
Mapping the Institutional History of Women's Organizations in Morocco and Egypt: A Comparative Case Study

Jessica Barber

Abstract: Women's organizations have been at the heart of nearly every struggle for civil rights in the Middle East and North Africa since their inception. This paper will focus on the unique strategizing methods of women's organizations in the region that confront deeply patriarchal societies with particular focus on the institutional history of Morocco and Egypt. The paper will first summarize the emergence of women's rights organizations in the region within a historical, social, political, and international context. An in-depth history of Morocco and Egypt's women's movement through the lens of grassroots NGO organizing will follow. The two countries will then be examined alongside one another with specific attention to similarities and differences. While the paper will explore the importance of these organizations, it will also give homage to the grassroots, network-style organizing methods that have taken place outside of a hierarchical structure during and following the Arab Spring. Following the comparative case study, I will offer a detailed conclusion summarizing the research presented throughout the paper as well as what the future of women's rights and organizing may look like in the coming years.

The Birth of Women's Rights Organizations in the Region

To better understand the creation of women's institutions throughout the region, it is first and foremost important to examine the history of women's organizing as it dates back to the late 19th century. Like many social, political, and religious movements that took over the region, feminist consciousness raising efforts originated in Egypt and disseminated throughout the Arab world (Badran, 2000). Reforms in Turkey, the "Arab national awakening in Syria and Iraq," the creation of the printing press, and the push for women's education also played a critical role in stirring up the movement for women's rights (Mazreg, 2021). Women began to step into the public sphere alongside men as more and more as political movements demanding national sovereignty from the grips of imperialism gained popularity. They were present in both political and social struggles as they organized within structured political parties in an effort to end imperial rule, yet women's rights agendas were set to the side in order to accomplish the more pressing issue of independence (Ryadi, 2021). Men often argued that a "gender-based approach" for a political movement would ultimately become "a factor that disturbs class struggle" (Ryadi, 2021). Despite male resistance, female trailblazers like Huda Sha'arawi, the founder of the Egyptian Feminist Union that was established in 1923, wrote that she planned to fearlessly voice her "pain and start a

revolution for the silent women who faced centuries of oppression,” as recounted by Margot Badran in Sha’arawi’s biography. She went on to lead the pioneering efforts that pulled women from the home and into the streets (Badran, 1987). Even still, women’s rights were secondary to the pressing fight for national liberation.

Despite putting their own demands on hold, the women’s rights struggle remained dormant once again following “political and union experience” because creating a post-independence government structure was seen as the most important priority (Ryadi, 2021). As Leftist political movements and parties lost momentum, women that neglected their own rights in order to focus on independence left these organizations that were often extremely patriarchal and exclusive to form their own organizations instead.

In the beginning of this era of post-independence in the 60’s and 70’s, women enjoyed a world in which there was an overall lack of anxiety around rigid gender roles and norms. Following that period of dormancy after organizing for Leftist, pro-independence parties, the mid-1980s to the early-1990s saw the birth of dozens of women’s organizations across the region. While secular feminists used their skills and experience from organizing within the political parties and the secular nationalist movements of the era to create new organizations, Islamic feminism also began to quickly gain popularity as Islamist revival movements swept into major cities and towns (Moghissi, 2016). Secular feminists began to establish non-governmental organizations as a way to revitalize efforts to fight the patriarchy and push for equality between the sexes. Simultaneously, however, another story was being told by the women who argued that Islam could be a tool for women as opposed to a weapon that can be used against them. Regardless of whatever feminist brand a woman aligned with, the feminist writings of Nawal Saadawi, Fahima Charafeddine, Farida Nakkache, and others inspired all women to prioritize and demand their own rights from their nascent governments in the midst of growing Islamic militancy in the 1980s (Ryadi, 2021).

Women’s organizing looked different depending on the country, but many early efforts across the region were grounded in intellectual work that “established legitimacy for women’s demands in a deeply misogynistic society” (Ryadi, 2021). Morocco’s Fatima Mernissi’s book “The Veil and the Male Elite,” as well as newly admitted women at al-Azhar University in Cairo paved the way for women to act. Women’s committees at universities, associations in youth centers, the establishment of non-governmental organizations, and the continuous struggle for union women to have rights were all a byproduct of this momentous era of women’s activism and scholarship (Ryadi, 2021). The key moments of female organizing in the 1980s and 90s laid the path for later struggles for democracy and human rights that surfaced during the Arab Spring.

The birth of women’s organizations as well as the degree of organizing throughout the region varies depending on the country. The era of independence struggles laid the foundation for women to

organize themselves outside of primarily male and hierarchical organizations and political parties that left them on the periphery. The tools both secular and Islamic women used to establish these new organizations allowed for women to center their own agendas that sought to challenge Islamic extremism, reform sexist family law codes, improve literacy, demand meaningful representation at all levels of society, and enshrine equality between the sexes in everyday society.

Morocco

In 1944, a young group of women who called themselves the “purity sisters,” founded one of the first Moroccan women’s associations called Akhawat Assafa that opposed “the inferior status imposed on women” by society (Boutkhil, 2016, pp.131). Additionally, “they called for the education of women, the abolition of polygamy and challenged inheritance laws” that subjugated women in their daily lives (Boutkhil, 2016, pp. 131). They demanded rights and protection for domestic workers, the creation of a family law that protected married women and protested violence and harassment against women. Often hailed as the women who started the Moroccan feminist movement, these women eventually shifted to prioritize the national struggle against colonialism over their own struggle for basic human rights after joining the pro-independence Shura & Istiqlal Party. While their selfless act of taking up the national cause before campaigning for their own seemed like it would ultimately pay off in the form of male recognition and support, the women that comprised Akhawat Assafa were a part of a much larger 20th century trend that spilled across the borders of the MENA region.

The existence of the Akhawat Assafa association tells the story of Morocco’s first wave of feminism which lasted from the mid-1940s to the early 1960s (Ryadi, 2021). Women were consistently abandoning their own feminist struggles and joining the fight for national liberation instead. Another prominent organization at the time was the Moroccan Women’s Union. Attempting to organize women together to fight for common causes, the Communist Party (at the time a subdivision of the French Communist Party), created this small union that would go on to become one of North Africa’s most well-known women’s organizations, the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women (Ryadi, 2021). As many women organizations lost their connection to political parties following independence and began to choose to organize independently of men, The Progressive Union of Moroccan Women, founded in 1960, became Morocco’s first autonomous organization for women. Additionally, the ADFM also began to organize independently in the post-independence era after communism was banned by the monarchy.

