

Gendered Resistance



المجلس العربي
للعلوم الاجتماعية
Arab Council
for the Social Sciences
Conseil Arabe
pour les Sciences Sociales

© 2021 Arab Council for the Social Sciences
All rights reserved

This paper is available under a Creative Commons Attribution 230.231 International License (CC By 232.233). This license allows you to copy, distribute, and adapt the content free of charge as long as you attribute the work appropriately (including author and title, if the case applies), provide the link for the license, and indicate if changes were made. For more information, go to: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily state or reflect the official views of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS).

MENTORS



ASMAE BENADADA

Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Dhahir Al Mehraz, University of Sidi Mohamed

Ben Abdellah, Fez, Morocco. She specializes in Women's Studies and Political Sociology. Benadada's publications include "Women and Politics: Sociological Study of Women Partisan Sectors" (2008). She contributed to a number of edited works, including, "Le mouvement des droits humains des femmes au Maroc: Approche historique et archivistique" (2015). [The Women's Human Rights movement in Morocco: A Historical and Archival Approach] (2015) She has also published a number of research papers in national and Arab journals specializing in women's issues.



HODA ELSADDA

Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Cairo University and an activist for women's rights. She previously

held a Chair in the Study of the Contemporary Arab World at Manchester University (2005-2011), and was Co-Director of the Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World in the UK. She was Carnegie Visiting Scholar at Georgetown University in 2014-2015. In 1995, she co-founded the Women and Memory Forum, an Egyptian research organization that focuses on the production of knowledge on gender in Arab cultural history. She is currently the Chairperson of the Board of Governance of the organization. Her research interests are in the areas of gender in Arab cultural history, women's rights, and oral narratives.



ISLAH JAD

Associate Professor and lecturer on gender issues and politics at the Women's Studies Institute and Cultural Studies Department at

Birzeit University. She managed the program from 2008 until 2013 and is acting Director for the year 2021. She is a founding member of the university's women's studies MA program and a founding member of the first Ph.D program in Social Sciences at Birzeit. She has written books and papers on the role of women in politics, Palestinian women and the relationships among them, Islam, and NGOs. Dr. Jad is also a consultant on gender issues to the United Nations Development Programme and is co-author of the UN's Arab Development Report on Women's Empowerment and author of three other books. Dr. Jad received her Ph.D. from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London in 2004.



LAMIA MOGHNIEH

Research Fellow in Medical Anthropology and Mental Health Worker at the Department of English, Germanic and Romance

Studies (ENGEROM) at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Former EUME fellow in Berlin, and former ACSS fellow in Beirut. Her research focuses on the cultural and social history of psychiatry and its relationship with the formations of mental illness, the individual and society in the MENA region. In her current research project, she traces the cultural authority of modern psychiatry in Lebanon, through archival research of records from the Lebanon Hospital for Mental and Nervous Disorders and ethnographic research on contemporary psychiatric practices.

MENTORS INTRODUCTION

This volume is a collection of essays by fellows of cycle 4 of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences's (ACSS) New Paradigms Factory Program (NPF) on "Gendered Resistance."



The New Paradigms Factory Program (NPF) was launched in 2012 with the aim of supporting scholars and activists working in the humanities and social sciences in the Arab region. It helps them publish their research by creating a space for dialogue and the exchange of ideas between fellows from different Arab countries and a group of specialized mentors. We, the mentors, select the participants of the program from a pool of applicants who have already completed their research on a topic of relevance to the theme of the cycle. The Arab Council for the Social Sciences offers fellows a writing fellowship as well as the opportunity to participate in workshops and publish their research.

The NPF seeks to enhance communication between scholars and activists, and to bridge the gap between specialized academic research and the beneficiaries, stakeholders, and activists who support or benefit from it. NPF also aims to explore new spaces for specialized knowledge production outside of academic institutions. The program provides participants with the opportunity to explore innovative ways of writing and presenting their topics. These may diverge from the standards for publishing in specialized journals, provided that the work is based on in-depth research and includes a coherent theoretical framework. For example, the previous issue on Gendered Resistance

featured an illustrated story about May Ziadeh and her multiple identities, in which the scholar relied on images and storytelling as a means of resisting the modernist narrative about her. NPF takes as its premise the idea that knowledge production in the social sciences and humanities is not limited to academics, books and specialized journals. Rather, scholars and workers in various sectors, such as civil society and the media, contribute to it.

