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SOCIO-POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN ISRAEL:
THE CASE OF THE NORTHERN ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

Lilian A. Tauber

Durham Middle East Paper No. 79

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INSTITUTE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

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This paper examines the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel by using ‘socio-political entrepreneurship’ as the analytical framework. While the notion of entrepreneurship originated in the field of economics, it has also taken hold in the social sciences as ‘social entrepreneurship’ and ‘political entrepreneurship’. Social entrepreneurship refers to initiatives taken to ameliorate social issues through economic means, while political entrepreneurship describes the way in which policies are changed in unexpected ways, generally at high levels of government. However, there is a gap in which the literature fails to explain social entrepreneurship with political undertones, or the case of the politician as social entrepreneur.

This paper proposes the concept, and various aspects of, ‘socio-political entrepreneurship’, which combines elements of social and political entrepreneurship. The aim of socio-political entrepreneurship is to work on behalf of society to improve social conditions; while this has political undertones, the enterprise need not necessarily, or exclusively, be about changing politics. The Northern Islamic Movement is a social and religious movement that focuses mainly on socio-religious activities in the Israeli Arab communities, but also exhibits goals, rhetoric, and functions with strong political undertones. Thus, the use of ‘socio-political entrepreneurship’ allows for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the functions of the Northern Islamic Movement in Israeli Arab society.

KEYWORDS

Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement, Israel, entrepreneurship, socio-political entrepreneurship

This paper examines the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel and the role it plays in Israeli politics to better understand its role in Israeli Arab society. The Northern Islamic Movement is a movement that focuses mainly on socio-religious activities in the Israeli Arab communities, but also exhibits goals, rhetoric, and functions with strong political undertones. Thus, the Northern Branch is often understood to pose a comprehensive challenge to the state of Israel in social, political, and economic terms, and raises questions of a democratic dilemma.¹ This view is restrictive in its assumption of a zero-sum situation in Israel, where a policy or event benefiting the Arab minority negatively impacts the Jewish citizenry and vice versa. The analytical framework proposed and developed here is the concept of ‘socio-political entrepreneurship’. While the notion of entrepreneurship originated in the field of economics, it has also taken hold in the social sciences as ‘social entrepreneurship’ and ‘political entrepreneurship’. Social entrepreneurship refers to initiatives taken to ameliorate social issues through economic means, while political entrepreneurship describes the way in which policies are changed in unexpected ways, generally at high levels of government. However, there is a gap in which the literature fails to explain social entrepreneurship

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while this has political undertones, the enterprise need not necessarily, or exclusively, be about changing politics. The benefit of studying a socio-political movement as an enterprise allows attention to shift from the zero-sum model to more productive questions that allow for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of its roles and functions.

There is a wide and varied literature on the study of entrepreneurship, in which definitions and aspects of the concepts are sometimes vague or contradictory. Regardless, some overarching themes have emerged. Traditionally, scholars have analysed the entrepreneur as operating within an economic market, but more recently, theories of social and political entrepreneurship have been developed and applied within the broader social science field. Following is a concise review of the seminal ideas of classical economic entrepreneurship, grouped into one of six overarching themes, and a brief overview of the contributions of social and political entrepreneurship theories.

*Critical Aspects of the Entrepreneur in Economic Theory
The Person/Entity Who Assumes Risk and/or Uncertainty*

Richard Cantillon established the entrepreneur as one who assumes risk and/or uncertainty, describing uncertainty as all those ‘unknowable’ things inherent in the economic market.² Another crucial development in the theory of uncertainty and risk in entrepreneurship emerged in Frank Knight’s work. He argued that the entrepreneur assumes the consequences of uncertainty and risk.³ According to Knight, management does not imply entrepreneurship, but a manager becomes an entrepreneur when his work requires exercising ‘judgment involving liability to error’.⁴ One of Knight’s most important contributions was to clearly distinguish between the concepts of insurable risk and non-insurable uncertainty. Knight wrote that ‘risk’ refers to a measurable quantity, i.e. the objective probability that an event will happen. On the other hand, ‘uncertainty’, often confused with risk, is an unmeasurable factor such as the inability to predict consumer demand.⁵ Other writers who agreed with Cantillon’s and Knight’s assessment that risk and uncertainty are defining aspects of entrepreneurship are Johann Heinrich von Thünen (1960), Hans von Mangoldt (1987), Frederick Hawley (1892), Herbert Davenport (1913), Ludwig von Mises (1949), Arthur Cole (1949), and George L.S. Shackle (1955).

An Innovator

Most modern theories of entrepreneurship take their origin from Joseph Schumpeter’s seminal work, which had been foreshadowed by Abbe Nicolas Baudeau’s theory of the innovative entrepreneur.⁶ Schumpeter argued that the entrepreneur is principally an innovator: an individual who creates a new good or quality; creates a new production method; opens a new market; captures a new supply source; or creates a new organization or industry.⁷ The entrepreneur is the main instrument of change, the one who disturbs the status quo through a process of ‘creative destruction’. Per Schumpeter, ‘everyone is an entrepreneur only when he actually “carries out new combinations,” and loses that character as soon as he has built up his business, when he settles down to running it as other people run their businesses’.⁸ Following Schumpeter, Jeremy Bentham (1952), Johann Heinrich von Thünen (1960), and Israel Kirzner (1985) also emphasized the entrepreneur’s innovative qualities as important in the development of human progress.

