

FRAMINGS: RETHINKING ARAB FAMILY PROJECTS

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FRAMINGS: RETHINKING ARAB FAMILY PROJECTS

THE ARAB FAMILIES WORKING GROUP

VOLUME I

Dedication Page

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Preface

The Arab Families Working Group, formally launched in May 2001, is a collective of fifteen scholars who carry out research on families and youth in Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, and their diasporas. AFWG was organized to develop interdisciplinary, comparative, and collaborative theories and methods to frame new paradigms for the study of Arab families and youth. AFWG began with twenty-four members. Over time, several members could not continue their work with AFWG and a couple of new members were invited to join. The membership of AFWG stabilized at fifteen in 2004. AFWG is a dynamic, continually growing research collective which redefines itself and its field of study as it learns more about both the subject of study and the work of interdisciplinary, comparative and collaborative research. Part IV of this volume gives a brief outline of some of AFWG's organizational evolution. Here I summarize the brief outline of this intellectual journey to situate Volume I of the AFWG project.

This book represents the theoretical framings which emerged in the first three years of the Arab Families Working Group project, which we have called Phase I (2001-2004). Phase I consisted of two or three meetings a year in which we critically examined the state of the literature, the key paradigms, and the methodological choices strategically deployed to study Arab families over the previous half century. We spent considerable time thinking through the work of a collaborative project crossing a dozen disciplines, covering three countries, which brought together scholars, many of whom did not know each other. The work focused on developing frameworks for analysis. From this framing we organized our work around two key project groups: Public Discourse and Youth (Chapter 2) Research Project Group and the Border

Crossings Research Project Group (Chapter 3) along with a subsidiary project of the Public Discourse Group – the National Data Project Group (Chapter 4).

During Phase II of the AFWG project (2004-2007), we generated the initial contours of what evolved into thirteen empirical research projects to be carried out by the fifteen Core Group members in the three countries and their diasporas. The projects changed as we debated and critiqued individual and collective proposals. Preliminary research for these thirteen projects was carried out during Phase II. As we immersed ourselves in the empirical projects, it became clear that the actual research we were pursuing crossed the boundaries of our research project groups so much so that we found it far more productive to return to our work in the Core Group as a whole, rather than working through the smaller research project groups. We dissolved the project groups and integrated their work back into the Core Group. Phase II of the AFWG project represents the transition between the initial formulation of research groups and the reintegration of the projects into the Core Group. The results of Phase II empirical research are now being submitted as two special issues of two different journals.

Phase III of the AFWG Project (2007-2011) focuses on in-depth data gathering on the thirteen empirical projects. We plan for Phase III research to generate Volume II of the AFWG edited series. Phase III has already begun to generate subsidiary research projects from the initial thirteen. This could lead to Phase IV of the AFWG project in the following years.

Each of the chapters in the volume is the result of collaborative efforts even when it is written by one author. Other collective members often read and commented at different versions of the chapters and provided input and critical feedback to the authors. Volume I took on a life of its own -- writing, rewriting, and reformulating the AFWG research project. The process of writing co-authored chapters was challenging yet exciting. Most of the chapters were written

with several authors contributing to different sections and to the critical revisions. Once the chapters were done, they were reviewed for editing and formatting. Chapters were sent back to authors or team leaders for additional questions and comments. Two final rounds of edits were conducted. The table of contents and the arrangements of the chapters changed over time as well with continuous feedback from Core Group members.

The Part One gestures towards the work that has been done and needs to be done to reframe research on Arab families. Part Two presents the conceptual framework of our shared engagement with theoretical and ethnographic material on Arab families. Chapter 2, in Part Two, is the product of the Public Discourse and Youth whose theoretical tools and the analytical spaces of law, public policy, education, and media are still constitutive of our research projects. Chapter 3 represents the work of Border Crossings project which looked at movements across national, ethnic, and regional borders and across public and private spheres. Chapter 4 focuses on the making of families through statistical analysis, a very popular tool of population studies. Part Three, Chapters 5, 6, and 7 examine the trends in research and analysis in Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine. Part Four, the final Chapter 8 offers a brief organizational genealogy of the AFWG research project.

Suad Joseph

Coordinator, Arab Families Working Group

Acknowledgements

The Arab Families Working Group is the outcome of the work and support of many people and institutions. There are more people to thank can be thanked in these pages.

We are grateful to Hoda Rashad, Director of the Social Research Council of the American University of Cairo for offering the first funding that allowed AFWG to leverage additional funding. Leila Bisharat, Representative, Cairo UNICEF, matched the funds offered by AUC's SRC. Barbara Ibrahim, Representative, Cairo Population Council also matched the funds then, Ibrahim ElNur of the Cairo Population Council offered AFWG the first large grant. Dina Craissati, Cairo office of the International Development Research Center added to the sum. These grants allowed AFWG to hire our first research assistant and hold its first meeting in May 2001 in Cairo. We are additionally grateful to Hoda Rashad for allowing AFWG to hold numerous Core Group meetings at the Social Research Council seminar room. Provost Tim Sullivan of AUC has given AFWG offices at AUC since 2001, allowed us to funnel our first grants through AUC, to host our website on AUC's servers, to use libraries and other facilities. He continued to support AFWG throughout his tenure as Provost, until he retired in 2008. AUC President John Gerhart was also a very strong AFWG supporter, as has been current AUC President David Arnold.

Raising funds was always time consuming and crucial. The Population Council offered the first significant funding and continued to fund AFWG for several years, including allow us to use their offices for one of our Core Group meetings and releasing their staff to assist in the organizational and financial arrangements which needed to be made. At the Population Council,

AFWG is especially grateful to Barbara Ibrahim, Representative, Cairo office at that time, and Ibrahim Elnur, Director of the Middle East Awards Program at that time. Population Council staff Moushira Elgiziri and Nahed Sakr worked above and beyond the call of duty to support AFWG. AFWG is deeply grateful to the International Development Research Council, Ottawa, for four grants which have underwritten the bulk of AFWG's work. We are especially grateful to IDRC program officers Pamela Scholey, Emma Naughton, Eileen Alma, Rawwida Baksh, and their staff for continued support. The work would not have been possible without their guidance and commitment. Ford Foundation has been critical to the AFWG project, supporting us with two grants. Emma Playfair and Dina ElKhawaga and their staff brought vision and perspective to our project. They also came to some of our meetings and conferences. Ford Program officers Sharry Lapp and Basma Kodmani were kind enough to join us for some AFWG Core Group meetings.

The University of California, Davis, through many offices and officers, has been critical to the success of AFWG. The Dean of Graduate Studies, Jeff Gibeling, has offered matching funds, via work study grants for graduate student researchers, for every large external grant we have won, significantly increasing the funding available to AFWG. Dean of Social Sciences Steven Sheffrin funded offices and servers for AFWG. Vice Chancellor Barry Klein's office helped negotiate the contracts and subcontracts, particularly Leanna Sweha whose patience and meticulous attention to contractual details was essential. The Anthropology Department staff has been unstinting in their efforts on behalf of AFWG. Managing Staff Officer, Nancy McLaughlin supervised staff work for AFWG grants, Candy Cayne Clark pulled off the phenomenal amount of work of implementing all the grants, Lucy Day handled the hiring of graduate student researchers, and other staff offered regular back up support: Royce McClellan,

Peggy Slaven, and Edie Stasulet. We are especially grateful to the University of California Education Abroad Program (UC EAP) for allowing their Cairo staff person, Dina Marks, to work with AFWG on organizing our office and helping us plan some Core Group meetings. Ms. Marks was Suad Joseph's staff person when Joseph was director of the UC EAP program at AUC and in that capacity began working with AFWG in 2000. She continued working with AFWG, assisting us with transitions between our student staff people until she retired in 2007. We could not have managed our work at AUC without the generous help of Ms. Marks.

The work of AFWG relied heavily on graduate student researchers and undergraduate interns. They are often the unsung heroes of large collaborative projects such as AFWG. We have had an office in Cairo since 2000 and an office in Davis since 2002, managed by graduate students, who helped prepare the materials for the AFWG Core Group meetings, stakeholders workshops, conferences, and provided back up support in research and website development. Our Cairo graduate student staff has included Nahla Zarroug, Nelly ElZayyat, Hania Sobhi, Irene Samy, Nora Elmarzouky, Randa Osman Ahmed, Kristen Schuck. In addition, a number of other graduate students assisted us at the AUC office on specific aspects of the AFWG project: Alyce Abdalla, Sherine Hafez, Ghalia Gargani, Nadine Khalil, Tonia Rifaey, and Sarah Sadek. We were particularly fortunate in the early years to have AUC undergraduate Khaled Dinnawi help us establish the first AFWG website. Our Davis graduate student researchers have included: Fawn Scheer, Vivian Choi, Kathryn Quanbeck, Rima Praspaliauskiene, Rita Maalouf. We have also had the assistance of UC Davis an undergraduate intern Kathleen Juten. A number of UC Davis graduate and undergraduate students have worked on various IT and website support issues for AFWG: Rajagopalan Ventakarmani, Jerry lee, Andrey Dub, Tracy Smith, Brett Erilane, Jia-Hsuan Hsin, Ray Lee, Abram Jones, Sammy Aldeen, Nathan Lee, and Xi Chen. In

addition, a number of student researchers have worked with various Core Group members on their specific projects: Ray Jureidini would like to thank Nadine Khalil for the literature review on the “issue of return” for the Border Crossing group; Samar Kanafani (Anthropology Masters graduate, American University of Beirut) who worked on collecting survey questionnaire on family related issues in Lebanon for the Data Group; Iman Humaydan (Anthropology Masters, American University of Beirut); and Jasmina Brankovic (assistant editor, Journal of Transitional Justice in South Africa). Eileen Kuttab would like to thank Rula Abu-Duhou as an assistant who did literature search and review. Zeina Zaatari would like to acknowledge the contributions and help of Hanan Haidar, research assistant in Lebanon. Barbara Ibrahim would like to thank Rania Salem. Rania El Abed assisted Hoda Rashad when Rashad was a member of the AFWG Core Group.

We are also indebted to the institutions with which our Core Group members are affiliated for their handling of AFWG subcontracts and administrative support for AFWG Core Group members’ research: American University of Beirut; American University in Cairo; University of Amsterdam; Birzeit University; University of California, Davis; Cairo University; Lebanese American University; University of Manchester; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

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Finally, we all wish to acknowledge our own families, who often had to endure hours of our working away from them on “families” even as we tried to hold on to our welcome relationships and responsibilities with our own families.

Suad Joseph

Coordinator, Arab Families Working Group

Arab Families Working Group Research Project Groups

Public Discourse and Youth Research Project Group:

Lamis Abu Nahla, Hoda Elsadda, Barbara Ibrahim, Penny Johnson, Suad Joseph, Annelies Moors, Martina Rieker, Omnia ElShakry, Zeina Zaatari.

Border Crossings Research Project Group:

Ibrahim Elnur, Ray Jureidini, Mona Khalaf, Eileen Kuttab, Jihad Makhoul

National Data Surveys Group:

Barabara Ibrahim, Martina Rieker, Penny Johnson, Annelies Moors

Arab Families Core Group Members

Lamis Abu Nahleh: is an assistant professor at the Department of English Language and Literature and is involved in teaching gender studies at the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University. She has conducted research on gender and education, the Palestinian family and household and gender case studies in areas including women's micro-credit projects, community-based rehabilitation programs, gender integration into industrial schools, gender analysis and planning in the Palestinian Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education. She is actively involved in community outreach and consultancies in gender planning and empowerment domestic violence and honor killing. Her publications include, Gender Planning, Vocational Education, and Technical Training (VETT) in Palestine (London: World University Service, 1996); "Employment: Contract for Daughters and Daughters-in-Law," in Inside Palestinian Households, An Initial Analysis of a Community-Based Survey of Palestinian Households, eds. Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson (Vol. 1, 2002); and "A Gender Analysis of Micro-Credit Programs in Palestine, Three Case Studies," in Women's Studies Review (2003, in Arabic). She is currently engaged in research on the status of the elderly in the Palestinian family and on domestic violence.

Ibrahim Elnur is Associate Professor and coordinator for professional development graduate programme at the Political Science Department at the American University in Cairo Political Science Department at AUC. Co-coordinator of the group on Reconstruction of war torn communities Previously: Director of the Middle East Research Awards (MEAwards) at the Population Council, Cairo (1999-2001), Visiting Researcher, OAS-AUC, Co-founder and coordinator of the Group for Alternative Policies for Sudan (GAPS) (1996-1999), Associate

Professor, El Fatih University, Tripoli, Libya (1995-1996), Head Department of Economics, Juba University, Sudan (1990-1995).

Elnur most recent publication is (2008): "Contested Sudan: The Political Economy of war and Reconstruction", Routledge Middle east Studies, Routledge and Sudan background paper for the Arab Hyman Development 2008 (UNDP, AHDR 2008). His and authored "Differentiation in the Educational Systems, Diasporas and Reproduction of Educated Elites," in Social Science in the Arab World, Turkey and Iran: Determinants, State and Potentials ed. A. Ben Hafaiedh and M. El Jaziri (2004); "11 September and the Widening North-South Gap: Root Causes of Terrorism in the Global Order," Arab Studies Quarterly (2003); and "The Second Boat of African New Diaspora: Looking at the Other Side of the Global Divide with Emphasis on Sudan," African Issues, (2002, 3).

Hoda Elsadda currently holds a Chair in the Study of the Contemporary Arab World at Manchester University. In 1992, she co-founded and co-edited *Hagar*, an interdisciplinary journal in women's studies published in Arabic. In 1997, she co-founded and was Director of the Women and Memory Forum, a research organization focusing on rereading Arab cultural history from a gender-sensitive perspective.

She is a member of the editorial board of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (IJMES)* since 2005; Associate Editor of the Online Edition of the Encyclopedia of Women in Muslim Cultures published by Brill (2006); Consultant Editor of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, Second Edition (forthcoming, 2007); and member of the Advisory board of The Global Fund for Women.

She has co-authored *Madkhal ila Qadaya al-Mar'a fi Sutur wa Suwar* (A Beginner's Guide to Women's Issues), Cairo, The Women and Memory Forum, 2002, and *Maseerat Al-Mar'a Al-*

Misriyya: `Alamat wa Mawaqif, Cairo: National Council for Women, 2001; trans. 2001 into English by Hala Kamal as *Significant Moments in Egyptian Women's History*, Cairo. She has published articles on gender and culture, such as: "Imaging the 'New Man': Gender and Nation in Arab Literary Narratives in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 3: 2 (Spring 2007) pp. 31-55.

Barbara Lethem Ibrahim is the founding director of the John D Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement at the American University in Cairo. Previously she was regional director for West Asia and North Africa at the Population Council from 1991 to 2005. Prior to that, she served as the regional program officer for urban poverty and women's studies for the Ford Foundation in Cairo, Egypt. Barbara received her BA from DePauw University, an M.A. from the American University of Beirut and her Ph.D. from Indiana University, all in sociology. She was principal investigator on the major national survey of adolescents and parents conducted in Egypt in 1997, as well as helping to design ISHRAQ, a large sports and empowerment program for rural girls. She advises individuals and corporations on strategic philanthropy in the Arab region and serves on a number of NGO boards. Barbara received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association of Middle East Women's Studies in 2003 and was inducted into the Educators Hall of Fame (USA) in 1999. Recent publications include, *Charity to Change: Trends in Arab Philanthropy* (2008); *Egypt's Youth Bulge*, Oxford Egypt Review (2005); *Negotiating Leadership, Young Women's Experience in Rural Egypt*, *Feminist Studies Quarterly* (co-authored 2004); *Gender-Role Attitudes Among Egyptian Adolescents*, *Studies in Family Planning* (co-authored 2003); and *Social Change and Adolescent-Parent Dynamics in Egypt*, *The New Arab Family* ed. by J. Hopkins (co-authored 2003).

Penny Johnson is an associate researcher at the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University in Palestine and co-editor of the Institute's Review of Women's Studies. Her recent publications have focused on women's narratives in Amari refugee camp, marriage ceremonies and arrangements in the two Palestinian intifadas, global and local approaches to gender-based violence, and dynamics of kin-based marriage, place and nation. She was a member of the first Palestinian National Commission for Poverty Eradication and is member of the editorial committee of the Jerusalem Quarterly.

Suad Joseph, at UC Davis since 1976, is Professor of Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies. She is the founding Director of the Middle East/South Asia Studies Program. She is former chair of the Women and Gender Studies. She founded the Association for Middle East Women's Studies (1984); the Arab Families Working Group (2001); and the Middle East Research Group in Anthropology (1976 -- evolved into the Middle East Section of the American Anthropological Association). She also founded the Consortium of American University of Beirut, American University in Cairo, Lebanese American University, University of California, Davis, Birzeit University (2001). Her research focuses on family, gender, citizenship, rights, and youth in the Middle East, with a focus on her native Lebanon. She was awarded the UC Davis Distinguished Scholarly Public Service Award, 2004. She is editor of Intimate Selving in Arab Families (1999, Syracuse University Press), Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East (2000, Syracuse University Press) and is the General Editor of the 6-volume Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures (2003-2008), published by Brill, the first such encyclopedia. She edited and co-edited 7 books and has published around 100 articles, book chapters, and targeted circulation research contributions.

Ray Jureidini: is Associate Director of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (CMRS) at the American University in Cairo, Egypt. As a sociologist, he has previously held the position of associate professor and chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the American University of Beirut and has held academic appointments in several Australian universities. His research interests lie in the fields of industrial sociology, economic sociology, migration, human rights, racism and xenophobia. His current research looks at temporary labor migration and concepts of ‘unfree’ and ‘slavery-like’ migrant labor with particular focus on female migrant domestic workers in Lebanon and the Middle East. He has been a human rights activist working against anti-Arab vilification and discrimination in Australia as well as racism and xenophobia against Asians and Africans in Arab countries. Among his recent publications, Dr Jureidini has co-edited Sociology: Australian Connections (3rd Ed. 2003); co-authored with A. Moors, F. Ozbay, R. Sabban & H. Jaber (2008) "Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East: Becoming Visible in the Public Sphere" in Seteney Shami (ed) Publics, Politics and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa (2008); authored “Sexuality and the Servant: An Exploration of Arab Images of the Sexuality of Domestic Maids in the Household,” in Sexuality in the Arab World, S. Khalaf and J. Gagnon (eds)(2006); co-authored with N. Moukarbel, “Female Sri Lankan Domestic Labour in Lebanon: Contractual, Slavery-like Practices and Conditions,” Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies (2004); “Migrant Workers and Xenophobia in the Middle East,” monograph in series Identity, Conflict and Cohesion (2003); and “L’échec de la protection de l’état: les domestiques étrangers au Liban (The Failure of State Protection: Household Guest Workers in Lebanon),” Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales (European Review of International Migration) (2003).

Mona Chemali Kahlaf is the author of several publications focusing on women's empowerment through education and work. She is presently Assistant Professor of Economics at the Lebanese American University and Senior Consultant on the "Social and Legal Empowerment of Women in Lebanon" project, jointly sponsored by the World Bank and the Council of Development and Reconstruction (CDR) in Lebanon. In addition, she is a member of the Advisory Board of the Gender Economic Research and Policy Analysis Initiative (GERPA), established by the World Bank and CAWTAR in 2006, the coordinator of the World Bank's Gender Consultative Council in the MENA Region from June 2000 until the present, and a member of the editorial board of Al-Raida, a quarterly magazine dealing with women's issues in the Arab world. Previously, she was the director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University from October 1997 until September 2005. In addition, she was a member of the Lebanese NGO Commission for the Preparation of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, a member of the Lebanese National Commission for Women Affairs from 1996 until 1999, and a member of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) from 1996 until 1999.

Eileen Kuttab has been the founder and director of the Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University from 1999 until 2008, and an assistant professor in Sociology. As a woman activist, she has been involved with grassroots women's organizations and has served on boards of trustees of human rights and development research centers. Her main research interests focus on the relation of feminism to nationalism, social movements and in particular the women's movement, gender and development particularly women's work in the informal

sector, coping strategies and alternative development. She has many publications in these areas, including: ““Community Development under Occupation: An Alternative Strategy,” Journal of Refugees Studies (1989) and “Where have all the Women (and Men) Gone? Reflection on Gender in the Second Intifada,” Feminist Review (co-authored 2001). . "Palestinian Women's Organizations: Global Cooption and Local Contradiction" in Cultural Dynamics (2008). 20(2):99.

Kuttab, Eileen, (2006) “The Paradox of Women’s Work: Coping, Crisis, and Family Survival”. Ed. Taraki L. In Living Palestine, Family Survival, Resistance, and Mobility under Occupation. Syracuse University Press.2006. Her current work is on Palestinian youth.

Jihad Makhoul: Currently holds the position of associate professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. She received her doctorate in Public Health from the University of Wollongong in Australia. Jihad has conducted research in Lebanon on the influence of displacement and conflict on families and the health outcomes on youth with a focus on violent conditions, and living conditions. She has written in English and Arabic. Among her publications are "understanding youth: Using qualitative methods to verify quantitative community indicators (2007) in *Health Promotion Practice*; "Violence: the Silent Determinant of Child Labor," in *Journal of Children and Poverty* (2004); "An Ethnographic Study of the Consequences of Social and Structural Forces on Children: The Case of Two Low Income Beirut Suburbs," in *Environment and Urbanization* (2003); and "Development Perspectives: Views from Rural Lebanon," in *Development in Practice* (2002). She authored "A Structural Perspective on Poverty and Health Inequalities in Lebanon," in *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies* (2003) and Report of an Evaluation of the Textbooks for the National Health and Environmental Education Curriculum (Arabic, 2000).

Annelies Moors: studied Arabic at the University of Damascus and anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. From the early 1980s on, she has conducted anthropological fieldwork in Palestine (Nablus); later she also did fieldwork in Yemen (San'a) and elsewhere in the Arab world. She is the author of Women, Property, and Islam: Palestinian Experiences 1920-1990 (Cambridge University Press, 1995), co-editor of Discourse and Palestine (Het Spinhuis, 1995) and guest-editor of a special issue of Islamic Law and Society (2003) about public debates on family law reform, and (with Emma Tarlo) of a special issue of Fashion Theory (2007) on Muslim fashions. She currently directs a research program on Muslim cultural politics. Since 2001 she has held the position of chair of the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World at the University of Amsterdam for the social scientific study of contemporary Muslim societies (see www.isim.nl).

Nadine Naber is an assistant professor at the Program of American Culture and the Department of Women's Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She conducts research and teaches courses in Arab American Studies. Her first book in progress, Arab San Francisco: On Gender, Cultural Citizenship, and Belonging focuses on negotiations of race, gender, and sexuality among Arab youth in San Francisco, California. Her current research, funded by the Russell Sage Foundation, focuses on shifts in racial formations among Arab and Muslim Americans in the aftermath of September 11th. She has co-edited a special issue of the MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies titled Gender Nation and Belonging: Arab and Arab American Feminist Perspectives (Spring 2005). She is co-editing an anthology on Racial Formation and Arab Americans (under review, Syracuse University Press). She has published articles that situate Arab Americans in the context of feminist studies and U.S. racial and ethnic studies including Arab American Femininities: Beyond Arab Virgin/American(ized) Whore,

Journal of Feminist Studies (forthcoming); Muslim First-Arab Second, A Strategic Politics of Race and Gender, The Muslim World (forthcoming); So our History Doesn't Become your Future: The Local and Global Politics of Coalition Building Post September 11th, The Journal of Asian American Studies (2002); Ambiguous Insiders, An Investigation of Arab American Invisibility, Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies (2000); and Intersectionality in an Era of Globalization: The Impact of the World Conference Against Racism on Transnational Feminist Practice, Meridians: Race, Transnationalism, and Feminism (co-authored). Nadine serves on the advisory board of the library at the Arab American National Museum and was a board member of INCITE! Women of Color against Violence. She is also a founding member of AMWAJ (Arab Women's Movement for Justice) and RAWAN (Radical Arab Women's Activist Network).

Martina Rieker: is the director of the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies at the American University in Cairo.

Omnia El Shakry is an associate professor of History at the University of California, Davis, where she teaches courses on modern Middle East history and world history. Her research interests relate to the history of social science in Egypt and the formulation of a post-colonial national modernity. Her first book, published by Stanford University Press in 2007, is entitled, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt*. She is currently working on her manuscript, "Theorizing the Soul: Modernity and the Construction of Selfhood in Twentieth Century Egypt."

Zeina Zaatari is the Senior Program Officer for the Middle East and North Africa at the Global Fund for Women in San Francisco, California. Previously, she held the position of Lecturer between 2002-04 in Anthropology and Women's Studies at the University of California

at Davis and the California State University, San Francisco and Sacramento. She recently published a report on *Advancing Women's Rights in Conflict Zones in the Arab World* (ESCWA, 2007). She also wrote "The Culture of Motherhood: An Avenue for Women's Civil Participation," at the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* (2006), "In the Belly of the Beast: Struggling for Non-Violent Belonging," *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies*, special issue *Gender, Nation and Belonging: Arab and Arab American Feminist Perspectives*, (5, 2005), and "Lebanese Country Report," in *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Citizenship and Justice* (NY: Freedom House, Inc and Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2005). Zeina is one of the producers for *Voices of the Middle East and North Africa* on KPFA in Berkeley. In addition, Zeina one of the founders of the National Council of Arab Americans, the Radical Arab Activist Women's Network (RAWAN), and Sunbula: Arab Feminists for Change in the bay area.

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Affiliates of AFWG are scholars who have worked with AFWG at some point in time

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Rania Salem is currently a graduate student at the University of Oxford's Department of Sociology. Her thesis investigates how the configuration of siblings within families mediates the reproduction of gender inequalities in Egypt. She has recently published, with Barbara Ibrahim and Martha Brady, a study of young women's negotiation of civic roles in rural Egypt, "Negotiating Leadership, Young Women's Experience in Rural Egypt" Women's Studies Quarterly, 2003. Previously, she worked as a research assistant under the Gender, Family and Development Program of the Population Council in Cairo. She has also served as a research assistant for the Arab Families Working Group and the New Arab Demography project.

Fawn Scheer obtained her Master's degree in International Agricultural Development (IAD) at the University of California, Davis. Previously, she worked as a graduate student researcher with the Arab Families Working Group working on the Arab families bibliography among other projects. Her educational background is in Environmental Science and Geology (B.S., Northern Arizona University), and much of her work experience has centered on developing awareness of environmental issues and improving environmental management practices. After returning from a Peace Corps assignment in Mombasa, Kenya, she interned for various non-profit organizations and worked as a Research Assistant with the Institute for Tribal

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Hania Sobhi received her B.A. in Economics and Political Science and her M.A. in Political Science from McGill University. Her work with the Arab Families Working Group focused on the relationship between the discourses on youth in Egypt and their economic marginalization, and the impact on family and gender dynamics. Her current research interests include youth, education, and the new religious discourses in the Muslim world and their relationship with economic, political and social reform. She has two forthcoming publications about these issues, in addition to a number of presentations at international conferences. She is currently Research Officer with the Egypt Education Reform Program, at the Academy for Educational Development.

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Nahla Zarroug worked in the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [UNOCHA] Khartoum as an Information Analyst in the Public Information and Advocacy Unit. She finished her B.A. in Middle East Studies and her M.A. in the same program through a two-year African Fellowship from the American University in Cairo. Nahla has been involved in several research projects including “Arab families in Egypt and Sudan” for the Arab Families Working Group, “Regional and International Arab Migration” for the MEAwards, Population Council in Cairo, “Red Sea Migration” and “Social (Re) construction after war, with

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Introduction: Rethinking Arab Family Projects

Suad Joseph and Martina Rieker (2008)

The Family as Problem Space in the Arab World

Families constitute a strategic site within which to locate a project that seeks to develop a fuller understanding of the complexity of contemporary social processes in the Arab world. In his genealogy of the constitution of modern law and ethics in colonial Egypt, Talal Asad (2003) identifies the new vocabulary of *a'ila* (modern “family”) as a particular enunciation of a newly emerging set of modern socialities. It is the trajectory of this modern arrangement of social and cultural relations that lies at the core of the Arab Families Working Group research project. Conceptualized within the grammar of socialities, this project on the study of families in specific localities seeks to grasp the complex, changing strands of relations that mark a particular cultural-historical and geographical terrain.

Family has been central to most popular and scholarly conversations about the Arab world for the past century. Woven into the fabric of almost every aspect of social life, family has been understood to be critical to social projects of all sorts – colonialist, anti-colonialist, nationalist, pan-Arabist, socialist, modernist, religious, and feminist. Movements from all political directions have claimed the space of family as their own, elevating its purpose and production to almost sacred principles. Relationships, ethics, and idioms nested in family discourse have been mobilized to link political, economic, social, religious, and cultural institutions and processes. Arab families have been seen to be crucial to development, democracy, participatory citizenship, human rights, and the basic production of culture. Studies of Arab societies almost always gesture towards family structures and dynamics. The density of

social value packed onto the site of family makes Arab family studies a strategic point of departure for research on the complex contestations concerning social arrangements in Arab societies.

The cultural and analytical category of “family,” however, has become among the thickest of social categories, layered with meanings and fraught with expectation. Perhaps no category of social analysis in and of Arab societies is at once more seemingly “fixed” and yet flexible. Arab family structure and discourse appear to be designed for malleability, negotiability, formability, performativity, and yet substantiality – producing a montage of families and an appearance of concreteness. The diversity of family formations, the fluidity of personnel who constitute family, the elision of family with other categories (“usra”, “aila”, “beit” – kin, family, household), the chronic “thereness” of family and the chronic “elusiveness” as to what and who is family begs for analysis. Indeed, it is precisely the simultaneity of “elusiveness” and “thereness” that makes “family” so powerful in the Arab world.

The family is very much alive in Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt, and their diasporas, the focal sites for this volume. People appear to continually reinvent and reinvest in families. Throughout the twentieth century despite profound and diverse historical changes in the life of people, communities, societies, the family inhabits a significant space in ways in which individuals organize and live their everyday. In Palestine, house demolitions, deportations based on family relations, and collective punishment based on family meted by the Israeli state has brought the Palestinian family violently into politics. In Lebanon, as the state fell apart during the Civil War (1975-1990) and remains largely stalemated close to two decades later, civilians and activists alike have turned to their families and family networks for basic resources and security. In Egypt people repeatedly have used the family system to gain security in the face of an

increasingly repressive state, and neoliberal economic dislocations. People continue to draw on their families, it would appear, not because of the cultural “durability” of a “traditional” family, but because of the collapse of statist projects, the decline of liberalist and socialist state projects, the failure of social welfare projects, the failure of nationalist projects and in the wake of war and forced migrations. (1)

The muscular emergence of the concept and concrete realities of family/families in the Arab world must be studied in the context of post-colonial turmoil, in the face of domestic and international wars, in the realities produced by forced migration and social upheaval, and in the abysmal outcomes of modern statist projects. Critical to this seeming “returning” to families is the failure of Arab state-building projects and the contradictory deployment of family structures, within those process, in the crises of modernity. Statist projects, in general, construct family projects designed to confirm and augment the social, economic, and political arrangements envisioned for the state. Jacqueline Stevens argues that states are very invested in the rules of kinship (Stevens 1999, 235). Indeed, one can argue that the idea of “family” itself can be traced as a product of statist projects (Joseph 2005). One can also argue that liberalist states invented the idea of family, disembedded from other existing social configurations, as a unit of political formation through the use of family legislation, labor law, education, economic and social development. Judith Butler argues that “Not only does the state presuppose kinship and kinship presuppose the state but ‘acts’ that are performed in the name of one principle take place in the idiom of the other, confounding the distinction between the two...” (Butler 2000, 11). Seen as an effect of power relations, the family embodies power relations enmeshed with and often indistinguishable from the state (Donzelot 1997, Deleuze 1997).

Textual Practices: Arab Family Studies

The family has been a conceptual problem space in post-Enlightenment thought. Wedded to the ideal of the individual citizen-subject as author of local modernity projects, and subsequent rights based emancipatory narratives, post-Enlightenment thought more often than not perceived the family as representing older historical patrimonial norms out of which the individual citizen-subject had to be liberated. Critical engagement with this genealogy notwithstanding, epistemologically academic literature in gender and women's studies remains firmly grounded within it. Much of the energies within gender and women's studies have focused on ways in which to "identify" and "empower" the individual gendered subject from a web of complex social and cultural ties and networks, often situated within "the family". Within the context of the study of the non Euro-American world, the family is furthermore burdened by a colonial geographical imaginary. Women and indigenous family structures not only served as core tropes within colonial discourse, but also became the subject wherein anti-colonial politics embedded its production of cultural authenticity (Chatterjee 1993). Navigating the treacherous terrain of the tradition and modernity binary, and the postcolonial indigeneity discourses it authorizes, the study of local family structures in postcolonial gender studies continues to struggle against and with these complex historical inscriptions.

It is beyond the scope of this introduction to present a genealogy of the study of the family in the modern Arab world. While the field, and especially scholars within gender studies, has distanced itself from the generic production of the Arab family as represented in the works of Halim Barakat (1993) or Hisham Sharabi (1998), nonetheless the dominant lens through the individual gendered subject has been narrated is by way of processes whereby she disentangles herself from dominant culturally distinct familial networks. One important moment through

which to trace the direct and indirect (re) consolidation of a post-colonial gender studies authenticity discourse is the publication of Germaine Tillion's 1966 *The Republic of Cousins: Women's Oppression in Mediterranean Society*. Written by a French anthropologist of Algeria, *The Republic of Cousins* can be read as a postcolonial text in the ways in which it refuses the sacralization of the Mediterranean as boundary. Tillion's insistence on the Mediterranean as a shared space nonetheless requires a new place holder, the family and its reproduction processes, to guarantee the geographical difference between "north" and "south" (Rieker 2005). The argument here is not to suggest that this is the foundational text for post-colonial gender studies of the region *per se*, but rather to point towards the ease with which the 'family as problem space' becomes the place holder for analysis of other modern stories. More than forty years later, the cultural construct of the "prison house" of the Arab family as an ahistorical organization of norms and relations through which individuals variously need to be liberated (women and children) or reformed (men) remains an easily recognized sub-text in scholarship, NGO work, print media, and even in the terrain of international wars. The Arab family is reproduced, in these scholarly, journalistic, public and political sites, as an institution that one has to fight against to gain rights, rather than an institution within which members have rights. In this representation, the family (and gender relations) becomes another kind of boundary, a distinction, a difference between Europe and the Arab world, in the shared geocultural space of the Mediterranean.

