Introduction

This book examines the evolution of Islamic religious identity over the past four decades and its impact on the socio-cultural aspects of Muslim life in Israel. It focuses on the evolving role of Islam in the construction of an Islamic minority identity in Israel and on the impact of that newly developed Islamic identity as it has become integrated into religious and socio-cultural spheres since the 1970s. It investigates the means by which the Muslim minority relates to the challenges imposed by modernity within the non-Islamic context.[1] In addition, the present research draws on a public-opinion survey, to expand our understanding of popular Islam and of how Islam is perceived by the general public. This book is also based on analyses of religio-legal texts published by local and foreign religious scholars, who interpret Islam for the Muslim minority in Israel.

Islam is the religion of the majority of the Arab citizens in Israel. According to the latest Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics reports, there are 1.3 million Muslims in Israel, comprising about 83 percent of the Arab population residing across the country.[2] During this period Islam has become an important factor in the political and socio-cultural identity of the Arab minority in Israel; the number of Muslims in Israel who define their identity, first and foremost, in relation to their religious affiliation has steadily grown.[3] Muhammad Amara noted, for example, that today "the Arab minority in Israel places great emphasis on Islam as

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[1] See John Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982).

[2] According to the recent reports by the Israeli Bureau of Statistics, the Israeli population comprises 75.5 percent Jews, 20.3 percent Arabs, and 4.1 percent other: Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, no. 61, 2010; more on the Arab community in Israel in Amal Jamal, "The political ethos of Palestinian citizens of Israel: critical reading in the future vision documents," *Israeli Studies Forum* 23 (2) (2008): 3–28.

[3] Asʿad Ghanem, *The Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel, 1948–2000: A Political Study* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001), 124; Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled, *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 111.

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a factor in their identity, more than during any other period."[4] This is manifested by a sharp increase in the number of Islamic associations, mosques, cultural centers, schools, and academic religious institutions in Israel, such as al-Qasemi Academic College of Education in Baqa al-Gharbiyya and the Daʿwa College for Islamic Studies in Umm al-Fahm. Students may even travel abroad to study Islam, mainly in the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan, and Turkey.

Islamic movements have been active in Israel since the late 1970s.[5] Today, political Islam is considered one of the major political forces of the Arab Muslim minority in Israel, with representatives in the Knesset (the Israeli parliament).[6] Since the early 1980s these movements have taken power in several Arab localities and succeeded in raising the standard of their local services.[7] Abbas Zakkur, a Knesset Member (KM) on behalf of the Islamic Movement (IM) in Israel, maintains that the movement aims to introduce Islam to the Muslims in Israel – to teach them about their religion in an attempt to re-create an Islamic ethos, an Islamic social order.[8] In the same vein, Shaykh Kamal Khatib, the vice-president of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement (NIM), added:

The Islamic Movement initially functions as a service to our people, through associations that we have established all over the country ... We have clinics, ambulances and sports clubs for karate and soccer ... in many Arab villages ... We seek, by means of the abilities of our people, to build our own institutions and to maintain our own identity.[9]

Given the current momentum of religious trends, this study will elaborate on the various aspects of the religious life and practices of the Muslim minority in Israel. Emphasis will be placed on popular Islam

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[4] Muhammad Amara, "The collective identity of the Arabs in Israel in an era of peace," *Israel Affairs* 9 (2003): 249–262, at 249.

[5] See Ibrahim Malik, *The Islamic Movement in Israel: Between Fundamentalism and Pragmatism* (Givat Haviva: Institute for Arabic Studies, 1990) [Hebrew]; Mahmoud Miʿari, "al-Haraka al-islamiyya fi Israʾil," *Shuʾun Filistiniya* 215–216 (1991): 3–15 [Arabic]; for more on the emergence of contemporary social movements see Alberto Melucci, "The symbolic challenge of contemporary movements," *Social Research* 52 (1985): 790–816.