A Decision Maker

Until the beginning of the 1950s, the standard textbook definition of the entrepreneur’s function was that of ‘making fundamental policy decisions in an enterprise’.⁹ Carl Menger wrote that economic change arises from individuals’ understanding of circumstances, not the circumstances themselves. His

theory relies on the role of knowledge in individual decisions, and thus his entrepreneur's function is to use his calculating and decision-making abilities to align productive resources over time.¹⁰ Friedrich von Wieser expanded on this, writing that the entrepreneur directs an economic enterprise and that 'he supplies not only the necessary capital but originates the idea, elaborates and puts into operation the plan, and engages collaborators'.¹¹ Other authors whose work attributes decision-making qualities to the entrepreneur are Alfred Marshall (1920), Amasa Walker (1866) and his son, Francis Amasa Walker (1876), Arthur Cole (1949), George L.S. Shackle (1955), and Theodore Schultz (1975).

A Leader

Historically, entrepreneurship has been consistently associated with leadership. In the earliest literature, royalty, military leaders, and even merchants were considered entrepreneurial because they subjected themselves to risk in a way that others did not, and positioned themselves to gain significant political, personal, or economic benefits.¹² Various classical authors have described the entrepreneur as a leader in some form, whether as manager, superintendent, organizer, employer, or contractor. John Stuart Mill established the entrepreneur as a manager or superintendent – one who has direction and control over the enterprise.¹³ Leon Walras similarly

characterized the entrepreneur as the coordinator of resources.¹⁴ François Quesnay's entrepreneur is the independent owner of a business, one who 'manages and makes his business profitable'.¹⁵ Jean-Baptiste Say (1840) described the entrepreneur as the manager of a firm, yet separate from the capitalist. He also wrote that the entrepreneur's most distinguishing quality is to have 'good judgment', a term closely associated with leadership today.¹⁶ Von Wieser (1927), Amasa and Francis Walker (1866 and 1876), Bentham (1952), Marshall (1920), Menger (1950), Davenport (1913), and Schumpeter (1947) express similar ideas in their work.

The Supplier of Capital

Adam Smith divided entrepreneurs into three categories: the adventurer, the projector, and the undertaker.¹⁷ In his treatment of 'the undertaker', he established the entrepreneur as the person who supplies financial capital. Smith considered the undertaker to be a 'prudent man'.¹⁸ Importantly, Smith's prudent man accumulates capital because he is frugal; in this way, he encourages slow but steady progress. Ludwig von Mises (1949) and Amme-Robert Jacques Turgot (1977) are among other scholars who emphasize that entrepreneurs supply financial capital, and most contemporary work assumes this attribute.

Notably, Turgot's contribution was to establish capital ownership as a separate economic function. He wrote

that a capitalist does not need to be an entrepreneur, but that one cannot be an entrepreneur without being a capitalist.¹⁹

'Who' May Be an Entrepreneur?

The literature on entrepreneurship generally agrees that the term 'entrepreneur' may be applied widely to various actors and is not restricted to economics or to a single person. Cantillon (1931), von Mises (1949), and Theodore Schultz (1975) argued that the entrepreneur may be any person who must make choices and deal with uncertainties, qualities which may apply to persons as diverse as students, consumers, beggars, home-makers, or any labourer reallocating his or her services, time, or efforts. This idea allows for a broader interpretation of the entrepreneur beyond, for example, one who faces economic risk in a business. Amasa Walker (1866) and Jeff Skoll (2006) agree with these assessments, and more recent work has established that even a government may be entrepreneurial.²⁰ Regarding whether the entrepreneur is one person, a group of people, or an organization, Fredrik Barth agreed with Schumpeter that the entrepreneur is not necessarily 'a single physical person' and that 'every social environment has its own ways of filling the entrepreneurial function'.²¹ More specifically, Barth wrote that the word describes 'an aspect of a role: it relates to actions and activities, ... [and] it characterises a certain quality'.²² This means that 'being an entrepreneur' refers to a person's, group's, or organization's function rather than their identity.

Contributions of Social and Political Entrepreneurship Theories

Schumpeter offered some early insight into the entrepreneur's relationship with society, writing that entrepreneurial functions involve the 'will power adequate to break down the resistance that the social environment offers to change.' In this way, entrepreneurial activity 'extends to the structure and the very foundations of ... society'.²³ Charles Wilson added that entrepreneurs are involved in a process of 'social amelioration', a concept that has carried through to present day analyses of social entrepreneurs.²⁴ This introduction of entrepreneurs' role in society gave rise to the development of social entrepreneurship theory in the mid-1950s. Cyril Belshaw wrote that entrepreneurs both represent and influence the direction of social change, because 'their values and methods are a reflection of the synthesis between old and new that is the developing culture'.²⁵

Barth gave rise to further discussion of the social entrepreneur with his more precise explanation of how an entrepreneur functions in terms of social change. He built on the idea of community cooperation, writing that

a 'corporate group' will arise around the entrepreneur which is new in terms of membership, function, or composition and structure. This definition of the word entrepreneur 'leads us directly to highly seminal points of social change'.²⁶ However, the social entrepreneur depends on the approval of others to succeed: 'Despite the awareness of its needs, a society may ... be hostile to the means with which the innovator wishes to satisfy them'.²⁷ This drives the entrepreneur to undergo the process of 'constructive destruction'²⁸ : a concept describing the process by which the entrepreneur 'destroys important social organisms that a given society wishes to but is unable to protect'.²⁹

