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Gendered Division of Labor in a Post-Privatization Moshav: A Case Study of Moshav Tzin in Southern Israel

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Abstract

This study examines patterns of gendered divisions of labor in a moshav (a cooperative agricultural settlement) in the central Arava region in the south of Israel in 2011. As with Israel's other cooperative agricultural settlements, Moshav Tzin (fictitious name) was privatized in 1989, at which time responsibility for many areas under its jurisdiction was transferred to the familial agricultural unit. Unlike other cooperative agricultural settlements, however, the remoteness of Moshav Tzin contributed to the preservation of agriculture as its main source of income. The following study investigates how the process of privatization affected the gendered division of labor in a moshav that has remained agricultural.

The structure of Moshav Tzin and resultant gender and familial tension

The moshav is a cooperative agricultural settlement that until the late 1980s acted as a social hub, municipal network, and organizational configuration for the division of labor and allocation of capital for its members. In its ideal structure, each family in the moshav maintained an independent familial agricultural unit allotted by the moshav association. However, basic service responsibilities – such as input purchasing, capital and credit management, as well as sorting, packing, marketing, and transport of agricultural products – were managed cooperatively. As such, the moshav comprised a hybrid organization incorporating both individual and collective values; the familial unit constituted the private sphere,

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whereas the public sphere manifested in the roles and authority of the cooperative association. The unique structure of the moshav also affected the role of the family. In a moshav based on familial agricultural units, the family was basic unit of production. This stands in contrast to typical labor associations, such as the kibbutz, where the individual constitutes the primary production unit.

This particular family configuration yielded clear gender tension; in the moshav, the domestic sphere was the responsibility of women. Yet the structure of the familial agricultural unit – based on the self-employment of all family members – compelled women to contribute in the production domain as well. Commenting on the paradoxical spirit of the moshav, Sharabi (2007) articulates the tension faced by women as, “Private that is public.” Yet this duality also had positive aspects – women’s participation in the labor market bore no cost to the family or otherwise. As these spheres were interwoven, women were not compelled to choose between work and family. In an article about women members in the moshav, Kaplan (1946), himself a member of Moshav Nahalal in the north of Israel, describes women’s dual role as an aspect of their liberation:

I will tell you about the liberation of the woman in the moshav, about her liberation from the tradition of generation upon generation of the Hebrew woman who was dependent and did not provide for her children, who was not forced to take part in the struggle for existence. There was someone to look after her, someone she relied on, and she, passive in nature, could forever stand aside, for there was someone stronger than she [...] But now I see that in the moshav of all places [...] the most precious qualities for every person, especially the woman, are awakened: responsibility, care, independence, development of supernatural working abilities.

Indeed, in the moshav, a double burden was laid upon the familial unit and consequently, upon women—of both the home and the agricultural unit. On the other hand, placing responsibility for the operation of the agricultural unit upon women also made them a part of the moshav core, namely, agricultural work. Furthermore, data show that the majority of female moshav members who did not work in the agricultural familial units were not employed outside the house (Appelbaum and Margolis 1979). In other words, partaking in the work of the agricultural units enabled moshav women to participate in the labor market, whereas the majority of women in the country were relegated to the familial sphere alone. To clarify, I do not maintain there was gender equality in the cooperative agricultural settlements; a higher percentage of men saw the agricultural unit as their place of work (Appelbaum and Margolis 1979). Additionally, there was a clear male bias in the moshav’s managerial positions and internal structures, including the national Moshavim Movement and the regional purchase organizations. Yet in comparison to other organizational and social frameworks

characteristic of Israel's formative period, moshav women had a higher status than women, and even men, elsewhere (Fogel-Bijaoui and Sharabi 2013).

Changes in the moshav organizational patterns

The Israeli economy experienced a severe financial crisis in the 1980s (Ben-Basat 2001; Rosenthal and Eiges 2014; Kislev 2015). This crisis, and the economic policies enacted in its wake, prompted the privatization of numerous cooperative organizations, including the moshavim (Ben-Basat 2001; Ram 2005; Schwartz 1995). For non-agricultural organizations, privatization meant a transition from public to private ownership, though the center of organizational power remained intact (Ram 2005). In contrast, privatizing a moshav cooperative meant eliminating its centralized responsibility for resource sharing, distribution of labor, and capital allocation—in other words, dismantling the organizational power center that controlled these domains and transferring the responsibility to the private farms of the moshav families. This process aimed to transform work in a moshav into an individualistic pursuit; every family would work on its own at its private farm or seek employment outside the moshav, without mutual guarantee for credit or coordination of post-harvest processes such as selling and purchasing. This, indeed, was the aim of privatization in Moshav Tzin studied in this article (Shnider 2008).