The independent organizing that began to unfold amongst female activists gave life to the second wave of Moroccan feminism. Immediately following independence, many women were silenced amidst the urgent need to create a post-independence government. During this tumultuous period in which a young, newly-free country began to find its own footing in the world, women’s struggles remained dormant. The second wave of feminist organizing didn’t begin to take shape until the mid-1980s. The

prevalence and growth of Marxist and Leftist ideology was not limited to the West during the latter of the 20th century, but also reached North Africa and the Middle East as the work of writers like Samir Amin and Frantz Fanon gained popularity (Salem, 2019). This global movement for human rights and democracy which manifested itself in the form of newly created international institutions, world-wide protest movements, and a strong belief in self-determination in the post-colonial era influenced women's rights NGO's, nonprofits, and scholarship throughout Morocco. Many of these organizations, unlike during the first wave, were created and organized "outside of political parties" by the same women who had experience strategizing and protesting for independence two decades earlier (Ryadi, 2021). Hailed as the "real schools of democracy" that operate in the form of decentralized networks, women's NGOs like l'Union de l'Action Féminine (UAF) (est. 1987), l'Organisation Démocratiques des Femmes du Maroc (officially established in 1985), and later on, Jossour Forums Des Femmes Marocaines (est. 1995), gave women the space to critically assess their situation and their path forward (Ennaji, 2010, pp. 80).

Building off of the female scholarship that was growing and spreading throughout the region, Moroccan women began to address the huge gaps that failed to address women's issues and rights in the criminal and family law code. Despite trying to portray itself as a modernizing, industrial state in the eyes of the West, oppressive domestic gender policies remained in place. Valentine Moghadam writes of this phenomenon in which "two parallel, apparently contradictory developments ... (i) the expansion of industrialization, urbanization, proletarianization, and state-sponsored education, which undermines patriarchal family authority; and (ii) the retention of Muslim family law, which legitimates the prerogatives of male family members over female family members" remained a painful reminder to women that there was still much work left to do (Moghadam, 1993).

Additionally, the growth of Western and European feminism undoubtedly had an influence on women activists throughout Morocco and the region at large. Women also took note of the state feminist projects were underway in Gamel Abdel Nasser's Egypt and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's Tunisia (Ryadi, 2021). In their early stages, women's rights NGOs were influenced by emerging female scholarship and the growth of international institutions that prioritized women's rights. The creation of the March 8 newspaper (8 Mars) by the UAF in the mid-1980s encouraged the integration of women in all sectors of society. The Arabic newspaper, which reached nearly 20,000 women a month, analyzed legal and political issues and reported on educational and cultural issues that affected women (Cengage). This grassroots network of women sought to change prevailing cultural attitudes that kept women in a subordinate position to men both in the public and private sphere.

Moudawana (Moroccan family law or personal status code) was established two years after Morocco gained independence from France in 1958. Similarly to the PSL in Egypt, Moudawana "governs areas of family law such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody" (Centre d'Impact Public,

2016). The reform efforts didn't occur within a vacuum, but rather took place alongside the rise of political Islam in the 1990s and the Casablanca terrorist attacks that shook the country on May 16, 2003 (Outaleb & Sadiqi 2021). Instead of acting as a deterrent, these outside forces and events that threatened greater Islamic militancy prompted renewed dedication and commitment to creating a state that enshrined gender equality as a fundamental principle.

A wide variety of local actors made the passage of the reforms possible. Feminist academic Fatima Mernissi led the way by founding two research groups in 1981, both of which included prominent male religious scholars and jurists, with the specific aim of reforming Moudawana (Outaleb & Sadiqi 2021). As Mernissi began her efforts to "feminize the public space," she herself began to shift from a secularist perspective towards an Islamic understanding of feminism. Her gradual turn towards Islamic feminism reflected the ever-present nuances and ambiguities that were present in the changing attitudes of Moroccan feminists in the second half of the century. Even though she was primarily an academic, her work prompted the inclusion of civil society NGOs. In 1992, Union de l'Action Feminine spearheaded a One Million Signatures Campaign that successfully pressured King Hassan II to form a commission that would set about reforming the Moudawana (Outaleb & Sadiqi, 2021). The lobbying of these organizations attracted the attention of the government officials who wanted to find a way to counter the relentless growth of political Islam (Outaleb & Sadiqi 2021). The ensuing royal statement underlined and put into practice the long-held beliefs of Islamic feminists that are based upon "the egalitarian spirit of Islam and the universal principles of human rights" (Eddouada and Pepicelli, 2010). As opposed to being a win solely for feminists that organized within an Islamic, *ijtihad* framework, secular and Islamic feminists alike applauded the reforms that marked a new era for women in the country.

The three most visible pillars of reform declared equality between the spouses, family equilibrium through marriage law reform, and the protection of children (Outaleb & Sadiqi, 2021). In addition, women became eligible to compete for "posts of authority in state religious institutions" (Eddouada and Pepicelli, 2010). Five years later in 2009, "the Ministry for Islamic Affairs assembled a group of female theologians and preachers to hear the King, quoting the Qur'an," specifically focusing on the holy texts that espouse gender equality as a way to cement Morocco's commitment to establishing Islamic state feminism (Eddouda and Pepicelli, 2010). Even still, the reforms neglect to address serious issues like polygamy, marital rape, and inheritance. To go further, many have accused the Moroccan government of co-opting/appropriating the grassroots movement that led up the reforms.

The 1980s laid the groundwork for a decade of unity in the 90s that led to these celebrated reforms of Moudawana in 2004, the Labor Code in 2003, the Nationality Code in 2008, and the Constitutional revisions in 2011 (Sadiqi, 2015). These NGOs promoted "women's emancipation, participation, social mobilization, and associate lobbying" in every aspect of society, which not only

empowered women at the time, but built the infrastructure that allowed women to be on the front lines during the Arab Spring in 2011 (Ennaji, 2010, pp. 80). To accomplish this, UAF and ADFM, each of which are based in major cities like Rabat and Fez, used their dozens of branch organizations to organize literacy, family code comprehension, information technology, and violence against women workshops that blended the lines between political and social life. Other organizations, such as the Association Ennakhil, which leans more towards Islamic values, focuses on helping women and young girls affected by violence and early marriage by creating social centers for those in need.

Moha Ennaji categorizes two types of NGOs in Morocco: local government NGOs that attempt to improve failing and lackluster government services and advocacy/lobbying NGOs that work to defend democracy and protect human rights (Ennaji, 2010). The latter came into existence following the creation of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights and the passage of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women at the UN, both of which happened in 1979 (Ryadi, 2021). Each of these landmark events became a “universal reference for the basis of their struggles” and the movement at large (Ryadi, 2021).

