

On the Heroic:  
Courage, Love, the Greater Good and the Case of Leila Khaled

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## ABSTRACT

Heroism is a phenomenon central to the development of Western Society. It is present at the core of understanding history, it is the basis for all literature, and exists in many forms in contemporary society, including the celebrity. As a result of its pervasiveness, the philosophy by which heroism ought to be understood has been left out of its contemporary iterations. Through an investigation of a provocative real person, rather than a literary character, the being of the hero in the everydayness of life can be more readily understood. The character in question is Leila Khaled, provocative because she is a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and participated in two airplane hijackings. The general public understands her to be a terrorist; however, she is a hero among her own people and as a hero has much to teach. Through an inspection of her story, the hero presents itself as acting with courage and being motivated by love toward a greater good. Thus, an investigation of these phenomena - courage, love, and the greater good - will result in a better understanding of the hero that works toward the philosophic discussion about heroism that has been largely ignored over the last several hundred years.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
2 THE CASE OF LEILA KHALED .....	9
3 ON COURAGE .....	32
4 ON LOVE .....	46
5 ON THE GREATER GOOD .....	59
6 CONCLUSION.....	71
REFERENCES .....	75

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is concerned with a great many things. Existence, knowledge, reason, and values are just a few of the phenomena central to the discourse of philosophy. However, this discourse is not without limits. All communication, including philosophy, is made possible through and constricted by language. Language can be understood as a tool for conveying meaning; however, that meaning is fractioned and subject to the interpretation of others rather than being a way of communicating a totality of meaning. Over time, language changes, it becomes a new tool for solving new problems. As language changes over time, we are often left with very few words to discuss phenomenon vital to the shaping of our world and ourselves. While this can be attributed to many different factors, the most disparaging factor to a philosopher is that the layperson is not actively talking about these phenomena and as a result we either lose or never develop the language necessary to talk well about certain phenomena. The most common example for this type of specialized language development comes from the Sami people. Often oversimplified as Inuit, the Sami are an indigenous culture to northern Europe. As a result of living on the arctic tundra for hundreds of years, they have developed more than three hundred words for snow (McCarthy 973). The snow is a central part of their daily lives and what results is a language that intricately documents many different facets of snow that gives each unique word a meaning that is tailored to include or exclude certain things. The hope of the philosopher is that the public is concerned enough about their own existence that

they would be able to develop this highly specialized language without sacrificing their place as a productive member of society that must also be concerned with individual development.

Heroism is one phenomenon for which we do not have adequate language. Heroism reaches all the way back through the history of man as an organizing characteristic and then is disseminated in many aspects of culture and society. In addition to this, heroism has a vital role in the development of values and morals for every individual. As the case would be, there isn't enough variety of language to talk about heroes and their actions as they ought to be spoken about. There is not enough differentiation in language to distinguish without discussion what a hero like Mohandas Gandhi did in leading the people of India to independence and what a firefighter does when he rushes into a burning building. This is not to say that there ought to be a hierarchy where some acts are inherently more valuable or judged by society to be more valuable than others; this is meant to show that the word hero has within it a profusion of meaning that makes it quite hard to accurately talk about being heroic. Or rather, in order to discuss how heroes are different, how they are the same must be recognized.

In order to talk about the hero well, the hero must be situated in the everyday where it is not seen as the rare path achievable by few but a way of being exceptional in the uncertainty of the everyday that is available to all. With the understanding that the heroic happens in the everyday and everyone is capable of being heroes, the dialogue about heroism will grow because it is now more than just the concern of the philosopher but it also the concern of the public who

ought to have learned through an upbringing in the contemporary culture which concerns itself with the aestheticism of heroics. As a result of expanding this discussion, more language will come about as a way of taking on some of the meaning that is currently loaded within the heroic.

A vital segment from the discussion of the heroic that has already occurred comes from Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Influenced by Marx, Husserl, and Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty talks directly about heroism in Sense and Non-Sense. As Sense and Non-Sense was Merleau-Ponty's fourth book, he had expanded beyond epistemology to include political theory in his work. He discusses the hero as such, a function of politics concerned with war, truth, and faith. Merleau-Ponty gives space to Hegel to say about the hero as a political character in history that the hero is one who

although born on a certain date, under certain laws, and into certain moral structures just like everyone else, [they] are the first to understand that this system has no future; they forsake happiness and by their deeds and their example create a law and a moral system in which their time will later recognize its truth. At first they stand alone, since they stand against custom; they have a presentiment of the future although, of course, no knowledge of it. They sense it in their tastes, their passions, and their very being rather than see it clearly before them. Their heroism resides in having worked out and won for others, with nothing certain to go on and in the loneliness of subjectivity, what will afterwards seem the only possible future, the very meaning of history: this is the unexpected junction of reason and unreason. 'They should be called heroes in that they have drawn their goals and their vocation not only from the calmly ordered course of events...but also from an underground source of inner spirit...which strikes against the outer world as against a shell and cracks it because such a shell is unsuited to such a kernel...they were the new race which already existed within the old' (183).

This passage has three primary focal points in which all the other phenomena can be situated. First, the heroic is concerned with deeds. The hero is one that acts and

in his actions conveys an abundance of meaning. Next, the hero acts for others. What this gets to is an understanding of the motivation behind the actions of the hero. If the hero acts for others, rather than himself, then he acts with love because that is the means by which man puts others before self. Finally, the hero has a presentiment of the future. The hero acts in order to bring about a new world which to the hero appears to be the only possible future. If the hero is motivated by love then the future toward which he works must be concerned with a greater good, one which is concerned with others rather than primarily with the self. As the contemporary discussion of heroism goes forward, it must not ignore this basis of the hero as one that acts with courage and is motivated by love toward a future of greater good because it is the most basic philosophic foundation that captures the heroic in its entirety and simultaneously maintains its connections to all the other phenomena alluded to in the previous passage.

Using the foundation of the hero as acting with courage, motivated by love, and toward a greater good, it makes sense to frame the hero as an advocate. With this framing we can repurpose the language already available to create an initial understanding of the hero before launching an investigation of the hero and questioning what it means to act with courage, be motivated by love, and work toward a greater good. Going back to the image of the hero constructed in Sense and Non-Sense, the hero is an advocate because he sees the possibility of the future that others are not able to see. He uses this presentiment as a means of speaking for the other who is not prepared to address the future or cannot see a



future in which they might grow, live, and be happy. The hero-advocate acts to create a space in which these people may reclaim their voice.

Although the definition of the heroic as an act of courage, motivated by love, toward a greater good may appear to be too narrow to accurately reflect a depth of meaning needed for a discussion of the hero, it does provide adequate space to discuss the hero as an advocate found in the everyday. The following sections on courage, love, and the greater good will explain in detail the complexity of this definition and how it denotes many other phenomena that aren't exposed at a surface level but are in fact contained inside these forces. An extended investigation ought to rely on a single hero as an exemplar in order to avoid confusion and a plurality of instantiation. The exemplar for this investigation will be Leila Khaled, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who was instrumental in two plane hijackings. While she may appear to be an extreme example, it is her extremeness that makes it easier to see her heroic qualities because they are exaggerated along with the rest of her personality and actions. This example also calls into question the exclusivity of the terms hero and terrorist.

When Leila Khaled is viewed as a hero, it must be asked to whom is she a hero. This is because there is no universal moral by which we abide. Just as each culture, subculture, community, family, and individual has their own ethics and morals, so do they all have their own heroes. While Khaled may not appear to be distinguishable as a contemporary American hero according to the morals of contemporary American culture, there is no denying her ongoing influence on the

Palestinians. She published an autobiography, had a documentary made about her in 2006, and continues to regularly give interviews for other texts in addition to her regular work in Palestinian and international politics. Even though she is not a hero in the American culture, the components of her heroism have a universal quality to them from which we can learn how to act with courage, how to be motivated by love, and how to work toward the greater good.

Working toward an expansion of this definition of the hero, a case study of Leila Khaled will provide a foundation from which examples, parallels, and applications may be drawn. This account of her actions will be taken primarily from Eileen MacDonald's Shoot the Women First in which she chronicles her interview with Khaled. MacDonald is an investigative journalist with previous work in human trafficking. Her text Shoot the Women First was intended to challenge the misconception that female terrorists are simply radical feminists or puppets of manipulative male leaders.

Next, the case study will lead into an analysis of courage as a component of heroism. Courage branches into two schools of thought. First, is moral courage found in the writing of thinkers like Rushworth Kidder who stick very close to the idea of morality as it pertains to the modern Christian. To be discussed second, framed by Paul Tillich's The Courage to Be, cosmopolitan courage will take a pre-Christian, or supra-Christian, path toward its Aristotelian sense and how it is central to our being. This examination will address courage as a function of gender, how it is a reaction to suffering that is deliberate in order to combat anxieties, and how ultimately it is rational but not reasonable. This is in order to

show that courage is always already a part of being because it is a way of addressing the other in the present and through its practice any person can be a hero.

The examination of why a hero is motivated by love will come primarily from Erich Fromm's The Art of Loving. Fromm frames love as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. This will also address questions about what or who we ought to love and to what extent. Love is such a strong motivator for the hero because it is a way of being with the other that is at the same time transformative in terms of how it supports the growth of the self and the other in addition to renegotiating the distance between beings in the world.

Finally, this definition must look toward the outcomes of the hero's actions. Starting with James S. Fishkin's and Peter Laslett's work on how to justly address future generations, as laid out in Justice between Age Groups and Generations, will provide an understanding of the unequal relationship the present has with the future. A discussion of their work pairs well with that investigation of distance undertaken by Onara O'Neill in "Distant Strangers and Future Generations," in which the author concentrates on how the distant stranger can be made into an immediate neighbor. The destination for this inquiry is a place where the hero is seen as creating balance in the community in such a way that leaves the future possible rather than calling the future to be in the present.

In order to undertake these tasks, the boundaries of this investigation must be clearly set because they are concerned with an ongoing political conflict from which this account of heroism takes several cues but doesn't not address fully.

The account of Leila Khaled's life and actions used in this investigation comes primarily from several texts. This is in order to avoid conflicting accounts of minute details while still allowing adequate space for her story to be told, in some instances even in Khaled's own words. As a whole, this investigation is intended to reflect the voice of the Palestinians. This can be seen as a limitation because it favors Khaled's telling, or her supporters' telling, of the story. The information that will be covered is in no way meant to be used as evidence or resemble an evaluation of who is right and who is wrong in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The conflict reaches through hundreds of years of history and has many historical, political, religious, and cultural facets that will not be covered here as they are less relevant to defining heroism in the everyday; however, it is duly conceded that the word choice and discussion may appear to more accurately reflect the conflict as seen by the Palestinians and not the people of Israel because Khaled's morals are aligned with the morals of the Palestinian people. Before she can be discussed as a hero, her label as a terrorist must be examined to show how it can exist at the same time as her label as a hero.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE CASE OF LEILA KHALED

At first glance, hero and terrorist appear to be mutually exclusive labels; however, Khaled can be viewed as both. Prior to discussing her as a hero, she must be viewed in the way that the majority of the world sees her, as a terrorist. While there is no universally accepted definition of terrorism, one of the more widely used definitions was adopted by the U.S. Department of State in 1983. They characterize terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (United States Department of State xii). This definition is significant because it provides a legal foundation for arresting and prosecuting those that commit terrorist actions. If this definition had existed when Khaled hijacked the El Al or TWA flights, it would have labeled her as a terrorist because her actions were premeditated, politically motivated, with the threat of violence, and toward noncombatant travelers; however, this was not the definition of terrorism at the time. At the time, the United Nations had only the “1963 Convention on Offences and Certain other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft” which gives the pilot the right to use restraint or reasonable alternatives to prevent someone from taking illegal control of an airplane (226). It wasn’t until the 1970s, after Khaled’s hijackings, that the U.N. would add more than a dozen other conventions to supplement the one approved in 1963 to further clarify definitions, procedures, and the rights of a state. Aside from the oversimplifications that go along with applying a definition like this to real world

situations, organizations, and individuals, the controversial moment in the more recent definition comes from the label “noncombatant.” While it serves to delineate between civilians and military personnel, it creates an unintentional boundary between terrorist actions and military operations. Joshua Sinai explains in “How to Define Terrorism” that by limiting the definition to noncombatant, acts that would otherwise been seen as terrorist acts that are committed against armed forces now become military operations (2). This definition abates the strength of a state’s ability to combat terrorism or put terrorists to trial because there are separate procedures and ramifications for terrorists acts and military acts.

