" (Kidron, 2004, p. 58).

This passage entails in it numerous elements. The first is the notion of having an educational responsibility. Yesh Gvul focuses much of its efforts on educating soldiers regarding their responsibilities as citizens in uniform. The fact that it is an army of conscription allows them to reach all parts of society in this educational task. Another important aspect is the need for an independent organization. Yesh Gvul believes that education should come from an institution that does not have an interest only in shaping obedient soldiers but one which can be more objective and teach an overall notion of

justness. By including the notion of compliance under “normal circumstance”, they emphasize the fact that they do not intend to be subversive but are trying to teach soldiers to distinguish between what is normal and what is not. In this case, they hope that the soldiers themselves will come to the overall conclusion that serving in the territories is not “normal” and refuse to serve. The third part points to the notions of having a “moral conscience” and “social awareness”. This emphasizes the universal values Yesh Gvul wishes the soldiers follow. It allows for disobedience when these values are not met with. Yesh Gvul’s educational efforts focus on teaching soldiers to distinguish between moral and immoral acts and on explaining why disobeying an immoral order can be justified. The informational campaign is not limited to the borders of Israel and many talks are given in Europe and the US. Yesh Gvul organizes international events to gather worldwide support showing how the act of refusal is a global issue and not only limited to Israelis.

Yesh Gvul forms discussion groups, conferences and workshops and advertises these gatherings in the daily newspapers to invite soldiers to participate in these workshops. They distribute flyers and brochures regarding their activities in highly soldier concentrated areas (such as the major bus and train stations). The workshops focus on an explanation of the laws and consequences regarding refusal and on the need to open the question of the occupation up for debate. They also publish and distribute booklets called “survival kit for refuseniks” (Kidron, 2004, p. 106). These booklets focus on the nuts and bolts of refusal by explaining the exact procedures a soldier must go through, and are aimed at de-mystifying the process. Their goal is to reduce the terror of defiance and prison and hope to persuade those who are still debating whether to partake

in the process to go through with their refusal. The booklet explains how the process works, what the consequences are, and how they will be supported by the organization. It advises contemplating soldiers on who they should speak to and how to best “survive.” By explaining the process and advising soldiers, Yesh Gvul hopes to make the act of refusal more accessible and less threatening to those who are undecided. They take a large concept of “refusal” and break it down into an actual and feasible procedure.

In addition to their educational focus, Yesh Gvul stages a monthly demonstration outside one of the prisons (Prison 6 – which is generally used to incarcerate the refusal prisoners). They also stage demonstrations on specific occasions (such as Independence Day, Memorial Day etc) outside the various prisons and in front of the Prime Minister’s or Minister of Defense’s house/bureau. These activities are the traditional protest activities known in the Israeli culture. Other social movements also focus on these traditional tactics of demonstrations and distribution of flyers and brochures. These familiar tools are used because both the public and the leaders of Yesh Gvul can relate to them. The public is accustomed to these tactics and can accept them as legitimate forms of protest and therefore participate in the familiar and known repertoires of actions.

Courage To Refuse uses different tactics to mobilize support. They remain within the boundaries of conventional repertoires of action but try to be more creative in their use of the media. They try to more actively use the media and the press to publicize their events and do not stage regular demonstration or stand at major crossroads and distribute informative flyers. They follow the notion that without media coverage, a demonstration is considered as a non-event (Gamson, 1995) and therefore will only stage a demonstration if they are promised media exposure (A. D. personal communication,

December 29, 2003), whereas Yesh Gvul will stage the demonstration and hope that the media will show up. Media discourse is used as a cultural resource to understand and create a debate surrounding an issue (Gamson, 1995). Gamson and Modigliani (1989) explain the cyclical nature of how media coverage creates debate, which in turn mobilizes more activists, which produces more media coverage and so forth. Courage To Refuse uses this strategy of providing exposure to generate public debate regarding refusal to mobilize support and gain legitimation. Their public relations tactics are more sophisticated and they hope to reach the wider public through the extensive coverage of the media. They employ known public relation and advertising firms to handle the press coverage and to act as consultants on how to work the media. One example of how they use the advertising firms can be seen in the publication of the pilots' refusal letter in September 2003. A full article was published in a Friday edition (which has a higher circulation) of only one of the popular newspapers. The newspaper was promised exclusivity as an incentive to publish their story and the pilots were photographed in their work overalls, a publicity tactic intended to create a public stir.

Courage To Refuse does not provide educational workshops and their target audience is the wider public (not only soldiers). They also try to mobilize support by appealing to the different sectors of the militaristic society. The movement differentiates between the different military forces such as the pilots and the various elite forces. Every citizen in Israel who has served in the military has a strong identity with the unit they were a part of. From the first moment a soldier arrives at their unit, a strong sense of belonging and "unit pride" is formed and encouraged by the military. These identities remain long after the soldiers have finished their service, through social relations and

through their reserve service. In December 2003 a letter calling for refusal, signed by members of the elite unit of the matkal force, appeared in the daily newspapers. Even though these soldiers were a part of Courage To Refuse, the fact that they separated themselves created a sense of identity amongst all the unit's members throughout the country.⁸ This is only one example of how Courage To Refuse tries to use militaristic group identities to mobilize supporters.

By separating the units, Courage To Refuse tries to appeal to the smaller identity groups within society. They focus on a more particularistic identity, which they believe is stronger and personalize the refusal by framing it in such a way that appeals to smaller unit-based collective identities. This type of public relations tactic tries to use the strong militaristic sense of belonging to appeal to the public. Mobilization is framed under specific unit identity forms, and not under the wide category of soldiers. Yesh Gvul on the other hand frames the refusal as a widespread problem that is common to a more general identity group, that of all soldiers. The common factor shared by most of society is that all were or still are soldiers.

Reference to Other Movements

Tarrow (1998) describes the modern social movement as being modular. In today's globalized and technologically advanced world, it is easy to learn from other similar movements in history or other places. Social movements can take certain elements and adapt them to their own cultural and social frameworks to increase their own success. A great difference lies between Yesh Gvul and Courage To Refuse in this

⁸ The pilots' letter is another example of the same kind of strategy for invoking unit identity emotions.

case as well. Despite the fact that they might take certain elements from different places, the public image they provide is different. Courage To Refuse prefers to paint an image of itself as being a place and time specific movement, with the uniqueness of the Israeli case being its main characteristic (A. D. personal communication, December 29, 2003). Yesh Gvul, on the other hand, compares itself to other movements in time and space to show how this specific case is one which deals with universal values of injustice.

Yesh Gvul appeared on the political scene twenty years before Courage To Refuse CTR did. Although both groups are fighting for the same cause, Courage To Refuse decided not to merge with the activists of Yesh Gvul but to form their own group. They have tried to distance themselves from Yesh Gvul because they believe that they are outdated and perceived as too liberal by the public (A. D. personal communication, December 29, 2003). They try to frame the need for a withdrawal from the territories in their own terms and not to take any known elements from Yesh Gvul. The belief in the need for isolation is that the comparison to other movements is not relevant. They prefer to focus on the specifics of the Israeli case and believe that a comparison to other movements will only provoke antagonistic sentiments. Courage To Refuse believes that the Israeli public will not relate to cases which are outside the specificity of its own history. Israeli culture is built on the notion that the emergence and justification of the state is unique – the need for self-determination for the Jewish people. Therefore, any spatial comparison cannot be done because they have not gone through the same historical narratives and processes that Israel has. The uniqueness of the Israeli case is what strengthens them. Other refusal movements existed for different reasons and there is no ideational connection. By insisting on remaining isolationists, Courage To Refuse

remains true to its use of the Israeli case as being unique. They do not try to appeal to universal notions of the injustice of the occupation but try to appeal to the specificity of Israel. This is in accordance with the particularistic trend Courage To Refuse tends to follow. It is not occupation *per se* that is wrong but the specific occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip that is detrimental to the future of the country.

Yesh Gvul on the other hand, publicly compares itself to other movements. They tie themselves to the civil-rights movement and the Vietnam anti-war movement in the US, and to the End Conscription Campaign in South Africa. These movements rely heavily on the works of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. and their theories of non-violent resistance and civil disobedience. These theories are rooted in the universal themes of injustice and justifications of disobedience. Yesh Gvul frames the occupation under a universal notion of immorality and justifies the refusal under the same ideal. By connecting themselves to other movements in time and space, Yesh Gvul tries to appeal to a more universal claim that occupation is always unjustified and that any non-violent action to try to stop it is justified. This appeal to the public can be stronger because it tries to frame war and occupation in a more general way, without the emotions that come with the Israeli case. Yesh Gvul hopes that if the public can relate to the struggles of other people, done out of rational thinking, then maybe they can see the similarities of the injustices of the occupation in Israel. If one agrees that the whites in South Africa were justified in their refusal to serve in an army that supported apartheid and enforced inequalities, then maybe they can see that refusing to serve in an occupying army in Israel is also justifiable. Yesh Gvul believes that comparing themselves to other movements

only strengthens their legitimacy because it appeals to people's general notions of justice and morality.

Despite the fact that Courage To Refuse prefers not to compare itself to other refusal movements, there is one social-political movement that serves as an exception. Both groups like to mention the success of "Four Mothers." It is widely believed that "Four Mothers" contributed to the military withdrawal from Lebanon in July of 2000. In February 1997, after a collision between two helicopters flying to Southern Lebanon led to the death of 73 soldiers, four women (mothers of soldiers who had served over the course of the years in Lebanon) demonstrated at a crossroads in northern Israel, protesting the occupation of Southern Lebanon. Despite the government decision to withdraw in 1985, the military was still present in a "security zone" to provide safety for the northern border. The military presence led to the death of hundreds of soldiers over the years. The initial four mothers drew huge attention and wide public support. The call for withdrawal grew well beyond the four mothers to all sectors of society (with 25,000 signatures on its petition) and it is believed to have influenced government policy. Although "Four Mothers" did not use tactics of civil disobedience and refusal to serve, the mythic strength of the movement was highly influential. This was a movement that managed to influence government policy in the military realm. It showed how the public can influence policy through a political movement. "Four Mothers" serves as a symbolic movement and provides Yesh Gvul and Courage To Refuse known repertoires that both can use. Courage To Refuse can relate to the movement because it was also case specific and dealt with the uniqueness of the Israeli situation. Although Courage To Refuse does not use the same cultural resources that "Four Mothers" did, it believes in its symbolic

strength. The fact that a small group of people managed to influence government policy has great ideational strength. It points to the fact that if successful, a social-political movement can change the political reality. Yesh Gvul can relate to “Four Mothers” because it both spoke the language of illegality and immorality (of the occupation of Southern Lebanon) and because of the similar cultural resources used. They also gain encouragement from the fact that a social movement is capable of changing and influencing government policy.

Use of Elites and Other Movements

Both groups use the various elites in the country to act as supporters and legitimize their cause. The intellectual elite in Israel are traditionally positioned on the left end of the political spectrum. There is widespread support of the refusal movement amongst the intellectuals. Yesh Gvul asks leading intellectuals (writers, academics, artists) to perform and speak at their various workshops and events. By enlisting intellectuals, Yesh Gvul hopes to gain more legitimacy amongst the public. Many intellectuals have written in the daily newspapers and signed the various petitions in favor of the refusal. Most do not differentiate between the two groups but support refusal and the goal of withdrawal in general.

The case of the political elite is different. Very few politicians will publicly support the refusal movement, although some might behind closed doors. At present, only one member of the Knesset, Roman Bronfman of Meretz, has openly stated that he supports refusal. Despite the fact that politicians might ideologically support the idea, for political reasons they wish to remain silent on the matter. Other members of the left-wing

parties claim that even though they support withdrawal, the tactic of refusal is illegal and therefore they cannot support it. A leading name in Israeli politics that supports the refusal movement is Shulamit Aloni. Aloni was the former chairperson of Meretz and held various cabinet positions. Aloni is known for her left-wing politics and although she is now retired, still speaks out on many occasions. The political members of the right-wing parties are more outspoken in their condemnation of the refusal.

There are other social movements who support the refusal movements. Both Yesh Gvul and Courage To Refuse try to mobilize support of political movements that are dedicated to the withdrawal from the territories. Both groups try to use the networks of Peace Now and the Refuser Solidarity Network (RSN). They use them to increase their circulation of support and to campaign for funds (especially through RSN which is based in the US and can therefore raise funds from American contributors). RSN is an organization that is founded and consists of Jewish supporters with emotional and ideological ties to Israel. Yesh Gvul however, does not limit itself to Jewish supporters. They are also connected with other organizations such as the Vietnam veterans. Courage To Refuse limits itself to support from Jewish contributors. This again shows how Yesh Gvul sees the injustice as a universal issue whereas Courage To Refuse sees the problem as a particularistic Israeli one. By using only Jewish networks of support, Courage To Refuse wishes to stress the notion of the problem as being one regarding Jews and Israel. Yesh Gvul however, by increasing its web of support, uses a more universal approach in its appeal.

Specific differences in use of the Cultural Resources

The following section focuses on the more specific deployment of cultural resources. The previous section dealt with the structural aspects, according to social movement theory and the general differences between the groups and their actions. This section will focus on the differences in their use of symbols, discourse and rhetoric while framing refusal and mobilizing support. The way the groups use these cultural resources influences the amount of support and public acceptance that the groups manage to generate. It is the specific use of cultural resources that contribute and affect their legitimacy and success.

Framing of the Injustices

Each group frames the problem they wish to address differently. They differ in their use of the hegemonic discourse and the appeal of the specificity of Israeli history. Framing is traditionally referred to in social movement literature as the collective process of interpretation and social construction (Snow & Rochford & Burke & Benford, 1986; Snow & Benford, 1988; Benford & Snow 2000). Framing is based on the larger context of societal values and is drawn from the existing political culture. Different meanings can be constructed from the same discourse, and each movement engages in the construction of meaning and portrayal of the injustices as well as offering a pathway to change (Zald, 1995). This is not only a strategic tool but also an interactive construction of the dispute among those wishing to challenge the injustice. The cultural resources help constrain and

shape the framing efforts (Tarrow et al, 2002). Frames are derived from the beliefs and identities that are developed by the public discourse; and also influence public discourse by how the issues are framed. The process of the construction of frames is an interactive one where the discourse is both drawn from the existing culture and also influences it. Both Courage To Refuse and Yesh Gvul act under the existing political culture and mentality yet each construct and interpret different meanings to frame and justify selective refusal.