Concurrent with the external economic processes described in the literature as the trigger for privatization (Schwartz 1995), social changes were unfolding within the cooperative settlements that also undermined the traditional structure of the moshav. These changes included, for example, minimizing the cooperatives' involvement in members' activities (Appelbaum and Margolis 1979); rising value of agricultural land in settled areas (Schwartz 2006); emergence of novel sources of income, such as light industry, tourism (Bar-El et al. 1989), and the free professions (Sofer and Appelbaum 2006); and shrinking share of agriculture in the country's GNP and in the livelihood of the moshavim in particular (Sofer 2005).

When privatization forced the majority of the moshavim to abandon their collective structure, with some even turning away from agriculture, many became rural suburbs (Schwartz 2006). However, this was not feasible for moshavim located on the remote periphery, such as Moshav Tzin and the other Arava moshavim in the south of Israel. For these settlements, agriculture remained the principal source of livelihood and members were compelled to develop new practices and mechanisms to generate sufficient income by industrializing agriculture (Kochman 2008).

The case study: Moshav Tzin

Moshav Tzin was founded as part of a national project to settle the Arava—Israel's arid southern region. In addition to Moshav Tzin, four other moshavim and a communal settlement were founded in the area (Hochman, Vitkin, and Zilberman 1984; Hochman and Zilberman 1990; Eisenman 1994). The moshavim were created through a spatial policy adopted by Israeli government in the 1950s: establishment of settlement blocs rather than isolated settlements (Weitz 1971). Moshav Tzin was founded 100 km from the nearest city and 30 km from the nearest settlement (Eisenman 1993).

By the time Moshav Tzin was founded in 1971, the collective ideology had already begun to change in many of the moshavim, with broad variation in values emerging among them (Appelbaum and Margolis 1979; Weintraub 1984). When Moshav Tzin's guiding principles were formulated in 1976, residents adopted a strict ideological position in line with classical moshav values. It was decided that the cooperative would provide a whole range of agricultural services to the family farms: purchasing, selling, credit allotment, allocation of production quotas, and sorting of agricultural products for the market. The village-level cooperative was given a great deal of power and was to be directly involved in the management of the family farms. Moreover, clear guidelines were set for the running of the cooperative. As will be explained below, one of the issues decided by the cooperative – employment of hired labor – was to have a direct impact on gender relations. In the ideal moshav, hiring of non-members is predicated upon a socialist ideology meant to prevent exploitation of the working class. Until 1978, Moshav Tzin prohibited the use of hired labor. From 1978 to 1984, each family was allotted a single “volunteer” worker from the pool of “volunteers” in the moshav, and from 1984 to 1989, families were allowed to hire up to three paid workers. Since privatization in 1989, the cooperative has not dealt with this issue.

Since 1989, some fifty families have joined Moshav Tzin. With a population of 500 people in 2011, 102 familial agricultural units were in operation. Since privatization, the moshav has become home to approximately 500 migrant laborers, predominantly from Thailand, who are employed in the familial agricultural units. Despite the changes and in contrast to non-peripheral cooperative settlements, Moshav Tzin has preserved agriculture as its primary source of income.

Research methodology and data

This study is based on an exploratory case study, an inductive research strategy suitable for exploring and explaining a social phenomenon in its natural context

(Yin 1994). Moshav Tzin is not necessarily representative of either the moshavim or other work organizations. As a case study, however, it enables an analytic generalization that can expand and enrich the theory in the field of gender in the moshav (Yin 1994).

The study uses both quantitative and qualitative research tools, including interviews and questionnaires. Thirty-eight semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with former and current moshav residents. Content analysis of the materials collected in the interviews was conducted in order to map the practices that characterize work processes on the moshav and link them to the themes, values, and basic assumptions that crop up repeatedly among the interviewees (Schein 2004). Analysis of the interview data was conducted by inductive coding (categorization, thematization).