After receiving much positive feedback from civil society, universities, and research centers on the first issue devoted to the theme of Gendered Resistance, we conducted a second cycle on the same theme, featuring two workshops. But there is another reason—perhaps the most important one—for continuing to focus on this topic, which is the fact that gender-based violence, and especially sexual violence, has become a high-profile issue globally, as well as a matter of public concern in the Arab region. This is an important development that is closely related to the waves of revolutions that have swept the Arab region in the last decade, as some Arab political regimes have resorted to extensive sexual violence in order to deter women's political participation. This has resulted in the opening up of spaces for discussing taboos and addressing under-reported political and social issues. Despite the frustrations and defeats endured by many revolutionary movements, the breaking of silence around crimes of sexual violence continues unabated, and a new generation of young women is pushing the cause forward with boldness and determination.

Over the past few years, there has also been a significant increase in the number of initiatives and campaigns aimed at combating gender-based sexual violence in the Arab region, and this has also helped to make the issue a priority within mainstream society.

 **The NPF seeks to enhance communication between scholars and activists, and to bridge the gap between specialized academic research and the beneficiaries, stakeholders, and activists who support or benefit from it** 

In the fourth cycle of the program, we held two workshops in spite of unprecedented difficulties caused by the Covid-19, which swept the world in 2020, affected the global economy, restricted movement inside and outside countries, and brought about drastic changes in work patterns and social communication that are expected to last well into the future. The workshops were held virtually, via Zoom, and additional meetings, discussions, and lectures were conducted remotely, as well. Undoubtedly, one of the essential features of these workshops—the opportunity for human encounters—was lacking, and participants were not able to enjoy lively discussions around a dining table with colleagues from different Arab countries. Meanwhile, some of the participants were exposed to serious psychological pressures as a result of the news of illnesses and deaths, and others suffered the illness itself. Nevertheless, we were determined to overcome these difficulties. We combatted distance, internet outages, and mood swings with intellectual interest and determination.

Participants and mentors began working via Zoom prior to the first workshop, as the date of the workshop had been postponed due to the pandemic. In the first workshop, the mentors gave presentations on feminist research methodologies. They also raised and discussed several relevant concepts, such as resistance, violence, the body, gender, and translation. The participants then presented their research, which was followed by a discussion. In the second workshop, two scholars were invited to give lectures. Professor Lina Abou Habib, a feminist researcher and acting director of the American University of Beirut's Asfari Institute, delivered the first lecture, "Feminist Research and Activism". The second lecture, "The Feminism Movement during the Arab Spring", was given by Dr. Hend Zaki, Professor of Political Science at the University of Connecticut in the United States of America. Rich discussions and debates took place over the course of the workshop sessions' that followed, and the participants and mentors continued to work cooperatively during the next few months. All of the fellows managed to complete their research, and the main objectives of the program were successfully achieved.

On feminist methodologies

In the second workshop of the fourth cycle, we decided to focus on feminist methodologies. This served as a way of introducing the study of gendered resistance in our societies as well as offering the participants a set of feminist tools that allow for different styles of writing and different theorizations of resistance and power. Our discussions allowed us to put forward different approaches to gendered resistance. These included strategies for writing about

the body, lived bodily experience, and the body's relationship to power and resistance; and strategies for using affect as a source of knowledge in our feminist research. In their studies, all of the fellows relied on qualitative research methodologies, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, discourse analysis, participant observation, and ethnography—methodologies that are used in disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, cultural studies and oral history. These disciplines often differ in terms of their research objectives and how interviews are used or made available. We also deliberated on the most prominent techniques and methodologies within feminist studies, namely focus groups, oral history, and ethnography, all of which help researchers capture the details of the everyday lives and lived experiences of women.


In their research, feminists have usually relied on qualitative techniques that are suitable to interpreting and analyzing the structures and consequences of power relations in society. Such techniques are also helpful in understanding the processes by which meaning is constructed, exploring areas of silence in formal narratives, and producing compound, multi-level knowledge. In cycle four, we also discussed the use of focus groups as a particularly productive qualitative technique. Focus group discussions are arranged and managed by the researcher but take place among a group of respondents who are willing to speak about a specific topic. This technique allows for a better assessment of the sample's needs, expectations, and degree of satisfaction, as well as a better understanding of their views, motives, and behaviors. It is often used to elicit information about problems of contemporary relevance, as it allows respondents to talk about daily problems and interact with the rest of the group. The focus group technique stands apart

from regular (individual and group) interview techniques in that it assumes that the formation of ideas, beliefs, and opinions takes place through communication and discussion. Focus groups, while important, do not always enable the researcher to understand phenomena with the same degree of depth as other techniques, nor do they allow research participants to speak freely. This is especially true when the topic is related to sensitive personal experiences or social taboos. This limitation forces researchers to use other techniques, such as participant observation and individual interviews, which are what most of the fellows did in the research they conducted this cycle.