In recent attempts to revisit core colonial tropes such as the *harem*, Arab feminist scholars and artists (for instance Fatima Mernissi's *Dreams of Trespass* (1994) or Moufida Tlatli's *Silences of the Palace* (1996)) critically confront modern liberatory narratives of institutional normalization of the family. As postcolonial gendered texts, these pieces

furthermore question the inherent authorial voice of the post-Enlightenment subject, yet the location from which these texts interrogate their various subjects remains that of the forever-emancipating individual subject. This is both the strength but also the limitation for studying local familial arrangements from within a “gender studies” perspective. The rich material on family social histories that have been published over the last few years, especially on the Levant, (e.g. Doumani 1995; Khater 2001) in contradistinction are able to explore much more rigorously the production of familial networks and the enmeshment of individual subjectivity within them within larger historical and social contexts. What is lost in this approach, however, is a fuller understanding of their repressive mechanisms, and the subaltern (gendered, classed) voices that are silenced in the process of systemic reproduction (for an exception to this see Thompson 2000). Another body of recent historical work focusing on Egypt in particular (Abu Lughod, 1998; Shakry 1998) has sought to disentangle ways in which the gendered individual was made visible in early modern household reforms. As Asad (2003) has shown in his influential essay on colonial law in Egypt and on the work of the Islamicist Muhammad Abduh in particular, what came to be defined as tradition, modern, authentic and so forth in the making of anti-colonial modern projects was always already a process of envisioning and inscribing new and categories of “tradition” and its others.

The Arab Families Working Group Project

In contradistinction to a growing body of recent historical literature, there is very little new critical work on contemporary Arab families. Despite the centrality of Arab families in political and cultural talk, Arab family studies are among the least theoretically and empirically developed arenas of scholarly investigation of the contemporary Arab world. Reliable research

on families that investigates the intersections of family, class, religion, gender and generation, beyond the general and generic, is hard to find. Relatively little research investigates the intersections of family, class, religion, state formation, gender, and generation. The systemic historical embedding of political, economic, and familial structures has been the subject of research of few and only relatively recent scholars (Thompson 2000, Khater 2001, Doumani 2003, Pollard 2005). The articulation of familial processes within the intersections of national and global movements and transformations is understudied or under-theorized. Hardly any research on Arab families is interdisciplinary, comparative, historical, and transnational in approach.

Much of the work on Arab families is relatively ahistorical. These works often essentialize, homogenize, and de-contextualize Arab families. They tend to use “Arab family” generically, presuming an unproblematical concept that can be applied across classes and countries. AFWG discussions have raised the question of the term “Arab” – what makes a family “Arab”, versus Egyptian, Palestinian, or “Mediterranean”? Some works on “Arab” families, appear to need no territorial or social organizational referent. In some of this work, the congealing of the category of “Arab” family offers a target to point the finger for the ills of Arab society (Barakat 1993, Sharabi 1988). Even the work that tends to romanticize Arab families shares with its critics a construct of the Arab family as static and unchanging. Recent work has challenged that ahistorical representation of Arab families -- much of the recent scholarship on Arab families, in fact, has been historical. The works of Akram Khater (2001), Nelly Hanna (1998), Elizabeth Thompson (2000), Beshara Doumani (1995, 2003), and Lisa Pollard (2005) offer critical insight into the cusp of the modernity project. These books, focusing on the late

19th and early 20th centuries, are, however, not themselves are not about modernity projects. Very little critical work on Arab families covers the post World War II period.

The neglect of family studies is particularly striking given the centrality of Arab families to Arab societies. Relationships, values and idioms based on family weave together political, economic, social, religious and cultural institutions and processes. Arab families are crucial to developing or hindering democracy, human rights, citizenship, legal literacy, peace, conflict resolution, and economic development. Analyses of these (and other) aspects of Arab societies almost always lead back to analyses of family structures and processes. Arab families both produce and are produced by transformations in their societies, and thus critical changes in families both trigger and signal changes in other social arenas.

Paradoxically, it could be that it is the very centrality of family that has resulted in the relative absence of critical Arab family studies (Joseph 2008). Perhaps this is not unusual. Donzelot argues that even in Europe by the beginning of the 20th century, family became “the buttress at the foot of which all criticism stopped” (1997, 5). Perhaps also the lack of critical family studies is partially a consequence of the privileging of “gender” (adopted from Western feminist studies) as the key category of analysis, with “gender studies” attendant focus on the “individual” as its point of departure.

Family talk, however, saturates the public sphere in the Arab world. The textual output of statecraft practices, from constitutions to labor laws, are entangled with family. In the constitutions of most Arab states, the family is identified as the unit of society. In that sense, Arab statist projects constituted family projects (Joseph 1991, Thompson 2000) as sites for the production of national desires – dreams, ideals, visions, and wishes of what “the people” and “the nation” could be. Towards that end, statist projects instituted family legislation, labor laws,

industrial and agricultural development plans, educational programs and the like. In this respect, statist projects in Arab states have been not unlike statist projects elsewhere. Jack Goody (1983), for example, argued that the Catholic Church deployed church law to reinvent family forms as part of its own state-building project. Lynn Hunt claimed that, during the French Revolution, “the most obvious material at hand for thinking politically was the family, not the family as some kind of modal social experience, but the family as an imaginative construct of power relations” (1992, 196). Donzelot similarly argued that the family was supported by conservatives and liberals alike during the French Revolution, with critics coming mainly from scientific and utopian socialists (1997, 5). Paola Baccetta (1999) contended that the Indian state worked vigorously to reinvent the family through the lens of the Hindu nationalist project.

Consequently, in most Arab states, family legislation (marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance) became contested among groups with different political aspirations (e.g. nationalists, Islamists, and feminists). The volatile tug of war around family law and the continual changes in legislation itself reflects the uncertain stability of statist projects. Labor laws in the Arab world are thought to be more “modernist” than family law. Yet even in the arena of labor law the contradictions between market demands and modernist values around women, children, and family have left a state of confusion, making labor laws often irrelevant as they so often unenforced.

The Arab Families Working Group Project: Unpacking Arab Family Projects

As a collaborative, interdisciplinary, comparative, transnational research collective, the Arab Family Working Group Project (AFWG) studies contemporary family dynamics. As our analytic point of departure the project works with the notion of *socialities* to open up a wider

conceptual space through which to carefully examine the form (families) that social organization takes in the Arab world. Deleuze reminds us that family is not just a “manifest reality, but a moving resultant, an uncertain form whose intelligibility can only come from studying the system of relations it maintains with the socio-political level.” (1997, p. xxv) The AFWG project, therefore, studies Arab families, not to “stuff” people into family systems as some enduring and unchanging social form, but to understand the construction and shifting nature of socialities in their socio-political contexts. The study of Arab families and its constitutive members, especially its gendered youth, builds upon a complex set of academic fields and sub fields, and the various actors and social visions that certain locations enable. The autonomous, forever emancipating Enlightenment subject is also forcefully hailed, in the last few years, within the frameworks of both neo-liberal and new imperial agendas. These subjects and frameworks demand a very careful analysis of both familial socialities and their constitutive members at a moment of complex social, economic, and geopolitical changes in the Arab world.

The AFWG work in this volume focuses on families and youth in Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon and their transnational diasporas in the United States and Canada. There are a number of reasons for this particular concentration. For one, the Levant and Egypt have historically dominated scholarly production within the Middle East. Put differently, our understanding of the Middle East has largely been produced through the lens of these two spaces. Consequently there is a critical mass of ethnographic and historical studies available on Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine. Each of these countries also has a long history of institution building around the study of woman and the family. The Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University, founded in 1973, is the oldest such institute in the Arabic speaking Middle East. The Institute for Women’s Studies at Birzeit University (Palestine, founded in 1994) and

the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies at the American University in Cairo (Egypt, founded in 2000) are among the few graduate programs and university affiliated gender studies research centers in the Arab region. Furthermore, Egypt is the location of numerous organizations committed to research on families, youth, gender such as the Social Research Center (American University in Cairo), Women and Memory Forum, and international organizations such as the Population Council, International Development Research Center, UNICEF and others.

Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon are rich material sites at which to re-interrogate and unhinge hegemonic understandings of social processes and actors. All three sites are undergoing tremendous transformations: The Palestinian national project has been made and unmade over the last decades, following over half a century of dislocation, occupation, war and violence and the emergence of competitive movements and visions for the nature and organization of the statist project. The post-civil war social contract is being renegotiated in Lebanon with competing visions based on troubling and contested foundations, following over a quarter of a century of civil war, violence and instability. Egypt is redrawing its social geographies within the context of neo-liberal restructuring in Egypt. These three very different statecraft projects within which the imaginaries of family are centrally located, and within which there is historically significant institution-building and literatures around women's studies offer rich comparative material to study and understand social configurations of modernity in these countries. They are three countries which have from the late 19th century, even before the generative work of Qasim Amin (1899) set the stage for modernity projects in the region, especially in relation to women and family. Three countries whose histories and geographies are intimately intertwined – whose boundaries cannot meaningfully be fixed without violating much

of their histories. They are three countries whose histories are caught up in contested territorialization, reterritorialization and deterritorialization to the present – an issue central to the AFWG project.

While AFWG does not intend to contribute to the reproduction of the *sui generis* process of meaning making in the region by focusing exclusively on these three contexts and their particularisms, the institutional strength, the scholarly traditions, and the effectivity of modern collection processes make these strategic sites at which to compare contemporary processes within a historically nuanced perspective. The AFWG project hopes that this initial comparative three country project (and their diasporas) will provide a critical basis for future research in other Arabic speaking Middle Eastern contexts.

War, displacement, violence, marginality and forced migrations are some of the key words around which familial socialities and their youth constituents negotiate their every day – and which spill over into their dynamics of diasporic communities. It is these moments of rupture that form the entry point for the questions that the comparative AFWG research project poses to the study of youth and familial socialities in contemporary Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon.

The Arab Families Working Group investigates the modernity of the family. Approaching the family as an institution and discourse that is produced, AFWG looks at the frames through which family is produced, with particular interest in the notions of discourse, youth, marriage, border crossings, and the public/private. Family is a project of the state, of religious institutions, of nationalist movements and colonialist and post-colonial projects. To dissect the frames through which the family is produced, we engage an historical approach. Family structures are redeployed in the historical present. By historical present we mean that

families are grounded in the past and in the coming future. The present, enmeshed in the past, is constantly refigured.

We aim to unpack the way in which “the family” is implicated in the production of the liberalist, contractarian public/private dichotomy (Pateman 1988). We work towards unpacking the notion of the “public” and the illusory notion that the public is something other than “family”. We suggest there are many “publics” and that the public is constantly reconstituted (Fineman 1995). Similarly we aim to unpack the ways in which “the family” is situated in liberalist efforts at undermining larger kinship groupings and constructing the “individual” – an anchor point of statist projects and their failed social contracts (Makdisi 2000).

No concept or institution is more linked with an essentialized construct of culture than is the concept of family. To de-essentialize “Arab culture”, one must first de-essentialize “the family”. Reading material realities into understanding families and family projects is central to AFWG’s critical disabling of a culturalist reading of the idea of “return” to Arab families. In place of culturalist analyses we propose historical, discursive, and empirically-grounded social analyses. “Family” is not a cultural remnant but a response to crises and survival (Sayigh 2005, 2007). We see families as real lived experiences and the construct of the family as having powerful discursive and material effects. Seeing “the family” as constantly invented and reinvented in the crises of failed states and failed modernism. AFWG aims to de-essentialize culture, unmooring it from its ahistorical constructions.

Family is a trope and tropes have genealogies. Many scholars, including some in AFWG, in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine, have and continue to focus on “household”. In our discussions, we have asked what is left out or lost by using the framework of families, rather than households? Does household presuppose nuclearization and “modernization” under conditions

of certain kinds of urbanization? But, households in all these three countries, we found, were often not nuclear; and households were quite different from kin networks. Family, with its affective and moral infusion, reflected both local and national discursive strategies and norms not evoked in the more demographically deployed term “household”; “families” we found was the relevant local term. In Arabic, the classical usage is “usra”, while the colloquial is “’a’ila” -- neither of which is fully encompassed by their closest English proximate -- “family” and neither of which has a constant set of empirical referents. But again, our concern is less the term for social organizational categories and more the socialities they entail and how these socialities are shaped and reshaped. It is almost impossible to define “usra” or “’a’ila” through a set of criteria which translates consistently into social forms on the ground. For example, we questioned how best to understand Sri Lankan domestic workers (Chapter 3, this volume) as members of “the family” (rather than only as members of “the household”); and how they traverse the emotional and moral terrain, at times as idiomatic kin and at times as intimate outsiders. In some countries domestic workers have been distant or close kin, making the boundaries between “family” and “household” unstable and uncertain.

It became clear as we compared our case studies that it made more sense to talk about “families” as complex webs of relationships, as familial networks. Who counts as family continually shifts under changing times and conditions. We learned to be cautious about fixing meanings and terminologies, and grew particularly weary of national or international statistical data (Chapter 4, this volume) in which terms like “household” and “family” were deployed as if they were stable givens. Many of these terms, or tropes, were generated by statist projects, bent on data collection for their political plans. In some cases, religious institutions impose tropes and terms to advance their social visions. Development organizations, NGO, national and

international, also can come to have vested interests in arresting the targets of their work from their moving frames into fixed frames. AFWG is interested in problematizing tropes and terms associated with familial socialities.

We asked what is the work that tropological uses of “the family” accomplishes. One challenge has been how to study families without reifying and reinstalling the category of “the family”. For this reason, we have chosen to use “families”, not “family” to signal the diversity and situatedness of families. We have chosen to use “Arab” as opposed to “Islamic” or Middle Eastern” or “Egyptian, “Lebanese” or “Palestinian” family to signal the comparative historical project with its attendant contextualizations. AFWG investigates not what family “is” (not to fix whether it is by blood or not, whose blood, which “type” of blood, or other iconic definitions). Rather we are concerned to understand how it is produced materially and discursively and what it comes to mean to the varying and shifting constituencies for which it mobilizes political, social, economic, and moral affect.

As we questioned the application of “family” versus “household” to concrete lived experiences in these Arab countries, we also asked about the usage of family versus “gender,” versus “women”. We reflected on why feminist scholars had fled family studies. Many of the AFWG Core Group had come from gender studies and had been trained to see family studies as stagnant, a terminological jungle. What made us turn to study Arab families? Our research led us to raise the question of what was lost by privileging “gender” or “women” versus “family” as a point of departure; what effects did the shift in frames of reference have on not only scholarly outcomes but also on the political activities which we investigated. We found that “family” is a different kind of project from “women” or “gender” in the context of Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine.

Feminist research in the 1960s and 1970s shifted the terms of conversation to “women” and “gender studies”, neglecting the family as a set of relationships, or positioning the family as a frame from which women had to liberate themselves in order to find their agency. Several decades of privileging gender has atomized “the social” into individuals in much of feminist scholarship. It appeared that social structures could only be viewed from the frame of “the individual”, “the subject”, and “the subject’s subjectivity”. Lost often were the nuanced and profound contextualizations of social relations; and lost often was a concerted focus on men and their social relationships with women. Gender studies and family studies, however, never co-resided very well in the Arab social studies. Gender studies became a standing in for empowering women vis-a-vis their families, jettisoning family and gender studies into a tense relationship with each other. AFWG shifts the debate by putting family and gender in dialogue; we readdress the societal through the lens of family. The AFWG project is a corrective, not a return, to the single-minded focus on women and gender, taking families as sites of socialities which expose the intersections of women, men, gender, household, kin, and networks.

The frame of families as sites of socialities, exposed another thread of connection in our research: the construction of desire and the desiring subject. How is it that actors are brought into wanting “families”, into desiring “familial life” was a question that we turned to. This question led us to rethink our ideas about “youth”, youth as a target of “public discourse”, marriage as a holding place for youth, the state as a holding place for desire (Chapter 2, this volume). We discussed the ways in which marriage is not a resolution; the ways in which the social contract is a discipline that is rebelled against, but which has not challenged or rendered impossible what we call marriage. We raised the question of the different sorts of social contracts developing at the level of community, and the ways in which these social contracts may

challenge the social contract embedded within the modernist state. We found that while there maybe a youth rebellion against the non-national state, the notion of marriage has not been fundamentally challenged in Egypt, Lebanon or Palestine. And while marriage remains possible only for recognized subjects within the social contract, youthful desire may be a way to slip away from the state into non-national futures. Youth fantasies about migration, we found, are about non-national futures; about non-national desires. Youth rebellion literature often focuses on the ways in which the social contract gets ruptured on the social, communal level. The literature celebrates rebellion which challenges the social community – the breaking of social contract at the community level – as long as it does not challenge the Jacobian contract which is located in the state.

AFWG began looking at the social contract at the level of state and the social contract at the level of community in Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine. While in the United States and Europe, scholarship often celebrates the breaking of the social contract at the level of community, but not the state; in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine, rebellion we found is at the level of the state, not the level of community. This recognition reinforced AFWG's interest in families since the community is situated through marriage and family. One can say that, in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine, youth have not challenged marriage and family.

These issues of youth, desire, marriage, territoriality, movement are critical for the two AFWG core projects: 1.) Public Discourse and Youth (Chapter 2, this volume) and its subsidiary project on National Data Surveys (Chapter 4, this volume) and 2.) Border Crossings (Chapter 3, this volume). AFWG considered a number of research questions. Our interests converged around these two trajectories for two key reasons: First, those under 25 years old constitute between 60-70% of the population in most Arab societies. While youth constitute a narrower

age bracket (the age range of “youth” varies by countries and issues considered – from 12 to 25 or older), nevertheless, to focus on youth is to focus on not only the future of Arab societies, but their present, their majority. Youth have been critical to modern statist projects and therefore how youth are represented in public discourse (media, legal, educational institutions) reflects the concerns and issues at the heart of these projects. Second, AFWG recognized that shifts in how family comes to be enmeshed in and differentiated from other arenas of social life is a critical marker of societal change locally and historically. Given the tumultuous changes brought about by migration, war and displacement in Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt, the shifting boundaries between family as a “private” arena and the “public” signifies and facilitates important transformations across all social spheres. It is therefore a key index of social developments. Public and private create domestic borders which are traversed and transgressed in relation to both national and world transformations. Border crossings occur locally, nationally, and globally. AFWG’s commitment to comparative work documents the shifting character of social groupings, to ground them in localities and to investigate the changing but intertwining intersections of key social categories, including familism, ethnicity, nationalism, religion, tribalism, regionalism through the empirical work of these two core research trajectories.

The Arab Families Working Group Research: The Border Crossings Project

The Border Crossings Project (Chapter 3) focused its research on the shifting meanings of family manifested in the changing boundaries of the “public” and “private” under conditions of war, migration, violence, and displacement. Who counts as family and what sites get to be considered “family” and how family dynamics change under conditions of upheaval are critical in understanding how families adjust to change. The territorialization of the Middle East around

state-building projects in the 20th century produced families across borders. Some families became Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Syrian because political boundaries were drawn, imposing territorial identities that were not indigenous. The new boundaries and their attached identities, nevertheless, were mostly embraced over time. Families intersected with new territorial configurations, newly invented national and regional definitions of identity.

The Border Crossings group takes an historical approach, recognizing that shifting boundaries and transgressing boundaries are not new to the region (Thompson 2000, Khater 2001). A genealogy of the region's geography narrates a story of rising and falling regimes, states, and empires which constantly contested and changed the region's political landscape. The Border Crossings group addresses the issues of movement, deterritorialization and reterritorialization. It destabilizes the project of nation/family and state/family by viewing family not as a static entity, but as constantly reconstituted. There is not "an" Arab family; there are Arab families. Families which appear marginal in the literature wedded to "normative" representations of "the" Arab family are not marginal but rather central to the very history and experience of families in this region. Families who move because of forced migration under conditions of war and violence; become displaced because of economic upheaval, political or social remapping; or move voluntarily in response to imaginings of new futures are main characters in the stories of Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine.

The constructs of youth and desire wove themselves through both Core Group research trajectories of the Public Discourse and Youth and the Border Crossings. States territorialize identities through the practices of statecraft such as passports, visas, travel permits. Youth, we found in all three of these countries, want to leave, to move, to transport themselves beyond the state. They seek non-national futures. Border crossings are not aberrations of these countries or

the region; rather they are central to the historical narratives of the region. Migration has been an historical site of desire for youth -- for over 150 years youth in these countries have yearned to leave, to migrate, find different futures. The Border Crossings group captures these desires at a certain moment of history. We cannot understand youth in the region without looking at looking a core desire to break outside of borders, to challenge region and locality. This compelling desire to move, to migrate exposes the territorialized vision of statecraft in the region as having been rendered disabled.

AFWG examined the shifting of the social contract to the level of community in new and different ways (Islamist movements, through marriage and the family). Transnationality (migration forced, chosen and yearned for, non-national futures) emerged as other sites of core desire. Transnationalism, the current trope for border crossings, has been central to the history of Arab families for close to 150 years (Khater 2001, Thompson 2000). Civil wars, colonial occupation, forced migrations, upheavals resulting from postcolonial statist projects have existed as the constant condition of socialities in the Arab world from the early 19th century. The changes in the state, colonialism, postcolonialism, and current political projects have led to the social projects of today, including the so called “return” to “families”. The persistence of movement, defying territorialization of visions of the future, raised for AFWG the question of how Arab families reproduce themselves in transnationality. It challenged “Arab” as a descriptor of the noun “families” (“Arab families”), as we recognized the movements to Africa, America, Latin America, Australia, Europe, Asia, particularly in the past 150-200 years. In Brazil alone, there is a reported population of Lebanese heritage that numbers around nine million (twice the population of Lebanon, at 4.5 million). That these movements were often reversible, with individuals and families “returning”, “regrouping” and reconfiguring themselves defies the

representation of Arab families as an entity detached from locality or contextuality. AFWG became more skeptical about whether Arab or Arab families meant a territorial space, reinforcing our view that the diasporas need to be organically integrated into how we think of Arab families. As we tried to “think” “Arab”, we found it slipped through our fingers – reinforcing the recognition that we needed to address families as evolving and shifting transnational networks.

Transnationality, however, as used by AFWG is not simply about the movement of people from Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine outside their national borders. It is also about the movement of people into those territorial boundaries. These countries themselves became destinations of in-migration from other sites, further destabilizing the territorialization of “Arab families”. Migrant labor, particularly migrant domestic labor, is critical for understanding Arab families in these sites. The AFWG investigates the genealogy of domestic labor and its relationship to family structures, dynamics, discourses, and idioms. While domestic labor has been a long-standing part of elite families, it has become increasingly a part of families across the social terrain. An historical analysis reveals that domestic labor one hundred years ago usually consisted of local people, usually females, often very young, and often distant extended kin. Over the past half century, however, domestic labor has increasingly gone global, initially with the importation of members (usually female) of poorer classes from neighboring Arab countries, and later from not too distant non-Arab countries. Today, domestic labor in Egypt and Lebanon, in particular, is imported from as far away as the Ethiopia, Sudan, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Indonesia, and India. The influx of domestic labor, with its importation of diverse languages and cultures, has raised critical questions for families in these countries. “Who is raising our children”, “what are their values”, and “where are their mothers” are questions raised in the media and the parlor rooms. The treatment (at times abusive and a violation of both

domestic and international labor law and human rights conventions) of domestic workers has become a family, a national, and an international issue. Are these domestic workers from India and the Philippines and Sri Lanka to be studied as part of “the Arab family”? AFWG addresses these questions and their implications for transformations within and around Arab families.

The Arab Families Working Group Research: The Public Discourse and Youth Project

The Public Discourse and Youth Project (Chapter 2) focused its research on the discourses concerning the “crisis” of youth, family formation (through marriage) and media discourses on youth and families in Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt. How a public debate is created, who creates it, in what sites are they produced, how categories of youth and family are used in public debates, what is meant by them, who uses them, how their use is responded to by the key constituents (youth, families, government agencies, NGOs) are central questions to the project. The Public Discourse and Youth group has been concerned with what notions of family are discursively authorized by state, by courts, by law, by educational curricula, by media, and by popular culture. We look at the ways in which family and state are mutually constitutive of each other, discursively and materially. We do not presume a single set of public discourses on youth, anticipating competing public discourses and competing private discourses with an uneven translation between public and private discourses. How youth and critical others perceive, create and engage with public discourses – across class, religious, regional, and gender and generational lines – and in different arenas such as law, education, and the media are important points of departure for this research trajectory.

Arab families are undergoing profound transformations – transformations which both generate and reflect critical changes throughout Arab societies. These transformations in Arab families are often perceived and represented, in Arab public fora, as “crises”. We aim to critically investigate why families and youth are perceived to be “in crisis”, by problematizing the notions of “crisis” and “transformation”. Perceived “crises” in family systems are often symptomatic of social systems in crisis or at the height of change. AFWG is interested to document how the representations in public fora signal key changes in society and often lead to change.

The Public Discourse and Youth group is particularly interested in investigating three questions: 1.) Why youth are seen as a “lost generation” in Lebanon and Egypt, but as saviors, particularly male youth (“shebab”) in Palestine? Who is blamed or credited with the conditions of youth? How does the public discourse affect the possibilities for intervention on behalf of youth? What are the differences in signification of male and female youth? 2. What is the “ideal” family, as represented in the three nation-state building projects? 3. How do the implicit public discourses over youth, ideal family relations, and normative sexualities reflect and affect youth in their societies?

The perceived “crises” of Arab youth are often considered, in Arab public discourses, to be both a cause and symptom of the crises of Arab families and Arab societies. When youth are considered to be a “problem” and how their problems are posed as “family” problems or “social”, “political”, “economic”, “religious”, or “cultural” problems varies with the dynamics of regimes. Arab youth were constructed as the vanguard and the hope for the future in Arab nationalist projects, barely half a century ago. Today, Arab youth in Lebanon and Egypt are often represented in public discourse as a “lost generation”. Their “lostness” is counterposed to

the notion of the “ideal family” represented in nation-state building in these countries. Palestinian youth, however, are not seen as lost, but as heroic -- saviors of the Palestinian nation/state. Yet the realities of occupation, armed struggle, and risks of death put youth, the standard bearers of national liberation, at the center of crises in Palestine. Embedded in these public discourses about youth are the implicit discourses over normative youth sexualities, gender and generation. How are public discourses on youth invented, deployed, gendered and situated in terms of “ideal” families within nation-state building projects? How are discourses inscribed in law, education and popular culture? How do the critical actors participate in or resist the production or implications of these discourses? These are critical questions for this research trajectory.

The role of youth is critical to all major conflicts in the region. Youth are often the material forces of conflict. It is youth who are mobilized for wars; it is mostly youth who pay the price of conflict with their lost lives, lost education, injured careers. The Public Discourse and Youth group draws out the voices of youth and those actors deemed responsible for youth, looking at how youth are represented and how they see themselves and their sense of agency. The objective is to develop frames for understanding the critical transformations of Arab families which entails understanding the debates around youth -- the largest segment of Arab families and Arab societies.

The research group sees neither youth, nor families, nor the state, nor the nation, nor religion, nor culture, nor women, nor men, nor even the idea of “discourse” as homogeneous categories. “Youth” are differentiated by gender, by class, by religion, by region, by education – even what age groups count as youth vary from country to country, time to time. The term “Arab family” is disaggregated from the public discourses of “normative” families to account for

the vast array of concrete social arrangements lived out across national, religious, class, ethnic and regional differences. “The family” is not an undifferentiated entity. The research group examines the family as consisting of numerous actors with differentiated interests, including extended kin, idiomatic kin, multiple generations – with gender and hierarchy always at play. What constitutes “the family”, in discourse and reality, shifts, the boundaries of family change, responding to changing social, political and economic conditions.

Public discourses are played out in popular culture through TV, movies, popular magazines, plays and novels. They are also played out through the national school curricula which impacts the socialization of children for national citizenship. Furthermore, and importantly, public discourses both reflect and affect law – citizenship laws, family laws, labor laws and other critical arenas such as laws regulating free speech and activities of NGOs. Public discourses are arenas for the vetting of social concerns as well as disciplinary tools for inventing social realities. Capturing the dynamics between the lived realities and the mechanisms for creating realities is crucial to understanding how public discourses affect questions of citizenship, rights, equality and democracy.

Driving these public controversies about the “crises” of Arab families as represented in the public debates about the “crises” of Arab youth is a concern with the question of cultural authenticity. In Arab discourses the questions of Arab identity, Arab culture, what is “authentic” (as opposed to “western”) in what youth believe and how they act is heatedly argued. State and opinion leaders, families and youths raise questions about how to engage the “other” (the West); is the other just different or is it bad; how do they differentiate themselves from the other; is it even possible to disentangle from the other; do they feel they must disengage in order to clarify their identity; how does one encourage and respond to the “other”; does response and

encouragement entail loss or compromise of identity and authenticity; does authenticity allow or not allow for change? The intensity of the emotion involved in drawing a line between self and other contrasts with Western discourses which currently espouse plurality and diversity as expressions of equality. Concerns about “authenticity” frame the public discourse and frame the three questions as questions about authenticity. Our research situates the three questions in the context of local public debates about “authenticity”.

Public discourses and discursive practices are a lens for studying strategies and relations of power, assimilation and resistance, and potential paths of intervention for change based on an understanding of the agency of actors at all levels of society. As such, a critical analysis of public discourses and discursive practices offers a primary tool for developing frameworks to respond to social transformations as they are perceived and answer the question: what is to be done? The starting point, then, is capturing the controversies around youth as they are debated in public fora by the critical actors.

Reframing Arab Families Projects: Volume I of the AFWG Project

Volume I represents the work of AFWG during its first three years (2001-2004) of formulating interdisciplinary theoretical approaches for the study of Arab families in Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine (Phase I of the AFWG project). Each part is introduced by a short section on “context” which explains the background to the framing of those sections. Part Two addresses the questions and frameworks developed within the two key AFWG projects —Public Discourse and Youth, and Border Crossings and the supplementary project on national survey data production. The Public Discourse and Youth chapters are organized around the three key sites which the group identified as critical for understanding discourse and youth -- law and

public policy, education, and mass mediated public discourse. The Border Crossings chapters are organized into two sections, one focusing on the key refiguring of “public” and “private” and one on forced migration and displacement. The national survey data production chapter addresses how families and youth are produced in statist projects through the collection, analysis and distribution of various formulations as to what constitutes “data” (statistics, surveys, invention of essentializing categories and the like). Part Three of the volume captures the state of the art in the literature on families and youth in Egypt Lebanon and Palestine. A separate chapter is devoted to the scholarly literatures of each country. Part Four offers a genealogy of the AFWG project, how it was launched and evolved, focusing especially on the interdisciplinary, comparative, collaborative, inter-generational vision that motivated and energized our activities. Part Five entails a bibliography of over 2,000 items on Arab families from the 19th century to the present. Most of the bibliography is in English. We included Arabic, French and German sources to a lesser degree because we did not have the staffing to expand those sections, but with the expectation that the work would be expanded on the AFWG website and future publications (<http://afwg.info>).

Endnotes

1. This is not a “returning to “traditional” family entities. The very idea of “traditional” family is an invention of the modernist project, as Beshara Doumani has convincingly argued (Doumani 1998), and shares in its failures.

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Introduction: Families in Public Discourse

Annelies Moors (2004)

As families are crucially important for social and cultural reproduction, ‘the family’ is a central trope in a wide variety of political projects. Notions of the family become particularly important across the public sites of law, education and the media. To engage with these three sites, we begin with an overview that brings together two sets of ideas and literatures relevant to ‘the family in public discourse’. First, discussing the family within public discourse asks for an engagement with the debates about the development of the modern public sphere and the politics of participation. Second, focusing on the family and notions of ‘the public’ invites a closer look at the literature about the construction of the public versus the private within the context of colonization and nation-state formation. In both cases, there are tensions and disjunctures between, on the one hand, conceptualizations of the public and the family as unitary and, on the other hand, the everyday dynamics of multiple publics and multiple family forms struggling for hegemony.

‘The public’: the Politics of Participation

A discussion of ‘families in public discourse’ requires, first of all, an unpacking the notion of ‘the public’. The concept of the public sphere, stemming from Jurgen Habermas’ (1992) work on the development and demise of the bourgeois public sphere in late eighteenth-century England, France and Germany, has become increasingly popular in debates about the relation between state and society. To some extent ‘public sphere’ has replaced the concept of

‘civil society’. Whereas ‘civil society’ tends to be limited to associational forms of political participation and mobilization in the context of the European nation-state (Chatterjee 1990), the notion of ‘the public sphere’ more readily allows for a wider variety of forms of political engagement and for imaginings of community that include both those wider and narrower than that of the nation. However, the notion of the public sphere has not gone uncontested¹.

One problem is that the concept of the modern public sphere fails to take into account issues of voice, authority and exclusion. Central to Habermas’ discussion of the emergence of the modern public sphere is his assertion that communication is based on the rational exchange of ideas and opinions about issues of the common good by participants considered as equals in the debate. Whereas pre-modern publics were first and foremost representatives of particular statuses and interests, in the modern public sphere individuals were to appear as equals, not hindered by attachment to particular interests or identities, with only the power of rational argumentation acknowledged (Mah 2000). The assumption that participants would be able to bracket inequalities of status and that the outcome of debates would not be influenced by the identities and social positions of the participants, has been convincingly criticized. It has been pointed out that the public sphere is, in fact, an arena for the formation and enactment of social identities (Fraser 1992).