In addition, a quantitative questionnaire was distributed to moshav members based on a number of indices.

First, an index examining the significance of identity components was used (Moore and Kimmerling 1995; Kimmerling and Moore 1997). To construct this index, respondents were asked to rate a selection of identity components, such as sex, nationality, and profession, according to the significance they attribute to each.

Second, a locus of internal control index was used (Rotter 1966), which classifies the respondent according to their tendency to take personal responsibility for life events. The locus of internal control was constructed as the average of six answers on a scale of 1 to 6. Respondents with a low score tend to attribute their life events to external causes while respondents who received a high score tend to attribute their life events to internal loci of control. The index was introduced to decipher the characteristics of moshav members who formed partnerships even after the association had been privatized, as well as uncover any differences between women and men in their patterns of cooperation. Following the omission of one item, this index demonstrated an internal {credibility} of $\alpha=0.60$.

Finally, the questionnaire included questions regarding the socio-demographic background of the respondent, such as gender, age, country of birth, father's country of birth, and education. Other questions examined the social tapestry of the moshav. Such questions included the number of areas in which the familial unit maintains partnerships, whether respondents or their partners have immediate relatives in the moshav, and seniority in the moshav.

The questionnaires were distributed to 164 moshav members at an internal event held in the summer of 2011. After omitting non-responses and questionnaires with sparse answers, we ended up with 78 usable questionnaires. Although the sample was not designed to be representative, 40% of the studied population participated in the research. Among the respondents 51.3% were male and 48.7%

female, a gender distribution quite similar to that of the moshav's overall population (49% male and 51% female).

Differences between two groups of moshav members – male and female – were analyzed by standard statistical techniques: t-test for means of various identity components between men and women and Pearson chi-square test for linear correlations between variables in the same group.

Gender based division of labor in the moshav prior to privatization

Upon being granted official status as a moshav (cooperative agricultural settlement) in 1976, Moshav Tzin adopted a strict socialist worldview according to which its members' association banned the use of salaried employees in familial agricultural units. This policy was intended to strengthen the principles of equality and avoid the formation of a salaried labor class it considered disempowered. The agricultural units thus relied on the family unit for labor. This regulation was short lived; in 1978, each familial agricultural unit was granted permission to employ a single volunteer from the volunteer pool in the moshav. In 1984, the moshav families were allowed to hire up to three paid workers and following the privatization of the association in 1989, agricultural units were permitted to hire migrant laborers as needed (Eizenman 1994; Shnider 2008; Tzfadia and Yacobi 2011; Strom 2011). Thus, until 1989, the moshav association maintained restriction on the number of salaried employees in each familial agricultural unit, a decision that strained the units by limiting their workforce.

This constraint affected the preservation of equality in Moshav Tzin in at least one aspect: labor shortages necessitated the mobilization of women to work in the moshav core industry – agriculture.

Furthermore, like other cooperative agricultural settlements (Schwartz 1995), Moshav Tzin encountered financial difficulties during the 1980s that undermined, *inter alia*, the sustainability of the familial units. To cope with the situation, the cooperative transferred all of the salaried positions in the moshav administration to its members in order to help families make a living. This led to the inclusion of women as paid employees in two of the moshav's cooperative branches: accounting and education. These were in line with traditional gender-based divisions of labor and the rewards of women employed in these branches were relatively low both financially in terms of status. Yet again, it was an external "constraint" that had led to the integration of women within the moshav labor force.

As a result, a female member who had been employed as an accountant and was familiar with the moshav finances was appointed moshav treasurer in 1988, a highly prestigious position at the time. It was the first time a woman filled this role in Moshav Tzin. While I do not argue that the appointment of a woman treasurer was a direct result of the decision to integrate women as paid employees, I nonetheless posit that prevailing social circumstances set the context for this appointment. This appointment, however, resulted in yet another form of gender discrimination as the members' association set the female treasurer's salary at a mere 40% of her (male) predecessor. By way of explanation, it was argued that should a man have been employed in the position, he would have been excluded *de facto* from agricultural labor and his family's agricultural workforce would have been reduced. The family of a female treasurer, on the other hand, could supplement her reduced managerial income through the continued cultivation of their agricultural plot.