With this understanding, the people who perpetrate military operations are guerrillas and not terrorists. For an individual like Leila Khaled this blurs the line between these two categories and makes it unclear if ultimately she is a terrorist or a guerrilla fighter. While this may appear to be semantics, the distinction determines how we are to understand Khaled, as a hero-terrorist or as a hero-guerrilla. Heroes are the forces that define the absolutes of our actions and aspirations. Absolute here is intended to mean those actions or aspirations that are within the acceptable norm. This norm is set by the actions of those we hold as heroes. This is to say, we learn how to be heroes from the people we see as heroes. As new heroes arise, our understanding of what is heroic changes over time. If Khaled is a hero-terrorist, any action is justifiable as long as it is toward a heroic end. Here, heroic end is intended to be mean a greater good, a good that benefits more than just the hero. For Khaled, this heroic end is ending the

suffering of her people as refugees. In this framing, violence becomes an acceptable tool – within the norm and acceptable as an action as established by a prior hero – of the hero and it is usable against anyone, even the unarmed public. However, if Khaled is a hero-guerrilla, violence is justified – not a norm but allowed as extreme – only as a provoked response to armed, militaristic groups advocating repression or cultural genocide. Both the hero-terrorist and the hero-guerrilla allow space for the hero to act violently; however, it benefits the hero to be understood as a guerrilla because then the hero's violent efforts are aimed at those groups actively engaged in committing injustice. This aimed violence is more aligned with the universal greater good because it lessens the risk posed to unarmed civilians caught up in political conflicts.

As a result of the analytically insufficient defining of terrorism, there is a pervasive practice of labeling these individuals as terrorist, guerrilla, hero, or some other classification dependent on a complex hierarchy of motivations, actions, intentions, targets, and outcomes. The complexity of the vernacular lends credence both to arguing Khaled is a terrorist, as is the accepted norm, and the argument that Khaled is a guerrilla, as she is prone to thinking of herself in this manner. A survey of Khaled's childhood, participation in her two hijackings, and how she continues to stay active in the PFLP will provide a deeper understanding of the labels ascribed to her, and how she therefore may also be seen as a hero. The following survey of Khaled's life is guided by interviews conducted by Eileen MacDonald and recounted in MacDonald's text Shoot the Women First, which looks at women's roles in terrorist organizations and activities.

Leila Khaled was born in Haifa, Palestine in April of 1944. At the age of four, she, her seven siblings, and her mother were forced to leave their home. It was 1948 and the Arab-Israeli War had triggered what is now known to Palestinians as Nakba. Translating to English as the “great disaster” or “great catastrophe,” Nakba came about a result of a radical Zionist paramilitary group<sup>1</sup>, which would later become the foundation for the actual Israeli Army, slaughtering any Palestinian family that refused to leave their home. One such example is the Deir Yassin Massacre which took place in April of 1948 and involved one hundred and twenty Jewish fighters from radical Zionist groups assaulting Deir Yassin, a Palestinian city of six hundred citizens near Jerusalem, and killing more than one hundred. This was just one of several similar massacres that happened as radical Zionists poured in from war-torn Europe with the support of the international community. While it is hard to reduce hundreds if not thousands of years of cultural tension between Jews and Palestinians into a single thought, it may be easiest to think of their conflict as an armed land dispute. For hundreds of years the land that is now Israel was controlled by the Palestinians and, in the Palestinian state, Jews were second-class citizens when it came to owning land and businesses. The conflict stems from both groups believing that they have historical, racial, and religious claims to that land that is now Israel. This conflict would go on to shape the rest of Leila Khaled’s life and the lives of more than five million displaced Palestinians.

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<sup>1</sup> This radical Zionist group was known as Lohamei Herut Israel in Hebrew and is commonly referred to as the Stern Gang in English in recognition of the group’s founder, Avraham Stern.



Khaled and her family moved to a relative's house in Tyre, Lebanon. They lived there for a year before they saw Leila's father who had stayed behind to fight the Zionist invasion of Palestine. He had protected his country as long as possible before he was forced into a refugee camp in Egypt. While in the camp, he suffered a heart attack. His doctor smuggled him out of Egypt and into Lebanon where he could be reunited with his family. Leila described him as being broken, sick, and with a crushed spirit (103). This would change the dynamic of her whole family and quite possibly could have been the social opening that allowed Khaled to be so outspoken and toss off the traditionally conservative roles of Palestinian women.

While her older siblings took on jobs to support the family, Leila began protesting in the streets with other Palestinian school children and questioning her mother as to why they left their home and they couldn't return (104). As she got older she grew more outspoken and audacious. Despite her mother's complaints, Leila often went out alone past curfew in order to hand out resistance leaflets door-to-door and when stopped by soldiers she would tell elaborate stories to avoid suspicion. She was academically gifted and moved while still a teenager to Kuwait to be an English teacher. At that time, an illegal resistance organization had formed in Kuwait that advocated armed resistance against radical Zionists. She joined the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and began recruiting other members. The Palestinian loss of the Six Day War and loss of control of the West bank convinced Khaled that she needed to be more involved in the resistance. She could do more than hide in the shadows handing out

literature and recruiting members. Khaled had decided that she would train as a guerrilla fighter and stand on the front line of the resistance.

Khaled waited several years before the PFLP invited her to come train at one of their camps. At only twenty-five years old, Leila and two of her brothers told their mother that they were going to a secret camp to train as guerrillas. Khaled was trained with both men and women on how to use hand-grenades, guns, and fight hand-to-hand. Multiple times during her training the camp was bombed by Israeli planes, but each time they would just move to a different area in the mountains and rebuild what had been destroyed and continue their training. Eventually, her brothers left her and went back to their regular lives; however, Khaled would not give up so easily and continued to ask to be more involved.

Khaled was eventually sent to Beirut where it was revealed to her that her wish to be on the front lines had been granted. When she was told that she would be trained how to hijack a Boeing 707 airplane, she literally laughed in delight (107). While her outburst almost caused her superiors to change their mind, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August, 1969, Khaled would hijack TWA Flight 840. Khaled and her accomplice, whom she knew only as Salim, met in the airport lounge in Rome. She had never met him before and recognized him only by a set of secret signals that had been arranged for them. Khaled and Salim were travelling first-class so that they were as close to the cockpit as possible. Khaled had explosives and hand-grenades in her purse and a gun tucked into her pants. As Khaled prepared to board her flight she was stricken with a moment of hesitation. She had seen two little girls playing together. Khaled knew those innocent little girls could die

because of her, if she used the explosives in her purse to blow up the plane or if they might have encountered anti-aircraft fire as they flew through Israeli airspace; either way, it would be her fault. Khaled later recounted that she fought back the hesitation when she “remembered all the countless thousands of Palestinian children in the refugee camps. They were depending on me to tell the world about them. When I remembered their faces I was strengthened” (qtd. in MacDonald 109). She had to keep returning to the thoughts of her people dying in the streets instead of their homes when a young Greek man began talking with her on the shuttle to the plane. He told her that he was going to visit his mother. Khaled listened to his story and did her best to block out her feelings until half an hour after the plane had taken off.

The Israeli Ambassador to Washington, General Rabin, who was also the former Israeli Chief of Staff, was supposed to be aboard the plane but had changed flights at the last minute. The PFLP had staged the hijacking primarily to capture General Rabin so that he may be tried in a revolutionary court (110); despite this set back, the hijacking would also serve as a means to show the dedication, tactical prowess, and extreme risk that the PFLP was willing to endure if it meant success for their cause. Khaled did not learn about this change until she had already boarded and decided to continue her mission. When the time had come, Khaled pulled the pin from her grenade, got out of her seat, and ran toward the cockpit. Salim blocked the aisle so that no one could follow her. Aside from a stewardess who screamed and dropped her tray of drinks, none of the passengers moved or tried to stop what was happening. The pilots tried to resist as much as

possible. First, Khaled told them to fly to Lydda. The pilots acted confused and told her they did not understand. She knew they were purposely resisting because Lydda had been changed to Lodd after the creation of Israel. She told them again that they would fly to Lydda, and they obeyed. Then she shocked the crew with her knowledge of the plane. She disabled the depressurization valve to prevent the pilot from turning it. This would cause the oxygen masks to deploy and Khaled and Salim would blackout without the aid of an oxygen mask. After catching the engineer lying to her about how much fuel was in the plane, Khaled told the passengers to relax and that the stewardesses would continue to hand out drinks. Now fully in control of the plane, Khaled contacted the Israeli control tower to let them know that the plane was no longer theirs.

She informed the control tower that her plane was no longer TWA Flight 840 but rather Flight PFLP Free Arab Palestine. They initially refused to acknowledge her as that, but after the co-pilot informed them of the severity of the situation, they agreed to her demand. She then told them that she would be landing in Lodd. The control tower responded by sending three Israeli fighter jets to prevent her from doing so. Khaled had anticipated this response and was prepared with a contingency plan. She switched the microphone on so that all the passengers could hear that she was calling for a peaceful landing and Israel was threatening to blow them out of the sky. She ordered the pilot to descend and prepare for landing although the fighter jets did not retreat. As they descended she could see tanks and soldiers already on the tarmac. She ordered the pilot to fly on to Damascus.

The Damascus airport in Syria was new, and the Israeli forces wouldn't be able to relocate quickly enough to meet her there. After a smooth landing, Khaled addressed the passengers again. She made sure to hold her grenade behind her so that they understood she was not a threat to them. She told them to wait five minutes and then exit the plane through the emergency exits. Panic gave way and everyone immediately exited the plane despite her plea for them to not rush. With the plane empty, Salim set up the other explosives from Khaled's purse with a fuse so that the plane would explode after they had exited. As the plane was engulfed in flames, the Syrians rushed to meet them, confused over what had happened. Khaled and Salim were ushered into an airport bus with all the other passengers since the Syrians were not aware of who they were. It was now, Khaled admits, she began to allow her emotions to come back. She recalls two women, holding each other as they fought back fits of tears. Khaled apologized to them. All they could say in response was that they had wet their pants (MacDonald 114). Khaled told them that they would get clean pants once they were inside the airport. She began handing out cigarettes and candies because she couldn't take just sitting there while everyone stared at her with anger and hatred. One woman, recalling Khaled's remarks over the intercom on the plane, asked her who the Palestinians were. This was all the evidence Khaled needed to know that she had done the right thing. Reflecting on that day, Khaled said that woman's question "said everything – she did not know our fight – no one did, she did not even know we existed. But after the hijack everyone knew. That is why we did it" (qtd. in MacDonald 115).