Yesh Gvul frames the problem under the discourse of universal morality and injustice. They rely on notions of justness and legitimacy taken from the traditional secular theories of civil disobedience. They focus on the immorality of the occupation and on the need to use civil disobedience tactics as part of their idealist discourse. Notions of civic responsibility are central to their argument and they perceive themselves as followers of a tradition set by Gandhi and King Jr. They claim that the occupation is immoral and therefore any soldier participating in this act is acting immorally. Yesh Gvul's website claims that the occupation "places...servicemen in a grave moral and political dilemma, as they are required to enforce policies they deem illegal and immoral" and that "they cannot in good conscience obey the orders of their superiors" (About Us, 2004). To conquer and occupy a different people is unjust, therefore this war is unjust and soldiers have the right and the obligation to disobey and refuse to serve. The testimonies of the soldiers active in Yesh Gvul reiterate this notion of immorality and injustice. One activist states that he is "commit[ed] to the principles of justice, honesty and fairness" and that the "systematic denial of human rights...is [not] in keeping with basic moral principles" (Kidron, 2004, p. 82). Another adds that the "responsibility for

committing immoral acts...lies with all those ready to carry them out even though they do not agree with them” and therefore it is a “basic human duty to refuse such reserve service” (Kidron, 2004, p. 86). Again, an ethical argument is used to justify refusal. Soldiers are obligated to refuse such actions they deem to be immoral. Perhaps the most telling testimony is that of a refuser who justifies his actions by stating that “I was convinced that refusal was the only step I can take to reconcile my deeds with my conscience, with my overall rights granted to every human being” (Kidron, 2004, p. 107). This statement frames the refusal as an act of conscience, stemming out of a moral dilemma and justified by universal values of justness and morality.

Yesh Gvul distributes leaflets to soldiers which questions whether the acts in the territories are moral. It states that “there are instructions, orders and duties that are ‘legal’ but immoral” and that “these are things – even if termed ‘legal’ – that decent people do not do” (Kidron, 2004, p. 84) The distinction between legal and moral is important in that it asks the soldiers to differentiate between the two concepts and to try to follow their conscience and not necessarily their orders. The use of the term *decent* calls upon the soldiers to use their moral conscience in asking what kind of actions decent people take. Yesh Gvul tries to appeal to the moral values of soldiers and tries to justify acts of refusal when they are deemed as immoral and going against a *decent* person’s conscience.

This type of argument is rooted in the classical civil disobedience literature. Yesh Gvul consciously uses it to justify disobedience. They claim that the refusal “applies to the principles of civil disobedience, as pioneered by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., to a military context” (Kidron, 2004, p. 55). The use of the civil disobedience tradition can justify refusal because it frames disobedience in a context that is universally

accepted when going up against illegal and immoral acts of government. The immoral policy of the government in this case is the occupation and it is framed in a manner which supports the notion of an unjust war, warranting disobedience. Yesh Gvul frames both the occupation and the service in the territory with notions of immorality and injustice. These universal notions are ones that the general public can identify with.

The historical narrative of Zionism emphasizes the notion of a just society. In its early years it was often stated that the state of Israel must be a beacon to other nations, and to provide an example of how a just society must operate. Yesh Gvul has taken this notion of building a just society as the wider discourse under which they frame the problem of the occupation and the justification of selective refusal. A just society is contradictory to an occupying society and so, to achieve the Zionist goal, the occupation must cease. Yesh Gvul claims that it “rejects the abuse of military might for unworthy ends such as wars of aggression, or violent subjugation of a civilian population” (Kidron, 2004). The “unworthy ends” that it is referring to is the occupation of another people. Again, it is the use of moral rhetoric that tries to justify their cause. The goal of building a “just” society cannot be obtained if one is acting immorally. The use of moral justifications is widespread in the framing of the legitimization of refusing to serve.

Courage to Refuse, on the other hand, frames the problem in a different way. There is a realist cost-benefit militaristic analysis of the occupation. Courage to Refuse tries to incorporate the notion of disobedience in more pragmatic and militaristic terms. They frame the injustices of the occupation in security laden terms, therefore justifying disobedience. Withdrawal from the territories is not framed in the context of idealism and justness, but in militaristic terms. The movement started after reserve soldiers completed

their service in the Gaza strip. They came to the conclusion that the occupation had higher costs than benefits to the country. The original letter that established Courage To Refuse states that they (the officers) “were issued commands that had nothing to do with the security of our country” and that they had “seen the bloody toll” of the occupation. In addition, it states that “the missions of the occupation and oppression do not serve this [security] purpose” (Combatant’s Letter, 2002). These statements point to a rational analysis of the situation. These are ranked officers, officially trained to secure the country, claiming that the specific occupation and the commands given do not in fact contribute to secure the borders. The “heavy toll” that the occupation brings with it costs the country and its citizens more than it benefits its security. The website explains that the letter was written after the soldiers “realized that the missions...had in fact nothing to do with the defense of the State of Israel”; that “many of the commands issued to them were in fact *harmful* to the *strategic interests* of Israel” (emphasis mine); and that “the Occupation poses a threat to the security of Israel” (Combatants Letter, 2002).

From the testimonies of some of the signees it is possible to see this type of reasoning as well. One of the original co-signers of the letter, claims that the military presence in the territories “encourages terrorist actions”; is “unnecessary and dangerous” and that he “refuses to believe that there is no other choice” (Swirski, 2003). Another adds that “my presence cannot solve those problems” and that “these actions on the part of the IDF provide no protection for Israel” (Weiss, 2003). A different member of Courage To Refuse writes that “the only condition for resolving the [Israeli-Palestinian] conflict is to end the occupation” (Chacham, 2003, p. 127). Chacham (2003) quotes other refusers as claiming that the “Israeli government’s policies in the occupied territories are

fertilizers for suicide bombings. We produce the terror” (p. 126). Other members add that “the occupation regime is a security disaster, its perpetuation a grave blow at national security” (Kidron, 2004, p.109).

These are soldiers who in the past might have voiced their opinions on withdrawal from an ideological perspective. This time they decided that the presence of the IDF was a security cost, which was not leading to any foreseeable future benefit. The presence of the army was not reducing the security threat but only fostering more hate within the occupied civilian Arab population, therefore increasing chances for more terrorist acts. The IDF and the government claim that the occupation is necessary to provide safety for the Israeli population. However, the increasing presence only fosters more hate and increases the numbers of those willing to commit terrorist acts, therefore endangering the country more than providing safety for it. After having served in the territories numerous times over a course of several years, they saw that the situation only worsened and came to the conclusion that the military presence was not the proper solution. And so, for security purposes, it is necessary to withdraw. This type of argument is a realist one, framed in militaristic terms.

It is important to note that the cost is a moral one as well as material. The moral cost is the same as that of Yesh Gvul’s, in that soldiers who have to occupy another people and soldiers who have to come face to face with violence on a daily basis lose some of their moral fiber. The original combatants’ letter states that the “price of the occupation is the loss of the IDF’s human character and corruption of society” The letter also terms the occupation as an “oppression” of another people, pointing to a moral

argument. However, although the refusal is rooted in issues of morality, Courage To Refuse tries to appeal to the public through militaristic and patriotic values.

Courage To Refuse emphasizes the fact that refusal is an act of patriotism out of concern for the future of the country. The letter states that those who have signed “declare we shall continue serving in the IDF on any mission that serves Israel’s defense”. The movement’s official website publishes members’ testimonies enforcing this notion of patriotism and their emotional connection to the country. One states that he “wants to live in this country [Israel] and raise children here” and that the “refusal should come from us who are loyal and serve the country” (Swirski, 2002) while another claims that he is “glad to serve as long as the objective is not connected with subduing the Palestinian population” (Weiss, 2003). Another member explains that “the same sense of commitment and responsibility that led us to become combat officers informed our decision to make sure our soldiers did not think we were abandoning them...we were struggling for them”(Chacham, 2003, p. 60-61). All these statements frame the refusal in patriotic and militaristic terms to justify and strengthen their refusal. The soldiers try to emphasize the fact that they are refusing out of concern for the security and future of their nation. Loyalty to their country and its ideals forces them to refuse to comply with a policy they perceive as being detrimental to its future. Courage To Refuse tries to appeal to the militaristic culture by framing the need for selective refusal in realist, militaristic and patriotic terms.

Both groups try to work within the broader cultural boundaries to frame their legitimacy. The Israeli hegemonic discourse is made up of Zionist ideals. Both try to use different aspects of the hegemonic discourse to frame the refusal. Yesh Gvul claims that

its source of authority lies in the universal notions of morality and justness (P. K. personal communication, January 1, 2004). Notions of morality and justness are part of the hegemonic discourse in that early Zionism tried to appeal to these notions. The attempt at building a just society was always present in Zionist discourse. Yesh Gvul uses the universal morality aspect of the hegemonic discourse to legitimate the refusal. By refusing to serve, a soldier is following his moral obligations, even if they do go against his political and civic responsibilities. "It is morally impossible to be both a devoted democratic citizen and a regular offender against democratic values" (Menuchin 2003). Menuchin's statement shows the contradiction between serving in the territories (a citizen's obligation) and trying to remain true to one's moral conscience. Menuchin (2003) adds that by refusing, "we can show our fellow citizens that the occupation of the territories is not just a political or strategic matter. It is also a moral matter." This statement calls upon notions of morality and uses ethical terms to legitimize the injustice. By refusing to serve, a soldier is following his moral conscience and not his political obligations. An advertisement that Yesh Gvul published states that "on us [the occupation] incurs erosion of moral values" (Kidron, 2004, p. 97). Again, they are using the universal discourse of morality to legitimize the action of refusal. Framing both the occupation and the refusal in ethical terms, and using universal notions of morality and justness, legitimizes refusing to serve in an unjust war. Yesh Gvul's uses that specific aspect of the hegemonic discourse to try to appeal to the public.

Courage To Refuse claims that its source of authority is from Zionism, the Declaration of Independence and the Bible (A. D. personal communication, December 29, 2003). The use of the bible and its teachings to justify refusal is important because it

retains the Jewish value system and ideals. Courage To Refuse use the religious historical narrative to frame their refusal. Shamaï Leibowitz (grandson of the re-known Jewish philosopher and author Yishayahu Leibowitz) explains that the bible does not justify the occupation or the tactics used there. Biblical precedents of Abraham in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:24-25) and Jacob in the story of Nablus (Genesis 49:5) indicate this (Leibowitz 2002). The interpretations of these stories point to the fact that there is no justification for harming innocents and policies of collective punishment. The notion of individual responsibility is also found in the biblical sources in that the “wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him alone” and that “The soul that sins, it shall die” (Ezekial 18:20). This can again be interpreted as a criticism of the military policy to destroy homes of the families of the suicide bombers as a deterrent. If it is the bomber who had “sinned” the punishment should be theirs, and not their families. However, this can also be interpreted as emphasizing the notion of individual responsibility in the sense that just because other soldiers are complying with the commands, it is still up to the individual soldier to be held responsible for their own actions, therefore anything that they deem as being illegal should not be carried out. The refusal to participate in such actions becomes a religious imperative. The bible does not sanction a blind obedience to one’s country. Obedience *per se* as a value is not sacrosanct and therefore it is justifiable to refuse and disobey. The appearance of these interpretations of the biblical sources on Courage To Refuse’s website is evidence of the fact that they try to frame the refusal and justify it in a discourse that is both familiar and legitimate to the public of the Jewish state.

Zionism

The state of Israel was built on the Zionist movement. This is the historical narrative that every child grows up with. The appeal of Zionism to the public is that it is often considered to evoke nationalistic feelings. Zionism itself can be used as a cultural resource for these movements. Williams (2002) shows how religion was used as a cultural resource both in the civil rights movement and the rise of the Christian right. Both worked within the cultural boundaries and hegemonic religious discourse to different ends. Movements use a particular set of discourse and language that is connected to the larger context of the political culture. The language has to be innovative and yet familiar to appeal to the public. Hence, a reinterpretation of the hegemonic discourse is needed to strengthen the movements' claims. Different meanings can be read from the same overall discourse, which itself is situated within the larger cultural context (Kurzman, 2004). In the Israeli case, Zionism is the larger cultural context and each group takes different meanings from this same overall discourse. The use of the hegemonic discourse and the various aspects of Zionism are important to construct subsets of discourses that are both transformative yet constrained by the hegemonic meanings they wish to challenge (Whittier, 2002). A tactic of "selective adoption" of Jewish and Zionist elements is used to provide a set of discourse that the public can relate to. Each group tries to work within the Zionist hegemonic discourse and yet constructs different meanings and two different subsets of discourses – one of post-Zionism and one of a subsidiary type of bourgeois-liberal Zionism.