As seen during the 1990s, coalition building has been the key ingredient for the success of the women’s rights movement and agenda. More recently, through the lobbying of UAF and ADFM, women have won numerous hard-fought achievements. The establishment of a ten percent quota for women in parliament, a twenty percent quota in the political bureau of political parties, and an alliance with the religious right and Islamist women’s associations on major issues has led to thirty-four women in parliament and seven female ministers in 2007 (Ennaji, 2010). While there is still much work left to be done and shortcomings to address, it is important to note that Morocco is perhaps the only Arab country to pass civil rights reforms that were lobbied for by grassroots NGO women activists.

Egypt

The women’s movement in Egypt has experienced many ups and downs since its emergence in the late 19th century. Often described as being “on the forefront of the feminist movement in the Arab World for a century,” Egyptian women have endured massive opposition in the fight for equality and human rights (Song, 2018, pp. 11). As the movement for independence from British colonialism began to boil over during the 1919 nationalist movement, women began to gain visibility as they demanded for their freedom alongside men (Song, 2018; Al-Ali, 2000). The first World War also intensified the fight for liberation and led to national economic programs that indirectly helped women, particularly those of the lower class. While the 1919 revolution may have allowed the women’s movement to gain some traction within the national dialogue, female journalists and male modernist reformists also called for the liberation of women from both indigenous patriarchal forces and sexist colonial domination in which women were either overtly sexualized through an Oriental lens or portrayed as passive and oppressed

women stuck in a backwards society. Men like Muhammed Abduh and Qasim Amin, as well as the work uncovered by Leila Ahmed of female journalists that has been destroyed from the record, “emphasize that women’s participation in the 1919 nation-wide marches, strikes and protests against the British colonizers was a continuation and extension of the activities of women in previous decades” (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 56). Considered by many scholars to be the first male Arab and Egyptian feminist, Qasim Amin was a lawyer and jurist that wrote *Tahrir al-Mar a* (The Emancipation of Women, 1899) and *Al-Mar a Al-Jedida* (The New Woman, 1900). Even though Ahmed notes that Qasim was not the “father of feminism” but rather the “son of Cromer and colonialism,” each groundbreaking book nevertheless signaled a new dawn for Egyptian women at the turn of the century.

On March 6, 1923, Huda Sha’rawi created the Egyptian Feminist Union at a meeting in her home with a group of upper-class, wealthy women. After coming of age in *harem* society, Sha’rawi publicly removed her veil in a crowded train station in Cairo in an attempt to signal the start of a new era for women. It is important to note that she decided to perform this bold act on her journey home from the International Women Suffrage Alliance in Rome. While the EFU is considered Egypt’s first official women’s organization, it has been accused of exclusionary practices that are a result of only having wealthy, land-owning women as its membership demographic. Additionally, Leila Ahmed has argued that Sha’rawi’s public unveiling was not simply a brave act of feminist resistance but rather a “valorization of Western ways as more advanced and more ‘civilized’ than native ways” (Ahmed, 1992). Despite its elitist tendencies that did little to include women across the class spectrum, the EFU fought for women’s suffrage, personal status laws reforms, and more accessible educational opportunities for girls and women. Sha’rawi went on to become the Arab Feminist Union president, fighting for an agenda that called for education access, changes to patriarchal, Islamic marriage laws, specifically in the realm of divorce and polygamy, and the establishment of a minimum marriage age of 16 years old (Song, 2018). The work of Huda Sha’rawi and the Egyptian and Arab Feminist Unions also led to the admittance of women into some Egyptian universities in the late 1920s as well as the inclusion of very basic women’s rights in the 1923 constitution. In a common trend that spans much of the region, her diligent commitment to women’s rights sought to create space for women’s struggles and agendas in the midst of a majority-male nationalist movement. The Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Moroccan independence movement, and the brutal Algerian civil war against France all tell a similar story.

While Sha’rawi embraced secularism as the sole avenue for the women’s rights agenda in the early 20th century, Malak Hifni Nassif became the opposing Islamic feminist opinion that resisted Western idealism. These two feminist binaries that began to emerge during an era that viewed the West as the beacon of progress and modernity and Islam as an oppressive tradition have remained a steadfast reality of the Egyptian women’s movement. Nassif laid the groundwork for women to find their own

space outside of the wealthy, well-connected women who had close ties to the nationalist movement. The Bint El-Nil (Daughter of the Nile) group that eventually evolved into a magazine was founded later in 1948 and initially existed as a way to challenge this feminist elitism that saturated the women's movement. The nascent organization campaigned for lower and middle-class women by calling on women to enter the workforce and leave the home (Al-Ali, 2000). Its founder, Doria Shafik, demanded full political rights during the eve of Nasser's nationalist revolution. Like Sha'rawi, however, Shafik still faced accusations of being exclusionary and Western centric.

The 1952 revolution marked a shift in Egyptian society because it "inaugurated a new age for women by altering the class structure and by the ideological, legal, and practical inclusion of women in the new state" (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 62). This quickly proved to be merely surface level. Margot Badran wrote that "men's nationalism had a patriarchal character" during the 1919 revolution, and the changes that began to unfold in 1952 were no different (Badran, 1988). Under Gamal Abdel Nasser's new Egypt, women were completely forbidden from independently organizing. In her book *Secularism, Gender and the State in the Middle East : The Egyptian Women's Movement*, Naje Al-Ali argues that "Nasser's commitment to women's welfare as part of his wider struggle for social justice has been juxtaposed to his suppression of women's activism" (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 67). The lack of women's rights organizations paralleled the co-optation of women's rights agendas and the beginnings of a state feminism project.

The Law 32 of 1964, which remains in place today, was put into place to closely monitor NGOs and private volunteer organizations. At the time, this effectively crippled women's NGOs. The growing prevalence of strict state surveillance of women ironically followed the passage of the revised 1963 constitution that declared all Egyptians equal regardless of gender. Additionally, labor laws were changed to guarantee state jobs for all Egyptian citizens "irrespective of gender" (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 68). In an effort to increase women's access to higher education and add to Nasser's facade of a progressive regime for women, al-Azhar University, Egypt's most well-known higher education Islamic institution, opened its doors to women in 1962. Across the country, women were encouraged to attend school and become not only literate, but highly educated. While all of these new policies aimed to position Egypt as a progressive leader in the region that prioritized all of its citizens' welfare, patriarchal personal state laws remained unchanged throughout Nasser's authoritarian rule. Naje Al-Ali highlights this public-private dichotomy throughout her book when she says, "while state feminism created and organized a system of public patriarchy, it did not challenge the personal and familial views of women's dependence on men that were institutionalized by the PSL laws and the political system" (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 68). Even today, contemporary Egyptian feminists are conflicted as to whether Nasser's policies improved women's rights or simply masked inequality.