Khaled and Salim were detained for forty-five days while they were interrogated, and Syrian politicians debated if they could be put on trial in Syria or if they were to be extradited to Israel. Eventually, Khaled and Salim were released to prevent Syrian involvement in the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians. Khaled returned a hero. Dinners were held in her honor and thousands of requests for her to come speak poured in from all over the Middle East. Khaled saw it as the beginning. The Palestinians were no longer a problem that the civilized world could silence with donations of tents and sugar. The world would know the Palestinian people and that something was in fact happening in the Middle East.

The PFLP began training her to hijack another plane in September of 1970. She now realized that all the publicity she had garnered would prevent her from moving unnoticed in public. Rather than give up her position in the next mission, Khaled sought the help of a plastic surgeon. After almost a dozen surgeries over five months to reshape her eyes, nose, and cheeks, all of them using no anesthetic as prescribing drugs would have created a paper trail, Khaled was ready for her next mission.

On September 6th, 1970, the PFLP planned to stage a coordinated hijacking of three flights: Swissair, TWA, and El Al. Tighter security measures meant only half of her comrades were able to board their flights. Khaled herself was only able to board the El Al flight by deceiving two security guards. The first asked if she had any dangerous weapons. She laughed and asked, "Why would a girl like me have a dangerous weapon" (qtd. in MacDonald 121). Then a security

guard tested her disguise persona. Khaled was supposed to be Maria Sanchez from Honduras, so the guard asked her if she knew Spanish. She replied, “Si, senor,” the only Spanish she knew, and he didn’t ask her any more questions (qtd. in MacDonald 121). As she found her seat on the plane, she again saw children and promised herself that she would do nothing to harm them. Her accomplice, a Nicaraguan named Patrick, who was posing as her boyfriend, wanted some food from the stewardess, but Khaled told him no because he needed to focus. Khaled noticed a man a few rows away staring at her. She feared that he might be an air marshal. She knew she had to move before he became more suspicious. She pulled out her grenades and ran toward the cockpit. The plane erupted with screams. The cockpit door was locked and Khaled ordered a stewardess to open it. Before she could get inside, several air marshals began firing at her and Patrick, including the man that had been staring at her.

Patrick drew his pistol and protected Khaled who kicked the door open and showed the pilot that she had two live hand-grenades. Patrick was shot by the air marshals that had now made their way to the cockpit and tackled Khaled to the ground before she could give her orders to the pilot. She dropped one of the hand-grenades. It didn’t explode. The air marshals were beating her on the floor and then others joined it. Even as she was being kicked in the face, she tried her best not to blackout because she still had the other grenade in her hand. Eventually, someone tore it away from her and she blacked out. When she came to, the crowd was still beating her. She watched as someone walked over to Patrick as he lay

bleeding on the floor. The man picked up a pistol, kicked Patrick, then put the gun to Patrick's neck, and shot him four times.

Khaled credits the British police, who were the first responders to the scene, with saving her life. Had they not taken Khaled from the passengers and put her into an ambulance, she would have been beaten to death by the angry and fearful mob. After being examined in the hospital she was sent to the Ealing police station. While she was there, the Ealing police were inundated with mail for her, most were letters of admiration and marriage proposals although some hate mail and death threats accompanied the fan mail. Even as she sat in her cell, she was able to earn the admiration and respect of her guards. They spent days interrogating her but the only straight answer she ever gave them was her name and affiliation with the PFLP since she saw herself as a prisoner of war. Her logic was that since the Balfour Declaration of 1917<sup>2</sup> the British had been at war with Palestine. She refused to tell him that she “had strict orders not to blow the plane up because we are not killers, we are freedom fighters” (qtd. in MacDonald 127). After three weeks she was told that she would be released in exchange for hostages that were taken from a hijacked airplane by the PFLP after Khaled's capture.

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<sup>2</sup> On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1917, Lord Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, sent a letter to Baron Rothschild, a Jewish banker and politician in Britain, that expressed

“His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (qtd. in Kayyali 45).”



From there, she toured refugee camps educating women on how they could be involved in the resistance movement. She also was briefly married to a fellow guerrilla, but their roles kept them apart and they eventually ended the marriage. News of her marriage even reached *The Washington Post* which ran the headline “Leila Khaled Weds Guerrilla Comrade” and refers to Khaled as a “guerrilla hijacker” (“Leila Khaled Weds Guerrilla Hijacker”). Israel made a public declaration that if Khaled were caught again, they would do everything in their power to make sure she would stand trial.

Around that same time, the assassination attempts started. She narrowly avoided a bomb that had been placed under her bed. Had she sat on the bed it would have detonated but she noticed the bomb while looking for her slippers. In 1976, on the day before her younger sister’s wedding, assassins confused Khaled with her younger sister and shot Khaled’s younger sister and fiancé while they were waiting for Khaled at her house. Khaled returned home to find the pair had been murdered. From here she went underground and tried to stay out of the limelight although she continued to be active politically. She married a second time in 1982 and had a son. Khaled became the First Secretary to the Palestinian Popular Women’s Committees in 1986 and became more involved with improving the conditions in refugee camps for women and children. She fell out of the limelight for some time before resurfacing in Jordan with her husband and two sons. In the last decade she has continued to be active in the Palestinian National Council and World Social Forum in addition to going on speaking tours of Britain and Sweden.

There are many examples of heroism as an act of communication in this telling of Khaled's life. First, we see her as a narrative figure as Khaled uses her own body to tell the story of her life. Khaled underwent plastic surgery after her first hijacking so that she would not be recognized while trying to board the second plane she was going to hijack. In this instance she uses the rhetoric of her body to express her resolve for her cause, the amount of pain she will endure for her people, and how she is willing to give up personal gifts – like beauty – in order to continue fighting on behalf of her people. Then, she can be seen as an individual actor in the larger narrative of her family and community. When Khaled was just a child, deceiving armed guards to hand out resistance information, the sacrifice of her childhood in favor of political activism communicates her values, hopes, and desires not only for herself as a Palestinian but for all Palestinians. Finally, she can be understood as an advocate for her people on an international scale. For the passengers involved in her hijackings, the police she encountered while detailed, and the general public through the media coverage of Khaled, their interaction with her and understanding of her would heavily influence their opinion and attitude toward her and her people.

While it is important to understand Khaled as a hero that communicates in many different ways, she is influenced by the ideology that had been taught to her by the PFLP. Just like Khaled can be seen as both a terrorist and a guerrilla, the PFLP fits the same double categorization because it has undertaken both military operations and threatened violence against civilians. Accordingly, there is a firsthand document called “The Political, Organizational and Military Report of

the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine,” that was drafted in February of 1969. This document plainly lays out the ideology that would have been taught to Khaled and other guerrilla fighters. After an introduction that explains why the PFLP is vital to the Palestinian movement, the document focuses first on the organization’s enemies. The first enemy of the PFLP is Israel because it is “a political, military and economic entity trying to mobilize... people to defend its racist-aggressive-expansionist entity and prevent the Palestinians from regaining their land, freedom and rights” (Kadi 184). The second enemy is the world Zionist movement. The PFLP understands Zionists as providing aid to Israel in the form of money, people, and technology which allows Israel to continue to aggressively expand through use of military power for the purpose of strengthening themselves at the expense of other races (Kadi 185). There is a distinction here between Zionists and Jews. Khaled was treated by a Jewish doctor in England after she was detained following her second hijacking. The police found it shocking that she would allow herself to be treated by someone of the Jewish faith. What they didn’t realize is there is a difference between the practice of the Jewish religion and Zionism, which seeks to combat Diaspora by creating a state based on historical ties and religious tradition to the land that is now Israel. This differentiation is important as an indicator that the PFLP is not looking to globally eradicate the Jewish faith but rather take back the land from a particular subset of people that took it from the Palestinians by force.

After naming Israel and Zionists as enemies, the PFLP begins to focus more internationally on the politics of their situation. Imperialism is named an

enemy because its interests lie in exploiting people and resources (Kadi 186). The last enemies named by the PFLP are Arab capitalists. The reasoning behind this is although they may genetically and culturally be Palestinian or sympathetic to the Palestinian movement, these bankers, sheiks, and merchants are dependent upon global imperialism and cannot take a separate political stance for fear of losing their power and wealth (Kadi 187-8). Now, if we were to take these enemies and restate them just as their motivations and methods – racist, militaristically aggressive, expansionist for the strength of a single race through violence, exploitative, and manipulative of local and international forces – they suddenly sound like the type of forces a hero would fight against. Again, these ideologies are the foundation being taught to Khaled and every member of the PFLP. What we learn from more closely examining Khaled and her parent organization is that the terrorist labels attributed to them are in fact not so definite and instead act to mute many layers of meaning in which we can learn from her as a hero that acts courageously, with love, and toward a greater good.

It must be conceded that she is a hero concerned with justice more so than law. In the documentary *Leila Khaled: Hijacker*, Khaled explains “I don’t agree with the murder of civilians, wherever it is in the world” (qtd. *Leila Khaled: Hijacker*). Here we begin to see Khaled more as an advocate fighting the forces of corruption and subjugation than as a terrorist. It cannot be denied that she broke the law on multiple occasions but she did so because she was acting against the injustice that she saw in the world. As a hero, she hopes to persuade people to take a stance. There are millions of Palestinians that have accepted their

displacement and millions of other citizens of the world that have silently allowed suffering to continue in all its forms in the world. While Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas Gandhi were seen as radical for their nonviolent resistance, Khaled was meeting the threat of radical Zionism with her own radicalism as a call to action not limited to only the Palestinian people. She knew it would take radical acts to capture the attention of the world and only with the world watching Palestine would change happen.

Khaled's actions left a large impact internationally in terms of raising doubt about individual safety in a world of international politics; however, the most important questions her actions raised was asked of her on the shuttle in Syria as she left her first hijacking: who are the Palestinians. Khaled, as a hero, knew her actions would not end the suffering of her people; on the other hand, they were vitally necessary because they would make the world aware that the Palestinians existed and reinforce the waning nationalism of the Palestinian working class that had not yet joined the front lines of this conflict. This shows a larger concern for the mobilization of the Palestinian people. The PFLP thought they could accomplish this by "making the working class aware of its existence, conditions and future (Kadi 203)." This approach, called scientific socialism, seeks to uniform the working class with the already present resistance movement (Kadi 202). The problem the Palestinians face is they have not yet been able to achieve this ideological unity to strengthen their organizational structure and as a result the working class has not been moved to disrupt their lives in favor of mobilization. It is important to note here that although the overall culture of the

1960s and 70s seemed to favor being a member of some resistance movement, the Palestinian culture is very conservative so it is out of the ordinary that a woman would be celebrated in championing a public cause in the way that Khaled did. So, how did Khaled become so deeply involved in the resistance and connected to the suffering of her people when so many others have failed to take such a determined stance?