Yesh Gvul uses a post-Zionist discourse. Kidron (personal communication January 1, 2004) claims that labor-Zionism is “an ideology devoid of content”. This critique of Zionism claims that the earlier interpretations of Zionism led to racial policies. It claims that Labor-Zionism tried to build its strength on notions that were both racist and intolerant. Post-Zionism tries to appeal to universal notions of justness and morality, claiming that Zionism today, after the formation of the state of Israel is an empty notion. Yesh Gvul is one of the avant-garde movements of the post-Zionist ideology (Ram, 2003). Post-Zionism as a political approach came about in the 1980’s with the appearance of the “new historians” who tried to debunk the political myths of the labor-Zionist ethos and is considered to be characteristic of the radical political left. Yesh Gvul appeared on the scene around the same time as part of this ideology. They are part of the post-Zionist school of thought, which focuses on the notions of civic nationalism. It adheres to the idea that the state of Israel is the source of identity, that belonging comes from a shared common citizenship, and to the universalistic and normalizing dimensions of secular Zionism. Post-Zionism focuses on a political culture based on universalistic and globalistic norms (Ram, 2003). Yesh Gvul focuses on notions of social responsibility and citizenship of a secular entity. Citizens are responsible to the society they live in. In this case, the society is the state of Israel and citizenship comes from a secular notion of belonging, not a religious or ethnic-national (Jewish) affiliation. This type of reinterpretation can be seen in the way Yesh Gvul honors some of the national holidays. It offers alternate forms of celebration. National holidays such as Independence Day and Passover are reinterpreted as commemorating notions of freedom, and provide for a different type of celebration than the traditional form. The alternate forms of celebration

provide post-Zionist interpretations of the national-religious holidays and a more secular way to take part in the national holidays. Yesh Gvul adheres to the secular and universal notions of post-Zionism in its attempt to appeal to the public and to legitimate its acts of refusal.

Courage To Refuse uses a Zionist discourse that has some elements of post-Zionism in it, in its attempt to appeal to the public. Ram (2003) calls this a bourgeois-liberalism, which derives from the traditional Zionist narrative. They do not try to empty Zionism of its content but to reinterpret it in a way that will fit today's society and ideals. There is still the belief in the notion of the Jewish state but also an emphasis on its democratic aspect. The belief that a Jewish-democratic state is possible is still prevalent in this discourse. This discourse claims that a civic nationalism can go hand in hand with an ethnic one, as long as the religious aspect is removed. The religious aspect (characteristic of neo-Zionism) is the notion of the sanctity of the land. The biblical land of Israel is a central part of the historical narrative of neo-Zionists and the political right. Their justification of the need to occupy the West Bank is that those territories are part of the biblical land of Israel. The liberal reinterpretation of Zionism claims that it is possible to remain Jewish and democratic, as long as the notion of the sanctity of the land is removed from the historical narrative. The three notions are always going to be in conflict with one another. Once the religious aspect is taken away, it is possible to remain an ethnic (Jewish) and civic nationalistic state.

This notion is part of Courage To Refuse's ideology. They are still rooted in Zionism but they wish to bring back the notion of secular Zionism and leave out elements of the sanctity of the land as that is a conflict that can never be solved. Again, this is done

out of a security orientated way of looking at the situation. If the state wishes to exist, it is necessary to leave out the notion of the sanctity of the land and to withdraw from the territories that might be valued as religious in Jewish history. The original combatant letter (2002) written by the Courage To Refuse members states that they were all “raised upon principles of Zionism, sacrifice and giving to the people of Israel...in order to protect the State of Israel and strengthen it”. Courage To Refuse does not try to escape from the labeling of Zionism but reinterprets it under notions of patriotism and Jewish democratic values. According to Courage To Refuse, the occupation goes against Zionist values in that it cannot be compatible with democratic and Jewish values. One refuser explains that “our refusal stems from sanctification of life and the recognition that it supersedes all else...The settlers attach supreme importance to the sanctity of the location and the soil” (Kidron, 2004, p. 92) He emphasizes the notion of valuing life over soil as the main justification for refusal. In this case, the two notions conflict each other and for members of Courage To Refuse, life is more important than land. A different member states that “taking the meta-physical out of our ancient myths...you can maintain a sense of nationalism without denying the rights of the Other” (Chacham, 2003, p.135). The sanctity of the land must be removed from Zionism if the state wished to remain Jewish and democratic.

Another refuser explains that “Zionism is a movement for the creation of a safe democratic homeland for the Jewish people. A state moving on a non-democratic course does not implement Zionism” and ends his testimony with the following self-reflection “What is Zionism right now? It is refusal to take part in the occupation” (Kidron, 2004 p. 109). A different testimony adds that “refusal is practically the only Zionist position you

can assume today” because “the real threat to the State of Israel today is the occupation” (Chacham, 2003, p. 133). This line of thought is typical of liberal-Zionism. It is the democratic notions that are valued above the sanctity of the land. By claiming that to remain Zionist one must refuse to partake in the occupation, there is an acceptance of the fact that even though there are religious aspects to the land, they should be discarded in light of remaining true to the democratic values. By reiterating past notions of Zionism as being the creation of a homeland for the “Jewish people”, there is the acknowledgement that it is possible to be Jewish and democratic. *Courage To Refuse* members reinterpret notions of patriotism and Zionism to justify their refusal. Zionism is reinterpreted into a patriotic act, and it is the loyalty to the state and its values, which justifies refusal. The statement of, “It is us the Zionists, it is us who care” shows how they view refusal as a patriotic and Zionist act.

Biblical references are also used to support withdrawal. There are numerous places in the bible where the notion of sharing and splitting the land can be found. Examples for such compromises are the pact made between Abraham and Abimelech (Chacham, 2004, p. 92) or even the one made between Esau and Jacob (Chacham, 2003, p. 93). Both stories show that making peace with your enemies is of higher value than sanctifying the land. The land can be shared and split between two people as a compromise to avoid war and violence. Peace is of higher value than the sanctity of the land. *Courage To Refuse* takes these biblical interpretations and emphasizes the Jewish ideals that can be incorporated into its Zionist thought. Zionism does not have to be secular and devoid of religious aspects but a reinterpretation of what it means to be Jewish can be used and can be compatible with democratic ideals.

Both movements try to use the hegemonic discourse of Zionism in their appeal. Yesh Gvul claims that Zionism in its contemporary form is a misleading concept and that the secular notions of statehood should be more important, in accordance with the rising post-Zionist ideology and the universalistic notions of social responsibility and secular citizenship. Despite the fact that this ideology opposes Zionism today, it is still rooted in notions of early secular Zionism (mainly the universalistic and civic norms). Courage To Refuse tries to reinterpret Zionism in a different way. They try to remain true to the Jewish ideals of Zionism, to the secular ideals of a civic nature and to the militaristic culture. They do not try to attack the current prevalence of the labor-Zionist ideology but to reinterpret it in such a way that fits in with their political goals. By remaining true to both the Jewish and democratic aspect, they can appeal to a larger sector of society. By removing only the notion of the sanctity of the land out of realist reasonings they try to appeal to the public. Both groups are trying to remain within the boundaries of the hegemonic discourse of Zionism with slightly different interpretations and sub-sets of historical narratives.

Symbolism

The use of a symbolic repertoire that remains within the cultural boundaries creates and communicates meaning (Williams, 2002). Symbols are signs (can be linguistic) that provide meanings and significance (Poletta, 2004) and different meanings can be constructed from similar symbols and sets of discourse (Steinberg, 2004). Again, it is Zionism and the militaristic culture, which provide the hegemonic culture out of which the two movements draw their symbolic signs and language. Both groups must

draw from the militaristic culture as their movements rely on soldiers who can best relate to this set of discourse. However, each group uses a different set of symbols and constructs a different set of meanings from the same militaristic culture.

Yesh Gvul uses the notion of the “thinking soldier” and the slogan of “soldier – where to?” (P.K. personal communication, January 1, 2004). Within the Israeli militaristic culture, the responsibility of soldiers is greatly emphasized. The IDF prides itself on the values it teaches its soldiers. One of these values is that of the “thinking soldier. A soldier must obey all rules yet some are subject to disobedience. A soldier must differentiate between what is considered to be a legal and an illegal order. It is his or her duty to not obey the illegal one. The IDF prides itself on the “doctrine of man and the honor of the soldier” which clearly states that soldiers are obligated to think. It uses slogans such as “man is above weapons”, “thought saves sweat and blood”, and “the battlefield of tomorrow needs capable and thinking soldiers” (IDF, 2004) The IDF distinguishes between “tamed” soldiers (who blindly obey every order) and “trained” soldiers (who responsibly obey orders). The thinking soldier is what provides the IDF with its superiority. The notion of “quality versus quantity” is often used and the quality is a result of the ability of its soldiers to think. These slogans and beliefs indicate that all soldiers (and therefore most of society) have been reared on the notions of the superiority and value of the thinking soldier. Yesh Gvul incorporates this symbol and “stresses the right and duty of every soldier to scrutinize the orders he receives, and reject duties he finds morally or politically repugnant.” (About Refusal, n.d.) In leaflets that Yesh Gvul distributes to soldiers, it asks them to ponder whether the acts they are asked to carry out are moral or not (Kidron, 2004) The leaflets include terms such as “ask yourself...” and

“soldier, it is in your hands” (Kidron, 2004, p. 102) to remind them of their responsibility to think about their actions before following orders. The words used in the leaflets emphasize and reiterate the notion of the “thinking soldier.”

Another symbol that is widely used in Yesh Gvul’s rhetoric is that of the “black flag”. The black flag refers to a term used when one is asked to do something illegal. When a soldier is given a flagrantly illegal order (or even just illegal⁹), it is supposed to raise a “black flag of illegality” and make the soldier think about the illegality of the order. This term was coined by a panel of judges who composed the verdict on the soldiers responsible for the Kassem village incident in 1956.¹⁰ This illegality “rescinds the soldiers’ duty to obey and charges him with criminal accountability for his actions.” (Kidron, 2004, p. 2). The notion of the “black flag” has since then become a central symbol in militaristic rhetoric. Yesh Gvul uses that symbol to justify the act of refusal. They claim that the orders given in the territories, as well as the occupation itself, should raise a black flag to the soldiers. Since they are the ones that should be held accountable for their actions, it is not only necessary but also justifiable to refuse to serve and disobey orders.

The other slogan that Yesh Gvul uses is that of “soldier – where to?” This resembles the notion of the thinking soldier. It asks of the soldier to contemplate on what his or her actions will lead to. The question of “where to” requires soldiers to be

⁹ The difference between the two is that according to IDF rules, when the order is flagrantly illegal, the soldier is not required to follow it and when it is only illegal, they are required to follow the order and then file a grievance against the commanding officer.

¹⁰ On October 29, 1956 the Israeli military placed a curfew on the Palestinian village. The villagers working in the fields did not hear of the curfew due to the fact that they were out in the fields. Upon their return to the village, the Israeli Border Guards killed 47 people and this incident is known as the Kfar Kassem massacre.

accountable for their actions and to take responsibility. This notion of the thinking soldier and the slogan of “where to” focus on the social responsibility of the soldiers, who are also citizens. It points to the universalistic notions of responsible citizens. Citizens hold a responsibility to the society they live in. Since in Israel most citizens are (or at least were) soldiers, their acts as a soldier and as a citizen are one of the same. Whether they are wearing the uniform or not, they must be held responsible for the acts of society. The philosophy of Yesh Gvul and its educational efforts relies on the fact that citizen/soldiers must be reminded that “they bear a personal responsibility for the orders they obey” (Kidron, 2004, p. 97). In Israel, the unique situation of being “citizens in uniform” allows Yesh Gvul to follow its philosophy that soldiers “can and should be taught that not every task or duty to which they are directed is necessarily the proper role of an army” (Kidron, 2004, p. 97). They also try to teach that “obedience must have its limits, which are defined and dictated by the *moral conscience* and *social awareness* of each individual” (Kidron, 2004 p. 97; emphasis mine). It is the use of an ethical discourse and rhetoric that dictates Yesh Gvul’s efforts. The use of the words that refer to a moral discourse emphasizes Yesh Gvul’s universalistic approach and appeal. It reminds soldiers that it is the universal notions of justness and social responsibility that they must answer to. Following one’s moral conscience is of higher value than the obedience to the orders they receive. By reminding soldiers that they are responsible for their actions, Yesh Gvul appeals to the universalistic notion of social responsibility and building a just society. They require soldiers to question whether their actions and their ends are justified.

Courage To Refuse uses different symbols of Israeli discourse to further their cause. They focus on the “male, Zionist fighter” and use the Star of David as a symbol.

The three notions of Zionist, fighter and soldier go together. The male fighter fights for his country to preserve its Zionist values. With the inception of the state of Israel, Ben-Gurion formed the IDF. The IDF was formed out of the existing paramilitary organizations of the Yishuv (Palmach and Haganah). The new state needed a unified army to protect its borders. The leaders of the IDF were the Zionist leaders of the time and brought in many of the Zionist values to the military. The IDF values the combat soldier who protects the borders of the country to preserve its Zionist nature. The IDF prides itself on a tradition of leadership that is passed on to all generations of officers. In addition to being taught in officer school how to lead, there is also a more informal oral tradition that is passed down. This tradition values the notion of entrepreneurship. The Israeli officer finds solutions to all kinds of problems, even at the cost of disobeying orders. Some of the more notable generals in Israeli history are imaged as heroes for completing the task, even if it meant disobeying orders. The elite paratrooper units, shaped by Moshe Dayan and Ariel Sharon, are based on the notion of the entrepreneur leader as an intricate part of its tradition. During the 1950's both showed how breaking the rules can lead to victory (Ronen, 1989). As summed up by military historian Har-Zion (1969), "A mission was a mission, a goal was a goal, but each person was responsible for himself and his actions. Everyone could be an entrepreneur and had to be an entrepreneur" (p. 136). A deep tradition of disobedience and entrepreneurship exists when the officer believes that different actions will further the real cause. *Courage To Refuse*, by focusing on fighters (a fourth of who are officers) can relate to this militaristic tradition. The original letter begins with the statement "we combat officers and soldiers,

who have served...” This emphasizes the notion of being combat officers and soldiers and emphasizes the fact that they are fighters. It is the fighters who are refusing.

The slogan found on the bumper stickers and flags used and distributed by Courage to Refuse are “Israeli. Zionist. Fighter. Refuser.” The way the four notions are put together suggest that they are all of equal value. To be an Israeli means to be Zionist, to be a fighter and to be a refuser. They are all equal concepts and equal in their importance. Other slogans widely used are those of “Objection to the Occupation is Zionism” and “Refusing for Israel”. These two also emphasize the notion that those who refuse are patriotic and that it is the loyalty to their country that leads them to these actions. These slogans try to evoke nationalistic sentiments and try to remain true to the militaristic discourse. The refusers are actually soldiers who are fighting for the future of their country, only their fight comes in the form of refusal. The Star of David is also used by Courage To Refuse. This is the sign that appears on the Israeli flag and symbolizes the Jewish nature of the state. The Star of David is taken from biblical references. David was known for his capabilities as a warrior and by choosing this symbol, Courage To Refuse adheres to the Jewish and civic nature of the state, and to the fighting heroic nature of its citizens.

