Women, Islam, and Resistance in the Arab World

Maria Holt
and Haifaa Jawad
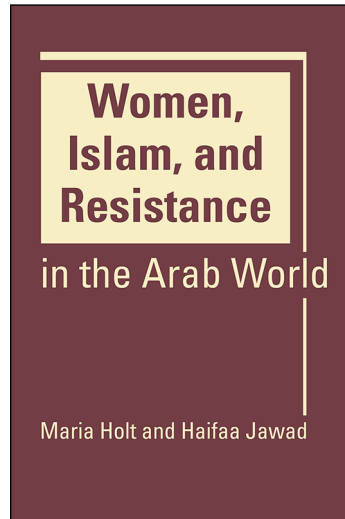
Contents

1

Women and Islamism in the Arab World

Even when we are in mourning, we still need to behave according to the expected codes and male orders.[1]

When I interviewed Umm Hassan in 2007, she was fifty-five years old.[2] She was married to her cousin at the age of thirteen. Her family came from the town of Bint Jbeil in southern Lebanon, in the area that was occupied by Israel until 2000. Her husband was a personnel manager. The couple had two sons and three daughters. They now live in Kuwait. When I interviewed her, she told me about the death of her eldest son, who worked as a mechanical engineer in Kuwait. During visits to Lebanon in the 1980s and 1990s, she said, he became inspired by and involved with the "Islamic resistance," which was fighting a guerrilla war against the Israeli occupation. He was caught by the Israelis making bombs and imprisoned in Khiam prison; they brought his mother to intimidate him, but he refused to talk. In early July 2006, Umm Hassan was in Bint Jbeil with her son and, when the resistance captured two Israelis on the Lebanese-Israeli border, she said, "he was crying with happiness." Following the subsequent Israeli invasion, he went away "to do an operation" but did not return; he was killed on August 12, 2006. They were very proud of him. The resistance, she added, "is a source of pride for the country."[3]

Umm Walid also lost her son under violent circumstances. She was fifty-one years old when I met her in 2007 and lived in Hebron in the Palestinian West Bank. She was born in Jerusalem, was married, and had three sons and one daughter. Her husband was a tailor. Her eldest son, Walid, was killed by the Israelis in 2003. He was a fighter with the Islamist movement Hamas. Umm Walid supports the Islamic resistance movement, she said, because "they work against the Israeli occupation." She also believes strongly that Palestine should be an Islamic state. She and her husband had been unaware, she said, of their son's activities. Nonetheless, they felt

"very proud" of him. Walid, she recalled, often talked about becoming a martyr. Another of her sons, also a fighter, is in an Israeli prison.[4] Umm Sarah, forty-one years old and a native of Iraq, lost her brother during the invasion and was forced to flee Iraq with her husband and four children, first to Yemen and then to Jordan, where they currently live as refugees in difficult conditions. She affirmed, "We support the Islamic resistance; they are defending our homeland and families and I do not mind if my son wants to fight with them." In response to a question on the role Islam should play in Iraq, she answered, "We want Islam to rule our lives and land, we are Muslims."[5]

The narratives of these three women, their pride and their anguish, provide some idea of the popular support in Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, Iraq, and also in the wider Arab world for Islamic resistance movements. They are a source of empowerment for populations who feel they are victims of injustice. Their stories also reveal that their natural sense of sorrow, be they mothers, sisters, or daughters, at the loss of their loved ones, is tempered by the positive concept of martyrdom that continues to sustain Muslims, especially Muslim women, in times of tragedies and difficulties.[6] It is a "politics of piety," in which "men are associated with martyrdom [and] women mainly with mourning."[7] But their stories raise questions about the meaning of resistance in conflict situations, how it is understood by the women affected, how it contributes to articulations of modernity in Arab societies, how power and powerlessness are expressed, and how the resistance includes, or fails to include, women. Can the positive feelings of these three women and many other women in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, and elsewhere in the region translate into more active forms of female participation in Islamic resistance movements? What implications does the involvement of women have for future democratic development in the Arab world? These questions highlight "some of the conceptual challenges that women's participation in the Islamic movement poses to feminist theorists," one of which is whether their roles, as nationalist agents or active resisters, are likely to be inhibited or empowered by the ideological influences of Islam.[8]

Power and Empowerment

According to popular misconception in the west, Muslim women are oppressed and mistreated by men and by their religion. In this view, they lack power, both political and personal, and enjoy few of the rights or freedoms to which women in the west are accustomed. Simplistic generalizations of this kind have proved unhelpful in understanding the complex reality of Arab societies, specifically the ways in which women's experiences

vary over time and place and the strategies they adopt to negotiate on their own behalf. Where there is power, as Michel Foucault tells us, there will be resistance, and as we are focusing on resistance in this book, we must also explain what we mean by power, and especially the empowerment of women. We ask how women can feel empowered in a situation rigidly structured by patriarchy and how they subvert patriarchy in order to play a part in both national and more private struggles.

It should be acknowledged, first of all, that knowledge and the pursuit of knowledge are also forms of power. To know, as Bryan Turner argues, "is to subordinate."[9] The orientalist discourse, as explored by Edward Said in his influential 1978 book, was "a remarkably persistent framework of analysis," which also "constituted a field of political power."[10] To avoid, or at least minimize, such power relations, we have been careful to privilege the voices of the women we interviewed, to highlight their concerns over our own theoretical preoccupations, and to accord respect to points of view we may not necessarily share.

We agree that it is misconceived to classify women as "a coherent group across contexts, regardless of class or ethnicity."[11] According to this view, power relations "are structured in terms of a unilateral and undifferentiated source of power and a cumulative reaction to power. Opposition is a generalized phenomenon created as a response to power."[12] As Judy el-Bushra and others have argued, to equate men solely with power and women with powerlessness creates a false dichotomy. On several levels, even though men are usually the formal holders of power, "women exercise agency in the pursuit of self-identified goals."[13] Beyond the arenas of the state and the family, many women in Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine perceive themselves as powerless vis-à-vis the west and its local ally Israel. Their response, as outlined in this book, is to resort to various forms of resistance.

Questions of Identity and Belonging

Our objective is to challenge assumptions of powerlessness and victimization, and we will do so by referring to Islamic texts and exploring how Islamic activism enables women to play constructive roles in violent conflict, by reviewing Arab women's involvement in war and conflict in the present period, and by focusing on how women in several Middle Eastern societies experience and are being empowered by their participation in Islamic resistance movements and revolutions in the Arab world.

In this book, we seek to address the issues mentioned above by (1) defining "resistance" in the context of national and anticolonial struggle, (2) assessing how forms of resistance enhance an Islamic emancipator project, and (3) considering how Arab Muslim women engage with legitimate

and illegitimate violence in order to resist oppression both inside and out-
side their societies. We are primarily concerned with resistance against per-
ceived external enemies by Muslim communities who choose to organize
their struggles within an Islamic framework. But we cannot altogether dis-
regard how women and men are differently affected. Although the language
of political Islam is one of rights and Islam supposedly gives women "all
the rights they need . . . what this actually means for women is, for all prac-
tical purposes, the same patriarchy."[14] But it is also a language of identity
and belonging that has not, we argue, been altogether hijacked by "the
patriarchy."