Despite the limitations of focus groups, they are highly useful in allowing feminist researchers to pose critical qualitative questions about the formation, movement, and transformation of social representations and the place they occupy within the intellectual system. They also help researchers examine the relationships between symbols, patterns of thought, patterns of speech, and actions. Focus groups, like many other qualitative research techniques, seem appropriate for research that seeks to capture gender-based discrimination and violence, as well as various forms of resistance to patriarchal structures and male domination. Qualitative methods create space for expression, disclosure, discussion, criticism, and alternative proposals, all of which are mechanisms needed for gender studies and gendered resistance.

Oral history is a methodology that began attracting socialist historians, who were often writing about the daily lives of working-class people, in the 1950s and 1960s because of its alternative epistemological grounding. In the 1970s, the field saw a remarkable rise in activity, as more and more scholars became concerned with the deficiencies of standard historical methodologies. The latter tend to narrate the

past through the biographies of the famous and the rich, relying almost exclusively on official records and failing to provide any account of the lives of ordinary people. Oral history has emerged as a method for correcting historical knowledge about groups marginalized by social class, race, or gender, and it has become an essential tool in the support of social movements seeking to change unbalanced power relations and authoritarian policies.



Despite the frustrations and defeats endured by many revolutionary movements, the breaking of silence around crimes of sexual violence continues unabated, and a new generation of young women is pushing the cause forward with boldness and determination



The methodology of feminist oral history was based on a feminist epistemology that raises questions about the essence of knowledge and what knowledge is worth knowing. Its fundamental assumption was that the prevailing epistemologies are patriarchal and biased towards a masculine vision of the world, wherein men occupy the preferred positions of power and their interests dominate the knowledge-production process. This is reflected in decisions about what questions are worth asking and what knowledge is important and worthy of preservation. Feminist oral history included women's points of view, highlighted their lives and experiences, and examined documents related to both women and men. It also attended to personal accounts about politics and participation in the public sphere, stories about life in the private sphere, and

details about the everyday lives of women in their roles as homemakers, child-rearers, and so on. This methodology does not assume a hierarchy between what happens in the public and private spheres, and it seeks to highlight the unbalanced power relations between men and women and the effect that this has had on written history. As an oft-cited quote from the feminist activist Carol Hanisch summarizes, "The personal is political."

Women's liberation groups have relied strongly on feminist oral history methodology in furthering their political and social goals. Feminist historians have attempted to answer the following questions posed by women's liberation movements: where have women made history, and why are women excluded from so much of the historical record? Their answers have come in the form of research projects that look for the presence of women in historical archives and documents overlooked by mainstream historical research. The need to search beyond the usual sources owes to the fact that much of what women have accomplished has been preemptively deemed unworthy of archival preservation. During the closing decades of the twentieth century, feminist historians reclaimed the forgotten voices of women, challenged dominant narratives that excluded women, and integrated gender as a unit of analysis in the reading and writing of history. One of the most successful methods used in writing women's history was the collection and documentation of oral accounts of women's lives, which shed light on their experiences and brought their voices forward. Later on, feminists managed to create a research movement that supported women's liberation movements around the world. Thus, oral history, as the collection and documentation of accounts from the voiceless, has become an important tool in advocacy campaigns,

resistance activities, and giving voice to what is not said in the mainstream media.


As for ethnographic methods a mainstay of anthropology, queer and black feminist theories helped to liberate it from its colonial history by critiquing the concept of “culture” and drawing attention to hegemony and the movements that resist it. Ethnography as a method has become a tool for investigating the influence that authoritarian structures, such as political, economic and medical institutions, have on cultural phenomena. It has also been used to deconstruct the normative linguistic and cultural features of society. Feminist researchers also used the ethnographic method to make arguments against absolutism in the realm of epistemology and instead draw attention to the diversity of epistemological stances that exist. What distinguishes ethnography from the other methodologies is the fact that it relies on a theory of reflexivity, which demands that the researcher include her own experiences, identity, positionality, and interpersonal relationships in the field as elements of her research and writing. This also enables her to include the opinions and points of view of her research subjects in her work, which fosters yet more analytical and epistemological criticism. Ethnographic methods have been used in many feminist research projects, as it made possible a style of writing that differs strongly from purportedly “objective” academic writing. Ethnography places great value on empirical inquiry and the relationship between the personal and political insofar as it pertains to critique and theorizing. It has also shed light on the ethical and political positioning of the researcher relative to both their topics of research and their research participants. It likewise exposes power relations in society as well as in the research itself, and it offers researchers a means of sharing knowledge and research between each other. As is evident

from the contents of this book, the fellows had a strong interest in feminist methodologies and qualitative methods, and some of them dedicated sections of their essays to highlighting these methodologies and showing how they impacted their research questions and writing processes.