Both groups use symbols found in the hegemonic discourse of Israeli culture. However, each group tries to create different meanings and define the public debate in a different manner. Both groups use symbols found in the militaristic culture yet provide a different argument in an attempt to justify their cause and appeal to the public. Each group tries to mobilize supporters using a different set of symbolic repertoires. Yesh Gvul tries to appeal to the notion of civic responsibility and universal notions of injustice and

the illegal actions of the military while Courage To Refuse tries to appeal to the more patriotic, masculine and fighting aspect of the militaristic culture.

Organizational Structure

The structure of the organizations themselves reflects the culture of the movements. The form of the organization itself is symbolic of the cultural dimension of the movement and their internal practices have a symbolic dimension that is inter-related with the larger cultural context. The interaction between the cultural context and the internal dynamics and structure of the organization constructs meaning and identities to promote mobilization (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004). A brief look at the organizational structure of the two movements provides information on what type of cultural resource they each try to tap into. Courage To Refuse is structured in a hierarchical way. There are several teams, each in charge of a different aspect (such as public relations and media, legal, internet and newsletter, and foreign relations) with a CEO who supervises the operations of the various teams. This type of order is very similar to how the military is structured – different divisions in charge of the different military forces (infantry, artillery, intelligence, logistics etc) with the chief of staff at the head supervising all operations. This type of military hierarchy signifies the use of the militaristic culture that Courage To Refuse uses and is framed by. The internal dynamics are shaped by the larger context of militarism. Their appeal to the militaristic culture is what shapes and is shaped by the structure of the organization.

Yesh Gvul is different in its structure. It is of a more anarchic and non-formal nature. There are no official titles for the members and the responsibilities are distributed

on an ad-hoc basis. The members meet on a regular basis and all decide on a plan of action. At each meeting, the distribution of roles is made for the specific action that was decided upon. All members who are present at the meeting have an equal say in the decision-making and deliberative process. This type of structure points to a more egalitarian and democratic culture. Yesh Gvul interacts with the larger context of democracy and egalitarianism (a notion found in early secular-Zionism) as its cultural resource. The cultural dimension of the universal notion of equality shapes the internal dynamics. The appeal to equality and egalitarian-democracy signifies its use of the wider cultural context.

The specific cultural resources used show the difference between the two groups. Their use of the different discourses, rhetoric and symbols show how each group is trying to appeal to the public in a different manner. Each group hopes to gain public support by tapping in to a different aspect of the collective cultural identity. The different types of appeal lead to the two movements' different degrees of effectiveness..

*Use of the Civilian Courts as a Cultural tool and the Case of
Zonshein vs. Minister of Defense:*

The following section focuses on a specific use of a cultural resource. It is important because it shows how Courage to Refuse tries to take advantage of one more tactic to mobilize support. The use of the courts is consistent with Courage to Refuse's particularistic nature in that it uses an institution that is specific to Israeli society. They do not attempt to use the International Courts of Justice and remain within the boundaries of the Israeli institutions. The high court in Israel is perceived as the most trustworthy institution in the country and shapes Israeli culture. It is perceived as the guardian of the democratic aspect of the state and as protecting liberal values and human rights. Since Israel does not have a written constitution, it is up to the courts to guarantee human and civil rights. With the military being such a central institution of the state, great emphasis is put on the high courts to shape its democratic values. Traditionally, the executive branch has been powerful and central in the shaping of Israeli culture but since the 1970's the courts' centrality in shaping the dominant culture has been on the rise (Barzilai & Yaar Tuchman, 1992).¹¹ The main public perception is that the court is the trust worthiest and least corrupt of the all the political and government institutions. However, despite its

¹¹This is due to the fact that there is more and more discontent with the executive branch as they are perceived as becoming more corrupt. The courts have escaped this perception and are accepted as the least corrupt of the government institutions.

rising importance, the court still tries to avoid ruling on general security policies, especially those enacted beyond the green line. Despite this general tendency, there have been several rulings favoring individual rights over national security issues.

Throughout the history of the state, there have been several cases where citizens have appealed to the higher courts to allow them to conscientiously object to service. The cases have always dealt with the notion of conscience objection and not political objection. Those cases dealt with soldiers requesting total exemption from military service out of conscientious reasons. In 1980, the civilian high court was asked to intervene in military policy regarding selective refusal. Until that time, the military's policy was to allow reserve soldiers requesting not to serve beyond the green line an alternative place of service. Private Gadi Elgazi, an enlistee, put in a similar request but was denied by the military and stationed in the West Bank. Elgazi appealed to the high court claiming that the military was using discriminatory policies in that it allowed reserve soldiers to ask not to serve in specific places while enlisted soldiers were not given that privilege. Before the courts could rule however, the military changed its policies and did not satisfy the reservists' requests anymore. The issue of discrimination was no longer relevant as neither type of soldiers' requests were positively received. However, the ruling of the court did state that a military system could not allow its soldiers to dictate where they would be stationed, whether it is out of economic, social or conscientious reasons (Elgazi v Minister of Defense, 1980).

Shortly after, during the Lebanon War, when the notion of selective refusal became more widespread, the high court was used to intervene in another case of political refusal. This case became the precedent for the treatment of selective refusers. Yossi

Shein (one of the founders of Yesh Gvul) refused to serve in Lebanon, claiming that his conscience cannot allow him to serve in a place that he perceives as illegally occupied. The high court ruled against him, claiming that refusing to obey a military order (in this case the location of service) out of political-ideological reasons harms the democratic order and causes discrimination within the enlisting process. Furthermore, it claimed that acknowledging selective refusal does not exist in countries that allow total refusal as a reason for exemption from military service. Therefore, it is inconceivable that in Israel, a country that does not even acknowledge total refusal, selective refusal will be allowed. (Shein vs Minister of Defense) The importance of this case was that it set precedence for anyone trying to appeal to the higher courts that selective refusal should be acknowledged by the military.¹² It set a legal and normative framework for how to relate to selective refusal and delegitimized it as being a threat to democracy.

In 2002, David Zonshein tried to engage the higher court again but knew that the context of his appeal had to be different for his case to be heard. The novelty of the Zonshein case (*Zonshein v Minister of Defense, 2002*) is that it attempted to bring the political aspect of objection to be dealt with on a national and civilian level. The previous cases dealt with the wish to acknowledge the right of soldiers to refuse to serve in specific places. This case wished to deal with the political aspect of the occupation and less with the rights of objection issue. Generally, soldiers who refuse to serve are sent to prison under disciplinary proceedings according to military rule. They do not stand before a court but are sentenced by their superior officers (according to military law).

¹² Another attempt of *Machnes v Minister of Defense*, where the claim specified that refusal should be allowed because of the policies enacted in the territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the courts reiterated the Shein ruling.

David Zonshein decided to appeal to the military courts and asked for a military trial. This move would have allowed for testimonies to be heard and for a more elaborate hearing yet it also included a risk since a guilty verdict by the courts could give a sentence of up to three years (compared to the maximum of 45 days in which the disciplinary proceedings allow). The Military Advocate General refused to hear the case and returned it to the disciplinary court. Zonshein appealed to the civilian high court against this ruling. The appeal questioned the attorney's decision and dealt with the legality of denying a military court to rule on the imprisonment of soldiers of conscience and selective refusers. Zonshein, a forming member of Courage To Refuse, wanted to bring the issue of the occupation under the court's scrutiny and make the case a public debate. The goal was to make the legality of the occupation a legal issue and to create a debate amongst both the legal and political elites, and the public.

Courage To Refuse, by appealing to the higher courts hoped to create a debate regarding the occupation and its legality as well as the violation of human rights that occur under this occupation. They had hoped that by claiming the occupation as being illegal, they could justify the refusal and sway the political elites and create a political agenda for withdrawing from the territories. If the courts agree that the occupation is illegal, or even that the military presence violates human rights and goes against liberal values, then there is room for discussion regarding withdrawal. The courts, as an institution shaping political culture can influence public opinion and increase the likelihood of withdrawal. Courage To Refuse hoped that even if eventually the ruling would go against the legality of refusal, the case itself would demand wide media coverage, which would foster debate amongst the public and politicians.

However, they failed in this attempt and the discussion remained about the use of “conscience” and what that entails. It became a case about conscientious objection, a case which the selective refusers could not make since theirs is a political objection and not one of pacifism. The courts focused on the issue of objection. Supreme Justice Barak claimed that the general policy of not exempting anyone from service is reasonable and therefore the military has the right to decide who is a “real” conscientious objector. The central issue, the legality of the occupation and the right to selectively refuse was not the main issue of the case and so Courage To Refuse, represented by Zonshein, failed in their attempt and the courts ruled against them (claiming that they could not make a case and so there was not even a discussion and the case was thrown out before it could even become a public debate – no media coverage etc).

The importance of this case to this study is that it shows how Courage To Refuse tries to use a specific cultural tool to justify its cause. The fact that they failed to do so was due to their lack of a justified (in the eyes of the court) legal case. Their attempt to use the court as a cultural tool was a tactical decision yet the way they went about it was wrong. They are the first to admit that this attempt failed because of the way they raised the issue (A.D. personal communication, December 29, 2003). Had they phrased their appeal in a different manner, they might have gotten a different ruling and allowed for the case to be discussed in the courts, thereby creating a debate over the issue of the occupation. Despite this fact and the strength of the high courts in shaping Israeli and culture and identity, both Courage To Refuse and Yesh Gvul have refrained from using the courts to justify refusal. It is important to note that Yesh Gvul has appealed on numerous occasions to the higher court regarding issues of specific violation of human

rights in the territories, the treatment of prisoners and even as to the legality of appointing Dan Haluz to the new deputy chief of staff. However, they have yet to appeal to the courts regarding selective refusers. They are aware of the fact that the state can never allow this to be legal and the difficulty in distinguishing between political and conscientious objectors and so do not attempt to use the courts as a cultural tool to create legitimacy of the refusal movement.

VI. Effectiveness

Effectiveness in this study is measured in several ways. The first measurement is the actual number of active and passive supporters each group has. As of October 15, 2004 the number of refusers has risen to the number of 1376 with 14,000 signatures on the supporting petitions. This is a large number in the context of Israeli military force which relies heavily on its reserve forces. As to date, Courage to Refuse has 623 signers on its active petition – reservists who refuse to serve whereas Yesh Gvul has 411 on its own petition. The additional refusers are either those who refuse without signing any petitions or those who have signed both petitions. Therefore, in terms of active supporters, the number of actual objectors (both reserve and enlisted), each movement is similar in its effectiveness. In addition to the actual refusers, there is also the factor of passive supporters, those who show up for protests and demonstrations. Despite the absence of formal records as to the number of protestors arriving at the regular protest scenes, the leaders of Yesh Gvul estimate that the numbers vary from a few dozen to a couple hundred for the regular protests. The variance depends mostly on weather conditions and timing of the demonstrations – whether they occur on a Friday night or Saturday - as well as the political timing. After a controversial military act or the imprisonment of new objectors the number of supporters at the demonstration tends to rise into the hundreds (D. T. personal communication August 17, 2004; P. K. personal

communication, August 18, 2004). This is a large number when taking into consideration the fact that the vigils in front of the prisons are held on a regular basis. A consistent number of supporters indicate that there is a real commitment to the cause within a large amount of the population. On special occasions such as the alternative Independence Day celebrations, the numbers tend to reach the thousands (D. T. personal communication August 17, 2004; P. K. personal communication, August 18, 2004). This again is a large number when considering the fact that the entire population of Israel is approximately 6.7 million.

Courage to Refuse does not stage regular demonstrations but does organize occasional protests when the political situation demands it. On May 12, 2004 a large political demonstration was held as a response to the proposed unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Courage to Refuse claims that 500 demonstrators arrived at the scene in support of their cause. It seems as if Yesh Gvul is more successful in mobilizing passive supporters. The regularity of its demonstrations takes a heavy emotional toll on the individuals and the fact that there is a consistency in the numbers shows that they are effective in their mobilizing tactics. The fact that they can reach a couple of thousand of supporters for their special occasions suggest that they are more effective. Courage to Refuse enlisted 500 supporters for its demonstration, which is an admirable number but small when compared to that of Yesh Gvul. Therefore, in terms of passive support, it seems as if Yesh Gvul is slightly more effective in its attempt to mobilize support.

Legitimation

Legitimation in this study is a product of public support and acceptance, and was measured in three different ways. The first way of looking at legitimation is that it is a product of mobilization. Therefore, the more people a group is able to mobilize, the more it is publicly accepted. As explained in the previous section, it seems as if there is similar active support and a slight difference in passive support between the two groups. In terms of legitimation, it seems as if there is an equal amount of public support amongst the two groups.

The second measurement of legitimation is the public opinion polls conducted by independent research facilities in Israel. These polls indicate public acceptance of refusal and give insight to the public's response to the phenomenon itself. Public opinion polls taken by two of the more prestigious research institutions in the country referred to the acceptance of the refusal phenomenon, but not to the difference between the groups. These polls show the public's level of acceptance of refusal as a political tactic and their support of the refusal movements in achieving their goals. An increase in public acceptance is evidence of public legitimation.

