



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Women's Studies International Forum

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/wsif

“Resistance is fertile”¹: Revisiting maternalist frames across cases of women’s mobilization

Michelle E. Carreon^a, Valentine M. Moghadam^b^a American Studies Program, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA^b International Affairs Program and Dept. of Sociology, Northeastern University, Boston, MA, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Available online xxxx

SYNOPSIS

Historically, governments and social movements have evoked images of mothers as nurturing, moral, peaceful, or combative agents. But how is a maternalist frame deployed in different contexts? Who deploys this frame, for what purposes and to what ends? In this article, we present a classification scheme to elucidate the diversity and versatility of maternalist frames through the examination of four distinct categories of cases of women’s mobilization from the global South as well as North. Drawing on secondary literature and our own ongoing research, we construct a typology of maternalism—from-above and maternalism—from-below to demonstrate how maternalist frames may serve patriarchal or emancipatory purposes with implications for gender justice and the expansion of citizenship rights.

© 2015 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

In a 1984 photograph, Orlando Valenzuela depicts a smiling Sandinista woman breastfeeding an infant with an AK-47 strapped to her back. This image – as with previous ones depicting Vietnamese militant mothers during the U.S. war – embodies the complexities of politicized motherhood. It can symbolize life in contrast with a weapon of death, or it can imply two forms of nurturing or protection – one by sustenance and the other by armed struggle.

Motherhood, as both cultural trope and framing device, has figured prominently in women’s movements, revolutions, nationalism, state-building, right-wing movements, and the welfare state, with an attendant large body of studies.² Feminist studies have examined maternalist politics and policies, with debates on their efficacy, relationship to patriarchy, emancipatory potential, and contributions to social transformation.³ Whereas much of the literature on maternalism has arisen in connection with debates on the welfare state in Western Europe and North America, there is now a robust set of studies pertaining to maternalist politics in the Global South. Given the vast literature within which motherhood and maternalism

appear, and the diverse ways in which maternal identities are invoked in political movements and processes, we revisit the literature and historical record to offer a classification that explicates the different deployments of maternalist frames, agents, and outcomes. We draw on the feminist scholarship and the social movement literature, as well as ongoing research by one of us in the United States.

In this article, a *maternalist frame* refers to elements of motherhood, mothering, and maternal identities deployed to evoke meanings within a given context and elicit participation and/or support of collective action. We ask: *What are the different cases of mobilization in which the maternalist frame is deployed? In what contexts do these forms of deployment take place? How do citizenship rights operate in these cases and shape the contexts in which women’s mobilization occurs?* We suggest new concepts, such as *maternalism-from-above* and *maternalism-from-below*; we distinguish state approaches to maternalist policies from grassroots approaches to maternal identities and politics; and we identify *patriarchal* and *emancipatory* maternalism. Key to these distinctions, we argue, is the role of women’s rights movements and institutions, the presence or absence of ties to the state, and the place of feminist values in cases of mobilization.

E-mail addresses: mcarreon@purdue.edu (M.E. Carreon), v.moghadam@neu.edu (V.M. Moghadam).

Our analysis contributes to the scholarship on social movements and gender by showing an interactive relationship between opportunity structures and motherhood-based mobilization in different contexts. It demonstrates the ways that the maternalist frame deployed by actors relates to self-empowerment and the extension of citizenship rights. We shed light on feminist debates about motherhood and mobilization and the paradoxes that arise with entering the public political realm by reinforcing the traditional characteristics of the private (or “feminine”) sphere. Examining a range of cases of women’s mobilization and contexts within which maternalist frames are deployed is needed to better understand the complexities and versatility of these framing processes and the opportunities and risks that activists face.

Literature review

Maternalism has been conceptualized in a number of ways. In one set of definitions, maternalist politics refer to discourses, policies, and actions by or for women predicated on values or interests associated with motherhood. Koven & Michel (1990: 1079) defined maternalist ideologies as those “that exalted women’s capacity to mother and extended to society as a whole the values of care, nurturance, and morality.” Their book (Koven & Michel, 1993) extended the argument to examine the ways that maternalism operated in various types of welfare states. Skocpol’s (1992) study of the origins of social policy in the U.S. showed how the U.S. came close to being a maternalist welfare state, largely based on women’s mobilizations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, though it failed to come to full fruition or to last. Rather, a paternalist welfare state developed with the father as the head of the household and the main provider to the normative nuclear family of wife and kids, and even that model eventually fell short of what was provided to women and children in European models in the 20th century.

Nancy Naples termed “activist mothering” as the politicization of motherhood through community work. In her study of women community workers hired in Community Action Programs during the War on Poverty in low-income neighborhoods in New York City and Philadelphia, Naples (1998: 113) recognized “how a broadened definition of mothering was woven in and through their paid and unpaid community work which in turn was infused with political activism.” Di Marco (2009: 53) has referred to this politicization of motherhood as “social motherhood,” which “turns needs related to children into political demands and thus promotes political action.” Across societies, women have drawn on their reproductive roles to make claims for peace, reconciliation, human rights, and social provisioning for mothers, children, families, and communities; prominent examples are the Argentine groups Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo (Arditti, 1999; Bouvard, 2002). In the year before communist rule ended in Czechoslovakia in 1989, the Prague Mothers mobilized around environmental issues and deliberately used motherhood to explain and defend their right to protest, marching with their toddlers and baby carriages (Shriver, Adams, & Einwohner, 2013: 277).

At the same time, conservative movements and governments have invoked motherhood to maintain the sexual division of labor, the traditional family model of a male breadwinner/ female homemaker, and laws and norms that

privilege men in the public space and tie women to the family and household. Different deployments of maternalist frames may underscore instances in which opposing movements may utilize the same frame for different purposes, thus creating a discursive tug-of-war. Indeed, Ladd-Taylor (1994) distinguished “sentimental” from “progressive” maternalism, while Koven and Michel (1993) noted differences between “radical” and “conservative” maternalists, asserting that maternalism is a political discourse that is sometimes “a cloak for paternalism” and sometimes deployed by women for women.⁴

In one of the earliest studies pertaining to the Global South, Everett (1981) discussed three types of maternalist politics in India: forming middle-class women’s associations, participating in militant rural movements, and developing feminist theory and practice. The All-India Women’s Conference (AIWC), formed in 1927 in the nationalist and women’s movements of the pre-independence period, stressed the role of tradition in women’s oppression but also engaged in traditional forms of charity and social service work and tended “to glorify the role of the mother in national development”, such as in maintaining order and encouraging production (Everett, 1981: 171). In a more recent study on Iran, Kashani-Sabet (2011) examines maternalism from the early modern period until the Islamic Revolution to show how this largely state-driven project for social and national progress was advanced by physicians, hygienists, educators, journalists, feminists, and policymakers. Focusing on the Islamic Republic of Iran, Gheyanchi (2001) showed the contradictions of a discourse elevating motherhood that in fact masked the reality of male privilege and the subordination of women within the family. Moghadam (2006: 92) similarly argued that behind the state’s motherhood discourse stood the “patriarchal gender contract” – inscribed in a very conservative form of Muslim family law – to the detriment of feminist concepts of individual and collective women’s rights. Meanwhile, in a global neoliberal economic context characterized by privatization, labor market flexibility, and the diminishment of government responsibility for social provisioning, women’s demands for economic citizenship and the valorization of care often are met with a resounding silence (Moghadam, Franzway, & Fonow, 2011; Razavi and Hassim, 2006).

The literature, therefore, is consistent with Sonya Michel’s (re)conceptualization of maternalism as a theory of women’s political activity; as a specific historical development; and as a form of post-feminist politics (Michel, 2012). We also agree with her emphasis on the context-dependent nature of the concept; social movements, for example, may or may not deploy the motherhood frame or maternalist politics, or they may deploy them in diverse and sometimes divergent ways and for varied purposes.