On the concept of gendered resistance

The following question has dominated a large swath of social science research for quite some time: how do the poor, the marginalized, and the oppressed respond to their oppression? Answers have typically revolved around two longstanding theoretical frameworks that prevailed for a long time, especially in the midst of the second wave of feminism that dominated throughout the sixties and seventies. The first framework is built on the writings of Amartya Sen (Sen 1980, 1990), whose work came to prominence in the early eighties and had its own theoretical foundations in Marxism. Sen argued that poor and oppressed peasants identify with the ideology of their oppressors. They thus become partners in their oppression through a “false consciousness” that diverts their attention away from their real interests. Sen reached a similar conclusion regarding how women in India place the interests of their families above their own interests. Several feminist movements have used awareness-raising sessions to help women locate and focus on their real interests, assuming that identification with—or subordination to—patriarchy is the product of false consciousness, and that awareness of this fact can be used to resist various forms of structural oppression. James Scott’s book, “Weapons of the Weak,” published in 1985, strongly refutes this theoretical framework.

Based on a study of peasants in Indonesia, it concludes that resistance to oppression takes many forms and is spread across a wide range of locations. Scott also observed that resistance was not necessarily directed against one entity, such as the state. Rather, people (in this case, the peasants) carry out “conscious” forms of resistance under even the most severe conditions of oppression. They do this through forms of passive, indirect resistance including work slowdowns, sabotage, evasion, and even theft. Scott did not address women, however, and whether the same forms of resistance used by men against the dominant classes could be used by women, as well. Indeed, he did not even consider the different forms of oppression that women experience. But his book did, nonetheless, upend the common understanding of resistance and the various forms it can take.



Our discussions allowed us to put forward different approaches to gendered resistance. These included strategies for writing about the body, lived bodily experience, and the body’s relationship to power and resistance; and strategies for using affect as a source of knowledge in our feminist research



Many feminists have attempted to understand the hidden forms that women’s resistance takes, whether by exploring the “bargaining” by which women get food on the table in exchange for their submission, or the struggles over resources and power that occur between women and their husbands and families (Agarwal 1994; Kandiyoti 1988). The latter include, for

example, women secretly saving money, raising animals on the property of their blood relatives for their own benefit, or selling crops without their husbands’ knowledge. Pina Agarwal linked individual and collective resistance in her study of women’s resistance to land ownership in India. She concluded that it was important to note the intersection and juncture of women’s interests through the collective nature of women’s resistance to inequality in the distribution of material wealth as well as to the ideological forces that discriminate against them (Agarwal 1994).

The accumulation of knowledge about hidden and individual forms of women’s resistance has not, however, diverted attention away from public and collective forms. Theoretical work on social movements has raised interesting questions about the conditions necessary for successful collective resistance by groups working outside of the official political sphere (parliaments, local councils, etc.). Many theories have emerged that treat these forms of resistance within the same framework as the so-called “old social movements,” which revolve around material resources (issues of wealth distribution) and political power (influencing or accessing political power) (Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978). As for the “new social movements,” they focus on emerging issues (for example, domestic violence, trafficking in women, immigration, etc.) or are related to the formation of identities (ethnicity, culture, sexuality, religion, etc.). These movements share fronts of resistance not only to the state but also to various aspects of society and culture (Slater 1985; Touraine 1985; Melucci 1989, 1995; Offe 1985; Scott 1990).

The concept of gendered resistance, which focuses on individual or collective forms of resistance regarding issues of gender construction, sexuality,

and the body, is still controversial in the context of Western feminism. The latter has seen a tendency, especially among post-structuralist and queer theorists, to deconstruct or problematize the concept of gender. The writings of Judith Butler (Butler 1990) fall into this category (Butler 1990). Butler argues that gender identities are formed through performance and repetition, and they are likewise socially and culturally preserved. Therefore, to bring about change, these identities must be resisted by performing repetitive individual actions and behaviors that counteract established and oppressive representations.