Acknowledging that group identities and interests are always at play, some have argued that rather than employing the notion of a unified public sphere, it is more productive to start from a proliferation of publics; a contested terrain that ought to be thought in terms of its multiplicity or diversity. As Nancy Fraser (1992) has pointed out, members of subordinate groups may well find it advantageous to constitute alternative publics. She proposes to employ the term ‘subaltern counterpublics,’ that is, “parallel discursive arenas where members of

subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs” (1992: 123). Recasting Fraser’s notion of subaltern counterpublics, Michael Warner (2002) defines a counterpublic as a public maintaining an awareness of its subordinate status, marking itself off against a dominant public, with conflict not just extending to ideas and policy questions, but as well to speech genres and modes of address, regarded by the dominant public with some measure of hostility (86)².

Taking issue with the use of spatial metaphors – the public sphere as a space one can move into and out of – Harold Mah (2000, 167 ff) considers a central characteristic of the modern public sphere that it becomes represented as single and ‘unified’. This then raises the question of how some succeed in presenting their particular interests as universal, as entailing the common good, that is, how they succeed in not being seen as in the public, but rather as the public. Such a public, as the momentary outcome of the struggle between various groups with specific identities and interests, is always inherently unstable and needs to be continuously reconstituted. This then asks for an investigation of the moments when groups highlight their particular identities and interests and when they downplay such specificities, normalize their particular positions and work to appear as the public in arguing for the common good. In order to investigate the family in public discourse questions need to be raised about topics such as: who are able to participate in public debate and who are excluded, who gain positions of authority in such debates and on what basis are they able to do so and what issues are seen as legitimate topics for public debate and how are these framed?

The Habermasian notion of the modern public sphere does not only fail to address the politics of participation, but it is also limiting in its exclusive focus on rational debate as the only legitimate form of participating in the modern public sphere. Because individuals are seen as

abstracted from all social characteristics when participating in the modern public sphere, the only suitable mode of communication is rational argumentation; other forms and styles of communication are a-priori seen as ineffective and undesirable. If, however, the public sphere is recognized as an arena where group identities and interests are always at stake, then there is a need for a more all-encompassing ‘politics of presence’ that allows for the inclusion of other forms of critical expression and non-verbal modes of communication (Moors 2002). Such forms and styles of presentation may include, for instance, bodily comportment, appearance, dressing styles and the nature of the language, rather than only its substance. In other words, a ‘politics of presence,’ as a broadened notion of engagement in the public sphere, allows for the inclusion of a greater variety of ways in which people ‘make a statement’ as it were. This is especially important when discussing contributions of subaltern groups that may be less well versed in effectively presenting their points of view in normalized and hence acceptable formats of ‘rational argumentation.’

The politics of dress and appearance may be seen as a strong example of such a ‘politics of presence.’ Whereas women’s dress has been a topic of considerable public debate, dress as embodied practice has its own societal effects. The dramatic uncovering of the face by Huda Sha‘rawi and Ceza Nabarawi in 1923 at the railway station in Cairo can indeed be seen as ‘making a statement’ of sorts. Yet it is but one example of a trend that by then had already become increasingly widespread amongst urban women from the middle- and upper classes in Egypt and Lebanon (Baron 1989). In such social circles unveiling could certainly be seen as an oppositional move, one that questioned the exclusion of women from the public sphere (Baron 1989, Badran 1995: 92).

Starting in the early 1970s, in contrast, an increasing number of women started wearing ‘covered’ or ‘Islamic’ dress as an expression of their affinity to the cultural politics of Islamist movements and as a form of opposition to state policy (El-Guindi 1981 for Egypt and Göle 1996 for Turkey). In the course of the 1980s and 1990s wearing Islamic dress became more generally related to wider social and cultural-religious trends. Increased access to education and the labor market, drew large numbers of women from the lower-middle classes into the public sphere, who often felt more comfortable doing so if wearing a modern style of covered dress (Macleod 1991). Simultaneously, for substantial sections of the population notions of religious virtue such as female modesty and piety were a motivating force. These women considered bodily acts, such as wearing covered dress, not so much as a critical marker of identity, but as a crucial means to train oneself to be pious (Mahmood 2001). If women were engaged in Islamizing the public sphere, some did so through their participation in public debate, but many more were involved through the styles of dress they were wearing in public; even when this was not their intention, their actions may still be interpreted as such by the public at large.

Simultaneously, dressing styles are a productive angle from which to investigate family relations, especially the relations between the generations. For younger women were amongst the first to start wearing new forms of covered dress. They did not only start wearing covered dress to express their difference from an earlier generation of women that had adopted Western forms of dress, but they also wore new forms of covered dress in an attempt to distance themselves from those worn by rural and poor urban women. In other words, public statements about the family and family relations are not only produced verbally in dialogue, but also through symbols, appearance and dressing styles.

‘The Family’: the Public Versus the Private

In the previous pages the notion of ‘the public’ has been critically evaluated in order to grasp how it can productively be employed to investigate ‘the family in public discourse’. Undoing its liberal and rationalist biases by including both inequalities of voice and other styles of making a statement are preconditions to this task. Another angle to approach ‘the family in public discourse’ is through an investigation of how the family is implicated in dichotomous constructions of the public and the private. The association of women, the family and the domestic with the private, a sphere that is seen as separate from the public, is part and parcel of the development of Western liberal thinking, perhaps most clearly visible in the ideology of domesticity in Victorian England (Davidoff 1995). Such concepts as ‘the public’, ‘the family’ and ‘domesticity’ are, of course, specific to historical moment, geographical location and class. In the colonized world, the meanings of such notions were further complicated as women and the family became crucial icons of identity in nationalist discourse³. Local notions of the public and the private, in so far as they existed, were transformed in the course of the colonial encounter through selective adaptation of some elements and the partial rejection of others⁴. In the course of these processes, modernizing elites often attempted to differentiate themselves from the protagonists of older local notions as well as from those holding on to popular, lower class cultural forms (Chakrabarty 1994, Chatterjee 1989).

In late nineteenth century Egypt, the colonial encounter engendered a variety of positions amongst male nationalists. The largely upper-class male secularists, such as Qasim Amin, called for increased participation of women in the public sphere, highlighting the importance of the removal of the face-veil, as part of a nationalist ideology of modernization, that tallied neatly with the ideas propagated by the British colonizers. Partially in reaction to such a convergence

of interests, their opponents, conservative men, often of lower-middle class background, highlighted the importance of women's seclusion, including their veiling as the central symbol of holding on to cultural authenticity (Ahmed 1992).

Focusing on the family, Lila Abu-Lughod (1998) sees Amin's project not so much as supportive of women's emancipation but rather as promoting the ideals of the modern nuclear bourgeois family. Women's education was propagated under the assumption that educated women would be more suitable as marriage companions for well-educated modern men. They would also better be able to live up to the new ideals of motherhood that included the scientific management of households and the training of children as future citizen of the modern nation (El-Shakry 1998). Such notions of domesticity were substantially different from existing patterns, where women were not only seen as wives and mothers but where they were also substantially involved in kin relations and spend a large part of their time in homo-social women's circles⁵.

Also in Ottoman Turkey, public debates linked the new family with the new nation. Kandiyoti (1998) describes how the Young Turks, the protagonists of Turkish nationalism in the period 1908-1918, not only aimed at a political, but also at a social revolution. They argued for the need for a new or national family, a monogamous, nuclear and companionate family that was to replace the older patriarchal family, based on polygyny and arranged marriages of young girls with older men. However, patriarchal families, as such, had already become rare in late Ottoman Istanbul. Kandiyoti concludes that the writers raising these issues were not so much arguing for a new family form. They were, however, aiming to develop a new discourse on reproductive heterosexuality and to produce new notions of masculinity and femininity, suitable to a new domestic intimacy involving companionship between the spouses and child-centeredness

(Kandiyoti 1998, 279-82). The subsequent authoritarian modernization project of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk propagated a state-imposed cultural politics that strongly encouraged women to unveil and worked against gender segregation. Kemalist bureaucrats were to socialize as modern couples in the public sphere (Göle 1996).

Discussing women's entry into the public sphere in early twentieth century Iran, Najmabadi (1993) has argued convincingly that in order to do so they needed to develop particular forms of self-discipline and control. Pre-modern women, in hindsight seen as ignorant, uncivilized and restricted to an all-female world, had to be turned into women who were well-behaved, polite and quiet, who were good mothers, suitable partners for their husbands and committed supporters of the nation. Simultaneously, women's moves into the modern-secular public sphere also brought about the demise of a homo-social women's world. This brings to the fore how societies in the Middle East with some measure of gender segregation complicate notions about the modern public sphere as a site enabling participatory politics.

Forms of female homo-social interaction – often taking place in the houses of the women involved - have often been overlooked in debates about the public sphere because they have not readily been recognized as, in some sense, public. Yet in many different settings, women have been, and to some extent, still are engaged in well-organized and formalized all-female visiting circles that function as fora for discussions of matters of general interest and the common good, varying from marital to national politics. Such women-only settings can be described as subaltern parallel publics that may function, depending on the content and style of their interactions and their positionings in relation to the general public, as sub- or counterpublics. This asks for an investigation about how such female social spheres were impacted by the

development of a modern hetero-social public sphere and the concomitant new forms of the family and companionate marriages.

The Family, Discourse and Social Life

The family as a cultural ideal – be it the always monolithic Muslim, Arab, modern, or whatever family - is a highly popular trope in discourses about modernity and tradition, about westernization and cultural authenticity; ‘the family’, in a very similar way as ‘women’, has been used as metaphor for particular normative visions about society and employed in a wide variety of political projects. Academic debates^{on} the development of a modern public sphere tend to focus^{on prescriptive texts of reformers, intellectuals and politicians}. Moreover, discussions on the public – private divide center on how such contrast schemes are developed at the level of ideology. At the level of social life, however, we need to take into account how such ideological notions relate to and (mis)represent everyday interaction. When new notions of domesticity, for instance, were incorporated in everyday life, they may well in the process become redefined and put to different uses, with some aspects accepted and others discarded. For in everyday life, large sections of the population were not able to live up to or were actively resisting the new prescriptions of modernity and domesticity (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). Pointing to the tensions between women and the family as political symbols and their lived realities, Julie Peteet (1997: 126) shows how the representation of mothers as icons of the nation stands in a tense relation to the different ways in which Palestinian women themselves have connected motherhood to political struggle after the defeat of the resistance in Lebanon. Mothers of martyrs developed a strong critique of the Resistance era, demanding that their labor of care and mothering be recognized as political. If the resistance had represented mothers as repositories of a nationalist reproductive

potential, women themselves deployed this discourse in a way to validate motherhood as a political practice in itself (1997: 111).

Turning from ideology to social structures and practices, the modern, restricted, nuclear family is often seen as an institution historically emerging in relation to the development of the capitalist economy, the administrative state and the modern public sphere (Fraser 1987: 41). Critical feminist accounts have highlighted the fact that women in countries such as France and England have not simply been excluded from the emerging bourgeois public sphere, but how also relations between the public sphere and the private sphere are strongly gendered⁶. With the growing popularity of the ideology of domesticity in Victorian England, men's participation in the new public sphere – as heads of the new privatized nuclear family- was built upon women's activities in the private sphere (Davidoff 1995).

More generally, there is a tradition of scholarship that questions the public and the private divide and the association of the former with men, the market and the state, and of the latter with women and the family through a focus on social practice. Such dichotomous thinking, starts from the assumption that the circulation of goods and labor that takes place within as opposed to between families and households is fundamentally different. Whereas relations within the households/families are seen as 'naturally' based on reciprocity, pooling, sharing and sacrifice, relations in the public sphere are seen as based on unequal exchange, profit maximalization, bureaucratic anonymity and so on. These assumptions have been criticized along various lines; two of which are relevant here. Relations within households are not necessarily based on reciprocity, but may well be a form of unequal exchange with a sexual division of labor that makes women and children dependent on men and with rights to consumption that are based on positions of authority rather than on need. An emphasis on separate spheres neglects and negates

the crucial connections between the domestic and the public sphere, and the relations of family members with non-coresident kin and non-kin⁷. In an early contribution focusing on the Middle East, Cynthia Nelson (1974) had challenged the notion that the social worlds of men and women are reducible to spheres of private and public with power limited to males in the public arena. Highlighting the importance of their interrelatedness, she points out that women are central as structural links between kinship groups in a society where family and kinship are crucial institutions in everyday life. They do so through for instance, their involvement in the politics of arranging marriages, in channeling or withholding information and in influencing men's public image through their behavior. In her historical study about women and sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire, Leslie Peirce (1993) shows how under conditions of dynastic rule, it has proven futile to distinguish between family relations and state politics or to locate these in different 'spheres.' In hereditary dynasties the family is the polity, marriage politics is state politics, procreation is a political act and political power derived from one's position in the royal household.

The main challenge in dealing with 'public discourse and the family' is then to link the family writ large with its flip side, that is, the lived reality of family relations in all their pluralities, diversities and dynamisms. Public discourse on the family needs to be related to the ways in which people as kin, family or household members act upon the world, including not only their words as speech acts, but their full range of activities. This then does not only raise questions such as what issues are raised in public debate and who considers such issues as 'problems' that need to be solved, but also how do these relate to people's daily lived experiences. Investigating 'the family in public discourse,' the family does not simply count because it is such a convenient trope; the notion of discourse we employ is broader than one of

texts or verbal debate. More precisely, we employ the notion of discourse in a twofold way in an attempt to integrate textual analysis with social theory (Fairclough 1992). Next to an analysis of debates, that includes the context of their production, dissemination and consumption, it is necessary to investigate their power effects; starting from a dialectic relation between discourse and social structure, discourse is both constituted by and constitutive of social relations.

Three sites are crucial when investigating public discourse and the family: law and public policy, education and schooling and mass mediations. Actors involved in these institutions and discourses participate in struggles around ‘the ideal family’; they not only reflect hegemonic notions about ‘the ideal family’, but also produce, reproduce and transform these in varying degrees. The nation-state, political movements and, increasingly, commercial interests have (attempted to) influenced these three sites in order to produce new notions of the ideal family. In everyday life, however, ‘family members’ may take up a variety of positions vis-à-vis such notions, varying from using them against structures of domination within families to resisting their attempts at gaining hegemony. The complexities of these positions are further elaborated in the sections that follow.

Introduction: Families in Public Discourse

Endnotes

1. See, for instance, the contributions in Calhoun (1992)'s edited book Habermas and the Public Sphere or Freitag's introduction on 'the public' and its meanings in colonial South-Asia in South Asia (1991).
2. Such a public marks itself off from any general or dominant public. This is in contrast to subpublics that focus on particular interests, yet simultaneously consider themselves as members of the general public and do not attempt to present themselves as standing for the public.
3. For two examples on how women have been employed as symbol of nationalism, see Beth Baron (1994) and Afsaneh Najmabadi (1998).
4. Elizabeth Thompson (2003:56) has argued that public/private dichotomies were difficult to discern in the medieval and early modern historical record in the Middle East and that in some settings local equivalents for these notions were hard to find. Moreover, Abedi and Fisher (1993) point to the problem of translating notions of publicness and privacy in Middle Eastern languages. The net result of colonial encounters has often been the construction of the public and the private as separate and set in opposition to each other.
5. Interestingly, similar notions of domesticity based on the ideal of the nuclear family and of companionate marriage are widespread in contemporary Islamist circles (Abu-Lughod 1998).
6. In feminist writing the notion of 'the public sphere' has been used in much broader sense than in Habermasian approaches. It refers to everything outside the domestic or familial sphere,

conflating the state, the official economy of paid employment and arenas of public discourse (Fraser 1992: 110).

7. These points have been argued convincingly by Olivia Harris (1981).

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Law and Public Policy

Penny Johnson and Annelies Moors (2004)

Despite a common discourse that poses families and states as separate and distant opposites -- one private and intimate, the other public and formal -- in fact these two spheres intersect in crucial ways in Arab societies. One neglected but potent way that this occurs is when the instruments of state power, such as laws, policies and regulations, are used to shape (and impose) a particular idealization of the family that suits the ‘project’ of the state in that historical moment. This makes the investigation of law and public policy a central task when tracing changing visions and valorizations of Arab families, family relations and youth. In the three geographic areas of concern, Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon, this entails tracking changes across turbulent recent histories of colonialism, nationalism, state formation and globalization.

The correspondence between how families –whether normative ‘good’ ones or pejorative ‘backward’ ones– are constructed in textual discourses such as law, political platforms, national constitutions or economic and social policies, and the lived realities of families in various settings is neither simple nor straightforward, but it is the heart of this investigation. The intersection between Arab families and governmentalities is a site where the tensions, conflicts and contradictions of complex processes of modernity – from colonialism to state formation to globalization – were, and are, made visible. Both the governing of Arab families, the configuring of the idea of “family” into government and the effects of actual family practices on the nature of governance have important implications for the shaping of citizenship

and citizen's rights, the nature and resolution of social and national conflict, family and gender relations and gender equality.

As Talal Asad (2001) has argued with particular attention to Egypt, it is in the context of the rise of the modern centralizing state that “the family” emerges as a category in law, in welfare administration and in public moralizing discourse (Asad 2001, 9). A clear example of the emergence of “the family” in law is seen in the late Ottoman Empire’s creation of two distinct sets of laws. Driven by the centralizing impulse noted by Asad as well as challenged by the growing power of European colonialism, it instituted a process of legal codification which separated newly-termed “personal status” issues, such as marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance, gifts and guardianship, governed by shari‘a-derived principles, from other civil, commercial, constitutional and criminal issues, governed by European-derived codes and conventions. The clustering of these issues into a separate domain of “family law” (for example, in the Ottoman Law of Family Rights of 1917) has implications for the families as subjects of public discourse and the positioning of families in state projects as markers of cultural authenticity as well as for their regulation. As Barbara Stowasser (2003) has noted, the term “family” was never used in Islamic law and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) at all prior to the legal codification and standardization at the end of the nineteenth century; “personal status” was also introduced into legal discourse at this time (Walleq in Massad 2001, 81). This is perhaps not surprising: shari‘a-based personal status law was and is concerned with individual relations within families and not “the family” as a juridical object. However, the function of personal status law in defending or preserving the family as a social institution is put forward in legitimating arguments by state or other political forces. While this new legal boundary between public and private might seem to produce a family that is regulated separately, notions of the

family haunt, and indeed shape to some extent, constitutional, nationality, criminal, social and labor legislation. A number of scholars have shown that notions of a new modernizing family- and of reforming “backward” families-have been central to both colonial and national projects. Whether a colonial focus on “hygiene” in peasant families (Fleischmann 2003, 50) or a nationalist discourse of educating a new “generation of mothers” (Shakry 1998, 132) for a new nation, the equation of family and national improvement was pervasive in the founding moments of Egyptian national expression.

While it is too much to claim that the nation-state (or previously the colonial project) thus invents the family, there is perhaps little quarrel that the nation-state acts through law and policy to regulate family life and relations. There may be, however, significant differences between Western and Arab models and among Arab states. In the Palestinian case, the Israeli centralizing and occupying state has a national project of Palestinian fragmentation, while the recent Palestinian governing authority is a non-sovereign entity with limited functional powers. Both the Israeli occupier and the nascent Palestinian authority, however, have deployed family, kin and clan relations and family and kin idioms to consolidate power, albeit for different purposes. While the Israeli military government strengthened selected family and kin groups to foster collaboration and weaken allegiances to the nationalist resistance, the Palestinian Authority sought legitimacy through “traditional” kin affiliations and loyalties and even established a presidential office for clan affairs (Jad et al. 2000, 151). The utilization of kin and kin idioms between the governing and the governed is also a major dynamic in Lebanese politics and power, where the “myth of extended kinship” has been posited as the hidden, but hegemonic “civic myth” (Joseph 2000). Lebanon’s confessional system seems to foster the rise of parliamentary families, rather than individuals, where seats appear to be passed along on family lines: from father to son to grandson, or in some cases,

husband to wife or brother to sister. Both Palestine and Lebanon remind us that “non-state law” or the “non-state normative sphere” (Botiveau 1999, 83) generates law where families may be agents, as in some forms of customary law, as well as objects.

Less explored, and also crucial to our project, is how families and family ideologies shape state policies and legal practices and give or withhold legitimacy and power. In an interesting historical example from Egypt prior to codification, Amira Sonbol (1996) proposes that specific family relations and composition were both reflected in the various schools of legal jurisprudence and influenced their power. Extended families prevalent in Lower Egypt preferred the Shafi'i mazhab, which privileged the patriarchal household (fathers and grandfathers) in matters, for example, of marriage guardianship, while Upper Egypt preferred the Maliki mazhab, reflecting the older “male patriarchal order headed by male members of the wider clan” (Sonbol 1996, 239). Sonbol argues that this flexibility in legal choices gave way to a “state-sponsored legal order” (Sonbol 1996, 256) in the course of the direct state involvement in law-making and legal reform.

These practices are still very relevant in current affairs as the following two examples from contemporary Palestine assert. In the first, government and donor-sponsored housing projects and policies under the Palestinian Authority after 1993 projected a family ideal which excludes many actual families. Examining one donor-government housing initiative, Lamis Abu Nahleh (2001) found that “public housing projects planned by the Palestinian National Authority in conjunction with donors targeted nuclear (small size) families as well as not accommodating female-headed households.” In the second, a particular “family system” posed obstacles to a Palestinian national project. In a project to revitalize the Old City of Jerusalem in order to “reanimate the Palestinian urban space... those who live in the old city are people of rural

descent variously scripted as Hebronites, whose family system is considered a core problem for the realization of a certain kind of modern, urban Palestinian family” (Rieker 2001). Both examples attest to the exclusions that are embedded in state and global family policies which privilege certain kinds of families and exclude others. Public discourses, however, are arenas not simply where these exclusions and privileges are defined but also where they are contested.

The displacement of families by citizens – rights-bearing individuals – is a dominant discourse in the tracing of Western nation-state formation. However, processes contain their own contradictions such as the privileging of males as citizens and family providers. Nonetheless, both discourses and processes in the Arab world may have significant differences. As Joseph has observed: “Arab states, generally have not undertaken as systematic efforts to displace families in the lives and minds of their citizens. With few exceptions... Arab states have deferred to, relied on and even deployed the institutions, relationships and idioms of families in their structures and processes of governance” (Joseph 2001). While Western states also deploy family institutions and idioms in their consolidation and exercise of power, this deployment bespeaks the importance of “family” in Arab state legitimation, underscored by clauses in a number of Arab constitutions. The Egyptian constitution, important both for Egypt and for a succession of states born of, or deploying Arab nationalism, has a particularly rich formulation in its Article 9: “The family is the basis of the society founded on religion, morality and patriotism. The state is keen to preserve the genuine character of the Egyptian family – with what it embodies of values and traditions – while affirming and developing this character in relation with the Egyptian society” (Blaustein and Flanz 1971, 12). A moral, religious, patriotic and “genuine” family that embodies values and tradition, while nonetheless developing and changing in relation to society, is both a new civic configuration and it contains its own

contradictions. State institutions attempting change, for example, as well as political movements, may appeal directly to younger generations, mobilizing them for public action. Social practice may thus take measures that work against particular forms of the family, while expressing the family as ideology.

If we see the affirmation and indeed the production of this ideal family as critical to the national project and the deployment of family idioms as important to state legitimation, we can perhaps bring a new reading to the “persistence” of shari‘a –based family law that may help dissolve some of the obdurate oppositions characteristic of the family law debate in various Arab settings. Rather than characterizing family law only as a “last bastion” of shari‘a in contemporary Arab and Islamic states (Mir-Hosseini 1993, 12), we may see state intervention in the production, codification and reform of shari‘a-based family law that is not discreet, but an “element of a process” (Ibrahim 2001) of state legitimation, social ordering and the production of societal values.

A comparative analysis of public discourses in law and public policy and representations of families in three countries over time, while also seeking to grasp the lived realities of families, should shed light on the social and political tensions embedded in contemporary debates ranging from youth morality to family law controversies in many contexts. The latter in particular tends to be posed in a sterile opposition between rights versus culture (or in one particularly static variation, universalism versus cultural relativism or cultural authenticity), individual rights versus collective rights and the divides and intersections between the “private” and the “public,” where “the family” serves as a boundary marker in varying contexts. By moving beyond “rights talk and culture talk,” in Mahmoud Mamdani’s terminology (Mamdani 2000), the vigorous public debate over family law that characterized the 1990s (Moors 2003), may be seen to contain

multiple positions, interests and expressions of needs. For example, the 1998 Palestinian model parliament organized by women's NGOs in Palestine to propose amendments to address gender discrimination in a wide range of laws, including family law, (Welchman 2003) witnessed both constructive debate and a virulent and polarizing attack by Islamists. They accused parliament organizers of serving as agents for Western ideas that conspired against the Palestinian society and Islamic civilization (Hammami and Johnson 1999, 333). This familiar, if destructive, opposition was at least partially countered by defenders from political parties deploying the notion of "Palestinian democracy" or a "democratic Palestinian platform," (Hammami and Johnson 1999, 336). Palestinian democracy is a highly charged concept which resonates with cultural authenticity, a long history of national struggle and a powerful critique of existing reality in the interim period. Contemporary debate over changes in the regulation of divorce is also a rich case in point, where multiple interests and rights contend in public discourses. In January 2000, the Egyptian parliament amended the law to permit women to ask for a divorce without the consent of their husbands in exchange for waiving their financial rights (an extended form of khul', which is permitted in Islamic law). The change was a result of lobbying by women's groups, but it also addressed a practical problem of court backlogs of cases where women had been abandoned by their husbands. Most media presented the change as an unambiguous victory for women's rights (U.S. News and World Report 2000), while an expanded right to divorce was opposed by male cultural conservatives and pundits, who warned that women would desert marriage en masse. Diverse local voices, however, complicated the picture. Women, particularly poor women, had competing notions of rights and interests and many women objected that their financial rights in marriage were threatened. In a public opinion poll in Palestine, women and men were asked if they would like to see a similar law enacted in

Palestine. Only a little more than a third of women (37%) responded in the affirmative: of those that said no, 44% said no because a woman should not have to give up their property, while only 24% said no because women should not divorce (Hammami 2004).

Another contemporary controversy -- over the rise in urfi, a customary form of Islamic marriage, among young Egyptians -- is framed by its opponents in a strong moralizing discourse that sees such marriages as a cultural deviation and corruption of the Egyptian family, with a particular focus on the moral corruption of youth and students. The reputed rise of urfi marriage, which is not registered in court, however, has a number of strands, although new moralities may play a part. It is certainly rooted in new economics of marriage, where young men cannot afford the mahr and other financial commitments of a legal shari'a marriage, particularly high housing costs, leading to a rising age of marriage. Migratory "customs" and culture also seem to play a part (and are blamed in media reports) whereby misyar (ambulant) marriages are allegedly imported from Saudi Arabia and mut'a (temporary) marriages from Iran (Abazi 2001, 21-22).

Law and public policy as a site for investigating has a number of foci, also reflecting an interest in understanding how discourses of the "family" and the valorization of particular family relations (for example, father-son, mother-son or sibling relations) relate to moments of national mobilization, state formation or national crisis. It also reflects an interest in how citizenship and citizen's rights (public rights) have been construed in relation to both legal and political discourses on the family (Johnson 2001). Researching law and public policy in tandem is critical to understanding such issues as family law reform in the context of political transformations, the search for a social contract or consensus as a basis for political legitimacy and shifting power relations.

The analysis of Lebanon, Egypt and Palestine gives an interesting and critical comparative edge, given the diverse processes of nation and state formation and accompanying differences in law and policies towards families. If one of the signal features of nation-states is surveillance, manipulation and mobilization of population as well as of territory, population policies are of particular use in understanding state-family dynamics. A strong state-led family planning program in Egypt since 1980, for example, has projected the ideal of a small “modern” nuclear family, which offered a supposed haven of rational and hygienic order, adequate education and health for children and harmonious family relations. The ideal family and the ideal citizen are closely linked in this project whereby the “family planning program as a pedagogical project is linked to constructions of gender, domestic relations and the creation of a responsible citizenry in Egypt” (Ali 1997, 40). Though perhaps not of the same scale, similar processes were undergone in Lebanon, implemented by the non-governmental Family Planning Association (FPA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and promoting a particular perception of the “modern family,” namely nuclear, smaller in size, monogamous and non-extended in its decision-making. Both can be contrasted with the ambiguous population policies of the Palestinian Authority, where a long-standing Palestinian discourse encouraging high fertility as crucial to national survival (Jad et al 2000, 152-3) was overlaid in the interim period. This was enacted through the deployment by policymakers, rather tentatively, of developmental discourses where rapid population growth was seen as an obstacle to economic development, sustainability and a new Palestinian modernity married to a new Palestinian family. During the second intifada, national survival was once more starkly on the agenda: coupled with a strong tendency in Israeli politics to reduce the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to demographic issues, the link between family, fertility choices and national projects re-emerged.

The “weak state” of Lebanon, its system of sectarian pluralism and the construction of powerful kin networks are related as well to the delegation of personal status law to religious courts and the contemporary struggle for optional secular marriage laws. The centralized character of the Egyptian state, its codifications and contestations of family law and its systems of control that infiltrate family and kin systems present another problematic. In Palestine, an ongoing process of political and legal transition and an intense and highly unequal national conflict yields rich insights and a series of interesting questions as Palestinian law-makers, jurists and activists debate family issues and legal reform within this complex process, while families are enmeshed in fundamental threats to survival and rights. Palestine also provides linkages between the three country sites: both in the actual presence of Palestinian communities, particularly Palestinians in Lebanon, and in the ways the Palestine issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict shape the agendas of states and political parties in ways that deeply affect families, whether mobilizing for war, conceiving a political and social enemy or socializing children for citizenship.

Conceptions of families are embedded in the diverse paths to development within the histories of these societies and among them, including in the current period where a complex array of national, local and international agencies shape developmental agendas that include or valorize certain kinds of families and exclude others. Peter Gran (1996) has suggested that diverse state development trajectories produce specific ideal family types. Gran describes Iraq as a “Russian Road” regime and puts forth the hypothesis that “Russian Road regimes share a particular approach to family organization, notably the cross-generational family as an alternative to the ‘over-generalized idea of the Arab or Mediterranean family’” (Gran 1996, 67). While this may be too schematic, the interaction between development agendas and families has

great relevance to the present era of both state and globalized interventions in the lives of Arab families, as well as the active response and interventions of families themselves. The significance, or valorization, of particular family relations, is also embedded in state and national projects. While patriarchal visions of political leaders as “fathers” certainly abound, consider the utilization of “brotherhood” in the Palestinian or Algerian national liberation movement, other political movements (Muslim Brothers) and mobilizations for war, such as the Lebanese civil war. In the Western context, Carol Pateman (1988) reminds us of the exclusionist contract of citizenship and rights that emerge from ideologies of fraternité, where citizenship as brotherhood implies a republic of men. It is interesting in this regard that the use of idiomatic kinship among marginalized political and religious groups in the United States and Canada, namely African American and Muslim communities, cross gender lines in the sense that both brotherhood and sisterhood are used. On a different note, Rosemary Sayigh (2002) explores strong and significant relations between mothers and daughters in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon which reconstitute Palestinian identity and history. She concludes: “Theorists of the family and the state from Engels onward have posited a correspondence between political and family regimes, and there is strong ground for suggesting that the relationships between refugee mothers and daughters have political implications for a future Palestinian state and society” (Sayigh 2002, 59). Sayigh’s point is tied to the role of women in reproducing the nation as tellers of history and keepers of tradition: it can be argued that the laws and policies in the present interim form of Palestinian governance were structurally incapable of addressing or incorporating the histories and identities of these refugee women.

An analysis of how the field of the law and public policy (state institutions) is implicated in the production of Arab families, both in terms of notions about ‘the Arab family’ and in terms

of concrete social policies, asks for different levels of investigation. Starting at the level of the state, one central set of questions refers to how the family is at stake in the attempts of the (post) colonial state to control its subject populations. As the state is not a homogeneous entity, but a site where possibly divergent interests intersect and converge, this includes a question about what state actors are involved in proposing particular policies. Both the state's attempts at setting up particular legal systems, such as through the codification of (family) law, reforms of legal procedure and the court system (restructuring the relations between the state and the religious establishment), as well as more specific policies with respect to families and family relations are relevant to this investigation. This includes such issues as the legal framing of definitions of the family (who are included or excluded as kin / household / family members) and, more specifically, the ways in which family members are to relate to each other (in terms of rights and obligations) and to society at large.

Both in the case of colonization and that of nation-state formation state actors build upon particular concepts of 'the family' and translate these, as it were, into particular legal policies. Simultaneously, however, there are also various sets of non-state actors involved in 'producing the family' through their attempts at influencing the directions of legal reforms. These non-state actors span a wide range. They include those working at the local level as well as transnational actors and grass-root organizations and highly institutionalized ones 'from above'. They also vary from socio-political movements of different signatures and human rights groups to UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency responsible for Palestinian refugees, and the World Bank. These non-state actors all employ their own explicit or implicit concepts of 'the family' and their own normative notions about the nature of family relations. Contemporary micro-credit programs in Lebanon, for example, often include regulations that forbid dual loan

applications from a mother and a daughter, because they are perceived as the same family, while allowing dual applications from a mother and a daughter-in-law, assuming they are in different families (Zaatari 2003).

Issues such as legal reforms of the family (as exemplified in family law) often are at the heart of virulent debates, in which ‘the family’ (in particular gender relations in the family) is framed in terms of striving for modernity (in its multiple variations) or referring to notions of cultural authenticity. However, if a focus on debates and discussions is an important starting point to gain insight into ‘Arab families in public discourse,’ the question of how these discourses and debates relate to people’s daily-lived experiences is important. Do such debates raise issues that speak to widely felt concerns in society at large or do they reflect the notions of particular, often privileged, sections of society? Or rather are they part and parcel of intentional political agendas? In a similar vein, the question of how the production of (legal) texts, such as in the case of legal reform, relates to their implementation on the ground, needs to be addressed. In order to answer such questions we must move beyond a textual approach that only deals with legal texts and turn to other archival material such as court cases) and, in particular, to ethnographic research (Moors 1999). This is even more important when investigating how discourse and debate on Arab families (and their mass-mediations) actually affect people’s everyday lives. How do ordinary people deal with the law and public policy, that is, how do they make use of, circumvent or resist the legal system? It also asks for acknowledging the need to search out ‘alternative’ notions of family relations that are not explicitly present in either the legal system or propagated by civil society and oppositional activists.