In order to solicit support and participation, movements often tap into shared understandings and experiences to gain support from local and community actors as well as to generate international responses and wider solidarity. A human rights frame, for example, has been utilized to elicit support for the basic rights of the individual, but this can be problematic and lack resonance if the complexities of local and situated experiences are neglected:

Human rights, while therefore universalizing in intention and grounded in the globalizing power of the United Nations –

sponsored Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and other conventions, is received, understood, and articulated very differently with various locales depending on that particular project's relationship to locally defined normative projects. (Guidry, Kennedy, & Zald, 2000: 21)

Such a consideration of how frames are received, understood, and articulated in various local contexts is significant for an examination of maternalist frames. We argue that while on one level “motherhood” – that is the act of giving birth and caring for children – is a universal experience as well as cultural trope, meanings and practices of mothering are versatile. Framing motherhood as a universal experience has useful qualities and can have positive effects, such as legitimizing welfare claims, but women experience mothering in a range of ways, depending on the contexts within which they live and work.

The status of women within a given society – shaped by race, ethnicity, class, gender, economic status, religion, and sexuality – affects how women experience motherhood, as well as how they are either empowered by or excluded from certain citizenship rights. The ways in which these factors intersect also affects how women experience motherhood in their everyday lives, as well as how institutional structures shape these experiences. Glenn (1994) warns that an essentialist interpretation renders mothering “natural, universal, and unchanging,” whereas theories that focus on mothering as social construct take into account the effects of specific structures, such as patriarchy, racism, and capitalism, which can either control women or empower them. Mothering is gendered, in that the sexual division of labor and gender roles are organized and reinforced through practice within a given society, and mothering is racialized. Power differentials and inequities arise in both of these processes. Glenn (1994: 3) writes that:

As Third World women of color, lesbians, and working-class women began to challenge dominant European and American conceptions of womanhood, and to insist that differences among women were as important as commonalities, they have brought alternative constructions of mothering into the spotlight. The existence of such historical and social variation confirms that mothering, like other relationships and institutions is socially constructed, not biologically inscribed.

How women undertake mothering and how they are valued as mothers or rendered invisible (or undeserving) is crucial to understanding these different lived experiences. Rich (1976: 13) distinguished two interrelated meanings of motherhood: “the *potential relationship* of any woman to her powers of reproduction and to children”, and “the *institutions*, which aims at ensuring that the potential – and all women – shall remain under male control.” This relationship between the potential of women's power and the restraints of patriarchal structures is at the heart of a consideration of politicized and mobilized forms of maternalism.

Our study relies on an analysis of *frames*, and on how maternalist frames are deployed and resonate in distinct contexts. Benford and Snow (2000, 614), citing the work of Erving Goffman, note that frames are “‘schemata of

interpretation’ that enable individuals ‘to locate, perceive, identify, and label’ occurrences within their life space and the world at large”. Framing is “a process that aims to maximize the public resonance of a movement's claims to generate interest in and sympathy for the movement” (Olesen, 2006: 181). In her study of women's strategies during Chile's democratic transition, Noonan (1995: 81) shows that “the manner in which ideology and cultural themes are framed may provide opportunities for protest, especially in the authoritarian context.” As Gamson and Meyer (1996: 285) argue, collective action frames “define people as potential agents of their own history.” Frames have their own histories, but their meanings may shift with cultural and political changes over time.

Our framework

We examine a range of cases in which maternalist frames have been deployed in a variety of contexts and for diverse purposes. Organized within a four-tiered framework, each case is categorized by different contexts and forms of mobilization. Our framework includes examples of types of mobilization that operate either as *maternalism-from-above* or as *maternalism-from-below*. These categories should be viewed as Weberian ideal-types rather than strict divisions but we offer them to highlight differences. We define maternalism-from-above as forms of mobilization in which maternalist frames are deployed from positions of state/government or military power. This is a top-down version of maternalism that may take the form of government-enacted women-friendly social policy, recruitment of women for national defense or civic duty, or mobilization of women for revolutionary struggle. Such state-sponsored mobilization and politics may serve either patriarchal or egalitarian purposes.⁵

Maternalism-from-below refers to maternalist frames and forms of mobilization deployed by actors that are separate from the state, government or military power in an enactment of bottom-up self-empowerment. Often deployed by autonomous or grassroots groups situated at levels with less formal political power, they may nonetheless occasionally benefit from elite support. This type of mobilization may be more focused on expanding women's participation and rights, but it may also include right-wing groups keen on conserving a certain way of life and opposed to change.

In this paper we examine four sets of empirical cases (illustrated in Table 1), drawn mainly from the Global South or transnational movements: (1) contexts of violence; (2) revolutionary motherhood; (3) transnational feminist networks; and (4) economic justice and revolutionary motherhood framing in a U.S. context. In examining the deployment of maternalist frames within these various cases of mobilization, we present some propositions that reflect the complexity and fluidity of maternalist politics. First, as noted, maternalism-from-above and maternalism-from-below may serve either patriarchal or emancipatory goals, depending on the ideology of the group, movement, or regime deploying maternalist politics or invoking the motherhood trope. Second, maternalist politics may reflect and serve feminist goals, whether in terms of women's practical interests and basic needs or their strategic gender interests.⁶ Additionally, maternalist politics that are not explicitly “feminist” need not be conservative or patriarchal

Table 1

Four sets of empirical cases of maternalist politics and frames.

| Contexts | Case Studies |
|--|---|
| Contexts of Violence | The Mourning Mothers of Iran; the Mothers and the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina; the Saturday Mothers in Turkey; the mothers of the victims of femicide in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. These cases involve the mobilization of women, as mothers and grandmothers, in response to violent state repression, militarization, and cultures of impunity. |
| Revolutionary Motherhood | The Sandinista Revolution and the use of maternalist frames by the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional – Sandinista National Liberation Front); the use of maternalist frames in the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 1980s. Both cases involve the deployment of state-sponsored maternalism during the context of revolution. |
| Transnational Feminist Networks (TFNs) | This set of cases focuses on two TFNs: <i>MADRE</i> and <i>Code Pink</i> . Of particular interest are the ways in which these TFNs deploy maternalist frames in order to solicit support for peacemaking and humanitarian efforts. |
| Economic Justice in the U.S. | This set of cases centers on the grassroots organizations, <i>Mamas of Color Rising</i> (Austin, Texas) and <i>Young Women United</i> (Albuquerque, New Mexico), which make up the “Revolutionary Mamas of Color” network. The women in these organizations are focused on economic justice, self-empowerment as mothers, and building up their respective communities. |

but rather a form of *de facto* feminism or a form of women's collective action that effectively challenges women's subordination. Third, maternalist politics, especially in the form of *maternalism-from-below* and sometimes benefiting from a political opportunity for elite support, may expand women's civil, political, and social rights of citizenship. Fourth, contemporary maternalist activists demonstrate an anti-hegemonic tendency, whether they are calling for social policies for working mothers, the release of political prisoners, or the reform of family law.

In the following sections we examine the versatility of the maternalist frame in a diverse range of cases, illustrating our argument that the maternalist frame is at once universal and context-shaped.

“Weep for the mothers who are condemned to live”: Contexts of violence

In an ethnographic study conducted in the northeast region of Brazil, Scheper-Hughes (1992) discusses how “motherly love” plays out in everyday practices and lived experiences within the context of abject poverty and high levels of mortality. In the case of the mothers of Alto do Cruzeiro, death was common, and child survival rates were low. Her use of the phrase “*se conformar*” (to adjust) refers not just to “coping” but to how mothers deal with the reality of infant deaths, burials, and grief, as in the following poignant passage:

I am three times cursed. My husband was murdered before my own eyes. And I could not protect my son. The police made me pick over the mutilated bodies in the morgue to find my De. And now I am forced to go on living. I only wish I had the luxury to hang myself. But I *cannot die*. I am the *matriz*. My children and grandchildren still suck from my roots. Don't pity the young men and the infants who have died here on the Alto do Cruzeiro. Don't waste any tears on them. Pity us, Nancí. Weep for the mothers who are condemned to live. (Scheper-Hughes, 1992: 408)

Some mothers emerging from circumstances of injustice and tragedy have refused to remain passive but instead have mobilized collectively to demand justice and accountability. From May 1995 onwards, the Saturday Mothers of Turkey held weekly vigils in central Istanbul demanding that the authorities account for the disappearances and deaths of their loved ones.