Another important aspect of social entrepreneurship is the ability to capture 'the active cooperation of considerable segments of the population'.³⁰ Barth wrote that entrepreneurs recognise and develop a 'set of needs in a population which places clients in the strongest relation of dependence to himself'. In this way, clients begin to view those needs as vital, and the entrepreneur 'can

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present himself as singularly qualified and able to cater for precisely [those] needs'.³¹ These aspects imply a type of dependency-provision cycle between the entrepreneur and society, in which the entrepreneur is in a position to be the best, or main, provider of some type of good or service which society requires.

Political scientists have defined political entrepreneurs as 'individuals who change the direction and flow of politics'.³² Political entrepreneurship occurs 'when an individual acts on a political profit opportunity'.³³ The concept of opportunity and the concept of the profit motive have emerged as important to consider. Further, the function of a political entrepreneur is here understood in 'terms related to policy success and status'.³⁴ Holcombe writes that 'entrepreneurial opportunities arise in politics for many of the same reasons that they appear in markets, to reduce the inefficiency. ... If the political system is unstable ... then change is more likely'.³⁵

Towards a Theory of Socio-Political Entrepreneurship

The following question, which arises throughout the literature on entrepreneurship, needs to be answered: What happens when the politician is a social entrepreneur or when social entrepreneurship has political undertones? Despite the plurality of work on political entrepreneurs, and of course the wealth of discussion on all aspects of the economic entrepreneur, the idea of the politician as social entrepreneur remains underdeveloped. One possible way to address this is to revise the concepts of social and political entrepreneurship and propose the idea of 'socio-political entrepreneurship'.

Social entrepreneurship describes initiatives taken on behalf of the betterment of social issues through economic means. Political entrepreneurship has been developed as a concept through which policies are changed in unexpected ways, generally at high levels of government. A synthesis of these two concepts allows for the analysis of entrepreneurs who work on behalf of society to improve social conditions, and whose efforts may have political undertones but are not necessarily, or exclusively, about changing politics. This approach builds on the overarching themes of economic entrepreneurship and aspects of social and political entrepreneurship described above.

To encapsulate the dimensions of socio-political entrepreneurship, these criteria are proposed:

- a) Assumption of risk and/or uncertainty – The entrepreneur assumes the risk and/or uncertainty of the enterprise. The enterprise's viability depends on the members' efforts and their ability to secure resources, as well as prudent management of capital.
- b) Innovation – In keeping with the foundational scholarship on entrepreneurship, the socio-political enterprise must be able to distinguish itself from similar or related undertakings with a characteristic that is new or different.
- c) Autonomy in decision-making – The enterprise is created and governed by a group of people/citizens undertaking an autonomous project. The enterprise is not managed, either directly or indirectly, by any other organization or authority, whether private or governmental. Thus, the enterprise may formulate its positions and organise its actions freely, as well as terminate the undertaking.
- d) Leadership – The entrepreneur displays leadership qualities within his enterprise by managing, organising, and directing other members. Similarly, the enterprise may take on a leadership role in the community.
- e) Supplying capital – The entrepreneur supplies the capital necessary to produce the

enterprise's services. This can be in the form of physical, financial, human, or social capital.

- f) Involvement in social development – The socio-political entrepreneur principally aims to serve society, or a part of society, in some way. The enterprise encourages local-level social responsibility and engagement.
- g) Demonstrable cooperation of society – The enterprise functions with, and actively encourages, the support of the society in which it operates. The participation of members of society is crucial to the success of the enterprise's goals.
- h) Dependency-provision cycle – In the socio-political enterprise, the entrepreneur has identified a particular need in society and has engineered a way to position the enterprise as the sole, main, or best provider of the solution to those needs. In this way, society becomes dependent on the services provided by the entrepreneur.
- i) A combination of political and social objectives, formal or informal – Importantly, socio-political entrepreneurship distinguishes itself from social entrepreneurship and political entrepreneurship in that it combines elements of both. As such, the socio-political enterprise may be a social enterprise with political undertones, or it may be a political enterprise with a heavy emphasis on social services.

The Northern Islamic Movement as Case Study for Socio-Political Entrepreneurship

The Development of the Islamic Movement: The Socio-Political Context of the Arabs in Israel

Israel is a country with a Jewish majority and an Arab minority, comprising roughly 75 percent and 25 percent respectively.³⁶ While Arabs are granted basic rights, they are not offered equality because the state gives symbolic, structural and practical preference to its Jewish citizens.³⁷ Welfare services, land allocation, educational institutions and the economic development of communities for Arabs differ from those in the Jewish communities.³⁸ Thus, Israel's Arab population has not been given admission to full membership in Israeli society, but rather false and unequal integration.³⁹ This demonstrates the failure of secular Israeli politics to address the grievances of all its citizens.