At the level of the Arab region, multiple widespread popular resistance movements began to appear in 2010 and 2011 calling for change to the existing structures of political and economic oppression and exploitation, that were also intertwined with the local, regional, and international levels. In some parts of the Arab region, they were responded to with a wave of neocolonial policies that have only worsened the deprivation and oppression of large portions of society. Some claim that the wave of protests and popular resistance has largely failed to achieve its goals. Upon closer examination, however, we find multiple forms of resistance occurring daily among different social groups, including women, and in various locations, including courtrooms, social media, streets, factories, banks, theaters, cinemas, television screens, paintings, songs, and so on. These forms of resistance can be individual or collective and include resistance to the demolition of unauthorized buildings and slums, the eviction of some areas intended to be “developed” by investors, the sale and dismantling of state-owned factories, the use of encumbrances on state property as collateral for international loans, the interference in daily life by armed groups, the devaluation of local currencies, the privileges granted to

the military to discriminate against civilians, and the violation of the body and dignity of women through sexual harassment, just to name a few. In light of the ongoing narrowing of the public space by which direct or indirect political, social, or cultural actions can be taken against the prevailing structures of oppression, it is important to track any new forms of resistance, whether individual or collective. In the introduction to the first issue on gendered resistance, a question was raised about the act that is considered “resistance” and whether the intention to perform the act is in itself a differentiation between one act of resistance and another. There are different answers to the question, but our proposed answer hinged on the concept of “necrosis,” which describes the way that women’s resistance can eat away at the body of the patriarchal system—as well as other forms of sluggish oppression—disrupting the prevailing, authoritarian models of power.

The door remains open, then, for multiple and diverse forms of gendered resistance to be embraced by researchers taking part in the second workshop of the fourth NPF cycle. Limitless, too, is the extent to which these forms can bring about change in the numerous sites of tyranny, impoverishment, and oppression, and work towards a world in which women and men live in dignity, freedom, and social justice at all levels.

Essays

This volume features ten essays dealing with gender-based violence and highlighting a variety of ways of combating institutional, family, or community violence.



Gendered resistance can take many forms, and these include performing actions that run

counter to the prevailing norms of women's behavior in the public and private spheres. Through the repetition of these practices, the structure of patriarchy can be gradually disrupted and changed.

For example, in her study, "The Impact of Ride-hailing Services on Women's Mobility in Cairo," Rana Seifeldin Ahmed attempts to understand the impact of these services on women's mobility in Cairo through interviews conducted with users. These interviews enable the author to analyze changes in mobility patterns and the reasons behind them. Using themes of mobility, everyday resistance, and respect, Ahmed argues that the use of this mode of transportation can be understood as a form of resistance to the spatial and temporal constraints imposed by the male domination of public space. The study concludes by questioning the extent to which women using this service are able to change the power relation that emerges between them and their drivers as a result of their ability to hold service providers accountable. While this does increase the ability of women to change the behavior of drivers and control their own movements through public space, this change affects only a segment of the female population and does not necessarily change power relations within the Egyptian public transportation system, which is plagued by daily violations of women's bodies. This study is based on the results of twenty-five semi-structured interviews with Cairene women "Transportation on Demand" users in 2017.

Ghadeer Ahmad Eldamaty, in her essay, "This Pregnancy is Null: Abortion and Gendered Resistance in the Egyptian Context," attempts to show that the practice of abortion is a form of resistance to legal and societal structures of power. By practicing abortion, women regain ownership of their bodies, thus challenging the

hegemony of social, economic, and political systems. This is a practice by which women demonstrate agency and resist the division of gender roles and the nationalization of their reproductive labor power. Eldamaty employs an ethnographic approach and relies on participant observation and interviews. She concludes that abortion has been an act of resistance practiced by women throughout history, but one often undertaken within a very dangerous and violent local context. Abortion enacts a restructuring of the capitalist-patriarchal system as well as gendered resistance to its policies of surrogacy. When women regain control of their wombs and bodies, they engage in a violent confrontation with patriarchal power.

 **The accumulation of knowledge about hidden and individual forms of women's resistance has not, however, diverted attention away from public and collective forms** 

Hebatallah Tolba addresses gender discrimination in Egyptian burial traditions in her essay, "Gendered Resistance in the Face of Death: Challenging the Division of Labor and Space Exclusion in Funeral and Burial Rituals in Egypt." Tolba begins her essay by recounting a personal experience she had when her father died and she found herself obliged not to participate in certain rituals because she is a woman. Within the traditional division of genders, women are excluded from attending rituals at certain times and in certain spaces that are considered the preserve of men. Tolba uses a highly personal style of ethnographic fieldwork as her entry point into a narrative about gender discrimination practiced against her and her opposition to it. Tolba bases her analysis on the theory of emotions

articulated in Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. She describes her feelings of anger, and how they ultimately turned into an engine fueling resistance to discrimination.