The third measure of legitimation analyzes the media's portrayal and depiction of the movements. The way the media frames the movements and their actions can be either reinforcing or adversarial (Gamson, 1995). If the media is reinforcing then it works towards fostering public legitimation. The media can portray the movements as being part of a marginalized political discourse or they can depict them as being part of a legitimate mainstream debate. However, the media's response is to the overall refusal

phenomenon and does not explicitly differentiate between the two groups. Whilst interviewing a random selection of the public, again, a reaction to the phenomenon itself was observed, whereas there was hardly any perception of the differences between the two groups. However, by analyzing the discourse used by the media in portraying the refusal groups' actions, one can infer which appeal is more effective. If the media responses use Yesh Gvul's discourse of universal humanistic values in supporting the movements, then the claim can be made that it is more effective in its public appeal whereas if the more militaristic and realist discourse of Courage to Refuse is used then that is the more resonant appeal. The study focuses on a content analysis of the newspaper texts. The two newspapers studied are the two popular dailies – *Yediot Aharonot* and *Ma'ariv*. These two newspapers do not belong to any political wing. Their publicists belong to both the right and left of the political spectrum and there is no one political line that the newspapers try to adhere to.

The extensive media coverage of the refusal phenomenon suggests that the movements are effective in their public appeal. As mentioned previously, the uniqueness of this case is that in the same existing reality, with the same political goals, two movements operate differently. Despite the fact that they operate with a different set of values, they are both working towards the same goal. Each group focuses on a different set of values, therefore appealing to a different sector of the public. A larger number of people are influenced and this increases the amount of supporters. The fact that each takes a different path towards the same goal creates wider public support. Although the groups compete for the same type of supporters (both active and passive), their different strategic actions increase public legitimation of the refusal phenomenon and will

increase the chance for the achievement of the overall goal of withdrawal from the territories (which both share). The next section will deal with the legitimization of the refusal phenomenon as a measure of effectiveness for both movements.

Public Response

In May, 2004 an opinion survey was published by Asher Arian, professor at the University of Haifa, and director of the National Security Policy and Public Opinion Project of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University. This opinion poll is part of the center's annual study, and this time questions regarding the refusal phenomenon were incorporated. The results showed that 25% legitimized refusal to serve in the territories. Out of that 25%, 19% believed in the right to refuse both the order to serve in the territories and the order to evacuate settlers; and only 6% believed that only the right to refuse to serve in the territories can be legitimized (while 8% legitimized the right to refuse to evacuate settlers and not the right to refuse to serve in the territories). The following is a table of the breakdown of the results of the study (Arian, 2003, p. 39)

Table 1. *Israeli Public Opinion on National Security 2003*

Refusing a Military Order
Must obey both orders: 67%
May refuse removal of settlers but not service in territories: 8%
May refuse either order: 19%
May refuse service in territories but not removal of settlers: 6%

Arian goes on to explain:

Of those who said that it was permissible to disobey the order to serve in the territories, 75% said it was also permissible to disobey the order to vacate settlers. On the other side, 69% of those who said that a soldier may disobey an order to vacate settlers said that a soldier may also refuse to serve in the territories. Respondents in the political center tended to be more insistent about the obeying of both types of orders, whereas members of both ends of the political spectrum tended to be more willing to have a soldier disobey both orders (2003, p. 38).

These findings imply that the main issue concerning the public is that of the right to refuse an order. Both ends of the political spectrum are morally motivated and regard their political beliefs as being important, therefore justifying refusal when ordered to act against them. On the other hand, the political center places legality over morality and is more concerned with maintaining a lawful society. Table 2 shows the breakdown of those supporting refusal according to political affiliations. The table emphasizes the point that those on both ends of the political spectrum have a higher tendency to support refusal, whether it is refusal to serve or refusal to evacuate settlers. This table points to the fact that there is higher support of refusal in general amongst the political left than there is amongst the political right. This is in accordance with the notion that the political left places issues of morality over those of blind obedience to the state.

The results of the survey show that there is a relatively high acceptance of refusal within the public. A quarter of the population believes in the notion of the right to refuse.

The eight percent that believes in the right to refuse to evacuate settlers and the six percent who legitimize refusal to serve in the territories can be explained by the fact that they are motivated by their political beliefs. However, as an objective number, twenty-five percent is a relatively high number and suggests a large amount of support for the refusal movements.

Table 2: *Refusing an Order: Distribution by Political Self-Definition* (Arian, 2003, p. 41)

	Left						Right
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Right to refuse to remove settlers	44%	30%	28%	26%	17%	21%	35%
Right to refuse to serve in the territories	63%	39%	28%	25%	14%	16%	26%

In addition to Arian's survey, the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research has also included questions regarding refusal in their monthly polls. The Steinmetz Center conducts ongoing public opinion surveys regarding peace process issues. Since 2002, questions regarding the refusal have appeared four times in their studies, following instances of public debate, which was usually instigated by Courage to Refuse. The periods following the publications of the various letters (the original combatants' letter in January 2002, the pilots' letter in September 2003, and the matkal force letter in

December 2003) have led to public debate regarding these issues. The authors of the surveys, Professor Ephraim Yaar and Dr. Tamar Hermann, regarded the publications of the letters as having strong public effect. In January 2002, they reported that “on the issue of the ‘officers’ letter’ -- only a very small minority supports the refusal to serve and considers it a legal protest measure against government policy pertaining to the peace process” (Yaar & Hermann, 2002a). Only fifteen percent of the population accepted refusal as a legitimate form of protest and 79% regarded it as illegitimate (Yaar & Hermann, 2002a).

The month following the publication of the original letter kept the issue of refusal on the public agenda. The findings showed that there was an increase in the rate of support for the refusers despite the initial negative reactions. They found that a quarter of the population accepted refusal as a legitimate form of protest. (Yaar & Hermann, 2002b). However, the findings also showed that there was an increase in support for the right to refuse to evacuate settlements. The authors go on to claim that despite the military’s and leadership’s strong opposition to the organized refusal to serve, the public did not follow. Similar to Arian, here too the findings show that there is also an increase in the right to refuse to evacuate settlements and that the refusal is based in political affiliations.¹³ However, the rate of support for the right to refuse to serve in the territories is higher among left-wing voters (39%) than the rate of support for refusal to evacuate settlements among right-wing voters (24%) (Yaar & Hermann, 2002b). These findings

¹³ 64% consistently oppose both forms of refusal, "left" and "right", and 6% are consistent in supporting both forms of refusal. The remaining 20% support or oppose refusal based on ideology. Of these, 8.5% support "leftist" refusal but reject "rightist" refusal, and 11.5% support "rightist" refusal but reject "leftist" refusal.

suggest that the public supports the theoretical aspect of the right to refuse a military order when it goes against one's conscience. A focus on the selectivity of the refusal and the tactic of refusal as a form of protest (for both political ends) seems to be the issue and not the political question of withdrawal. Despite both movements' insistence that their refusal is more legitimate than the political right's refusal, it seems as if the public perceives both in the same light. These findings suggest that with the appearance of Courage to Refuse on the political scene, public debate focused on the legitimacy of refusal as a form of political protest.

After the publications of the pilots' letter and matkal's letter in the end of 2003, the Steinmetz Center again included questions regarding this issue in their survey. These findings indicate the movements' ability to increase public support for their cause. During the two years the groups actively worked towards increasing public support and acceptance of their cause. However, the studies showed that there was not much change within the public sphere. The study found that 75% opposes refusal while 20% expressed support for the pilots (Yaar & Hermann, 2003a). The issue of refusal as a form of legitimate protest was again the focus of the debate. "The public makes a clear distinction between protest by soldiers and protest by ordinary citizens. At the same time, in the case of civilian protest as well there is a strong consensus against illegal protest, even if nonviolent" (Yaar & Hermann, 2003a). After the publication of the matkal force's letter in December 2003 and with the increase in public debate regarding refusal, again questions regarding the legitimacy of the act were included in the monthly survey. As before, the findings were similar to the original ones with 77% opposing refusal (Yaar & Hermann, 2003b).

The Steinmetz Center's findings, combined with Arian's, suggest that public opinion regarding the right to refuse has not changed significantly. Despite Courage to Refuse's and Yesh Gvul's attempts at increasing public support of their actions, there has not been a shift in public opinion over this period. However, again it is necessary to look at the objective numbers. A fourth of the population believes in the right to refuse to serve in the territories. A fourth of the population supports the notion that personal beliefs and ethics are of higher value than obedience. Despite the fact that there has not been drastic change in public support, it would be wrong to claim that the groups have not succeeded in increasing their legitimacy. The media portrayal of the groups has changed over this period of time. The way the different institutional communities portray the two groups can lead to a change in public acceptance. The way intellectuals, politicians and the media depict the movements and the discourse they use indicates the level of support the movements have gained over the time period studied. -

Media Response

The third measurement of legitimation is how the movements are depicted in the media. The media's portrayal of the movements has impact on their public acceptance. A favorable depiction indicates support and legitimation of the movement's actions. The increasing coverage of the refusal phenomenon makes the public more aware of it. If the public is made aware of the phenomenon, it increases the debate surrounding it. A perception of public concern is the important factor when analyzing media coverage of social movements (Zald, 1995). An increased debate includes the voicing of different opinions. If more favorable points of view are heard, then it suggests an increase in

acceptance and a step towards legitimation. The way the refusal is portrayed leads to an increase or decrease in legitimation. If the media portrays the refusal phenomenon in a positive manner and supports it as a legitimate form of protest, then it can influence how the public perceives it. In addition, the type of discourse the media uses when portraying the movements indicates whether it legitimizes each one of the refusal movements. The media has the option to legitimize the refusal phenomenon and it also has the ability to legitimize each movement separately.

The media-public relationship is a special one in Israel in that the situation of war is always in the background. Barzilai (2000) claims that within the communication discipline there is a lack in theories explaining the importance of the media in shaping the relationship between society and the state – especially during times of war. Despite this, other scholars claim that the media tends to support government action during times of war. Roeh and Raphael (1993) claim that “during times of crises the media tends to express an ideology of consensus and that media coverage helps set the public’s perception regarding the relevant phenomena” (p. 47). The media becomes mobilized and tends to maintain the social consensus while expressing it in its coverage. In their study of the Israeli media coverage during the 1987 *intifada* they found that the media tends to act within the “consensus norm” during times of crises, and does not take on the role of an “objective” or “fighting” media (Raphael & Roeh, 1993, p. 58).

However, in the Israeli case, since war has been a situation to be dealt with since the inception of the state, it is possible to detect an increase in criticism of the government. Barzilai (2000) traces the increase in this type of criticism with each war during Israeli history. Over time, the Israeli media has become more critical of

government action and is an active part of the public debate regarding the necessities of different types of actions and policies. However, Barzilai (2000) concludes that despite the fact that the media in the nineties is more critical and democratic, it cannot be claimed that it represents the people against the state's institutions. The opposite is still true and the media is more the state's representative toward society and is still used as a mobilizing tool during times of war. Despite this conclusion, the media has become increasingly critical of government policies since the outbreak of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*. Part of the increase in criticism is seen in their portrayal of the refusal movements. For social movements to succeed there is a need for the media to extensively cover and portray their actions in a positive way (Barzilai, 2000). Therefore, a close analysis of the portrayals of the two refusal movements was done to measure their effectiveness. Positive media depictions lead to legitimation and therefore can be a measure of effectiveness.

To determine whether there is a favorable view of the movements, it is necessary to analyze the discourse that they use to support or oppose the phenomenon. The type of discourse used also indicates which refusal movement and which appeal is more effective. If the universalistic rhetoric and discourse typical of Yesh Gvul is used, then it indicates that this appeal is more effective. If, on the other hand, the militaristic and realist language typical of Courage To Refuse is used, then it can be inferred that this is the more effective appeal. Therefore, when analyzing the texts, I not only looked at the change in support and opposition but also interpreted the specific words and terms used to voice the points of view. The use of the militaristic discourse indicated that Courage To Refuse is more effective whereas the use of the universalistic discourse indicates that Yesh Gvul is more effective.

A content analysis of the texts written by the regular columnists and the editorials published in the two leading daily newspapers was done to measure legitimation. The analysis of the words, symbols and rhetoric used while referring to the two movements can point to whether the media accepts and supports the groups' actions or not. As a general rule, mentions of the movements appear in the daily newspapers after a specific political occurrence. An example of such an occurrence may be after a specific demonstration, after an appearance of another letter of refusers (such as after the pilots' letter or the matkal forces letter), or when one of the refusers makes a controversial public statement. The turbulent nature of Israeli politics makes it difficult for the editorials to remain consistent with one political subject. And so, one finds editorials concerning the refusal movements whenever a specific occurrence regarding the actions of one of the movements is made public.

The development of the responses in the two most highly circulated daily newspapers was followed from the beginning of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada* until June 2004. Overall, there has been an increase in the positive response to the movements and a change in the type of discourse used to support their actions. The development of these responses can be separated into four major stages. The first stage occurred after Courage to Refuse's letter appeared in the newspapers in January 2002.; the second stage was after the appearance of the pilots letter in September of 2003; the third after the Matkal Unit's letter in December of 2003. During the spring of 2004, other mentionings of the movements have appeared and this will be categorized as the fourth stage. In May 2004, several peace demonstrations occurred following various military actions and Prime Minister Sharon's proposal for the unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. These

demonstrations created public debate in which the refusal phenomenon was also addressed. Between these time frames there have also been other mentions usually following spontaneous instances. However, it seems as if each publication of a letter created intense public debate within the press. Each letter was published in one (or both) of the newspapers, a fact that probably caught the attention of the writers and brought about their response. Yesh Gvul's continuous activities are not widely covered by the two dailies and it takes a special occurrence, such as the publication of a letter, to foster wide debate.