Israeli Arabs desire civil and political, if not cultural, integration with the Jewish majority, and are not satisfied with the place they have been given within Israel's society.⁴⁰ While the Palestinians in the territories were progressing towards their right to self-determination, the Arabs in Israel had made no progress towards their goals.⁴¹ In addition, the failure of Pan-Arabism, the decline of Arab nationalism in the 1970s, and the blow the fall of the Soviet Union dealt to the Arab Communist Party created an

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ideological crisis for Israeli Arabs in the late 1980s and early 1990s, leaving them to search for new socio-political identities.⁴² Israeli Arabs could not join the political sphere in Israel like their Jewish counterparts, but their limited citizenship status nevertheless allowed them to function within the legal framework of the state, and Arab leaders made clear that they 'would act only within the law'.⁴³ Under the direction of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who advocated that the resource disparity for Israeli Arabs needed to cease, some progress towards parity was made. However, Rabin was assassinated in November 1995 by a right-wing extremist who opposed the Oslo Accords.⁴⁴ Since then, it seems that the state has not allowed Arabs to exercise their citizenship rights beyond a certain limit, which is 'located at the transition point between struggling to have their liberal rights respected, even expanded, in the conduct of official policy and attempting to challenge the prevailing notion of the common good of society'.⁴⁵

Beginnings of the Islamic Movement

The Islamic Movement emerged in the Negev region of Israel and is one of the leading political forces in Israeli Arab society today.⁴⁶ Following the June 1967 Six Day War, Israeli Arabs and Palestinians in the occupied territories renewed

their relations, and religiosity increased in the Israeli Arab communities.⁴⁷ One of the persons influenced by this transition was Sheikh Darwish from the Little Triangle region. Initially active in the Communist Party, he shifted to Islam as an ideological and political framework for action in the mid-1960s. He began preaching in Kafr Qassem, and the Islamic Movement began in 1972 when he gained his first followers. Darwish's reputation spread to neighbouring villages and by 1978 his influence could be traced as far away as the Bedouin settlements of the Negev and Galilee. His ideology at the time was based on two positions: antipathy to western imperialism and culture, and the 'understanding of Islam as the most complete, liberal, and humanist way to life'. Because of this, his sermons attracted those who felt alienated from and discriminated against by Israeli society and who were searching for identity.⁴⁸ Initially, the activists followed a pattern of 'Islamization from above', which meant that the movement was organized into militant groups that aimed to destroy the dominant Israeli-Jewish order. The group comprised approximately 60-100 lower middle class male activists, most under the age of 25, lacking higher education, and all from the same region as Darwish. However, some of the movement's members were arrested in early 1981, and several, including Darwish, served prison sentences for inciting violence against the state. After Darwish's release in 1983, he declared that the movement would henceforth avoid public calls to establish a Muslim state and that it would act within Israeli law. Since then, the Islamic Movement has followed a process of 'Islamization from below' in which it concentrates on social, cultural, religious, and educational services.⁴⁹

In 1996, the movement split on various grounds, but the most significant and divisive one was the issue of participation in Israel's Knesset (parliamentary) elections. The two factions of the Islamic Movement are now known as the 'northern' and 'southern' branches, names which have little to do with geographic differences.⁵⁰ The Southern Branch strives to achieve equality through negotiations or by pressuring the state to allocate resources to improve Israeli Arabs' status and condition, follows traditional and conservative ideologies, and has participated in Knesset elections since 1996. In contrast, the Northern Branch follows a more Islamist position, does not participate in Knesset elections, and has constructed independent institutions separate from the state in order to provide essential services to Arab communities.⁵¹ One plausible explanation for the Northern Branch's decision not to participate in Knesset elections is that their participation in the elections would signify recognition of Israeli sovereignty.⁵² The Northern Branch has argued that election participation would be a violation of the Islamic faith because 'the Knesset represents the principle of human sovereignty while Islamic faith recognizes only the sovereignty of Allah'.⁵³ In this dissertation, the focus of

study going forward is the Northern Branch because its non-participation in state governing institutions presents an interesting case study regarding the success of its socio-political entrepreneurial role within Israeli Arab society.

Aspects of the Northern Islamic Movement Today

The Leadership and Its Rhetoric

The Islamic Movement's leadership initially comprised well-educated young men such as Sheikh Darwish, Ra'ed Salah, Kamal Rayyan, Kamal Khatib, and other distinguished activists motivated to change the conditions of the Israeli Arab communities.⁵⁴ Little is known about the Movement's early organizational structure and institutions as it was not registered as a political party and its members had no formal status. When the Movement became institutionalized in the late 1980s, it established the supreme body known as the Advisory Council (majlis shura), elected by the general conference (mu'tamar 'aam), whose members represent towns in which the Movement is active. Senior officials in the Israeli General Security Service have stated that 'the Islamic Movement presumably maintains several covert cells', which the Movement denies but which would be consistent with the Muslim Brotherhood's organizational structure. Still, the Movement derives great strength from its lawful, overt actions, and has carefully exploited