Also concerned with the matter of breaking norms is Heba Alhaji's essay, "Curses as a Tool of Feminist Resistance: Who am I?" which tackles a controversial issue in feminist and revolutionary circles: the use of curses as a form of resistance. Alhaji analyzes the sexual dimensions of language and obscenity, and how an obscene, anti-masculine discourse—which uses the female body and organs to denigrate the other—takes form. She also sees the possibility for the formation of an alternative language that can disrupt this masculine discourse. The essay sheds light on a new phenomenon perceived among young Syrian feminists, who use curses to confront the male violence they are subjected to for defending women's rights in the context of the bloody conflicts that have divided Syria and displaced the majority of the people. Alhaji seeks the opinions of feminist activists who use curses as a tool to dismantle male domination over language and discourse. Curses also constitute a political act of resistance to an oppressive political system that uses women's bodies to consolidate its control over the country. Alhaji then aims at changing the patriarchal view of the woman's body and exposing its exploitative politics. The essay attempts to redefine several cultural concepts, such as shame, honor, and decency, which are often used to silence women's voices.

Gendered resistance may involve an ongoing negotiation process with prevailing laws and norms, whereby women must carry out daily maneuvers to achieve personal or collective gains.

For example, Reeham Mourad investigates the impact of heritage projects on social relations

in the popular neighborhoods of Cairo in her essay, "Spaces of Resistance: Women Maneuvering the Sha'bi Notions of El-Khalifa Neighborhood." In her study, she draws from two disciplines—urban planning and social sciences—with the purpose of tracking the class and gender interactions that these projects unintentionally produced. She points to the intersection of class and patriarchal ideology, which manifests itself in public space as a daily discourse affecting local women and visitors, alike, restricting their freedom. Mourad relies on ethnographic methodology to illustrate the symbols and formations that are integral to this discourse, as well as the different aspects of gendered resistance by which women attempt to confront, deconstruct, and challenge it.

In her essay, "The Power of Societal Censorship and Disguised Resistance in the Sphere of Sexual and Physical Activity of Cairene Women," Samaa Elturkey uses the case of the Egyptian media figure "D.S." to analyze the relationship between laws and collective teams in the monitoring and control of women's sexual agency in Egypt. In her study, Elturkey shows how this mechanism produces a certain kind of marginal and invisible resistance through which women attempt to recover their sexual agency and liberate it from the state and the community. Elturkey relies on discourse analysis to understand law and resistance beyond common stereotypes. She makes theoretical contributions towards understanding the authoritarian relationship that exists between legal and popular/communal discourse in Egypt.

The third group of essays engages with the assumptions that feminist theory has often made about traditional women's work (such as cooking and embroidery). These essays redefine it as a form of gendered resistance—one that is connected to contemporary Arab feminist movements.

Malek Lakhal's essay, "Struggle and Transmission: A Study of Frictions between 'Generations' of Feminists," stems from a question posed by the researcher, herself a feminist activist, about the refusal of some Tunisian second-generation feminists (active after the 2011 revolution) to recognize the struggle of post-independence feminists (active around 1980) who wrote the first women's demands. This refusal was accompanied by harsh judgments that belittled the latter's experiences and deemed them irrelevant—part of a past that needed to be transcended. Lakhal tried to understand the reasons behind this judgment of the earlier generation in order to work towards undoing it. She believes that the concept of "generation" can help make sense of the history of the Tunisian feminist movement, and that good use can be made of all generations' experiences. Lakhal conducted a series of interviews with women to find out the types of frictions that occur between these two generations and what causes them. In her analysis, she tries to show that the younger generation's rejection of their predecessors, and the frictions resulting from that rejection, serve to obscure certain forms of resistance established by emerging generations. This is in some ways similar to the way in which patriarchal culture gradually erases the work of female activists and the history of the feminist movement.

Jawida Mansour addresses the situation of Palestinian women working in embroidery, either in cooperatives or in their homes, in her essay, "A Liberal Mini-project on a Piece of Fabric." Embroidery is at once an economic tool that can provide a livelihood as well as a form of resistance to the continuous theft of Palestinian intangible heritage—not to mention the appropriation of the craft as Israeli heritage. Mansour employed ethnographic fieldwork in a variety of forms, including focus groups and individual interviews. She concluded that

craftswomen engage in four distinct species of resistance through their embroidery work: gendered resistance, socio-historical resistance, individual psychological resistance, and transnational resistance.