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Education and Public Discourse

Barbara Ibrahim, Penny Johnson and Zeina Zaatari (2004)

Introduction

In the twentieth century, education in the Arab region and in the three countries under consideration was a critical, sometimes driving element in projects of colonialism, nationalism and modernity. More recently, education has been central to the oppositional strategies of Islamists and other protest groups. While the relationships of political discourse and education receive increased attention across the Arab and Islamic worlds, relatively less focus attends to the intertwined aspects of education, modern identity and families. This is the case even though families are primary sites for the transmission of cultural continuity and change. Of particular interest from a discursive perspective is the relation between the spread and formalization of education, on the one hand, and schooling in national projects and the production of the category of youth on the other hand. We focus on the production of ‘youth’ – and young men and women – as social categories, as citizens and as gendered, familial subjects. The contradictions and resolutions in this process are a complex topic for investigation, but have received scant attention in the regional literature. We are particularly interested in investigating the production of youth as citizens and youth as gendered familial subjects—sons and daughters, wives and husbands, mothers and fathers. Are these exclusionary subjectivities and processes of production? What role does formal education play or is perceived to play in this dynamic? States and foreign school systems feature prominently in how this narrative develops in Palestine, Egypt and Lebanon.

Education figures prominently in contestations over each new generation of Arab youth. For the past century, education has been a primary institution of modern society that socialized young minds in addition or in opposition to families. Therefore, control over the content of what is taught and who teaches it is seen as critically important. Families' relationship to the educational curriculum and process reflects contested attempts at controlling the material taught, the process of teaching and the kinds of future citizens encouraged through the educational process. In some instances families participate actively in the educational process encouraged to do so by teacher-parent councils and by their involvement in the extra-curricular activities of their children among other things. In Lebanon, these practices are noticeable mostly in private schools today, but were/are a common feature of public schooling as well (Zaatari 2003). On the other hand, mostly in public school systems of education in Egypt, families have neither been encouraged to engage with schools in their communities nor to participate actively in the education of their children. This may be a partial legacy of the colonial period and missionary school systems that assumed the 'native' parents to be illiterate and to harbor beliefs and practices inimical to modernity. Until today, both media and official sources tend to place blame for poor school performance or lower female attendance at primary schools on 'traditional parental attitudes.' Other research suggests that quality of instruction, economic factors and distance from home to school are more significant factors (El-Tawilla et al, 2000). Thus, a discourse develops in which families are blamed for institutional problems and their exclusion from the educational process gains legitimacy. This source of tension between families and educational systems within particular historical and socioeconomic contexts is an aspect of modern mass education that is often overlooked.

According to Louis Althusser (1971), the school under modernity has replaced the church during the rule of sovereigns and monarchs as the main ideological state apparatus. Educational

institutions are sites for the creation and socialization of the future citizen of the nation/state. Newly emergent states, therefore, have labored in a variety of ways to obtain control over the content of education. Nationalizing schools formerly operated by foreign entities, restricting university access to those who obtain state-controlled secondary degrees and creating ‘national school textbooks’ are some of the mechanisms used to ensure this control. School curricula and the educational system are avenues by which states undertake to produce a new generation of consenting modern, economic, social and political subjects. Oppositional groups struggle for some share in the design of education, but have often resorted to covert means to do so. Some of these contestations, like those arising from Islamists currently, have gained sharper public attention with the rise of militant Islamist movements and the increased focus on Islamic madrasas following the events of September 11, 2001¹.

Education in the realm of public discourse is sometimes narrowly understood as a process of internalizing ideas and knowledge in a formalized system. In most research and commentaries on educational systems in the Arab world there is a further assumption that educational systems are highly centralized and homogenized. But this conception ignores much diversity on the ground and the interactive nature of what takes place between teachers and learners in social settings. We adopt here a definition of education as the cumulative product of socially situated practices of pedagogy (Carter, 1999). In this perspective, while states and other hierarchies may exert considerable control over particular educational sites, nonetheless a degree of agency is granted to both those who teach and those who learn. Two levels of interaction can be considered simultaneously—that of student and teacher in a setting and that of the school in its wider societal context (Lave in Carter, 1999). Thus, while discourses on education need to include the role of formal curricula in shaping young minds, we also attend to social dynamics in

classrooms and playgrounds and to the external actors who help to shape even the most centralized school systems.

To distinguish between formal systems of education along with the curricula they generate and more informal learning processes we employ two distinct terms: education and schooling. Education can include the processes that take place, for example, when students gather in peer groups away from families or when teachers act as role models for their students. These lines will not always be clearly drawn, but they are heuristically useful. Schools are only one of the 'sites' where intentional pedagogy may take place. Thus national and private schools and universities, training institutes and religious schools or sites of religious instruction are all of interest. These institutions need to be understood as sites where through a 'hidden curriculum' (Grant 1994), children are trained not just in formal topics or cognitive skills, but also in the appropriate roles expected of them in society when they grow older. Their consciousness is being molded into a particular kind of subject, be it citizen, consumer or disciplined worker. In Lebanon, for example, this may partially explain why the state subsidizes, and therefore maintains a stake, in religiously based schools.

Other sites of learning include educational television and radio programs, both public and private, and state-initiated educational campaigns (literacy, hygiene, family planning, youth mobilization). In places like Egypt, where public school classrooms are typically overcrowded, a parallel informal system of private tutoring has emerged and is a shadowy big business, accounting for billions of Egyptian pounds exchanged informally, for both school employees and other tutors. In the last decade or so, the internet has grown and continues to as a site of learning and instruction. All of these mediums fall within the scope of inquiry, as each is an arena of pedagogy in which young minds are being shaped -- and are simultaneously participating in the

shaping of social practice. Further research is needed to explore the considerable linkages among them, with state management and control as a theme to be investigated in each.

Conceptual Framing: Families and Education

Families themselves are recognized in our analysis as educational sites, but the informal education and critical socialization that occur are examined primarily through how they might conflict, cooperate or influence formal discourses of education and public debates on education. Writings on modernity and on the socialization of the ‘new woman’ and ‘new man’ as citizens of the nation/state as opposed to members of a tribe, a clan or a sect were pervasive in the emerging nation/states in the postcolonial era. The discourse in Egypt and also in Iran of the ‘new family’ paralleled discussions of new citizens. Education and more specifically formal education in ‘national’ schools, albeit modeled after missionary schools, was discussed as the avenue for the development of the society into a modern viable nation. Within this context, schools are situated in opposition to family institutions (traditional ones, family loyalty, tribal and clan affiliations) on one level and in alliance with the ‘new family’ in another. Formal education, and particularly state-mandated universal education, can be seen as drawing youth away from the family sphere and familial influence. Socialization for participation in society and the workplace becomes a mandate of schooling, carried out through national education agendas, classroom interactions and peer group influence. Shaping of the new generation is thus removed from a familial sphere where it had primarily resided before. At the same time, however, we find a call for mothers to become the educators of a new generation of men and women who see themselves and their families as attached by citizenship rather than tribal affiliations to the nation/state. This is represented in what is often referred to as an-nahda literature (Qassim Amin).

Most youth socialization traditionally emanated from the authority and guidance of parents, other family members and the community at large. Religious leaders, political figures in the community (like the mukhtar or the feudal landlord in Lebanese villages) and various forms of schooling institutions (trade schools, kuttab and guilds) also played an important role in the socialization and education of the future generation. Older siblings played an active role with younger children and extended kin interacted substantially over the course of a young person's initiation to adult roles. These relations still exist, of course, and in fact their persistence as important factors in work careers and marriage choices is a feature that deserves investigation. However, the increasing influence of formal education and its nearly universal spread is a fact of life of today and a central theme in public discourse across Palestine, Egypt and Lebanon. Formal education has come to mean a very specific process of learning in a specific spatial setting and with a determined relationship and hierarchy between youths and teachers that can in essence be repeated over time and space with minor modifications.

Setting up a dichotomy between modern education and families ignores important dynamics that are constantly at play between the two. It also ignores earlier processes of formal education and the kinds of subjects that they produced. Did kuttab, professional guild and Ottoman military schools produce subjects that were only 'family members'? Desires for education and to 'be educated' have a crucial place in the imaginaries of people across the Arab world. In fact, most families embraced education wherever it was available as an opportunity for improving the life prospects of their young. This is most especially true for boys in earlier decades, but in recent decades increasingly also for girls. In homes and communities where youths form the first generation to be educated, students may enjoy an elevated status, which can

be subversive of traditional patriarchal hierarchies based on age and gender. Parents may undertake substantial material sacrifices to educate the next generation.

To understand the active engagement of families in the pursuit of education for their children, we need to examine the contemporary discourses around modernity, and the central place accorded to the making of educated citizens. Attention is needed also to aspects of the 'social contract' in our three sites and the extent to which families expect that education will be provided at a quality sufficient to enable successful adult participation in the workforce. Some evidence recently from Egypt suggests that for low-income parents that contract is considered broken and withdrawal of boys in order to apprentice in the marketplace is considered a better family strategy than continuing in the public school system until graduation (Ferghany 1999). It is thus important to give attention to both the discourses that reinforce and undermine modern education, as well as the discourses practiced within the institutions of education themselves.

Finally education may become contested ground within families, with lines of conflict drawn between the generations (as when parents prefer children to be available for domestic labor or family farming) or between genders, when the educational goals of mothers differ from those of fathers. No matter how appealingly the promises of education are packaged, some members in families may see more utility in other investments of children's time. In one interesting contemporary example (El-Kholy 1997) of within-family contestation over education, low-income women in Cairo actively strategize to keep their daughters in school, often against husbands' opposition. The reasons given by these mothers have to do with establishing a more powerful status for their daughters, either through securing a paid and respectable job or by negotiating a better marriage. Educated daughters would be less susceptible to abuse by husbands, according to the mothers who were interviewed (El-Kholy 1997). In Lebanon, the

number of female students at universities increased and often exceeded that of their male counterparts toward the end of the civil war and the economic crisis that ensued immediately after (Faour 1998). Given the pressure on males during uncertain economic times to become main providers for their families, sons and future husbands were encouraged to take on business and vocational tracks as faster avenues towards advancement, providing sisters and future brides with more educational opportunities.

Domestic and public aims for female education are thus intertwined, contrary to a family logic often assumed in public discourse, in which girls are withdrawn from school for early marriage or domestic responsibilities. This may entail collective family strategies. In Palestine, Maya Rosenfeld's (2002) work in Dheisheh refugee camp near Bethlehem in the 1980s and 1990s found that "family-based patterns of organization" were forms of agency set against the structural obstacles posed by refugee camp life under military occupation. Families utilized "work chains" to assist both female and male family members to obtain higher education, with an educated older sibling working to support the education of younger family members (Rosenfeld 2002, 541). This pattern of successive sibling support for education is repeated in villages and poor neighborhoods in Egypt and Lebanon. Family allocations to education are often tenuous and sensitive to economic disruption. El-Tawila and her colleagues (2000) found that girls' enrolments among poorer Egyptian families declined perceptibly in years when there was political disruption (the first Gulf war) or economic squeeze (introduction of new school fees).

Historical Legacies

The modern period witnessed major transformations in the systems of education in Egypt and Syria, including Palestine and Lebanon. The first missionary schools were established in these countries in the first half of the nineteenth century. Ellen Fleischmann (2002) has explored the encounter between the early missionaries in Syria and the role they played in bringing about socio-cultural changes within Arab families. “Did missionary women attempt to replicate their own American Protestant notions of idealized womanhood in constructing concepts of ‘Syrian’ womanhood?” (411), is a question that is still relevant today. The process is complicated, particularly as Arab students themselves became teachers and as missionary schools are not and were not isolated from national influence.

Teaching in one of the earliest girls schools established in Palestine, the Friends Girls School in Ramallah founded by American Quakers in the late nineteenth century, a young American teacher wrote letters to her family in the turbulent year of 1939. During those years, Palestinians, particularly in the hilly regions of the West Bank, were in full revolt against the British Mandate. She sees herself as a bearer of modern knowledge in her description of students in her science class (although naïve about the distinction between ‘knowing’ and ‘saying’): “They were amazed when they learned about sex. The teachers later told me they are not supposed to know about that until they marry. None of our teachers are married. How did they know” (McDowell 2002, 62)? However, her letters are also filled with sympathetic accounts of repression suffered by the civilian population and the strong presence and counseling of nationalist Palestinian teachers. Although the missionary school teachers had certain privileges – notably the ability to get a permit to leave Ramallah – the Palestinian headmaster and female staff were in touch with rebels and clearly identified with the national cause. These

dualities came close to a clash of loyalties for locals within the system. Indeed, the headmaster, Khalil Totah, complained to the Peel Commission that the British had either designed Arab education “to reconcile Arab people” to the Zionist national project or “to make the education so colorless as to make it harmless” (Miller 1985, 96), while Jewish education was not colorless and clearly had “an aim.”

Education with an Arab aim became a nationalist project in the era of national independence movements, but one with multiple public discourses and influences. School curricula and institutions in the Arab world have come under a multitude of influences all attempting to shape the Arab citizen in their own image. In Lebanon, the dominance of sectarian private schooling can be seen as a source of contestation for the notion of the Arab subject that each aimed to create. Missionary schools on a civilizing mission stressed liberal values in terms of political discourse, but very conservative values in terms of religious identity and gender relations. To counteract the spread particularly of French and American missionary schools, numerous private schools were established in the early 1900s emphasizing Arabic language and culture in education. The Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut was first established in 1878 and it aimed to create social institutions including schools to “construct a distinguished makassed community, built on sublime values and proud of its nationality. ²” Regional variations in the kind of subjectivity aimed for were apparent in the emphasis on certain subjects or languages versus others, in the degree of permissiveness with regard to political organizing on school grounds and in the relationships of students with their sociopolitical and economic environment outside the boundaries of the school.

This process intensified during the many wars in Lebanon and extended further into the public school system. The importance of language to nationalist projects cannot be

underestimated. Struggles against colonial powers are struggles to name and reclaim identity. When the language of the colonizer is used to silence and mold subjects of the colonial mind, narrating in the language of the nation become acts of resistance and generative of national identities (Palestine, Algeria and Lebanon are cases in point). The tremendous focus given to the Arabic language in South Lebanon is connected to the project of Arab nationalism. The leftist nationalist movement in the 50s and 60s in Lebanon found many followers in the cities and villages of the South. According to Zeina Zaatari (2003), women activists of this period talked about the importance of literature and Arab language in their upbringing. They remembered the activities in their schools connected to this movement, like the creation and establishment of libraries, the poetry reading sessions and the writings. Whether it was fathers telling stories in the evenings about Turkish conscription and the famines or Arabic teachers extolling the importance of Arab unity, these activists were impacted by the educational cultures of Arab nationalism.

More recently, emphasis on Arab culture and Arab language has permeated the educational culture of South Lebanon as well. Students often participated in poetry reading and literature contests organized between the different schools. The centrality of Palestine as focal point of Arab nationalism and the Arab-Israeli conflict was also reflected in curricular and extra-curricular activities at schools (drawing and poetry competition with Palestine or the Intifada as theme are common features specially in South Lebanese schools). What implications do the different moments of history, locally, nationally and regionally, the different curricula, the different political and state structures as well as differing religious educational missions have on the educational cultures that evolve?

Projects of Arab nationalist education existed in parallel with other educational projects. Mohammed Ali, for example, introduced a modern educational system in Egypt in the early nineteenth century with schools for nursing and the military, and somewhat later for medicine. In their wake came modern high schools to act as feeders for the new technical schools. Mohamed Ali, while an ambitious modernizer, did not want to challenge the Islamic establishment and therefore left intact the longstanding Azhar system of religious schools. In a sense he institutionalized a secular-religious dichotomy that continues until today by permitting two parallel educational systems (Herrera 2003).

On another level, the examination of school curricula taught in national institutions in different decades of the twentieth century reveals the successive shifts in national ideological tendencies and their implications for representations of the family and of youth in a particular historical moment. Several questions arise, which may be answered somewhat differently in our three geographic sites: What are the differences/similarities between school curricula taught during successive periods (grouped according to common practice roughly as colonial, nation-building and contemporary)? What are the practical implications of these differences/similarities on public representations and expectations of Arab youth?

In the case of Palestine, formal schooling was rather consistently seen as a key means of family and national survival and development even before 1948, when the dispossession of Palestinians made education a highly desirable form of moveable capital. Ylana Miller notes that, during the British Mandate (1920-1948) “one of the most consistent subjects of Arab petition and discussion was schooling” (Miller 1985, 90), including petitions by villagers. The Mandatory authorities, however, neglected villages for cities, Arab Muslims for Arab Christians, and girls for boys. Female education was not simply a colonial project. There was a variable

demand among Muslim villagers for female education, with a number of villages, as noted in a memorandum by the high commissioner, expressing an “undoubted anxiety for an extension of female education” (Miller 1985, 104).

Although all three countries have highly mixed educational legacies, Palestine is to some extent exceptional, in that, until 1995, its educational system in the West Bank and Gaza was based on a mix of legal provisions inherited from the Ottoman, British and Egyptian systems, with a strong dose of Israeli military orders. Indeed, a “systematic purge” by successive educational regimes emptied the system of educational content relevant to national aspirations (Mazawi 2000, 272). A particularly apt example of the purging of textbooks by the Israeli military authorities was a sentence in a seventh grade grammar book where “Our unity will frighten the enemy” was replaced by “Our success will please our parents” (Fasheh 1989, 515). National mobilization is replaced by family obedience.

Nonetheless, schools, universities and their accompanying student movements, comprising both male and female students, were almost continuously sites of national unrest and resistance, with national aspirations and family support conjoined. Family idioms were frequently used for these “sons” and “daughters” of the nation who rise up to demand its independence. Informal processes of education in families, peer groups, and clandestine political movements, as well as pedagogies of classrooms commanded by nationalist teachers, combined in an alternative education that opposed military occupation. In his discussion of informal education in the 1970s, Munir Fasheh also includes voluntary work groups, health care projects, adult education and theatre and folklore groups (Fasheh 1989, 523); these informal processes culminated in the initiatives by neighborhood and popular committees during the initial phase of

the first Palestinian intifada (1987-1993) to educate children and youth during prolonged school closure.

Under the interim Palestinian Authority, the first Palestinian Ministry of Education set out to revise the curriculum (long outdated) and unite West Bank and Gaza educational systems. In initial proposals to develop objectives and strategies for curriculum reform, one analyst succinctly noted a central question to be addressed in developing a Palestinian curriculum: “What Palestine do we teach” (Jarbawi in Abu Lughod 1996)? In September 2000, a new curriculum was introduced for grades 1-6. Even prior to its introduction, the new curriculum (and also older textbooks used from the Jordanian and Egyptian system) had been the subject of a sustained attack by Israeli government officials (Moughrabi 2001) for anti-Israeli material, usually equated with anti-semitism. Other observers, including Israeli academics, found the textbooks generally moderate and promoting values of democracy and tolerance in Palestinian society. Textbook writers have also clearly attempted to avoid gender stereotyping. These contesting public discourses continue: constructing Palestinian citizenship is still a project of resistance. Both Palestinian families and the nascent Palestinian state place education in a central position in strategies of survival.

The presence of the first printing press in the Arab World in Lebanon (1800s) is an indication of the role of education and print media in the creation of the Lebanese consciousness. France’s colonial project had focused on the creation of French subjects or in the language of today ‘Franco-phone’ subjects. Although the impact of this civilizing colonial mission is not as dominant in Lebanon as it was in Algeria, yet it has had lasting impacts. Missionaries both Jesuit/French and Anglican/American (though the latter followed later) were concerned with education as a main element of an ‘enlightened society’. Competing narratives of subjectivity

lead many ideological schools as well as religious and political parties to create alternative spaces to promote their visions

Lebanon followed a trajectory similar to Palestine's during the Mandate period. At that time, formal schooling was largely a product of foreign missionary schools, although several Muslim institutions (like Makassed) had established formal schools in Beirut since the early 20s. In Lebanon, missionary or religiously based schools continued after Independence and during the civil war to shape the nature and content of education as well as the nature of the subject/citizen. The Lebanese state did neither hold an exclusive right nor the power to monopolize the content and provision of education. Conflicting narratives in the design and content of education have always existed side by side. Due to the proliferation of private schooling, including colonial missionary, local religious as well as secular institutions, competing narratives co-existed and oppositional groups overtly invested in spreading their particular variant of education. Youths reasserting their ties to France in Beirut and Mount Lebanon spoke French even outside the classroom, whereas the importance of Arabic discussed previously in the South was a reflection of reaffirming Lebanon's Arab identity.

Missionary schools were also central to early modern education in Egypt, and remained so through to the 1950s. They were particularly important in the neglected towns of Upper Egypt and as a venue for women's inclusion in education. The missionary schools of British and American origin inculcated a strong sense of social responsibility along side the more standard subject matters. With few exceptions, the urban women's engagement in public life and social change activities in the 1940s and 50s were, some argue, products of these mission schools. This is a major aspect of the development of civil society and philanthropy in twentieth-century Egypt that deserves closer study.

Nearly all foreign-controlled schools were nationalized following Nasser's revolution, in a clear declaration that the state should play the dominant role in shaping the next generation. Collective national loyalty replaced individual social responsibility as a subtext of formal learning, with implications for dampening social activism that are still felt today. Importantly, the new regime instituted free and compulsory primary schooling as a right of all citizens, and free education through university (and even graduate training abroad) for those who qualified academically. These rights are enshrined in the constitution as well as public consciousness, making reforms to the system difficult to institute half a century later.

Analysis of the curricula in Egyptian schools reveals several substantial ideational shifts in the past half-century. The post-1952 revolutionary project of education reformed civics, history and Arabic language texts in particular. History texts began to stress popular politics over ordained rulers. Ideals of socialism and Arab nationalism pervaded the civics texts and readings in Arabic language classes. While older generations were suspect in these books, youth were anointed with the mantle of creating a new Egypt, free of colonial influence and confident in its Arab, Muslim and socialist identity. That discourse, however, came to be seen as inappropriate once the state moved away from Nasserism and toward closer relations with the west in the 1970s. To mark a break with the past, textbooks were altered to begin each school year by recounting the glories of the 1973 October War and 'liberation' of the Sinai.

Contemporary Discourses: Egypt and Lebanon

The current legacy of nearly 50 years of mass education is mixed. Nearly all six year olds enter formal education now in Egypt and Lebanon, (as was the case in Palestine before the outbreak of the 2000 intifada), and impressive gains have been made in closing the gender gap in

schooling. Most communities have a nearby primary and preparatory school. However, Egyptian state investments in improved access have been made at the expense of quality, and most families have little faith in public schooling alone to bring the desired futures for their children. The fifteen or so years of war in Lebanon has also taken its toll on public education and today public schools have become the exclusive realm of low-income parents as even those who teach in public school choose to enroll their children in private schools. Underpaid teachers in Egypt provide 'private lessons' after hours to students who can afford them, making education in reality an expensive undertaking for families. Media discourse for the last two decades has consistently attacked the Ministry of Education for declining school standards. Public disapproval is occasionally so high that even innovations aimed at improving the quality of instruction are damned before they can be fairly tested (Al-Ahram Weekly 2003).

But one important factor keeps this dissatisfaction from ultimately dislodging the current system. Islamists have not only been highly critical of existing school programs and curricula, but they have also attempted to change things by introducing some of their members as teachers and administrators and also by forming alternative schools. Thus, the state and those parents in line with it maintain a wary truce over the problems of public education, on the assumption that slow reform of the status quo is better than more extreme alternatives. Religious forces, nonetheless, find opportunities, sometimes covertly, to introduce their discourse and symbols into public school channels. A number of government school headmistresses a few years ago were dismissed after parents complained that their daughters were being forced to veil in order to continue in school. When a revised history curriculum added messages in support of Muslim-Christian tolerance, typesetters in a governmental publishing house attempted to drop some of those sentences as the text book was going to press (Kojak, 1996).

Interestingly, the political, social and economic realignments symbolized by the 1974 Open Door economic policy in Egypt were neither accompanied by comparable parallel changes to the school curricula nor a change in the policy of guaranteed employment for all graduates of post-secondary education. Thus by the 1980s, state actors were plagued by the disconnections observed between socialist-inspired and educated youth graduates who were expected to carry forward the projects of economic reform and privatization. At the same time, a rising movement of Islamist militancy shook the confidence and security of the state.

These factors set in motion a more or less constant program of curricular reform that continues to the present. Not surprisingly, this has resulted in exposing Egypt's youth to multiple and contradictory discourses. Recent revisions have strengthened messages regarding gender equity, for example, but there are still inconsistencies between what students read in their social studies texts and texts for religion class. A middle school religious text states that women are suited to be queens in their homes, while men are suited for mobility between home and public spheres (El-Tawila et al 2000). Some messages are far removed from the realities of life for all but the comfortable middle class in Egypt. A second grade health lesson instructs children not to buy food from street vendors. This not only ignores the huge volume of food sold by vendors to students and workers, but also the sizable number of children for whom this is the occupation of their fathers or mothers.

Because all texts and lesson plans are centrally produced in Egypt, every student in a given level across the country receives identical lessons on each school day. Regional variations in culture or practice are therefore not acknowledged, and teachers are not encouraged to supplement the set lessons. This gives an immense uniformity to the content and transmission of knowledge and assures a high level of centralized control of educational discourse in classrooms.

El-Tawila and colleagues (2000) note that this creates a uniform ‘culture of the classroom,’ in which recitation and rote learning of facts predominate over discussion or problem solving. Parents and students have become full participants in the enactment of these practices, one of the reasons that simple reform in the schools is difficult to achieve. Notable efforts are underway in 2002-2003 to alter the prevailing pattern of classroom dynamics in Egypt, by introducing new teaching and instructional standards. Research elsewhere suggests that the social practices that comprise an educational system are closely linked to other social practices in society. Issues of empowerment, participation and voice must therefore be addressed at a number of embedded levels—classroom, school, education system, communities and the state.

As in Egypt, there was a strong increase in the number of Islamic schools in Lebanon throughout the 1990s, emphasizing a heavy religious content to the curricula. Mu’asassat Imam al-Sadr, Hizbullah schools, Islamic Brotherhood schools among others were on the rise in numbers and in their ability to provide quality education to their pupils. Women’s associations had also participated in creating kindergartens and elementary schools for low-income families. Moreover, they have had a long history of organizing summer schools for children for the purpose of improving educational skills as well as creating a ‘better rounded individual’. According to the Coordinator for the Women’s Association of Hizbullah, summer schools provide children with the space to improve their knowledge of certain subjects like math and sciences but also of the world generally and provide teachers with a space to shape the individual as a whole (Zaatari 2003). Consciously creating subjectivities is at the core of the new schools. This is clearly evident in the summer schools as they are specially structured in response to the perceived waves of ‘modernization’ and western cultural hegemony enacted daily on the screens of television programs. The transformations in the post-independence, the civil war, the post-

civil war and the post-liberation of the South periods require further analysis and study taking into account the historical and social transformations taking place in Lebanese society and economy.

National narratives and myths were learned in schools but also through other forms of education like popular culture (namely songs and theatrical plays, like Rahbanis' work) that create a particular kind of an imagined communal Lebanon. Its failure to homogenize can easily be seen in the devastations of the civil wars and their effects on the population and the proliferation of media outlets with contrasting and complimentary representations of Lebanon. A renewed interest at the end of the civil war to unify and re-write school textbooks (especially history texts) and to change the structure of schooling and curriculum, can only be understood within the context of war, nationalism and subject making. Youth were the main participants in the war as both victims and perpetrators of violence. Concern about the messages given to the 'new generation' as the Lebanese try to redefine their Lebanese-ness in an attempt not to repeat the civil war, was a topic of debates, conferences and political struggles (Abou-Mourad 2002, Samra 2001, Musa 2000, Al-Amin 1999).

At the core of these debates are ideas about Lebanon's identity and what that entails for how youth, the new generation, is to be socialized and educated. Mainly contested was the development of a history text for Lebanon and a textbook on civil education. The revamping of the school curriculum was undertaken by the state in cooperation with teachers' unions, university professors as well as political and religious leadership. This entailed contradictory notions of participatory democracy while at the same time an attempt to uniformly and vertically impact the minds of future generations. In addition, debates surfaced on the choice of Arabic literature being taught at different level in the school system (Samra 2001). Some arguing that

ancient Arabic literature promotes traditional ideals not suitable for modernity and the ‘new’ Lebanon. The politics thus of curriculum and textbook transformations necessitates a detailed study not only of the ideology and discourses, but also of the impact and changes taking place in schools among the youths.

Another area of debate in the recent reshaping of the educational system in Lebanon focuses on the tracks made available to students. Traditionally, Lebanese schools followed the French education system in asking students to choose between a scientific and a literary track in 11th grade and then to choose between a ‘Mathematics’ and a ‘Sciences’ track within the scientific category during 12th grade. At the same time, there was the option of vocational schools, not highly desired by parents but very important for job opportunities. The three tracks were thus rather fluid and allowed students to choose a variety of majors at the university level. Those tracks were though rather gendered as girls, often encouraged by teachers and parents, dominated the literary section shying away from the math section. This representation has also been duplicated at the university level with females being dominant in social sciences and humanities and males dominating engineering departments. The recent transformation requires students to choose a career track as early as ninth grade. The tracks available are Math, Sciences, Economics and Psychology and Literary. Students of ninth grade are required to take around 11 topics throughout the year. This has raised numerous concerns regarding the gendering of education and the pigeonholing of girls and boys in rigid career tracks very early on.

University entrance exams have worked to reinforce class and regional distinctions among the Lebanese. Private schools equip students to get into private universities, which in turn entail better job opportunities and possibility for continued study abroad. The war has

tremendously compromised public schooling and public university. The Lebanese university dispersed into different colleges in different regions of the country and attempts at re-centering it in one campus near Beirut has raised sectarian and class tensions among students and faculty. Another transformation that has recently taken place in the post-civil war era is the plethora of private colleges, small, some operating as for-profit enterprises, that have been licensed by the Ministry of Education to offer university degrees mostly in Business, Computer Science and Language. This has opened new avenues for more students to achieve university degrees, but often without adequate assessment of career needs and market realities. It reinforces the idea still dominant in Lebanon that a university degree is important. However, no assessment of actual transformation in career placement and socio-economic status has been done.

Similar private universities are springing up in Egypt, as well as hundreds of ‘institutes’ purporting to offer minor diplomas in computer science, language and business management. These courses have become popular with low-income students who were unable to continue at university. While little systematic evidence is available, and there is no official licensing of these institutes, questions have been raised about the quality of their programs. In an economy where youth unemployment is as high as 50 percent, such courses hold out the allure of preparing students to participate in modern, globally connected fields. How much of this is pandering to dreams and desires, in the absence of practical content, is a subject worthy of investigation. The nature of education at these new educational spaces, their locations (in poor residential areas or beyond major cities), as well as the profile of students they attract should be addressed in extensive research. One hypothesis is that in addition to selling particular skills, the new generation of private educational institutions is selling young people a sense of connection

to the global world. Enrolment in these courses may also confer elevated status upon the individual-and by extension on their family-increasing their options in the marriage market.

Education and schooling are sites where families and family relations are contested and also reinforced. Discourses on education permeate various media outlets, political debates and historical narratives. Education often tied to ‘modernity’ and ‘national narratives’ acts also as a marker of economic locality and as a ‘sure’ avenue for the socialization of the youth. The media also presents another site where youth are created, where discourse on modernity has a different level of saliency and where youths themselves participate more actively in the creation and reproduction of those images. An understanding of education and desire as manifest in the contemporary choices of Arab youth is closely intertwined with ways in which modern media glamorizes certain ways of living and relating in the world. The next section addresses mass mediation as a crucial site for examining public discourses on youth and families.

Education and Public Discourse

Endnotes

1. See, for example, reports of the International Crisis Group.
2. The Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut was established in Beirut in 1878 by Sheikh Abd Al-Kader Kabbani, a prominent intellectual of the Arabic and Islamic world. <http://www.makassed.org/home.html>. The Makassed is a “non-profit philanthropic Islamic association aim[ed] at constructing a distinguished makassed community, built on sublime values and proud of its nationality.”
3. The contemporary situation of Palestinian education can only be addressed in the context of military occupation which began in 1967, appeared to be entering a process of reversal, but -- since 28 September 2000, when the Al Aqsa intifada erupted -- has been re-instituted with devastating consequences for the education of children. School closures, curfews, and military roadblocks between local communities and their schools overwhelm the contemporary public discourse over education in Palestine. In the first four years of the intifada, Israeli soldiers or/and settlers killed almost six hundred children under the age of seventeen and wounded thousands. The grim statistics – including 298 schools shelled or invaded and at least 1300 disrupted by curfew and siege – are only part of the picture. Educators are still grappling with the “dis-education” of a generation from the previous intifada. For further statistics see, www.palestinemonitor.org, www.btselem.org, www.unicef.org.

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Mass Mediated Public Discourse: Constructing the Family and Youth

Omnia El Shakry and Annelies Moors (2004)

Alongside education, the mass media are crucially important in constructing, disseminating and subverting notions of ‘the Arab family.’ Just as state agencies and other groups struggle for control of education, mass media are also contested public sites. State institutions, religious authorities, oppositional movements and marginalized groups engage in multiple ways in the production of ‘the Arab family’, using a great variety of media and genres, such as print, electronic media, entertainment, informational programs and high and low brow. This includes didactical texts and romance novels, political pamphlets, booklets and posters, quality newspapers and the popular press, art films (‘third world cinema’) and commercial comedy and melodrama, radio and television serials and religious programs on radio, television and the Internet (such as television and cybermufti’s).

One major effect of the development of the mass media is that it entails new forms of communication and ‘publicness’ that are no longer based on dialogical interaction in a shared space. Although the scope of certain media and genres differ, mass mediation always entails a move from dialogical communication in a shared space to a disjuncture of producers and consumers, with producers/distributors disseminating reproducible messages and products to multiple, unknown audiences to be consumed at many different locations and at various moments in time.