[6] See Tilde Rosmer, "The Islamic movement in the Jewish state," in Khaled Hroub (ed.), *Political Islam: Context versus Ideology* (London: Saqi Books/London Middle East Institute, 2010), 182–209; Elie Rekhess, "The Islamic movement in Israel: the internal debate over representation in the Knesset," *Data and Analysis* 2 (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 1996): 1–5; Elie Rekhess, "The politicization of Israel's Arabs," in Alouph Hareven (ed.), *Every Sixth Israeli: Relations between the Jewish Majority and the Arab Minority in Israel* (Jerusalem: Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation, 1983), 135–142.

[7] Dan Rabinowitz, "Umm-al-Fahm: dilemmas of change," *ha-Mizrah he-Hadash* 37 (1995): 169–179 [Hebrew]. On the Arab local authorities in Israel see Maha al-Taji, "Arab Local Authorities in Israel: Hamulas, Nationalism and Dilemmas of Social Change," Ph. D. thesis (Seattle: University of Washington, 2008).

[8] Rosmer, "The Islamic Movement."   [9] Ibid.

and how ordinary Muslims perceive their religion, their Islamic identity, and their relationship with the Jewish Israeli majority. Several research questions are at the hub of our investigation: What is the legal and theological nature of Islam in Israel? What is the primary religious authority for Muslims in Israel? To what extent has Islam shaped the identity of the Arab minority in the state of Israel? How does all this affect the socio-cultural aspects of Muslim life in Israel?

The State of the Art

A quick glance at Islamic scholarship in Israel indicates that Muslim scholars have placed great emphasis on political Islam and on the role of the Islamic Movement in local politics, while much less attention has been paid to the evolution of Islamic religio-legal identity and its impact on the socio-cultural aspects of the Muslim minority in Israel.[10] Scholars' explanations of the Islamic revival (*sahwa*) in Israel may be divided into two major approaches. The first relies heavily on the global Islamic

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[10] Important works in these fields include Elie Rekhess and Arik Rudnitzky (eds.), *Muslim Minorities in Non-Muslim Majority Countries: The Islamic Movement in Israel as a Test Case* (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 2013); Laurence Louër, *To Be an Arab in Israel* (London: Hurst, 2007); Shafir and Peled, *Being Israeli;* Alisa Rubin-Peled, *Debating Islam in the Jewish State: The Development of Policy toward Islamic Institutions in Israel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Sammy Smooha and Asʿad Ghanem, *Ethnic, Religious and Political Islam among the Arabs in Israel* (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1998); Elie Rekhess (ed.), *The Arabs in Israeli Politics: Dilemmas of Identity* (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 1998) [Hebrew]; Nadim Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State: Identities in Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Michael Dumper, *Islam and Israel: Muslim Religious Endowments and the Jewish State* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1994); Raphael Israeli, *Muslim Fundamentalism in Israel* (London: Brassey's, 1993); Raphael Israeli, "Muslim fundamentalists as social revolutionaries: the case of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 6 (4) (1994): 462–475; Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980).

A subject that drew less attention from the scholars is that of the Shariʿa courts in Israel. Important works in this field include Aharon Layish, *Legal Documents from the Judean Desert: The Impact of Shariʿa on Bedouin Customary Law* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011); Aharon Layish, "The adaptation of religious law to modern times in a strange ambiance: *Shariʿa* in Israel," *Divre ha-Akademiyah ha-Le'umit ha-Yisre'elit le-Mada'im* 9 (2) (2005): 13–51 [Hebrew]; Ido Shahar, *Legal Pluralism in the Holy City: Competing Courts, Forum Shopping, and Institutional Dynamics in Jerusalem* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015); Raphael Israeli, "The impact of Islamic fundamentalism on the Arab–Israeli conflict," *Jerusalem Viewpoints* (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs 1988): 1–6; Sammy Smooha, "The Arab minority in Israel: radicalization or politicization?" *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 5 (1989): 1–21; Sammy Smooha and Asʿad Ghanem, "Political Islam among the Arabs in Israel," in Theodor Hanf (ed.), *Dealing with Difference: Religion, Ethnicity and Politics – Comparing Cases and Concepts* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999), 143–173; Muhammad Amara, "The nature of Islamic fundamentalism in Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8 (2) (1996): 155–170.