An obvious facet of Khaled as a guerrilla fighter that has not yet been discussed is her gender. While her superiors in the PFLP saw this as an advantage because she was able to move about more freely and arouse less suspicion, Khaled often found that her gender distracted from the ideologies she was trying to convey. Reporters sexualized her actions or obsessed only on her looks and how unlikely it was that someone so delicate could be so dangerous. Even in prison she was given women's magazines with sewing patterns and had to demand to see a newspaper. Her interrogator repeatedly told her that he did not want to talk politics with her until Khaled shouted at him "I'm involved politically. Do you expect me to speak about fashion" (qtd. in MacDonald 128)? What Khaled exhibits here is resolve. Mia Bloom, in "Female Suicide Bombers: A Global Trend," discusses how "women generally become involved, at least initially, for personal, rather than ideological, reasons" (145). While Khaled appeared to have grasped the ideology of resistance fairly early on with her childhood protesting and handing out leaflets, there is no denying her deeply personal reasons for fighting.

Most important is the memory of her father. Khaled's father died a broken man after his heart attack robbed him of the ability to fight for his home and his family. Khaled had to watch all of this at a very young age and although she has never really spoken about it, the death of her father would appear to most as a very strong motivator for the life of political activism that she chose. Additionally, she left Haifa at an age when she was old enough to remember her home. We see this in *Leila Khaled: Hijacker* when she is presented with a piece of tile from her home in Haifa. Even though she hadn't seen those walls since she was a little girl, she instantly recognized what it was and had to stop the interview for a moment while she wept and was reminded of all the reasons she had to fight. While this gives her a firsthand account of what life in Palestine was like, it also implies that she witnessed the vast change in political landscape that happened when Israel became a nation at the expense of her people. This is so significant because it directly correlates the ideological change of Israeli statehood with the only apparent physical change, the exile of her people.

What Khaled's resolve – as a woman in a conservative, male dominated culture and as a child that saw her family crippled by political upheaval – gave her was courage. Courage often required Khaled to be deceptive about her true motives. As a child out after curfew she deceived soldiers so she could hand out leaflets. As she boarded the El Al flight she narrowly avoided being caught twice. Then, as she was interrogated by the Ealing police, she had to look her captors in the face and hide most of what she knew from them. Throughout her interrogation, the danger of being extradited to Israel where she would be tortured

and put to death was all too real. Courage was important to Khaled, just as it is important to the hero, because it allowed her to endure in the face of danger in order to fight for her principles.

Courage is defined as the intersecting space between principles, danger, and endurance in Moral Courage, by Rushworth Kidder, the founder of the Institute for Global Ethics (7). While Khaled has principles that she fights for, Kidder would have issues with her lack of morality. Khaled subscribes to a philosophy of terrorism in which the valuation of life is different from Kidder's as an ethicist. Khaled has already been attributed as saying she does not agree with murder of civilians no matter where it happens in the world. At the same time, when asked how she would feel if her sons wanted to go be guerrilla fighters for the freedom of Palestine, she explained "my children are not worth more than other Palestinian children" (qtd. in *Leila Khaled: Hijacker*). What develops is a valuation of life where every life is equal. For Khaled her son's lives are not more valuable than a stranger's life just because she is their mother. At first glance this makes her appear cold and unmotherly; however, taking a step back, this ideal of equality is quite noble. With equality of life the poor are equal to the rich, the weak are equal to the strong, and so forth. This shows that Khaled values life and acts courageously in its defense although she may not so neatly fit the definitions given by ethicists. As we will see, Khaled exhibits many components of courage that will become more apparent as we discover the various levels of meaning concealed within acting courageously. This discussion will also reveal a deep connection between courage and love.



Khaled is motivated to act as an advocate for her people out of love. When she was faced with hesitation prior to boarding TWA Flight 840 she recalls thinking of “all the countless thousands of Palestinian children in the refugee camps. They were depending on me to tell the world about them. When I remembered their faces I was strengthened” (qtd. in MacDonald 109). Khaled was motivated by love to better the lives of those Palestinian children because she respects all lives equally and had knowledge of their suffering which tasked her with the responsibility of doing what she could to be an advocate so that they may one day lead better lives. Conversely, Khaled was aware of the dangers that could arise from her celebrity, a form of self-love. She explains that “for a while I felt I was a very important person. But then I became scared, scared of myself. I was scared I would suffer delusions of grandeur” (qtd. in *Leila Khaled: Hijacker*). Like most heroes, the public praised Khaled for her actions. To this day she continues to accept speaking invitations that she receives as a result of her celebrity but she does so not out of self-love but because they provide her a stage through which she can continue to inspire others to act with courage when they are motivated by love in the face of injustice. What we will see, after our discussion of courage, is that to be motivated by love requires care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. This ultimately leads into an exploration of the hero’s concern for the greater good.

Khaled fights injustice in part so that she may one day again see her home but also so that millions of others may one day see theirs. In this way she strives toward a good greater than herself. She tells Lina Makboul, the director of *Leila*

*Khaled: Hijacker*, that “I have a dream, when Palestine is liberated – I’m going to sleep under a tree for three days. I want to smell the soil. It’s not the house. It’s my country” (*Leila Khaled: Hijacker*). Khaled is not fighting for something that is hers. Khaled is fighting for the masses that have dreams like hers, that they may one day have the freedom to walk in the streets and dwell in their homes without threat of violence or fear of persecution because Palestine is a place that is safe for all Palestinians. The problem with discussion about a greater good is the hierarchal nature of it. It has already been mentioned that Khaled fights for Palestine for her people; however, what about the safety and desires of the Israeli people? Khaled’s actions clearly run contrary to their collective need for land to build their nation on. Similarly, Khaled’s actions endangered people from many different nationalities and changed travel on an international scale through the threat of violence she enacted on TWA Flight 840 and the El Al flight. This is the point at which a greater good must not be confused with a universal good. While the cause Khaled has chosen to champion may be at odds with some, she is a hero because she acted with the hope that she would make life better for others. While this is clearly a manifestation of her concern, it also envelops hope for the future and requires some degree of selflessness to act on behalf of so many people who may not be willing to do the same for her. In order to understand the greater good as it relates to the heroic moment, we must conceptualize it as the intersection of concern and selflessness with possibilities of the future.

This brief inspection of Khaled’s life and actions as a member of the PFLP has begun to expose the complex structure by which someone can be called a

hero. Examining Khaled as a heroic figure reveals that heroes are not always universal. Entrenched in both time and place, Khaled is a hero primarily to her people although the rest of the modern world is satisfied with calling her a guerrilla or a terrorist. Despite these negative labels, Khaled acted with courage, motivated by love, and for a greater good. In order to achieve a better understanding of the institution of heroism, it can be broken apart in these three pieces. First, constructing a definition of courage provides an avenue to learning why it is central to the actions of a hero.

## CHAPTER 3

### ON COURAGE

Our discussion of courage thus far has come from Kidder's Moral Courage which frames courage as the intersecting space between principles, danger, and endurance (7). Just as our definition of courage includes a motivation, an action, and an outcome, the structure of courage laid out by Kidder is comparable because it encompasses these three moments. Principles become the motivating factors that guide an act of courage. The act itself is one of danger because it is one that goes against the being of the world. As an outcome, the world endures the act of courage by adopting a new being that the hero hopes will put the world in better relation to man in order to alleviate some kind of suffering or anxiety. The limitation of Kidder's discussion of courage is his preoccupation with Christian morality. While it is expected that there will be many different understandings of courage based on the influence of culture and religious faith, in order to discuss a hero that exists outside Christianity we need a more holistic approach that does not restrict courage to a particular time or place.

Paul Tillich, in The Courage to Be, provides an account of courage that incorporates the pre-Christian historical sense of courage. This isn't without irony as Tillich himself is considered one of the most prominent Protestant theologians of his time; however, Tillich's work steps farther back into the ontology of courage than Kidder is willing to go. Tillich begins in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. Aristotelian courage is central to being and done so because it is noble. Noble in this sense is that which is beautiful; in the original text, noble is meant as

a contrast to that which is base and ugly (4). Aristotelian courage is beautiful because it is what allows us to achieve possibility despite a being of the world in which courage might mean self-sacrifice. Committing self-sacrifice knowingly is meant to be seen here as the greatest expression of courage. Despite Aristotle's attempts to place courage central to and within a person's existence, Tillich explains that courage was often reserved historically for the aristocracy or the knighthood (5). The historical connotations that became connected with courage were the acts of the soldier and the virtue of the nobility. In Greek, courage was *andreia*, which means manliness (5). Similarly, in Latin, courage was *fortitude*, what can be understood as physical strength (5). What results is a historical understanding of courage that contains within it an underlying threat of disenfranchising women from the institution of heroism.

Despite a history of more than one hundred years of feminists movements in the western world, there are still expectations of masculinity that create gender boundaries when discussing heroism. Masculinity has been built not only into our ways of speaking but also our institutions. Linguistically, we have phrases like "take it like a man" in which is built the understanding that men are more able than women to physically endure or emotionally cope with their relation to the world. Similarly, even from a very young age, boys are told "big boys don't cry." This again belittles the female experience with the implication that women are more prone to express their emotions and as a result are weaker than men. Institutionally, we still struggle with jobs marked by a need for courage being traditionally male. Soldiers, policemen, and firemen are just a few examples

where courage is seen as a vital component of doing the job well but our understanding that women can only do these jobs has only begun in the last few decades.

What modern society has failed to recognize, or is moving very slowly to correct, is that courage is an essential part of being that comes prior to gender. Linda Rabieh, a political theorist, gives a feminist critique of courage in Plato and the Virtue of Courage. Rabieh notes that the machismo of courage has grown in a post-9/11 world where males have taken up an enhanced sense of guardianship as an expression of nationalist sentiments and duty to protect the state (10). The explanation that Rabieh likes for why men are concerned with courage comes from Simone de Beauvoir, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century French existentialist and feminist theorist, whom asserts men have laid claim to the arena of courage because they seek a creative moment in their life that parallels the female burden of childbirth (qtd. in Rabieh 12). In this way, man is able to transcend his animal nature through pitting his being against the being of the world in such a way that shows concern beyond his own mortal existence. This is to say that it is more heroic to be concerned with the survival of others than it is to be preoccupied with self-preservation. Ultimately, the feminist critique of courage comes to place where it equates mothering to courage (14). Men exhibit courage out of a need to foster the growth of the world just as a woman fosters the growth of her child through mothering. Equating courage to mothering gets us to an understanding of courage as a selfless act. Mothering is meant in the feminist critique to be a nurturing of one other than the self (14); if courage is a way of mothering and mothering is a

way of being selfless, then courage is self-less. Similarly, if courage is a way of mothering and mothering is a way of being feminine, then courage is reinforced as part of the being of both men and women because it is both masculine and feminine.