The construction of modern notions of Arab families has been integral to the multiplicity of media sites-print, visual and aural-since the turn of the century. This section aims to elaborate

the ways in which public discourse, and specifically media, has been a crucial site of contestation in the articulation of modernity and the construction of Arab families in Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon. In particular, “youth” has emerged throughout the twentieth century as a salient category of exploration both for media producers and consumers. It remains a pivotal axis in the construction of ‘the modern Arab family’ as well as in the idealization or denigration of youth culture. In exploring the question of public discourse, we address the major theoretical issues and empirical agendas emerging from historical and social scientific studies of print and mass media in the Arab world. While print media has had a long history of scholarly examination (Ayalon 1995, Cole 1993, Mehrez 1994, Rugh 1987), visual and aural media, and particularly commercially produced media, has been understudied. Nonetheless, since the early 1990s it has become a burgeoning field.

Recent scholarship on mass media and mass culture in the Arab and Muslim world has pointed to the need for studies that take seriously the relation between mass mediated forms of culture and social identity and interaction, on the one hand, and nation-state or globalization projects on the other (Armbrust 1996, 2000a). While declarations of the demise of the nation-state project abound in the flurry of literature on transnationalism and diaspora¹ many studies argue that such assertions are, in the very least, premature (Armbrust 2000a). As the recent film production of Nasser 56, an unabashedly nationalist and nostalgic, recounting of the nationalization of the Suez canal in Egypt (Gordon 2000), and the vast output of Palestinian cinema which “dreams of a nation” (Abu Lughod 2004) demonstrate, nationalism remains a contrapuntal point of modern identity in much of the Arab world². Walter Armbrust (2000a) points out the “wide spectrum of public culture within which nationalist imagery can form an effective bulwark against metropolitan globalization” (15).

Media producers participate in a “shared discourse about nationhood and citizenship” (Abu-Lughod 1993, 494) molding and shaping visions of modern national identity. Nonetheless, one should not assume that it is the producers of media who construct images of national and familial identity, while those who consume media are passive recipients. Whereas Habermas (1989[1962]), for instance, underlined the great potential of the development of a modern public sphere for participatory politics and the crucial role of print media in that respect, his evaluations (and those of the Frankfurter Schule more generally) of the development of electronic mass media and consumer culture are very negative; a rational bourgeois public engaged in critical debate has been given way to a mass public engaged in uncritical consumption. Such a notion of audiences as passive consumers of media messages of producers has been under attack at least since Stuart Hall (1980) pointed to the possibility that audiences may develop alternative and even oppositional interpretations. Much effort has been put toward elaborating a notion of ‘creative consumption’ (Gordon 2000, 177; Abu-Lughod 1993). Recent work has shown that audiences participate actively by listening or viewing, effecting and contesting new subjectivities and sensibilities in the process. The dissemination of religious sermons through audiocassettes and the practice of ethical audition in Egypt’s contemporary Islamic revival, enables listeners to reconstruct their sensibilities in accordance with ethical models of Islamic personhood and self-discipline (Hirschkind 2001). Abu-Lughod (1999) has pointed to the need to connect producers’ intended messages with the ways in which audiences located at multiple spaces or times or both relate to these. Investigating how a particular television serial is interpreted by viewers who differ in terms of location, generation and wealth, becomes important. The disjuncture between the intended message of a feminist, left-wing serial writer and the ways in which a poor illiterate

village woman, her more educated daughter and her wealthier, yet uneducated, neighbor engage with this message, differ strongly.

The complexity of the relationship between public discourses and lived realities, thus, urges us to question how various forms of media are interpreted, lived and subverted. That is, how media may be at one and the same time both more and less than the intentions of its authors. Abu-Lughod (1993, 1999) has argued that anthropologists of media need to attend to the ways in which regional and class disparities and the specificities of gender and education within nations can lead to “exclusions and segregations” within the media and a differential experience of viewing. Thus, for example in his ethnography of mass culture and modernism in contemporary Egypt, Walter Armbrust (1996) recounts the making of modernist ideology through the vehicle of mass culture, from the 1930s onwards. Such an ideology of modernism entailed an adherence to classical styles, Western techniques and progressive ideals. It thus fell within the purview of bourgeois tastes but was purported to be available to those newly entering the ranks of the middle class. Yet as embourgeoisment became increasingly unattainable and modernity appeared ‘beleaguered,’ particularly after the 1970s, the ideology of modernism proved illusory. In effect, cultural production that denizens of high and state-sponsored culture would deem ‘vulgar,’ often best expressed the ironic distance felt by the masses toward middle class images of modernity in contemporary Egypt (Armbrust 1996, 1-10).

Much attention has been paid to the effect of the proliferation of new technologies of media production (such as the Internet) in the contemporary world. ‘New’ media itself has been hailed as the avatar of modernity, the new public sphere, an agent of democratization and civil society and an avenue for more participatory engagement with cultural production (Anderson 1999, Norton 1999). It would be a mistake, however, to cede to such ahistorical technological

determinism. The relevance of new media resides not so much in its novelty, as in the manner in which it is embedded within larger social systems of meaning. In much the same way that many social theorists have argued that postmodernism or post-Fordism is an intensification of earlier world historic processes (Harvey 1989, Jameson 1991, Lash and Urry 1994), so too may mass media be viewed as the intensification of a process inaugurated by the development of print media in the turn-of-the-century.

Media and Genres: Producing the Nation and the Family

Indeed, the turn of the century provides a useful point of departure for any discussion of the role of media in public discourse surrounding the family. It functions as a foundational moment in the history of the construction of modern notions of the ‘family’ (Asad 2003), as well as its instrumentalization by emerging colonial and national states. In colonial settings, there was, often enough, an intersection between European colonial discourses and indigenous modernizing and nationalist discourses, which sought to modernize the family (Shakry 1998). Thus, in the cases of turn of the century Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine, articles in the nationalist press began to consolidate new gendered discourses on family life, including wifhood, domesticity and proper childrearing. Among the first women’s journals in the region were: Al-Fatah (Egypt, 1892) and Fatat Lubnan (Lebanon, 1914). Common throughout the literature of the turn of the century was a concern for the proper upbringing or education (tarbiya) of the future generations and the creation of a national family, which emphasized the importance of women’s role in socializing the sons of the nation (Shakry 1998, Fleischmann 1999, Thompson 2000). Furthermore, as Baron (1994) has argued, it was not only the nature of women’s writings that implicated them in projects of modernity, but the very act of public writing itself.

Beginning with turn of the century print media, this investigation will address the issue of different media genres, by focusing on emblematic historical moments and their attendant dominant media genres. Thus, during that period, print media provided a central locus for public discourse, while for the period of nationalist agitation and anticolonial nationalism (roughly the 1930s to 1960s) cinema, radio and theater provided the major forms of media. The contemporary period witnessed the dominance of visual media, particularly television in the 1970s and 1980s, and Internet and satellite television in the 1990s and beyond. Furthermore, different genres may be discerned within the various forms of media, particularly media that is instructional, pedagogical or propagandistic in intent, in contrast to entertainment-based commercial media. Both of these forms, however, may be related to statist projects.

Attention will thus be paid to how different media are embedded within various political projects, be they statist or counter-hegemonic³. Genre itself may be correlated to larger political and structural conditions of media production. For example, much of the recent Palestinian cinema is filmed as chronicles or diaries (sijillat or yawmiyyat), such as Elia Suleiman's 1996 Chronicle of a Disappearance (with its two part "Nazareth Personal Diaries" and "Jerusalem Political Diaries") and Divine Intervention (2002, subtitled "A Chronicle of Love and Pain"), Tawfiq Abu Wael's Diary of a Male Whore (2001) and Sobhi Zobaidi's video diary Crossing Kalandia (2002). These films exhibit the politically charged nature of recording and documenting the quotidian and of the pervasive politicized 'remembrance of things present' (El Shakry 2004).

In a somewhat different vein, Joel Gordon (2002) has argued that the genre of melodrama in Egyptian popular cinema under Nasser contributed to the formation of an Egyptian civic identity and public memory in the revolutionary era. Melodrama as a genre enjoyed great

popularity as a means to produce modern sensibilities, modern citizens and subjects. Abu-Lughod argues that the modernist project did not only work through the moral messages of such melodramatic serials, but that this genre was particularly suitable for the modernist project because it constructed and highlighted ‘the individuality of ordinary people’ (1999: 116). In televised epics, the impact of this genre of mass mediation is clear. Televised melodrama turns the mythical heroes of oral epics into ordinary people, whose interpersonal relations and individual longings are at the center of attention. But melodrama has to be located within the context of everyday life. Abu-Lughod (2000, 2002) points out that such projects of ‘melodramatic’ individualization stand in tense relations with the great value attached to family and kin relations, that are not overtly challenged in these serials.

A final example comes from the turn of the century, where a long tradition of political satire and critique exists in the Arab East, the most notable examples being Yaqub Sannu‘ and ‘Abd Allah Nadim⁴. Much of the satire turned on language-illustrating the importance and malleability of Arabic to convey differences in regional, class and national origin. Indeed much discussion of Arab media turns on the notion of linguistic difference or more specifically linguistic diglossia, or what Walter Armbrust refers to as a “split vernacular,” a combination of a classicist (transmitted through high-culture, mostly print) and an oral colloquial vernacular (Armbrust 1996, 37-62; Dougherty 2000).

The ambiguities of actual linguistic diglossic practice and its ideological contexts (Armbrust 1996, 59) calls into question facile distinctions between high and low culture in the Arab world, terms of reference associated with the formation of a canonical culture establishment. Even when vernacular culture is evoked, it is, more often than not, an ossified notion of a folk culture-an authentic heritage to be preserved or a vestigial primitive culture to be

modernized (Armbrust 1996, 2000a, Asad 2003, Salih 1955). In contrast, recent works have shown the importance of taking seriously “nontraditional oral media.” Walter Armbrust (2000b) has argued that in the case of Egyptian early commercial cinematic history, cinema provided the “cultural synthesis of the bourgeoisie” constructing national community “by creating a fund of images tied to middle class bourgeois identity—an image tied to a vernacular authenticity, high tradition and modern technique” (2000b, 304)⁵. Armbrust’s use of ‘screen capitalism,’ in contradistinction to Benedict Anderson’s notion of print capitalism, is telling.

One of the unfortunate consequences of the success of Benedict Anderson’s (1991) Imagined Communities, has been the over utilization (if not the reification) of the notion of print capitalism. It has been argued that the focus on print has led to the neglect of other modalities of creating national community, principally oral⁶. The focus on non-print media is all the more important in societies with literacy rates still relatively low. Yet the relationship between media, literacy, orality and the dissemination of information is far more complex than it appears and must be explored, rather than assumed. Juan Cole (1993) and others have argued that print media, in the turn of the century, was often read aloud in coffeehouses and other public spaces. Mass literacy in twentieth century Arab states has led to the increased accessibility of the public sphere and a concomitant ‘multiplication of agency’ (Eickelman 1992). Nonetheless, often enough, literacy does not guarantee the accessibility of print, or even broadcast, media (Eickelman 1999, 34). Indeed, the accessibility of audiocassette religious sermons, such as those by the Lebanese Shaykh Husayn Fadlallah and the Egyptian Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hamid Kishk, exemplars of the new aural Islam (al-Islam al-sawti), may prove competitors to the ever popular “print Islam” (Eickelman 1999, 36).

Early Visual Media: Photography and Film

If the printing press has been a central means of mass mediation in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, attention also needs to be paid to the visual mass media that soon after emerged. Photographs were a major visual mass medium in the last quarter of the nineteenth and, by then often reproduced as picture postcards, the first half of the twentieth century. If a tremendous number of picture postcards were produced to communicate Orientalist visual imagery, it did not take long for photographs to also become a highly popular medium to visually produce and disseminate notions of modernity in anti-colonialist and nationalist publications. Pictures of ‘new women,’ dressed in ‘modern ways’ and framed as part of new (nuclear) families were central to such propagations⁷. As in written texts, notions of modernity were in various ways linked to cultural authenticity. Walid Khalidi’s (1984) photo-history of Palestinians before their Diaspora includes both a large number of pictures of urban upper-middle class families that underline their modernity through their appearance as well as their composition. It also includes some pictures of the rural population framed through a positively presented traditionalism and timelessness (Moors 2001). Maha Saca’s picture postcards of young Palestinian women in beautifully embroidered dresses, produced in the early 1990s, work to combine urban modernity (through the act of public presentation, their appearance and comportment) and rural traditions (through the dresses and texts) in a different way simultaneously in the same picture (Moors 2000).

While films were already produced in the Middle East in the early twentieth century, the production of longer feature films (in Egypt) started in the late 1920s. Up to the 1960s melodrama was the most important genre in these films, often combined with musicals. Family relations were central to this genre; in Viola Shafiq’s words ‘melodrama became family drama’

(1999, 14). Imaginaries often centered on seduced or raped women often within the context of class inequalities; such films criticized traditional family relations and forced marriages and highlighted tensions between men and women as well as between parents and children. When in the 1950s and 1960s, the heydays of Arab nationalism, anti-colonial realist films became an important genre, these (Third Worldist) films often took up the very same motifs but infused them with political allegories (the raped woman standing for the rape of the nation) (Shafiq 1998, 1999).

By the 1980s, the demise of the great expectations of Arab nationalism engendered the development of post-Third-Worldist cinema in Egypt and elsewhere. More diversified in terms of its aesthetics and ideology, these films underline the tensions within the nation and use innovative narrative strategies, including a greater emphasis on the personal/domestic (Shohat 1999). Some of these films have become the subject of strong controversies when shown in Egypt. The producers of the documentary 'Marriage Egyptian Style', were, for instance, sharply criticized for selecting a cleaning lady as its main protagonist rather than a well-educated, modern and civilized middle class woman. Because of their choice of a person deemed unsuitable 'to represent the nation,' the producers (especially the Egyptian researcher) were accused of having severely damaged Egypt's reputation abroad (Saad 1998).

Whereas the starting point of Palestinian cinema has been very different, its further development shows certain (but by no means only) parallels with cinema in Egypt and elsewhere. Palestinian film production emerged in the late 1960s as part and parcel of the Palestinian liberation movement, as a means to mobilize for the national struggle; its main audiences were Palestinians in the refugee camps (Alexander 1998). By the 1980s the expulsion of the armed Palestinian resistance from Jordan and later Lebanon, the development of a wide

scale of popular forms of organization in the occupied territories and the rise of a generation of independent, well-trained filmmakers, had shifted film production to historical Palestine and transformed both its ideological content and style of presentation. Some film producers aimed at global markets and participated in the international art film circuit. Their films were often more experimental, highlighted non-violent modes of resistance and used a more complex visual language. Others produced films that were more accessible to local audiences as well, explicitly engaging with hierarchies, inequalities and exclusions within the national project. They often paid specific attention to vulnerable or marginalized groups, such as young women and children and included such topics as domestic violence⁸.

This also highlights how Benedict Anderson's focus on a consensual building of an imagined community of national citizens elides the complex process by which nationalism systematically excludes national others or subalterns (Chatterjee 1993, Mitchell 2002). Thus, in contrast to conventional histories of nationalism, such as Anderson's, Timothy Mitchell (2002) argues that the nation is made not out of the growing self-awareness of a collective subject, but out of the violent, uncertain encounters and projects which perform the distinction between what belongs to the nation and what does not. What role does the media play in the reinforcement or subversion of dominant groups?

Some have argued that it is precisely the newer "small media" which enable or facilitate the communication of dissident or subversive messages (Eickelman 1999), particularly for those groups marginalized and excluded from the domains of state sponsored mass media, such as present-day Islamists in Egypt and dissident groups in Palestine/Israel. Indeed, 'small media' are harder to control by state institutions and other authorities. This includes older forms such as pamphlets and posters, but also newer ones such as faxes, audiotapes, videotapes and CD-Roms.

Such ‘small media’ have been an important means of communication in the context of the Iranian revolution (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi 1994), while from the 1990s on, satellite and Internet technologies have also made it easier to communicate across borders; for example, the Palestinian Across the Borders project⁹. Whereas Naomi Sakr (2003) is generally skeptical about the great expectations about satellite technology for processes of democratization, she highlights the importance of particular televised programs for youth in the region, such as the effect of images of Palestinian children throwing stones or wounded on young people elsewhere in the Arab world (Sakr 2003, 192). Whereas Eickelman (1999) goes so far as to argue that the “‘migration’ of messages, media, writers, and styles of discourse is part of an increasing fragmentation of authority” (38), this still begs the question of whether the multiplication of new media and different individual’s (or group’s) access to them erase distinctions between the “kinds and sources of authoritative speech” as Eickelman claims.

The New Muslim Public Sphere

Much of the literature on new media has focused on the relationship between new media and the transformation of what authors variously describe as the ‘new Muslim public sphere.’ Such discussions turn on what Jon Anderson (1999) has described as a process of creolization, or a syncretic mixing of codes (such as those of the ‘high’ textualism of the ‘ulama and the folk or sufi practices, sometimes referred to as mass Islam); and the creation of new “special-purpose intermediate communities of discourse that array in a continuum between otherwise (for example socially) separate communities of communication” (Anderson 1999, 43-4). This expansion of the Muslim public sphere, Anderson argues is related to the Internet’s facilitation of a new class of interpreters (1999, 41), much in the same way that the Salafiyya and Deobandi reformers were

facilitated by the medium of print in the turn of the century. Further, such a ‘widening’ of the Muslim public sphere is not limited to the Internet alone, but also to the existence of a budding industry of pamphlets, booklets and broadsides; audio-cassettes, as in the oft-cited example of the popularity of twentieth century Iranian clergy; as well as vernacular television preachers, such as Egypt’s Shaykh al-Sha‘rawi (Anderson 1999, Hirschkind 2001, Messick 1996, Starrett 1995a, 1995b).

These new interpreters of Islam and new contexts of interpretation, Anderson and others argue will lead to a sense of expanded agency for lay Muslims and a diversity of expressions of Islam. Such views, however, obscure the extent to which such diversity of Muslim interpretations and opinions have always existed, particularly in the pre-modern period (Brown 1996, Dallal 1993). In fact, one could argue that the codification and modernization of Muslim law (or its textualization), under colonial constraints, has led to the narrowing, rather than widening, of the Islamic discursive tradition or the realm within which it operates (Asad 2003, Messick 1993). The broader historical and structural conditions within which Muslim thinkers and Islamic interpretations develop and transform over time must be attended to. Whereas new actors (for instance, young well-educated women) have been able to enter the field of debate, simultaneously others (such as the illiterate and those not able to employ the ‘language’ of the new media) run the risk of being excluded. New styles of argumentation are more accessible to some, but may also lead to the devaluation of other, older practices (be it oral performances, folk rituals or whatever). In other words, these new Muslim publics practice their own forms of exclusion, be it on explicit ideological grounds (e.g. in attempting to silence those arguing for different interpretations) or through the production and normalization of particular sense of self and sensibilities. A focus on media enables us to gauge these wider transformations and Muslim

responses to them. That is to say, technological determinism should not substitute for historical analysis.

For instance, perhaps due to the state monopoly over media in Egypt, non-state sponsored Islamist groups resort to alternative, newer, forms of media to transmit their ideas and build communities. In Lebanon, on the other hand, various religious groups retain their own media outlets. Hizbullah, for example, has a major 'Media' institution with both radio and television stations as its major mediums. The unique position of Hizbullah, as the upholder of Lebanese sovereignty, due to its role in driving Israel out of Lebanon, has allowed it large popular support and access to such resources. The new print and media law of 1994 (Murr 1994) has monitored the licensing of TV, radio, magazines and newspapers, basically limiting it to those with strong ties to government officials (Saadeh 1999). The government, however, has allowed for one Islamist outlet and one Christian Fundamentalist outlet on radio and television. A more thorough investigation and study of this contemporary phenomenon is necessary for understanding the complexity of these strategies and the alternative means that fringe religious and political entities resort to.

Contemporary Mass-Mediated Discourse of Family and Youth

These types of questions about the authoritative nature of discourse impact, in quite specific ways, on the question of the contested nature of representations of the family and youth in media. An exploration of the disjuncture between dominant discursive practices, such as state-sponsored television and contestatory discourses, such as literary representations, can tell us much about the schism between idealized representations of the family and youth, on the one hand, and the social reality they mediate, on the other (Mehrez 2001). For example, cinematic representations of youth

culture and modernity, during the Nasserist 1960s as in Papa's up a Tree (1969) Marriage the Modern Way (1967) and Midterm Vacation (1962), illustrate the longstanding conventions of Egyptian modernist cinema-emblematic of the coupling of bourgeois sensibilities and traditional family values (Armbrust 1999). Indeed, the Nasser era was crucial in redefining the importance of youth as the “new generation capable of bearing the responsibility for progress and the new society created by the revolution” (Ministry of Social Affairs 1964, 20-21). The inculcation of youth was to be accomplished through physical and social upbringing, al-tarbiya al-riyadiyya wal-ijtima'iyya (Ministry of Social Affairs 1964, 20-1). The accent on youth under Nasser localized them as a particularly appropriate site (alongside children) for the inculcation of a socialist ethic, one which could be embodied in two crucial ways: through physical education tarbiya riyadiyya and the disciplinization of free time awqat al-faragh with various forms of social service and activity (Ministry of Social Affairs 1964, 23-4). It would be wrong, however, to conceive of youth discourse as emerging only in the post-colonial era. Careful historical analysis will be needed to document the emergence, and transformation, of the concept and category of youth, in much the same way that the emergence of discourses of childhood has been situated in the turn of the century (Najmabadi 1998, Shakry 1998).

Yet these cinematic and statist discourses represent only one facet of mediated representations of the family and youth. Literary representations of the family in 1990s Egypt, Samia Mehrez (2001) argues, began to diverge radically from media images, particularly television. While literary representations, such as Sonallah Ibrahim's 1992 Dhat, portentously hailed the death of the family as a literary icon, television serials continued to reproduce it as a national icon (Mehrez 2001). Indeed, Mehrez claims that until the Infitah period, Egypt's literary representations were “very much in line with the official imaginary” (Mehrez 2001).

Yet, dominant discourses often strive, quite self-consciously, to compete with alternative visions of youth and family. Thus, in Iran the concern over declining youth audiences for Iranian state television led to the formation of a group called “optimal image,” which contemplated adopting programs that could compete with Western music videos (Eickelman 1999, 37). Moreover, in Bangladesh, a new genre, which may be referred to as Islamic romance novels, has increasingly taken the place of more pedagogical and didactic literature (Huq 1999). Such a genre could have profound implications for youth imagining of Muslim family life.

Lebanon is an interesting site in which to investigate the diversity of media avenues and their discourses on the family. The weakness of the Lebanese state, during and after the civil war, has led to an abundance of unregulated media outlets. During the war various militia groups and political parties created their own radio and television stations, at times operating solely at the local level of a city. Currently, the state has taken some control and continues to survey the various media outlets it has legitimated. The contradictory and conflicting images of family life, citizenship, interfamily dynamics, youth and women presented on diverse television stations like the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International (LBCI), Future TV (FTV) and Al-Manar TV, raise numerous questions about the nature of the state, modernity, globalization, gender relations and the imagined Lebanese nation of the future. Furthermore, the presence of these stations on satellite TV allows such practices and ideologies, which permeate the Lebanese local, to enter other Arab locales and diasporic communities and thus requires further investigation.

Returning to ‘the family in public discourse’ in its twofold sense-that is both as a trope in public debate, standing for particular modalities of modernity, and as the lived reality of family relations in all their pluralities, diversities and dynamisms-both remain largely under-researched.

The family writ large has been central to multiple forms of mass mediations, yet investigations of the ways in which media producers construct images of ‘the family’ have remained relatively rare. Even fewer attempts have been made to link these to the lived realities of family members; scant attention is paid to how differently positioned family members engage in the production of meaning when engaging with various media as audiences.

This also raises the issue of how particularities of location, region, class, gender and generation are taken into account in analyses of the production of meaning, including the ways in which existing media products are actively interpreted and employed in everyday life and become a basis for face-to-face discussions, debates and political action. It furthermore raises questions about the impact of political and economical transformations on access to ‘the media’, about what family-related issues are deemed worthy of debate in particular media/genres and whose voices have become increasingly authoritative (based on what sorts of legitimization) and whose have become marginalized and silenced.

Mass Mediated Public Discourse: Constructing the Family and Youth

Endnotes

1. For more information on this field, see especially Arjun Appadurai 1990, 1993, 1996.
2. Interestingly, both Nasser 56 and the Palestinian Film Festival received outspoken praise and criticism, respectively, outside of the Middle East, illustrating how representations of nationalism or even nationalist aspirations, can inspire much emotional outpouring. Nasser 56 was well received in places such as Gaza and the West Bank and even among diasporic communities (an Arab-American weekly hailed it as “a film all Arab-American youth should see”) (Gordon 2000, 178, 181n31). On the intensity of the reaction to the New York Palestinian Film Festival, see Abu-Lughod 2004.
3. Indeed, the highly publicized and most recent cases of censorship and public censure in the Arab World for contentious texts that address religion in Egypt (Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd) and Syria (Muhammad Shahrur) highlight this point well. On Abu Zayd, see Hirschkind (1995) on Shahrur see Eickelman and Anderson (1999, 7, 11-12) and Eickelman (1999, 36).
4. A more contemporary example of the use of political satire can be found in Arab comic strips, see Douglas and Douglas (1994).
5. Walter Armbrust (1996, 2000b) is both unique and passionate in his defense of commercial cinema (particularly the ‘much-maligned’ Egyptian cinema) as a subject of scholarly inquiry. Cinema studies that focus on the Arab world have, perhaps, placed an undue emphasis upon diasporic or exilic cinema, and ‘auteur’ cinema (Asfour 2000, Naficy 2001, Shohat and Stam

1994). This may be because of its ready accessibility to Western audiences and its emphasis on blurred ethnic and national boundaries and fragmented identities; themes that mesh well with current postmodernist aesthetic sensibilities and multicultural ideologies of Western liberalism (Armbrust 2000b).

6. The critiques of Anderson's work are too numerous to mention. Noteworthy is Partha Chatterjee's work, which questions the universalization of European forms of nationalism that Anderson considers "modular" (Chatterjee 1986, 1993).

7. For examples see Sarah Graham-Brown 1988.

8. For example, the feminist documentary films of the Center for Women's Studies in Jerusalem, or Sobhi Zobaidi's *Women in the Sun*, 1998.

9. See also special issue of the Middle East Journal (2000) about understanding the new media in the Middle East.

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Diasporas, Border Crossings and the Flexible Boundaries of Arab Families

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Introduction

Much of the research on family and gender patterns in the Arab world supports an area studies approach that constructs an immutable link between seemingly fixed and authentic cultural patterns (including family and gender dynamics), peoples and specific places of origin. Smadar Lavie and Ted Swedenburg (1996) explain,

The confidence in this permanent joint between a particular culture and a stable terrain has served to ground our modern governing concepts of nations and cultures. In these still powerful conceptual frameworks, there is a homology between a culture, a people or a nation and its particular terrain, and both the culture and its associated place are regarded as homogeneous in relation to other cultures/places (even if those are characterized by internal differentiation) (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996, 1).

By exploring the reterritorialization of cultural practices among Arab families when individuals and groups live lives that are stretched across local and/or national borders and repositioned vis-à-vis new and diverse public and private spheres, this essay calls into question the idea that Arab people, cultural patterns and places of “origin” are inseparably linked¹. We emphasize cultural locations in which Arab family formations are reconstructed across geographic, cultural and political borders in the context of a multiplicity of loyalties and relationships that individuals sustain locally, translocally and/or transnationally. In doing so, we contribute to efforts that throw expectations about cultural authenticity in doubt (Clifford 1988,

14). We suggest that diasporas provide rich sites for exploring cultural ideals, such as those related to family and gender, as situational and constructed. We also focus on diasporas because they provide useful sites for transcending Western feminist approaches that reduce Arab family and gender patterns to a consequence of “culture” and/or “religion” (Islam) and hence assume that a monolithic or singular Arab family exists. While calling for de-essentialized understandings of “Arab culture,” this essay does not overlook the ways that fixed and bounded notions of cultural authenticity emerge in diasporic locations. Instead, we suggest that such notions are constructed, and constantly shifting depending on diverse socio-political contexts. We thus locate our analysis at the intersections of the constantly shifting family and gender dynamics and the simultaneous reinscriptions of cultural authenticity that are produced within the context of Arab engagements with translocal and transnational movement.

Many scholars of gender and family studies have argued that the “private” is not an isolated, separate sphere but is constantly shaped and reshaped by social structure and socio-structural inequalities (Thorne and Yalom 1992). Bringing feminist theorizations of the “public” is “private” to bear on family formations among Arab families in diasporic contexts, we argue that the construction of “public” and “private” boundaries are constantly shaped and reshaped by the changing socio-political realities of translocal and/or transnational movement and that the forms that Arab families take are multiple and constantly shifting. This essay thus transcends perspectives that construct an inseparable relationship between a seemingly fixed “Arab culture” and particular geographically bounded territories as it exposes the constructed nature of cultural ideals about “family” in the context of an increasingly globalized world.

Historical Overview

Over the last three decades, the Arab region has witnessed significant increases in the extensity and intensity of population flows and displacements following the oil price hikes of 1973 and 1983 (Massey and Hugo 1993). These flows resulted in momentous inter- and intra-regional flows and included Arab migration to other Arab states, Arab migration outside the Arab region, Asian inflows (most significantly into oil producing countries and post-war Lebanon) and transit migration and return migration. Early migratory flows were mostly Arab and involved families as well as individual migrants. These migrants responded to the demand for skilled and unskilled male labor. More recently, migration has overwhelmingly included Asian inflows into oil producing countries and has predominantly consisted of the migration of individuals as opposed to families, including significant female participation.

Comparatively, however, Arab migratory flows continue to be male-dominated. Whether directly involving Arab families or indirectly, these population flows have had a great impact on the reshaping of Arab families - migrating families as well as those in the receiving and sending countries. The new economics of migration have radically changed the assumptions that underlie processes of decision making with a serious shift away from individual to collective rationality (Taylor 1999). Many scholars now acknowledge that families make decisions about individual or group migration as a collective survival strategy. Such decisions have led to shifts in the gendered division of labor within families as new locations and living arrangements often produce new “social fields that cross national boundaries and provide the staging ground for the construction and appropriation of practices and identities” (Basch, Glick Schiller and Blank 1994, 29). Despite the extensive movement of people and ideas within and beyond the Arab

world, most research on Arab family patterns has not taken the impact of translocal and/or transnational movement on gender and family seriously.

State of the Research

A significant amount of Western feminist scholarship on gender in the Arab world has tended to isolate gender and family processes from the study of political and economic structures. Few studies exist (Tucker 1993; Hoodfar 1997a & b; Lobban 1998; Joseph 1993, 1999; Abu-Lughod 1999, 1998, 1995 & 1993; and Hatem 1999, 1994, 1987, 1986) that theorize family patterns not as fixed or isolated features of a seemingly abstract “Arab culture,” but as consequences of various processes, such as globalization, economic restructuring and the gendering of the state (Shah 1998). Moreover, research that situates family patterns within the context of these processes and that pays attention to the translocal as well as the transnational movement of people within and beyond the Arab world is limited. Within the existing research in this area, scholars have addressed shifts in the cultural demands of Moroccan mothers who regularly move between their place of migration and their homelands (Salih 2003); the impact of socio-economic and political change on domestic organization in Yemen (Stevenson 1985); and migration, urbanization and women’s kin networks in Tunis (Holmes-Eber 2005). Yet most research that considers Arab families in the context of transnationalism centralizes the positions and experiences of “women” while ignoring the relationality between femininities and masculinities within broader family structures.

Within the research on globalization, displacement and diaspora, much of the literature tends to focus on labor migration. Moreover, it tends to emphasize the positions and experiences of individuals rather than the organization of social groups according to the rubrics of “family”

or “community.” In addition, while many studies on labor migration that emphasize gender exist (Parrenas 2002, Anderson 2000, Chang 2000), they have not been expanded to include the Arab region. While many scholars have conducted research on refugees, the field of refugee studies has focused primarily on survival strategies, legal status, rights, resources, health and well-being, livelihood and refugees’ impact on hosting countries. Despite the wealth of material on transnational movement and diaspora, there remains a great need for research on gender and family formations among individuals and groups displaced within and beyond the Arab world.

A Theoretical Approach to the study of Arab Families and Diaspora

Possibilities for theorizing Arab families and diaspora lie in bringing the study of globalization, the translocal and transnational movement of people and ideas and Arab family and gender studies into conversation with one another. The features of globalization that are significant to Arab family studies and diaspora are the fluidity of production sites, the increased mobility of labor, the denationalization of economies, the location of multinational corporations in global cities where specialized professional services are concentrated and increased militarization and war. As these features have produced intensifying conditions of impoverishment and marginalization, they have been highly significant in heightening the movement of labor migrants, refugees of war and persons displaced by development projects across geographic boundaries within and beyond the Arab world.

Several scholars have deployed the term “diaspora” to refer to communities displaced from an original center to at least two peripheral places (Safran 1991). Diasporic communities, William Safran argues, maintain memory, vision and myth about their homeland and imagine their ancestral home as a place of eventual return. For Safran, the collective identity of a

diaspora is importantly defined by this relationship. While Safron's definition is useful for understanding diasporic experiences within and beyond the Arab world, we agree with Clifford, who argues that, "the discourse of diaspora will be modified as it is translated and adopted" (Clifford 1994, 306). We use the term diaspora to refer to experiences of communal displacement and the construction of "home" far away from "home." In addition, we find the flexibility of Clifford's definition useful in that it opens up spaces for considering multiple kinds of displacement within and beyond the Arab world, such as forced migration induced by war and colonialist occupation and settlement, economic displacement and displacement of people due to development projects. This flexibility is also useful for highlighting the ways that border crossings across national borders in addition to border crossings within national borders impact family formations. Our definition, for example, includes Palestinian families displaced from Palestine and currently residing beyond the borders of Palestine as well as Palestinian families displaced from their villages of origin and living in "far away" villages and refugee camps within historic Palestine. While we use the term "transnational" to refer to the movement of people and ideas across national borders, we use the term "translocal" to refer to family formations produced vis-à-vis two or more geographic places within a particular national context. As Eileen Kuttab's essay in this volume explains, the impact of internal displacement on family structures, such as the internal displacement of Palestinian refugees within the Palestinian context, are under-researched and are not yet understood at the international level.