Until privatization in 1989, the moshav's social structure encouraged the integration of women within its internal labor market, in agriculture and other areas. This process was prompted by the continued responsibility of the family to its agricultural unit, the labor shortages caused by the moshav's ideological orientation, and the financial difficulties that compelled the hiring of women-members. To be clear, Moshav Tzin was no paragon of gender equality prior to its privatization; there was a clear preference to employ men in managerial positions and their salaries were higher. Nonetheless, women assumed active roles in the cooperative's labor market.

According to Sharabi (2007), this pattern of gender division of labor, according to which women were at once responsible for the well-being of their families and employed in low status agricultural positions, was characteristic of many cooperative agricultural settlements at the time.

Altered labor patterns in Moshav Tzin following privatization

In 1989, in the middle of the severe financial crisis in agriculture, Moshav Tzin association initiated profound structural changes, namely privatization, which also led to a transformation of labor relations. In the academic literature, privatization is often described as the dislocation of an organization's center of gravity from public to private hands; a centralized management is maintained, albeit in other hands.² This was not the case with regard to Moshav Tzin; privatization of the association significantly narrowed its authority and functions, and accordingly allowed

2 Uri Ram (2005, 2011) proposes to dub these processes "corporatization."

member families more freedom in operating their agricultural units. In other words, in contrast to typical privatization processes, Moshav Tzin demonstrated a weakening of centralized management and expansion of individual responsibility, principally within the familial agricultural units.

Power and authority were relocated from the collective to the individual. The centralized coordination of many of the moshav's work processes, including the sorting, purchase, and sale of agricultural products, as well as credit and capital management, became the independent responsibility of each family unit. Likewise, moshav member families were also granted freedom of decision in engaging hired labor for the familial agricultural units.

This change led to shifting labor patterns within the familial agricultural units. The initial phase of privatization took place around the same time that Israel began employing migrant labor in agriculture throughout the country, including the southern Arava region (Storm 2011). Privatization led the moshav to embrace this practice (Eisenman 1994; Shnider 2008; Tzfadia and Yacobi 2011; Strom 2011). Indeed, employment of migrant laborers significantly reduced the physical load of agricultural work for unit owners.

In addition, technological advances in agriculture reduced the demand for physical labor. While such technological progress is not necessarily an outcome of privatization, it is noteworthy that in the 1980s the Moshav Tzin association had blocked the introduction of the latest technology, such as fruit and vegetable sorting equipment, fearing a loss of oversight and control (Shnider 2008). In other words, technological development within Moshav Tzin is linked to its privatization in the sense that the process removed barriers to innovation.

In the wake of privatization, "sophisticated" tasks previously handled by the association were transferred to the familial units. These included non-labor-intensive aspects of agricultural work, such as capital management, product marketing, and payment collection.

Finally, in the past two decades, the membership in Moshav Tzin expanded by some fifty families, altering the average level of education among women in the moshav. A negative correlation was observed between women's age and educational attainment ($r(38) =$

-0.338 , $p < 0.05$), signifying that the young cadre of women who joined the community in the past two decades were more educated than their senior peers who had been integrated in the moshav workforce before privatization.

In sum, in the moshav social environment where women had already been integrated in the workforce by the 1970s and the 1980s, the women's overall level of education increased, the physical demands of agriculture decreased, and, correspondingly, the importance of workers' human capital rose.

Women's status as workers in the moshav, twenty years after privatization

One could assume that given these circumstances, women's share in the labor force will rise over the years and they will be assigned to positions with higher status. The reality of the moshav in the year 2011 shows otherwise.

As part of the survey, the respondents were asked to rate seven components of their identity (Moore and Kimmerling 1995; Kimmerling and Moore 1997) according to their subjective evaluation: profession, family, place of residence, political opinion, ethnic origin, gender, and social class. The rating was done on a scale of 1 – the most important, to 7 – the least important. The average scores are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Rating of identity components by gender*

Identity component	Men (N=40)	Women (N=38)
Profession	2.67	3.21
Family	1.02	1.09
Place of residence	2.64	2.66
Political opinion	5.03	5.65
Ethnic origin	5.68	6.36
Gender	5.00	3.17
Social class	4.33	4.60

*Average scores on a scale of 1 (most important) to 7 (least important)

Family is revealed to be the most important identity component among both women and men (lowest average scores; see Table 1). The rating is almost the same for both male and female respondents. The second most important identity component – place of residence, namely Moshav Tzin – is also rated identically by the sexes. There is notable difference, however, concerning the third most important component: for men this is their profession as farmers; for women, on the other hand, gender is cited as the third most important component of their identity. The gender-based differences in the rating of profession and gender (Table 1) are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. Gender is ranked higher by women and profession is ranked higher by men. No significant differences were found between women and men with regard to the other identity components: political opinion, ethnic origin and social class.