Every Saturday at midday in front of Galatasaray High School on Istiklal Street, they held up pictures of their family members imprisoned, killed, or “disappeared” because of suspected political activities or participation in organizations for the rights of Turkey's Kurdish minority. At each meeting a press announcement was read detailing specific cases but the vigil was otherwise held in silence. This did not, however, protect them from police repression. According to a 1998 Amnesty International report, some outside groups and organizations with different agendas attempted to take advantage of the credibility of the Mothers' action and attended the meetings shouting slogans, irritating police and creating extra danger for the Saturday Mothers.⁷

Another example is the Mourning Mothers of Iran, a group of women whose children were imprisoned or killed following the 2009 contested presidential elections and the formation of the Green Protest Movement. The women met weekly and protested peacefully in Laleh Park in Tehran, but sometimes faced violence and arrest. While international attention to the Green Protests provided an opportunity for the formation of the group, several of the activists, including the group's founder, Mansoureh Behkish, had experienced the loss of family members during the terror years of the 1980s, when the Islamic state executed thousands of political prisoners, including some 3,000 in the summer of 1988. After a 2010 assault on the Mourning Mothers, Hadi Ghaemi, director of the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, stated the following in a news release:

No culture permits such violence to be unleashed against mothers...How can this government, which claims to have moral and religious authority, treat mothers who have lost their children in such a way? The Iranian officials should know that the activities of Mourning Mothers will not stop until their legitimate grievances are properly addressed.⁸

Iran's Mourning Mothers call to mind the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, perhaps the best-known example of mobilization by mothers. In 1976, a military junta in Argentina launched what came to be called the Dirty War, imprisoning, torturing, and killing numerous leftists. In response, the mothers and grandmothers of the *desaparecidos* began to organize and engage in public protests by meeting at the Plaza de Mayo every Thursday afternoon, thus breaking a culture of silence in Argentina. Many of the Mothers were

housewives or employed in such female occupations as primary-school education, social work, and retail sales. Few had received an education beyond high school, and only two had any political experience. The Mothers' commitment to discovering the fate of their children – and of the grandchildren born in prison – and holding the regime accountable moved them outside of the private sphere and into the public and more political arena. According to Marguerite Guzman Bouvard (2002: 60), "The mothers claimed space within a closed and male-dominated society. These women came out of the shadows, out of a cultural, historical, and socially invisibility and into the center of the political arena to challenge a repressive government."

At the time, the Plaza de Mayo Mothers were the only group that dared to confront the repressive military government, and their experience and sense of injustice committed against their children contributed to the transformation of their view of motherhood and shaped their political consciousness. Even after democratization, they continued to draw on their identities as mothers and grandmothers in visual ways. The "pañuelo", or small white headscarf on which their children's names are written, became one of the world's most striking nonviolent weapons: a symbol of the movement, of collective mothering, and of collective memory. As Arditti (1999) has documented, their insistence on connecting potential grandchildren with their biological families led to the development of the National Genetic Data Bank (Banco Nacional de Datos Genéticos). In another case from Latin America, the mothers who have organized in response to the femicide cases in Ciudad Juárez have also taken it upon themselves to seek answers and justice for the disappearances and murders of their children – specifically daughters. Since the early 1990s, countless women have been murdered in Juárez, and their bodies have been found throughout the city, largely abandoned in vacant lots or remote parts of the desert. Gupta (2011) notes the varying estimates for the numbers of murders:

One estimate by the city's *El Diario* newspaper has 878 women in total killed between 1993 and 2010; some locals put the figure in the thousands. It can take months for bodies to be discovered – if they ever are – because the desert surrounding the city is so vast. Often by the time the remains are found, the heat has mummified them. Many more women are reported missing than are confirmed dead.

Many of the victims of the Ciudad Juárez femicide have been young and poor, workers in the maquiladoras, foreign-owned factories in an export processing zone. Situated within this localized realm of the global neoliberal economy, the women were already subjected to structural violence. However, families of victims and border activists alike have pursued justice. Activist women have utilized symbols such as pink crosses and have emphasized their roles as mothers of the victims. At rallies and marches, they would carry posters with photographs of their daughters' faces and statements such as "Desaparecida" and "Ayúdanos a Localizarla" ("Help us find her") (see photographs in Staudt, 2008), and pressured the local police to locate and stop the killers. In many cases, however, authorities blame the victims and question their

reputations, leading some of the grieving mothers to conduct investigations themselves.

In the cases discussed thus far, activist women have responded to immediate concerns, dangers or needs – that is, their *practical interests* – which have politicized them via their roles as mothers and grandmothers. They have mobilized within cultures of impunity, where accountability is difficult to achieve but is a central goal of their efforts and struggles for justice. Their nonviolent protests are deliberately public in order to draw attention to the atrocities or injustices visited on their families, and in the process they become known to the public as activist mothers. But does this label keep them safe?

In her study of women's participation and collective action frames in Chile's transition to democracy, Noonan (1995: 104) refers to the "safe" manner in which a pre-existing maternal frame was utilized by women's organizations: "When the state forms changed, women mobilized the preexisting maternal frame, thus manipulating dominant cultural themes in a safe manner, to identify the culpable parties, guide their action, and justify their 'nontraditional' behavior." Our research indicates, however, that mobilization grounded in maternalism is not risk-free. In fact, activist mothers have been vulnerable to harassment and attack, and in some cases have become murder victims.

In January of 2011, Mexican poet and activist Susana Chavez was found strangled and with one hand cut off in Ciudad Juárez. Chavez was active in an organization called May Our Daughters Return Home, which represents the loved ones of the victims of femicide in the region. She also coined the slogan, "Ni una muerte más" ("Not one more death"). Roughly a month before, in December of 2010, Marisela Escobedo was shot in the head at close range by masked gunmen outside the state governor's office in Chihuahua. Escobedo campaigned for justice for her teenage daughter, who was murdered in 2008 in Ciudad Juárez. Despite his confession and acceptance of guilt for the murder, her daughter's boyfriend, a member of the Zetas drug cartel, was released. Carlsen (2011) notes:

Every day, Marisela fought for justice for her daughter and sought out the killer. She received multiple death threats. She responded saying, "If they're going to kill me, they should do it right in front of the government building so they feel ashamed." And they did.

The maternalist frame may be culturally resonant across the globe, but it is not necessarily a "safe" collective action frame.

What of the place of feminism, or feminist values, in this first set of cases? Although the groups do not self-identify as feminist, the cases exemplify *maternalism-from-below* that involves grassroots mobilization and the politicization of motherhood through tragedy. The Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo "politicized motherhood and subverted the boundaries and meanings of the public/private divide" (Lister, 2003, 148), exemplifying what Di Marco conceptualizes as "social motherhood," or "political practice rooted in motherhood rather than of motherhood as a paradigm of women's participation in politics" (Di Marco, 2009: 45). The groups utilize their status as mothers and deploy frames that speak to their own interests and experiences. But they do more. Out of tragedy, the women commit their lives to seeking

accountability for the atrocities committed against their loved ones, as well as to a better and more just society.

“Tender in love, fierce in battle”: The Sandinista revolution and Iran’s Islamic revolution

In *Gender and the Nation*, Nira Yuval Davis discusses the deployment of “woman” and gendered cultural representations connected to the nation, ethnicity, or religious group, wherein they are projected as the carriers of the culture and reproducers of the collectivity. She also draws attention to women as agents during times of war and as participants in peace movements but warns against essentializing women as peacemakers. Yuval-Davis rejects Sara Ruddick’s claim that some features of ideologies and practices of mothering can serve as the foundation of an anti-militaristic movement. Referring to the anti-nuclear Women of Greenham Common as well as the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, she notes, “While some women in these and other movements have colluded with the essentialist notion of ‘women as the peaceful sex,’ most of the women in these movements have rejected such notions which are so prevalent in militaristic constructions of femininity” (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 111).

