

MENA Women's News Brief

July 28-August 11, 2014

Book release: Moroccan Feminist Discourses by Fatima Sadiqi

Fatima Sadiqi's recent book, *Moroccan Feminist Discourses*, analyzes the feminist discourses in Morocco following the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. Sadiqi is Professor of Linguistics and Gender Studies and Founder of the Center for Studies and Research on Women at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco. ([Palgrave Macmillan](#))

Egypt

July 31: Egypt's Damietta bishop bans women from wearing trousers, make-up in church

"Coptic Orthodox bishop bans his female congregants from wearing trousers, blouses and make-up to receive communion." ([Al-Ahram](#))

July 31: Woman Activist Calls for Sex Education to Combat Harassment

"A rights activist has called for including sex education in school syllabi to promote awareness among students and educate them on the danger of sexual violence and the need for respecting the female body." ([All Africa](#))

August 6: Egyptian feminists raise awareness of women's cultural and political role

"Feminist groups like the National Council for Women (NCW) are trying to reach their goal by initiating projects to empower women in society and support women in politics." ([Daily News Egypt](#))

August 7: Egypt sentences 2 to life for sexual assaults

"An Egyptian court sentenced two men to life and another to 20 years in prison on Thursday for sexual assaults on women during public rallies in the city's iconic Tahrir Square, judicial officials said." ([Washington Post](#))

August 7: 'Positive step, but not enough': Women's groups react to Tahrir sexual assault verdict

"Three men received harsh jail terms on Thursday for sexual assault - but this is just the beginning, say anti-sexual harassment groups." ([Al-Ahram](#))

Iraq

August 8: Arab and Gulf Countries Must Take the Lead (by Haleh Esfandiari)

"I cannot shake the images of Vian Dakhil, the Iraqi member of Parliament, screaming at her colleagues that her people are being slaughtered, children are being murdered and the women are being taken into slavery or killed. Her constituents have fled their villages and are taking refuge in the mountains, where they are dying of heat." ([New York Times](#))

August 8: Iraq Official: Militants Hold 100s of Yazidi Women

"Hundreds of women from the Yazidi religious minority have been taken captive by Sunni militants with "vicious plans," an Iraqi official said Friday, further underscoring the dire plight of Iraq's minorities at the hands of the Islamic State group... The U.S. has confirmed that the Islamic State group has

kidnapped and imprisoned Yazidi women so that they can be sold or married off to extremist fighters.” ([Associated Press](#))

Iran

August 7: Rohani deputy slams Tehran's gender segregation plan

“The presidential deputy for Women and Family Affairs, Shahindokht Molaverdi, says the Rohani administration does not approve of gender segregation in the workplace. This comes after the head of Iran's judiciary commended the mayor of Tehran for implementing a plan to separate male and female public employees in municipal offices.” ([Al-Monitor](#))

Morocco

July 30: Moroccan women reject image in Arab media

“Female politicians, artists and journalists met last week in Casablanca to discuss what they consider the negative and prejudiced portrayal of Moroccan women in Arab television.” ([Maghrebia](#))

Palestinian Territories

July 28: Women in Gaza bear psychological scars of war

“Fearing for their lives and their children, Palestinian women are suffering from severe mental health issues.” ([Al-Jazeera](#))

Qatar

August 8: Expat women overcoming professional challenges

“Expatriate women in Qatar discuss obstacles in pursuing careers but note overall improvement.” ([Gulf News](#))

August 9: A window into empowering Qatari women

“It was former UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan who said that when women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life. A saying, which a research team from Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) is upholding through a study, entitled 'Qatari Women: Engagement and Empowerment'.” ([Zawya](#))

Saudi Arabia

July 29: Improving early education in Saudi: two women's stories

“Early childhood education has also received government support and mainstream attention in recent years, due in part to two Saudi visionaries. They may be a generation apart, but Ilham Al-Dakheel and Samia Kazi have been a powerful force in helping to gain recognition of the importance of early education.” ([Wamda](#))