Women's "gendered identities are constructed through the discourse of
religion and nationalism."[15] This has positive and negative connotations
because "Islamic movements themselves have arisen in a world shaped by
the intense engagements of Western powers in Middle Eastern lives," and
therefore it is likely that the primary concern of women and men is to
express communal solidarity in the face of threats from outside.[16] Con-
structed, historically and symbolically, as "mothers of the nation," women's
status has meant that the nation has been frequently identified through "the
iconography of familial and domestic space."[17] This idealization—or
restriction—of women's role has meant that nationalist activism has tended
to take place outside the private sphere, thus excluding women.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, on the United States by
self-proclaimed Muslim "jihadists" and the emergence of what has been
called the "new terrorism,"[18] the tendency of uninformed public opinion in
the west to demonize Islam, without distinguishing between the vast major-
ity of law-abiding and peaceful Muslims in the Arab world and the small
minority that has opted to use Islam as a weapon of violence, increased dra-
matically. It also placed under the spotlight the activities of Arab women
and raised urgent questions about proper female conduct; although "the
mother of the martyr" (*umm shahid*) is a respected role, as Umm Hassan's
and Umm Walid's narratives demonstrated, the woman who chooses to act
violently on behalf of her nation or people tends to be treated with more
ambivalence. However, as we will argue, the increasingly popular practice
of resistance within an Islamic framework is enabling some women both to
access sources of dignity and empowerment and also to adopt more active
roles.

But it is also clear that a tension exists between women's engaged and
committed participation on the one hand, and their symbolic and relatively
restricted role on the other. We address this tension by exploring how the
strength of Islamist movements affects women's rights and entitlements in
the Arab world, in the context of non-western versions of "modernity"; we
also ask whether the trend of Islamic resistance, in the face of gender
stereotyping by many in the west, is capable of empowering women;

finally, we evaluate some of the ways in which Arab women are throwing into question or, in some cases, subverting the male-dominated character frequently attributed to Islamist movements and whether their efforts can be described as a type of "feminism."

Female Forms of Resistance in the Arab World

One of the key arguments we make in this book is that women in the Arab world, in response to oppressive practices from outside and discrimination within their own societies, are performing various forms of resistance. They are inspired by anticolonial movements, nationalism, and, of particular note in the context of this book, religion. We suggest that resistance is adopted by women to protect them from patriarchal excesses or traditional patterns of behavior that appear to relegate them to second-class status. However, resistance is a broad concept and difficult to define. As Foucault argues, resistance is a response to the exercise of power; and power clearly takes many forms in women's lives. In Arab societies, "many women willingly participate in the dominant power relations (patriarchy), accept socially designated roles, and internalize and use various socially constructed discourses to explain why things are and to give meaning to their experiences."[19] This, we argue, is a form of resistance. It implies not simply "acting in opposition" but also reflects the "potential for subversion and contestation in the interstices of established orders."[20]

Although Rose Weitz asserts that "the term resistance remains loosely defined,"[21] Jocelyn Hollander and Rachel Einwohner focus on two recurring themes: "recognition and intent."[22] An important issue, as they say, is "the *visibility* of the resistance act" (emphasis added).[23] It may be oppositional or unrecognized, overt or deliberately concealed.[24] Although some argue that the concept of resistance should apply only to "visible, collective acts that result in social change,"[25] others are of the opinion that it is equally applicable to what Scott calls "everyday" acts of resistance,[26] the "ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups."[27] As el-Bushra notes, "everyday forms of resistance within existing gender relations frameworks provide scope for women to exercise political influence."[28] Any discussion of resistance "must detail not only resistant acts, but the subjective intent motivating these as well."[29] However, as Hollander and Einwohner observe, assessing intent may be problematic; oppressed people "may intend to resist [oppression] in some fashion, but this resistance may occur privately because public resistance is too dangerous."[30]

For Arab women suffering oppression, resistance occurs on several levels and takes a variety of forms. As women, they may resist the patriarchy, but this is likely to be a concealed form of resistance. The women in our

case studies see themselves as part of a resistance project against the colonizing power of Israel and the hegemonic power of the west. They tend to regard themselves, in some respects, as marginalized; however, rather than identifying marginality as "a site of deprivation," they find that it is preferable to re-conceptualize it as "the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance."[31]

Resistance, as we argue, can be expressed in subtle and more obvious ways. It is very often nonviolent but can also become violent. It can take the form of dress: for example, the veiling movement in Egypt from the late 1970s and in Iran following the 1979 Islamic revolution has been described as an expression of resistance, in this case against the neocolonial project of the west.[32] The women in our case studies have also used dress to express their opposition to prevailing narratives, especially Shiite women in Lebanon who consciously adopted Islamic dress as a visible form of protest in the early 1980s. Some of the women we interviewed, who often conceptualized their own activities in terms of resistance against the enemy "other," preferred not to discuss more complex internal dimensions of resistance, such as coercion and lack of choice, although some asserted that, once national liberation has been achieved, women's "liberation" is likely to follow. They rarely used the language of "women's rights" but the meaning was implicit in their words.

Overview of the Book

We have selected four key areas to illustrate our arguments. First, in the context of the rapidly evolving study of Middle Eastern Muslim women, we discuss the dangers of essentializing women; colonial feminism, as Abu-Lughod notes, belongs "in the past."[33] Second, we assess the impact of violent conflict on women in the Arab world in terms of identity, national belonging, and modernity. Third, we consider the various effects that Islam, as a faith, a tradition, and activism, has on women involved in violent conflict. Fourth, in the case studies we explore the significance of women's own agency. While acknowledging the complexity of the topic, we argue strongly that, without analyzing all relevant elements, it is impossible to draw meaningful conclusions about women's lives. Our project took place against a background of violence, insecurity, and uncertainty; it is essential to bear in mind that the women interviewed for this project exist in similarly insecure conditions, which is likely to have an effect on the framing of their narratives.

We test our arguments by referring to three case studies—of Iraqi, Lebanese Shiite, and Palestinian women—all of which present very persuasive models of both intense oppression of women and women as "liberatory

subject."[34] We chose these three groups of women because (1) all of them have consciously embraced an Islamic form of resistance against oppression imposed on them from outside; and (2) they embody significant differences, both in the performance and perfectibility of their resistance. In all three cases, women have assumed a diversity of roles that highlight victimization but also demonstrate that "their lack of formal power does not deprive them of their capabilities of resistance."[35] To explore the influence of Islamic resistance on women, we analyze the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Iraqi conflicts from the perspectives of some of the women involved, in their own words. We ask how Islamic teachings, including the modern ideology of political Islamism and Islamic resistance, prevent, constrain, or encourage female participation in the defense of the nation and the formation of personal identity. We argue that, far from being excluded from the dominant discourse, many Arab women are finding their "voice" through the modernizing processes of Islamic resistance. For many, especially in the west, the presence of women (sometimes in leadership positions, as is the case with the Yemeni activist Tawakkol Karman, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in late 2011) on the streets has been surprising and has caused some to reevaluate the stale stereotypes of silencing and powerlessness. Indeed, their efforts, determination, and dynamism seem to have created a model for others to emulate.