There is validity in her criticism, especially with regard to the notion of motherly love as essentially anti-militaristic and pacifistic. Mothers, after all, have supported their sons’ participation in wars, revolutions, or in national liberation struggles, and mothers themselves have taken part in such conflicts. Yuval-Davis (1997: 113) refers to perspectives of “Third World feminists”, who “argue that they could not afford the luxury of being anti-militaristic, because the national liberation of oppressed people can only be carried out with the help of an armed struggle.” Analyzing women’s participation in armed and revolutionary struggle is important to elucidate the gendered nature of nationalist movements, discourses, symbols and frames; to analyze the reasons for women’s support for or opposition to armed movements; and to understand the place of motherhood in these struggles.

The revolutions in Nicaragua and Iran provide examples of major social upheaval and state-building where maternalism and motherhood were prominent frames. In 1979, a broad coalition overthrew the Pahlavi state in Iran and installed an Islamic regime; in Nicaragua, the Sandinista-led revolution overthrew the Somoza regime and installed a progressive government. While maternalist frames were deployed by activists in both cases, the meanings and goals were significantly different, and the gender outcomes of the revolutions diverged, specifically with respect to the new revolutionary states’ laws and policies, and women’s participation in decision-making bodies.

In the Nicaraguan case, the ousting of Somoza involved “the culmination of a process of growing popular opposition characterized by the incorporation of a wide cross-section of the population into political activity” (Molyneux, 1985: 227). Large numbers of women from all social classes joined the revolutionary struggle in multiple ways, leading Molyneux (ibid.) to conclude that “women’s participation in the Nicaraguan revolution was probably greater than any other recent revolution with the exception of Vietnam”, comprising some 30 percent of the FSLN combat forces. Bayard de Volo

(2001: xiv) writes that the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional) utilized mobilizing imagery that glorified women giving birth to future combatants who would be sent off to war: “Maternal symbolism was used repeatedly in Sandinista discourse in the late 1970s through the 1980s to shape subjectivities that would mobilize men and women into the guerillas or (later) the military, encourage them to protest Somocista or contra violence, and organize politically or at least placate mothers of drafted or fallen combatants.” The FSLN also tapped into a sense of “combative motherhood,” which emphasized the protection of one’s children through armed resistance and “undermined the traditional notions that women were naturally nonviolent or passive and that war was an exclusively male realm” (ibid: 42–43). Indeed, in constructing a female revolutionary, “women often took on a feminine, particularly maternal, version of toughness-yet-tenderness,” and “one of the most common images of the woman guerilla was that of a woman with a baby at her breast and a rifle slung over her shoulder” (Bayard de Volo, 2012: 421). Examples of this are Orlando Valenzuela’s photograph “Miliciana de Waswalito, 1984”, mentioned at the start of this article, along with the emblem of the Cuban Women’s Federation. Such images were widely circulated in Nicaragua and sometimes accompanied with the slogan: “Tender in love, fierce in battle” (Bayard de Volo, 2012: 421).

Molyneux (1985: 229) has discussed the tensions between a greater revolutionary struggle and women’s strategic gender interests, asking: “For if women surrender their specific interests in the universal struggle for a different society, at what point are these interests rehabilitated, legitimated, and responded to by the revolutionary forces or by the new socialist state?” In fact, they were responded to in a relatively women-friendly way by the new Sandinista government, which included such measures as paid maternity leave, equal access to education, a well-resourced national women’s organization (AMNLAE), and legal equality in relation to divorce, adoption and parental responsibility, as documented by Kampwirth (2003) and Shayne (2004). The new legal and social environment for women was not without its contradictions, including the persistence of *machismo* and the denial of full reproductive rights for Nicaraguan women in deference to the Catholic hierarchy. Still, we define the Nicaraguan case as an example of emancipatory maternalism-from-above because of the Sandinista discourse and the resources that were made available to women and women’s groups by the new revolutionary state.

The Iranian case, on the other hand, can be categorized as *maternalism-from-above* in a traditional, patriarchal form. While women took part in the mass street protests against the Shah, the protesters were overwhelmingly male, and Islamic slogans became more vocal and visible after the Shah’s departure and the arrival from exile of Ayatollah Khomeini. Islamists objected to various freedoms that Iranian middle-class women had acquired since the 1960s, including freedom of dress, and thus the discursive emphasis became the restoration of the traditional Muslim family and the presumed elevation of motherhood, codified in the new constitution. With the removal of leftists and liberals from the new power structure, the Islamic state annulled the liberal family law that had been enacted by the previous regime, adopted a new set of provisions in the Civil Code that codified women’s subordination to their male kin and spouses, and disseminated symbols

and frames tying women to the family. Outcomes included a decline in women's employment and the total absence of women from political and legal decision-making. Highlighting the discontinuities in women's status and participation before and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Moghadam (2006: 88) writes that "the state remained rentier and neopatriarchal after the revolution, but a key difference was the strengthening of Muslim family law and a state-driven maternalist discourse and politics."

The new Islamic revolutionary state did provide a segment of its female supporters with basic military training, but this was primarily for purposes of surveillance, especially in connection with the implementation of the new compulsory veiling law. During the 1980–88 war with Iraq, the Islamic authorities encouraged mothers to volunteer their sons to the war effort, which was also framed as a religious duty. During those war years, urban women who rebelled against compulsory veiling by wearing colored clothing or showing some of their hair were denounced or called on to have "shame before the martyrs of Karbala", a framing device to invoke both the war with Iraq and an episode in early Islamic history heralded as a precursor to Shiism. With the end of the war, "mothers of martyrs" were exalted and provided with certain privileges and welfare entitlements. Education also expanded, but as Mehran (2003) notes, the purpose was to inculcate the young with appropriate Islamic values, including the creation of "the new Muslim woman". Feminist lawyer Mehranguiz Kaar has highlighted the contradiction between the Islamic state's formal praise for mothers and Iranian mothers' lack of legal protection, such as the right to custody of their children, the right to open a bank account for their children, and control over their own bodies (Cheytanchi, 2001). Moghadam (2006: 100) observes that many feminists in Iran "have noted that despite its 'motherist' discourse, the Islamic Republic of Iran has in practice devalued motherhood through its policies and laws."

The Nicaraguan and Iranian cases shed light on how maternalist frames and discourses affect levels of women's participation during and after a major social upheaval like a revolution, and how they prefigure women's citizenship rights in the new political environments. The deployment of maternalist frames in these disparate forms of *maternalism-from-above* had significantly different effects on women, which in one case (Nicaragua) expanded women's participation and citizenship rights and in the other (Iran) severely restricted participation and diminished citizenship rights.

"Guardians of life": Transnational feminist networks and the maternalist frame

According to Ruddick (1995: 219), "maternal peace politics begin with a myth: mothers are peacemakers without power." Transnational feminist networks that deploy maternalist frames dispel that myth by emphasizing the empowering and radical aspects of motherhood and maternal thinking in order to raise awareness and solicit support. Moghadam (2005: 4) defines transnational feminist networks (TFNs) as "structures organized above the national level that unite women from three or more countries around a common agenda, such as women's human rights, reproductive health and rights, violence against women, peace, and antimilitarism, or feminist economics."