revival of the past four decades.[11] Bernard Lewis argues, for example, that the Islamic movements activated during the second half of the twentieth century were rooted in the universal belief in the unity of 'church and state' and that Islam formed the central element in Muslim identity. According to Lewis, Islamic movements in the modern period, including the pan-Islamism of the Ottoman sultan ʿAbd al-ʿAziz I in the 1870s, the rise of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1930s, and the Iranian Revolution of 1977–1979, were manifestations of this universality and centrality.[12] Elie Rekhess asserts that there are strong ties between different Islamic movements, including those that are active among the Arab Muslims in Israel and their Palestinian counterparts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He states that political Islam in Israel is merely a branch of general Palestinian Islamic fundamentalism – that is, these Islamic movements share the same characteristics.[13] In the same vein, David Bukay adds that there is only one Islamic culture and that there is no difference between various groups of Islamic activists, even in their interpretations of religious texts.[14]

The second approach is that of a group of scholars who acknowledge the uniqueness of Islam and of the Islamic Movement in Israel. According to them, although political Islam in Israel is part of the general revival of Islamic fundamentalism (which began in the 1970s), it still has special characteristics rooted in the Israeli experience of the Arab minority, including the development of the Islamic Movement in the Jewish state, with its clear Jewish political and cultural hegemony.[15] For Sammy Smooha and Asʿad Ghanem, "political Islam varies from one place to another and its exact nature is determined by specific and historical circumstances. In Israel, it is strongly restrained by political democracy and the ultimate Jewish control of the state and society."[16]

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[11] See Mazen Hashem, "Contemporary Islamic activism: the shades of praxis," *Sociology of Religion* 67 (1) (2006): 23–41.

[12] Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 133–154.

[13] Elie Rekhess, "Political Islam in Israel and its connection to the Islamic Movement in the territories," in Elie Rekhess (ed.), *The Arabs in Israeli Politics: Dilemmas of Identity* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1998), 73–84 [Hebrew].

[14] David Bukay (ed.), *Muhammad's Monsters: A Comprehensive Guide to Radical Islam for Western Audiences* (Green Forest, Ark.: Balfour Books, 2004), 7–24; see also Gilles Kepel, *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997).

[15] Nohad ʿAli, "Political Islam in an ethnic Jewish state: its historical evolution, contemporary challenges and future prospects," *Holy Land Studies* 3 (1) (2004): 69–92; on political Islam in general see Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

[16] Smooha and Ghanem, "Political Islam," 144.

Nohad ʿAli, a native sociologist, and co-author of this book, argues that although the shared and universal ideology of the Islamic revival movements was adopted by the Islamic Movement in Israel, the movement has been trying to express itself in diverse and distinctive ways. In principle, there is a conflict between the commitment to the principle of Islamic revivalism, on the one hand, and to the secular laws of the ethnic Jewish state, on the other.[17] Furthermore, ʿAli claims that the Jewish context of the state of Israel continues to bedevil the development of the Islamic Movement in Israel. He adds that, since the 1930s, Islamic revivalism in Palestine has undergone five phases of development: Egyptian, Israeli, Palestinian, and two phases of 'adaptation' and 'post-adaptation'. These phases reflect ideological developments, rather than simple historical evolution. They are also the outcome of three sets of constraints: structural, ideological, and domestic.[18]

Alisa Rubin-Peled outlined the Israeli government's approach to Islamic activism, arguing that Israeli officials implement a system of strict centralized control on Islam and the Muslim minority in Israel, effectively preventing the emergence of a national Muslim leadership or an independent religious educational system.[19]

On the socio-cultural, ideological, and religio-legal aspects of Islam, one finds a few studies that focus mainly on ideological discrepancies within the Islamic Movement in Israel – issues of identity, Islamic law vis-à-vis Israeli secular law and the Shariʿa courts. ʿIssam Aburaiya, for example, sheds important light on the ideological motives behind the Islamic Movement's split in 1996.[20] Muhammad Amara and Izhak Schnell describe the religious aspect of identity in the Arab minority in Israel. Taking an approach that considers identity to be a multi-dimensional phenomenon, they argue that religion is an important factor for Arab Muslim minority in Israel.[21] Nadim Ruhana elaborates on the complexities and conflicts regarding identity amid the Muslim

[17] See Ziyad Asaliyya, "Athar al-qawanin al-israʾiliyya fi al-qadaʾ al-sharʿi fi Israʾil," MA thesis (Hebron: Hebron University, 2003) [Arabic]; on the implementation of Islamic law in Israel see Yitzhak Reiter, "Qadis and the implementation of Islamic law in present-day Israel," in R. Gleave and E. Kermeli (eds.), *Islamic Law: Theory and Practice* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1997), 205–231.