Returning to the case of Leila Kahled, we are reminded that she expressed this nurturing courage when she saw two little girls playing in the airport lounge before her first hijacking. She stuck to her plan to hijack the plane because she “remembered all the countless thousands of Palestinian children in the refugee camps. They were depending on me to tell the world about them. When I remembered their faces I was strengthened” (qtd. in MacDonald 109). Children and world are the two key moments in Khaled’s explanation for her courage that show both the feminine and masculine. First, Khaled acted on behalf of children. While there were a countless amount of children suffering in refugee camps, there were just as many adults experiencing the same physical suffering in addition to the mental anguish of knowing that relief was not coming and that the dangers of life in a refugee camp were ever-present. Khaled’s concern is for the children because they are dependent upon others to negotiate their conditions of possibility. Khaled seeks to nurture the children by informing the world about their plight so that they might have a better future. As a result, since nurturing is a way of showing courage, Khaled acted with courage. Next, Khaled is concerned with telling the world about the children. Here we approach the more masculine understanding of courage in that Khaled is concerned with changing the world. In order to do this she was trained how to operate the plane. Here there is an obvious

dichotomy between the masculine and feminine. The understanding is that men do the mechanical job of flying the plane while women do the more domestic job of serving food and making sure all the passengers are comfortable. Khaled continued to act with masculine courage because she brought weapons with her. Weapons in this case being a tool of war and thus a component of masculine courage. Through a discussion of the feminist critique of courage, Khaled's actions can be seen as both masculine-courageous and feminine-courageous. What this reinforces is the recognition that courage is not limited to a particular gender and a gender is not limited to a particular kind of courage because courage is central to being.

There is an undeniable aspect of Khaled's practice of courage that relied on taking power. When Khaled entered the cockpit during her first plane hijacking, she had to demonstrate that she knew all about the mechanical workings of the plane before the crew would take her seriously. Her preparations combined with the implied threat of the weapons she had on her person created a situation in which the crew had to yield their authority to her. It was vital that Khaled have this modicum of power over authority because it was the authority of international governments and agencies that catalyzed the suffering of the Palestinian people. This power only increased her resolve and gave hope to the possibility of the future she was trying to achieve for her people. She confronted authority again when she tried to call Israeli controlled Lodd by its Palestinian name, Lydda, and when she actually renamed the flight she had hijacked. Through the power of naming she was able to get the authorities she was



struggling against to recognize a history and a movement that the authorities denied had legitimacy. Not all courage is concerned with stripping power from authority figures; however, all courage is concerned with power as it is a force by which people might be persuaded toward the hero's possibility of the future despite the peoples' inability to see or comprehend such possibility.

What has largely been implied up to this point is the catalyst that dispatched Khaled into action. Khaled's courage came about as a reaction to suffering. Susan Sontag, in Regarding the Pain of Others, says about suffering that we are asked how long we can watch without flinching, without being moved to action (41). Sontag is speaking primarily about the vast difference between artistic representations of suffering and the photographic depictions of suffering that have emerged during the last century. Modern technology has afforded us the ability to act with courage by responding in news ways to the suffering we see in the world. Every time Leila Khaled was able to get her picture into the newspaper or cause a journalist to go to the Palestinian refugee camps she was spreading her call to action by causing people to question how bad her people's suffering could truly be that it would cause such a beautiful, young woman to abandon all hope of a normal life and risk her life to draw attention to the suffering of her people. It was not enough for Khaled to just recognize the suffering. She acted with courage in order to lead the protest against her people's suffering.

In addition to being a response to suffering that is central to being, courage is deliberate. Human beings are not courageous at all times but at all times they are capable of being courageous. There are many instances in the everydayness of

life where courage is not at the forefront of our being; however, when courage is necessary, there is always a choice to act on it. This makes it deliberate. In “The Secret Sources of Strengthening: Philosophical Reflections on Courage,” William Desmond judges courage as

an energy called forth in the face of a threatening enemy; it is self-affirmation despite an other that opposes. Thus, courage indicated an intimate frailty of our relation to others, a frailty that can easily turn from accord into war and hostility. Courage means living in this precariousness in such a manner that one’s self-affirmation is not stifled (12).

Desmond’s idea of self-affirmation conveys the importance of the being above the being of the world. To put this another way, Khaled should exercise her will to change the world rather than die because the world cannot independently renegotiate its own being in order to convey her valuation of life. What is crucial in this explanation of courage is its negotiation of the other. Renegotiation of the world can put us at odds with the other. Consequently, courage gives us a way of mediating our being with the world and with others. Khaled was willing to risk this relation to the other and as a result had several attempts on her life and she has been marked as a criminal by those who feel they were wronged by her courage, because Khaled changed her being with the world in such a way that it changed the being with the world for all of us. This is not limited to tighter air travel restrictions but also extends to modern notions of safety and a host of other arenas.

Courage is rational but it is not reasonable. Ration is meant here as a process of logic that occurs within a person as a result of taking information in from the world and comparing it to previous knowledge in order to make a

decision. Reasonable is set apart from this as a means of communicating the motivations of actions between two people since we are incapable of expressing our internal rationality explicitly and without some degree of interpretive ambiguity. To put it another way, courage is part of being and, since each being is separate, courage is unique to each individual. If we look at Khaled and her accomplice Salim, each acted with courageous resolve that they came to independent of one another based on the suffering they saw in the world and were moved to do something to make it change. Although the suffering they both saw was similar, it was different and unique to each of them because each has a being that is separate and unique from the other. Furthermore, each was moved to act in a similar way and yet their actions were separate and unique. As a result, because courage is a result of experience nuanced by being, and no two people can be the same being at once, then courage for each individual is unique and not the result of a wholly inclusive process by which meaning is passed from one individual to another.

We've discussed already that courage is a way of renegotiating being with the world or being with the other. This renegotiation is a natural response in that it affirms life. The possibilities of being with are held inside the Being. As a result, a Being can use their being with and the possibilities for being with that they see to change the world. For example, Khaled saw that it was possible that a world could exist in which her people were not suffering. As a result of her seeing the possibility, which could not be seen by many others, she hijacked an airplane as part of the actualization of her perceived possibilities; however, since courage is

not reasonable, Khaled is not able to transfer her possibilities and being with to another person.

Throughout this investigation of courage, self-affirmation and affirmation of the other continue to emerge. To talk about these more plainly, courage is concerned with a valuation of life. An act of courage carries with it the meaning that life is worth preserving. Returning to Tillich's The Courage to Be, we find a discussion of non-being. This is not limited to the meaning of death but rather is concerned with man's anxiety toward death, meaninglessness, and guilt (41).

Death, with which Tillich includes fate, is concerned with that anxiety that there is an inescapable point at which we will cease to exist as far as the world is concerned. What results from this vantage point is a valuation of the human experience, because we are finite the choices that we make in order to define our life – negotiate possibility – have meaning. Courage is important to assuage this anxiety because it gives the possibility of staying, at least for a short time, the unpredictability of the world that leads to death.

Anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness is Tillich's second fear to which courage responds. Here Tillich talks about creativity, the relation between creativity and courage has already been discussed in terms of the feminist critique by Rabieh, as participation of the being in the world (46). This participation creates new meaning and changes the world, even if only minutely. Tillich interprets this relation as

[Man] affirms himself as receiving and transforming reality creatively. He loves himself as participating in the spiritual life and as loving its contents. He loves them because they are his own fulfillment and because they are

actualized through him. The scientist loves both the truth he discovers and himself insofar as he discovers it. He is held by the content of his discovery (46).

The anxieties of emptiness and meaninglessness are thus a spiritual death and just as real and threatening as a physical death because they steal meaning from existence. Without meaning, man becomes apathetic and unable to find lasting meaning in all things. Ultimately, everything is left devoid of meaning and man can only question his existence in which he again cannot find meaning. Courage is so important to combating this anxiety because it gives meaning to things.

Khaled's courage reaffirmed for her that her people's pain had meaning. Khaled's actions brought international attention to the plight of her people in order to get them to realize that all life means something and it should not be tossed away so easily like the Palestinians were being tossed away as the rest of the world turned a blind eye to them.

The final anxieties are guilt and condemnation. Since man is responsible for his own life, he is the judge of that which he has produced (51). When he looks at the things he had made and rejects them, he rejects himself. In rejecting himself, man experiences guilt and condemnation for in his freedom he has acted against his ability to give his life meaning through his relation to the world and that which he creates. This anxiety is so powerful because "it is present in every moment of self-awareness and can drive us toward complete self-rejection" (52). This is to say that self-imposed guilt can be so great that it causes a fundamental rejection of the value of one's own life. To return to our example, if Khaled had

not acted on behalf of her people, her guilt might have become so great that she never again takes the opportunity to reaffirm the value of any life, even her own.

Tillich's framing pits courage against these anxieties; however, this does not go as far as to answer the inherent temptations of using courage wrong. In "Courage: Heroes and Antiheroes," by Robert Cummings Neville, courage is tempted to take a path with less obstacles and continue under the weight of its own inertia (123). Neville states that the problem with courage is that it leaves itself fairly vague in terms of how to approach and overcome obstacles. We already have a multitude of personal obstacles and being courageous calls us to take on more of these obstacles. Thus, we can be seduced into a type of apathy where we don't act courageous because we expect others to overcome obstacles for us. Neville's second circle of temptations are based on inertia. Here courage is thought about in terms of energy. We use this energy to shape the world around us. When this energy isn't applied carefully, Neville reveals that it can degrade into "entropic chaos" (123). He provides multiple examples: marriage can become a series of taken-for-granted patterns that steal meaning from a partnership or a career can become a trajectory that doesn't seek new opportunities. In terms of courage, this inertia can prevent the hero from acting because the inertia has shifted focus from the goal and onto a perfection of the means needed to achieve it.

Up to this point, courage has always been an admirable quality; however, courage can also be problematic when it is exhibited in excess. The excess of courage is recklessness. The goal in this Aristotelian view of courage as a golden

mean is that the action is equal to the sense of duty. Looking closer at Khaled's actions, it is possible that she is a hero that manifests with an excess of courage. If this is the case, her actions were foolhardy. This is not intended to be a concession that Khaled is not a hero; to the contrary, our definition says a hero needs courage but does not distinguish the degree of courage needed. Therefore, a hero is still a hero even if they are unable to respond with the appropriate level of courage because it is in the practice of courage that we learn how to use it appropriately. Khaled's goal as a hijacker was to put the plight of her people into the public and political spotlight. She did so by endangering many people and breaking the law. It can be argued that Khaled's actions went beyond the regular call of duty for her to alleviate the suffering of her people and as a result of her excess she unnecessarily made herself a criminal and negatively impacted her ability to continue to serve her people; however, she continued to practice courage and is now has the experience to be a stateswoman. In this role she continues to serve her people with courage that is not foolhardy because it does not put civilians in immediate danger. Douglas N. Walton puts this at issue in Courage: A Philosophical Investigation. Walton frames courage as supererogatory, or beyond one's duty, and furthermore explains

where courage is supererogatory – beyond duty – the personal merit attaching to the courageous act seems to border on glorification of the ego and comes uncomfortably close to a fanatical or irrational hero worship. But where courageous actions is in conformity to duty, under dangerous or difficult circumstances, we seem almost incapable of seeing the real value in it; the important thing may seem to be whether or not the requirements of duty were in fact met. How the act was carried out, or what were the obstacles or circumstances in which it was carried out, seem elusive of

questionable as matters of moral obligation or value. Either way, courage as a moral quality seems elusive and dubious (11).