This finding suggests that profession and gender are mutually exclusive identity features among moshav members. Put otherwise, it would appear that in Moshav Tzin, one may be either a farmer or a woman, but not both.

The aforementioned quantitative finding is confirmed by interviews with women. When asked about her profession, for example, a member described how she spends leisure time:

People ask me what I do and I find it difficult to define myself in such a way. It is as if I do nothing but I don't know... women here live well, what can I tell you? Once a week [they go to] yoga, once a week to the gym, once to the pool. They're having fun. How they define themselves, I don't know.

In 2011, agriculture – the primary source of income for 98 of the 102 familial units surveyed in Moshav Tzin – remains an overwhelmingly male arena. Rather than build upon the infrastructure established at the time of the cooperative to advance equality, the principal occupation became increasingly masculine, as the following quote by a female member illustrates:

When we were kids, my mom was equal to my dad in the field. This was her work and that's where she managed most of her life. In addition to the field, she also had the house. She always worked so hard but today it is no longer the case. Occasionally, I take the time to ask what is going on in the field, what is being picked and how much we picked. But I am not there. And most of the women here are not there, most of them. Some women, or so I hear, work a bit, sort a little, harvest. [But] they are a minority and they do things very locally. I think [the agricultural field] is something very masculine.

In-depth interviews conducted with the moshav younger female generation, namely women who joined after having acquired education and a profession, emphasized that the choice to live in Moshav Tzin entailed professional sacrifices, as the community is located some 30 km from the nearest settlement and over 100 km from the nearest city. Hence, the settlement offers few employment opportunities:

When I arrived here, I realized I was making a great professional sacrifice since in my occupation, as in many other fields, there are no [opportunities] here in the Arava. I knew and understood that this was [my] lot. We created a table of advantages and disadvantages and I understood I was making the occupational sacrifice, which is the hardest one I made in my decision to come here.

For this woman, the decision to relocate to a cooperative agricultural settlement in the Arava clearly entailed a heavy professional price. The majority of young men who joined the moshav were also educated and likewise sacrificed their careers. Unlike the women, however, the moshav provided them with new occupations.

Similar data attested to the exclusion of women from the moshav labor force. Among the work patterns I examined in the course of this research³ is the existence of multiple partnerships among agricultural units, particularly in sorting, transportation, and ownership of agricultural tools. This pattern is so commonplace that all but one of those who filled the quantitative questionnaire indicated they maintained such partnerships in at least one sphere of operation. The data gathered through the questionnaires demonstrated that each of the moshav familial units maintained an average of 5.9 partnerships in various areas. Attempt to identify explanatory variables to this work pattern yielded an interesting gender-related finding.

No correlations were found in the pooled sample of men and women between work-related variables (such as number of partnerships) and explanatory variables (such as the locus of control). However, examining these variables while controlling for gender produced a different picture. There was no statistically significant correlation between explanatory variables and attitudes toward labor among women, but the same analysis for men revealed statistically significant correlations. For instance, in the subsample of men, there is a negative correlation between the number of partnerships per unit as a work-related variable and the locus of control as an explanatory variable ($r(37) = -0.342, p < 0.05$).

These results may also testify to the exclusion of women from the moshav's labor market. Indeed, quantitative findings suggest that, in line with the internal logic of the agricultural unit, labor decisions are made by men. The lack of connection between explanatory variables and attitudes towards labor among women is intuitively obvious considering women's claim that they are not involved in agriculture. As such, for instance, when the man's locus of control is external (i.e., he attributes his life events to external factors), the data show that, as the manager of the familial unit, he will be inclined to maintain more partnerships. Conversely, when the woman's locus of control is external, the familial unit will not necessarily enter into a greater number of partnerships. The woman does not participate in agricultural work and as such is not the one to make such decisions. Two out of 38 female respondents actually answered that they "do not know" or considered "irrelevant" the number of partnerships maintained by their familial unit. Both women admitted to being unversed in the work of the moshav. Clearly, these two replies cannot be regarded as conclusive, yet taken together with the other findings, a more coherent picture begins to emerge.