[18] Smooha and Ghanem, "Political Islam," 144.

[19] Rubin-Peled, *Debating Islam in the Jewish State*, 3.

[20] ʿIssam Aburaiya, "The 1996 split of the Islamic Movement in Israel: between the holy text and Israeli–Palestinian context," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 17 (3) (2004): 439–455, at 450–451.

[21] Muhammad Amara and Izhak Schnell, "Identity repertoire among Arabs in Israel," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (2003): 175–194.

minority in Israel.[22] Sammy Smooha and Asʿad Ghanem provide a valuable account of the influence of political Islam on ethnic and religious Islam.[23] Aharon Layish, Musa Abou Ramadan, Ido Shahar, and other scholars focus on Islamic law and its implementation in the Shariʿa courts in Israel.[24]

Methodology

Note the application of sociological, anthropological, and cultural methods, such as those anchored in the groundbreaking papers of Clifford Geertz (1968, 1993), Peter Brown (1981, 1995) and Victor Turner (1995) regarding religious culture and ritual sites,[25] and of Mary Douglas (1966) and, in her wake, of Emmanuel Sivan (1995) about "enclave culture."[26] The various theories suggested by these studies have significantly enriched the study of Islam and Islamic societies, yet they have barely touched upon Islamic research in Israel. Studies applying social history, or quantitative methods, or providing anthropological fieldwork, are scarce.[27]

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[22] Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State*; Nadim Rouhana, "Accentuated identities in protracted conflicts: the collective identity of the Palestinian citizens in Israel," *Asian and African Studies* 27 (1993): 97–12; Nadim Rouhana and Asʿad Ghanem, "The crisis of minorities in an ethnic state: the case of the Palestinian citizens in Israel," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (3) (1998): 321–346.

[23] More on today's political Islam in Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); Michael Salla, "Political Islam and the West: a new 'cold war' or convergence?" *Third World Quarterly* 18 (4) (1997): 729–742; Emad Eldin Shahin, *Political Ascent: Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

[24] See Musa Abou Ramadan, "Notes on the anomaly of the Shariʿa field in Israel," *Islamic Law and Society* 15 (2008): 84–111; Musa Abou Ramadan, "Judicial activism of the Shariʿah Appeals Court in Israel (1994–2001): rise and crisis," *Fordham International Law Journal* 27 (1) (2003): 254–298.

[25] Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Peter Brown, *Authority and the Sacred Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction, 1995).

[26] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 1966); Emmanuel Sivan, "The enclave culture," in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11–63.

[27] For more on this see Inbal Tal, "Women's Activism in the Islamic Movement in Israel, 1983–2007: Influences, Characteristics and Implications," Ph.D. thesis (Haifa: Haifa University, 2011) [Hebrew]; Inbal Tal, *Spreading the Movement's Message: Women's Activism in the Islamic Movement in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, 2015)

Meanwhile, by focusing on the Islamic Movement, the existing research has adopted a very narrow approach, taking a 'top-down' political view, starting with the elites and their institutions and dealing much less with the middle and lower classes. These researchers present socio-cultural observations and investigate minor ideological trends, internal tensions, intergenerational struggles, and the social networks created by Islamic activism. All the aforementioned are meant to provide a more dynamic and complex picture of dogmatism and renewal, conformity and opposition.