the actions available to it within the confines of the state of Israel.⁵⁵

Among the leadership there are some contradictions and nuanced rhetoric regarding the state. On the one hand, the Movement's publications recognise Israel and its right to exist, and leaders such as Sheikh Darwish stress that 'publicly and audibly, we recognize the State of Israel'. On the other hand, some leaders treat affiliation with Israel as a 'default option'; Kamel Khatib for example has stated: 'We will not consent to being assimilated into the Israeli milieu, not ideologically, not politically, and certainly not culturally. In no way does the Israeli milieu represent us'.⁵⁶ This shows a stronger resistance to the state and the inequalities it represents, as well as a rejection of what it currently means for Arabs to be Israeli. Two of the main slogans used by the Movement, al-Islam huwa al-hall ('Islam is the solution') and al-Islam huwa al-badil ('Islam is the alternative'), refer to the organization's belief that they represent an alternative to Western culture, Zionist occupation, and the oppression and identity crisis of Israeli Arabs.⁵⁷ Sheikh Salah in particular is now one of the most vocal leaders of the Islamic Movement and is often described as charismatic. His rallying slogans are certainly emotive, perhaps meant to attract financial support for the Movement from other parts of the Muslim world.⁵⁸ Salah's 'Al-Aqsa in Danger' project, and the rhetoric and

activities that accompany it, have been very effective instruments for recruiting support for the Movement. The significance of the sacred place (discussed in more detail later) and its transformation from merely a religious to the more powerful national symbol, have gained support from many, including non-Muslims.⁵⁹ Although Salah has served multiple prison sentences for inciting violence in some of his speeches (such as calling for the Al-Aqsa mosque to be defended ‘in spirit and blood’), his rhetoric is fascinating. He is known to use an ‘intriguing blend of Islamism, Palestinian nationalism, and denial of Israel’s hegemony’.⁶⁰

Goals of the Northern Islamic Movement

The Islamic Movement is ‘a religious, political, and social movement’, focused mainly on socio-religious activities.⁶¹ Its primary ideological sources stem from Muslim Brotherhood writings, including those of Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Hasan al-Hudaybi.⁶² When the Islamic Movement became organised in its newly de-radicalised form in the early 1980s, it ‘rush[ed] in to provide the essential services to individuals where the government ... failed to do so’ in the Israeli Arab communities.⁶³ To address government insufficiencies, the Northern Branch adopted the ‘autonomy model’ proposed by Salah. He proposed the establishment of al-mujtama al-isami, a self-sustaining community which would

be able to provide for itself, using its own resources to provide several comprehensive services. This type of community would not be dependent on the Israeli state and thus would not suffer from socio-economic sanctions. The Arab community could then ‘administer their lives in an autonomous, sovereign manner, in the spirit of Islam’.⁶⁴ Another of the Movement’s major aims has been to encourage Muslims to become more devout; through youth education, community programs, and social activism the Movement attains great community support while stressing Islamic teachings.⁶⁵ In this way, it has to a great extent followed Muslim Brotherhood goals of building an Islamic society.⁶⁶ The state of Israel wishes to preserve its Jewish character and prevent religious and national separatism, however, and thus a major obstacle to the implementation of Salah’s plans has been government acts against the Movement’s social institutions and financial mechanisms. Besides humanitarian support, the Movement was also accused of helping Hamas commit terrorist attacks; the individuals carrying out these attacks were likely not directed by the movement even though they identified with it.⁶⁷

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the future vision of the Northern Islamic Movement is simply al-mujtama al-isami. While this has been a short-term goal, the Movement’s longer-term political goals may be more far-reaching.

To quote Salah, the movement seeks ‘to mix between the Islamic sources and the sharp political vision’, which indicates a readiness to compromise, and a ‘desire to find solutions which would enable the movement to find a bridge between the teachings of Islam and the existing political situation in Israel’.⁶⁸ The phrase ‘sharp political vision’ indicates that Salah may have a greater political agenda beyond just providing services to the communities. Kedar’s work comprehensively reviews the Northern Branch’s goals based on the Movement’s weekly newspaper, its women’s monthly publication, books written by members, sermons, and his own conversations with Movement leaders.⁶⁹

In summary, Kedar argues that the Northern Branch’s main message is that the state of Israel is illegitimate, and that the struggle against it and its culture is necessary. Salah’s al-mujtama al-isami is, in this view, only a temporary solution ‘designed as an alternative to the state and to the liberal worldview

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that it has injected into the Islamic community’ while a more comprehensive struggle against the state is not feasible.⁷⁰ Rekhess agrees that the Movement’s goals are complex; although progress was slow, it was in no hurry and had adopted ‘a gradual, reformist approach’, due to its long-term vision.⁷¹

Services Provided by the Northern Islamic Movement

Between 1972 and 1996, the Islamic Movement caused a ‘fundamental transformation in the worldview and lifestyle’ of Israeli Arabs, transforming the traditional and conservative yet secular society into one that adopted an Islamic lifestyle identity.⁷² The Movement’s network of organizations, institutions, and volunteer organizations are duly registered with the state, and offer practical solutions to social issues insufficiently addressed by the government.⁷³ The short sections below discuss the Movement’s work in da’wah, education, infrastructure, healthcare, charity, and sports, culture, and the arts.