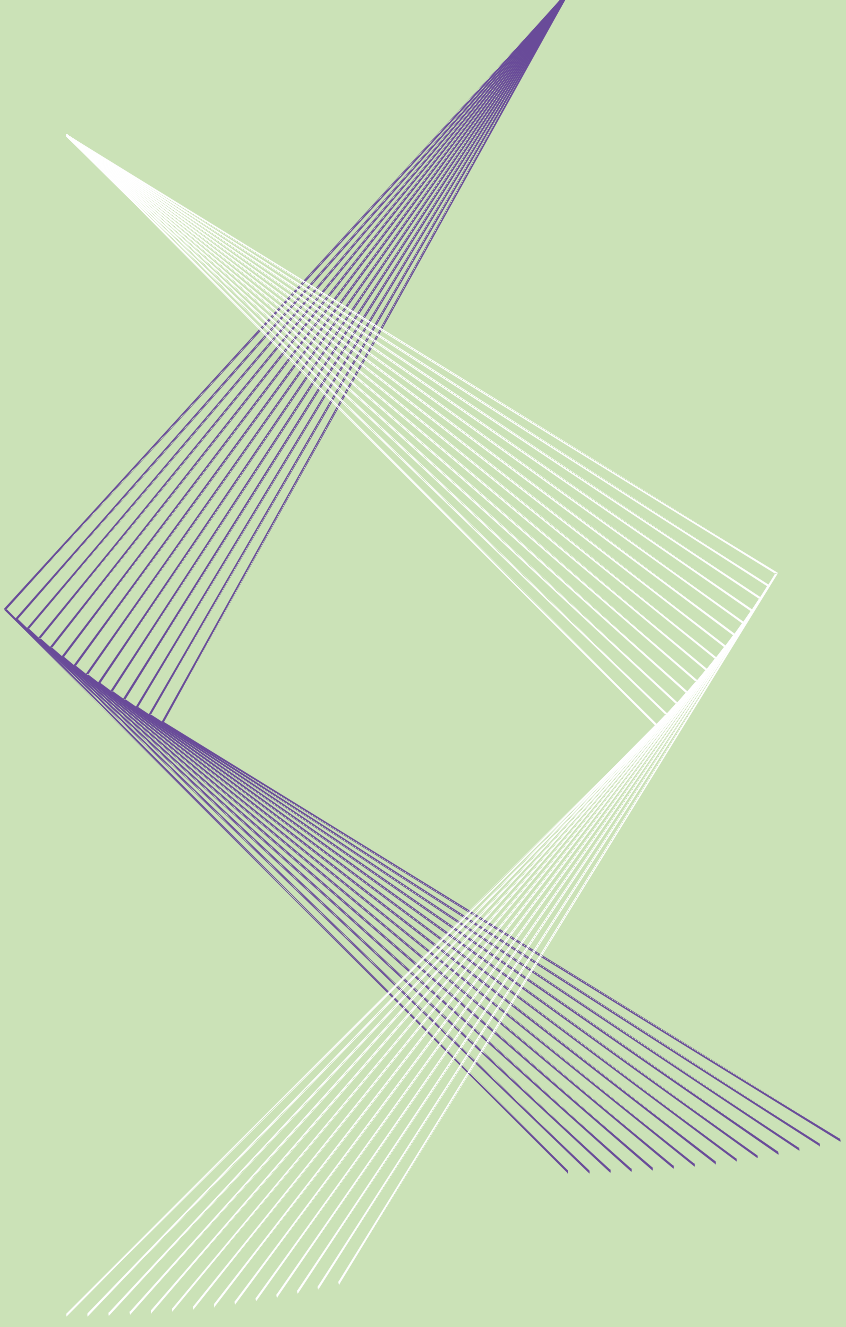
In her essay, "Informal Work for Women in Marginalized Neighborhoods in Tunisia: Cooking as a Tool of Resistance," Jawaher Channa looks to traditional bread-makers in Tunisia in an attempt to shed light on the simple and informal forms of resistance that are waged by marginalized women. She then links the struggles of these poor women to feminism and feminist struggles more broadly. The topic of her research came as a result of reflection into her experiences as a feminist in Tunisia and her tendency to bridge the gap between publicly visible feminists and the many women who engage in smaller techniques of daily resistance. In her essay, Channa introduces us to four women who work as bread-makers whose lives she came to know over the course of two years of interviews and participants observation. She describes how each woman relied on her baking and feeding experiences to face the economic and patriarchal marginalization to which they were subjected. Through these lives, Channa also highlights the transformation of cooking from a tool for care to a tool for gendered resistance to economic and social violence by marginalized women in Tunisia.

Nay El Rahi explores the feelings of Lebanese women who have been subject to harassment by family or friends in her essay, "Sexual Harassment and the Connective Self: Her Shame is Their Shame." She sheds light on their descriptions of, and reactions to, the incidents by making recourse to Suad Joseph's theory of the "connective self" and Sara Ahmed's theory of emotions. El Rahi notes that the women in question do not use the term "harassment" to describe the aggression

they were subjected to. This is because, within the context of an environment that they consider safe, they experience the incident as an assault on their group or family rather than on their specific bodies. For this reason, El Rahi suggests reconsidering frameworks researchers and activists use when dealing with incidents of sexual harassment in Lebanon and listening to the language women use when describing their experiences.