MADRE expressly invokes motherhood through its name, the Spanish word for "mother." The group's objective is the advancement of women's human rights at an international level, and their name was inspired by the Nicaraguan struggle and women's experiences with the revolutionary process. *MADRE*'s website tells the story of a group of women from the U.S. who were invited to Nicaragua to build a network built upon international women's human rights ("Inspired by the Women's Committees of Nicaragua whose children had been killed by the Contras or during the fight to overthrow the right-wing Somoza regime, they named the organization *MADRE*") (<http://www.madre.org/index/meet-madre-1/who-we-are-49/history-161.html>). The organization is also devoted "to advance women's human rights by meeting immediate needs and building lasting solutions for communities in crisis," and draws attention to the many ways in which women around the globe are affected by neoliberal policies, militarism, and conflict. One of their many areas of concern is maternal health, and the website has a section dedicated to the Safe Birth Project in Palestine, which focuses on making adequate birthing options (including midwifery) available to women affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Another example of how *MADRE* deploys maternalist frames is the emphasis on generational activism. Mother's Day is described as a day of activism, and there is a strong emphasis on the struggle for change across generations and for passing on to other generations a commitment to peace, as well as the following reminder: "As we celebrate our own mothers this Mother's Day, let's also honor mothering itself – the work of transmitting the lessons and principles we need to transform this world into a place where all children can thrive" (<http://www.madre.org/index/press-room-4/news/getting-stronger-every-generation-six-womens-stories-626.html>). In a May 2012 piece, Yifat Susskind, executive director, outlines "policies government leaders must implement in order to recognize and support the work of mothers," which "would preserve social services including health care, child care, and food assistance" (<http://www.madre.org/index/press-room-4/news/mothers-need-more-than-just-one-day-790.html>). She emphasizes the need to secure women's reproductive rights, promote peace, recognize care work, and ensure that mothers and their families have adequate access to clean water, food, education, and economic opportunity. This framing emphasizes activist mothering and the valorization of women's care work at a transnational or universal level and in a way that evokes empowerment rather than essentialism.

Our second example comes from the feisty anti-war women's political group, *Code Pink*. Reinforcing the idea of women as the bearers and guardians of life, *Code Pink* states:

CODEPINK is not exclusively women – we invite men to join us – but we are particularly eager to see mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and daughters, female workers, students, teachers, healers, artists, writers, singers, poets and all outraged woman rise up and oppose the war in Iraq. Women have been the guardians of life – not because we are better or purer or more innately nurturing than men, but because the men have busied themselves making war. Because of our responsibility to the next generation, because of our own love for our families and communities,

it is time we women devote ourselves – wholeheartedly – to the business of making peace. (<http://www.codepink4peace.org/article.php?list=type&type=3>)

Code Pink ties peacemaking efforts to a responsibility to the next generation. In their call for women across the globe to reject militarism and war, they highlight women's common roles and identities as mothers across cultures. Echoing Ruddick's feminist maternal thinking and politics of peace, *Code Pink* emphasizes that this positionality is not restricted to biological mothers or even to women exclusively. Like MADRE, *Code Pink* undertakes initiatives around Mother's Day, reclaiming the holiday as a day to work for peace, as it first did in 2006. In 2009 Code Pink called for "A Radical Act of Knitting in Honor of Mother's Day", which involved activists creating a giant knitted cozy to cover the fence of the White House. The cozy read: "We will not raise our children to kill another mother's child" (<http://codepinkalert.org/article.php?id=4795>). Drawing on maternal symbols such as childbearing, knitting and Mother's Day, *Code Pink* explicitly equates motherhood with peacemaking. It should be noted, however, that Code Pink's collective action strategy of invoking strong maternal, mothering, and feminine themes in their anti-war advocacy work is complemented by decidedly "unfeminine" (in some understanding) direct action, such as disrupting congressional hearings and haranguing politicians.

The collective action strategy of both MADRE and *Code Pink* includes what Moghadam has termed *feminist humanitarianism*, or operational work to help women facing poverty, violence or war to meet their practical needs.⁹ These examples of progressive maternalism-from-below highlight frame mechanisms based on human rights, exposing injustice, and peace politics. While these groups may not explicitly frame themselves as mothers first, MADRE and *Code Pink* serve as examples of ways in which maternalist frames can be deployed for mobilization not necessarily restricted to mothers as the central group but to challenge injustices, inequalities, and hierarchies.

In contrast to deploying a "combative motherhood" frame, as in the Nicaragua case, these examples of mobilization deploy maternalist frames for purposes of opposition to militarism and war-making and for peaceful international relations. They are not pacifist organizations, however, as they have supported certain national liberation movements. This distinction is important as it problematizes the notion that maternalism equates with pacifism, peace and non-violence alone. Finally, this set of cases differs from historic examples of "revolutionary motherhood" in that the strategies and goals are transnational in nature.

"Revolutionary mamas of color": Mothers and economic justice in a U.S. Context

If mothering is gendered and racialized, it is also expressive of social class divisions. Feminist scholars have emphasized the importance of paying attention to how these factors intersect. Collins (1994: 47) contends that "for women of color, the subjective experience of mothering/motherhood is inextricably linked to the sociocultural concern of racial ethnic communities – one does not exist without the other." This relationship between the individual and the community as a whole was alluded to in

the discussion of the Mothers and the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and a commitment to collective mothering and concern for collective memory. Collins has also described "othermothers" and a broader nature of mothering within African American communities, which highlights such women who, through extended kinship networks, help build communities and ensure their survival. Mobilization based on maternalist politics and maternal identities has certainly included a concern for this relationship in other examples.

If the politicization of motherhood is one form of maternalist politics from below that serves to challenge the exclusion of women from the public and political spheres, it is also important to consider ways by which ordinary women strategically organize around issues of motherhood as empowered, political agents in their own right with claims on the state. Here we consider two women's groups that mobilized around motherhood and were concerned with multiple issues that mothers face in American society today: *Mamas of Color Rising*, based in Austin, Texas, and *Young Women United*, situated in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Although less active today than in the past, their collective action repertoire exemplifies the intersectionality of activist motherhood and the relationship between the individual and community survival. Together, the groups formed the "Revolutionary Mamas of Color" network, established in 2007 and focused on the needs, rights, and empowerment of mothers and communities of color – including Latino/as, African-Americans, and Native Americans.

Both groups addressed themselves to social/economic rights issues specific to the U.S., notably difficulties related to maternal and child health, birthing options, and social welfare. On their website, *Mamas of Color Rising* emphasized community and included mothers as active agents in the survival and thriving of communities of color, while also highlighting the invisibility of care work. They stated:

We are living in a world where the labor of caretaking is INVISIBLE socially and economically. It's no surprise that most of the world's poor people are mothers and their children. Imagine all the hours of UNWAGED work that is not counted in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The GDP would almost double if unwaged domestic work were counted. Working class mothers, particularly single parents and women of color are caught in low-wage work that barely provides enough income to cover childcare, much less other basic rights. And the Welfare "social safety net" scrutinizes and polices poor mothers instead of providing support to all families and recognition that "mothering" is work. (<http://mamasofcolorrising.wordpress.com/about/>)

In her scholarship on citizenship, Ruth Lister draws on Susan Hyatt's work to discuss "accidental activism", described as "the process through which 'women who previously did not see themselves as in any way political are becoming activists for social change'; and "in doing so, they 'politicised motherhood and subverted the boundaries and meanings of the public/private divide" (Lister, 2003: 146, 148). Lister adds that such politicization of motherhood challenges the exclusion of women from the public and political spheres. We agree that women may resort to an activist version of the maternalist frame "accidentally", but we also draw attention to how women may systematically organize around issues of motherhood as

empowered, political agents in their own right. The *Mamas of Color Rising* collective exemplifies this type of strategic mobilization by drawing on experiences as mothers within a specific context and expressing grievances by addressing specific issues of policy. Their statement above and below reveals their understanding of women's labor and its fraught connection to welfare policy:

In this country, most interactions with social services and institutions have become a WEB of discrimination and humiliation, a WEB difficult to get out of. Our vision of organizing around motherhood is not a biological one, it's not just about bio moms, or even moms, but about all of those members of a community who share in the often undervalued and invisible work of caretaking and parenting. But it's not just symbolic either, because unfortunately right now it's mothers and other women who do the vast majority of the work of taking care of children, elders, and sick folks who cannot take care of themselves. (<http://mamasofcolorrising.wordpress.com/about/>)

Mamas of Color Rising also mobilized around a "Birth Justice" fundraising campaign dedicated to providing a full range of prenatal and birthing options to all women, especially women who receive Medicaid, are uninsured, or are undocumented. A related post included a video by a University of Texas-Austin student, in which members of the collective shared their personal experiences about birth and discussed their commitment to birth justice for all women.¹⁰ As such, the group's emphasis on organizing around motherhood echoes Ruddick's "maternal thinking" by considering the urgency of building and maintaining community, which is also emphasized by *Young Women United*. It also echoes Kessler-Harris (2003: 158-9) on "economic citizenship", defined as "the independent status that provides the possibility of full participation in the polity", along with:

... the right to work at the occupation of one's choice (where work includes child-rearing and household maintenance); to earn wages adequate to the support of self and family; to a nondiscriminatory job market; to the education and training that facilitate access to it; to the social benefits necessary to sustain and support labor force participation; and to the social environment required for effective choice, including adequate housing, safe streets, accessible public transport, and universal healthcare.