In this chapter, we discuss some of the theoretical underpinnings that inform our understanding of Arab women's resistance in situations of violent conflict, with a view to challenging preconceptions. We also describe the methodology used to conduct research. There is a great difference, as Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian observes, "between those who invert the patriarchal order by putting women in the centre and those who deconstruct that order and perceive women *as* the centre," and we certainly support the notion of women's centrality.[36] In order to construct an appropriate analytical framework in which to locate the research, it is necessary to decolonize feminism[37] and, by doing so, to destabilize some of the founding assumptions of modern theory.[38] Our work touches upon the question of control, in the sense of who controls the research process, who controls the agenda, and who controls the outcomes.

In Chapter 2, we consider the theological elements of the debate: What are the religious foundations of "Islamic resistance" and women's role in it? How does their activism challenge the patriarchy? As we were writing this book, a sequence of events of far-reaching significance began to unfold in the Arab world; since the end of 2010, many watched in amazement as women and men in states across the region poured into the streets to demand reform and the overthrow of dictatorial regimes. Although these events can by no means be attributed to Islamic activism, they are a natural progression of a resistance trend of which Islam is a key constituent. The

so-called Arab spring is continuing still, and it is impossible to make meaningful claims about its outcomes. However, we felt it important to refer to the various Arab revolutions in terms of women's participation that, we argue, has parallels with the case studies explored here; in Chapter 3, therefore, we present an overview of women's activism. The final three chapters focus on the particular experiences of women in Lebanon, Iraq, and Palestine and are based on substantial fieldwork carried out in the countries concerned. Our aim, overall, is to link the discourse on gender and national identity with discussions of women's role in national liberation and Islamic resistance movements.

Research Method: An Exploration of Difference

In order to analyze Arab women's experiences of violent conflict and resistance in the latter part of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century, we address the questions of how best to study women in societies other than one's own, in this case the Arab Middle East, and, more broadly, why a separate study of women is necessary at all. We need to consider, in other words, to what extent it is possible to generalize about "women" as a category. Clearly, discussions about "difference" cannot be separated from questions of identity[39] and these in turn "cannot be resolved outside those of gender."[40]

Fieldwork research for this book was conducted in Lebanon, the West Bank, Syria, Jordan, and Yemen in 2002–2003, 2006–2007, and 2010–2011.[41] It took the form of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with a wide range of women of all ages and classes and, in certain cases, of communication by email. Suitable (and willing) participants were identified with the help of local organizations and individuals, who also advised on the content of the questionnaires. In addition, we interviewed some prominent male figures who have links to the resistance. The primary objective of the interviews was to assess each woman's personal experiences of violent conflict, her relationship with and feelings toward the national/Islamic resistance as a form of activism and liberation (both personal and political), and her own particular methods of coping. On the whole, the interviews tended to turn into conversations; in some cases, other women were present and contributed to the discussion. Our interviewees included professional women (university lecturers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc.) and women who had no schooling at all; women living in towns, villages, and refugee camps; political activists; women involved in welfare activities; students; Islamist women and secular women; the widows and mothers of martyrs; and women who refer to themselves as "feminists."

Each interview lasted, on average, one hour; most were conducted in Arabic and took place either in the woman's home or in a community center or the office of a nongovernmental organization. In every instance, the research project's aims were clearly explained to the woman so that she could give her informed consent; she was assured that she need not answer any question that made her feel uncomfortable and that her identity would be protected. We wanted the participants to appreciate that the project gave them space to express their own views, hopes, and experiences, both positive and negative, rather than fearing that an artificial agenda was being imposed on them.

By and large, the women were forthcoming about shared goals of national liberation and nation building and their own reasons for participating in what often appeared to be a bloody, chaotic, and frequently hopeless conflagration. What emerged from these encounters was a strong sense of pride on the part of the majority of the women in their contribution to the struggle; they made it clear that they had no choice but to involve themselves. Forms of participation were described in creative and sometimes even humorous detail. One gleaned a feeling of a broad and vital objective shared by all members of the community. On the fringes of the consensus, however, we sometimes sensed an element of discontent and began to be aware of areas in which women had experienced dissatisfaction, though these were rarely articulated openly to us. We sensed that some of our interlocutors were disappointed that, although they too had risked their lives for the national struggle, their male-dominated society was still reluctant to give women a voice in the business of postconflict reconstruction, if and when it began.[42]

Our experiences convinced us that it was impossible to arrive at any definitive version of the "truth," or perhaps the women with whom we spoke simply did not wish to share their truths with us. Conversations were often simply that: an opportunity to exchange views and to establish where we all stood. At the same time, despite the problematic nature of the relationship between us, the women revealed—deliberately or inadvertently— something of the complexity of their situation and the ways in which they were coping with it. At the end of the period of fieldwork, we both felt we had learned a great deal. But new questions had begun to take root in our minds, specifically, what happens when the mask of consensus slips?

We must acknowledge the difficulties of addressing these problems because there is no shared understanding of what constitutes resistance or how to deal with the fluid boundaries of dissatisfaction. The problem of conceiving difference "in ways which are not restrictive but liberating remains a key theoretical and political question for contemporary feminism."[43] One engages in the exploration of the lives of women who are

"different" with two distinct objectives: to locate points of convergence and to enrich one's own understanding of the world. However, as this introduces complex issues of self-positioning and a notional postcolonial methodology, it should be undertaken with caution. There has been much discussion among feminist researchers about "non-hierarchical research relations," which, it has been argued, can "only be met by an *escape* from reality" (emphasis in original).[44] Our aim here is to engage consciously and deliberately in research that is not only nonhierarchical but also hands over part of the power involved in the research process to the women who are the subjects of the research.

One should beware of equating difference with deviation from the norm. It is preferable to acknowledge "change, complexity, and interpretative privilege in cultural formation. . . . This enables us to locate and condemn the particular historical formulations of culture that oppress women . . . as well as to understand and support women's ability to wrest freedom from amidst these oppressive conditions."[45] There is a danger, too, of reinforcing "the notion of difference as objectified otherness. . . . An abstract anthropological subject deemed 'oppressed' is thus created. Studying this constructed subject is not for the purpose of understanding her as such as it is to gather documentary evidence of her 'oppression.'"[46] We have taken care to avoid labeling the subjects of our research as "oppressed" except in terms that they themselves apply to their situations. Although it is unrealistic to ignore "difference," it is equally unhelpful to pretend we have nothing in common. Difference "has been a stumbling block for western social science from its very inception."[47] A division is drawn not simply between the private and the public spheres of life but also between western and nonwestern societies. By extracting particular categories of individuals—in this case, Arab Muslim women—one is intimating that there is something special and different about them, whereas in reality it is an artificial distinction. It is pointless to take "Muslim" or "Arab" women as an undifferentiated group and to assert that what they have in common is greater than what divides them from each other and from women elsewhere. At the same time, western researchers recognize that definitions of feminism may differ in fundamental respects, that objectives and ways of achieving these objectives may also be different, and that everyday life for women in Arab societies—on the whole—contains symbols and patterns of behavior that are more or less unfamiliar to women in western societies.