With this issue, we conclude the fourth cycle of the New Paradigms Factory Program (NPF) on the theme of Gendered Resistance. We hope that we have succeeded in our goal of supporting research in the field of gender studies and encouraging scholars and activists to produce new and innovative knowledge that addresses a wide audience in independent research centers and human rights institutions.





BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agarwal, Bina. 1994. "Gender, resistance and land: Interlinked struggles over resources and meanings in South Asia." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 22:1, 81-125, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03066159408438567> . Accessed on Jan. 23, 2021.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London and New York: Routledge.

Kandiyoti, Deniz. 1988. "Bargaining with Patriarchy, Gender and Society." Volume: 2 issue: 3, page(s): 274-290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124388002003004>. Accessed on Jan. 23, 2021.

Melucci, Alberto. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Melucci, Alberto. 1995. "The New Social Movements Revisited: Reflections on a Sociological Misunderstanding", in L. Malhue (ed.), *Social Movements and Social Classes: The Future of Collective Action*. London: Sage IDS WORKING PAPER 276 31.

Oberschall, Anthony. 1973. *Social Conflict and Social Movements*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Offe, Claus. 1985. *New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics*. *Social Research* 52: 817-68.

Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Scott, Alan. 1990. *Ideology and the New Social Movements*. London: Unwyn Hyman.

Sen, Amartya. 1980. *Poverty and Famines*. Oxford: Clarendon.

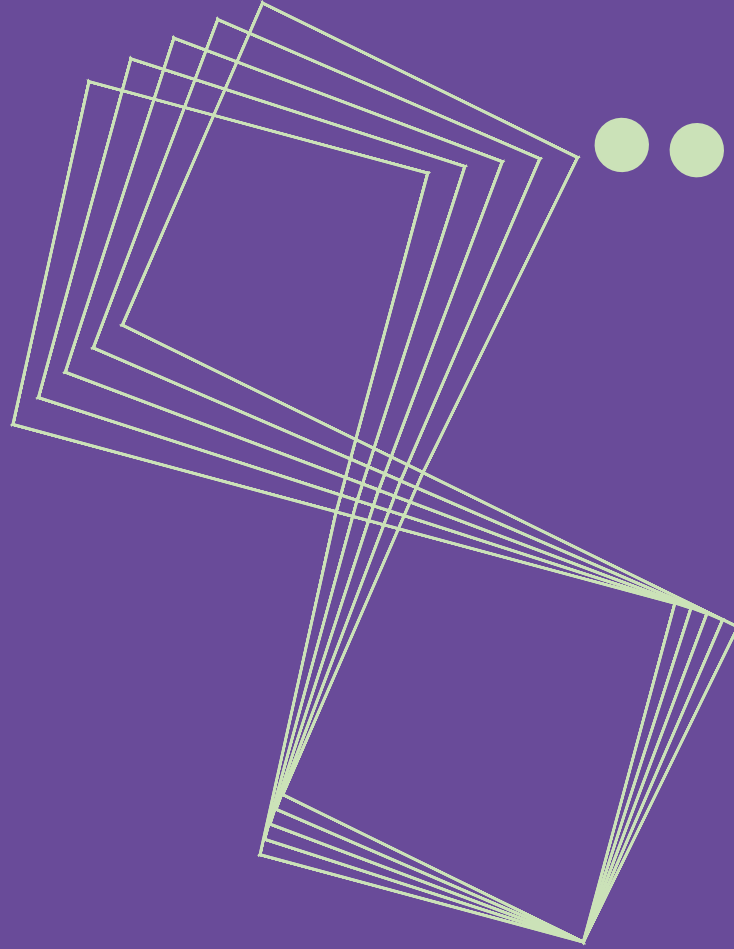
Sen, Amartya. 1990. "Gender and Cooperative Conflicts." in I. Tinker (ed.), *Persistent Downloaded by [174.21.97.234] at 15:02 22 April 2014*. "GENDER, RESISTANCE AND LAND: SOUTH ASIA 125 Inequalities: Women and World Development". New York: Oxford University Press, pp.123-49.

Slater, David. 1985. *New Social Movements and the State in Latin America*. Dordrecht: CEDLA, Foris Publishers.

Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Touraine, Alain. 1985. "An Introduction to the Study of New Social Movements." *Social Research* 52.4: 749-87.





Arab Council for the Social Sciences
John Kennedy Street, Ras Beirut
Alamuddin Building, 2nd Floor
Beirut-Lebanon

T. +961 1 370 214
F. +961 1 370 215
E. info@theacss.org



المجلس العربي للعلوم الاجتماعية
شارع جون كينيدي، رأس بيروت
بناية علم الدين، الطابق الثاني
بيروت-لبنان