One way the groups mobilized around their own experiences as mothers was the utilization of a distinctive form of the revolutionary motherhood frame. In their own words, the Revolutionary Mamas of Color collective was a network of women "working collectively to raise our children, and to create the vision of how we want birthing, parenting and caretaking to be in a more just and loving world" (*Revolutionary Motherhood* zine, 2). Here, use of the term "revolutionary" in the motherhood frame is discursive and visionary rather than literal, and a reference to a continuing struggle for social change. Thus, unlike the Nicaraguan and Iranian examples, the groups are tied to neither a state nor a political movement, thus exemplifying maternalism-from-below, and they are informed by their identities as mothers of color.

In a PDF file of a zine that the network created, available on-line, frames of revolutionary motherhood and women's empowerment were presented through language and visual imagery, such as the feminist sign of the symbol for women with the fist in the circle, along with cultural and transnational images. One was a reproduction of Shepard Fairey's poster of a Muslim woman, with a gun strapped to her back and a flower sticking out of the gun barrel. Other images included a Native American dancer and what appeared to be a drawing of a Zapatista woman breastfeeding an infant. These images evoked "revolution" through armed struggle while combining them with images of culture/tradition/ritual and mothering. References to the collective's own community-based identities were seen in references to the Chicano movement and Latino culture and iconography such as Our Lady of Guadalupe.

One of *Mamas of Color Rising's* previous projects serves as an example of an alternative model of labor and the economy that also promotes a form of economic citizenship. *Yo Mamas Catering Cooperative* began as a project of *Mamas of Color Rising*, whereby empanadas were sold to the Austin community to raise money for participation at an alternative media conference. After being invited to cater for other progressive events in the area, the project developed into the catering cooperative. On the *Mamas of Color Rising* website, the cooperative was given the subtitle: "Feeding the Revolution," which again refers to their vision of alternative economic arrangements, which some have called "the solidarity economy."¹¹ The cooperative was featured in a television special that focused on sustainability projects, and one of the members, Jeanette Monsalve, stated, "I wanted to be a part of *Yo Mamas* because I've worked 9-to-5 jobs. And I've had my two kids and have found that I just don't fulfill all their needs. But I have goals of something bigger for them" (<http://www.yesmagazine.org/blogs/fixing-the-future/austin-learning-to-run-a-cooperative>).

While the groups did not explicitly label themselves as feminist on their websites or zine, *Mamas of Color Rising* and *Young Women United* used language and imagery that echo feminist questions, such as power relations, gender discrimination, devaluing of women, and the sexual division of labor. As such, they would seem to exemplify collective action based on a combination of Molyneux's strategic gender interests and practical gender interests. These two cases of *maternalism-from-below* in the U.S. context may on one level reinforce the idea of mothers as culture bearers and reproducers of the community, but they also show mothers as political agents in their own right, using their symbolic capital to advance their economic citizenship and political empowerment.

Discussion and conclusions

This article began by revisiting the feminist literature on, and debates about, maternalism, and has provided a classification scheme for prominent examples of maternalist politics and mobilizations. The preceding discussions have provided an array of cases of collective action using maternalist frames by different actors and for different objectives, which we have categorized as examples of *maternalism-from-above* and *maternalism-from-below*. We have further distinguished patriarchal and emancipatory forms of maternalism-from-above, as well as self-defined and *de facto* feminist forms of maternalism-

from-below. Key to these distinctions, we have argued, is the role of women's rights movements and institutions, the presence or absence of ties to the state, and the place of feminist values in cases of mobilization. In emancipatory cases of maternalism-from-above, women's rights movements and institutions are recognized and provided resources by government or state agencies; women's rights groups receive the support of the state; and the participation and rights of women are goals and practices of political movements or the state's agenda. These conditions are not present in patriarchal cases of maternalism-from-above, where states or revolutionary movements may work to meet women's practical needs but dismiss feminist claims; they project women as wives and mothers exclusively rather than equal citizens. Mobilizations that we have called maternalism-from-below may be self-defined or de facto feminist, but they challenge women's second-class citizenship and assert themselves in the public sphere and public space to make claims on political movements or on the state. We have further argued that the maternalist politics of progressive women's organizations – such as MADRE, Code Pink, and Revolutionary Mamas of Color, discussed in this article – imply more than frame resonance: by invoking an ethics of care as well as justice, they seek support for greater social spending, welfare provisioning, and economic citizenship. As such, their objectives are broad social transformation.

We examined four sets of empirical cases of maternalist politics, three of which fall within the category of maternalism-from-below. In contexts of violence, women mobilize as mothers and grandmothers in response to state repression, militarization, criminality, and cultures of impunity. Here they transcend the private sphere of the family and the home to insert themselves in the public space, the public sphere, and political discourse. For some women, this is a form of "accidental activism", while for others it is transformative and a lasting form of activism, creating new political opportunity structures. Our second set of cases was of transnational feminist networks that draw on motherhood symbols in their critique of militarism and war and in the pursuit of peacemaking and solidarity with women living under conditions of insecurity. This is a deliberate form of activism with clear and long-term strategic goals for broad societal – and indeed global – transformation. The same can be said of the Revolutionary Mamas of Color and Young Women United in the U.S. – women committed to economic citizenship and a stronger welfare state, along with the valorization of the experience

and rights of mothers in communities of color. These cases exemplify our propositions regarding the anti-hegemonic nature of much of contemporary maternalist politics and the struggles for full citizenship that they frequently entail.

Finally, we presented two contrasting types of motherhood invoked during revolutionary upheavals, which we defined as examples of maternalism-from-above. In one example that we presented, women are called upon by revolutionary movements or states to join militant activities as equal partners, while in the other they are expected to produce loyal citizens through their mothering roles. Revolutionary movements are gendered opportunity structures, but their outcomes for women can differ across contexts, depending on the movement's ideology and the mobilizing capacity of women's rights groups.

Our framework, illustrated in Table 2, confirms our propositions regarding the salience of sociopolitical and cultural contexts as well as the versatility of maternalist frames. Maternalist politics may serve conservative and patriarchal interests, or feminist and social justice goals. They may address women's practical needs or strategic gender interests, or both. State-sponsored maternalism need not always serve patriarchal interests, as the Nicaraguan case demonstrates with respect to women's participation in the Sandinista Revolution. In their study of Czechoslovakia, Shriver and his colleagues showed how the maternalist frame was deployed effectively in one political context (communism) but was met with derision and dismissal in another (post-communist democracy). Our research similarly finds that the political context matters, and that states may be receptive or hostile to motherist politics. In the cases of Iran and Turkey, the state may claim to valorize motherhood, but mothers who protest the imprisonment or execution of their children may be met with repression. Maternalist politics and frames may be resilient and universal, but they are also versatile and context-specific.