We have also consciously tried not to fall into the trap of orientalist stereotyping. In the writings of orientalists, the Middle Eastern woman, if she is mentioned at all, is usually considered in terms of a series of crude contrasts or contradictions: from colonial fantasies of "the oriental woman," on the one hand a voluptuous harem dweller and on the other a beacon of progress; to the national liberation ideal of the Arab woman, a symbol of

purity and traditional values and, at the same time, a representative of the modernist aspirations of the new nation. Although scholarship has, by and large, moved beyond such simplifications, the starkness of "modernity" and "nonmodernity" remains an issue fraught with difficulties and requiring further exploration.

In the context of postcolonial scholarship, feminist researchers are adopting new and innovative approaches to the study of women and gender. Nadje al-Ali, for example, in her work on the Egyptian women's movement, speaks of "multiple allegiances," in the sense that the researcher is likely to experience a variety of involvements or relationships with the research community. She admits that she felt "torn between my wish to engage in a more reciprocal relationship where I was not the only one asking questions and a fear that I could too easily slip into an act of indiscretion."[48] Her dilemma goes to the heart of the problematic relationship between the researcher and the research community, particularly when the individuals one is researching are "different." As far as we are concerned, the point is not "to dismiss the role that Islam plays in women's lives" but rather "to study the historical conditions under which religion *becomes significant* in the production and reproduction of gender difference and inequality" (emphasis in original).[49] We are aware of the challenges this endeavor poses.

There is a gap between how Islamic resistance is generally perceived in the west—as "a medieval political party using religion as an attractive shield behind which to hide their real intent"[50]—and its attraction for many men and women in the Middle East, who regard it as a "new way of living and a new vision of modernity . . . that fundamentally differs from what the West terms "modernity."[51] Many Arab citizens fear that Islam is "under siege"; they regard western attitudes, and in particular the west's uncritical support of Israel, as hypocritical and unjust. Their articulations of dissatisfaction and frustration at their inability to be heard lie at the heart of our research project.

Islam and Feminism: The Debate in the Arab World

We believe that it is impossible to consider women's activism in the Arab world without some reference to feminism as a motivation or a methodology. Defining feminism, however, is not at all straightforward. To begin with, feminism "must stop conceiving itself a nation, a 'natural' political destination for all women. . . . Rather than adopting a politics of inclusion . . . it will have to develop a self-conscious politics of partiality, and imagine itself as a *limited* political home, which does not absorb difference with a pre-given and predefined space but leaves room for ambivalence and

ambiguity" (emphasis in original).[52] In any case, thanks to the efforts of female scholarship, women "have been rendered visible"[53] to some extent, and the focus has been shifted from the universal male subject. Feminists have begun "to question and challenge the implicit male perspective of the dominant paradigms, methodological strictures, and theoretical assumptions of the various disciplines."[54] Although this approach might be theoretically persuasive, how can it be effectively linked to the lives of the women we are studying?

What, in other words, does "feminism" mean to Arab and Muslim women? Definitions of feminism, both in the west and in the Middle East, are highly contested. Chandra Talpade Mohanty speaks of "imagined communities" of women "with divergent histories and social locations, woven together by the *political* threads of opposition into forms of domination that are not only pervasive but also systemic."[55] However, the historical literature "is full of all kinds of feminists who would surely have had a hard time finding common ground," and the term "feminism" remains problematic today.[56] Badran suggests that the various revolutionary upheavals in the Arab world are "inscribing a new feminism . . . which does not go by the name 'feminism,' but by its spirit—redefines the words freedom, liberation, justice, dignity, democracy, equality, and rights."[57]

Margot Badran and Miriam Cooke state that feminist scholarship in the Middle East first arose "in a pre-colonial context following the rise of capitalism and the modern state. . . . From the start women grounded their feminism first in Islam and later in nationalism."[58] In Deniz Kandiyoti's view, it "has followed a distinctive trajectory reflecting both its engagement with local debates and its dialogue with broader currents of thought, from the turn of the century to the present."[59] The first wave of feminist writing in the Middle East "is associated with movements for social reform and modernization during the era of post-colonial state formation spanning the periods between the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth centuries . . . nationalism was the leading idiom through which issues pertaining to women's position in society were articulated."[60] The second wave occurred during the 1950s and 1960s. This period "witnessed . . . the incorporation of questions about the family and women's roles into broader discourses about social transformation."[61] A third wave emerged after the 1970s, when we began to see "more significant inroads being made by Western academic feminism into Middle Eastern scholarship."[62] One result was "a selective and uneven incorporation of the various concepts of feminist theory into Middle East studies and the emergence of distinctive, local styles of polemic and scholarship."[63] In the 1980s, the consensus that assumed "women" were a category sharing a particular form of oppression broke down, which "set the scene for what might be characterized as an internal crisis about 'difference.'"[64]

The concept of feminism has encountered mixed reactions in the Middle East. Denounced by some as an inappropriate or irrelevant western import, it has been welcomed by others as a tool of female advancement. It is evident that notions of a globalized and unspecific feminism have proved unhelpful to many Middle Eastern women, who dislike the term "feminist" and prefer to engage in a "new women-friendly and gender-sensitive Islamic discourse" that they do not regard as part of a feminist project.[65] In Egypt, for example, some women are reluctant "to identify themselves with feminism," not only because of "its negative image in society" but also because of a belief that it detracts from more important issues, such as gender equality within the public sphere.[66] Others, in contrast, use the word and its connotations as a call to action.

Yet, taking into consideration the fact that both the term and the practice of western liberal feminism have appeared unsatisfactory to some Arab women, we need to ask ourselves exactly what it might mean in a non-western setting. By deconstructing the concept into its component elements, one can extract at least three meanings. The first, often used by conservative Muslims to criticize those who advocate greater equality for women, dismisses feminists as "agents of Western cultural imperialism"[67] who encourage Muslim women "to abandon home life and its responsibilities . . . and make their lives miserable by running after political, economic, social and other activities."[68] A second usage applies to Muslim women who use the tools of western feminist scholarship to reappraise "the theological justifications that have been offered for restricting women's rights."[69] A third understanding of feminism has been adopted by some Muslim women who would definitely not describe themselves as "feminist" in a western sense, but who are pushing forward the boundaries of women's rights by action and example. Islamic feminism "burst on the global scene as a new discourse or interpretation of Islam and gender grounded in *ijtihad*, or independent intellectual investigation of the Qur'an and other religious texts."[70] In other words, even as many women engage in the practice of feminism in terms of women's rights and development, they may prefer not to adopt the label, whereas others choose to align themselves deliberately with western feminist tradition. We should, finally, take care not to confuse "Islamic feminists who articulate an egalitarian mode of Islam" with "Islamist women who promote political Islam and its patriarchal version of the religion."[71] The women interviewed for this book fall into the various categories outlined; although some defined themselves as "feminists," to others the term was alien and inappropriate. And yet, the actions of some of these women had the characteristics of feminist praxis in the sense that they expressed agency and a clear intention to effect change; in other words, they represent a self-recognizing form of resistance.