Moreover, in addition to opening up spaces for investigating diasporic experiences "far away" from home, a flexible approach to "diaspora" is also useful for theorizing influences of incoming diasporic individuals or communities on local families. For example, while the experiences of Palestinian families in the U.S. and Sudanese families in Egypt engender the

reconfiguration of family formations among Palestinian and Sudanese communities in the diaspora, the location of diasporic Sri-Lankan and Filipina live-in maids within Lebanese families inspires the reconfiguration of family formations among local, Lebanese families. We thus distinguish between two kinds of border crossings that engender reconfigurations of “Arab family.” We use the term “diasporic experiences” to refer to the translocal or transnational movement of Arab individuals or families and its impact on Arab family formations. We use the term “influences of incoming diasporic communities” to refer to the inflow of migrants or displaced persons (Arab or non-Arab) into local Arab contexts and its impact on locally settled Arab families.

Flexibility in understanding diaspora is also critical for considering that border crossings are not always linear processes that involve a one-directional movement from an “origin” to a “periphery.” For example, as Eileen Kuttab explains in this volume, return migration is important to a range of family and marriage practices within Arab families in the diaspora. Young men and women may return to their country of origin to marry as an act of return or maintaining connection. Moreover, they may arrange or attempt to marry in their country of origin as a strategy for maintaining or preserving cultural identity or ties to their homeland. Alternatively, women and men of Arab origin who have U.S. citizenship may be seen as possessing a form of dowry or social capital within the marriage market (i.e. marriage to a non-citizen). Migrant women from Asia who work for families in Lebanon are generally admitted on one, two or three year contracts with the expectation that, on completion of their contracts, they will return home, unless their work and residency permits are renewed. They may travel to visit their family and renew their permit only to return a month or so later to live within the ‘borders’ of a Lebanese family. There are cases, however, of Filipina and Sri Lankan women who have

remained in Lebanon for over 20 years. The longer-term residents are usually voluntary, but there are cases of forced retention by employers who withhold payment of wages and deny them their passports.

The focus on gender differentiations will reveal the ways that the issue of return impacts women disproportionately. United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), for example, defines a refugee in gendered terms in that the status of a refugee cannot be transferred through females. If a husband dies, a widow loses her refugee status; if a woman marries a non-refugee, she will lose her refugee status. We seek to expose the ways that gender permeates policies related to return and particular factors that women have to take into consideration. This approach might then generate an important debate among social movement activists working on the issue of Palestinians right to return. For example, how might the right of return movement adopt a feminist agenda that acknowledges that the current right is only transmitted through the male line, despite the large number of female-headed households? Investigating multi-directional kinds of border crossings, whether imagined or real, is thus crucial for understanding the various ways that Arab family formations shift in the context of diaspora.

To expose the gendered underpinnings of Arab family formations in various diasporic contexts, we trace shifts in the making and re-making of public and private boundaries among displaced Arab families (i.e. Palestinians in the U.S.; Sudanese in Egypt; Palestinian refugees from Haifa in the West Bank) and among Arab families that have been influenced by incoming diasporic individuals (Lebanese families with live-in maids from Sri-Lanka). Two key dynamics that render shifts in public and private boundaries visible are the gendered division of labor and the negotiation of survival and coping strategies among Arab families.

Border Crossings and the Division of Labor

Teresa Amott and Juliet Matthaei (1991) argue that gendered processes differentiate women's lives in many ways from those of the men in their community. They also argue that gender relations tend to assign women to the intra-familial work of child rearing and domestic chores in most societies throughout the world. While this may be seen as an over-generalization, in countries such as Australia, where equal opportunity legislation designed to facilitate and increase female participation in the workforce and where feminist programs towards equality in education and personal relationships have been active at all levels of government and socialization agencies since the early 1970s, we still see a highly gendered division of labor, not only in the household, but also in the perpetuation of 'female' occupations (such as nursing, childcare, teaching and the 'caring' professions and occupations generally) (Baxter 1993). One of the major mysteries of contemporary sociology is this "disjunction between the belief in household equality and the intense inequality of the actual division of labour" (Bell and Zajdow 2002, 268). This does not mean that nothing changes, for there are nuances in the negotiation of gender and family roles in all societies. What is of particular interest here is how these roles, particularly traditional roles are renegotiated as a result of various forms of migration.

Using Amott and Matthaei (1991) as a starting point, we are interested in the ways that gendered divisions of labor shift as a consequence of migration and displacement. Both women and men respond to new material and cultural realities in the diaspora in ways that may change their role tasks. For example, traditional gendered public/private boundaries may shift when migrant women take on paid labor outside of the household under circumstances of financial necessity, such as becoming domestic workers in the diaspora or undertaking factory work that was not even considered "a woman's job" in their homeland; or when family members create

income-generating projects from within the household; when women take on extra work within the household that was not previously required in their homeland; or when women become the primary breadwinners. In addition to the changing division of labor related to outside paid work, changes in the household division of labor are also critical for the understanding of changes in gender relations among Arab families. These shifts in the division of labor may empower or disempower women, or may grant them greater or lesser autonomy over their lives. In this sense, it is also important to consider how patriarchy within the culture of Arab families is intensified or relaxed under these circumstances.

Several feminist scholars have argued that women are often positioned as the bearers of “culture” within families (Beechey 1985, Cowan 1983, Eisenstein 1984 and Pateman 1988). Depending upon whether migrant families assimilate or whether they live in communities or ‘ethnic enclaves’ that enable them to maintain key cultural beliefs and practices, there may be shifts in the expectations of women to be the bearers of culture in the context of diaspora. Some feminists have argued that when communities face crises that threaten their ethnic/cultural survival, an intensification of masculinity emerges and differences in “genders” become exacerbated. There is a need to explore shifts in the form that patriarchy takes in the diaspora and the processes by which cultural expectations of women shift in the context of diasporic struggles to maintain cultures, histories and languages.

This raises the issue of expectations of return from the diaspora to the homeland, particularly as we acknowledge the feminization of international migration over the past two decades or so. Return migration (that includes return of refugees and the displaced) has policy implications for governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who might consider how returning migrants, with new and different skills and gender roles may impact the local

labor market; for example, how women who have made empowerment gains in the diaspora (or who have acquired new skills) might be consolidated into the local context. One key concern for NGOs interested in women's rights is to avoid the regression of such gains.

In the following section we explore the division of labor in Arab families within the context of migration and displacement. The first considers experiences from Arab families in the United States, the second of Palestinian refugees and the third looks at the impact of migrant domestic workers on the household division of labor in Lebanon.

There are several issues that are central to the exploration of shifts in the material and cultural division of labor among Arab diasporas in the United States. Class and citizenship status are crucial axes of oppression in the study of the gendered division of labor among immigrants. Poverty and the new socio-cultural environment of the U.S. leads some working class immigrant women who have not worked for wages in the past to undertake new tasks that were considered socially unacceptable among women of a similar social class in their countries of origin. Research in San Francisco indicates that some North African women migrants, for example, are working as housekeepers, nannies and cooks within middle-upper class homes—jobs considered socially unacceptable for women of their social class before migration (Naber 2002). What may be seen as ironic is that most nationals in the Middle East (perhaps with the exclusion of Egypt and Iraq) are reluctant to undertake such jobs, even in conditions of hardship, because these positions have become racialized in the sense that they are occupied by Asian and African migrant women almost exclusively in these countries of origin (Jureidini 2002). For a Lebanese national to become a domestic maid is to identify with the lowly status of a Sirilankiyya (Sri Lankan maid). In the Maghreb Al-Arabi region, domestic work is often connected to rural and

‘backward’ notions as young girls from rural, mountainous or desert areas are used as ‘bonnes filles’ in urban middle class homes.

Immigrant men living in poverty have undergone similar shifts by occupying ‘feminine’ jobs, such as cooking, cleaning or washing dishes. In these cases, necessity dictates increasingly acceptable shifts in the gendered relationship between kinds of work, social status and reputation among Arabs in the U.S. While it is well understood that migration often results in underemployment, little is known about how shifts in the kinds of labor women and men take on in the diaspora alter gender constructs and patriarchal power in the context of households and family formations.

Increasing pressures on poor women to enter the labor force tend to render public private boundaries fluid and unstable. At the same time, engagements with racism and the pressures of assimilation often intensify patriarchy and reify fixed notions of public [male] private [female] boundaries within familial and communal spaces (Naber 2002). Yen Le Espiritu (2003) explains that racialized immigrants tend to resist the assimilative and alienating demands of U.S. society by deploying homeland cultures as a basis for staking claims on the new society. This deployment, however, often controls women as one way of asserting moral superiority over the dominant racial or cultural group (Espiritu 2003, 158). Similarly, among Arab families in the U.S., the patriarchal refashioning of cultural traditions emerges within the context of racialization and the pressures of assimilation. As a result, theorizing Arab family formations in the U.S. requires a consideration of the ways that cultural ideals about “family” are constantly shifting, depending on Arab/Arab American engagements with racialization and assimilation.

The loss of social networks and extended kin ties in the diaspora also transform patterns in the gendered division of labor among Arab diasporas. If the pressures of assimilation and

racialization intensify patriarchal cultural ideals - such as the idea that woman is mother, the homemaker or the bearer of “culture” and seen as a natural role extension, or ‘familial ideology’ (Beechey 1985) - then how do diasporic women grapple with the loss of social support/assistance and the intensified pressure to do “cultural work?” Does the shift to a decrease in extended family ties in the diaspora, coupled with the intensification of fixed patriarchal cultural ideals lead to an increase in women’s work?

A dominant trend among middle-class Arab immigrants has been ethnic entrepreneurship, particularly in the area of local ‘ma and pop’ food and convenience stores. Local ‘ma and pop’ stores are often family operated and most family members, depending on age, tend to be employed in the business (Castles and Miller 1993). The conditions under which female family members work in these stores raise a number of empirical questions. Do they deal directly with customers or are they prevented from doing so? What changes in attitudes and values are brought about from such participation in public spaces? Are patriarchal conditions reproduced or are they relaxed? How are mothers and unmarried daughters figured into “the store”? To what extent does the formation of kinship structures at “the store” blur the line between public and private?

Finally, the relationship between the citizenship status, particularly after September 11th, 2001 and shifts in the gendered division of labor is critical to the study of diasporic Arab families in the U.S. After September 11th, immigrants perceived to be Arab or Muslim became increasingly vulnerable to institutionalized sites of power vis-à-vis the local police, the state, their employers and their landlords in addition to strangers on the street. Ongoing research on Arab families in the U.S. will be looking at how the detention and deportation of Arab men has altered the gendered division of labor of Arab families. Research on labor patterns among the

mothers, sisters or daughters of the detainees before and after the detention of their men should find considerable adaptation requirements in how they cope or are coping with such circumstances. It raises a number of questions: To what extent, for example, has the increase in anti-Arab racism after September 11th intensified patriarchal power among Arab families in the U.S.? Has the increased violence against veiled women in the U.S. after September 11th led male family members to attempt to restrict the movement of veiled female members? How has the increasing number of unemployed Arab immigrant men (due to September 11th related discrimination) led to an increase in Arab women workers? Has increased unemployment of Arab immigrant men, coupled with increased discrimination against Arab immigrant men in the workplace led to an increase in domestic violence? Have challenges over obtaining visas led more Arab immigrant men to marry U.S. citizens in general and white women [due to their white privilege] in particular?

In Palestine, the crisis of male breadwinners caused by unemployment, martyrdom, imprisonment or injury due to the Palestinian –Israeli conflict causes confusion and reversed redistribution of roles. Palestinian refugee families are generally regarded as traditional families where the division of labor in the household is highly gendered. However, the political crisis has, on the one hand intensified the traditional roles of women, yet on the other hand, it has also brought new roles to them, making private and public boundaries intertwined and not organically separate.

Palestinian refugee camps have been the most affected by the existing conflict, where women's lives have been greatly affected by the death of family members including primary breadwinners and children. Women are left with the dual burden of providing both the necessary financial, emotional and at times physical support needed to sustain the family. The death of

family members requires women to find alternative means of support for the household - support that extends from social to economic, to psychological and emotional. On the other hand, women have to sustain the family through adopting a combination of strategies, which include economic as well as emotional tasks that are gendered. For example, as the primary care takers, women assume the greatest burden in relation to caring for the injured. Again, house demolitions render whole families homeless, with little or no means to rebuild their homes. As such families are not only rendered homeless, they are left with no food, furniture, clothes or other basic necessities, hence women have to manage this crisis, sometimes without the support of community institutions.

The household in crisis functions as a unit of decision making in situations of economic hardship and widespread unemployment. This possibility opens the opportunity for a combination of income sources and expenditures, where pooling of resources is a basic principle. In this sense, Palestinian women may be seen as the 'shock-absorbers' of the family and the community. This idea of women coping and offering support and protection to the family is seen to be part of the gendered division of labor. It is expected that their experience and creativity should always be used to manage the crisis without any material or emotional support from other members of the family.

Palestinian women in the context of the Intifada have taken up new and different roles. They are required to deal with lawyers for the release or defense of their husbands and sons. They have to seek financial assistance by either visiting social institutions or by promoting and engaging in income-generating activities at home, or in the informal economy sector. For refugee camps, the informal economy has been vital for their survival as they are disconnected from the formal sector or the state apparatus. Such conditions are seen as obstacles for refugee

assimilation. Palestinian refugee women also need to manage the household with greater efficiency through reducing consumption. In summary, all these roles have affected and in certain instances dissolved the traditional boundaries between the gendered private and public where women undertake multiple public and private roles during crisis.

The roles that women undertake in such times of crisis can empower or hinder the welfare of Palestinian women. On the other hand, these new roles for women may have been dis-empowering for males who are traditionally expected to be the main breadwinners but who have now become marginal or secondary sources for income and stability. To what extent have gender relations been fundamentally changed by such experiences extended in time, that affect the long-term future that transform the division of labor into more equitable roles?

While many of the poorer migrant Arab women in the diaspora find themselves serving middle-class families as domestic workers, in most Arab countries, migrant domestic workers from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India (mainly Kerala), Indonesia and Ethiopia are employed in middle-class Arab households. Generally, analyses and discourse on Arab families have neglected the widespread existence of paid domestic labor in the household. Considerations of the division of labor in the household assume a uni-dimensional separation between the husband and wife or male/female kinship relations. While females are almost exclusively responsible for the day-to-day running of the household, a significant proportion of Lebanese families employ (now) foreign female domestic workers, most on a live-in basis. These women, mainly Sri Lankans in Lebanon (but also Filipinas and Ethiopians), do most of the housework – cleaning, tidying, assisting with cooking (sometimes cooking), child-care, shopping and serving. It may be estimated that approximately 1 in 8 -10 Lebanese households employ domestic maids that significantly reduce the household tasks that are the responsibility of female family members.

The employment of domestic maids introduces another level of managerial responsibility for the female head of the household that has only recently been addressed since prior to the early twentieth century that was the exclusive domain of wealthy family estates. As the middle classes in most countries, not only in the industrially developed states, can afford either local or migrant domestic workers, so it is important to reconsider the dynamics of the gender division of labor, particularly in the household. How, for example, are we to theorize female roles in Arab families where there is the presence of a 'stranger' in the home who does most of the household chores? How also is the "public/private sphere" dichotomy to be understood when the household is both the sphere of paid work (public) for a domestic employee, but at the same time the private sphere for family members? Little research has considered the extent of the reshuffling of the roles of husband and wife and crises in family authority during and following the civil war in Lebanon (Hatab 1990) in relation to foreign domestic workers.

The micro politics of the employer-employee relationship within the household contains boundary-making practices, practices of both social closeness as well as distance (Rollins 1985). Public and private boundaries are negotiated sometimes with mundane practices like distribution of food, eating meals and the creation of new public/private zones within the employing households. The lack of privacy for domestic workers in their employing households ironically means that they seek privacy in the public sphere, or public spaces where they may engage in the intimacy of conversation and social engagement within a 'community' of migrants of their own background.

In terms of the household division of labor, particularly with upper- and middle- class families, there are particular patriarchal relations that need to take into consideration that generations of women have been raised with domestic servants and go on to employ them after

marriage. For example, what happens to women who migrate from their homeland, to a country where domestic workers are neither the cultural norm, nor affordable to the migrant family? Without the domestic help that they are used to, what happens in terms of both their social status and role within the family? On the other hand, lower income Arab families can often use the employment of migrant domestic labor as an investment that will allow a wife, for example, to enter the paid workforce, where her salary is more than is paid to the domestic worker. In this context, the ‘commercialization’ of chores in the domestic sphere facilitates Arab women’s entry into the public sphere.

The noticeable trend in some Arab households (predominantly in the Gulf States, Lebanon and Jordan) is the employment of live-in domestic workers. This appears to be different than many western households (in the US and Europe) where domestic workers mostly work on a daily or part-time basis². Most new apartments in Lebanon, for example, provide a “maid’s room” that indicates the normalized expectation of employing live-in domestic workers, despite the often total inadequacy of the space allocated to them. In many households, they often have to share their sleeping quarters with a washing machine and a drier, or in small apartments they may be restricted to sleeping in the kitchen, hallway or occasionally on the balcony. When it comes to domestic and household matters, Lebanese women have a high level of autonomy in decision-making (Faour 1998) and the management of the household includes management of the domestic workers who, since the end of the civil war have become almost exclusively migrant women from Sri Lanka, Philippines and Ethiopia. Migrating on their own as part of the feminization of migration in recent years, many of these women leave their families and children behind to care for middle-class Arab families. The physical, cultural, linguistic and religious differences between migrant domestic workers and their employing families has at times given

rise to considerable tension and conflict that includes jealousy of mothers from the attachment of young children to the maid, communication misunderstandings, concern towards children learning Tagalog or Singhalese and criticism by some women's organizations that Arab mothers are not fulfilling their parental responsibilities by leaving childcare to foreigners (Jureidini 2003). On the other hand, others may view the family being enriched by the cultural diversity that is brought into the household from the migrant domestic maid. As we refer to the Arab household division of labor (particularly middle-class families) in gendered terms in countries like Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and the Gulf states, it is critical that paid household labor be taken into consideration where dimensions of differentiation - of both gender, ethnic and occupational exploitation - and resultant family dynamics need to be factored in.

Migration in its many forms, whether forced or voluntary, involves change and often a re-negotiation of family and gender roles to accommodate new circumstances. In such contexts the gendered division of labor is not immutable. The gendered division of labor is complex and shifting depending on the historical circumstances. We are interested in going beyond the idea that gendered division of labor is fixed by exploring the ways that the public/private divide shifts in multiple diasporic spaces.

Commonalities among Diverse Diasporas: Similar Transformations in Family Dynamics within the Context of Involuntary Conflict-Driven Migration

Theoretical Background

While we suggest flexible definitions of diaspora and highlight diverse topologies of translocal and/or transnational movement, we also argue that some commonalities among diverse diasporas exist. Commonalities exist, for example, among diasporas produced by conflict-driven

migratory flows. By focusing on the intensification and acceleration of transformation among families displaced in the context of conflict and the survival strategies that they produce, we will explore commonalities among diverse diasporas. We will simultaneously take historical specificities, such as class origin, seriously rather than homogenizing diasporic experiences. We emphasize the need to disrupt classifications of population flows, citing only middle class and educated elite, as a crucial category for understanding the complex ways that diasporas produce transformations among diasporic families.

Much of the research on conflict and war has typically focused on the vulnerability of women and children as victims of war and as providers of the backbone of the survival economies in time of conflicts. It has assumed that women's central role as the makers of the only social safety networks during conflict and displacement has produced significant changes in social structures. Prolonged conflict, such as that undergoing in Sudan, Palestine, Algeria and Iraq, is markedly characterized by both internal and external diasporas with further implications to the intensity and direction of changes in family structures and roles. Such changes and their driving factors (education, skills gained and lost, exposure to urban and cosmopolitan spheres) inevitably shape the process of social integration and reintegration in post-conflict society and consequently shape the direction of family dynamics beyond the narrow confines of household to wider social units and their patterns of reproduction.

Are there conceptually meaningful differences between non-conflict-driven as opposed to war-conflict-driven experiences of displacement? We argue that both patterns are highly similar in spatial characteristics in terms of direction of flows (within and outside the country) and final destination at urban sites (shanties and slums) or in neighboring countries or the global North. Given these similar spatial patterns in diasporic flows, are there meaningful differences that

merit a different analytical framework in non-spatial aspects pertaining to the dynamics of such population flows and their political, social and economic ramifications? Earlier studies on failed modernization emphasized that excessive rural-urban migration was driven not by an expanding urban-based industrialization project but by unequal rural-urban exchange, failure to transform agriculture, unsustainable population growth and expectations of better opportunities of jobs and services. Such patterns of urbanization may be termed “pseudo urbanization” from a historical comparative perspective, but are actually ushering a new type of urbanity. The term “pseudo urbanization” as well as other similar terms such as “villagization and ruralization of urban space” are widely used within critiques of modernization discourse to convey an incomplete process. They may aptly fit the description of widely observed patterns of urbanities in largely poverty-stricken urbanities or even in the discourse about relative affluent rent-supported urbanities in the Middle East. The basic problem with this notion is that it is too narrowly engaged with the immediacy of these urbanities and thus downplays the serious processes reshaping urban economies and gathering momentum for an alternative political socio-economy that might mark an alternative route to effective transformation.

Michael Todaro’s (1969) pioneering work provided evidence of the invalidity of explanation of rural-urban migration based on income differential or short term expectation “...the decision to migrate should be presented on the basis of long term, more permanent income calculations” (Todaro 1997, 282). “Because expected incomes are defined in terms of both wages and employment probabilities, it is possible to have continued migration despite the existence of a sizable rate of urban unemployment” (1997, 282-283). Taking Todaro’s analysis beyond the limited notion of long-term income calculation, rural urban migration needs to be seen as a process and indeed an irreversible one that creates its momentum, albeit in diverse

directions. Such a dynamic involves the creation of a new urban economy and new political, socio-economic dynamics. Ironically both successful and failed modernization projects accelerate the process but, naturally, with different outcomes and dynamics. The massive, exodus-like forms of war- and conflict-led urbanization may share some common features with earlier forms of rural-urban migratory processes, but a close look at the salient features of the two migratory processes reveal some fundamental differences in all conceivable aspects in terms of type of survival strategies, demographic and characteristics of migrants, implications of migration to family structures and roles and potential for skills acquisition.

Implications for the Study of Survival Strategies among Diasporic Families

Let us recall some of the main features of non-conflict-related migration (a la Todaro) that took place in the post-colonial state where migration was gradual and based an individual/household decision; typically male-led and in most cases did not involve the migration of entire families. Moreover, family reunion, when it took place depended to a great extent upon rational calculations related to actual or perceived comparative advantages of such a reunion. Consequently, there is a limited female-headed-household phenomenon in the receiving centers, but a significant one in the sending areas.

Substantial increases in women migration relate to more recent phases in post-colonial rural-urban migration but rather limited to Latin America, Southeast Asia and West Africa ... In fact, women now constitute the majority of the migration stream in Latin America, largely as a result of its relatively advanced state of urbanization compared with other developing countries” (Todaro 1997, 279).

Furthermore, in non-conflict driven rural-urban migration a gradual build up of skills formation is greatly being shaped by the interaction of formal and informal sectors of the urban economy and even some predictable patterns of survival strategies can be identified.

John Turner (1968) provides the benchmark for such predicted trajectories in rural urban migration. Drawing primarily upon his experience in, and surveys from Lima, Peru, Turner described three stages in the life cycle of an urban migrant. Each stage involves specific housing conditions, economic status and location among a city's three concentric zones. Turner's stages and their subsequent modifications should be thought of as ideal types rather than rigid categories. Turner (1968) also argued that a city's three concentric zones differ in definition and composition depending on which of three sequential "phases of urbanization" the city has reached.

Turner (1968) labeled new migrants to urban areas "bridgeheaders" (life cycle stage one). They are mostly young, single males who seek better job opportunities in the city and are therefore most concerned with easy access to the low-status, informal work most readily available in the central city. Proximity to employment and a desire for minimal transport time and cost take precedence over other factors such as quality or ownership of housing. Bridgeheaders' limited familial responsibilities allow them to tolerate the crowded and deteriorating rental tenements of the inner city. If and when bridgeheaders obtain better employment, accumulate some savings, marry and possibly have children, they shift priorities toward securing the stable and more spacious living environment that comes with owning a single-family dwelling. When bridgeheaders reach this stage they become "consolidators" by moving to the periphery where land is available for self-help housing (life cycle stage two). They build shanties using cheap, makeshift materials. As consolidators accumulate enough

savings to replace low-quality building materials with better ones, they slowly transform their shanties into houses (life cycle stage three). As the city expands, the former peripheral self-help housing areas are surrounded and enclosed by new and more distant squatter settlements. What was once a peripheral shantytown eventually becomes a zone of more solid and serviced low-income houses situated between zones of rental and self-help shanties. It is with reference to such predicted trajectories that a comparison is needed.

War and natural disaster-driven population displacement are typically associated with a high level of destitution resulting from massive destruction of assets, abrupt and unplanned significant population dislocation. While such migrants join the non-war related rural-urban migrants in their shanty town or next to its immediate vicinity, war destitution is not a simple expansion of urban poverty but a qualitative addition to it that usher new different dynamics to urban poverty. Not only is poverty deepened but also a significant change takes place in the demographic composition of the poor with higher representation of women, children and elderly, in family structure and roles and in the labor process which becomes significantly feminized. In the process of this new rural-urban exodus and because of its massive non-gradual character, new urban economies emerge. Apart from exerting a strong downwards pressure on real wages, the new wave of migration is reshaping through survival strategies in the context of the labor market and the demand for goods and services.

Other studies provided a wealth of useful analysis and information on the processes that triggered civil wars, rationale governing the behavior of various actors in civil wars and the emerging patterns of relations and institutions (Suliman 1993 and 2000, Duffield 1990 and 1991, Allen 1992, Johnson 2003, Cuttler 1986 and 1988, De Waal and Amin 1986 and Hamid 2000). In addition to their contribution to the understanding of the war process, these studies lend a

valuable support to the analysis of policy implications of civil wars. Not only institutional and societal changes but also cultural ones may greatly affect the very foundation of pre-war production structures and relations.

War and conflicts trigger multiple forms of population flows internally as well as externally. Diasporic experiences are further differentiated by class and, in many cases, the boundaries between voluntary and involuntary flows are completely blurred. How relevant are such alternative conceptual frameworks based on internal flows to the patterns of external flows? One way of stressing such relevance is that both internal forms of displacement and external ones constantly produce and reproduce multiple forms of social networks facilitating intensive circulation between and within communities irrespective of the geographical site. Furthermore, interaction made possible through such networks tends to dilute actual and assumed boundaries between various categories of the rural, urban, diasporic and transnational. Roger Rouse's (1991) seminal work on Mexican migration aptly captures this link. Referring to his work, Philip Crang noted that:

in stated contrast to Frederic Jameson (1984), Rouse attempted to map the social space of postmodernism' by eschewing the architecture of Los Angeles and Las Vegas in favour of an analysis of migration flows between the rural Mexican municipio of Aguililla and USA. ... Rouse concluded that the migration processes he had studied unsettled the traditional mappings of space, based as they were on notions of bounded rural Mexican communities and of a clear distinction between the spaces of core and periphery ... migration may be not just a set of movements to and from distinct places and perhaps across national borders but a 'continuous circulation of people, money, goods and information' through which 'various

settlements have become so closely woven together that, in an important sense, they have come to constitute a single community across sites” (Crang et. al. 2003, 439-440).

Family dynamic are constantly reproduced and reshaped by the operation of such networks and various modes of survival. Naturally the legal boundaries separate various categories and operate effectively in shaping the optimum attainable package of survival and consequently pace and direction of changes in family dynamics.

In an earlier study of the war-led displacement, Elnur, Elrasheed and Yacoub (1993) argued that the sequence of events which has led to displacement of Sudanese is critical in determining the options that are open to households to ensure their survival. For example, the specific reasons that led to migration from southern Sudan, i.e. related to the war, invariably resulted in a sudden, unplanned shift, but with a significant loss of assets and radical change in family structure. Almost 65% of war-displaced households lost all or most of their assets including productive assets. Women-headed household dominated with disproportionate representation of elderly and females. The sequence of events leading to displacement is critical in determining the options that are open to households to ensure their survival. For example, the specific reasons that led to migration, in this case war, may result in a sudden, unplanned but total loss of assets. Hence coping strategies, implying careful forward planning are irrelevant for war and war-related migration. Therefore, rather than being a final option, distress migration is now a first option not preceded by prior planned responses and trajectories usually discussed in distress migration literature. Furthermore, the total loss of assets in the case of displaced Sudanese people has aggravated their situation by forcing them to start their post-migration life with very few or no assets to liquidate. Consequently, the options that are open to them in trying to ensure their present and future survival are extremely

limited. The very few who managed to bring some of their assets with them to Khartoum are substantially better off than the others. It is this initial state of destitution and household demographic characteristics that distinguishes war-led forms from other forms of rural-urban voluntary and involuntary migration with which we intend to engage.

Involuntary migratory flows tend to produce some common features including the following. The feminization of survival strategies has far reaching implications to skills' acquisition because of household dual role or responsibilities limiting the scope for gaining new skills. While child labor is usually associated with extreme poverty and family disintegration in non-war situation, it becomes a normal survival strategy under conditions of war-induced displacement. This involves female-headed-households and a disproportionate representation of male children in child labor as female children assume other roles at the household level. Disruption and continuity is another common feature where pseudo urbanization has to be seen in a different context whereby reproduction of the 'old' communal live in an urban context, albeit in a ruralized shanty town, is not possible. This has further serious implications for the reconstruction of war-torn communities. Even in the event of a successful resettlement/repatriation, such old communal lives including institutions, people and ways of survival is not reproducible. Thus despite, illusive similarities between rural areas and the ruralized shantytowns, the 'idealized' continuity and relevance of the old/indigenous traditions and institutions are seriously undermined. While traditions and institutions may keep forms and rituals almost intact, their functions are radically changed and hence their relevance. This inherent flexibility and adaptability of institutions and traditions is reflected in the diversity of coping mechanisms but also entail a reciprocal interactive relation. The analogy of such an

argument based on internal displacement can easily be extended to out-flows involving diasporic experiences (Boyle 2002, Misra 2003 and Ali 2003).

The emancipatory impact of the feminization of the labor process within the household and in particular feminization of bread winning cannot be readily asserted or generalized. A number of studies (Xiushi and Guo 1999, McClusky 1991 and Green 1999) stressed the double burden that results and the repressive nature of such dual role. Yet such hasty readings of the impact of the emerging new dynamics may warrant a more careful reassessment and perhaps a reconsideration of the adequacy of analytical tools available. A focus on the immediacy of the impact rather than the potential emancipatory processes is the first step towards producing such an alternative reading. A useful comparison might address the various ways in which changes in family dynamics resulting from flows impact on and trigger societal changes beyond the confines of household/nuclear families.

A departure from such trend is seen in some recent writing on women's role in post-conflict contexts. According to Manchanda (2001) writing about South Asia, "Conflict opens up intended and unintended spaces for empowering women, effecting structural social transformations and producing new social, economic and political transformations and producing new social, economic and political realities that redefine gender and cast hierarchies" (99). Referring to Turshen and Twagiramairiy's (1998) work, Meintjes et. al. (2001, 9), draw attention to the need to assess the transformative potential of women's experiences to recognize the historical specificity of wars and the particularities of many groups of women within war-torn communities. However such gains, concludes Manchanda (2001, 139) "...generated from the trauma of loss are particularly ambivalent, and enabling cultural frameworks and solidarity networks are needed to legitimize them." Such a need for enabling conditions is particularly crucial because of the reversal pressure

as Hale (2001) noted in her study of Eritrean women. “The pressure on former fighters to revert to traditional norms is a familiar pattern in liberation struggle. In post-war situations the men need the labor of women, but they need to channel into ‘appropriate’ tasks for the common good, such as reconstruction, economic recovery and replenishing the population lost in war” (Hale 2001, 139).

One interesting site of such changes with far reaching implications is related to the reproduction of social classes. In all war-torn communities a phenomenal immigration of educated and middle class people has taken place. In places like Sudan, Iraq and Palestine, such massive migration led to the reshaping of the processes of reproduction of such classes. Elnur (2002) notes that elites’ reproduction trajectories were radically altered and the loss of inter-intra generational transmission of knowledge and traditions lead to the loss of continuity and potential for dynamism has also been lost. Such countries fell or are in the process of falling into a ‘low equilibrium trap’. Sudan, Algeria, Iraq, Burundi, Rwanda and Afghanistan, representing a wide range of initial conditions and development potential, are just some illustrative examples.

Studying changes in family dynamics offers a powerful lens through which many dimensions of societal changes can be observed, particularly when such dynamic changes are associated and overlap with urbanization, transmigration and transnationalism. The focus on middle classes and educated elites is vital for considering their quasi model-role in the processes of reshaping societal change and its direction.

In conclusion, the idea of a focus upon diasporas and border crossings is a challenge, not only to static representations of Arab families but also to reorient research into changing family structures and dynamics within specific historical, geographical, political and economic contexts. As Castles and Miller (1993) have shown, the largest migration flows to, from and in between Arab states has occurred mainly since the mid-1970s. Labor migration from Arab, Asian and

African countries to Arab countries of the Middle East still constitutes the largest movement of people around the world. Furthermore, any study of Arab families cannot ignore the continued existence of Palestinians as the largest and longest suffering population of refugees - around 3.5 million in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It is appropriate, therefore, to consider the effects of diasporic life on Arab families and the effects of migrants entering Arab countries. We have chosen initially to focus empirically upon a limited number of areas for study – Arab families in the United States, Palestinian families in the Occupied Territories, conflict-driven migration of Southern Sudanese to Khartoum and Egypt and Asian migrant domestic workers in Lebanese households.