Michel (2012) has noted that the relationship between maternalism and feminism has been vexed. We agree, but our case studies have illustrated intersections and alignments, which we also see as evidence of the complexity and fluidity of maternalist politics. The many cases of motherhood-driven politics in the global South and North since the last century has led us to distinguish different types of maternalist mobilizations and frames. Some that do not explicitly identify as "feminist" need not reinforce conservative or patriarchal ideologies; the cases of the Mourning Mothers of Iran, the Saturday Mothers in

Table 2
The versatility of maternalism: A typology.

| | Maternalism-from-above | | Maternalism-from-below | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | Patriarchal | Emancipatory | De facto Feminist | Self-defined Feminist |
| State-sponsored | Islamic Revolution in Iran | Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua | | |
| Autonomous/ Grassroots | | | Mourning Mothers of Iran Saturday Mothers of Turkey Mothers of Ciudad Juárez Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo Mamas of Color Rising and Young Women United Code Pink: Women for Peace | MADRE |

Turkey, the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, and the mothers who have mobilized in response to femicide in Ciudad Juárez all show that groups that may not explicitly self-identify as feminist can still resist and challenge patriarchal structures at different levels, which may include machismo culture, militarism, and state repression. These examples reveal a politicization of motherhood and of women's connection to the family by making bold claims on the state for justice. The Turkish, Argentine, and Iranian cases of maternalism-from-below in contexts of violence also share the strategy of mobilizing as women, as mothers specifically, in public spaces. Shifting the *maternal* from the private to the public creates a sense of transformation that may not be well-received in traditional or patriarchal contexts but politicizes the women's sense of maternal identities and extends that politicization from the individual level to the community, national or global level. In columns four and five of Table 2, any number of women's rights groups across countries could be added, such as the women's peace groups of Liberia, Israel's Women in Black and Mochsom Watch, and women's rights groups seeking reform of patriarchal family laws in Muslim-majority countries.

Of course, there exist examples of right-wing maternalist politics-from-below, and thus it is possible to add a sixth column in Table 2 for patriarchal forms of grassroots women's mobilizations, such as the right-wing women's groups studied by Kathleen Blee (see also Blee & Deutch, 2012), as well as various Islamist women's groups. In post-Arab Spring Tunisia, the newly-emerged Islamist groups projected motherhood as the central obligation of Tunisian women – and in contrast to what they regarded as the misguided secularism of the past. But secular and left-wing groups responded with their own maternalist images. Khalil (2014) describes a flyer handed out during the post-revolutionary electoral campaign in August 2011 that featured a picture of a pregnant woman's belly to encourage people to vote, analogizing the realization of people's dreams for the future Tunisian nation to the birth of a baby. Above the picture of the pregnant belly was an Arabic-language text: "The star of our dream 14 January: We vote on 23 October". The 23 October 2011 elections for the National Constituent Assembly were pictured as a delivery, or as representing the birth of a new nation. Similarly, in the United States, a discursive tug-of-war has characterized the deployment of maternalism, as when Sarah Palin draws on the notion of a "mama grizzly" to defend conservative objectives, while progressive women's groups draw on motherhood to argue for expanded welfare rights and economic citizenship.

The work of Koven and Michel shows that "at the heart of maternalism lies the paradox of entering the public political arena by reinforcing the traditional female sphere of children, family, nurturance, and care" while also valuing ideas of what constitutes as "the feminine" and expanding concepts of humanity and justice (Moghadam, 2006: 91). The paradox points to the diverse ways in which the maternalist frame is constructed and for what purpose: a diagnosis of a social problem in need of change; a way of resisting certain types of change; to inspire and motivate people. What is clear is that in the face of perceived injustices and within struggles for inclusion, solidarity and social change, the maternalist frame will not lose its mobilizing power, and resistance will remain fertile.

Uncited references

Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo
 BBC News, 2010
 BBC News, 2011
 Code Pink: Women for Peace
 Di Marco and Tabbush, 2011
 MADRE
 Mamas of Color Rising
 Revolutionary Motherhood Zine
 Young Women United

Endnotes

¹ The phrase is taken from a poster created and distributed by the U.S.-based anarchist collective Crimethinc, http://www.crimethinc.com/tools/downloads/pdfs/resistance_is_fertile.pdf.

² On women and protest see West & Blumberg, 1990; on gender, revolution, national identity and state-building, see Badran, 1995; Baron, 2005; Moghadam, 2006; White, 2003; Yuval-Davis, 1997. For feminist thought on citizenship see Lister, 2003.

³ See Di Marco, 2009; Gheyntanchi, 2001; Hobson, 1998; Jenson, 1986; Kessler-Harris, 2001; Koven & Michel, 1993; Ladd-Taylor, 1994; Lewis, 1980; Michel & Mahon, 2002; Moghadam, 2006; Pateman, 1988; Ruddick, 1995; Skocpol, 1992.

⁴ On the anti-Allende Chilean women's "march of the empty pots and pans", see Power, 2002; on right-wing women in the U.S. and internationally, see Rosen, 2010; Blee & Deutch, 2012; on Islamist women in Turkey, see Arat, 2005. An example of a discursive tug-of-war is the contrast between Sarah Palin's attempt to mobilize American conservative women with her "mama grizzly" campaign in 2010 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fsUJVL6cIK-c&feature=related>) and the "Sarah Doesn't Speak for Me" campaign by Emily's List, a Democratic pro-choice political action committee (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0mp99eEaic>).

⁵ *Patriarchal* denotes a reinforcing of the division between the public (male-centered) and private spheres, as well as the reinforcement of the traditional sexual division of labor. An *egalitarian* goal or outcome emphasizes equity and inclusion in terms of participation, rights, and power; and it may also valorize feminine values of nurturance, connections, and care.

⁶ *Practical gender interests* "arise from the concrete conditions of women's positioning within the gender division of labor." *Strategic gender interests* – usually defined as feminist – are derived "from the analysis of women's subordination and from the formulation of an alternative, more satisfactory set of arrangements to those which exist" (Molyneux, 1985: 232–33).

⁷ For more information about the Saturday Mothers in Turkey, see the following reports: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/017/1998/en/3ccea6b6-d9a5-11dd-af2b-b1f6023af0c5/eur440171998en.html> and <http://www.opendemocracy.net/ali-gokpinar/saturday-mothers>.

⁸ http://articles.cnn.com/2010-01-10/world/iran.mourning.mothers_1_mothers-human-rights-anti-government-protests?_s=PM:WORLD For more information, see also <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/irans-mourning-mothers-must-be-released-20100111>; and <http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2013/09/mourning-mother/>.

⁹ Moghadam (2005) calls them organized expressions of *globalization-from-below*, in terms of their resistance to forms of *globalization-from-above* as well as their transnational ties and connection to the global women's movement.

¹⁰ To see the video in its entirety, see: <http://vimeo.com/42075399>.

¹¹ See <http://ussen.org/solidarity/what> of the U.S. Solidarity Economy Network. Practitioners of the solidarity economy emphasize a people-centered approach to production and consumption. Examples include food and worker-owned cooperatives, bartering communities, community centers dedicated to economic justice and social uplift, fair trade, participatory budgeting, community-supported agriculture, and more.

References

Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (o). (English version). First retrieved on November 7, 2010 <http://www.abuelas.org.ar/english/>
 Arat, Yesim (2005). *Rethinking Islam and liberal democracy: Islamist women in Turkish politics*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