Da'wah – Da'wah activities can include sermons, religious studies, public rallies, educational camps, distribution of religious books, and publication of manifestos, opinion papers, and newsletters, all of which the Islamic Movement has exploited. Local Movement-operated 'da'wah committees' perfected their operative methods over the years. In 1992, the Movement first held a 'da'wah week', during which dozens of young people visited homes in the town of Umm al-Fahm with the purpose of inspiring residents to re-embrace Islam. The Movement expanded its da'wah activities after that, and since then societal life gradually changed as it 'Islamized'. Young people increasingly wore traditional conservative dress, and the consumption of religious literature surged. In addition, mosques became more popular, both as places of worship and as central community centres.⁷⁴ Another part of the Movement's da'wah activity has been its call for Muslims to reclaim all Islamic endowment assets to strengthen Israeli Arabs' historical and cultural heritage. There is special attention to protecting the al-Aqsa mosque (discussed in greater detail later).⁷⁵

Education – In the field of education, the Islamic Movement took the opportunity to fill a void created by government neglect, particularly in pre-school services as well as complementary and higher education services. The importance that the Islamic Movement attributed to this reflects the Muslim Brotherhood's emphasis on education as a 'primary tool for developing the faith of Muslim individuals ... and as a mechanism for recruiting new members'.⁷⁶ To address the lack of adequate educational services, the Islamic Movement established a network of subsidized kindergartens and day care centres that provided free meals and organized transportation. It also organized summer camps featuring outdoor activities, field trips to tourist and Islamic sites, prayer studies, lectures, and choral activities. The Movement's curriculum combines Arab nationalism with religion, while encouraging excellence in education.⁷⁷ Pre-school educational institutions are offered in 86% of Arab villages and are funded by charitable donations from the community.⁷⁸ To complement state-run elementary and secondary education institutions, the Movement offers a system in primary and secondary education that assists students who are weak in mathematics and English, and gives computer, internet, Quran and hadith lessons and helps students prepare for matriculation exams.⁷⁹ The public's response was overwhelmingly positive.

One of the greatest achievements in the field of higher education was the 1985 establishment of the College of Da'wah and Islamic Sciences (Kuliyat al-Da'wah wal-'Ulum al-Islamiyyah). Here, the Movement trained Islamic religious officials and allowed it to partially fill the void in advanced religious instruction. The Movement also established the Centre of Contemporary

Studies (Markaz al-Dirasat al-Mu'aasirah), a research institution which published an Islamic journal as well as regular scientific publications. The Islamic Movement initiated the Students Committee, which awarded scholarships and recruited students for volunteer activities.⁸⁰

Infrastructure – Annual volunteer infrastructure work camps have been organized to conform to regular schedules of activity. Many volunteers, mostly young people, from around the country staffed these projects that worked to pave or widen roads and sidewalks, renovate schools, and construct classrooms and playgrounds.⁸¹ Other activities included building and renovating mosques, cleaning and repairing cemeteries, constructing covered bus stops, and building security fences around public buildings. These activities had very minimal monetary cost because labour and materials were donated, while results were immediately visible on the ground.⁸² In addition, the work camps fostered pan-Islamic solidarity and brotherhood among the Arab youth. These activities have increased the popularity of the Movement among the Arab community, and even those who are not members of the Movement have contributed to it.⁸³

Healthcare – In this area the Movement activated an umbrella organization called the Association of Islamic Clinics, which oversaw a network of local clinics that offered general,

expert, and dentistry services, and in some cases even night services and their own medical insurance.⁸⁴ Services offered at these clinics included, for example, 24-hour on-call service, outpatient treatments, internists and family physicians, basic cardiology equipment, an ambulance, and emergency dental treatments. The Movement also organized a 'health week' in several towns during which the clinics offered free check-ups, treatments, consultations, and informational lectures.⁸⁵

Charity – In keeping with its Islamic character, the Movement collected alms and charity (zakat and sadaqa) for those in need. It organized committees that collected charitable donations, as well as Ramadan payments (fitrah) and kindergarten and day care tuition payments. These funds were used to support the needy or to fund the Movement's many communal projects; funds were earmarked for charity associations, nursing services for the elderly, financial assistance for marriage and other expenses for the needy, home renovations for welfare recipients, and even a campaign against the abuse of alcohol and drugs.⁸⁶ The charitable, Islamic character of these services, as well as their affordability, have increased the Movement's prestige and popularity. The fact that the Northern Branch undertook these projects without official help stood in great contrast to the poor performance of state bodies, and thus both its leader and its objectives

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received vast public support and admiration.⁸⁷

Sports, Culture and the Arts – One of the Movement’s first initiatives was to establish the Islamic Sports Association, which includes an Islamic football league separate from the Israeli league.⁸⁸ The Movement also opened martial arts clubs and organized classes in judo and karate.⁸⁹ In addition, the Movement conducted music, theatre and literature activities. It established choirs which performed at its rallies, summer camps, work camps, and weddings, and which played traditional instruments. The Movement’s Islamic Theatre operated throughout various regions, and performed plays containing political themes and social issues. The Movement established the Association of Islamic Libraries, which opened over thirty functioning libraries that operated in Islamic cultural centres and were registered as non-profit organizations. Further, book stores (also registered as non-profit organizations) and book fairs were established by the Movement, as well as its women’s monthly and a weekly newspaper, Sawt al-Haqq wal-Huriyyah.⁹⁰