Khaled even admits to this in her interviews with Lina Makboul. Khaled explains that “for a while I felt I was a very important person. But then I became scared, scared of myself. I was scared I would suffer delusions of grandeur” (qtd. in *Leila Khaled: Hijacker*). Khaled’s words could signal that her excess of courage resulted in her self-glorification that, for a time, stole any real value her actions had as an act of heroism. The hero worship Khaled fell prey to may be a result of the spectacle she intended to create. As a result of acting with increased danger and drama, rather than a quiet and unobtrusive act of courage, she responded inappropriately to the call of courage. It has to be recognized here that she is divided between her personal goals and organizational goals. As an individual, Khaled seeks a better life for her people; however, as a member of the PFLP, Khaled’s hijacking is intended to show their technical prowess and strength so that they may use that in the future to give themselves an advantage in negotiating relief for the Palestinians.

What results from this discussion is a definition of courage as central to being. Tillich expands on work going back to Aristotle that courage is a way of being with the world that exists within us that allows us to impact the world and others. Courage is not specific to either gender because it is a way or nurturing that is expressible by both men and women. While courage is not exclusive to either gender, a feminist critique of courage shows how any one person can employ feminine-courage that nurtures or what is understood as traditionally



masculine-courage that relies of physical strength and endurance. In either case, courage is a reaction to suffering. This reaction acts as a call to action that inspires others to act courageously. Furthermore, courage is deliberate and rational. The hero has a choice not to act but chooses to act with courage because they see in their being with the world that it is necessary. Throughout all of this, courage is intended to combat the anxieties of death, loss of meaning, and guilt. Without courage these anxieties cannot be overcome and man loses the ability to act courageously toward a heroic goal. Since the measure of courage is decided by the hero, it be done so in deficiency or excess. Either case results in unwanted outcomes; but, as we see from returning to Leila Khaled, an excess of courage can lead to self-glorification. This definition has been built upon the motivating premise that life has value. As far as the hero is concerned, this valuation can be explained as love.

## CHAPTER 4

### ON LOVE

This conversation concerning heroism has led us to the following question: what is love? In order to answer this question without the use of pop songs, I will return to our previous discussion of being with the world. We've already discussed that courage is a way of responding to the world and courage is taken up within heroism as a means of fighting the uncertainty that forces man to face his finitude. Within this explanation are two underlying themes that need to be brought to the forefront. First, we are being with. Simply stated, I have being and I can recognize that there are others with being with whom I share things, the world and meaning among others. Second, we are separate beings. Even though there are things we share – language, courage, and love to name a few – I can only exercise control over my own use of these things and cannot inherently control them for the other. What occurs between these two points is freedom. The hero is free to choose a great many options but has to weigh the effects not only on the self but also on the other. To pull an example from the story of Khaled's life, Khaled chose not to eat prior to her hijackings. Her reasoning was one of focus; not eating allowed her to stay attentive to the details of the moment which could drastically alter the outcome of her hijacking. Her choice to not eat was a way that she could exercise her will to control her being as a result of her understanding that does not directly impact us in a way that threatens or challenges our being, our understanding of our being, or ability to be free. The ultimate example of our separateness comes from our finitude; when my being

ceases, the being of the other continues and vice versa. If we are being separate and being with, then we are being separate with. While this may appear confusing, it can be restated more simply by remembering the task at hand, love. We are separate beings with the ability to forge connections through love. This means love is necessary because it is the means by which we move from being separate to being with the other that is capable of alleviating our anxieties about isolation and aloneness without removing the needed attributes that keep us aware and able to control our being and our understanding of being.

With a better understanding of why love is important, we can undertake construction a definition. The text that appears as being most helpful in this endeavor is Erich Fromm's The Art of Loving. Fromm was a German social psychologist that was born at the turn of the twentieth century. The Art of Loving was published in 1956 when the world was still trying to figure out what it had become now that the second world war had ended. As a text, The Art of Loving is meant to address the human values and concerns with understanding what love is and why we are doing it so poorly. Fromm clearly lays out his own concept of love as having a core rooted in care, responsibility, respect and knowledge (24).

If love is care, then love "is the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love" (24). The first essential portion of Fromm's explanation of care is that it is active. This is something he addresses again and again as a reason for why people are poor at loving. Active is meant to stand out as the diametrical opposite to that which is passive. Contemporarily, love is understood as something that we fall into and have happen to us. If love is understood in this

manner, love becomes very self-serving and narcissistic because it is something we receive but do not give. For Fromm, loving well is about standing in so much that it is a way of expressing and increased sense of connection and meaning between beings, just like Khaled's actions expressed her connection to her people and the heightened sense of meaning it meant for her that she was Palestinian and Palestinians were deserving of a home where they could feel safe. While we will return to this idea of love as narcissism later, Fromm provides multiple examples on how love is caring. The mother loves her child because if she did not care for it, it would die (24). If a woman says she loves flowers but is not active in watering her flowers then she has shown them neglect and her verbal account of her love is disingenuous (24). Biblically, God taught Jonah about love as active concern when God withered the tree that gave Jonah shade and Jonah grew angry even though Jonah did nothing to prevent the death of the tree (25). The second essential portion of Fromm's explanation of love as care is in his use of growth. Growth here implies labor. As such, love should be a labor. In other words, to love well is an art that requires both a theoretical framework for what love is and a practical understanding of how it used or applied in practice; this happens to be Fromm's main thesis within this particular text. If love is both care and concern, then it is accompanied by responsibility.

Responsibility is a part love because we must respond to the other (25). This is most easily understood when it is anchored in an example. Leila Khaled is one person who is tasked as the master of her own being. She exercises this control through choosing to be politically active and learning the skills that allow

her to be a guerrilla fighter. It is not her duty to make those choices for any other because the other also has being that makes him his own master. Through the dispossession of her people, many no longer saw the possibilities for the future that Leila Khaled saw. As a result, they chose to reorient themselves toward simply enduring to survive. Khaled, seeing this loss of possibility in her people was called to respond to their dejection not because she owes them anything or is responsible for their being but because, as one with being, she cannot endure watching her people suffer when she is capable of causing change. In this way, Khaled showed love marked by responsibility not because it she was obligated to protect them but because she was obligated to respond in some way and she happened to choose a way of responding that directly impacted not only the Palestinians but the international community.

Khaled was capable of responding in such a way because she had respect. Again, respect here is not intended to mean admiration or timidity in the face of something larger or more powerful; rather, in this instance, respect means that Khaled was capable of seeing others and recognizing them as individual and unique from herself (26). What we are to take from this uniqueness is a recognition that the other is not only meant to grow but is meant to grow free from exploitation. Fromm says

I want the loved person to grow and unfold for his own sake, and in his own ways, and not for the purpose of serving me. If I love the other person, I feel one with him or her, but with him *as he is*, not as I need him to be as an object for my use (26).

We see this within Khaled's actions. Even though her hijacking can be perceived as a call to her people to take back their future possibilities, she does not force or coerce anyone to act against what they see is right or just. Even though her actions in part served the political goals of her organization, it cannot be denied that they also served to try and afford her people a place in which they can grow without being subjugated by her own will or the will of any other individual, corporation, or political structure.

Finally, we arrive at Fromm's final argument for why love is composed of care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. This idea of respect, which has grown out of the idea of care which in turn connections back into the initial idea of care, is not possible with knowing the other. As with all knowledge, love's relation to knowledge comes in layers. One layer that has already been addressed is that we are capable of recognizing the being of others and the things we share. Within this is the shared knowledge that we are capable of conveying meaning about our emotion and as a result knowing the being of the other in the everyday. As an illustration, when Khaled saw children suffering in the poor conditions in the refugee camps, she was able to use her understanding of the meaning of non-verbal communication that is shared culturally to know that the children were not happy that they were suffering but in fact wishing for a better life that they knew was possible but were unable to see how to actualize. Caught up in this knowing of the other is a knowing that the connection between two beings is ephemeral and insufficient to fully connect to the being of the other just as it is insufficient to communicate a portion of our own being that is kept secret within us. Fromm

describes this as a “basic need to fuse with another person so as to transcend the prison of one’s own separateness” but we are incapable of achieving this “because we are not a thing, and our fellow man is not a thing” (27).

Using Fromm’s definition of love as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge, Khaled can also be seen as expressing love for the passengers on the hijacked flights. Even though she put them at risk with her actions, she did not put them at danger. At no point in any telling of Khaled’s story did she use or verbally threaten to use lethal force on any passenger or crewmember, nor did she ever jeopardize the mechanical safety and operation of the aircraft. She upheld that all life had value in her treatment of the passengers. She addressed them responsibly because she was pursuing a possible future in which all the passengers lived. Khaled showed respect for them by trying to console the passengers after the hijacking and allowing them to be angry with her even though she might not have understood why they were angry at that moment. The entire hijacking was concerned with knowledge. The suffering of the Palestinian people was not a Palestinian problem but a world problem that a majority of the world was not aware of. Khaled’s actions opened their eyes to this suffering that every person ought to be concerned with because it involved people with whom they share being in the world.

Using Fromm’s definition of love as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge, we can answer questions about what we ought to love. The contemporary interpretation of love is that it is geared toward objects (42). This is not meant as a chastising critique of consumer-capitalism, but rather to return

again to this notion that love is active and also ascribes values to things. Love is not found within the object but within the active relation to it. The love found within objects is a misconstruing of “symbiotic attachment” as love (42). This idea of symbiotic attachment masquerades as love in our modern vernacular and tells us that we need to find one particular thing to love. In other words, it is closer to favoritism than love which is a very poor way of loving. When I say I love asparagus I do not mean that I partake actively in the cultivation and harvest of asparagus as a crop but rather I mean in the realm of vegetables I find asparagus to be my favorite because it holds more value than other vegetables to me personally based on flavor, shape, color, and the other qualities by which a vegetable can be judged. When love is concerned with care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge rather than an object and its qualities, love reveals a hierarchy of values. Fromm’s explanation of this hierarchy is that

If I truly love one person I love all persons, I love the world, I love life. If I can say to somebody else, ‘I love you,’ I also must be able to say, ‘I love you in everybody, I love through you the world, I love in you also myself’ (42)

This is vital to a discussion of love because it serves as a reminder that love is expansive rather than reductive. When Leila Khaled acted out of love for her people it was not a way of saying she valued the lives, needs, and desires of others less but a way of saying that through her love of her people that there are things she finds worth loving in all people, the world, and herself. This way of loving has integrity.



Textually, when Fromm uses integrity, he is using it to denote a wholeness or entirety and not a sense of Christian ethic or morality. Until now we've spoken about love as a sharing and a connectedness; however, Fromm intends integrity to also mark the preservation of individuality. He points out here that love is paradoxical because it occurs between two beings as a way of becoming one while never being able to stop being two separate individualities (19). The implication here is that there can be unity on a large scale without a sacrificing the individual self. This love in entirety as a means of creating connected community is why Khaled's hijackings are so powerful as a persuasive tool. Her actions carry with them care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge which ripples through this connectedness of all beings as the impetus for justice because others ought to respond to the plight of the Palestinians with similar love that she has shown.