"Empty Modernity": Challenging the Colonial Narrative

There is no doubt that European colonialism "profoundly transformed the everyday lives and discursive terms of the colonized" and had a particularly disruptive effect on women.[72] In her study about "remaking" women in the Middle East, Lila Abu-Lughod suggests that the question arose "as to how new ideas and practices considered 'modern' and progressive implanted in Europe's colonies or simply taken up by emerging local elites might usher in not only forms of emancipation but new forms of social control."[73] She poses an important question. It is certainly the case that one cannot understand contemporary gender relations in the non-western world—or indeed the roles played by women in national liberation movements—"without some analysis and discussion of the colonial period."[74] Although colonial discourse was "highly gendered," the impact of colonialism on gender relations was diverse and contradictory.[75]

Under its influence, women tended to be "treated more as symbols than as active participants by nationalist movements organized to end colonialism and racism."[76] In the case of Arab societies, religious practices were taken to illustrate the barbarism of those subjected to colonial rule. The Euro-Christian gaze upon Muslim culture, "whether expressed by word or picture, has been a gaze of violence, dominance, distortion and belittlement."[77] Europeans have looked upon the Middle East with fascination, focusing in particular on "the two characteristics perceived as essentially Oriental: sensuality and violence," and there is no doubt that the legacy of such attitudes continues to affect the region.[78]

At the same time, while "many women suffered increased burdens as a result of the changes which were part of colonial rule . . . the colonial state was also a site of gender struggle and some women attempted to use the limited spaces which had opened up to their advantage."[79] Thus, although some have argued that colonialism was wholly negative and served only to increase women's subordination, it may also be the case that some of the changes brought by colonialism "did allow some space for some women to resist, use and challenge both new and existing patterns of gender relations."[80] In their complex reactions to colonialism, Arab women engaged in multiple forms of resistance, some of which took religion as a source of protection and opposition. In this way, many women were able to assert their own nationalist identity.

This pattern continued into the Arab nationalist period. While nationalist projects "consistently favor the standpoint of men and privilege the masculine,"[81] gender has been identified as central to the phenomenon of nationalism.[82] Women are feted and excluded at the same time. In Middle Eastern societies tainted by colonialism, a specific version of nationalism tended to emerge. Created out of an uncomfortable marriage between tradi-

tional values and western notions of modernity, it contained a special place for women as agents of modernization and symbols of identity. But, rather than being seen as liberating, this apparent "progress" provoked conflict, confusion, and backlash as women's bodies and sexuality became "a privileged political site for the expression of difference and resistance to Western modernity."[83] It is likely that these battles are still being fought as Arab citizens confront new manifestations of colonialism.

As elsewhere, nationalism in the Arab world was a response to the fragmentation of colonialism and to an ideological crisis that originated "in the intensification of the contradictions and the accumulation of conflictual situations in Arab society."[84] The governments of newly independent states in the region "indicted European imperialism for its invasion and occupation, as well as its policies which divided by creating states and drawing artificial national boundaries, thus debilitating the Arab and Muslim world."[85] At the same time, Arab nationalists drew inspiration from European nationalist models as well as the Islamic *ummah*. Pan-Arab nationalism claimed that since the Arabs possessed a common history, language, and religion, it was "natural" that they should form one nation. From the start, however, Arab nationalism was an ideology mired in contradiction.

Most significantly, in the context of this book, the Arab nationalist vision contained an idealized place for women, but one that appeared divisive. The portrayal of Middle Eastern women by early European travelers "was part . . . of a larger picture of the primitive, Islamic East," and one that Arab nationalists were determined to challenge.[86] In response to the confusing impulses of European colonialism, which dismissed Middle Eastern women as victims of Muslim backwardness, newly independent Middle Eastern states tended to treat them as symbols of nationalist achievement. The creation of a "new Arab woman" was part of the modernizing project for nationalist elites involved in the anticolonial struggle. She "is literate and educated in the nationalist curriculum designed by the respective Arab governments once her country has attained independence. She is even, in many cases, employed."[87] But this woman frequently occupies an uncomfortable position, resented by the traditional classes, struggling to balance paid employment with the responsibility of running her home, and regarded by some as a tool of decadent western feminism. Her situation becomes even more precarious when violent conflict threatens to engulf the society.

In order to understand women's "problematic relationship to the modern nation-state and its construction of subjectivity,"[88] we need to focus on two distinct areas: (1) the debate on "modernity" in the Arab world and (2) gendered aspects of nation building. Modernity, according to feminist scholars, "has brought about an identity crisis among the formerly colonized peoples of the Middle East . . . who may seek a form of alternative modernity that is not contingent on embracing westernization."[89] At the

heart of modernity "is the notion of the freely acting, freely knowing individual whose experiments can penetrate the secrets of nature and whose work with other individuals can make a new and better world."[90] However, as Abu Zeid notes, many Muslims "are reluctant to accept contemporary modernity, on the grounds that most of its values either contradict Islamic ones, or stem from human legislation."[91] They regard "modernity" as inextricably linked to the "grand narrative" of western progress, yet, as Alastair Crooke points out, the "grand narrative of Islam has not collapsed. It is revived and in the ascendant."[92] At the same time, Islamist discourse is still structured by that of the west,[93] and "Islamists do not intend to dismantle modernity but to Islamize it, to create an alternative modernity."[94] They insist that "Islam is modern/civilized *and* modern/progressive, as well as superior in certain ways to the empty modernity of the West."[95] Given the evidence of our research, it seems likely that some modern Islamist groups in the Arab world are engaging with modernity in order to create a more inclusive society. If women have felt left out of "nation making," they may be better able to relate to the Islamist grand narrative of resistance, not only to invasion and occupation but also to the empty modernity of the western model. Islamism, as Crooke observes, "is indeed challenging the west. But . . . the revolution is a struggle—a resistance—centred not on killing, but on ideas and principles."[96] From the point of view of many in the Arab world, this is an attractive revolution that, in the words of many of the women we interviewed, fully incorporates them.

For women in conflict situations, a sense of vulnerability is likely to make them ambivalent about their role in the national struggle. Since "the nation" is a largely masculine construct and the "historical patterns of colonialism and other forms of oppression would seem to suggest that there is an apparent affinity between nationalism [and] sexism," women tend not to be treated as full partners in the process of nation building.[97] As we suggested, nationalist symbolism tends to confine women to the domestic sphere. Thus, a cycle may be created, in the sense that men are largely in charge of the communal response to the conflict; they also exercise effective control over the women of the society. In other words, "the very idioms that women use to assert their presence in previously male-defined spheres are also those that secure their subordination."[98] As a result, it is conceivable that women will be less inclined to contribute their efforts to the struggle, and if this is true, their role may become a more passive one, apparently justifying the woman-as-victim mythology. The variables in this scenario are (1) that men do *not* have sole control over the violence that threatens their society—their actions depend to some extent on what the enemy does—and (2) that women very often can and do find appropriate and socially acceptable ways of participating in conflict situations, as our case studies reveal.

Women and National Liberation

In the Middle East, "nationalism and feminism have never mixed very well. Women have been used in national liberation struggles—Algeria, Iran, Palestine, to name a few—only to be sent back to their kitchens after 'independence' was gained."[99] As we argue, although nationalist ideology has played a vital role in liberation struggles in the Arab world, it also "reclaimed many of the patriarchal values of Islamic traditionalism as integral to Arab cultural identity as such."[100] As a result, although it is true that many women have experienced a conflict between national liberation and an anticipated improvement in their own status, others have welcomed a return to greater authenticity. One could argue, of course, that Arab men were also often victims, and some of them reacted to their perceived powerlessness by reverting to the hollow symbols of an imagined golden past and, in some cases, by asserting their power over women.