Overall, the Islamic Movement was immensely successful in garnering support through its various initiatives and programmes. Public opinion polls of the last decade show that the Islamist stream of

both factions is one of the strongest political streams in Arab society. According to the annual survey of Israeli Arab opinion, public identification with the Islamic Movement as the faithful representative of the Arab minority in Israel is very strong.⁹¹ Additional evidence of this is the massive participation in the annual rallies that the Northern Branch organises. Unofficial estimates show that ‘tens of thousands of individuals’ attend these rallies; more than any other popular gathering sponsored by an Arab party. Presumably the major reason for such high attendance is that the Movement focuses rallies on religious issues with strong national overtones, such as the ‘Al-Aqsa in Danger’ rally.⁹² According to the 2015 survey, 43 percent of Israeli Arabs sympathize in some way with the Islamic Movement. Among those, twice as many identify with the Northern Branch over the Southern Branch.⁹³

Through a series of initiatives in various social, religious, and cultural spheres undertaken by the Islamic Movement, Israel’s Arab population became increasingly Islamized.⁹⁴ The Movement’s operations took place in religion, infrastructure, healthcare, charity, education, sports, culture, and arts combined to create ‘a unique Islamic identity for the Arab population of Israel’⁹⁵. At the same time, the Movement operated with the restrictive condition of the constant threat of impending actions against it. Still, its organizations and initiatives were effective in providing essential services to its communities, and patiently, gradually, but persistently advanced its goals.

The Politicization and Conservation of Islamic Sites

To this day, the most fervently disputed issue in Israel is the Arabs’ struggle for land. Estimates show that up to 70 percent of land may have been expropriated from Arab citizens and turned into national land.⁹⁶ Thus it is worth examining the Islamic Movement’s attempts to reclaim sacred places in the context of the wider Arab struggle for land and for the rights of Arab communities.⁹⁷ Regarding the conservation of Islamic sites, the Northern Branch has benefited from the state’s consistent neglect and misuse of these sites. The Movement has diligently identified, documented, and sought to protect, clean and renovate Islamic sites not only in Muslim communities but throughout the country. The defence of these sites has allowed the Movement to revive Arabs’ Islamic religious heritage as well as position itself as the main force driving this project,⁹⁸ despite considerable state resistance. The Islamic Movement has used sacred places to expand its circle of supporters and to visibly demonstrate the recently strengthened identity of the Muslim minority in Israel. The Northern Branch’s leaders have learned ‘that sacred places are able to evoke [intense reactions] from diverse groups in support of political, religious, and other causes’.⁹⁹

The association between a place and society can be summed up by the following: 'Place is a space to which meaning has been ascribed'.¹⁰⁰ Further, 'the significance and symbols attributed to a place are at the heart of contests over control, over meaning, and over the manner in which a place is understood. This is the reason that contests over ... a place plays a material role in all cultural struggles for autonomy, control, and self-determination'.¹⁰¹ The Islamic Movement's use of place has its origins in the 1970s writings of Sheikh Darwish, whose careful rhetoric promoted a non-violent struggle to achieve national goals which included sensitive issues such as sacred places. In the 1980s, Salah, now 'one of the main forces in shaping the Movement's position regarding land', joined him.¹⁰² Around the same time, Kamil Rayyan began documenting, conserving, and renovating Islamic cemeteries and mosques, and negotiated with official state institutions over the Arabs' rights to these places.¹⁰³ In conjunction with Rayyan's efforts, Salah uses the status of these sacred places and particularly the compound in Jerusalem to bolster the Northern Branch's public standing. Since becoming head of the Northern Branch, Salah has held the popular annual 'Al-Aqsa in Danger' convention and rally.¹⁰⁴ The emotive slogans and activities accompanying this project have elevated Al-Aqsa's significance and transformed it into a national symbol. Salah's efforts in

this regard have gained support even from non-Muslims and others who are not affiliated with the Islamic Movement.¹⁰⁵ The Northern Branch promotes the transformation of land into Islamic sacred places, thereby precluding Jewish ownership. The Movement's leaders know that this tactic allows them to make gains in the struggle for land ownership and at the same time exploit it to recruit supporters for the Movement.

The Banishment of the Northern Branch

On 17th November 2015, Israel outlawed the entire Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement on charges of inciting the 'Third Intifada' or 'Stabbing Intifada' surrounding the issue of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.¹⁰⁶ Within Israel, opinions differ regarding the reasons for the outbreak of violence. Several Israeli Defense Force generals have stated that it is an expression of anger and revenge due to frustrations over the stagnation of diplomatic progress,¹⁰⁷ while the Israeli intelligence services have reported that the violence has its roots in Israeli Arabs' 'feelings of national, economic and personal deprivation'.¹⁰⁸ The official government statement on the issue is that 'the organization threatens public order, incites violence and racism, colludes with Hamas and harasses Jewish and non-Muslim citizens who want to visit the Temple Mount'.¹⁰⁹ Somewhat ironically, the Arab Israeli public now perceives the Northern Branch as a victim,

and many Arab community leaders and politicians have rallied around Ra'ed Salah. The controversy of the Northern Branch's outlawing seems to have boosted Salah's stature and that of the organization.¹¹⁰ To be sure, Salah and other Islamic Movement leaders will know how to use this to their advantage.