- Arditti, Rita (1999). *Searching for life: The grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the disappeared children of Argentina*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Austin: Learning to Run a Cooperative (2011). YES! magazine. Posted: January 2, 2011. Retrieved: June 4, 2011 <http://www.yesmagazine.org/blogs/fixing-the-future/austin-learning-to-run-a-cooperative>
- Badran, Margot (1995). *Feminists, Islam, and the nation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.
- Baron, Beth (2005). *Egypt as a woman: Nationalism, gender, and politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bayard de Volo, Lorraine (2001). *Mothers of heroes and martyrs: Gender identity politics in Nicaragua, 1979 – 1999*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bayard de Volo, Lorraine (2012). A revolution in the binary? gender and the oxymoron of revolutionary War in Cuba and Nicaragua. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 37(2), 413–439.
- BBC News (2010). Mexico murder protest mother Escobedo killed. Posted December 17, 2010. Retrieved December 17, 2010 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12023345>
- BBC News (2011). Juárez killings activist Chavez murdered in Mexico. (Posted January 12). Retrieved April 10, 2011 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12177543>
- Benford, Robert D., & Snow, David A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 611–639.
- Blee, Kathleen, & Deutch, Sandra McGee (Eds.). (2012). *Women of the Right: Comparisons and Interplay across Borders*. College Park: Penn State University Press.
- Bouvard, Marguerite Guzman (2002). *Revolutionizing motherhood: The mothers of the Plaza de Mayo*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Carlsen, Laura (2011). *The murdered women of Juarez*. (posted January 20). Retrieved January 22, 2011 CIP Americas Program (<http://www.cipamericas.org/archives/3895>).
- Code Pink: Women for Peace (e). Retrieved November 8, 2010 <http://www.codepink4peace.org/>
- Collins, Patricia Hill (1994). Shifting the center: Race, class, and feminist theorizing about motherhood. In Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Grace Chang, & Linda Rennie Forcey (Eds.), *Mothering: Ideology, experience, and agency* (pp. 45–65). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Detention of 33 Iranian mothers sparks protest, group says (s). CNN.com. Retrieved January 10, 2010 http://articles.cnn.com/2010-01-10/world/iran.mourning.mothers_1_mothers-human-rights-anti-government-protests?_s=PM:WORLD
- Di Marco, Graciela (2009). Social justice and gender rights. *International Social Science Journal*, 191, 43–55.
- Di Marco, Graciela, & Tabush, Costanza (Eds.). (2011). *Feminisms, democratization, and radical democracy: Case studies in south and central America, middle east, and north Africa*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: UNSAM – EDITA.
- Everett, Jana (1981). Approaches to the 'woman question' in India: From maternalism to mobilization. *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, 4(2), 169–178.
- Gamson, William A., & Meyer, David S. (1996). Framing political opportunity. In Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, & Mayer N. Zald (Eds.), *Comparative perspectives on social movements, political opportunities, and cultural framings* (pp. 275–290). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gheyanchi, Elham (2001). Civil society in Iran: Politics of motherhood and the public sphere. *International Sociology*, 16(4), 557–576.
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano (1994). Social constructions of mothering: A thematic overview. In Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Grace Chang, & Linda Rennie Forcey (Eds.), *Mothering: Ideology, experience, and agency* (pp. 1–29). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Guidry, John A., Kennedy, Michael D., & Zald, Mayer N. (2000). Globalizations and social movements. In Guidry, Kennedy, & Zald (Eds.), *Globalizations and social movements: Culture, power, and the transnational public sphere* (pp. 1–32). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Gupta, Girish (2011). *Mexico's macho blood sport*. Posted February 14, 2011. Retrieved May 3, 2011 New statesman (<http://www.girish-gupta.com/pdf/255-1.pdf>).
- Hobson, Barbara (1998). Women's collective agency, power resources, and citizenship rights. In Michael Hanagan, & Charles Tilly (Eds.), *Recasting citizenship*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Jenson, Jane (1986, Summer). Gender and reproduction: Or, babies and the state. *Studies in Political Economy*, 20, 9–46.
- Kampwirth, Karen (2003). *Women and guerrilla movements: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas, Cuba*. College Park: Penn State University Press.
- Kashani-Sabet, Firoozeh (2011). *Conceiving Citizens: Women and the Politics of Motherhood in Iran*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kessler-Harris, Alice (2001). *In pursuit of equity: Women, Men, and the quest for economic citizenship in 20th-century America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kessler-Harris, Alice (2003). In pursuit of economic citizenship. *Social Politics*, 10(2), 157–175.
- Khalil, Andrea (2014). Tunisia's women: Partners in revolution. *Journal of North African Studies*, 19(2), 188–199.
- Koven, Seth, & Michel, Sonya (1990). Womanly duties: Maternalist politics and the origins of welfare states in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880–1920. *American Historical Review*, 95(4), 1076–1108.
- Koven, Seth, & Michel, Sonya (1993). *Mothers of a New world: Maternalist politics and the origins of welfare states*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ladd-Taylor, Molly (1994). *Mother-work. Women, child welfare, and the states, 1890–1930*. Chicago and Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Lewis, Jane (1980). *The politics of motherhood: Child and maternal welfare in England, 1900-1936*. London: Croom Helm.
- Lister, Ruth (2003). *Citizenship: Feminist perspectives* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- MADRE (E). Retrieved February 23, 2011 <http://www.madre.org/>
- Mamas of Color Rising (g). (Official website). Retrieved 2011 <http://mamasofcolorrising.wordpress.com/>
- Mehran, Golnar (2003). The paradox of tradition and modernity in female education in the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Comparative Education Review*, 47(3), 269–286.
- Michel, Sonya (2012). "Maternalism and Beyond." In Rebecca Plant. *Beyond Maternalism: Motherhood and Method* (pp. 22–37). New York: Bergahn Books.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. (2005). *Globalizing women: Transnational feminist networks*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. (2006). Maternalist policies versus Women's economic citizenship? gendered social policy in Iran. In Shahra Razavi, & Shireen Hassim (Eds.), *Gender and social policy in a global context: Uncovering the gendered structure of "the social"* (pp. 87–108). Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Moghadam, Valentine M., Franzway, Suzanne, & Fonow, Mary Margaret (Eds.). (2011). *Making globalization work for women: The role of social rights and Women's trade union leadership*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Molyneux, Maxine (1985). Mobilization without emancipation? Women's interests, the state, and revolution in Nicaragua. *Feminist Studies*, 11(2), 227–254.
- Naples, Nancy A. (1998). *Grassroots warriors: Activist mothering, community work, and the War on poverty*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Noonan, Rita K. (1995). Women against the state: Political opportunities and collective action frames in Chile's transition to democracy. *Sociological Forum*, 10(1), 81–111.
- Olesen, Thomas (2006). The Zapatistas and transnational framing. In Almeida Johnston (Ed.), *Latin American social movements* (pp. 179–196). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Pateman, Carole (1988). *The Sexual Contract*. London: Polity Press.
- Power, Margaret (2002). *Rightwing women in Chile: Feminine power and the struggle against Allende 1964–73*. College Park: Penn State Press.
- Razavi, Shahra, & Hassim, Shireen (Eds.). (2006). *Gender and Social Policy in a Global Context*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave.
- Revolutionary Motherhood Zine (e). Retrieved Fall 2010 <http://mamasofcolorising.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/rmh-consolidated.pdf>
- Rich, Adrienne (1976). *Of woman born: Motherhood as institution and experience*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Rosen, Ruth (2010). The tea party and the new right-wing Christian feminism". Available at OpenDemocracy <http://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/ruth-rosen/tea-party-and-new-right-wing-christian-feminism>
- Ruddick, Sara (1995). *Maternal thinking: Toward a politics of peace*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy (1992). *Death without weeping: The violence of everyday life in Brazil*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Shayne, Julie (2004). *The revolution question: Feminisms in El Salvador, Chile and Cuba*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Shriver, Thomas, Adams, Allison, & Einwohner, Rachel (2013, Sept). Motherhood and opportunities for activism before and after the Czech velvet revolution. *Mobilization*, 18(3), 267–288.
- Skocpol, Theda (1992). *Protecting soldiers and mothers: The political origin of social policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Staudt, Kathleen (2008). *Violence and activism at the border: Gender, fear, and everyday life in Ciudad Juarez*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Turkey: Listen to the Saturday Mothers (s). Amnesty International. Retrieved November 1, 1998 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/EUR44/017/1998/en/3cea6b6-d9a5-11dd-af2b-b1f6023af0c5/eur440171998en.html>
- West, Guida, & Blumberg, Rhoda Lois (Eds.). (1990). *Women and social protest*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- White, Jenny B. (2003). State feminism, modernization, and the Turkish republican woman. *NWSA Journal*, 15(3), 145–159.
- Young Women United (d). (Official website). Retrieved 2011 <http://youngwomenunited.org/>
- Yuval-Davis, Nira (1997). *Gender and the nation*. London: Sage Publications.