Palestinian, Iraqi, and Lebanese nationalisms developed in different ways in the twentieth century. Although all of them are rooted in the colonial experience—British in the case of Palestine and Iraq and French in Lebanon—they were influenced to some extent by Arab nationalism. Palestinian nationalism evolved to compete with Zionism for possession of the land, whereas Lebanese and Iraqi nationalisms were more undefined. Indeed, it could be argued that there is no such thing as "Lebanese nationalism" or "Iraqi nationalism." They are more precisely mosaics of competing nationalisms united by a commitment to a shared Lebanese or Iraqi identity; the latter has been further questioned and challenged since the US invasion in 2003. Insofar as Iraqi, Lebanese, and Palestinian nationalisms emerged, at least in part, as reactions to adverse experiences, they may be described as "embattled" forms of nationalism: the Palestinian experience has enjoyed few fruits of success, and Iraq remains mired in sectarian violence, but Lebanon has evolved a distinctive national identity, at least on the surface. If we examine the sorts of actions and activities in which women engage during national liberation struggles, we discover both diversity and creativity. During the first Palestinian intifada (1987–1993), for example, women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip established alternative educational and economic structures, devised ingenious methods of avoiding Israeli interference in order to carry on with their normal lives, and formed political organizations to advance their own interests. During the Lebanese civil war (1975–1990), women of all religious persuasions engaged in courageous peacebuilding activities, such as publicly meeting at the Green Line dividing East and West Beirut in order to express their opposition to the violence. Women in Iraq, across both ethnic and sectarian divides, work hard to protect their communities, oppose sectarianism and division, and call for national unity. In the Arab Muslim context, it is useful

to look back at the roles of women in warfare, and to ask, on the one hand, how their participation or nonparticipation affected the ways in which they were treated and, on the other, how broad or diverse was the range of activities permitted to them.[101] As will be discussed, many Arab women today refer proudly to female role models in the early Islamic period. All these actions raise the question of who or what is being resisted and how significant a factor Islam truly is. All three groups are suffering or have experienced some form of foreign occupation; groups within each area have mobilized to confront and remove occupying forces. In all three cases, Islam has been a key factor. There has been a determination, in the Iraqi, Lebanese, and Palestinian cases, to end what they see as an illegal occupation and liberate their lands; it is a matter of honor, keenly experienced by women as much as men. Because diplomacy and passive resistance are perceived to have failed, a more militant form of resistance has been recognized by many as the most feasible solution.[102] Nonetheless, despite some notable successes by the Islamic resistance movement in removing the Israeli occupation from southern Lebanon, Palestinians and Lebanese Shiites are aware that they face a far more powerful enemy. That enemy appears vindictive and seems to respond only to force, and some Arabs argue that Israel has been successful largely because it is supported by a compelling ideology, rooted in religion.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict can be characterized as a quest for national liberation, whereas the Lebanese Shiite conflict with Israel falls into the category of anti-imperialist struggle. In Iraq, the struggle has been against foreign invasion and continuing sectarian violence. In response to violent conflict, Palestinian, Iraqi, and Lebanese women have adopted several modes of action. They support their male kin in a variety of traditional ways, protect their children, and attempt to maintain the integrity of their communities. On rare occasions, they resort to violence themselves.[103] These activities are broadly defined as "resistance." The majority of Lebanese, Iraqi, and Palestinian women regard the violence, directed against an unprincipled foe, as unavoidable, and it would be overly simplistic in all three cases to link women automatically with peace and men with war. For example, interviews conducted with Palestinian refugee women in Lebanon in July 2011 revealed that, although the women strongly disapproved of all forms of violence, most said that it was acceptable to use violence, including suicide bombing, against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. Similarly, most Iraqi women who were interviewed in Jordan and Syria in February and March 2011 accepted violence as a way of liberating their own country, arguing that violence is not only legitimate in the case of occupation, but also a means of precipitating the liberation of their territory. Nonetheless, male and female ways of coping and resisting tend to differ; the roots of these clearly delineated roles, one could argue, are located in

their national histories and religious traditions. We explore these differ-
ences carefully in Chapters 4–6.

However, we argue that liberation also means the liberation of individ-
uals, in this case women. On the whole, national liberation and women's
liberation do not sit comfortably together. Although the assumption is that
women will be "better off" once the nation has been liberated, real
improvements often fail to materialize or fall short of expectations. Cultural
values tend to remain rigid, and notions of "respect" are rarely examined.
Indeed, male values, being associated with victory, have a tendency to
become entrenched, and the role of women continues to be idealized as a
measure of tradition and continuity since, historically, "women have been
regarded as the repositories, guardians, and transmitters of culture."[104]
Moreover, national liberation struggles are almost always military in style
and violent in practice, qualities conventionally defined as "masculine."
Islamic resistance movements have also adopted militaristic trappings; they
seem to celebrate masculinized forms of heroism, which often includes
resorting to overt violence. If women participate at all, it is assumed that
they must do so on male terms, either by imitating men, which has conno-
tations of social unacceptability, or by carrying out traditional feminine
support roles. While these assumptions are certainly part of the story, we
propose to test them through our research and to argue that female forms of
resistance represent an authentic expression of women's empowerment.

The Performance and Perfectibility of Resistance

When Umm Hassan in southern Lebanon talked about the violent death of
her son, she gave the impression that both his "heroism" and her own nar-
rative of suffering were part of a larger story about the "perfectibility" of
resistance. It has grown beyond the simple defense of the country into
something, as Crooke says, that embraces "ideas and principles." Although
many women feel comfortable with that concept of resistance, has it been
able to subvert gender stereotypes? Umm Hassan is still "the mother of the
martyr," the one who performs the rituals of mourning. Is that her agency?
Where is the agency of Umm Sarah, forced to flee from her country and
live as a refugee, or Umm Walid, unaware of her son's activism but proud
that he died a martyr?

In this chapter, we have analyzed the literature to show that national-
ism and conflict are ordered according to male criteria. They tend to rein-
force masculine notions of heroism, which may have the effect of excluding
women. One should be cautious, however, when applying such theorization
to Arab societies that are caught up in violent conflict. To begin with, there
may be no functioning government to enforce the law. Even where there is

the semblance of a government, it is constrained in the Arab-Muslim context by sensitivities regarding the private sphere of women and the family. Although the majority of states in the world have signed international treaties guaranteeing gender equality and national legislation may be in place to protect women from the excesses of warfare, prevailing attitudes and an attachment to traditional practices are more difficult to change. Finally, women's own efforts are challenging the conventional discourse of woman-as-victim.

For Palestinians, Iraqis, and Lebanese Shiites, the blurring of lines between the battlefront and the home front has permitted the violence of conflict to spill over into all aspects of their lives. Although women and men are both negatively affected by conflict, their experiences of it and their ways of coping with it vary. For both, "home" is experienced as a site of insecurity. They have grown accustomed, on the one hand, to sudden and violent incursions by the enemy into their most private spaces and, on the other, to the threat and reality of displacement. To ascertain the validity of the assertion that men and women experience conflict differently, it is necessary to separate the strands between (1) Islam as a social system that protects women; (2) patriarchy as a social system that is prevalent in Iraqi, Palestinian, and Lebanese Shi'i society and privileges men; and (3) enemy violence against Iraqi, Palestinian, and Lebanese civilian populations, which, on the whole, does not discriminate against women or men.