Thus far, the interviews suggest that moshav women spend their time between the pool and the yoga studio, and do not participate in moshav labor. Hence, they do not define their identity through work and no connection is to be found between

3 For further elaboration, see Shnider (2013).

their women's personal characteristics and the working patterns of the agricultural familial unit. This, however, would comprise a misleading description of reality, which seems in fact far more complicated.

I conducted a total of 18 interviews with women in the moshav. When asked directly, most of the interviewees agreed that there was a division of labor between men and women in agriculture and that one of the professions – financial management of the family farm – is the near exclusive responsibility of women:

Anything to do with agriculture, peppers, the field, chilies, all these things... I know nothing about this; it doesn't mean anything to me. I am not there. Give me paychecks, Thai workers, VAT, you know – loans, interest – [are] my turf.

Until the moshav was privatized, financial management was one of the most important and highly regarded tasks. The treasurer was an authority. In 2011, however, when the management of the familial units' financial affairs was placed into the hands of Moshav Tzin's women, the treasurer's position lost much of its prestige. Local culture does not reward this aspect of the labor process and even the women entrusted with financial management consider it a marginal occupation that does not deserve a mention as a component of one's identity – in contrast to yoga, for example.

Despite the dominance of agriculture, this branch is not the moshav's sole source of income. In 2011, some twenty business initiatives were managed and operated by women in Moshav Tzin. This figure is four times higher than the national average (Koriel 2013), which ostensibly attests to the special place women carved for themselves in the community. Yet, such a conclusion warrants a number of reservations: first, most of these businesses belong to what are considered "feminine" domains, such as retail outlets for baby products and housewares, jewelry and furniture design workshops, a yoga center, Pilates studio, and cosmetician. As the majority of customers are female residents of the moshav, women's local entrepreneurship has buttressed, rather than toppled, the walls of the gendered ghetto. Second, it is noteworthy that 98 of 100 men in the moshav are independent farmers. Namely, while the existence of twenty female-owned businesses is exceptionally high in relation to Israel in general, in remote Moshav Tzin, where few employment opportunities exist, this figure is markedly low in comparison to the number of male-owned independent businesses. A final reservation concerns the social and economic location of women-owned businesses. In an interview, one woman defined her business as, "Adjacent to the agricultural unit," namely, peripheral and of secondary importance. The economic heart of Moshav Tzin remains agricultural and as such, none of the female-owned businesses constitute a family's primary source of income. It is no wonder that women regard their own businesses as "secondary."

Some of the women in the community are employed, usually part-time, in the moshav or its surroundings. They serve, among other functions, as nurses, teachers, and secretaries – again, jobs traditionally regarded as “feminine.” However, female members employed in the moshav consider the entire working world as secondary in their lives. In the following quote, a young woman who managed to keep her professional career after her return to the moshav described her experience thusly:

I ride my bicycle to work and back and everything is very accessible and close. Now, as far as I am concerned, raising a family is the most important thing and that is why I did not turn to [work in] the community, or [work in] shifts, or commute all the way to Be'er Sheva to work. It is out of the question.

The division of labor in the moshav created a two-dimensional system of gender exclusion. On the one hand, women are excluded from the moshav's core industry and primary source of income – agriculture. On the other hand, the professional fields in which women are employed – financial management, accounting of hired workers – are considered to be of secondary importance and lacking social prestige.

In Moshav Tzin, work is deeply rooted in a wider socio-cultural structure that enables some behaviors and forces others. For example, in 2011 no educational alternative was offered to children in the afternoon in a radius of 45 km from the moshav. Thus, at least one parents was limited to a maximum of half-time employment. In a reality where the principal source of income is agriculture – defined as a masculine field – it is obvious which partner will have to make the sacrifice. Nonetheless, the domestic division of duties between men and women, albeit not equal, is unlike the common division of roles in western society. Indeed, no spatial separation exists in the moshav between the work and home spheres. Both father and mother work in proximity to home and school. As such, there is no gender bias with regards to the parent who drops the toddlers off in daycare, or who picks them up in the afternoon. When I asked one of the women in the moshav how she accounts for the relatively large number of men congregating around the daycare at pick-up time, she responded as follows:

What do I do at noon? I cook lunch. And that's what I do every day at noon because this is when they eat lunch here. When the husband comes back from work, he eats at home and so does the wife. The kids eat too. This is how people live here, like in a 14th century village.