Nasser's successor, Muhammad Anwar el-Sadat, also openly discouraged independent feminist activism. In a sharp turn from Nasser's nationalist, pro-Arab state building project, Sadat instituted *infitah* (open door) economic policies that widened the gap between the rich and the poor (Al-Ali, 2000). In an effort to appeal to Western markets, these policies ended up harming lower class women and reversing many of the pro-equality opportunities that the Nasser regime once promised. The replacement of state feminism with these policies ultimately crippled Egypt's economy, polarized the national dialogue around social inequality, and led to the growth of anti-West Islamist ideology in the 1970s. These ideological battles that pitted Sadat and the West against communists and Nasserites led to the usage of the women's rights agenda as a political/bargaining tool. After decades of stalled dialogue concerning the personal status law, reforms spearheaded by Sadat's wife Jehan finally emerged in 1979. While the reforms "reaffirmed a woman's right to divorce, gave her the right to travel without needing her husband's permission and raised the legal age for marriage from sixteen to eighteen," it was still painfully evident that grassroots women activists were largely neglected from the reform process, no independent women's rights organizations existed, and there was no overarching state program that sought to prioritize women's rights (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 74).

The consequences of Sadat's poor economic policies and politically convenient co-optation of the women's rights agenda became abundantly clear during the reign of Mubarak in the 1980s. Islamism began to grow across the region in the 1980s, and Egypt was no exception. Prominent Islamist men began to call for the implementation of shari'a law, which in turn pressured Hosni Mubarak to adopt conservative policies and neglect any support he may have had for the women's movement. As a result, in 1985, the personal status laws were amended again to satisfy Islamist demands. Despite having no formal space to organize, women organized a lobby that used the 1985 Nairobi Conference for Women to pressure the Egyptian government to reformulate the law back to its 1979 statute (Al-Ali, 2000). Two discourses subsequently emerged. In the tradition of Qasim Amin, modernist feminists focused on traditional feminist issues like education, employment, and political participation. Other women argued for the inclusion of more "taboo" topics into the national women's dialogue like clitorrectomy and martial rape, both of which attack the patriarchal control of female sexuality under the banner of Islam. Nawal El-Sa'dawi was a prominent voice that challenged modernist-nationalist women's activists. She founded the secular Arab Women Solidarity Association in 1982 which surfaced as one of the first women's rights organizations in the latter half of the 20th century. The association started with 120 women and grew to nearly 3,000 women by 1985. Despite being banned in 1991 by the Ministry of Social Affairs for opposing the Gulf War, the association forged an important path for women's rights organizations that rapidly began to come into existence in the 1990s. El-Sa'dawi and her fellow members "developed income generating projects for economically underprivileged women, published literary magazines and

books, and produced films about Arab women's lives" (Devex). AWSA's struggles served as an example of how the Mubarak regime supported women's rights NGOs when convenient. The availability of funding and the international women's movement also had a significant impact on the ways in which Egyptian women's rights activists that occupied the NGO space operated.

The 1990s marked a significantly positive shift for the advancement of women's rights in Egypt. Numerous organizations begin to form and do both political, legislative work as well as on the ground advocacy and service work for women. The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights, an NGO established in September of 1996 and then formally registered in 2002, "stresses the importance of women's participation in public life as an activist, voter and candidate, as well as developing women's legal and political awareness and pushing for legislative change" (Karaoglan, 2007). ECWR monitors laws and legislation that restricts women's rights, provides legal counsel to women, helps women vote and run for election by assisting marginalized women with obtaining ID cards and registration in electoral records, and attempts to challenge existing laws and propose alternatives ((Karaoglan, 2007). With two main offices in Cairo and Giza, The Egyptian Center marked the beginning of the turning point from the failed state feminist project. ECWR has spearheaded numerous projects such as the Arab Women's Forum, the Women's School Cadre Program, and the Small Initiatives Program. The forum sought to train Arab women activists across the region in advocacy work and to recognize various forms of discrimination, the school program prepared women to run in local and parliamentary elections, and the small initiatives program helped smaller, more local NGOs expand their capacity through economic aid.

Another prominent organization was the Center for Egyptian Women Legal Assistance that was established in 1995 by four lawyers as a civil company and re-registered formally in 2003 as an NGO. Located in one of Cairo's poorest neighborhoods, CEWLA's office in Boulaq provides legal counseling and financial support for women under Egyptian laws and international conventions. Their work is primarily centered around women's rights within the personal status law landscape and legislation that discriminates on the basis of gender. In addition, these lawyers and their teams advocate for law reforms for issues like rape, domestic violence, and divorce (Karaoglan, 2007). On a small scale, CEWLA offers literacy and education classes, issues IDs and voter cards, and operates a small computer center for women. Outside the realm of local issues, the NGO holds roundtable discussions with the media and Parliament about discriminatory PSL laws, organizes conferences for NGO activists and lawyers across Egypt, and offers a legal hotline for women.

A third groundbreaking women's organization is the Women and Memory Forum, a research institution that was founded in 1995 and officially registered as an NGO in 2003. WMF "focuses on women mainly in Arab history to research and rewrite women's history from a woman's perspective" in order to change the ongoing "regressive image of women" that continues to dominate everyday attitudes

in Egypt (Karaoglan, 2007, pp. 59). Without taking a secular or Islamic stance, WMF argues that basic cultural ideas of Arab women that have existed for decades block the women's rights agenda. With the help of foreign funding, the institution produces conferences, workshops, an entire library, publications, film shows, and collects women's oral history (Women and Memory).

As previously mentioned, women began to organize and bring light to formerly taboo issues like marital rape and female genital mutation in their work. While these issues paved a path for women to unite around a common cause, the impact of the UN's decade of women that lasted from 1975-1985, "the failure of the past student movement of the '70s and the ideologies like Marxism and Nasserism to raise the woman question and address women's rights and problems," as well as a growing Islamist revival were all factors that contributed to the renewal of independent organizing and the growth of organizations like CEWLA, WMF, and ECWR (Karaoglan, 2007). In her detailed thesis that dissects Egyptian women's NGOs and their relation to the state, Beril Karaoglan also discusses other growing NGOs like The Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women, The New Woman Foundation, and The Alliance for Arab Women that emerged in the nineties (Karaoglan, 2007).

In the same breath, Suzanne Mubarak and her state-funded National Council for Women attempted to co-opt the grassroots women's rights movement. Her work would have direct consequences following the Arab Spring because much of the country, including male-dominant political parties, began to associate the campaign for women's rights with the corrupt Mubarak family's desire to appeal to the oppressive West (Song, 2018). Anne Song describes this in detail by accusing Hosni Mubarak and his wife of championing women's rights "off and on" as a way to "divide and rule the Islamist and secular opposition," just as Sadat once did years earlier (Song, 2018). The use of the women's rights movement as a political bargaining tool damaged the reputation of independent NGOs and hurt grassroots organizing efforts throughout the country following the Arab Spring uprisings.