Moreover, the Arab Muslim public in Israel has undergone a number of acculturation processes, according to the studies published by Aziz Haidar, Henry Rosenfeld, and Reuven Kahane.[28] This acculturation is manifested in the increased adoption of modern lifestyles influenced by ongoing contact with the Jewish environment in the realms of: education, culture, economics, and politics. As such, it is possible to assume that, despite the attempts of the Islamic Movement to bolster the religious identity of the Arabs in Israel, it was not able to unite all the Muslims under its auspices, nor to gain seniority for itself. A good explanation of this is found in the consistent behavior of the opposing factions, particularly secular groups, such as Rakah (the Israeli communist party), which have expressed their aversion to the Islamic agenda. These are all very significant subjects worthy of in-depth study, but the methods for gathering the relevant data must first be determined.

It is generally accepted that there is no single complete and comprehensive research methodology that is suited to and correct for all types of research. Therefore, deciding which method to use requires a deep understanding and knowledge of targeted subject matter and a full justification for its use. Both scientists and scholars have long been involved in an epistemological argument, debating the best and most effective practical method(s) for carrying out research. According to Amaratunga et al., this ongoing debate stems from two quite divergent approaches to research: logical positivism and phenomenology.[29] Logical positivism applies quantitative and experimental methods to investigate and support both hypothetical and deductive generalizations. This approach is most suited for use by an objective observer or an independent researcher

[Hebrew]; Nohad ʿAli, *Between ʿOvadia and ʿAbdallah: Muslim Fundamentalism and Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Resling Press, 2013) [Hebrew].

28 Aziz Haidar, Henry Rosenfeld, and Reuven Kahane (eds.), *Arab Society in Israel: A Reader* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003) [Hebrew].

29 D. Amaratunga, D. Baldry, M. Sarshar, and R. Newton, "Quantitative and qualitative research in the built environment: application of mixed research approach," *Work Study* 51 (2002): 17–31.

able to posit hypotheses for testing.[30] Information acquired in this man-
ner is examined by means of suitable tools and measures, rather than
being subjectively inferred from personal reflections, intuitions, or sen-
sations. In short, logical positivism seeks causal effects and primary laws,
and generally simplifies certain factors in order to facilitate outcomes.[31]
Positivists often explain that the objects of a specific experience are
'atomic' and are thus described as 'independent events' (atomism).

Unlike the positivist approach, the phenomenological approach (inter-
pretive science) adopts qualitative methods to inductively and holisti-
cally understand and identify human experiences within context-specific
settings and in relation to the aims of the conducted research. This
approach involves the understanding and explanation of various events
and cases by determining their causes, as does the positivist approach.
The phenomenological approach shares the subjective experiential per-
spective of the subjects/participants in the cases being tested. Accord-
ing to Amaratunga et al., this refutes positivist beliefs regarding atom-
ism. The phenomenological approach supports the idea of deductivism,
which shows that generalizations may be explained from a specific set of
past events and experiences that can predict future outcomes.[32]

Acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of these different
methodologies, questionnaires (quantitative) have some advantages over
interviews and textual analyses (both qualitative), because they are cost
effective, easy to use, and maintain the uniformity of the questions. The
disadvantages of questionnaires are that they do not guarantee partici-
pant motivation and require prior random sampling to control for biases.
The advantage of interviews is their ability to uncover deeper and more
specific details of a problem, though they are often time-consuming and
inconvenient.

Taking all the above into consideration, it was decided that this
research would avail itself of a mixed methodology – using interviews,
textual analyses, and questionnaires (qualitative and quantitative meth-
ods) – to maximize the inherent advantages. As such, this study dif-
fers from other contemporary studies of Islam in Israel, both in its
approach and in its methodology. Methodologically speaking, it presents
a multidisciplinary analysis of various sources, textual and empirical,
in an attempt to deepen understanding of the natures of Islam and

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[30] Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edi-
tion (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2000), 1–29.

[31] John T. Cacioppo, G. R. Semin, and G. G. Berntson, "Realism, instrumentalism, and
scientific symbiosis: psychological theory as a search for truth and the discovery of
solutions," *American Psychologist* 59 (2004): 214–223.

[32] Amaratunga et al., "Quantitative and qualitative research in the built environment."

of the Muslim minority in Israel on both the theoretical and practical
levels.