Just like our previous discussion of courage, love can be excessive or deficient and objects. Thus far, the other has been the object with which we share love; however, the hero has to be able to love himself before he can love the other. Self-love, done without excess or deficiency, is how a hero actively shapes her own being. This is to say that the hero who loves herself is concerned with her own growth and is at peace with those things about herself which she cannot change. John Cowburn, the contemporary Australian philosopher, theologian, and author of Love, categorizes this appropriate amount of self-love as self-acceptance (26). He goes on to explain that self-acceptance is how we recognize our own existence (26). Self-love has been moderated by theology throughout history to be sinful. Theologians, like Cowburn, are now actively making the

distinction that when self-love was made into a sin it was not meant to denote this self-acceptance of one's own being but rather a deterrent to self-rejection and narcissism. What self-acceptance gets us, continuing here with Cowburn's ideologies as he directly addresses the subject with more vigor than Fromm does in The Art of Loving, is a view of the world in which the superficial issues like our pride about our physical comportment fade away and allows us to truly see the being of the world with which we should be concern. Khaled exhibits this when she willingly forfeits her physical beauty because she accepts herself and as a result sees within the world suffering that she would not have been able to see if she were not able to accept herself.

When a lack of self-love is present, and a person cannot accept the unalterable manifestation of themselves within the world, they experience self-rejection. A person fallen into self-rejection cannot be a hero because she must be able to self-love before she can love the other. Cowburn splits self-rejection into two camps of refusal and resentment (30). This prior group continues to pursue the things with which they are not gifted and as a result are not able to take care of their own growth. Cowburn provides the example of a person who cannot sing continually pursuing singing opportunities while denying that the audience's reaction is an appropriate reflection of the singing (30). Resentment as self-rejection is underlined by an obsession with a particular facet of the self that cannot be accepted. Cowburn's example is the person that has grown old. This person resents the weakness that old age brings and yet has to occur against all will.

Just as dangerous is an excess of self-love. Often called narcissism, an excess of self-love is a way of saying that when I view the world I ought to see myself reflected in it. This is not to say that I have influenced the being of the world but rather that the world ought to shape itself to my being. Narcissism has been addressed in many different frames and by many different thinkers, such as Calvin and Freud. We expect narcissism in certain situations. Infants, for instance, are unable to love in the sense that they cannot be the master of their own growth and differentiate their own being from the being of the world. Narcissism becomes dangerous when love is considered to be finite and that by loving the other I have less love for myself (Fromm 53). For the hero, narcissism has another name, celebrity. When heroic deeds are recognized by the public, the public gives positive feedback to the hero, whether that be through media appearances, parades, or the keys to the city. A hero that loves well accepts this as a function of culture and a way of drawing attention to the action as a means to teach others how they ought to act. A hero that does not love well sees themselves reflected in the public's adoration and feels that things are better when the world is so. This person renounces their heroism in terms of the meaningfulness of their actions and instead accepts the role of celebrity. The celebrity believes if I love myself and the world reflects me, then I love the world; but, quite to the contrary, as Fromm, Cowburn, and many other thinkers construct love, the other ought to come first and since I "love my neighbor as a human being" it is virtuous "to love myself, since I am a human being too" (Fromm 53).

Throughout this exploration, many of the concepts have had underlying meaning that stems from relations to virtues, vices, ethics, and morality. Here, I would like to address why I have shied away from discussing them as such. I would like to point to Love's Virtues, a text by Mike Martin, professor of philosophy at Chapman University, in which Martin is primarily concerned with the morality that underscores a discussion of love. His cardinal thesis is that "there are many moral values, none of which is so fundamental that it overrides all the others in all circumstances" (25). Many of the cited authors are of the Christian faith or have a background in contributing to Christian thought. This is in contrast to our case study of Khaled who is a Muslim. As a result, love and courage cannot be rooted too deeply in the doctrine of either religion but instead has to move across these boundaries to understand these phenomena as they exist in the life of every being as capable of being a hero.

Furthermore, since there is not one universal ethic or morality by which all people act, conflict is inevitable. This is because every being must have morality, whether they know it or not, and since everyone has morals that reflect only a portion of the intricacy of being, different moralities will at some point run contrary to each other in their praxis. This is at the heart of our case study of Leila Khaled and distinguishing her as a hero or a terrorist. In order to understand the structures by which we adopt the heroes that shape our ways of being with, we must remain open to learning from those that experience the world from outside the narrow portion of morality by which we abide. Since conflict is an inevitable part of being with the other, it is a way of loving because it challenges us and

from it we grow. Even if it is a fundamental moral conflict, Martin theorizes that we solve it through compromise and a shared adjusting achieved democratically (25). That is to say, conflict calls for love in that conflict is a site where growth and nurturing is needed.

In this chapter, we started with a single phenomenon, love, and ended up developing it as a broad foundation by which it can motivate the hero. From Fromm's definition of love we see it as care, responsibility, respect and knowledge. Love is care because it is concerned with nurturing and growing. Stemming from this is a framing of love as a response to the other. Responsibility moves into respect by focusing further on the being of the other. Ultimately, love is a knowledge of the being of the other that creates the ability to share. With this in mind, love must be done well inasmuch that it is more than favoritism or symbiotic attachment but an active way of being with. Loving well has at its core a paradox between individuality and the oneness of humanity. To love well both reinforces individuality and values life in the brotherly sense of humanity as an entirety. Like many phenomena, love can be both a virtue and a vice. Done well, love can be directed at the other or even at the self as a way of achieving peace. When self-love lapses into neglect, the self becomes with rejection and is incapable of both love and, in short, is incapable of being a hero. An excess of self-love is more easily viewed in the everydayness of contemporary culture in the form of the preoccupation with celebrities. This narcissistic self-love cannibalizes the meaning from the heroic act. Moreover, the importance of our investigation into Khaled as a hero is reinforced by the diversity of morality that exists as we

discuss love and courage. The conflict that we see in her case is to be expected because it is the means by which we grow with.

## CHAPTER 5

### ON THE GREATER GOOD

To the outsider, it appears that so far we have done little more than write the word hero and from that gathered together courage and love; however, we have covered so much more in order to take one single word that exists alongside several hundred thousand others in the English language and expand it in such a way that we can find self, other, and the world. The definition of heroism that has been created thus far is still not yet complete, despite the work we have done thus far. Beginning in courage, the physical active practice of heroism was established. From the practice, we moved to a representation of heroism where we could find the motivation that comes prior to practice. This was of course love. This was comprised of care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. What is left is the investigation of how far these forces ripple through self, other, and the world. Stated otherwise, in order to complete a definition of heroism we must also look at its intended outcome which works toward the greater good of the community. Once we've defined community, we can begin to look at the hero's goal of upholding a greater good and how difficult this task just might be.

Thus far, world, other, and self have been discussed as separate and inseparable. Through courage there was an intervention of possibility between two individuals that brought them together despite the singularity of being the self has. In love we saw a similar moment where self was forced to respond to the

other. The stress placed on this idea of separate but inseparable is to say that they exist and are connected but this connection does not go as far as to insinuate the one – either self, other, or world – is a corporeal appendage of the two it is set apart from. Here, I would like to combine them, without undermining our established definition of these concepts as separate and inseparable, under the collective term community. Community appears to be the proper term because it already carries in its contemporary understanding connotations of both persons and place unlike similar words; such as neighborhood, commonwealth, or company which can be brought to this same place of understanding but at a surface level appear to mean exclusively person or place. The self belongs to community because it has an identity composed of many chosen and inherited facets, what might be called a persona from a psychological standpoint, which it shares with others. Others belong to community because the self can recognize those same identifying factors in the others. This recognition of the self in the other leads to a sense of brotherhood because we are inclined to protect our own identity and accordingly protect the identity of others that appear as our self. This brotherhood spawns infrastructure which takes up tools found in the world and gives them meaning unique to this group and thus the world is folded in to the relationship between self and other.

Our definition of community thus far has been a description of its physical components; however, the existence of the community at the metaphysical level cannot be ignored. In particular, when talking about the hero's impact on the



community, the community must be recognized as having time. The community has history, present, and future and has in a way woven together the history, present, and futures of the individuals in the community through their shared identity. This is so vitally important because a single heroic act can alter the present, determine the future, and influence an understanding of the past.

Similarly, a heroic act that directly impacts a single person can indirectly impact a larger audience through that individual's communication and participation in their communities. Peter Laslett, the late British historian who published multiple texts of the family and its forms and development throughout history, worked with James S. Fishkin, a professor of communications at Stanford University, to bring together ten papers in the text Justice Between Age Groups and Generations.

Their work was important because among the gathered works of many academics and thinkers they realized that the idea of justice between generations, what can be otherwise stated as justice over time, is extremely new to western thought and had only been briefly mentioned and not thoroughly analyzed or discussed before the 1960s (vii). This is a dilemma for the hero. The hero's actions ought to be just because just reinforces the benefits of the community. If the hero were not to be just then harm would come to the community and the hero would not be addressing the community in a loving way that allows for its growth and freedom. Similarly, the hero is concerned with the good of the community rather than a good that solely benefits himself; however, the hero must now take in to account not only present justice, and his obligation to others that exist in the present, but

also justice and the possibility of the future, as the future will also have others that will be indirectly impacted by the justice of the present. So how is the hero to be just over time?

Justice over distance is something we already understand and agree to. Onara O'Neill, in "Distant Strangers and Future Generations," attempts to explain this relationship between distance, time, and justice across generations. She points out that our understanding of the other in terms of distance is often caught up in classifying people as strangers or neighbors (62). This is important to us because we treat these two groups differently. Neighbors are those people who are in close distance to us. This does not always have to mean geographical distance since community can be rather amorphous. For example, the person who physically lives in the house next to me may be a stranger while someone who lives all the way across town may be my neighbor because we belong to the same community or communities. We show neighbors hospitality out of loyalty from continued positive interaction and are willing to do a great many things for them. On the other hand, we have the stranger to whom we give a certain degree of hospitality because we are obligated to respond to them in some way and contemporary society tells us to value the other rather than meet them with cruelty and hostility.

Ultimately, we are much less morally concerned with protecting the existence of strangers. O'Neill references here the parable of the Good Samaritan recounted in the biblical Gospel of Luke (62). The traveler who had been beaten

and robbed was ignored by many, including pious men, because even though they were in close physical proximity to one another the traveler was a stranger and lack of concern for the traveler's being put him at a great distance from everyone else until the Samaritan arrived. While the identifier "Samaritan" was intended to classify the man as part of an ethnoreligious group separate from the Jews, it has been taken up by popular culture to mean someone who does good deeds, particular for a stranger. O'Neill's point in this allusion is "that strangers too are neighbors and to be treated well – but the context to which they can be treated well is when they are close at hand" (63). A preoccupation with concrete categories ignores the transition of a distant stranger to one that is close at hand. Close at hand is meant to be a signifier of an other who is a stranger that I may directly impact because I acknowledge their being and am called to respond to them. To illustrate, before Leila Khaled boarded TWA Flight 840 in Rome, her fellow passengers were strangers who were not close at hand. Even though they were in Rome and might have crossed paths and eaten at the same café or been on the same bus, Khaled's actions as a civilian were of little impact to them. She had no reason to recognize their being and therefore the circumstances did not call for her to respond to them; however, once Khaled was on the plane with them and she held their lives in her hands, they were close at hand. Her actions as a terrorist had an immediate and direct impact on these strangers and the circumstances mandated that she recognize the being of the other passengers and respond to their being.