Volunteer committees in the moshav likewise embody traditional divisions of labor in terms of gender. The education, youth and culture committees all have female majorities, whereas the agricultural committee – responsible for supervising equitable division of critical means of production like water and land, the municipal planning committee – tasked with the provision of construction permits, and the moshav security committee all have a clear male majority. In other words,

while women are responsible for educational, social, and cultural aspects of daily life, men dominate the professional, economic, and security fields.

Discussion

Until 1989, the organizational structure of the moshav, as reflected in its bylaws, fostered the inclusion of women within the labor force. The limitation on contractual employment in the familial agricultural units contributed to the integration of women. Likewise, the decision to staff all of the contractual positions in the moshav administration with members – men and women alike – bolstered the economic incorporation of women, particularly in the fields of education and accounting, and even as treasurer, a senior managerial position. I do not argue the existence of utopian gender equality in the moshav prior to privatization. Rather, I present data that attests to constraints created by the moshav's association that catalyzed the inclusion of women within its labor force.

Privatization created new conditions for the familial units: physical labor was transferred to migrant laborers, some of the work was mechanized following technological advancements, and the “softer” segments of agriculture, such as financial management and marketing, were made the responsibility of the member families. These processes unfolded in parallel with an increase in women's educational attainment. Privatization of the moshav created ostensibly improved conditions for the integration of women within the moshav's labor market. In reality, however, events proved otherwise.

Agriculture, the main source of income for all of the agricultural units in the moshav, remains a clearly masculine arena. Unlike in the pre-privatization era, women are nearly absent from agricultural occupations today. Though some of the softer responsibilities, such as financial management, were transferred from the association to the moshav's women, the prestige of these roles diminished accordingly. Furthermore, women do not regard these tasks as professional; unless asked directly, they tend not to characterize these responsibilities as a profession. The occupations of women in the moshav – whether as contractual employees in fields traditionally regarded as feminine or as entrepreneurs – are perceived by the women themselves as marginal. This finding is grounded in both the qualitative and quantitative data, demonstrating that work does not constitute a significant identity component among women in Moshav Tzin. Indeed, no significant correlation was found between women's identity characteristics and the operation of the familial units. This stands in contrast to the men of the moshav, whose work is revealed to be a dominant component of their identities. A significant connection

was found between men's personal attributes and the operation of the familial units.

The study sought to investigate the connection between the privatization of Moshav Tzin and its gendered division of labor. Though Moshav Tzin is not representative of other cooperative agricultural settlements or labor organizations, a case-study investigation enables theoretical deduction from specific findings. Data collected in this research demonstrate that as long as a centralized social system supervised and set the rules for the community, creating a strong association, women were included in the moshav's internal labor market. When privatization was introduced, each familial unit became free to govern its own internal affairs, thus making room for broad entrepreneurship. At the same time, the new era of free initiative resulted in the exclusion of women from the labor market and a deflation of the prestige accorded to the feminine fields of occupation. This is true even for domains previously regarded as prestigious, such as financial management. Put otherwise, privatization and the freedom to initiate bestowed upon the familial agricultural units in the moshav harmed gender equality.

An ongoing academic debate attempts to understand the 21st century cooperative agricultural settlements in the wake of privatization (Sofer 2005, Sofer and Appelbaum 2006). Over the years, most of these settlements have lost their unique attributes; their specific structures have been altered and they have forfeited agriculture as the principal occupation. Schwartz (2006) even argued that the majority of cooperative agricultural settlements were relegated to little more than village-like suburbs (Schwartz 2006). The present study focuses on a moshav that does not meet these criteria; though privatized, it remained fundamentally agricultural. This model of a privatized agricultural moshav characterizes many of the peripheral cooperative agricultural settlements (Kohman 2008). The study shows that this model – a privatized agricultural moshav located on the geographical periphery – intensifies the exclusion of women from the labor market. Furthermore, privatization itself has created the social conditions for such exclusion.

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