

GENDERING RELIGION AND POLITICS

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GENDERING RELIGION AND POLITICS
UNTANGLING MODERNITIES

Edited by
Hanna Herzog and Ann Braude

Associate Editor
Pnina Steinberg

The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute
and
Women's Studies in Religion Program,
Harvard Divinity School



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This book was first conceived at an academic encounter between the two editors while Hanna Herzog was a visiting scholar in the Women's Studies in Religion Program (WSRP) headed by Ann Braude at Harvard Divinity School. Hanna suggested widening her theoretical concern with religion, gender, and politics into an interdisciplinary comparative project. Ann saw in Hanna's proposal an opportunity to connect the work of the 150 scholars who have participated in Harvard's WSRP since its founding in the 1970s with an international network. In 2006, 10 scholars from the United States, India, Germany, and Finland joined 10 Israeli and Palestinian scholars in Jerusalem for a public workshop jointly supported by the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, Harvard Divinity School, and the Goethe-Institute: "Religion Gender and Politics: An International Dialogue."

Jerusalem proved to be a particularly fruitful location because of its enormous significance for the three faiths under discussion, as well as the high visibility of intersections of religion, gender, and politics on its streets and in its newspapers, communities, and cafes. As quickly became clear from presentations and comments by Israeli and Palestinian participants, the State of Israel is itself an experiment in the application of social theory to the relation of religion and politics in the context of modernity, a fact that some papers in this book demonstrate as well.

The conversation initiated at the conference has continued and evolved, and has grown to include additional scholars committed to deciphering the relationships between gender, religion, and politics. This collection of papers reflects and represents the work of this intellectual network. We offer our sincere thanks to the authors who trusted in the project and contributed their knowledge, enthusiasm, and commitment to it. The project also benefited immensely from the work of scholars and commentators whose work does not appear in this volume, including Nohad 'Ali, Orit Avishai, Wallace Best, Ruth Ebenstein, Tamar El Or, Hunaida Ghanim, Tova Hartman, Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Michael Karayanni, Ruth Barzilay Lumbrozo, Maina Chawla Singh, and Nayereh Tohidi.

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