The four stages show a development in the amount of support the groups gain. After the first stage, those supporting refusal use the discourse of Yesh Gvul and its universalistic rhetoric of justice and morality. Those opposing refusal use a more nationalistic discourse to delegitimize the actions of those refusing. The second stage sees two types of development. One is an overall increase in support of the refusal phenomenon and the other is the way this support is depicted in the press. It is possible to detect the spread of the Courage to Refuse militaristic and realist discourse into the words of those supporting the refusal. In addition to this, support of the refusal in universalistic value terms is still apparent in the editorials and the opinions published. Those opposing the refusal movements and trying to delegitimize their actions remain within the boundaries of the realist security-orientated rhetoric. Both types of discourse can be detected among those supporting the refusal phenomenon. The fact that the Courage to Refuse discourse has spread and is used both by those opposing and now by those supporting suggests that this type of appeal is more effective. The third and fourth stages also show another increase in the amount of support by the opinion writers and also

provide many examples of both types of discourse. This again suggests that Courage to Refuse is more effective in appealing to the mainstream and contributing to the public debate. Table 3 shows the development of the uses of the two types of discourses over the four stages discussed. By analyzing the discourse used by both those who support and oppose refusal, it is possible to infer which group is more effective in gaining acceptance and legitimation.. The following section will provide a content analysis of the discourse and rhetoric used by the public opinion writers to determine which group has managed to increase its support within the media.

Table 3. *Types of Discourse Used Throughout the Various Stages*

	Support	Oppose
After Original Letter January 2002	Universalistic	Militaristic – Realist
After Pilots' Letter September 2003	Universalistic and Militaristic – Realist	Militaristic – Realist
After Matkal Unit's Letter December 2003	Universalistic and Militaristic – Realist	Militaristic – Realist
Spring 2004	Universalistic and Militaristic – Realist	Militaristic – Realist

Stage 1

Courage to Refuse's letter appeared in the newspaper of January 25, 2002. At first, there were not many voices of support and most writers opposed the notion of refusal. The letter was not seen as the beginnings of a new refusal movement but was considered to be part of an old familiar tradition set by Yesh Gvul in the 1980's. Therefore, the responses to the letter are limited to debating about the notion of refusal and whether it is a legitimate form of protest. The general media response was that of delegitimation of the act. Two types of opposition can be detected in the newspapers reactions to the letter. The first type is a political one where the refusers are labeled as liberalists who have an agenda and that is what delegitimizes them. This critique is similar to the official reaction of then Chief of Staff, Shaul Mofaz (who currently holds the position of Minister of Defense) who tried to delegitimize the phenomenon. He accused the refusers of forming "an ideological campaign" and tried to label them as illegitimate political actors. Some agreed with Mofaz's assessment and claimed that this was a propaganda campaign of the elites who perceive themselves as more worthy of others; and that this was a political tool of the liberal left who continues to act out of elitist sentiments (Lord, 2002).

This critique claims that despite the refusers' attempts at portraying themselves as officers dedicated to the military and their country, they are actually political actors in disguise. They are perceived as elitist liberals who are acting out of political and ideological reasons and that it is only propaganda without any substantive reasoning. This is very similar to the traditional criticism that Yesh Gvul has faced by the political right ever since its inception. This is an attempt to label the refusers as being ultra-liberal and misusing their military positions for an ideological agenda. The discourse used here has

elements of militaristic values and a cost-benefit analysis. This critique claims that the refusers are actually political actors following a liberal-left agenda and that they are misguided in their security analysis. The political right in Israel claims that the occupation is needed for security reasons therefore those opposing it are wrong in their assessments. The accusation of the refusers as being political actors uses the realist security-driven discourse to delegitimize the phenomenon.

The second type of critique tends to agree with the idea that the occupation is morally wrong, yet disagrees with the decision to refuse as a legitimate form of action. Different claims were made such as “the officers’ intentions and dedication to their units and country might be admirable, but that the decision to refuse is miserable...Refusal is a privilege given to soldiers in non-democratic regimes and during wars of choice. In Israel – it poisons the army from within” (Barnea, 2002); or these “phenomena disrupt the national agenda” (Haber, 2002). Others accused the actions as bordering illegal incitement and interpreted the officers’ actions as deriving from a psychological sense of desperation from the situation and the political system, one that will disappear once they realize that they are inciting rebellion (London, 2002). There was an overall belief that these sentiments would be won over by a general sense of solidarity with the nation and although there was a general critique of the officers’ actions, there was an acceptance of their reasons for refusing.

This critique is sympathetic to the officers’ dilemmas but believes that it should be solved in the public arena and not the military one. This is very similar to the traditional peace movements’ and left-winged political parties’ criticisms of Yesh Gvul. They agree with the ideological reasoning but believe the battle should be fought through the

accepted and legal channels. This type of criticism also uses a nationalistic discourse to delegitimize the act. The overall critique focuses on the notion that these acts are detrimental to national unity and the concern is how to keep the nation intact and not cause disruption. The rhetoric and notions of “inciting rebellion” and causing disunity are used to oppose refusal. Nationality and unity are prioritized and given greater importance while a realist analysis is used to claim that national solidarity is more important than ideological differences. This type of discourse and rhetoric is similar to the one Courage to Refuse uses when trying to justify their actions (although their conclusion is different in that they claim that it is out of nationalistic sentiments that they must refuse)

Both types of opposition to the refusal use nationalistic and militaristic discourse to delegitimize the act of refusal. The notion that refusal is detrimental to the country in that it fosters hate and antagonism is apparent in the two types of criticism. The use of this type of discourse to delegitimize an act shows that this discourse resonates with the Israeli public. The use of a militaristic and nationalistic discourse in the popular media suggests its appeals to the public and that it is a language Israeli society can relate to. The use of a security-driven analysis of the phenomenon stays within the norms of the cultural discourse. The wide use of the realist-nationalist discourse suggests that this type of rhetoric is central to Israeli culture.

Despite the wide opposition, some voices of support did appear in the media. There were those who wrote that “the right to refuse is a democratic right” (Michael, 2002) and criticized Mofaz as trying to blame the political left and wrote that “the refusers letter...is a story of impressive moral success” (Margalit, 2002). This support

uses the rhetoric of morality and values to legitimize refusal and is similar to the one used by Yesh Gvul to justify their actions.

Other voices of support came from the academic community. Some published individual articles in the daily newspapers regarding their opinions about selective refusal. Although these articles were not limited to the two most popular dailies used in this study, they show how the initial support of the refusal was limited to the universalistic discourse. Most of the academics address the issue of democratic values. They all point to the necessity in accepting selective refusal as part of the process of sustaining a democratic state. The common factor among most of the writers is that their support of the refusal movements comes from placing human and liberal values above obedience. They also commend the refusers as acting morally and valiantly when facing orders that go against one's conscience. This type of support is similar to Yesh Gvul's discourse of universalistic values.

Baruch Kimmerling (2002), a sociology professor in the Hebrew University, writes that "the current refusal transforms the refusers to moral entrepreneurs amending the state's democracy" He further claims that "a worthy peace movement should shape the agenda and the general rules of the game, not be imprisoned by them." Idan Landau (2002), a linguistic professor at the Ben-Gurion University, writes that "the refuser rejects automatic obedience to the law in the name of a higher value, and that is the right...to life and freedom" and that "there are instances and times where more basic values, such as the holiness of life and the right to freedom, are at stake" thereby legitimizing refusal in claiming that selective objection is one of those instances. He adds that "refusal is one of the sole cases which have real political significance: one drop in a dirty sea that colors its

surroundings the color of truth". Daniel Dor (2002), communications professor at the Tel-Aviv University, writes that "the officers' testimonies are the most important service that is given today". The common factor tying the different academics from the different disciplines is their belief in the right to refuse and their belief in the movements' commitment to uphold democratic values. They all commend the refusers as being individuals dedicated to moral and ethical codes, which will ensure that justice and liberal values prevail. They all differentiate between the commitment to democratic values and the democratic process. While it is necessary to keep with the democratic process, when being ordered to act against one's conscience, it is legitimate to refuse and thereby uphold democratic values. A commitment to democratic values is of higher importance than the commitment to the process. Without the values, the process itself has no normative meaning and will not be able to survive for long. The discourse used by these academics to support refusal is similar to the one used by Yesh Gvul. The universal language of values and morals is central to their support.

Within the academic community there was one response that incorporated some of the nationalistic discourse with the universalistic rhetoric. Ariel Rubinstein (2002), an economics professor at the Ben-Gurion University, addressed the issue of Jewish and Zionist values. He claims that the Jewish ethos is not one of an occupying people and that notions of responsibility and the right to refuse is central to its character. This point of view combines both notions of the universalistic values and the Zionist and Jewish ideology that Courage to Refuse claims to represent. The use of the Zionist and Jewish aspect of the refusal is part of the nationalistic discourse that Courage to Refuse uses.

Therefore, it is possible to detect the initial acceptance of Courage to Refuse discourse within the traditional community that is known for its adherence to Yesh Gvul rhetoric.

The refusal movements have generated responses from international intellectuals as well as Israeli ones. The international community is in part watching the development of the movements as they increasingly gain support. Susan Sontag (2003) writes that the refusers have moral courage and that “our great admiration must go to the brave Israeli soldiers... who refuse to serve beyond the 1967 borders.” She adds that “the likelihood that your acts of resistance cannot stop the injustice does not exempt you from acting in what you sincerely and reflectively hold to be the best interests of your community... What is in the true interests of a modern community is justice.” Sontag repeatedly mentions her admiration at the refusers and goes on to write that “those brave Israeli Jews who, in fervent and active opposition to the policies of the present government of their country, have spoken up on behalf of the plight and the rights of Palestinians, are defending the true interests of Israel.”

Slavoj Žižek (2002) also comments on the refuser movement while using Giorgio Agamben’s notion of the *Homo Sacer*. The term, according to ancient Roman law, refers to “someone who could be killed with impunity and whose death had, for the same reason, no sacrificial value” (§ 2). Žižek sees the treatment of Palestinians by the Israeli military as that similar to the *Homo Sacer* in that they can be dehumanized and therefore killed without putting too much weight on the moral conscience. He explains that the Palestinians “are reduced to the status of *homo sacer*, objects of disciplinary measures and/or even humanitarian help, but not full citizens. And what the refuseniks have achieved is a reconceptualisation of the Palestinian from *homo sacer* to ‘neighbour’: they

treat Palestinians not as 'equal full citizens', but as neighbours in the strict Judeo-Christian sense" (§ 20). Zizek's admiration towards the refusers is that they are guided by their moral conscience and bring back the human aspect to the occupation. By refusing to serve in the occupied territories, under immoral military orders, they bring back some universal ethical codes. Zizek goes on to praise the refusers by stating that "this refusal, significantly downplayed by the major media, is an authentic ethical act...this 'No!' designates the miraculous moment in which eternal Justice momentarily appears in the sphere of empirical reality" (§ 21).

Both Sontag and Zizek commend the refusers from an ethical point of view. Their support derives from universal notions of morality and justice. While the Israeli academics focused on democratic-driven reasons for legitimizing the refusal, these two critics focus on a more universal and philosophical justification. However, both hold human rights values as the prevailing value. Notions of justice and moral conduct motivate both kinds of responses. Their support uses Yesh Gvul discourse and suggests that Yesh Gvul's appeal is strong within this community of academics and intellectuals.

Another strong and surprising voice of support came from Michael Ben-Yair (2002), the former Attorney-General (1993-1996) who wrote that "Israel was founded on a known and obvious moral basis....[and] in the [refusers] eyes, the occupying regime is evil and service in the occupied territories is evil...and according to their conscience, they cannot be part of these acts. Therefore, their refusal is a legitimate and recognized refusal in any democratic lawful state. History's judgment will show that their act of refusal is what brought us back or moral fiber".

The overall reaction to the publication of the combatants' letter was negative and tried to delegitimize their actions. The debate regarding the refusal can be separated into two—one of opposition, which uses militaristic-realist discourse and one of support, which uses a universalistic discourse. This suggests that initially, Yesh Gvul was more effective than Courage to Refuse because those accepting refusal used the universalistic discourse to show their support. It is also important to note that from their first appearance, Courage to Refuse was viewed by the media as an extension of a known movement, Yesh Gvul. Although Yesh Gvul resurfaced onto the political scene after the eruption of the *Al-Aqtsa intifada*, it was a known group which was remembered for its past actions of refusal during the 1980's. The reaction to Courage to Refuse's first letter was reminiscent of past reactions to Yesh Gvul. The support and opposition heard use the same discourse of past critiques. Those supporting refusal use the familiar rhetoric of universal values and those opposing use nationalistic and militaristic notions. However, with the progression of time and the growth of Courage to Refuse, it is possible to detect a spread of Courage to Refuse discourse into those supporting the refusal. This suggests an increase in support that Courage to Refuse has managed to gain.

Stage 2

In September of 2003, another letter of officers refusing to serve was published in the daily newspaper. This time it was signed by 25 pilots. This was significant in that the Israeli Airforce is highly regarded in the public eye. There is a mythical aspect surrounding pilots that they are “the best of the best” and are expected to be most patriotic and loyal. This letter also generated great response in the mainstream media. As

previously, the first accusation came from Shaul Mofaz, who by then held the position of Minister of Defense. He tried to delegitimize the pilots in claiming that most of them were not actively serving anymore and that again, this is a political act disguised under morality.

The media debate created by the publication of the pilots' letter was different than the earlier debate seen after the publication of the original letter. The debate after the first letter consisted of voices of support that used the universalistic tone of Yesh Gvul whereas the voices of opposition used the militaristic realist tone of Courage to Refuse. The discourse of support during the second stage of debate combined both types of rhetoric. The spread of the militaristic discourse to the support side indicates an increasing amount of media acceptance that the group managed to generate. An increase in media acceptance can lead to an increase in public legitimation.

The familiar Yesh Gvul discourse to justify the refusers' actions was still detected. The issue of values and the moral aspect of having to act against one's conscience were brought up. Claims such as "refusal is the last resort of anyone who has been sent on a mission that goes against all the values they were brought on" (Paz-Melamed, 2003) and "Sodom always hated the righteous...Were the refusers' words so groundless, if what they say did not have such a loud echo in the hearts of many, such a storm would not have risen" (Serna, 2003) appeared. Serna's claim rests on the fact that he perceives the refusers as being "righteous." They would rather act justly and suffer the consequences than blindly obey orders they deem immoral. He adds that the harsh institutional reaction towards these pilots shows that there is some substance behind their actions. Serna and

Paz-Melamed use discourse of morality and justice to support the pilots' refusal, indicating their support of Yesh Gvul and its actions.