There are multi-dimensional layers in approaching diasporic elements of Arab families. Arab states have been, and continue to be, influenced by external powers, culture and ideology as well as internal changes. Most Arab states have been countries of emigration (including forced migration and displacement) as well as migrant receiving countries (including refugees and the displaced). In this sense, Arab countries are far more multicultural than is normally perceived by sect, religion, ethnicity and nationality. The transversals of international boundaries and the fluidity of gender and ethnic boundaries at the national as well as micro domestic levels are critical elements in understanding a hitherto under-researched area of family dynamics. Structural adaptations in the divisions of labor, marriage patterns, employment relations and the interplays between family, community, local national and global political forces are all involved in understanding the nuances in contextualizing the multiple and shifting ideas and experiences of Arab families – particularly in relation to processes of survival or enduring experiences of migration and displacement.

Chapter 3a

Endnotes

Diasporas, Border Crossings and the Flexible Boundaries of Arab Families

1. Here, we build upon Basch, Schiller and Blanc's theorization of "transnationalism" (1994). They argue that transnationalism is "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement." They explain, "We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders." Yet our approach is not limited to border crossings across national borders in that we also address border crossings within national contexts. We use the term "translocalism" to refer to such movements of people and ideas.
2. Exceptions are common with high income- western families in the United States that employ live-in maids from Latin America and the use of nannies from the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries (for more details see Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo 1993, N.Heyzer, G. Lycklama a Nijeholt & N. Weerakoon. Eds. 1994, and Mary Romero 1992).

New Forms of Forced Migration, Expulsion and Displacement: The Palestinian Case

Eileen Kuttab (2004)

Theoretical Background

Refugee Studies as a discipline, is a recent area of study influenced largely by migration studies. Although migration studies have been more established, they tend, however, to focus only on individuals rather than groups, to the extent that groups are considered as aggregates of individuals rather than a cohesive social unit that shares a common historical experience. In contrast, refugee studies deal with refugee status that is an outcome of a forced involuntary form of migration, whose displacement is caused by reasons outside the control of refugees such as internal and external wars, expulsion and exclusion, development projects and natural disasters (Zureik 1996, 5).

The debate between realists and nominalists within the field of international migration questions whether refugees are fundamentally distinct from immigrants or whether the category is a social construction masking similarities with immigrants (Hein 1993, 43). Research on refugees has developed a definition of immigrants as constituting an economic form of migration, whereas refugees are seen as a political form. Although this dichotomy sheltered refugee studies from criticism for some time, there still are continuous debates where one perspective views violence, flight and exile as definitive of the refugee experience and the other considers 'refugee' as a social construction.

The twentieth century has been described as the 'century of homeless man.' The number of persons permanently displaced for political reasons as a result of wars, treaties or other obscure

reasons has been startling (Beyer 1981, 26). Although most migrations occur within a context of socioeconomic and political forces that severely constrain options, the number of forced migration has increased. This trend is a result of a systematic reaction to a wide range of enduring socioeconomic conditions that Castles and Miller (1993) have called the globalization, acceleration, differentiation and feminization of migration (Castles and Miller 1993 and Wood 1994). Throughout history, the significance of large-scale expulsions for political or religious reasons has often been ignored (Beyer 1981, 26). More than one hundred million have been uprooted in the first eighty years of the century, millions permanently displaced as a result of revolutions, division of countries, annexations or boundary changes and other territorial arrangements (ibid.).

For social scientists the emphasis in this context is in investigating refugee issues not only focusing on their legal status but also learning how the refugee will change the structure of the indigenous population, the extent to which the refugee can and is willing to be assimilated and the effect the refugee may have on the labor market or political stability of a country (Beyer 1981). Anthropological, if anthropology continues to be based on ethnography, research will have to focus on people in transition, who are uneasy about themselves in a world that ignores their desire and need for continuity. It has to deal with responses to processes of displacement and arrival. In addition, it can account and will reflect the violence and suffering, the precariousness of life and the evil humans do to one another. This type of research will be different than earlier ethnographic traditions (Harrell-Bond 1986).

Analyzing the globalization of social conflict to explain forms of political violence is the most recent innovation in refugee theory (Zolberg 1981). This perspective was developed before the end of the Cold War and yet accounts well for recent refugee crises (Hein 1993, 48). It is known that there are three solutions to refugee flight and they are repatriation, integration within the

country of first asylum and resettlement in a third country (Stein 1986). Although a political solution that would permit repatriation of the refugees is seen as the ultimate goal, the humanitarian relief programs have been from the beginning inextricably intertwined with the complex political and military situation (Beyer 1981). The Palestinian refugee problem can be situated in this context as it combines the humanitarian and the political issues. The humanitarian issue is expressed in the mass expulsion of the Palestinian population by the Zionist colonial settlers since the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. The humanitarian response is also far from a durable solution, as repatriation and not assimilation of refugees becomes the only real option for the refugees. Assimilation has not been the policy of the hosting states due to the contradictory nature of the refugee problem with their political interests.

In this context new investigation is needed to research the problem of Palestinian refugees and the new forms of internal displacement. The previous expulsion of people and the new forms of displacement as a result of the current and continuous Israeli colonial policies has not been understood thoroughly at the international level due to limited research. In addition, the fact that international codes stress the resettlement of refugees rather than their repatriation as a policy by not tying the issue of return as a right has further compounded the problem. Most of the writings have been political in nature discussing the roots of the refugee problem and the possible solutions to it. There is limited work on how to develop the conceptual and methodological tools to understand the unique situation of the Palestinian refugees. There is a need to investigate the refugee issue in its human context in terms of protection, security and sustainability of their livelihood. Some discussions of these issues are currently being developed and came to the surface when the political negotiations and agreements between the Israelis and the Palestinians were initiated in the early nineties.

Displacement, Forced Migration and Family: Methodological Issues

An important issue that needs further understanding is knowing what would be a more appropriate methodological approach that should be used to conduct research on a refugee population like the Palestinian that has not been investigated on a large scale and is continuously experiencing transition and change due to the Zionist settler colonial policies. In addition, what are some of the important issues that should be investigated in the future that would contribute to deepening our understanding of the refugee problem as well as impacting future policies. These policies should work towards decreasing the degree of suffering and reaching a durable solution. Refugees are not responsible for the situation they are in as they have been forced to leave their homes of origin. Research and policies should reflect this situation and indicate accountability for their displacement.

It has been observed through research that structural factors have explained why refugee migrations are more frequently composed of families and not individuals like in voluntary migration. This becomes an important fact in the context of Palestinian refugee problem, which can suggest the use of family as a unit of analysis or can justify the use of family as a lens where refugee issues can be understood. Furthermore, studying families through a gender spectacle becomes also important especially when gender as a cross-cutting dimension, in addition to age as a generational issue, are combined to enrich the investigation. This methodology can shed light on attitudinal and behavioral practices.

In an early work on the Palestinian refugees, Rosemary Sayigh (1979, 5) describes the Palestinian refugee problem by saying:

Few people would dispute that the greatest victims of the establishment of the state of Israel have been the Palestinians. As a people displaced from control of their resources by force, deprived of their national territory and identity, condemned to minority status in the countries of others, Palestinians claim the same right of concern from the world as other oppressed peoples including the Jews. Yet their story has been suppressed, ignored, or distorted through the life-span of several generations, and only with the rise of the Resistance Movement after 1967 began to penetrate the wall of silence (Sayigh, 1979:5).

The Palestinian refugee problem has been described as one of the primary problems in the Middle East (Wright 1969, 11). It is not an exaggeration at this stage if we say that the Palestinian refugee problem is one of the most complicated in the world. Yet despite the recognition, importance and complication of the Palestinian refugee problem in the relevant literature and despite the large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, dispersed in the different countries of the world, the impact of displacement on the social structure and social networks has not been captured in academic writings until very recently.

The Palestinian refugee family has undergone different stages of displacement and in most of these stages the flight has been collective and communal. Not only in the context of the family or the hamula, but also in the context of the village and neighborhood. Ethnographic records point to camps and resettlement communities as an image of the original village (Zureik 1997) and as seedbeds most conducive to the growth of memory and the pursuit of the myth of return (Malkki 1995). People bear history through their memory, which becomes a portable tool that guides their present existence and paves the way for their future. For instance, through a family lens, one could understand the Palestinian refugee situation more deeply as the family has

been at the center of Palestinians' life in all the different stages due to the absence of a national state, and in all aspects of life namely the social, political, economic and cultural. In the case of the Palestinians, the family becomes the most important durable and remaining social institution in the context of the forced uprootedness and expulsion.

Through the family lens as one methodological tool we are able to understand the situation of refugees and even project the future of the problem through the families' memories and hopes as they are expressed in their ambitions and dreams. In this context it is useful to refer to an example of a research experience where a grounded-theory model was used, which depicts family consequences of political violence in the manner that Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1998) have constructed to investigate the Bosnian refugee families and their refugee trauma. This can be one of the models to understand in depth the Palestinian experience of forced displacement and migration. Investigation of the Bosnian family has demonstrated a wide range of experiences and revealed different realms of family life that should be investigated to understand the refugee trauma. Among them is family roles and obligations, family memories and communications, family relationships with other family members and family connections with community and the nation (Weine et al 2004). Such broad themes can be broken down into more targeted themes that can help in building a more comprehensive understanding of the inter and intra-relation of families under traumatic conditions of displacement and also facilitate the ability to understand the refugee experiences through a comparative approach.

Another category of analysis that should be accommodated in refugee family studies is the gender dimension. It is known that the impact of trauma and displacement on the refugee families is not the same on women and men. Such traumatic experience like others is gendered. The migrant experience is complex and hence understanding the dynamics of power relations in

the family in a gender perspective can deepen the understanding of the obstacles, constraints and everyday issues that a refugee family has to deal with. When analyzing family relations in traumatic situations, other studies (Weine et al 2004) have found that the concept of patriarchy is challenged and patriarchal power is eroded when teens and women participate in wage labor and men are displaced from their role as sole breadwinners. Such analysis can provide a space to explore the changes and new gender dynamics of a refugee family.

Future Research Issues

There are a variety of issues that are central to understanding the Palestinian refugee and internally displaced family in the Occupied Territories. Such issues exist within two interacting frameworks, the Israeli occupation policies and practices versus the camp setting where a patriarchal structure controls, dictates and constructs families' relations, behavior and practice. Some have argued that a community such as a refugee camp is not an entity a priori. Rather, communities are created and reproduced in an ongoing process (Gilen et al 1994, 42). A particular challenge is the observation and identification of networks not located in a specific place, but which are still local in the sense that subjects or members are known and organized (Appadurai 1993). The spreading networks of Palestinian emigrants and their families are an example where locality is not confined to a defined geographic space. Although geography and space are two important factors in the construction of social, cultural and political identity for the refugees, mobile camps and continuous displacement together with the actual economic and political conditions, points of views, attitudes, aspirations towards the realization of the Palestinian state and actualization of the right of return bear heavily on the social relations where

‘kinship idioms’ expand beyond ‘blood ties’ and where community solidarity becomes vital in sustaining families.

Refugee families fashion their living patterns according to a combination of factors surrounding their existence as refugees. In addition to the economic, political and cultural environment, the legal framework of host countries-or in the case of the internally displaced Palestinian refugees in the Occupied territories- and the Israeli occupation policies shape the family’s survival strategies as well as their social and political identity. Historically speaking, kinship ties as well as geographical ties constituted the basis of network formation in the early years of resettlement. Rather than being placed randomly in different camps by external actors like United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), many Palestinians affected by personal and social preferences, regrouped together with their kin and other members of the same village. Today we still find neighborhoods in different refugee camps named after original villages where Palestinians fled. Adaptation to new environments through construction of community based on memories of original structures, have resulted in the composition of new forms of social organization as refugees responded and adapted to their new reality. In addition, the development of alternative coping strategies has created new family formations and new marriage patterns that are important to document.

Refugee camps create Palestinian communities through kinship relations and friendship. Kinship merges with friendship and experience of common hardships, which again is transformed into kinship by marriage. As has been described in one of Fafo’s publications entitled Finding Ways: Palestinian Coping Strategies in Changing Environments, marriage symbolizes social ties that can be constituted between two social groupings (Gilen et al 1994, 55). Preferred marriage among Palestinians was traditionally endogamous marriage between

members of the same clan, and in particular marriage between cousins, or children of two brothers. Yet other Palestinian families in refugee camps broke away from traditional endogamous marriage patterns and married into the native-host-community as a coping strategy. Such intermarriage serves to build alliance between two groupings and facilitates access to employment and stability. Other new forms of marriage have been observed. One that takes place in the Palestinian community in the occupied territories including refugee camp residents is marriage between refugees and Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship (known as Arabs of 1948 or Palestinian inside the Green Line) and who are living in border villages (villages that are on the borders of 1948 and 1967). Another is of marriage between refugee camp residents and Jerusalem residents who hold blue identity cards, which have the benefits or status of residents but not citizens. Both of these groups are privileged, though not in the same way, in comparison to residents of the West Bank or Gaza Strip due to their access to mobility within the Israeli closure policy and to social and economic entitlements. Such marriages have become one of the options for survival available to displaced Palestinians or Palestinians refugee residing in camps.

Recently, in the context of the Al-Aqsa Intifada that erupted in Septmeber 2000, family reunification policies have been frozen by Israel as a punitive measure, which have affected negatively the occurrence of such marriages. The crucial questions posed in this context are of the degree of continuity of such marriages and whether they still serve as a solution or alternative to manage the political and economic barriers that surrounds the family. Comparing this to the conditions in the Gaza Strip, some studies indicate that refugees only marry refugees and that mixed marriages only occur when the muwatin (citizen) of the village or city is poor, or if the refugee is unusually wealthy or powerful. Yet it was also mentioned that cultural and ethnic factors contributing to the preservation of the refugee identity might be as important as class in

determining internal marriages. It is interesting to compare the regional disparities between the West Bank and Gaza Strip if they still exist and how marriage is expressed in both cultures. It will be useful to explore how Palestinian refugee families deploy marriage as a coping strategy and how marriage patterns are changing with the change of political reality.

Economic and social relations that are created with the inhabitants of the host community (urban or village setting) are among the new forms of social ties. Economic ties that were created as a result of refugee and natives working together or as a result of long-term trade were bolstered through marriage ties. Inter-marriage between Palestinians and host-community introduced new forms of marriage patterns, which on the one hand diverged from the traditional endogamous marriage and on the other served as a coping strategy. Building kinship through marriage has been one of the main coping strategies of camp residents. New material realities are changing the landscape of social relations once again in Palestine. The new internal displacement of Palestinians due to the building of the Apartheid Wall will cause another set of transformations and may require new coping strategies. It will be important to see how the youth is coping in the new settlements, which can be either a new neighborhood, another village or another city. It is also important to experiment with different methodological tools that include investigating the youth through a youth lens on issues and constraints that they face and ways of coping with them.

The crisis of male breadwinners caused by unemployment, martyrdom, imprisonment or injury due to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict causes confusion and reversed redistribution of roles. Although Palestinian refugee families tend to be traditional families where division of labor in the household is gendered, the political crisis has on the one hand intensified the traditional roles of women and on the other has also brought new roles to them. This leads to

redefining of the private and the public and making their boundaries intertwined and organically inseparable. Refugee camps have been the most affected by the existing conflict hence women's lives have been greatly affected by the death of family members including primary breadwinners and children. Women are left with the dual burden of providing both the necessary financial, emotional and, sometimes, physical support needed to sustain the family. The death of family members entails that women should find an alternative means of support for the household, support that extends from social, to economic to psychological and emotional. For instance, as the primary care takers, women will assume the greatest burden in relation to caring for the injured. House demolitions, a regular practice by Israeli authorities, render whole families homeless, with little or no means to rebuild their homes. In this instance, families are not only rendered homeless they are left with no food, furniture, clothes or other basic necessities. Therefore, once again women have to manage this crisis, sometimes without the support of community institutions, which are already depleted.

Coping strategies as survival strategies: Refugees context

The household in crisis functions as a unit of decision making in situations of economic hardship and widespread unemployment. This possibility opens the opportunity for a combination of income sources and expenditures, where pooling of resources is a basic principle. Adaptive responses found among refugees such as household strategies to secure multiple income sources, can create different results depending on how the state is conceptualized (Hein 1993). In this context, the household rather than the individual is an appropriate unit of analysis. Although social networks interact with other factors in the adaptation process, the household remains the basic economic unit for refugees (Gold 1992). Research findings in different

refugee experiences suggest that immigrant as well as refugee households blend income from multiple sources such as the market, informal economy, means-tested social welfare programs and working spouses and other adults. This income strategy resembles that of ethnic minorities in the United States. One of the adaptive means is based on the women's ability to bridge nuclear kin, extended family and the ethnic community on one hand and market, state and informal sources of income on the other (Benson 1990). Resettlement policies can also have an impact depending on whether they encourage self-sufficiency or welfare dependency.

Palestinian women have been the shock-absorbers of the family and the community. This idea of women coping and offering support and protection to the family is seen to be part of the gendered division of labor. Hence their experience and creativity are expected to always be used to manage the crisis without any material or emotional support from other members of the family. Palestinian women in the context of the Intifada have taken up different new roles. These include following up the lawyers to release or defend their husbands and sons and seeking financial assistance by either visiting social institutions or by promoting and engaging in income-generating activities at home, or in the informal economy sector. For refugee camps, the informal economy has been vital for their survival as it disconnects them from the formal or state apparatus which can be seen as an obstacle for assimilation. They may also manage the house with more efficiency through reducing consumption. In summary, all roles they have taken are gendered and have affected, and in certain instances dissolved, the boundaries between private and public. Although the roles women take in crisis are public yet they are gendered and considered through the community's eye as private because they deal with the livelihood of the family. It is important then to explore whether all of these roles have been empowering or enhancing women's position. Could these new roles be disempowering for males who are

considered the main breadwinners and have become now with the new reality a secondary source for income and stability? Has this reality changed the nature of gender relations and can this change be rooted enough to affect the future roles and transform them into more equitable roles?

Exile in itself is a definitive event for refugees and has important consequences for social identity (Rose 1993). For Palestinians exile remains a communal experience (Abu-Lughod 1988). Networks migrate while categories can stay put, then networks create new categories. Therefore, this transformation of social identity is important to explore in the context of Palestinian refugees. Conditions in the host society also can influence the process of identity formation, as the state remains a factor in the social organization of migration and the creation of migrant identities. Refugee migrations consist of families and cohorts sharing similar social characteristics as a result of similar departure conditions. Therefore refugees view their condition as one of exile and migration becomes a definitive element in their social identity. The attitudinal and behavioral consequences of this process remain to be explored.

Hence, different dynamics and issues are central to future studies on refugee and internally displaced families and they combine different issues that are of importance to the research community and also to the refugees themselves. The gendered impact of internal displacement on the Palestinian refugee family, meaning the different impact of displacement on women versus men is reflected in the gender power relations and decision making structures, the marriage patterns, the gendered division of labor inside the household, housing arrangements, patterns of formal and informal support and assistance and finally choices, perceptions and preferences within and across different generations of refugees.

Repatriation or Compensation: Gender Constraints

Whether Palestinian women will have an equal stake in the future of a Palestinian entity established after the interim period will be answered in part during the permanent status negotiations. Discussion of the refugee issue will require a definition of 'refugee' within the framework of these negotiations. This definition must address how refugee status has been passed from generation to generation since 1948. Will the descendants of Palestinian refugee women be recognized as refugees, or will only the descendants of refugee men have such status? Will Palestinian women and men enjoy the same rights, duties and privileges without gender-based discrimination? How will Palestinian legal status, which could carry rights to residence and citizenship, be transferred between husband and wife and transmitted from generation to generation?

Christine Cervenak (1994, 300) analyzes the patrilineal aspects of the UNRWA definition of a Palestine refugee. She maintains that this definition discriminates against certain Palestinian women and their children. In her view, UNRWA has established a patrilineal model for determining who is eligible to be registered as a UN 'Palestine refugee'; Palestinian refugee status is passed from generation to generation through the father. Palestinian refugee women who marry non-refugee men may maintain their refugee status, however UNRWA rules provide that they may not transmit this status to their children. Hence these refugee women, by virtue of their husband's non-refugee status are ineligible for a vast array of UNRWA benefits. Likewise, the children of this group of refugee mothers are ineligible for UNRWA services. In contrast, refugee fathers married to non-refugee women may pass on refugee status to their children and the entire family is eligible for UNRWA services. Cervenak concludes that this gender discrimination operates to bar most of this group from UNRWA's health, education, relief and

welfare services, as well as to limit its access to the full range of UNRWA's human rights protection (Cervenak 1994, 300). Given this analysis, it becomes clear that such gender discrimination policy, where refugee women cannot transfer their refugee status to their descendants because of their marriage to non-registered males, will also impact negatively the option of compensation if and when the family chooses compensation as a political settlement to the option of return.

Internally Displaced Persons: New Forms in the Context of Al-Aqsa Intifada

Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) constitute one of the largest and longest-standing displaced populations in the world today. Currently, three-quarters of the Palestinian people are displaced. More than five decades after their initial displacement from their homeland, Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons still lack access to durable solutions to their plight based on international law and UN resolutions.

As has been historically proven, the Zionist state has been always creative in finding new forms for uprooting and displacing the Palestinian population. In the context of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, Israel has created new forms of 'internal displacement,' under the pretext of measures against persons, families, villages, camps or towns active in confronting the Israeli oppression or hosting 'terrorists'-a term used by Israel to label Palestinian freedom fighters. This policy of displacement has historically been justified by Israel as a 'security measure,' undermining and denying the truth and practice that Israel has repeatedly and historically used namely transfer policies as part of its Zionist ideology. In other words, a policy which has uprooted the population, transferred Palestinians from their homeland and thus claimed that Palestine has been

a 'land without people', is labeled by Israel and accepted internationally as a form of 'security measurement.'

Although internal displacement is not a new phenomenon, yet the forms of displacement that are taking place in the context of this Intifada are new and are important to explore and investigate as they have drastically impacted Palestinian society in general and the Palestinian family in particular. It has become clear that the internally displaced Palestinians in the Occupied Territories in this current period have increased in number due to the oppressive practices of the Israeli State in creating new forms of displacement. Some of the families have been internally displaced for the third time now (having been displaced in 1948, 1967 and in 2003), as a result of the massive house demolitions or complete devastation of communities such as Jenin camp in the West Bank and Rafah camp in the Gaza Strip. Families in these camps have been transferred, moved or internally displaced either near villages or in urban neighborhoods near their original camps. In this context, it seems necessary to explore the new practice/concept of displacement through expanding the definition of the internally displaced to include such a category of displacement and investigate the gender impact of this kind of displacement on the family.

A second category of displacement in the current conditions of the Al-Aqsa Intifada includes two different groups of those forced to move due to their political convictions. The first is the group of hostages released in 2002 from the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem and deported either to the Gaza Strip or outside the country, mainly to Europe. Those internally displaced deportees who were transferred to the Gaza Strip, had to leave their families in the West Bank as a result of an agreement between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority. The other group of internally displaced persons is composed of prisoners in Israeli prisons who were

detained and held in administrative detention for at least three months and who for no reason were deported from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip as a punitive measure due to their political activity.

A third category of displacement includes the persons, families and communities that are being displaced or their survival threatened due to the building of the Apartheid Wall in the West Bank. The path of the Wall's first phase lies within the West Bank, up to 6 km inside the West Bank causing massive land confiscation, de facto annexation and destruction of cultivated lands. The consequences to three districts, namely Qalqilia, Jenin and Tulkarm, of the first phase are severe. It is important to mention that these districts represent some 22% of the West Bank population, totaling over 500,000 people. Yet 42% of the agricultural business and 53% of water sector employment in the West Bank are located in these areas with about 25% of the residents deriving their income from farming (World Bank 2003).

According to the World Bank's report on the Wall, some 25-30% of the population affected by the Wall is registered as refugee. Nearly 34% of the West Bank population are registered refugees with UNRWA. The fact that 75% of Palestinians globally are refugees is a reminder that the majority of Palestine is a dispossessed community which continues to face suppression and displacement. Refugee populations who are living in towns and villages, especially those along the Green Line, have already lost large portions of their land in 1948 and again in 1967. It is the same people who are today once more being displaced and whose lands are being confiscated. This is an important reality when understanding the effect of the Wall's first phase (PENGON 2003, 35).

The Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network (PENGON), who were formed to fight the Wall and lead the Anti-Wall Campaign, are comprised of six different Palestinian

organizations. “The Wall around Qalquilia has stolen the land which residents subsist upon, closed the market from where their income was derived, restricted health service and education opportunities and severed social and family relations; this is life in the caged city of Qalquilia. Already 4,000 residents have been forced to move outside the city in search for income to send home” (PENGON 2003, 95).

The implications of land separation and separation of families from their own land, illegal seizure of personal property, livelihoods and mobility are large scale. Separation from the land means that the majority of the population will lose their main and only source of income especially in the context of the last two years when the peasant family increased their dependence on the land for survival due to the worsening economic situation. The Apartheid Wall in its first stage has already isolated 51 communities from the majority of their lands and the eventual destruction of these lands will lead to confiscation by Israel, as they claim them to be abandoned. For those who have access to their lands but are isolated from their markets, the wall will mean a total loss in revenue, which is also threatening the continuity of cultivating the land. In the end, this will result in its confiscation by Israeli authorities. In addition, the Wall is affecting also the water resources. Destruction from the Wall has amounted to severe damage to water resources; over 30 km of irrigation pipes and 25 wells and cisterns have been destroyed during the Wall’s construction, which can also affect the families’ livelihoods and challenge their survival (PENGON 2003, 56).

Israel’s destruction of infrastructure, resources, homes and land is an attempt to create a living situation which is not economically or structurally viable and tears apart the social fabric within and between communities, ultimately banishing residents from their land. In the context of the new political conditions and after 55 years of Israeli occupation, the Palestinian people are

still faced with the same policies of displacement, expulsion, dispossession and humiliation. The impact of the new kinds of displacement on Palestinian families, their internal dynamics and coping strategies have not yet been studied. Future studies and research on the impact of the Wall on families will be useful in understanding the changes and threats that Palestinian families are facing in their own homeland. It can also develop the information necessary to support politicians, development practitioners and human rights activists in finding not only durable solutions and promoting coping strategies that are acceptable and relevant to the needs and aspirations of the Palestinian refugee communities but also advocate for Palestinian human rights in the international community and courts of law.

3 a & b

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Producing Modern Families through Data

Martina Rieker, Barbara Ibrahim, Penny Johnson and Annelies Moors (2004)

It is the sorting that makes the times, not the times that make the sorting (Latour 1993, 76).

Nothing protests but mute statistics (Chekhov 1893).

Data, statistics and numbers constitute not only foundational tools for modern governments (Rabinow 1989); they also inform the very way in which a post-Enlightenment world has been envisioned (Poovey 1998). Statistics under gird the ways in which communities are disciplined and problem spaces defined. They also serve as key tools to our modern understanding of ‘self-knowledge,’ and thus have been important vehicles for rights-based politics. Statistics is the modern language through which notions of entitlements based on citizenship or other forms of collective belonging are made visible. Along with mobility, technology and markets, it could be argued that statistics define the condition of being human in a modern world.

It can be assumed that numbers do more than standard statistical textbooks would imply. Beyond quantifying observable and reportable elements of the world, statistics are implicated in establishing the very categories within which reality is constructed. Statistical norms can rapidly become social and moral norms, casting up new and powerful rubrics—for example, the connection between counting the category of nuclear families and creating thereby ‘broken homes’. The

categories of statistical practice are lent particular weight in the era of science, when to call a survey methodology ‘scientific’ may too often close off critical examination of its underlying premises.

Framing an investigation of statistics

Therefore we take as our point of departure the notion that numbers are key mechanisms through which social space is made visible, serving as foundational tools for contemporary knowledge production. The producers and holders of data deploy or withhold numbers in order to validate a particular view of reality and to generate desired courses of action. The ‘subjects’ of these counting efforts may or may not push back with their own extrapolations of data to reconstruct a differing view of reality. In short, a great deal of modern truth effects is produced through data. It is striking, therefore, to see how little attention is directed to unmasking the processes and practices behind data collection and the statistics that process produces. This area is worthy of further critical examination in its own right, but one that becomes critically important in order to understand how modern Arab families have been defined and are continually defining themselves.

Efforts to understand the place of statistics in molding contemporary consciousness necessarily begin with the actors who generate and perpetuate statistical practices. Since these practices have evolved in parallel with the emergence of modern states, we begin the inquiry with a brief historical excursion. Of special interest are moments where statistics wielded a mobilizing influence over local or global actors in the colonial encounter in the Arab world and its recent aftermath. Arab families, as central ‘sites’ for the modernizing debates that emerged toward the end of the nineteenth century, form an important lens through which to examine the defining power of statistics.

Governments and their political precursors have been the initiators of most processes of formal data collection. Rulers needed to count in order to bound, tax and control their jurisdictional spaces. People were and are counted and categorized in ways that serve power; benefiting or harming populations in the process. However, an interesting and inevitable dialectic emerges in which the act of commissioning data collection sets in motion unintended distinctions and awarenesses. Those sent ‘to the field’ in order to record data may become motivated in unexpected ways through making visible other spaces of collective belonging and the inequalities within them. Collecting health data for the first Russian national census in 1892, Anton Chekhov was horrified to discover that, in villages a few kilometers away from Moscow, six out of every ten infants died before their first year (Figs 2002, 257).

Statistics, then, are much more than dry numbers; they carry within them potencies that may arouse strong affect and consequent action. The statistical production of Arab families, and particularly poor or peasant families, has generated a mixture of indignation (low contraceptive ‘compliance’ rates), impulses for improvement (maternal and infant mortality rates, etc...), as well as silences and exclusions. The exclusions most especially speak to ways in which international standards and norms have been uncritically applied to measure and shape Arab populations. Examples of these and other instances of problem spaces in the counting process will be explored in the narrative that follows. Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt, sharing features of an Ottoman legacy while diverging at key points in their recent past, form a rich backdrop for the analysis.

The study of Arab families, both their lived realities and the surrounding public discourse, necessitates an engagement with data sets. A critical engagement here is not only a quest for more complete statistics or better questionnaires, but also an acknowledgement that all processes of collection are based upon certain spatial and temporal intentionality or ‘desire’. Given such a

reading, we can then argue that the so-called facts produced within these processes are representations of certain historical moments. In other words, a critical engagement with data sets over time will allow for a much needed and deeper understanding of how and what sorts of Arab families have been made normative within the historical present. Data sets, we argue, constitute an important archive for understanding contemporary representations of the family. Their 'realities' ultimately become the silent referents in everyday life. To read the 'fact' as archive, as part of a production process rather than as the 'real' captured through modern science, allows for an engagement with what arguably are the largest collections of work on our contemporary societies.

Spaces and spheres of statistical authority

Collection processes and practices have their own contentious histories, both local and global. The promotion of international 'standards' for data quality and availability has become a way of ranking or sanctioning states in the global system. So in addition to the strategic role of statistics in ministerial cartographies of modern nation states, national standing in the international order is also measured by way of representation within United Nations agencies. For example, in the Middle East and North Africa region, Mauritania's inability to collect -- within the context of particularly defined scientific criteria -- CEDAW statistics¹, that is to make visible a particular type of gendered geography, authorizes the assignation of that nation state (and perhaps its citizen-subjects) as a problem-space for a particular set of contemporary global discourses (Rieker 2004). The complex political and economic reasons for 'non-compliance' are not reported in the compilations of statistics that emanate from each UN office. Nonetheless, they may be the object of considerable negotiation and pressure in order to remove this stigma in future reporting. The important point here is not that the sorts of coercions involved in having to

represent and translate local social realities into international social science categories reflects upon the collection process (e.g. unscientific data). It is rather that these unequal relationships may map new spaces of silence or “untranslatability.” For instance, it is within the interstices of lived realities and their translation into global categories that the problem of the “girl-child” emerges within contemporary development thinking. Here, the act of collecting data on children of particular ages and gender --and not others -- is premised on a set of post-Enlightenment conceptions of ‘rights’ of the individual citizen-subject. These then become entangled within a set of socialities (southern patriarchies) perceived as outside the contemporary social and moral order (Rieker, n.a). Our questioning of this process is not a criticism of attempts to improve the lives of young girls; on the contrary, we seek to expose the problems inherent when globally-achieved categories are imposed without consideration for local meaning categories and how those were achieved.

The act of collecting, then, is the product of competing temporal and spatial values. To acknowledge the conditions under which the archive was assembled, the statistics collected and the numbers made sense of allows for a critical engagement with the suturing and eventual naturalization of a particular representational politics. In recent work conducted on the United Nations Works and Relief Agency (UNWRA) archives, particularly the family files (Tamari & Zureik 2001), one can delineate the tensions between the very act of collecting for purposes of humanitarian aid, the discrepant relationships of power between the UNWRA collector and the head of household providing information, the persons representing and being represented by the designated respondent and so forth (Rieker 2001). This sort of careful archeology of the making of a data set constitutes one way to interrogate a ‘fact,’ call its truth effect into question, and carefully examine the emerging constituent parts.

Arab Families through a Statistical Lens

Almost every imaginable form of sociality in the global south became the subject of intense processes of data collection throughout the twentieth century. In the Arab world, the demise of colonial rule, followed by the failure of most of the region's modernity projects, spawned a growing industry of foreign aid and its attendant needs for data (Escobar 1995, Mitchell 2002). Local data production for policing, servicing and tracking change flourished during the state-building phase, but was not always made available or published. The intensified statistical focus on Arab families can be traced to global interests in fertility management, child survival and rural development; concerns that emerged largely following World War II. A few examples of locally-generated studies of the family can be found in that early period, most of which relied on small-scale data collection or ethnographic methods.