The framework we have outlined is intended to highlight women's roles and activities in the context of violent upheavals. Palestinian women have been fighting dispossession, exile, occupation, and repression for well over half a century. Their struggle is for national liberation and self-determination, but it also contains a growing feminist consciousness, which sometimes comes into conflict with nationalist objectives. Lebanese Shiite women, too, have been struggling against injustice. And Iraqi women have been fighting ethnic and sectarian strife and occupation. By examining the construction of national identity for women and men and the emergence of Islamic resistance movements as a form of national assertion and self-respect, we hope to illustrate women's growing sense of belonging to the nation and how that provides a path toward activism.

At the same time, we suspect that wars affect women, whatever their religion or circumstances, in similar ways all over the world. The more we have spoken to women about their experiences and perceptions of war, the more we have discovered a common thread weaving its way through their responses. Women tend to regard war and violence as unnatural, avoidable, and repugnant. We are certainly not claiming that women always reject the use of force or that they are not sometimes themselves violent. In their accounts of conflict, some Palestinian, Iraqi, and Lebanese women express pride in their respective resistance movements: like Umm Hassan, Umm

Walid, and Umm Sarah, they celebrate the martyrdom of husbands and sons; and, in rare and extreme cases, they themselves resort to violent acts against the enemy. But on the whole, although they are very often present in the arena of war, particularly when it intrudes into their personal spaces, women are more likely to seek nonviolent ways of opposing or surviving it.

Because of the diversity of influences on contemporary Arab states, women's lives are controlled by a tapestry of ideologies of which Islam is an important strand. The modern state "not only formalizes politics, it also changes the nature of political conflict, diminishing the forms in which women might previously have participated."[105] According to this hypothesis, female patterns of political participation occur in gender-specific social spaces, such as the domestic sphere.[106] We believe their involvement is growing, as the Arab revolutions of 2011 and the experiences of Islamic resistance illustrate.

One of our key objectives in writing this book was to understand how women's activism becomes "legitimate." For instance, the participation of women in the Iranian revolution was sanctioned by the clergy, and the activism of Palestinian and Algerian women during their respective liberation struggles was condoned by the urgency of popular resistance.[107] As we analyze the narratives contained in the three case studies, we argue that many women in Lebanon, Iraq, and the Palestinian territories have been able to access new arenas of effective activity, despite experiencing forms of victimization. Umm Hassan, Umm Walid, and Umm Sarah have not only been subjected to terrible events in their lives but also have gained access to a new way of conceiving themselves as "resistant" and active subjects. In the next chapter, we explore some of the theological underpinnings of this much-contested debate.

Notes

1. "Umm Riad," quoted in Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Liberating Voices: The Political Implications of Palestinian Mothers Narrating Their Loss," *Women's Studies International Forum* 26, no. 5 (2003): 405.
2. The names of all women interviewed for this book have been disguised.
3. Interview, Bint Jbeil, Lebanon, July 27, 2007.
4. Interview, Hebron, West Bank, November 4, 2007.
5. Interview, Amman, Jordan, March 2011.
6. Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Liberating Voices," 403.
7. Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational Religion and the Making of National Identities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 156.
8. Saba Mahmood, "Feminist Theory, Agency, and the Liberatory Subject," in Fereshteh Nouraie-Simone, ed., *On Shifting Ground: Muslim Women in the Global Era* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2005), 111.

9. Bryan S. Turner, *Orientalism, Postmodernism, and Globalism* (London: Routledge, 1994), 21.

10. Ibid.

11. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills, eds., *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 66.

12. Ibid.

13. Judy el-Bushra, "Transforming Conflict: Some Thoughts on a Gendered Understanding of Conflict Processes," in Susie Jacobs, Ruth Jacobson, and Jennifer Marchbank, eds., *States of Conflict* (London: Zed, 2000), 80.

14. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "We Need to Rethink Old Dogmas," interview with Yoginder Sikand, Qantara.de—Dialogue with the Islamic World, October 28, 2010, http://en.qantara.de/We-Need-to-Rethink-Old-Dogmas/9555c9654i1p660.

15. Suruchi Thapar-Bjorkert and Laura J. Shepherd, "Religion," in Laura J. Shepherd, ed., *Gender Matters in Global Politics: A Feminist Introduction to International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2010), 270.

16. Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism," *American Anthropologist* 104, no. 3 (September 2002): 789.

17. A. McClintock, "Family Feuds: Gender, Nationalism, and the Family," *Feminist Review* 44 (1993): 62.

18. National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: Norton, 2004).

19. Cheryl A. Rubenberg, *Palestinian Women: Patriarchy and Resistance in the West Bank* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 11.

20. Deniz Kandiyoti, "Gender, Power, and Contestation: Rethinking Bargaining with Patriarchy," in C. Jackson and R. Pearson, eds., *Feminist Visions of Development* (London: Routledge, 1998), 141.

21. Rose Weitz, "Women and Their Hair: Seeking Power Through Resistance and Accommodation," *Gender and Society* 15 (2001): 669.

22. Jocelyn A. Hollander and Rachel L. Einwohner, "Conceptualizing Resistance," *Sociological Forum* 19, no. 4 (December 2004): 534.

23. Ibid., 539.

24. Ibid., 540.

25. Jeffrey W. Rubin, "Defining Resistance: Contested Interpretations of Everyday Acts," *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society* 15 (1996): 241.

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

27. Hollander and Einwohner, "Conceptualizing Resistance," 539.

28. el-Bushra, "Transforming Conflict," 79.

29. Lauraine Leblance, *Pretty in Punk: Girls' Gender Resistance in a Boys' Subculture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, 1999), 18.

30. Hollander and Einwohner, "Conceptualizing Resistance," 542.

31. bell hooks, "Marginality as Site of Resistance," in Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West, eds., *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 341.

32. Fadwa el-Guindi, "Veiling Resistance," in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills, eds., *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 586–609.

33. Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" 790.

34. Mahmood, "Feminist Theory, Agency, and the Liberatory Subject."

35. el-Bushra, "Transforming Conflict, 80.

36. Shalhoub-Kevorkian, "Liberating Voices," 405.

37. For an exploration of the concept of "decolonizing feminism," see Marnia Lazreg, *The Eloquence of Silence: Algerian Women in Question* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 6–19.

38. Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips, "Introduction," in Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips, eds., *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), 1.

39. Roslyn Wallach Bologh, "Feminist Social Theorizing and Moral Reasoning: On Difference and Dialectic," *Sociological Theory* 2 (1984): 388.

40. Julie Marcus, *A World of Difference: Islam and Gender Hierarchy in Turkey* (London: Zed Books, 1992), viii.

41. Funding for fieldwork in Lebanon, the Palestinian territories, and Yemen was provided by the US Institute for Peace (2007–2008) and the Cordoba Foundation (2010).

42. An example of this was the "Women's Charter," presented by a group of women's organizations to the Palestinian National Authority in August 1994, for inclusion in the new Palestinian constitution.