Similarities and Differences in the Egyptian and Moroccan Womens' Movements

Both Morocco and Egypt are home to a vibrant women's movement with a long history of struggle, resistance, and dedication to equality that has manifested itself in the form of strong NGOs that have overcome numerous obstacles. As described in length in each previous section, both countries have powerful female voices and an NGO infrastructure that has paved a path for women to collectively organize in a deeply patriarchal society. By closely examining trends, changing political ideologies, and important events that have occurred in each women's movement since the early 20th century, this section will create a clear picture of the similarities and differences between the work of each respective country's women's rights NGOs and female activists.

Similarities

Located on opposite sides of North Africa with vastly different government structures, the women's movement in both Morocco and Egypt have many similar qualities and trends that date back over a century ago to the present day. After compiling research from a variety of sources, it is evident that five main similarities stand out the most: the Islamic and secular feminist divide, post-colonial influence, the impact of the international women's movement, the strong presence of women during the Arab Spring, and the diverse NGO organizational structure in each country.

One of the strongest and most clear comparisons between each country is the persistence of secular and Islamist internal divides within the dialogue of the women's movement. Both secular and Islamic feminism have their own unique progression that has often become entangled in various countries throughout the MENA region. Secular feminism was born during the era of "western imperialism and colonialism, declining Ottoman suzerainty, and decaying dynastic rule" in the late 19th century amidst growing nationalist movements (Badran, 2005). As previously discussed, in Egypt, Huda Sha'rawi was the main face of the secular women's rights movement. Despite leading Egypt's first two women's rights organizations, the Arab Feminist Union and the Egyptian Feminist Union, she was heavily criticized as being elitist, exclusionary, Eurocentric, and class biased. Nawal El Saadawi, a women's activist that operated through an Islamic lens, was the clear opposing voice of that era of activism. In Morocco, similar chasms began to come to light in the early 20th century. The Democratic Association of Moroccan Women, an NGO that was originally founded by the Communist Party as the Moroccan Women's Union, was strictly secular and often heavily criticized Islamist views. Many Leftist women that organized in each country's independence movement sought to build their own movement due to exclusionary practices in male-dominated political parties. Building off an often Marxist and liberal framework, many secular feminist women made it clear that Islam could not be a tool to help eradicate the patriarchy because it upheld it. Arguing that all religion is fraught with sexism, secular feminists have often been ostracized within a larger cultural dialogue that still deeply values Islamic tradition. This was particularly evident as Islamist movements gained traction in the 1980s and women had to come up with new, innovative ways to advance women's rights agendas. Building off the anti-West rhetoric of the era, Islamic feminists began to argue that secularism is inherently imperialistic and Western-centric. This divide within each women's movement has been made abundantly clear over the years. Each country has NGOs that operate on the ground doing apolitical service and legal work for women, but many of the national NGOs that focus on reforming legislation like the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights and the Union of Feminist Action in Morocco have chosen sides between the two ideologies.

A shared history of colonial rule is a second similarity between the Moroccan and Egyptian women's rights movement. Despite having different government structures, each country has dealt with

lasting colonial influences. In the realm of women's rights, this means combating both indigenous and foreign patriarchal forces. Orientalist attitudes that still exist today either exoticized Arab women or portrayed them as oppressed and passive housewives accepting their lot in a backwards and primitive society. Additionally, during each country's post-colonial state-building process, women activists that fought alongside men during independence struggles began to quickly realize that their agenda was seen as a neglected afterthought. The pressing issue of establishing governance pushed women out of the decision-making processes while also destroying any hope for the inclusion of women's rights on each country's formative agenda. This post-colonial reality forced the growth of women's rights NGOs into dormancy until the late 1980s. While each movement's reemergence looked much different, this period of nationalism and state-building offered the same ill fate for both Moroccan and Egyptian women.

NGOs in Morocco and Egypt have been heavily influenced by the international women's movement. This global push for women's rights that gained traction throughout the 1970s led to the establishment of conventions and international laws that began to prioritize women's rights, end gender discrimination and violence, and enshrine equality between the sexes. Additionally, many Moroccan and Egyptian NGOs were able to grow because of foreign funding. In Egypt, The Women and Memory Forum, The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights, The Center for Egyptian Women Legal Aid, The Alliance for Arab Women, The Egyptian Women and Development Association, and many more all receive funding from the EU and the US embassy as well as international organizations and institutions like the UN and the World Bank (Karaoglan, 2007). While larger Moroccan NGOs have received state funding in ways that Egyptian NGOs have not, women's rights organizations like Association Ennakhil and Forum Azzahrae for Moroccan Women also receive the bulk of their funding from USAID and other foreign sources (USAID, 2020). While funding has played an important role in shaping some of the ideological components of these NGOs, the lasting colonial influences that were prevalent in each country led many women activists to organize under the umbrella of Western secularism. This had a particular impact on women's rights scholars that were often educated in Europe, particularly in France and Britain. Even feminist scholars that harshly denounce Western colonialism and imperialism were educated at some of the world's top universities in Europe. Having completed her education at the University of Cambridge in the 1960s before moving to the United States, Leila Ahmed is one such example. Her powerful memoir, *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America-A Woman's Journey*, details the ways in which colonialism and Western ideology is harmful for Arab women experiencing patriarchy from two different directions. Nevertheless, Ahmed and thousands of other Arab female scholars across the region, and the subsequent women's movement that followed in their wake, were undoubtedly impacted by growing international feminist movement of the 1970s. As previously mentioned, the cohort of Egyptian women that attended the 1985 Nairobi Women's Conference at the end of the UN Decade for Women

reflects the respect and sense of trust that women had for international laws that were fairer than those of their home countries.

While Moroccan and Egyptian grassroots women's rights movements were significantly impacted by international trends and events, state feminist policies in each country were a direct byproduct of them. In an effort to appear modernized in the eyes of the West, both Moroccan and Egyptian leaders co-opted the women's rights agenda as a politically convenient bargaining tool to win much needed foreign aid. The alarmed international community prompted the Egyptian and Moroccan regimes to use women's agendas to counter growing Islamist ideological campaigns that threatened the political status quo in the 1980s. King Hassan II of Morocco and Anwar Sadat fit into this category particularly well. Despite the ensuing peripheral and performative legislative changes concerning laws that discriminated against women, cultural attitudes remained largely unchanged in each country.

Just as Moroccan and Egyptian women were on the front lines of nationalist revolutions, the Arab Spring uprisings were initially an opportunity for women activists to engage with the political sphere at a higher level amidst demands for human rights and dignity. This similarity between each country was true across much of the Middle East and North Africa. Women were (and still are) agents for change in numerous countries throughout the Arab World during major upheavals, and the 2011 protests were no exception. This collective mobilization and enhanced visibility of female activists had varying degrees of success. While many women ended up disappointed yet again, they were still energized by their direct involvement and the international attention that they received, which in turn led to the desire to find better ways to network and form coalitions.