In this situation, O'Neill would say, Khaled had a moral concern for the strangers. Khaled was forced to address her obligations to these people as her position was one that would determine their future. Concern here is not meant to mean troubled or worried for, although it can be argued that Khaled was worried for them based on her account of seeing children in the lounge prior to boarding the plane; rather, concern is meant to denote that she was put in relation to them and as a result had to address them physically and metaphysically whether she knew it and wanted to or not. O'Neill's thesis is that if we are able to find our self in relation to strangers in space then we ought to be able to find our self in relation to strangers in time (62). This is because strangers in time are simply strangers that are never close at hand. As a result our actions affect them in limited ways rather than directly (63). Our relationship to these future others is very complex despite their inability to move from far to close at hand.

One of the primary problems with the approach to intergenerational justice, which is an infrastructure by which we may address and respond to future others, is it relies on asymmetric relationships. Simply stated, the future generation does not exist, except in the mind of the people of the present as a possibility for the future, and because of this these future others cannot negotiate on their own behalf. Instead, the current generation has to try to anticipate the needs and wants of the future generation; unfortunately, they can only do this with the knowledge available in the present. For example, the people of the present

may take actions to preserve a finite resource for the future, an exercise in “fair share” justice; however, future knowledge may prove any resource we think is infinite is in fact finite and because we have consumed it in the present without restraint, these future others may attribute to us the injustice of greed despite our best efforts to act justly with the knowledge available in the present. Now compound this problem with the many facets of life and every choice a single person makes in a day and it grows infinitely complex to act in a just way toward the future generation.

There are many other paradoxical obstacles that prevent us from acting just toward future generations. One of those obstacles is the continuity of successive generations. If we try to take only our fair share, how many generations do we use to determine the final amount? No matter what generation is chosen as the “last” generation for the mathematical division, there will always be an infinite number of generations after them toward whom we are not acting justly. A second stumbling block to this approach is private liberty. While we value in contemporary western society the ability to have a private life separate from our life in public because in this private life we are free to exercise our autonomy, this autonomy makes us all different. These differences end up creating hierarchies and divisions which do not allow for justice between generations because once people are no longer the same, they reap benefits differently. Fishkin provides the example of a warrior society in “The Limits of Intergenerational Justice.” If our present justice creates a future where people

have more autonomy because they are well protected by a large standing army, then our justice has inadvertently put vital resources such as food and clothing in the hands of the army by taking it away from the people who are not a part of the military complex (75). Reviewing both examples, our idea of justice across generations has thus far been entrenched in what we can determine and create as a fixed solution in the present so that it is already decided for the future; however, this is clearly not working.

Ultimately, justice for the future lies in indeterminacy. The more uncertain the future, the more just it is for future generations. What is meant here is that the people of the present should not be choosing for the future in such a way that causes it but rather the actions of people in the present should simply allow for the continuation of the possibilities of the future. In “Atomistic Self and Future Generations: A Critical Review from an Eastern Perspective,” Masaya Kobayashi uses his experience as a member of a collective-thinking society, and as an academic, to address the issue of Western intergenerational justice. He points first to the non-existence of the future generation and ends with the asymmetry of power and resources that occurs between generations (15). What occurs between non-existence and asymmetry is indeterminacy. This is meant to stand against determinism, a deciding of what the future ought to look like in the present (19).; something we say in our previous examples as clearly creating more problems than it was able to solve. We can act justly without being deterministic by

addressing the thrownness of future generations (16). By taking up concern with our limitations and misgivings, we can act in the world in such a way as to allow the future generation to be thrown in such a way that they have more opportunity and fewer limitations. This is how we act justly across generations without “the kind of danger which will not cause visible effects in the near future, but may result in a catastrophe or serious collapse in the remote future” (14). This answers our question as to how the hero may be just over time. Not only does the hero directly intervene in the life of another in the present, he allows for the continuation of the possibilities of the future by combating man’s ultimate mortality as a result of the world and by helping others overcome their limitations and misgivings so that they may contribute to the community. Now, we are faced with answering how the hero as an individual knows what the greater good of the community is.

With this understanding of the community as being composed of self, other, and world, and being concerned with both distance and time, we can address how the individual coordinates with the common good, through communication. Jacques Maritain, the French philosopher and theologian, compares a community of people to a hive of bees in The Person and the Common Good. Maritain frames the self as a social unit (49). The individual is social because it seeks the knowledge and love of other persons and also as a way to address the material deficiencies of being a singular unit that can’t possibly produce all the things needed to live well (47-48). Bees are social for these same

reasons. As a single unit in a whole they benefit from the hive's knowledge of where to go for pollen and what dangers to avoid. Similarly, the single unit benefits by means of a home, protection, and food as part of the hive since it could not produce all these things as a single unit separate from the hive. What these bees lack and people have is morality and an understanding that actions that benefit the whole also benefit the self through redistribution (49). Since the good is redistributed throughout the community, it benefits the individuals to decide through communication what is beneficial to their community so the things that are given to all are in fact good for all. Without communication each individual can only be concerned with their individual good and act toward that. As a result, society dissolves into anarchy and the strong individuals dominate the weak individuals in order to continue receiving the strong's individuals understanding of the good rather than a true greater good that benefits the entire community (50).

What needs to exist in the community is a certain level of trust that this has not already happened, that the strong have not derailed the community and now control it as an individual so that the community no longer reflects the communal good. In order to achieve this trust, James S. Fishkin outlines four conditions in "The Limits of Intergenerational Trust." The first condition for trust is that the practices of the community must be harmonious in that they are have the support of a vast majority of individuals throughout the community (80). At



the heart of this tenet is redistributive justice. If the community is widely supported by the individuals within the community, when it reflects the good the people ought to see something that they all benefit from. Next, these practices must not be forced so that anyone who may wish to leave the community may be free to do so. This is a means of checking for tyrants. If a single person seeks to tyrannize the community it will cease to reflect a good supported by the community. Consequently, people will want to leave a community that does not reflect them but the tyrant must find a way to force people to stay so that the tyrant may continue to benefit. Also, the practices of the community “must supply essential benefits” (80). This is akin to the beehive metaphor discussed earlier where a single bee is not capable of fulfilling needs for shelter, protection, and food but is capable of doing so when joined with others in community. Fishkin’s final tenet for trust in the community is that the practices of the community must remain in perpetual reevaluation through communication as the community is continually changing. This is in a way a return to his first tenet on consensuality of which Fishkin has to say

within such consensus there is always continuing room for philosophical, moral, legal, and political criticism of the most vigorous sort. In fact, a continuing openness to such criticism is a plausible condition for being confident that a consensus should not be placed in the suspect category (81).

This critical examination is a way of ensuring that the practices of the community continue to be consensual because it requires that individuals be in discussion with each other and the broader health of the community.

Overall, a hero is concerned with the greater good because it is one that benefits the self without being selfish, is capable of addressing all being whether separated by distance or time, and contained within the community is a way of being in dialogue with self, other, and world.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of philosophy, heroism is often discussed as an aside, tangential to many other ideas. Returning to Merleau-Ponty's Sense and Non-Sense, we are reminded that the hero is one who

although born on a certain date, under certain laws, and into certain moral structures just like everyone else, [they] are the first to understand that this system has no future; they forsake happiness and by their deeds and their example create a law and a moral system in which their time will later recognize its truth. At first they stand alone, since they stand against custom; they have a presentiment of the future although, of course, no knowledge of it. They sense it in their tastes, their passions, and their very being rather than see it clearly before them. Their heroism resides in having worked out and won for others, with nothing certain to go on and in the loneliness of subjectivity, what will afterwards seem the only possible future, the very meaning of history: this is the unexpected junction of reason and unreason. 'They should be called heroes in that they have drawn their goals and their vocation not only from the calmly ordered course of events...but also from an underground source of inner spirit...which strikes against the outer world as against a shell and cracks it because such a shell is unsuited to such a kernel...they were the new race which already existed within the old' (183).

This covers much of our definition of the hero. It begins in the idea of thrownness, that man is born into certain things he had no voice in deciding, such as laws and moral structures, and yet they remain a part of him whether he accepts them or not. Not content with the possibilities for the future that he is capable of seeing with his being, the hero actively engages with the world and with others in order to change those systems already determined by the time of his birth.

From here, we begin to see more obvious parallels to the life of Leila Khaled as a hero. She is alone because she stands against custom. Khaled hijacked an airplane, something a very large portion of the population will never

do as it is against the law and against the moral structures that say the public should not be put at risk to decide a matter between two parties. To say she went against custom is to say she went against the usual way of acting. This is true not only of her actions as a hijacker but also her actions as a refugee. Where many accepted their displacement and tried to piece together their lives in a new land, she gave up that peace of mind in order to gain something that would benefit more than just herself. Again and again in Khaled's life we see what Hegel calls "inner spirit" (qtd. in Merleau-Ponty 183). The most extreme example being the surgeries she underwent without medication to dull the pain in order to change her appearance so that she may continue serving her people.

Courage is central to our being as a tool for renegotiating the anxieties, fear, and suffering we encounter in our being with the other in the world. Courage gives value to the human experience by placing life as the most valuable thing man has. Every act of courage is one that protects life in some way. Guided by Tillich's The Courage to Be, we see that the hero as the guardian of life is a hero which fosters the growth of the other in order to produce new things in the world.

Fromm's The Art of Loving outlines love as requiring care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. The hero is motivated by all of these things as a structure for finding himself in relation to others, addressing them, and recognizing the individual needs and desires of the other. The overlooked characteristic of love done well is that it should be a labor. The hero is active in love in that he brings people close to hand so that he may address them with the appropriate level of concern that all beings deserve. This means that the hero must address herself as

well, referring here to Cowburn's notion of self-love. The hero-advocate must show herself a love that is concern for her own growth so that she may continue to find meaning in her being an advocate and be happy with the things she has produced in the world as a hero.

The influence of the hero-advocate reaches the community through both time and space. A single act can have monumental consequences for the thrownness of future generations. We see from Laslett and Fishkins' work on intergenerational justice that the hero must be concerned with the community or she risks letting it fall prey to tyrants or manipulators, which is not a way of addressing the community with love. Onora O'Neill creates a stage by which the hero may take people over both time and distance and make them close at hand so that the hero may address their needs.

All the qualities of heroism are always already a part of us. The only thing that keeps us from being the hero is our practice of courage, love, and the greater good. When our lives in the everyday become an expression of these qualities we become an advocate. Our concern for the justice of our neighbors, those distant strangers that can become neighbors, and the community allow us to speak on their behalf. Doing so requires courage to speak, a loving concern for others, and a presentiment of possibility. In this way the advocate is a hero because he is one that is called to love rather than doing so as a result of sentimentality of narcissism.

Ultimately, the use of heroism in contemporary society has been ruled by tangents. Even though Leila Khaled is not a hero to the American culture, through

an understanding of the philosophy of heroism we can learn a great many things about the hero. We see the hero as acting with courage because he is required to respond to the other in some way. This response is motivated by love, an approach that carries within it notions of care, concern, responsibility, and knowledge that show just how complex it is to love someone. Finally, the hero is concerned with the greater good because it is a way of being selfless. Having a definition of heroism situated in the everyday allows for every person to be a hero because every being has within himself or herself the capacity for courage, love, and selflessness.

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