43. Chris Weedon, *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 12.

44. Jayati Lal, "Situating Locations: The Politics of Self, Identity, and 'Other' in Living and Writing the Text," in Sharlene Hesse-Biber, Christina Gilmartin, and Robin Lydenberg, eds., *Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: An Interdisciplinary Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 112.

45. Arati Rao, "The Politics of Gender and Culture in International Human Rights Discourse," in Julie Peters and Andrea Wolper, eds., *Women's Rights, Human Rights: International Feminist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1995), 173.

46. Lazreg, *The Eloquence of Silence*, 35.

47. Ibid., 6.

48. Nadje Sadig al-Ali, *Secularism, Gender, and the State in the Middle East: The Egyptian Women's Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 13.

49. Lazreg, *The Eloquence of Silence*, 14.

50. Tarek Heggy, *The Arab Cocoon: Progress and Modernity in Arab Societies* (London: Valentine Mitchell, 2010), 29.

51. Alastair Crooke, *Resistance: The Essence of the Islamist Revolution* (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 6.

52. Ien Ang, "I'm a Feminist but . . . 'Other' Women and Postnational Feminism," in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills, eds., *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 191.

53. Gisela Bock, "Challenging Dichotomies: Perspectives on Women's History," in Karen M. Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson, and Jane Rendall, eds., *Writing Women's History: International Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 1.

54. Bologh, "Feminist Social Theorizing and Moral Reasoning," 388.

55. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Cartographies of Struggle: Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism," in Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 4.

56. Leila J. Rupp and Verta Taylor, "Forging Feminist Identity in an International Movement: A Collective Identity Approach to Twentieth-Century Feminism," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 24, no. 21 (1999): 363.

57. Margot Badran, "Egypt's Revolution and the New Feminism," *The Immanent Frame*, March 2011, http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2011/03/03/egypts-revolution-and-the-new-feminism/?disp=pr, accessed March 12, 2011.

58. Margot Badran and Miriam Cooke, "Introduction," in Margot Badran and Miriam Cooke, eds., *Opening the Gates: A Century of Arab Feminist Writing* (London: Virago, 1990), xxvii.

59. Deniz Kandiyoti, "Contemporary Feminist Scholarship in Middle East Studies," in Deniz Kandiyoti, ed., *Gendering the Middle East: Emerging Perspectives* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), 7–8.

60. Ibid., 8.

61. Ibid., 10.

62. Ibid., 12.

63. Ibid., 12.

64. Ibid., 15.

65. Margot Badran, *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), 9.

66. al-Ali, *Secularism, Gender, and the State*, 5.

67. Ann Elizabeth Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), 97.

68. Abu'l A'la Mawdudi, *Purdah and the Status of Women in Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1981), 24, quoted in Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights*.

69. Mayer, *Islam and Human Rights*, 97. She names Abdullahi al-Na'im, a law professor in the Sudan, who became executive director of Africa Watch, and Fatima Mernissi, a Moroccan sociology professor and one of the founding members of the Moroccan Organization for Human Rights, as examples (see p. 96 in Mayer).

70. Badran, *Feminism in Islam*, 3.

71. Ibid., 6. See also Haifaa A. Jawad, "Islamic Feminism, Leadership Role, and Public Representation," *Hawwa, Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World* 7, no. 1 (2009).

72. Lila Abu-Lughod, ed., *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 17.

73. Ibid., 6.

74. Georgina Waylen, *Gender in Third World Politics* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996), 47. Other relevant works include Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978); J. De Groot, "Sex and 'Race': The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century," in S. Mendus and J. Rendell, eds., *Sexuality and Subordination* (London: Routledge, 1989); Veena Das, "Gender Studies, Cross-Cultural Comparison and the Colonial Organization of Knowledge," *Berkshire Review* 21 (1986).

75. Waylen, *Gender in Third World Politics*, 49.

76. Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: Pandora Press, 1989), 42.

77. Fadwa el-Guindi, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy, and Resistance* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 23.

78. Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 60.

79. Waylen, *Gender in Third World Politics*, 68.

80. Ibid., 50.

81. Fatma Muge Gocek, "Introduction: Narrative, Gender, and Cultural Representation in the Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East," in Fatma Muge

Gocek, ed., *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 5.

82. Linda Racioppi and Katherine O'Sullivan See, "Engendering Nation and National Identity," in Sita Ranchod-Nilsson and Mary Ann Tetreault, eds., *Women, States, and Nationalism: At Home in the Nation?* (London: Routledge, 2000), 22.

83. Deniz Kandiyoti, "Islam, Modernity, and the Politics of Gender," in Muhammad Khalid Masud, Armando Salvatore, and Martin van Bruinessen, eds., *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 95.

84. Issa J. Boullata, *Trends and Issues in Contemporary Arab Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 152.

85. John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 71.

86. Ruth Roded, ed., *Women in Islam and the Middle East: A Reader* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999), 9.

87. Lama Abu-Odeh, "Crimes of Honour and the Construction of Gender in Arab Societies," in Mai Yamani, ed., *Feminism and Islam: Legal and Literary Perspectives* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1996), 166.

88. Norma Alarcón, Caren Kaplan, and Minoo Moallem, "Introduction: Between Woman and Nation," in Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcón, and Minoo Moallem, eds., *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminisms, and the State* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 1.

89. Therese Saliba, Carolyn Allen, and Judith A. Howard, "Introduction," in Therese Saliba, Carolyn Allen, and Judith A. Howard, eds., *Gender, Politics, and Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 12.

90. Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, "Post-M odernism and the Crisis of Modernity," in *Telling the Truth About History* (New York: Norton, 1994), 201.

91. Nasr Hamid Abu Zeid, "The Modernisation of Islam or the Islamisation of Modernity," in Roel Meijer, ed., *Cosmopolitanism, Identity, and Authenticity in the Middle East* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999), 71.

92. Crooke, *Resistance*, 26.

93. Bjorn Olav Utvik, "The Modernizing Force of Islam," in John L. Esposito and Francois Burgat, eds., *Modernizing Islam: Religion and the Public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East* (London: Hurst, 2003), 65.

94. Ibid.

95. Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 25–26; emphasis in original.

96. Crooke, *Resistance*, 16.

97. Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, *Militarization and Violence Against Women in Conflict Zones in the Middle East: A Palestinian Case Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 83.

98. Mahmood, "Feminist Theory, Agency, and the Liberatory Subject," 115.

99. Evelyne Accad, "Sexuality and Sexual Politics: Conflicts and Contradictions for Contemporary Women in the Middle East," in Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 238.

100. Mai Ghoussoub, "Feminism—or the Eternal Masculine—in the Arab World," *New Left Review* 161 (January–February 1987): 8.

101. In the early days of Islam, women were present on the battlefield, urging the male warriors on with songs and stirring words. See Chapter 2.

102. The first intifada, which began in 1987, succeeded in placing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict back in the international spotlight. Hizbullah's violent struggle against the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon succeeded in forcing the Israelis to withdraw in May 2000.

103. Although increasing numbers of young women in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are becoming suicide bombers against Israeli targets and some Iraqi women have also undertaken such actions, there are very few such examples in Lebanon.

104. Rao, "The Politics of Gender and Culture," 169.

105. Suad Joseph, "Women and Politics in the Middle East," *Middle East Report*, January–February 1986, 4.

106. Ibid., 6.

107. Ibid.