Egypt and Morocco share diverse NGO organizational structures and belief systems that use a variety of strategies to advance women's rights agendas. Unlike some Arab countries where spaces for women's rights advocacy exist only in the form of state funded and controlled institutions, Morocco and Egypt have independent, grassroots NGOs that utilize both local and national approaches. Each country has well-established organizations that are often centered in major cities like Cairo, Rabat, and Fez with dozens of branch organizations that operate on the ground to provide direct aid and services like legal counsel, literacy classes, and voter registration campaigns that specifically help marginalized women. The existence of both legislative/political organizations that carry out operations on a larger scale and smaller NGOs that reach local communities in rural towns and villages has allowed women to expand their efforts and widen their base. In addition, diversity in thought has also been a consistent factor of Moroccan and Egyptian NGOs. Both Islamic and secular activists have enriched the debate about what the future of women's activism in the region should look like. It is important to note as well that many of the women doing the daily, essential work that often has the biggest impact for everyday people do not label themselves as feminists at all.

Differences

While key similarities exist between Morocco and Egypt, major structural differences are also present that have heavily affected the women's movement in each country. These differences create a fuller picture as to what has been successful in each country and what has not. Factors like governmental structure, the manifestation of nationalism, and government cooperation are amongst the main differences between the two countries.

When the Egyptian nationalist revolution abolished the monarchy on June 18, 1953, Gamel Abdel Nasser undertook an ambitious pan-Arab nationalist movement that shook the region to its core. The new, bold changes initially seemed to promise a new era for women's progress and the expansion of human rights in general. Despite his popularity, Nasser's authoritarian rule ruptured the women's movement in many ways. Unlike Morocco, no independent organizing was allowed, and systems of strict state surveillance were put into place that still have serious consequences for women activists today. On the surface, Egypt appeared to be a progressive state but nursed dictatorial tendencies behind the scenes that stifled dissent and the growth of civil society. The development of state feminism espoused this outward appearance of modernity, yet PSL laws that harshly discriminated against women remained unchanged and a strong pillar of private Egyptian society. Nasser's rule led to more of the same in the policies of his predecessors.

Moroccan women enjoyed much more freedom and independence from the state than their female counterparts across the Maghreb. Even though many women's rights NGOs were not established until the 1990s, female scholars like Fatima Mernissi challenged the status quo by gathering scholars from different genders, backgrounds, and religious perspectives to complete research that moved the needle forward for the movement (Outaleb & Sadiqi, 2021). Independent organizing was monitored by the state, but women did not suffer from severe censorship and criminal threats in the ways that Egyptian women did. Many Moroccan NGOs received state funding and did not have to desperately source their money from foreign sources. Nouzha Skalli, Morocco's former head of the Ministry for Social Development, Family, and Solidarity, distributed millions of dirhams to NGOs in the mid-2000s under a national campaign for human development (Ennaji, 2010). Moroccan women's rights NGOs' close relationship with the state and various political parties played an important role in the Moudawana reforms and the redrafting of the Constitution. King Hassan II's inclusion of NGO activists in the Moudawana reform negotiations with Islamic scholars and political leaders is one example of how Morocco did not attempt to abolish independent organizing, but rather reluctantly supported it. Grassroots female activists in Egypt lacked this sort of relationship with the state, which is evidence as to why the personal status law remained in place for so many years and only changed whenever its current leader found it politically advantageous.

Governmental structure has also played an important role in the advancement of women's rights agendas. While Morocco has been a relatively stable monarchy since the colonial era, "the fractured nature of the Egyptian post-colonial state, its changing policies under different regimes, its internal divisions, and its links to international constituencies account for women activists' shifting relations to the state" (Al-Ali, 2000, pp. 55). During the Arab Spring, Egyptian protestors were calling for Hosni Mubarak to be ousted, whereas regime change was not one of the demands in Morocco. While monarchies are not always beneficial for women, which is clearly evident in Saudi Arabia, Morocco still has a Parliament, legislative bodies, and a constitution with democratic characteristics. The stability of the regime and the persistent pressure that Moroccan women have managed to leverage against it has been a key ingredient for success and recognition. In the case of Egypt, women are constantly having to deal with new policies, political factions, and leaders that have not been historically benevolent towards women activists. Following the military's overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi in 2014, Abdulah Fattah al-Sisi's rule has been particularly unforgiving for human rights. This constant battle that Egyptian women have had to fight against patriarchal, unstable leadership has damaged women's hope for genuine, long-lasting change and future progress.

Lastly, Morocco and Egyptian women have worked to advance their agendas in different ways. Moroccan women have historically used coalitions with Islamic jurists, political parties, Islamic feminists, and international organizations to make change. The strong "polarization of dialogue" in Egypt has made these sorts of alliances nearly impossible (Al-Ali, 2000). The two opposing and divergent strains of feminism, one focusing on traditional women's issues and the other giving more attention to the private sphere and culturally taboo topics, have rarely found middle ground to collectively organize in the ways that Moroccan women have done historically. The growth and influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has also strained the dialogue around women's rights. Morocco has less Islamist influence, partially due to the 2004 Casablanca terrorist attacks and a consistently moderate ruling family, which has led to less extreme denunciations of women rights activism.

The Arab Spring and Its Aftermath

Morocco

The "20 February Movement" that kicked off the Arab Spring is a striking example of the ways in which decades of women's mobilization allowed for a new coalition and network. Women like Amina Boughalbi and Nidal Salam Hamdache were two leading voices that addressed major societal and political concerns like the wealth gap, high illiteracy, a lack of rights and liberties, poor health care, and corruption (Sadiqi, 2015). Young women were a part of The National Council of Support that helped rally labor unions, human rights groups, academics and journalists, international organizations, and political parties to fight for the aforementioned demands. While the movement didn't center women's issues, just

as they were pushed to the side during the era of the independence movement, the strong presence and experience of women's NGOs nevertheless moved education and health care to the top of the agenda.

Women used social media, blogs, street advertisements, and digital tools that "obliterated the frontiers between intellectual and activist spaces" (Sadiqi, 2015). This resistance to hierarchical systems and the utilization of non-traditional organizing methods allowed women to navigate a network on the fringes of mainstream politics. This approach also allowed more people to be reached, which in turn encouraged cooperation between women's organizations and the pro-modernity monarchy (Sadiqi, 2015).

A network called "Spring of Feminist Democracy and Equality," created in March 2011, submitted a list of demands to the Advisory Constitutional Committee for the revision of the Constitution. The list included prioritizing international law over national law, a fifty percent quota for women in all fields, the implementation of a ban against all forms of discrimination against women, and the recognition of the indivisibility of human rights (Sadiqi, 2015). The redrafting ultimately ended up including some of the demands of female NGO activists as well as the creation of multiple bodies and articles to safeguard women's rights, such as the Authority for Equality and the Fight Against All Forms of Discrimination.