August 3: Rehab program for female extremists

“The Interior Ministry has confirmed the establishment of a special rehabilitation program for women previously involved with Al-Qaeda.” ([Arab News](#))

August 3: Women's share in Saudi commerce records sharp rise

“Saudi businesswomen have increased their share in the commercial sector by registering 10,184 new firms in 2013, Al-Madinah newspaper reported.” ([Zawya](#))

August 3: Saudi women with master's degrees complain of unemployment

“A number of Saudi women who hold master's degrees have spoken out against the unemployment they have faced for the past several years and the lack of appreciation for their degrees and social circumstances.” ([Al-Arabiya](#))

August 4: Why are Saudi nurses still tackling stereotypes?

“A number of young Saudi women nurses are facing problems and obstacles in their work environment that hinder them from performing their duties properly.” ([Al-Arabiya](#))

August 8: Feminization of shops creates 65,000 jobs

“The third phase of the feminization of shops involves counting all women-only shops at malls, and forces the owners to employ only Saudi women.” ([Arab News](#))

August 10: Social media help Abha women to market their products

“The success Saudi women have achieved in marketing and international businesses was apparent through their participation in the shopping festival in Abha, where they have registered an impressive presence through their capabilities and potential.” ([Arab News](#))

August 10: Saudi matchmakers flourishing on social media

“There has been a surge in matchmakers on Twitter and other social networking websites who offer their services to the thousands of Saudis who are seeking marriage, Al-Hayat daily reported.” ([Al-Arabiya](#))

Syria

July 29: Islamic State militants open office for potential wives: Monitor

“Islamic State insurgents have opened an office in northern Syria where single women and widows can register to marry fighters from the radical al Qaeda offshoot, a monitoring group said on Monday.” ([Al-Ahram](#))

July 30: ISIS is Using an All-Women Brigade to Enforce Sharia Law in Syria

“In the city of Raqqa, where last week ISIS ambushed and killed more than 50 Syrian soldiers, the Sunni militant group has established an all-female unit tasked with policing other women under ISIS's rigid interpretation of Sharia law.” ([Newsweek](#))

August 4: Prostitution On The Rise Among Desperate Syrian Women Refugees

“Syrian women and girls are growing more vulnerable to sexual exploitation in Lebanon as their exile drags out and poverty increases, relief workers say. Some women are driven into outright prostitution. Others like Samar engage in what relief workers call survival sex, striking up sexual relationships with men who can provide rent or food.” ([Huffington Post](#))

August 9: Combatting gender-based violence against Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon

“While exact statistics are difficult to come by, it is clear that violence against Syrian women has risen in Jordan and Lebanon, particularly intimate partner violence (IPV), exploitation, survival sex and early marriage.” ([Daily Sabah](#))

Turkey

August 5: Women file suit over ‘no laugh’ remark

“Women’s rights activists and female legislators have filed a legal complaint against Turkey’s deputy prime minister who said last week that women should not laugh aloud in public.” ([Daily Star](#))

UAE

July 31: Women making great progress in the male-dominated IT sector

“Women have reversed a gender gap in the academic world and are now broadly outperforming men in the UAE, a top official says.” ([Gulf News](#))

August 9: First Emirati woman to helm GE Gulf

“Dalya Al Muthanna is the first Emirati woman appointed as President and CEO, GE Gulf, covering the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey.” ([Peninsula Online](#))

August 10: Dubai to host businesswomen's summit

“The summit will include sessions, group discussions and interactive meetings with the focus on strengthening the financial, legal and political status of women in business.” ([Emirates 24/7](#))

Yemen


August 5: Microfinance in Yemen thrives despite economic troubles

“With Yemen’s microfinance sector booming, an increasing number of women and youth get microcredits in hopes of breaking the cycle of poverty in their families and communities, although they do come with a risk.” ([Yemen Times](#))

By Samaa Ahmed



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