However, other voices of support also appeared in the media debate. They can be categorized as Courage to Refuse supporters in that they use the realist and militaristic discourse affiliated with the group. "It is good that there are Israelis...that do not bow their heads in silence but express their opinions in a loud voice, that the continuing occupation and the forceful policies do not end terror but only worsen it" (Man, 2003). Another article trying to analyze the different aspects of the pilots refusal states that part of the reason for their refusal is the conclusion that "the targeted assassinations policy is not efficient: it gives way to an endless cycle of revenge upon revenge upon revenge" (Kalderson, 2003). It is possible to detect the security oriented cost-benefit analysis of the occupation and the military policies enacted in the territories. The cost of these policies far outweighs the benefits and therefore the pilots' refusal in taking part in such actions can be accepted. These claims stem from a realist analysis of the occupation. The discourse used resembles that of Courage to Refuse in that it states that the occupation only fosters more terror and therefore reduces security.

The militaristic discourse also spread into the wider community of those supporting refusal. Previously, only the universalistic rhetoric typical of Yesh Gvul was used and now, the language of Courage to Refuse was also included to justify refusal. Public figures such as Amos Lapidot (2003), former commander in chief of the airforce (1982-1987), writes that "I can understand the pilots' protest. Their claim...is against those who determine a policy which leads them nowhere." Lapidot's support stems from

his belief that the government's policy and the occupation do not add to the security of the borders.

In addition to the various articles published by academics in the daily newspapers, on October 1, 2003, a letter signed by leading members of the academia supporting the refusal movements was published in *Yediot Aharonot*. The following day a letter of support signed by re-known Israeli poets and writers was published. The letter claimed that "a refusing government...which enacts only military force, must listen to the voices of its soldiers and officers, who are sent on missions during which many innocents are hurt" (Writers Letter, 2003). A week later, a petition supporting the pilots signed by different artists in the film industry was published. A petition of support is also circulating among academics and other known public figures (writers, journalists, artists etc) and currently records 344 signatures. This petition can be found on the Courage to Refuse website with a link to it on the Yesh Gvul website as well. The support of the intellectual community in Israel is not surprising as they traditionally belong to the liberal left end of the political spectrum. The difference here is that their support is not limited to the use of the traditional known rhetoric of Yesh Gvul but uses the militaristic discourse of Courage to Refuse as well. In addition to their appeal to the universal values that Yesh Gvul dwells on, they also show support in the language of Courage to Refuse. This suggests that Courage to Refuse has managed to increase its acceptance among the intellectual community as well.

Despite the growth in support, there were also those who still opposed the refusal and tried to delegitimize it. The voices of opposition were similar to the ones mentioned before in that the two types of critiques were still apparent. Accusations of the refusers as

being political pawns of the liberal left were still widespread in the opposing camp.

One of the strongest accusations against the pilots was made by *Ma'ariv* editor-in-chief Amnon Dankner. In an editorial he wrote on October 3, 2003 he praised himself on the fact that he refused to publish their letter in his newspaper. He wrote of how he refuses to act as a representative of a political group, or even to portray them in a "positive or empathetic light". Another accusation pointed at the pilots is that they have started an "earthquake with such destructive potential that one cannot estimate its proportions" (Fishman, 2003). This type of criticism is similar to the one previously seen. It uses the militaristic realist discourse to claim that the refusal is detrimental to the country's security and that political action should be taken in the public sphere and not the military one.

The second type of criticism was also used. This critique supports the ideological reasons of opposing the occupation and acknowledges the soldiers' frustrations, but does not legitimize the act of refusal. The nationalistic and militaristic discourse is again used to oppose the refusal. One such example is that of Dan Margalit (2003) who agrees that the occupation corrupts and is in favor of a unilateral withdrawal. While using Yesh Gvul's discourse of moral corruption however, Margalit also questions the actions of the refusers from a practical point of view. Margalit fears that the refusal to serve in the territories will justify settlers' refusal to evacuate territories (if the time comes) and thus create havoc and civil strife. While Margalit is sympathetic to the moral problems created by the occupation, he is doubtful about the practical outcomes that refusal will lead to. He tries to reconcile by claiming that "the refusers are good but wrong." Another writer claims that "he has no good word to say about the pilots and their refusal. They were

wrong” (Yamini, 2003). However, he adds that they should be allowed to voice their opinions since freedom of speech is a democratic right, and therefore the refusal movement strengthens Israeli democracy. Others still claim that the refusers have discarded their duties as officers and incite rebellion (Gilboa, 2003). This type of criticism is similar to the one seen before after the original combatants’ letter. There are sympathetic sentiments to the problematics of serving in the territories yet a realist analysis prevents them from fully supporting refusal.

The debate surrounding the publication of the pilots’ letter, 20 months after the appearance of *Courage to Refuse*, show that their discourse has spread into the words of those supporting the refusal. This discourse is also widely used by those opposing the act. The widespread use of the militaristic and realist discourse to justify (or oppose) refusal suggests that this type of appeal is more effective in mobilizing support. *Courage to Refuse* managed to take the same discourse that was at first used to delegitimize them and turn it around to form support. This suggests that they are more effective in their use of the cultural resources because they use a type of discourse that is more accepted by the public and remains within the cultural norms. There was an overall increase of support for the refusal phenomenon. However, the appearance of the militaristic discourse within the supporters’ realm indicates that *Courage to Refuse* had a larger increase in support than *Yesh Gvul* did. This suggests that *Courage To Refuse* was seen as a more legitimate movement. The next stage of political debate appears after a relatively short time and both types of discourse are again apparent in the media.

Stage 3

On December 21, 2003 another letter appeared in the newspapers. This time it belonged to the elite unit of the Matkal Force¹⁴. This letter also used militaristic discourse to justify their refusal to partake in specific missions¹⁵. This letter, similar to the pilots' letter shocked the nation. The Matkal Force soldiers are generally regarded as being the most qualified and of the highest caliber; therefore their refusal to serve in the territories demanded a serious response. The publication of their letter created another wave of debate and it is possible to detect an increase in the amount of support of the refusal movements with an increase in the use of the militaristic discourse. The familiar universalistic discourse, related with Yesh Gvul, was used to support refusal but there was also more use of the militaristic security driven discourse to accept this phenomenon. This suggests that Courage to Refuse's appeal increased within this time period.

Both types of discourse were used by different writers to support the soldiers' refusal. The universal language of Yesh Gvul can be found in some of the editorials such as an equation of the soldiers' refusal to that of past individuals who refused to commit illegal acts. "We expect fighting people to also be 'human', to get up and rebel" (Baram, 2003). Baram goes on to explain that the occupation is an international crime and that

¹⁴ The Matkal Force, established in 1957, is considered one of the most elite units within the IDF. Its overall purpose is the implementation of special missions, usually in coordination with the Intelligence Division. It is famous for missions such as Antebbe, Sabenna, the kidnapping of Mustafa Dirani and the Sheik Ubeid from Lebanon. Many leading member of the political and military institutions are among its graduates, such as former PM Ehud Barak, former PM Benjamin Netanyahu, Chief of Staff Moshe Yaalon, MK Dani Yatom and many others.

¹⁵ Although published separately, both the pilots and the matkal force are members of Courage To Refuse and the separate publications were used as a marketing tactic to increase support. See section on marketing strategies for further discussion on this tactic.

when society acts illegally, “‘political refusal’ (selective refusal) is legitimate and necessary.”

This stage also includes articles written by academics that support the refusal in the universalistic language of Yesh Gvul. This is the same type of response that was previously seen and it shows how despite the small shift among academics and the inclusion of the militaristic discourse, most still adhere to their traditional and familiar universalistic rhetoric. Yosef Raz (2003), professor of the philosophy of the law, writes that selective refusal is conscientious refusal because it is the soldiers’ conscience which leads them to refuse and Zeev Sternhell (2004), a political science professor at the Hebrew University, states that “the left’s refusal allows it to keep its humanity even during days of war”. Leiv Greenberg (2003), currently a sociology professor at Ben-Gurion University and formerly the spokesperson of Yesh Gvul addresses the issue of a democratic civil society. He writes that “objection is a basic human right...in that it [the refuser]...demands to influence” the democratic process; and that “conscientious objection provides the individual with a space of freedom, which is a basic condition for sustaining an autonomous civil society, without which, a democracy cannot survive”.

The realist analysis can also be found among the supporters. The efficacy of military policies is questioned. The refusers are accepted as being those who have come to the same conclusion that the occupation only leads to more violence and hatred. “For thirty five years it [the military] fulfills missions that have nothing to do with its purpose – the defense of the country’s borders” (Shelach, 2003).

In term of those opposing the refusal, the second type of critiques is voiced more often than the first. The right-wing politicians still claim that those who refuse are acting

on political whims but there are less editorial responses of that nature. The second type of opposition, in which the writers feel sympathetic to the refusers but do not agree with their line of action, are detected more often. They fear that acceptance of the refusers will lead to the legitimization of right-wing refusal to evacuate territories and that intense civil strife will follow. "Refusal [to serve] legitimizes 'Yesha'¹⁶ and the right's refusal...Despite the fact that the occupation is immoral, this is not the way" (Yamini, 2003).

The third stage, after the publication of the matkal force's letter, has shown an increase in the media's overall acceptance of refusal and the use of the militaristic discourse to justify it. The time period between the second and third stages is relatively small (only three months) and yet it is possible to detect an overall increase of support. This suggests that the media is growing more accepting and can legitimate the act of refusal. The increase in the militaristic-realist discourse is evidence of the usefulness of this type of appeal in mobilizing support. This suggests that Courage to Refuse is becoming more legitimate in the public eye and that they are more successful in justifying their actions.

Stage 4

In February 2004 Prime Minister Sharon announced his future plan for a unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. In May 2004 acts of violence in the Gaza Strip led to the

¹⁶ A Hebrew acronym referring to the council of Judea, Samaria and Gaza ("Yehuda", "Shomron" and "Aza")

death of 13 Israeli soldiers.¹⁷ On May 12, Courage To Refuse held a demonstration as a response to the death of the soldiers in Gaza. Courage To Refuse equated the “useless” death of the soldiers to that of the helicopter disaster of 1997, which led to the emergence of “Four Mothers”. They claimed that these actions in Gaza would lead to the same public reaction and to the ensuing success of their movement. On May 16, the Peace Movement held a huge demonstration in Tel-Aviv to support the unilateral withdrawal plan two days before a referendum was to be held among the Likud party members to see whether they support the withdrawal or not. The demonstration, which is estimated to have drawn 150 thousand supporters¹⁸, gave the refusers an opportunity to voice their concerns and justify of their course of action. A week later, on May 20, another demonstration protesting the military retaliation in Gaza was staged as a joint effort by several refuser movements (including that of the “shministim”, and the “Refuseniks Parents Forum”) in various places around the country (Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, Shparam, and Kfar Yasif). These events led to another wave of responses in the popular media regarding the refusal phenomenon. The refusers were given extensive coverage over the course of a couple of weeks and these responses constitute the fourth stage of the analysis.

During this stage most of the responses use the militaristic discourse. Both those opposing and those supporting refusal use a realist and militaristic analysis to justify their points of view. This suggests that over the course of this time Courage to Refuse is more effective and can appeal to a wider part of the media and public.. During this stage the

¹⁷ It is important to note that the militarys' retaliation led to the death of many more Palestinians and to the demolitions of many Palestinian houses.

¹⁸ The official police estimate

responses came not only from the regular political writers but spread to other media critics. After a televised interview with Courage to Refuse members was aired on Channel 2, *Ma'ariv's* television critic provided his view on the phenomenon and its relevance to Israeli culture. He stated that "these [the refusers] are not extreme left-wing people" and that their testimonies are meant to "remind them and us that it is possible that the military, while trying to avoid one kind of disaster, is leading us to a different disaster" (Daum, 2004). This response uses a militaristic discourse. It acknowledges the fact that the refusers are not part of the liberal left that is normally associated with Yesh Gvul supporters, but belong to a more central part of the political spectrum. It also uses a realist and militaristic analysis to claim that the military's current actions do not provide security but provide a pathway that can lead to disaster. The additional responses of journalists not dedicated to political issues shows the spread of the refusal phenomenon and its inclusion in the mainstream debate.

The academic community also increased its use of the Courage to Refuse discourse to support refusal. Law professor Ariel Frukcha (2004) published an article equating the refusal to the story of Antigone. He suggests that the state needs to incorporate easier sentences on those refusing to serve. A realistic analysis of the situation led to the conclusion that the only way to deal with the illegal actions of the refusers is by reducing their sentences. While explicitly voicing his support, Frukcha implies that refusal is justifiable. He acknowledges the problematic of the illegality of the act but does not denounce it. His realistic analysis points to the widening appeal of this type of discourse.

The opposition camp also uses the realist discourse to voice its concerns. The refusers were equated to deserters in that by refusing to serve they were abandoning the army and endangering the security of the nation. Ron Breiman (2004), chairman of Professors for a Strong Israel writes that “soldiers who refuse to serve at the check-points which are meant to keep the terrorists out, or who refuse to take part in the targeted assassination whose goal is to stop terrorist acts...contribute to the death of their countrymen”. This type of criticism uses a realist analysis of the situation to oppose the refusers. It claims that by refusing to serve, the security of the country is at risk.

During this time period, several articles written by Courage to Refuse activists were published in the two newspapers. Previously, most of the articles written by both leading members of the movements were published in the more liberal oriented newspaper, *Ha'aretz*. The fact that the editors of the two popular dailies allowed these points of view to be printed suggests that there is an increase in media support. Previously, *Ma'ariv*'s editor-in-chief claimed that he did not wish to be a tool in the groups' political acts (Dankner, 2003). The change in policy and the appearance of articles explaining refusal suggests that while it is still a controversial subject, refusal is accepted as being part of a legitimate public debate. Acknowledging the fact that this is an issue that needs to be addressed and publicly discussed legitimizes the movement.