Despite these changes, leading Moroccan feminist Nadia Elboubkri argued that the reforms were performative and only made peripheral changes (Sadiqi, 2015). The Arab Spring had limited accomplishments for women not only in Morocco, but throughout the entire MENA region. Nevertheless, the liberation of women is a continuous battle that will continue to be hard-fought and heavily resisted. The past decade has planted a seed for the future in which "a new generation of women emerged not simply looking for more rights, but for all rights" (Sadiqi, 2015).

Egypt

Despite having a high number of female activists on the street during the 2011 revolution, women ultimately saw a regression of their rights following January 25th. After Mubarak was ousted from power, the number of sexual assault cases throughout Egypt increased, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) charged female detainees with prostitution, conducted forced virginity testing, and registered them as sex criminals, and male authorities and fellow protestors often mocked and ridiculed their female counterparts (Song, 2018). Women suffered from rape and sexual torture while in prison and experienced severe harassment in the streets amidst the protests in crowded areas like Tahrir Square. In a conservative culture where speaking out about sexual assault and rape is considered shameful for the victim, there has been little accountability.

This epidemic of sexual violence in Egypt has demoralized the women's movements by attempting to silence it into shame. Even though more women voted in elections and participated in politics following the Arab Spring, overall representation declined. In the immediate aftermath of the protests, 27% of Tunisia's parliament were women, 17% of Morocco's, and only 2% of Egypt's (Song,

2018). To make matters worse, Egyptian Islamist Parliament members announced lowering the legal marriage age from 16 years old, allowing genital mutation citing Islamic tradition, and abolishing a women's right to divorce (Song, 2018). Nearly "91.1 percent of women ages 15 to 49 had been subjected to genital mutilation" throughout Egypt, which proves that the patriarchal control of the private sphere remains particularly strong (Eltahawy, 2014). These major steps backwards in a state whose future is unpredictable have been a major blow for women's rights. Even still, as Mona Eltahawy wrote for the New York Times following her participation in the Arab Spring, women across the entire region were, and still are, beginning to harness "a new and combustible power: the power of their rage and the need to use it" (Eltahawy, 2014).

Conclusion: Looking to the Future

While completing research for this paper, I began to quickly realize that it would be impossible to write a complete paper on women's rights NGOs in Egypt and Morocco without delving into the history of each respective women's movement. This meant exploring the effects of nationalism, examining Arab culture and its patriarchal roots, post-colonial state building processes, the implications of major upheavals and social protests, and internal ideological conflicts that occur in nearly every women's movement, and ultimately, every movement for social justice. Egypt and Morocco both share a vibrant history of women's activism that dates back to over a century. Each movement has experienced setbacks, challenges, and hard-earned wins over the years. The future of women's organizing in each country, and across the entire region, is bright. Despite startling statistics shared about Egypt and the unavoidable fact that while Morocco's laws are considered progressive, their actual enforcement leaves much less to be desired, the future is hopeful because women in these countries are refusing to give up. Decades of struggle and resilience has shown that even when women are raped in the street or mocked in the halls of Parliament, their commitment to making sure that their full humanity is recognized and respected is unwavering.

One specific legal case that was settled for a rural Moroccan woman in 2007 may offer an important roadmap for what the future of Arab feminist organizing can and should look like in the coming years. Rkia Bellot was 20 years old when her father passed away. As a single woman, she was left to care for her eight brothers on her own. In 2004, her family decided to sell their communal land in an effort to support themselves financially, and while each of her brothers received a share of the profit, Rkia was left empty handed. Under tribal law, Rkia was unprotected because women are not allowed to inherit land. Rkia was categorized as a *Soulaliyat* woman, which is defined as an "unmarried or widowed woman excluded from the inheritance of collective lands owned collectively by groups of people belonging to a common origin or descendants of the same ethnic group" (Sadiqi, 2015, pp. 12). Instead of giving up, Rkia began to protest her position and attracted the attention of the Democratic Association of Moroccan

Women. With the support of ADFM, Rkia organized a protest of over 500 women in front of Parliament in 2007 in an effort to bring attention to discriminatory inheritance laws.

To build upon her case, ADFM included a group of women from the town of Kenitra who were subjected to the same fate as Rkia. The association began to train women in “civic leadership and public speaking,” which quickly became a national story (Sadiqi, 2015). After understanding the breadth of the problem, ADFM began to organize hundreds of Soulaliyat women across Morocco to perform sit-ins and mass demonstrations in front of the Parliament building in Rabat. In March of 2009, more and more women were supported by ADFM until the Minister of the Interior released “a government order that instructed tribal leaders to recognize the rights of Soulaliyat women to receive money when their family’s communal lands were sold” (Sadiqi, 2015, pp. 13). The success of these women and the ADFM made waves throughout the region.

While this appears to be one small case in the midst of thousands from women who are seeking justice for the things they have endured in the privacy of their homes, Rkia’s case spells out a future for Arab women because it is multi-faceted, community-driven, and is a part of both political and the local spheres. The future of organizing in the MENA region cannot solely take place in the halls of government. Just as ADFM did, it must help local, disenfranchised women on the ground while simultaneously pressuring governmental officials and political parties to recognize the injustices that women deal with day in and day out. Even though the tribal laws that had patriarchal roots were seen as a cultural pillar in rural communities, they were still challenged by women whose livelihoods were dependent on their reform. Women’s rights NGOs must adopt intersectional strategies that seek to challenge both patriarchal culture and discriminatory laws in the same breath. Coalition building that forms bridges and mutual understanding between people with opposing viewpoints, cultural backgrounds, ages, and varying degrees of religiosity will determine the success and the overall reach of future women’s movements. Additionally, mutual aid that is separate from government funding, as seen in Rkia’s case, will allow women to form alliances and establish solidarity in an environment that thrives off their subjugation.

Egyptian women have a more difficult future ahead of them given recent violence statistics and the tumultuous history of the country. While these next steps are daunting, women will have to fight on multiple fronts to gain their rights. In each country, history has shown that it is more of a cultural battle than it is a political one. Women in both Morocco and Egypt have fought for laws that safeguard their right to divorce, a reasonable age to be married, admittance into universities, quotas that expand their representation in government, and the criminalization of genital mutilation. Despite being encoded into law, there is a large gap between what is written on paper and what is actually practiced in the sanctity of the home. Organizations like the Women and Memory Forum in Egypt that attempt to shift regressive

cultural attitudes towards women will be equally as important as political NGOs that work to reform laws. There is a long battle ahead, but the foundation is there.