Analysis & Conclusions

In the introductory section, it was established that a socio-political enterprise must have all of the following attributes: assumption of risk and/or uncertainty; innovation; autonomy in decision-making; leadership; supplying capital; involvement in social development; demonstrable cooperation of society; dependency-provision cycle; and a combination of political and social objectives, formal or informal. In order to determine whether the Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement in Israel constitutes an example of socio-political entrepreneurship, it is necessary to examine each of these elements in turn.

a) Assumption of risk and/or uncertainty – For the Northern Branch, the most obvious risk is the prosecution and incarceration of its leaders and other members for activities the state deems illegal. Sheikh Ra'ed Salah and other leaders have assumed responsibility for this risk several times and served jail sentences of multiple years. Another risk is the banishment of the entire enterprise, which means that any activity related

to the Northern Branch is illegal; this risk was realized in November 2015. A third risk might entail repercussions for the Israeli Arab community. It seems, however, that for the Northern Branch these risks, albeit setbacks, have contributed to greater community support for its objectives, which adds to its profit accumulation in the long term.

b) Innovation – The Northern Islamic Movement shares many attributes of other Islamic movements in the region, notably in terms of ideology, organizational structures, and operational mechanisms. As it is modelled after the Muslim Brotherhood, the Northern Branch has similar slogans, ideologies, and participation avenues. However, the Islamic Movement in Israel distinguishes itself from other movements in terms of the context in which it operates. First, it may be enough of a distinction that an Islamist movement can exist at all in the Jewish state of Israel. The Islamic Movement has been allowed to operate within the legal confines of the state, both as a political party and as a movement, which is unlike many other Islamist organizations in neighbouring states which suffered repression by authoritarian regimes. More importantly, the Northern Islamic Movement is, and functions as, much more than a political party. It sees its struggle as part of the larger ummah (trans-national society of Muslims) which is not confined to Israel alone. It has worked industriously, through

its rhetoric, activities, and services, to develop its ability to operate and proselytise at the social level, which has challenged previous Arab Israeli identity and has provided a new one in its place. In this way, the Islamic Movement distinguishes itself from other similar movements.

- c) Autonomy in decision-making – The Northern Branch is autonomous of the state, managing itself and developing and implementing its goals through its independent leadership and the work of the citizens who support the Movement. Although the Movement has in most ways sought to operate within the legal framework of the state, it has freely formulated its positions and activities.
- d) Leadership – Ra'ed Salah and others have taken on clear leadership roles in the Islamic Movement by organising resources and volunteers to advance its goals. Their rhetoric concerning Islamic sites has placed the Northern Branch in a leadership position among the Israeli Arabs in the struggle for land, and various Branch initiatives have led the community towards a stronger Arab identity.
- e) Supplying capital -- As outlined in detail in previous sections, the Islamic Movement operates its various functions and provides its services primarily with funds collected by its charity groups, donations of supplies and tools, and through structured volunteer work, all of which constitute the Movement's capital. This capital is invested into the community, and profit may be measured in terms of the degree of Arab Israeli communities' support for the movement, and therefore for its short- and long-term goals. Greater community support indicates greater profit for the Movement.
- f) Involvement in social development – The Northern Islamic Movement certainly has aimed to benefit the Israeli Arab society in which it operates. It has done so through the tangible work on roads, schools, mosques, graveyards, etc., through the provision of health, religious, and educational services. It has also done so through the less tangible nurturing of a stronger, more robust Arab and Muslim identity, which the Movement has viewed as a crucial way in which it has benefited Israeli Arabs.
- g) Demonstrable cooperation of society – The various volunteer groups that the Northern Branch organises, as well as its proselytizing activities, enthusiastically encourage community engagement, particularly of the youth. Due to the Branch's reliance on volunteerism in its programmes, it could not, in fact, function as it does without the high degree of Arab Israeli society's participation in its endeavours.
- h) A combination of political and social objectives, formal or informal – The Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement certainly has both social and political objectives. Its short-term objective has been to alleviate Israeli Arabs' social deficits by providing various crucial services, described previously, to the Arab communities in Israel, and combines political elements with its

services (such as the restoration of Islamic sites which is also a struggle for land). The long-term objective is certainly political, the goal being to establish a self-sufficient Arab community and perhaps expand this to independent statehood.

- i) An element of a dependency-provision cycle with society – The Northern Islamic Movement has established a dependency-provision cycle. It identified the various needs of the community that the state of Israel failed to provide, and has become one of the main, if not the primary, provider of services which alleviate those needs or constitute an alternative more favourable to the Arab community. As such, the community has become dependent on the Movement's services while the Movement is dependent on the community for its continued support of Movement objectives and activities.

As shown above, the Northern Islamic Movement fully meets the socio-political entrepreneurship criteria outlined previously. Due to its effective ability to operate and proselytise at a social level and challenge notions of Arab identity in Israel, the Islamic Movement defies traditional politics in the context of Israeli Arabs. Its activities and ideology create a pressing conflict for the state as it struggles to find a mechanism to narrow the area where the Islamic Movement can operate without raising concerning questions on the 'democratic' character of

Israel. Utilizing the new concept of socio-political entrepreneurship as an analytical framework has allowed for deeper and more meaningful understanding of the Northern Islamic Movement and its functions. Viewing the Movement from the perspective of socio-political entrepreneurship has permitted the study to circumvent traditional discussions which centre on zero-sum analyses, and allowed for the examination of an entrepreneurial movement which fits neither the category of political nor of social entrepreneurship entirely. The Movement's objectives, functions, and mechanisms have instead become the focus and have been described more clearly.

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