Because Islam is a religious code affecting all aspects of daily life,
devout Muslims in Israel may seek religious guidance not only in spiri-
tual matters but also in matters relating to temporal, social conduct. For
example, observant Muslims in Israel shun monetary transactions, such
as deposits/investments, loans, and mortgages with interest (*riba*), and
so avoid Israeli commercial banks. According to Islamic law, *riba* is one
of the capital sins; they therefore often use alternative Islamic banks in
the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and in other neighboring Arab coun-
tries. Devout Muslims are conflicted about mixed marriages; the mixed
education of Jews and Muslims; the celebration of Jewish holidays; the
observance of national memorial days, etc. Many refuse to serve in the
national or civil services, such as in hospitals or the policing of schools or
traffic, considering them to be at odds with Islamic doctrines of loyalty
and enmity (*al-walaʾ waʾl-baraʾ*).

The current study will elaborate on these and other related issues
on both the theoretical and practical levels by adopting the aforemen-
tioned mixed, quantitative and qualitative, methodology. Three methods
of enquiry are used: interviews, textual analyses (both qualitative) and
questionnaires (quantitative). A semi-structured interview (a set of ques-
tions linked to the overall research aims and objectives) are posed to the
selected interviewees, including people in senior positions (such as Mus-
lim religious leaders, Arab Knesset members (KMs), and researchers in
the field), approached at schools and universities, and in public places.
This type of interview is flexible, and new questions may be raised during
the interview as appropriate.

Various texts are chosen and analyzed: published fatwas, empirical
studies, and other writings on Islam in Israel. Content analysis was
applied to the texts and to the transcribed interviews, pointing out the
recurring themes relevant to the present research and forming a basis for
reaching certain conclusions.

In order to properly survey public opinion, a specially tailored ques-
tionnaire was designed to extract specific information with regard to the
main research questions in an objective manner. However, prior to its
actual use, a pilot study was done to familiarize the researchers with the
survey and interview processes, to uncover any potential problems with
the questionnaire or the interview questions, and to allow for appropri-
ate adjustments to be made. This pilot study included five interviewees
and fifty participants who filled in the questionnaire.

The revised questionnaire was also evaluated to ensure the consistency
and reliability of the various items, and was validated by experts in the

field. The random sample for the actual survey consisted of approximately 500 participants (Arab Muslims), citizens of Israel above the age of eighteen, residing in four geographical regions (in uncontested areas): Galilee (56 percent), the Triangle (23 percent), the Negev (12 percent), and the 'mixed cities' (9 percent). The term 'mixed cities' refers to Tel Aviv–Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, Ramlah, and Lod. The survey was conducted in 2015.

All the participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires; the data culled from the survey, after several analyses, were compared to other research findings. The responses in the questionnaires were coded into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), and appropriate statistical analyses were performed to test previous hypotheses.[33]

The Structure of the Book

This book has six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a brief background for Islam in Israel, by tracing the history of Islam in pre-state Palestine, with emphases on the three major players who contributed to shaping Islam in Israel: the Ottomans, the British, and finally the Egyptians. Then, the discussion proceeds to examine various developments occurring in Islam and changes affecting the Muslim minority under the newborn Israeli state; at this point, the emphasis shifts to Islam under the Israeli military regime (1948–1966). The next chronological stage in Israel is that of the post-military regime, characterized by the restoration of religious life amid the Muslim minority in Israel. The Islamic awakening, manifested in the reestablishment of Islamic religious institutions and the creation of Islamic movements, restored Islam as a fundamental factor in shaping the socio-cultural and political landscape of the Muslim minority in Israel.

Chapter 2 focuses on Islamic religious authority and interpretation in Israel. The current study hypothesizes that devout Muslims in non-Muslim countries seek new religio-legal/theological interpretations, ones that will allow them to remain part of their societies without compromising their adherence to the Islamic codes (considered binding and comprehensive guides to life). Thus, new Islamic institutions have emerged in the West during the past four decades, such as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the European Council for Fatwa and

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[33] In view of the vast range of subjects and issues undertaken herein, and for the sake of clarity, section VI of the questionnaire, dealing with Muslim Israeli women, was not included in this study analysis. Those findings will be presented separately in a future publication.