Even though many of the largest women's organizations in each country are grounded in secularism, women's organizing will never succeed without the inclusion of Islamic feminism. As Islamist movements shift back and forth between popularity and dormancy, there is no doubt that Islam will remain a key and steadfast component of both Moroccan and Egyptian society. Islamic feminists have the tools and the knowledge of sacred texts that can help Muslim women gain rights within a religious framework. Their inclusion into NGO spaces adds legitimacy to the women's movement in the eyes of male Islamic scholars and politicians that are trying to appeal to Islamist factions. These women add the necessary and missing component to the movement by challenging persistent cultural attitudes that are grounded in a patriarchal interpretation of Islam as well as claims that women's movements are Eurocentric, anti-family, and against cultural traditions. Alliances formed between Islamic and secular feminists that overcome ideological differences in pursuit of a larger goal will benefit women in numerous ways.

Ten years after the Arab Spring, the direction of the women's movement is still unclear throughout much of the Arab world. While the odds are almost never in a woman's favor, her willpower is. Morocco and Egypt are home to historically strong women's movements that contemporary activists can lean upon for support and build off to design a more inclusive future where equality is an undebatable human right. The future of women's organizing as well as the infrastructure of NGOs must have alliances between Islamic and secular feminists, coalition building that extends towards every corner of society, a revival of female scholarship that denounces patriarchal cultural attitudes, the use of unconventional network-based methods that prioritize intersectionality, and the enforcement of laws that forbid discrimination on the basis of gender. Just as it has been for over a century, there will be unforeseen challenges and roadblocks ahead. The future is uncertain, but there is no shortage of female willpower, frustration, and rage throughout the region. If these emotions are harnessed correctly, there is no doubt that women will be a force to be reckoned with.

Bibliography

Books

- Ahmed, Leila. *Women and gender in Islam: historical roots of a modern debate.* Yale University Press, 1992.
- Touaf, Larbi and Soumia Boutkhil and Chourouq Nasri. "North African Women After the Arab Spring: In the Eye of the Storm." *Palgrave Macmillan*, 2017.
- Pratt, Nicola. "Embodying Geopolitics: Generations of Women's Activism in Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon." *University of California Press*, 2020. <https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.temple.edu/stable/j.ctv17mrv35>
- Al-Ali, Nadjie. "Secularism, Gender and the State: The Egyptian Women's Movement." *Cambridge University Press*, 2000. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/templeuniv-ebooks/reader.action?docID=201420>

Articles

- "Arab Women Solidarity Association (AWSA)." *Devex*. <https://www.devex.com/organizations/arab-women-solidarity-association-awsa-47773>
- Badran, Margot. "Understanding Islam, Islamism, and Islamic Feminism." *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 13 no. 1, 2001, p. 47-52. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/jowh.2001.0022.
- Badran, Margot. "Exploring Islamic Feminism." Wilson Center's Middle East Program, November 29, 2000. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/exploring-islamic-feminism>
- Badran, Margot. "Between Secular and Islamic Feminism/s: Reflections on the Middle East and Beyond." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, Duke University Press, 2005, pp. 6–28, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40326847>.
- Boutkhil, Soumia. "Moroccan Women in Limbo: On Liminal Citizenship and the Quest for Equality." *Women's Movements in Post-"Arab Spring" North Africa*, pp. 251–265, 2016. https://www.academia.edu/30872345/Moroccan_Women_in_Limbo_on_Liminal_Citizenship_and_the_Quest_for_Equality
- Eddouada, Souad, et Renata Pepicelli. "Morocco: Towards an "Islamic State Feminism", *Critique internationale*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2010, pp. 87-100.
- Ennaji, Moha. "Women's NGOs and social change in Morocco." *Routledge*, pp. 79-88, 2010. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203851579-13/women-ngos-social-change-morocco-moha-ennaji>
- Fatima, Sadiqi. "Women's Organizing in Morocco In Light of a Post-Arab Spring Moment and an

- Islamist Government.” Zeina Zaatari and Suad Joseph (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, 2015.
- https://www.academia.edu/28734994/WOMENS_ORGANIZING_IN_MOROCCO_IN_LIGHT_OF_A_POST_ARAB_SPRING_MOMENT_AND_AN_ISLAMIST_GOVERNMENT_1?from=cover_page
- Karaođlan, Beril. “Women’s NGOs and Their Relations with the State in Egypt.” *Middle East Technical University*, 2007. <https://open.metu.edu.tr/bitstream/handle/11511/17113/index.pdf>
- Moghadam, Valentine M. “Women’s and Feminist Activism in Northern Africa.” *Wiley Online Library*, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegss317>
- Moghadam Valentine M. “Modernizing women: Gender and social change in the Middle East.” Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993.
- Moghissi, Haideh. “Feminism, Islamic.” *Wiley Online Library*, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegss286>
- “Five Years after the Arab Spring: What’s Next for Women in the MENA Region?” *Wilson Center*, 2016.
- Ryadi, Khadija. “History and Analysis of the Feminist Movement in Morocco.” *Capire*, 2021. <https://capiremov.org/en/experience/history-and-analysis-of-the-feminist-movement-in-morocco/>
- Sadiqi, F., and F. Outaleb. “*The 2004 Moroccan Family Law (Moudawana): Home-Grown Islamic Feminism With Potential to Grow*”. *Al-Raida Journal*, vol. 44, no. 2, Mar. 2021, pp. 112 -124, DOI:10.32380/alrj.v44i2.1832.
- Salem, Sara. "Stretching' Marxism in the Postcolonial World". *Historical Materialism* 27.4 (2019): 3-28. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206X-00001840>.
- Skalli, Loubna H. “Generational Politics and Renewal of Leadership in the Moroccan Women's Movement, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*,” 13:3, 329-348, 2011. DOI: [10.1080/14616742.2011.587366](https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2011.587366)
- Song, Anne. "Political Revolutions and Women's Progress: Why the Egyptian Arab Spring Failed to Deliver on the Promises of Women's Rights." *Master's Theses*, 2018. <https://repository.usfca.edu/thes/1088>
- USAID. “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.” *Usaid.org*. <https://www.usaid.gov/egypt/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>.
- USAID. “USAID-Supported Moroccan Civil Society Organizations Respond and Adapt to the COVID-19 Outbreak.” 2020. <https://www.usaid.gov/morocco/program-updates/jun-2020-usaid-supported-moroccan-civil-society-organizations-respond-and-adapt-covid>
- Women’s Learning Partnership. “Democratic Association of Moroccan Women (L’association

democratique des femmes du Maroc).” <https://learningpartnership.org/index.php/who-we-are/partnership/democratic-association-moroccan-women>

World Bank. “Labor Force, Female (% of Total Labor Force).” *Worldbank.org*,
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=EG>.

“8 Mars Newspaper.” *Cengage*, Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa.
<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/8-mars-newspaper>