Despite the increase in the militaristic discourse, it is still possible to detect the universalistic discourse in the supporting camp. However, as before, this type of rhetoric is limited to those traditionally thought of as belonging to the liberal left. During this time period, many left-wing writers call for unilateral withdrawal and justify the refusers. The military actions and the civilian deaths caused by the retaliation in Rafah prove once

more how refusal is a legitimate way of protesting. The refusers are termed as “warning signs” to the path the country is taking and to the deterioration that it is leading to. A surprising response came from General-Attorney Mazuz (2004) while addressing the lawyers association convention. “I understand and am even sympathetic towards every conscientious objector...who fights for his beliefs and faith...In itself, this could be a positive phenomenon that represents social involvement and concern” and added that “Refusal to serve and civil disobedience for political reasons are an integral part of the Israeli reality in the last few decades.” The fact that a leading public figure speaks these words while in office points to the movement’s success in gathering support. Usually, political figures try to avoid making such statements on controversial issues such as refusal. The fact that Mazuz allows himself to publicly support the refusers suggests that this has become a more mainstream issue. This response resembles Yesh Gvul discourse in that it uses universal notions of democratic values and the rights of conscientious objectors. Mazuz classified conscientious objection as an expression of human rights, as the Supreme Court had previously ruled. His support for all those following their conscience is seen as a right which strengthens the democratic process. This is in accordance with Yesh Gvul’s belief that when confronted with actions which are deemed to be immoral, one must follow their conscience.

The international community also responded to the movements’ actions. Recently, European Parliament members published a document with the following statement: “We, as Members of the European Parliament from different political groups, reaffirm our solidarity and stand with all the courageous Israeli “refuseniks”: they are among the moral voices of Israel and the world, they show the way to peace” (European Parliament,

2004). The document was signed by 60 members representing various political groups and countries. This statement uses universalistic discourse to voice its support and therefore increase Yesh Gvul's legitimation. The acknowledgment of the European community shows Yesh Gvul's success in making their cause public and legitimate. The support of the representatives of this community increases their legitimation within the public sphere. Israeli citizens perceive themselves as being more culturally similar to Europe than to the Middle Eastern culture, despite the geographic location of the country. And so, by having the European Parliament support the movements' cause and actions, it increases their legitimation in the eye of the public. The group's actions can gain larger mainstream acceptance if they are perceived as being legitimate in the eye of the elected European body of government.

Conclusion

In this chapter, effectiveness was looked at in three separate ways. The first was that effectiveness is a product of mobilization. On this scale it seems as if the two movements are equal in their measure of effectiveness.. Both groups mobilized a similar amount of active and passive supporters. The similar amount of support suggests that both groups are equally effective in their deployment of their cultural resources. They both manage to appeal to the different members of society.

The second measurement of effectiveness was public response and legitimation. The polls taken by the two institutions suggest that over this time period, there has not been an increase in support of the refusal phenomenon. About a quarter of the population accepts refusal as a legitimate protest tactic. The absolute numbers supporting the right to

refuse did not change over the time period studied. Although there has not been much change in the actual numbers of those supporting refusal, there has been an increase in media legitimation, which can be seen through the third measurement, the media portrayal of the two movements. The change in the portrayal of the refusers and the two groups indicates their public acceptance. Over time, there was an overall increase in the media's acceptance of the phenomenon, which again suggests their success in achieving public legitimation. Media legitimation often leads to public legitimation in the Israeli context of the media-society relationship. The overall increase in media support suggests an increase in the effectiveness of the movement's use of their cultural resources. Over the course of two years, the depictions of the two movements changed. Initially, those supporting refusal mainly use the universalistic discourse of justice and morality associated with Yesh Gvul. Over time however, it is possible to detect an increase in the use of a more militaristic and security orientated rhetoric amongst those supporting (and opposing) the refusers. The use of the different types of discourse is evidence of their effectiveness. The increase in the use of militaristic discourse suggests that this type of appeal resonates with the media, and therefore the public, more than the universalistic language of Yesh Gvul. The spread of the Courage to Refuse discourse into both the supporting and opposing camps suggests that this type of appeal is more effective.. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Courage to Refuse was more effective over this period of time in gaining legitimation. Refusal is now accepted as part of the mainstream debate. Despite the fact that the actual numbers did not change, the portrayal is that of more acceptance and legitimacy.

VII. Conclusion

This study compared how two social movements working within the same political and social context and towards a similar goal, differ in their use of cultural resources. One group tries to appeal to the public by using one version of the hegemonic discourse, that of the universal justice and idealism of Zionism; while the other tries to appeal by using a different aspect of the hegemonic discourse, that of a militaristic-realist analysis of the security situation. Despite being rooted in a similar ideological and political position, they bring their argument to the public through a different set of discourse. By using different cultural resources, the trajectories, credibility and effectiveness of each group differ.

The findings of the study suggest that the militaristic discourse has a wider public appeal and therefore indicates that Courage to Refuse is more successful. Over the time period of the study, there was an overall increase in the use of the militaristic discourse in the media portrayals of the refusal phenomenon, pointing to the notion that this specific discourse holds a higher public appeal.

The study has proven to be significant on various levels. The first is its insight on Israeli politics. The notion of refusal has become a central issue in the last couple of years. Refusal has become an issue that is relevant to both those supporting withdrawal and those opposing it. On the right-wing camp, calls to refuse to evacuate territories (if

and when the time arrives) are heard and this is a widely debated issue among those opposing withdrawal. On the left-wing camp, the issue of refusal to serve in the territories is also highly debated. The question of whether ideological reasonings and beliefs should legitimate disobedience has become a central part of the political debates. This study looks at only one aspect of refusal – that of refusing to serve in the territories. This is mainly because those supporting this refusal are organized in social movements and can therefore be studied. The settlers have yet to organize and establish formal movements which call for refusal to evacuate (mainly because the issue of evacuation itself is still in its proposal stage and has not yet become a reality). The issue of refusing to serve is a current phenomenon that is troubling the political leaders and also has a tradition in Israeli politics dating back to the early 1980's. Although there have been individuals who refused to serve before that time, an organized refusal movement originated in the Lebanon war of 1982. It will be interesting to see whether the success and effectiveness of Courage to Refuse and Yesh Gvul will influence the settlers refusal to evacuate settlements. A suggestion for further research would be to see if refusal as a value will be prioritized within the different groups in society and in turn lead to the weakening of the state and its formal institutions.

This study contributes to a further understanding of Israeli politics in that it provides a hypothesis on what kind of discourse is more appealing to the Israeli public. The security ethos and the militaristic culture are more dominant and therefore a group such as Courage to Refuse can be more effective. This study is an example of how strong and dominant the militaristic culture has become. Despite the early ideological notions of labor Zionism, here is another example of how that discourse has been pushed aside in

favor of realism and security orientated discourse. The political scene has changed over time and the emphasis on universal values is no longer as relevant as in the past. Zionism was initially based on universalistic values but over time militarism and particularistic notions became the dominant cultural factors. Yesh Gvul has remained stable as a movement and static in its use of the universalistic discourse. Courage To Refuse on the other hand, is better at adapting to the changing cultural arena and can appeal to a larger audience. Courage To Refuse's reinterpretation of Zionism is more appealing to the mainstream public and the use of a particularistic nationalist discourse is more useful in mobilizing the public. This can also provide an example to other social movements in showing that effectiveness and success depends on the ability to appeal to militarism. The security ethos is still the dominant cultural myth and in order to succeed in mobilization and legitimation, groups must remain within the boundaries of the contemporary discourse.

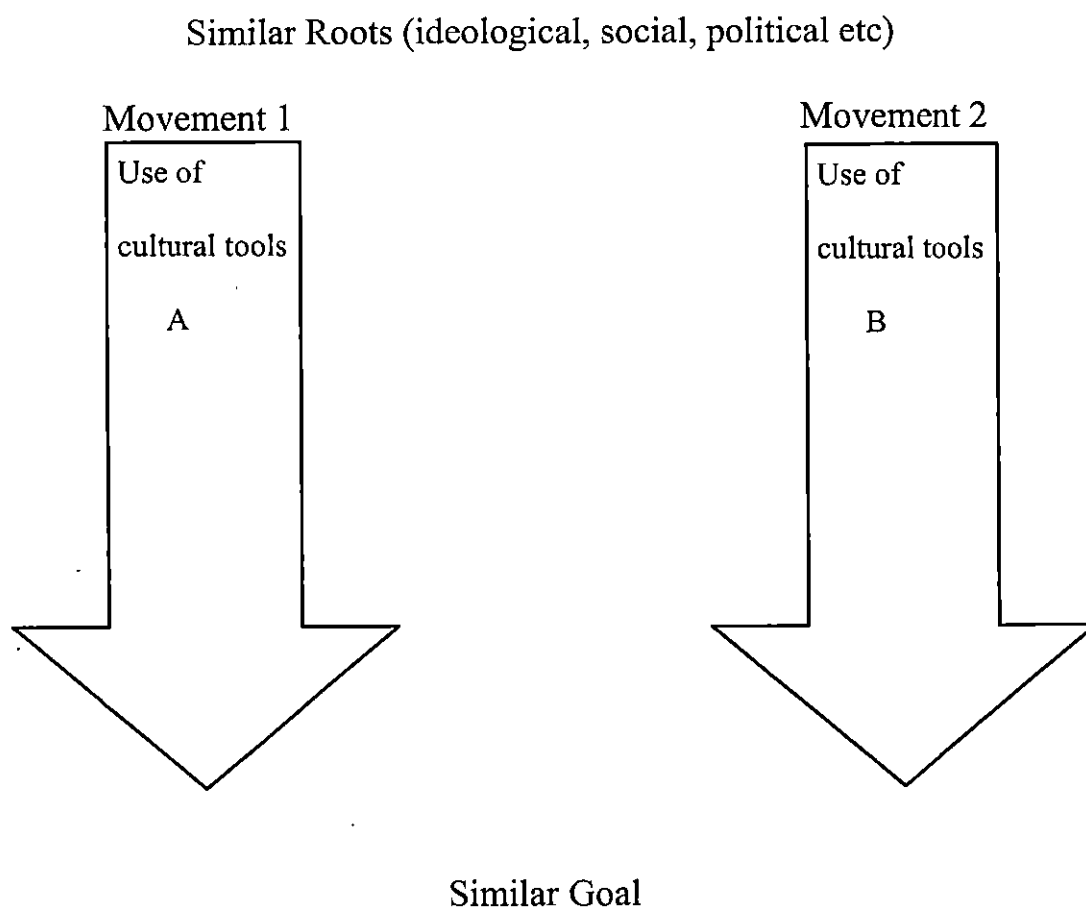
The success of Courage To Refuse's discourse is evidence of the subtle shifts in the overall public discourse. It points to a change in what type of language and rhetoric appeals to the mainstream. It is important to note that those opposing refusal also use this type of discourse. This is evidence of the centrality of the militaristic culture as a mainstream appeal. All parts of the political spectrum can relate to this type of discourse and therefore it is a strong cultural tool. In February 2004, Prime Minister Sharon, who is considered to be extremely hawkish in his political beliefs, proposed a unilateral withdrawal plan from the Gaza Strip. This plan was met with outrage from his supporters on the right. It is interesting to note that from a brief glance, it seems as if Sharon tries to justify the withdrawal using a realist analysis and that his language is similar to that used

by Courage to Refuse. This is only a passing observation that would warrant a further analysis. However, it does point to the fact that the political right seems to also use the militaristic culture to justify what it has always been opposed to, unilateral withdrawal. The use of the militaristic discourse on both ends of the political spectrum strengthens the assumption that militarism is the dominant cultural myth and that it can be used as a political tool by different groups.

The study is also a significant addition to the use of culture in social movement theory. Most social movement comparisons are between different movements in different countries, different times, or with different political goals. The difference in this case study is that it shows how in the same existing reality, with the same political goals, two movements operate differently and have varying degrees of effectiveness. The two groups stem from a similar ideological and social background with the difference being their use of the cultural resource. The diagram proposed in the introduction illustrates this notion. This illustration shows the importance of culture as a political tool. Since the roots and goals of the movements are similar (and at times identical) the variation in their effectiveness is due to their use of the different cultural resources. The diagram also serves as a proposal to be added into social movement theory. More studies of a similar nature should be done to provide more insight on how culture is a meaningful social and political category. This type of comparison can shed light on the theoretical aspect of the importance of culture. In addition to the theoretical aspect, this type of comparison also holds “real” value in that social movements can see which type of appeals resonate with the public and therefore increase their success in mobilizing and legitimizing their causes (whatever they may be). For a movement to be effective and succeed, it will need to

appeal to the existing cultural discourse. Success of a movement depends on its ability to incorporate the dominant values and beliefs of society.

Figure 2. *Theoretical Diagram of the Paths Social Movements Take:*



This study contributes to the theoretical and analytical questions surrounding cultural analysis and social movement theory, as well as dealing with an issue that is central to Israeli politics. The issue of the retreat from the territories is the central and

most important one guiding politics in Israel today. The use of civil disobedience tactics as a form of protest is a contested and widely debated contemporary question. The appeal of this study is that it deals with a “real” issue and problem, one that could prove to have grave implications on people’s lives. If these movements ultimately achieve their goal and affect government policy, it will change the face of the regional political, social, economic and cultural structure. The two groups studied here have increased their public support and acceptance (one more than the other) but have not reached their ultimate goal yet, a full withdrawal from all the territories. If that time ever comes, it will be interesting to go back and study the groups’ actions in retrospect and it will also be interesting to see whether the groups will continue to evolve onto other political issues or disappear from the political scene (as did “Four Mothers” once the withdrawal from Lebanon was complete). Presently, the two refusal movements are active and fighting for a cause they strongly believe in, hoping to change the political reality of the region, one that is responsible for a lot of blood and deaths. It is my hope that whether the groups have a hand in ending the occupation or not, the conflict will end soon and with it the endless bloodshed will cease to exist.

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