Survey research, involving a sampling of part of a population and quantitative data methods, emerged first in Lebanon. The earliest studies appeared during the liberal interwar period, often undertaken as a joint effort between western and local researchers. American University of Beirut in the 1940s and the Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo a decade later became natural institutional homes for these projects. Some of the earliest studies were notable for their cross-national and comparative approach, such as the classic Social Relations in the Middle East, undertaken by Stewart Dodd and his students (Ibrahim, S. 1987, 28). Growing levels of state control of information-gathering as well as suspicion of foreign researchers following the 1967 war, placed constraints on joint studies of this kind, but led to the rise of national survey research centers in Egypt, Syria, Tunisia and Iraq (Ibrahim, S. 1987, 29). These were funded from state budgets and conducted studies largely to serve the needs of

centralized planning and policy bodies. By the 1990s, these institutes had waned in importance, and private research and consulting firms, along with university centers, increasingly took on the tasks of survey data collection and analysis.

Since countries like Lebanon and Egypt were embarking on ambitious nation-building efforts in the decades of 1950s and 60s, we need to problematize the sources and modes of data collection that shaped conceptions of the family in that period and up to the present moment. To do so, we first propose reaching further into the past. A brief examination of the early articulations of local modernity projects in Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt, and the data collection efforts they generated will provide context for understanding the contemporary scene.

Governmentalities: Making Modern Citizens, Producing Modern Families

It can be argued that there is nothing particularly modern about the collection of statistics: empires and local rulers alike have enumerated those subject to their dominion in many historical periods. The Ottoman Empire, for instance, has a long tradition of counting its resources, both land and people; its sixteenth-century cadastral surveys for the Arab provinces (Syria and Egypt) included lists of households (Fargues 2003, 25; Doumani 1994, 10). However, the purposes, pervasiveness and publicness of the use of statistical tools mark distinct modern collection practices. Wedded to emergent notions of scientific governmentality, the modern deployment of statistics for practices of statecraft emerges from new and different sets of desires.

An important moment for our consideration is the unpublished Egyptian population and housing census of 1848, ordered by Muhammed Ali, which aimed to enumerate all the inhabitants of Egypt. Previous censuses undertaken by the Ottoman Empire only recorded adult males, largely because the purposes were limited to taxation and conscription, the latter primarily

for Muslim subjects of the Empire and the former including the jizya, or poll tax for non-Muslim minorities. This was true of the large 1831 Ottoman census, as well as smaller surveys, such as the 1861 cadastral land survey of Lebanon. The count of the male Christian population of the Mountain and their agricultural landholdings (underestimated due to concessions to the Maronite Church) remained the tax base for the following fifty years, primarily because of a ‘standing objection’ by Lebanese Christians to new figures and larger taxes (Khater 2001, 51).

Negotiating statistics through confessional politics was to remain a pronounced feature of the development of statistics in Lebanon and helped shape particular versions of Lebanese households and families and definitions of their ‘social problems.’ In contrast, confessional data on Egyptian citizens is rarely collected and, in the few instances where it is, detailed figures are not published by the government. This enables the Christian community to over represent its numbers, while official estimates are under representations according to most observers².

In the 1848 Egyptian census all household members, for the first time, were listed, and thus, according to Fargues, the “individual became the statistical unit,” marking a “transition to modernity” (Fargues 2003, 24). Although the term “household” was not used in this census, we argue that the household in its modern statistical definition emerges in the method of enumeration; organized as people who reside in a single dwelling unit and enumerated through their relationship to a head of household. Other residents are described by non-kin categories such as servants and hired laborers. The 1848 census also paid attention to individual economic activities and educational status as it listed student status, for example. This indicates an interest in the population that went beyond its immediate functional service to the state, to a wider understanding of the human resources of the country or “the capital upon which the government would be able to build a national economy” (Fargues 2003, 24).

If it was “modern” in its inquiry, however, its use was less innovative. The 1848 census remained unpublished and registers were kept in the form of lists of households and their members. However, the nexus of individual, household and nation-and parenthetically the disappearance of wider definitions of family as extended clan or tribe-is of great interest in understanding how “Arab families” would become bounded statistical objects of inquiry. Starting in 1848, census statistics take the individual as point of departure. However, as had been the case previously, such individuals were placed within houses or households (for which the term hane was used), a spatial notion, rather than referring to kinship, lineage or patronymic group. Still, as people in these houses and households were listed according to gender and kinship (that is in relation to the most senior male or, if no male was present, female), ‘family’ snuck back into the survey, with households seen as composed of, for instance, nuclear families, extended families and multiple families.

The tensions between census registration and notions about the family come to the fore in Tomoki Okawara’s (2003) discussion of the different meanings the term hane may have in different locations. Comparing household composition in Istanbul and Damascus, he argues that whereas in Istanbul a hane was typically a two story wooden structure, where a new household required a new house, in Damascus it was a courtyard-style house where several households could live independent family lives. According to the census such a hane seems, in Okawara’s words “like a multiple-family household. However, it is difficult for Muslim households without any relationship by blood or marriage to live together. It seems reasonable, then, to suppose that actually a residence was divided into two independent households, each of which lived separately” (Okawara 2003, 59). This points to two inherited problems with households. On the one hand, if we see households as ‘too bounded’ we may overlook crucial relations of sharing

with kin and non-kin in other households. On the other hand, we may assume close relations of sharing between inhabitants of one hane that do not exist in everyday life. For if non-related multiple households can live independent family lives, related multiple households may be doing so as well. Although the Egyptian administration conducted another census in 1882 on the eve of British colonial rule and once every decade thereafter, the next key wave of national censuses in Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon took place in the context of colonial rule, marking statistical processes with a colonial imprint. The 1917 census in Egypt billed as the first reliable enumeration of the population, faced multiple problems directly related to colonialism and its oppositions. The director of the Statistics Department quite clearly acknowledges problems related to the ‘political situation,’ whereby “one part of the population, the natives, detests the government,” as well as the many foreign communities who act as “little states within the state” (Levi in Mitchell 2002, 111). He also defines as problems the large nomadic communities and the substantial homeless population; populations who did not fit neatly into statistical concepts of ‘household’ as organizing population into residential units, not to speak of the additional problem of localized hostility to central authority.

Defining Problem Spaces through Statistics

Under the British Mandate of Palestine, national censuses were carried out in 1921 and 1931 and the Palestine Government’s Department of Statistics produced a Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. Although the Mandatory government exercised less pervasive and systematic social and economic control than British colonial regimes elsewhere-partly because of its circumscribed mission and largely because of extremely low budgets-here, as in Egypt, the censuses and other statistical reports were used to search for markers of modernity (as well as its

opposite) among the Palestinian Arab population. Reports measured for example, women's labor force participation, contrasting it to Jewish women's labor force participation, while largely ignoring women's informal, unpaid agricultural, petty commodity or household production (Fleischman 2003, 52). This contributed to the widely accepted notion -- now largely discredited but still present -- in statistical abstracts that only focus on formal employment, that Arab women were not economically active and that Arab families were economically supported solely by males. The colonial impulse to use western social systems as yardsticks to rank or to rate 'progress' in the global south is one that continues in a plethora of forms well into the present.

Drawing a production boundary around household activities would become the global standard in 1968, with the development of the international statistical standard of the GNP/GDP. The roots of 'household economics' are probably both in colonial and national enterprises and will be explored below. In addition to census data, national statistical agencies began collecting data on household income, consumption and expenditures by the middle of the twentieth century. These enabled a tracking of poverty and wealth, as well as the spread of modern domestic technologies such as telephones and electrical appliances. Arab families were by then invested fully with an economic identity worth measuring.

But that takes us ahead of our story, for earlier in the century families in the Arab 'east' still conjured up primarily exotic imagery. During the British Mandate in Palestine, an intriguing set of 'sex surveys,' unearthed by Fleischman and conducted in 1923 by the new Director of Health, reveal a colonial interest in the 'unnatural vices' of the natives; of the six questions asked, three are on polygamy and two on promiscuity and secret sexual rites (Fleischman 2001, 17-19). This inordinate interest in marital and sexual matters reflects a growing thread of local discourse at the time as well, where Palestinian and Egyptian writers felt compelled to denounce

familial customs such as polygamy that prevented local populations from becoming fully 'modern' (Kholoussy, forthcoming).

Local Statistical Projects

Estimates of the population of Palestine before the beginnings of Jewish settlement are a politically sensitive issue. The work of Beshara Doumani (1994: 3) on the political economy of the Ottoman population counts argues for a reconsideration of established numbers based on estimates of Western visitors. Employing both 'better statistics', in this case the records of the Nablus advisory council of the 1849 census and critically reconsidering the meaning of nafs³, he points out that the population of Nablus in the mid nineteenth century was considerably larger than hitherto assumed. Politics was also at stake in a different way in the 1849 census. The very process of counting people affected the relationships of the Ottoman rulers and the local inhabitants of Palestine, whose elites, in taking part in administering the census worked with the Ottomans, yet, in seriously undercounting the population, also worked against them and claimed their autonomy.

Palestinian population data under the Mandate is also found in the numerous White Papers and investigative reports, particularly the government survey prepared for the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry of 1946. The principal aim of these investigations was to count the relative weight of the native Arab population and the growing Jewish settler population. The demographic balance between Jews and Arabs was to remain a critical force in statistical collection and analysis under the new state of Israel in 1948, with Arabs renamed as the categories of Muslims, Christians and Druze, and from 1995 on the Christians further subdivided into Arab Christians and 'other' Christians (Moors 2003). In neighboring Jordan,

which ruled the West Bank until 1967 and absorbed a large number of Palestinian refugees into the East Bank as well, population data was elevated to a near state secret, driven by the fear that Palestinians would outnumber native Jordanians.

The representation of Palestinian families during this period as demographic time-bombs was pervasive. Palestinian discourses of hyper-fertility and families (and particularly women) as quite literal reproducers of the nation completed the dyad. Only in the recent interim period after 1995, when limited Palestinian governance faced developmental and resource challenges, has an alternative public discourse emerged of population growth as a problem, though scholars and women's health activists were arguing this point earlier. Of significance, this discourse was mainly articulated by the head of the new Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and was grounded in results of its population surveys. Equally important, this discourse disappeared during the second Palestinian intifada when national survival once more became an existential and political issue.

Egypt began collecting population statistics as early as many northern countries, as previously noted, with its first decadal census published in 1897. This was an era of prominent modernist reformers within the national discourse, who wanted to use science and education to break the yoke of tradition-and its bulwark, the extended family⁴. In the early part of the twentieth century, divorce and polygamy dominated the national discourse and debates around the Egyptian family, either as 'backward' phenomena in need of correction or as the bedrock of Islamic society to be protected at all cost (Kholoussy, forthcoming). Along with the status of women, these themes dominated the collection and reporting of population statistics, well into the middle of the century.

By 1952 a few local voices were raising alarms over high fertility rates, but the post-Revolution regime was more immediately concerned with redistributive justice-land reform, rural electrification, mass education and subsidies for the poor. Somewhat late in Nasser's rule he came to see rapid growth as a drag on the country's development, rather than as a way of achieving military superiority over Israel (Ibrahim and Ibrahim 1998). As the welfare state began to fray under the pressure of increasing numbers, both local officials and international donors began to focus on women's fertility as Egypt's single largest problem⁵. From the early 1960s, major survey efforts were directed to understanding women's 'Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices' or KAP studies, regarding reproduction and family size. These efforts were largely funded and designed externally by World Fertility Surveys (WFS) and later, Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and carried out by governmental and NGO statistical agencies. By the end of the century, more was known in Egypt about whether village women could name a contraceptive method than nearly any other development topic.

That intensive and sustained attention from international statistical collection projects occurred in a context where statistics and counting citizens had become associated in the national consciousness with 'mobilization against the enemy.' Indeed, until today, the Egyptian national statistical agency is named the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). This serves as a constant reminder to the public that some information is potentially dangerous, should it fall into nefarious hands and justifies an elaborate set of regulations around the collection and publication of data, regardless of subject matter. It transforms the events taking place within Egyptian households and families into a matter for national security concern. Thus, there has never been a serious attempt to introduce 'freedom of information' legislation and no discernable public pressure for rights to know what data on

individuals or families the government has at its disposal. In recent years, CAPMAS has responded to pressure from local academics and others to make its data more accessible and turned the production of statistical tables (never the raw data itself) into a revenue-generating activity. But so pervasive is the central control on data collection that household-based surveys are only allowable if conducted under the auspices of a government ministry or national university.

Size Counts

Egypt is not the only Arab setting in which population counting, growth and size has been a public concern. The size of households captures significant attention in Lebanon, both in terms of implications for the overall numbers belonging to each religious sect, but also as a marker of change toward modernity. There is an inherent tension discernable here, in which smaller living units are associated with the movement toward modern families, but a simultaneous unease is present as a subtext, as if the demise of large extended households may presage other forms of societal disintegration. A longitudinal study of Lebanese households (Zurayk and Armenian 1985, Deeb 1997) gathered information about household structure and environmental conditions for health between 1984 and 1994. The authors found a significant decrease in the size of households over this period, a time when the country was driven by civil strife. Lina Ktaili (1997) makes a somewhat strange observation on this data, suggesting that “more people have left families, than joined them” (79). This mixing of family with household is typical in much of the literature, but beyond that, the comment suggests that those who leave one household/family necessarily remain alone and isolated. It is more likely that young members leave relatively larger households to form an independent but smaller one at the time of

marriage. Thus, 'family size' may be decreasing, but the absolute number of families being spun off in this manner is not at all.

Studies such as Ktali's uncover a plethora of scientific typologies of household structure; for example, categories are created based upon the identity of the head of household, whether the unit is nuclear or extended, whether it consists of simple or complex conjugal couples, or contains a couple with lineal or lateral extensions. Zurayk and Shorter (1988) identified a somewhat different household typology from the notion of 'primal units' or combination of primary units designed to best capture the structure of Arab households. They introduce a concept of 'social composition' in their typology, limited to a threefold criterion of 'simple households' (married couple with or without children), 'complex households' (couple or couples with or without additional persons) and 'no-couple households' (lone or multiple uncoupled individuals). While this type of categorization may be useful for counting purposes, it cannot provide insight on the nature of interactions or social relations within units. Nonetheless, these typologies are found repeatedly in the literature, almost always assuming hierarchical forms, with simple or nuclear arrangements deemed to be more 'modern' than other configurations. The imperatives of counting for ranking and borrowed western notions of modernity drive this particular accent in the analysis of households in the Arab region and beyond.

Units of Counting

Statistics not only define problem spaces, we argue that they also impose categories of data collection which themselves create new 'realities' or hide others. As previously mentioned, adult males were the only human category that was deemed necessary to count in Ottoman surveys until the early 1880s. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century population censuses

began full enumerations of men, women and children as new states came to see their task as one of service provision-schools, hospitals and other-in addition to taxation and conscription. However, the question remained as to how to find and group individuals in ways that would be meaningful and efficient for survey takers? Ottoman surveyors were instructed to look for dwellings with separate chimneys and to consider each cooking chimney as one unit (Bisharat 2004). This was not practicable in all parts of the empire, including Egypt, where peasant dwellings were not constructed with chimneys. So the idea of identifying one male 'head of household' to delineate his household members was, in these patriarchal settings, a logical modification. Households similarly defined were commonly used as enumeration units in British and European surveys and so this practice became standard in Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine.

The concept of households defined through the reports of a male head is a problematic that feminists and others have challenged starting in the 1980s, pointing to the assumptions involved in seeing the household or family as unit of analysis and as an actor in its own right (Dwyer year). Based on the dichotomy of the domestic sphere versus that of the market, the circulation of goods and labor that takes place within households is seen as based on pooling and sharing and as such is contrasted to market relations⁶. Relations within households are not necessarily characterized by such forms of reciprocity, but may well be grounded in a sexual division of labor and rights to consumption that are based on positions of authority rather than on ability and need. Seeing the household as a unit in of itself overlooks the relations of family and household members with non-coresident kin and non-kin. It has also encouraged a focus on household composition rather than family relations, as evident in some historical studies⁷. Furthermore, a significant, and some would argue growing percentage of Arab households do not have a male 'head' and are instead supported solely by one or more females. If in mid

nineteenth century Cairo, most children were still very young when separated from their mother and father (Fargues 2003, 36), either because both parents had passed away or the child had already left the home, more recently the HIV-AIDS epidemic is creating another kind of reality in some communities, where households consist of minor children with sick or deceased adults. These realities are masked in survey findings where the data collection method relies on identifying a male to enumerate the household. Those who code data from national surveys in Egypt, quite often encounter instances of young boys listed as household heads, both to satisfy the needs of those collecting the data, as well as the social status needs of those not wanting to be stigmatized as lacking an adult male.

In another, more troubling example from the 1980s, official surveyors canvassed an impoverished housing area of Cairo slated for demolition, with the intention of determining the size of each household and the number of individuals economically active within the community. The results would determine housing assignments and transport systems available in a projected resettlement area. Residents were not given information about the intended use of data to be collected, so they resorted to second-guessing as to how each household might minimize harm from the survey results. Many of those with jobs and small enterprises in the community suppressed that information fearing taxation. As a result bus lines from the new to the old community were not adequately planned. Some families assumed that stating a higher number of members would entitle them to larger houses, so they inflated household size. Others imagined that the surveyors were looking for men who had not completed military service and so they skipped mention of the young men in their households. Predictably, allocations of housing were widely off the mark and years of petitioning on the part of these poor households ensued. Each of the (individually quite rational) intentions among those enmeshed in the survey process

result in distortions of the statistical picture emerging from collection methods which are either inadequately precise or deliberately opaque. The result is that families come to be counted, measured and profiled in ways quite disconnected from their everyday lived realities (Ibrahim 1987).

Family/Household Conundrums

The statistical problems presented in constructing Arab families are not one of quality alone nor can they be addressed by greater attention to detail. Categories themselves create the tensions and disconnects between measured outcome and lived reality. Family is only imperfectly related to the concept of household, for example, a term that in international usage encompasses those related family members and any unrelated others who live under the same roof and share common budgets and/or cooking facilities. In rural Arab settings households may well contain members who are unrelated but in a hired labor relationship, as was and is true of domestic servants in urban households. Fostering of children, taking in distant relatives for household labor and supporting kin who reside in other dwelling units, all of these were common in Palestine, Egypt and Lebanon and persist to some degree today. The neat international categories are predicated on notions of a modern urban ideal: a nuclear family, made up of one or more parent and their dependant children occupying a separate dwelling unit. Allowances in these definitions are made for other arrangements caused by divorce or the presence of an elderly parent; increasingly it becomes clear that also in the West, the nuclear ideal may have existed as a major household form only briefly at the middle of the twentieth century (Cheal 1991). However, these understandings of living arrangements persist in the structuring of most national

data collection systems and they run afoul of the, sometimes, fluid composition of ‘households’ in Arab settings and elsewhere.

The problem of statistical household units in relation to Arab families as they are locally constituted is examined in some detail through considering the situation in Palestine. It is illustrative of the dilemmas and disconnects between accepted global statistical standards and local lived realities. To do so we examine the difficulty of accommodating Arabic language terms that locate relationality in families to externally-generated statistical standards, as well as the problems that may arise as statistical agencies attempt to mediate between the two.

Capturing Kin

When the household as a unit of analysis is privileged in statistical representations, wider notions of family and kin as the social forms in which households are embedded are lost. The apparent trend toward higher proportions of nuclear living arrangements in Lebanon and Palestine, and to a lesser extent Egypt, further masks these realities of Arab family life. Numerous surveys in the Palestinian territory, including the 1997 national census, for example, show that about three-quarters of Palestinian households are nuclear. Similarly, a majority of Lebanese households are nuclear in the classic sense, defying some of the stereotypic ideas about Arab residential patterns (Ktaily 1997). However, the economic, social and living arrangements shared with family and kin outside the household, prominent in ethnographic work in Palestinian society, are not captured in data based on the household. What happens when social scientists and statisticians attempt to insert notions of family and kin that go beyond the household into survey instruments?

Two brief examples from Palestine are relevant. In a community-based household survey conducted by the Institute of Women's Studies (IWS) in 1999, researchers tried to ascertain the extent of kin-based economic enterprises and found a very low rate of 3%, seemingly defeating their hypothesis that economic relations among kin were pervasive. Several factors of interest, however, emerge that suggest that both survey design and the larger matter of the nature of surveys combined to produce this representation. The first factor was that the question was asked only to the head of the household. More important, however, were two other constraints. First, the Palestinian work force consists overwhelmingly of waged labor and the overall rate of ownership of formal economic enterprises is low. Second, patterns of kin economic cooperation in Palestine seem to revolve around the quest for jobs and their maintenance. Tamari noted in his exploration of patterns of work in Israel in 1981 that work was almost invariably obtained through a "a brother or cousin who was already employed by a Jewish boss" (Tamari 1983, 228). In a similar vein, Moors (1984) pointed out that the access of men from villages to the east of Nablus to jobs in the Gulf States was mediated through relations of kinship and affinity.

These patterns persist in the informal economic activities undertaken by unemployed men in the second intifada (taxi driving, peddling at checkpoints). Taraki noted that statistical inquiries about the "regular and usual patterns of cooperation" (such as a monthly transfer of money, for example) among kin already assume a mode of operation that effectively excludes the irregular, informal and occasional modes of kin mutual assistance as it is actually practiced (Taraki 1999, 6). Another major form of material cooperation across households is the investments made by two families at the time of a marriage. These one-time and often quite large outlays are never fully captured in formal surveys of household consumption or expenditure. As a result, transfers of wealth among Arab families that may be equal or greater to

those that occur by way of inheritance, remain unmeasured and unaccounted for (Singerman and Ibrahim 2003, Moors 2003).

Attempts to rectify the problem of artificially bounded households run their own risks of reifying ‘tradition.’ Recent data has produced an alternative version of Palestinian and Arab kin relations through statistical investigations of ‘social networks’ and kin living arrangements, most notably by the Norwegian applied social research institute, Fafo. In 1997, Fafo conducted an extensive Jordanian Living Conditions Survey (JLCS) which included an analysis of social networks and kin-based living arrangements. The researchers themselves note that such networks do not easily fit into a statistical model, reporting that during the design of the survey “the approach had to be reworked several times, mainly because suggested solutions proved to be too time consuming in the field, too complex to analyze, and too difficult to pursue conceptually” (Hanssen-Bauer et. al 1998, 262). The survey found that two-thirds of households had family members or other relatives living in the neighborhood or within walking distance and over a third resided in dense networks of ten or more relatives living nearby.

Coupled with other data on frequency of visits and patterns of social support, these kin-based living patterns led the authors to stress that “the importance of family relations dominates over modern processes” (Hanssen-Bauer, et. al. 1998, 261). In this instance, the researchers break out of the bounded household model only to find ‘traditional’ families who are immediately set into opposition with modernity. Yet contemporary research interest in social networks is very much driven by policy concerns and contemporary global politics. With the retreat of the state from social services and other processes of structural adjustment and economic ‘reform,’ it is germane (and perhaps convenient) to locate sources of social support and family survival in ‘traditional’ kin networks.

Another prominent way kin is inserted into statistical processes is in investigations of consanguine marriage, usually in demographic and health surveys and usually in questions directed at ever-married women of reproductive age. The investigation thus already has statistical and conceptual limits, which are exaggerated by what can only be described as a lack of curiosity, probably because consanguine marriage is considered as an immutable aspect of ‘tradition’.⁸ In the Palestinian case, data consistently shows over a quarter of women (15-49 years) married to first cousins and another 20% married to more distant kin, jointly representing almost one half of married women. Nonetheless, PCBS, in its 2000 Health Survey, devotes scant attention and less analysis to this prominent feature of family formation. One wonders why then they included this question at all. One table provides the raw percentages and one correlates kin marriage with the number of living and ever-born children (PCBS 2001, 81-82), suggesting that higher fertility (and disease) may be the concern when cousin marriage is examined. Cousin marriage is then briefly described as a “widespread trend” stemming from “various traditional factors” which has a “negative impact on children’s health” through increasing the potential for hereditary disease. While it is true that one can calculate from the PCBS table correlating consanguine marriage with the number of living and ever-living children a significantly wider child mortality gap for women in first cousin marriages than women in non-relative marriages, women married to more distant kin are similar to women in non-relative marriages. All of which should lead to questions about the possibility of a correlation between first cousin marriages and location (urban – rural), class, level of education, age at marriage and so on, all factors that may independently have an effect on the number of living and ever-born children⁹. This brings us back to the central thesis of this essay concerning the definitional power of statistics; kin marriage itself is a category that is produced by the data – or at least extracted and glossed from

the more complicated social world of kinship. An interesting example is a shift in kin categories from PCBS's 1995 Demographic and Health Survey to PCBS's 2000 Health Survey. A publication on family formation (PCBS 2002) produced a table that, on first glance, seemed to show a significant drop in kin marriage. In the 2000 survey, 28% of women married first-cousins (maternal or paternal) and another 20% married "distant cousins;" thus, about half of the women married kin. In the previous 1995 survey, a similar percentage of women married first-cousins but the percentage marrying "distant cousins" was much higher 36%.

Rather than a remarkable shift in marriage patterns, meaning a decrease in marriage with distant cousins, we encounter instead a definitional shift in the questionnaires and another conceptual shift in the analysis. In the 1995 survey, women were asked if they were married to first cousins, relatives from the same hamula, relatives from a different hamula or people of no relation. Already, we are clearly on troubled ground with the problematic, if iconic, use of the Arabic category of the hamula (or patrilineal clan, patronymic group). Sometimes essentialized as a timeless component of Palestinian society, its variability in place and time has been amply demonstrated (Rothenberg 1999, Rieker 1992), and its present status as a marker of identity in the Palestinian territory is highly questionable. While marriages with kin are prevalent, those engaging in them may well use other terms for their relationship. The category "different hamula," perhaps intended to cover marriages with matrilineal or affinal relatives, is even more problematic. Yet in its first demographic survey and one of its first surveys entirely, PCBS's turn to an indigenous but ill-defined category is intriguing.

In the 2000 health survey, women respondents chose between first cousins, relatives from the same hamula or no relation, and the problematic category of different hamula was discarded. Additionally intriguing, however, is that in the English publication of this data, hamula

transmuted into the misleading term “distant cousins” (PCBS 2002, 29). This mess of terminologies may increase if further changes are made in subsequent surveys to rectify the problem. This will further distort any attempts at trend line analysis on kin marriage patterns. As the above examples demonstrate, dynamics of “sameness” or “closeness” (Moors 1995, 87), open up kinship as a social category. Perhaps inadvertently, Palestinian national statistics began with trying to capture this social aspect through its use of the hamula, only to get caught in its own unexamined category. By casting a critical lens on these processes, much can be revealed about the ways Arab families define themselves and are redefined by state agencies.

Judicial Sources of Data

Another institution that has generated large numbers of quantifiable data is the shari‘a courts, the Muslim judicial bodies empowered to rule on matters of family and personal status. These institutions are also implicated in producing ‘the family’, but in a different way than the national censuses or household surveys. While the latter start from the house or household, with all those inhabiting a particular dwelling registered in relation to a ‘head of household’, family law deals with dyadic relations of rights and duties between kin and affines. In addition, in this case the house and the household come in, albeit in different and sometimes, contradictory ways. The concept maskan shar‘i refers to a legally adequate dwelling; a married woman is entitled to ‘a house of her own’, even if this house is to only consist of one room with some sort of kitchen and bathroom facilities. If we cannot say that family law produces nuclear families, it certainly provides a strong materiality to the conjugal tie. Indeed, women frequently turn to the court to claim their maskan shar‘i. In interesting ways, this formulation supports the secular tradition of counting households that consist of distinct living and cooking spaces.

The rules of inheritance law, in contrast, privilege not a living unit, but rather male descendants, by giving them a larger share. Yet they also give female kin, spouses and agnates clear rights to a share in the estate, allowing for the devolution of property in multiple directions. In practice, however, women's inheritance strategies, at least with respect to land and houses, aim at the reproduction of the paternal family, but only in lineal, not in lateral ways. This means that while women tend to give up property rights for the sake of their brothers (that is for their father's house), they are much more reluctant to do so for the sake of their paternal uncles or cousins (Moors 2003: 106). This can be fruitfully compared to property transmission strategies through family endowments. In early nineteenth-century Nablus the endower's line of descent was the primary beneficiary, excluding the agnates. Simultaneously, daughters were only included as beneficiaries if unmarried, widowed or divorced and daughters' children were excluded completely (Doumani 1998). Endowments appear to be a legal strategy for further focusing the flow of assets along vertical bloodlines and more or less ignoring living arrangements. Statistical data from the shari'a courts and from national censuses/surveys work in different ways to produce particular normative families. Further discontinuities appear when related to the social practices in everyday life.

Conclusion

The picture that is built up from these discreet pieces of evidence is one of multiple and, sometimes, contradictory data projects to define and shape Arab families. While there is no doubt that international statistical norms are currently in ascendancy, the examples from Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon point to persistent local constructions vying to mold ideas of the normative family. Those frameworks of data embedded in local religious/judicial structures

have proven their longevity, while states as sources of legitimating statistical frames regarding family appear to have waxed and waned with the fortunes of political power in regional and global orders.

International statistical frames carry a multilateral aura of legitimacy that may mask the hegemony of a few western sources of ‘scientific’ methods. But in Arab contexts, as elsewhere, historical and present lived realities are in a process of confounding global agreements as to what constitute comparable statistical categories. States will continue to collect data using internationally mandated definitions. In addition, multilateral agencies will continue to publish reports based on comparisons, indices and other rankings of nations constructed uncritically. Local institutions and actors will also persist in efforts to count, measure and group for their own purposes. Meanwhile, those who are acted upon by these processes express their ideas of family as they lead their everyday lives. In doing so, they also challenge and remake the formal definitions of family. Our brief examination suggests that much can be learned in the interstices of these numbers and the ways in which they are collected, interpreted and acted upon in the world.

Chapter 4

Endnotes

Producing Families through Data

1. The United Nations General Assembly mandates all member states to collect and report gender data through the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
2. The 1848 Egyptian census did publish information on religion, so the official sensitivities in this regard seem to be a more recent development. For more information, see Fargues 2003.
3. Doumani argues that Western interpretation of the word nafs was used to mean adult male only rather than male of any age.
4. Usages in Arabic of the terms ‘family’, ‘household’, ‘clan’, and so forth have an interesting history.
5. This refrain still echoes in presidential speeches at regular intervals (Al Ahram Weekly, 2004).
6. See Harris 1881.
7. See Moors 2003.
8. For exceptions see Rashad and Osman 2003 and Shokalmy 2003. Johnson (2004) explores the persistence of consanguine marriage in the Palestinian context, and some of the discussion in this section is taken from this work.
9. PCBS comments neither on the significance of the first mortality gap or the absence in the second case, nor does it remark on the fact that women married to more distant kin also do not have higher numbers of children than women married to non-relatives.

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Literature Reviews

Context

Penny Johnson and Zeina Zaatari (2004)

Arab families as a topic and tool of research, which the reader will notice from the state of the art literature reviews that follow, is a discipline in revival. Recovering and re-thinking past scholarship and identifying fruitful directions, intriguing questions, and emerging paradigms in recent studies means re-conceiving family studies in Arab contexts to include a range of investigations. These investigations range from early twentieth century “folklore” studies to the rapid assessment policy research of today, through historical, sociological and anthropological studies in their founding moments and contemporary theoretical crises. However, it is also true that research on Arab families has often been crippled by particular outdated theoretical frameworks that tend to represent Arab families as monolithic, static and adhering to a particular typology usually characterized as extended, patrilocal and patriarchal and sometimes marked with the exotic feature of polygamy. Despite the unquestioned and often affirmed centrality of ‘the family’ as an institution to the character and constitution of Arab societies and Arab nations in formation, examinations of families as agents in society and nation building are rare. Examination of the intersection of families and politics in general may be circumscribed by formal frameworks of tribalism or segmentary lineages. These theoretical tools are unable to capture change and they tend to assume unalloyed male power, draw rigid boundaries between public and private spheres and neglect female agency.

These representations leave little room to understanding inter and intra family dynamics, families’ relationships to the state and to social structures and diasporic families, as well as

family and social change. It is within the framework of capturing a more nuanced image of the family that has the ability to reflect the complexity of everyday life and struggles of Arab families around the world, that we lay out the following review chapters. As Veena Das has remarked, “everyday” does not mean uneventful (Das 2001, 2); for over a century, war, conflict, crisis and change have been enmeshed in the everyday life of Arab families shaping and being shaped by them. That the vast literature on war and conflict in the Middle East does not generally investigate families is as great a conceptual gap as family studies failing frequently to account for conflict and war (Johnson 2004).

It is our aim to present to the reader analytically what has been done in the past in terms of theorizing and studying Arab families by focusing on three niches that extend beyond their geographic or nation/state boundary to include diasporic communities as well. Even though each of the sections focuses on Egypt, Lebanon and Palestine, the theoretical constructs and tools cross cut these three nation/states and the review goes back to an era when these were not clearly defined national and state boundaries. These essays will also reflect the quality and quantity of research conducted in the past and the kind of research presented. Particular contexts obviously present particular theoretical and conceptual problems that are then reflected in the topics and methods used to construct representation of Arab families in these various locales.

The focus in these reviews has thus been largely on the state of scholarship on Arab families. We are thus tracing a particular form of the production of Arab families in scholarly discourse, as well as looking at the salience of research findings and observations. We must acknowledge our own exclusions, of which the most important is our neglect of literary studies and of literature, particularly Arab novels, where families inhabit richly-imagined territories that beg for exploration.

Literature Review: Egyptian Families

Sherine Hafez and Rania Salem with Alyce Abdalla (2004)

Introduction

Given the ongoing centrality of the family to the Arab region, it comes as no surprise that any discussion of Arab society must first encounter at its core, Arab families. Many scholars attest to the importance of the family as a social unit that mediates various social, economic and political factors in the Middle East (Altorki 2000, Hale 1996, Ibrahim 1977, Joseph 1999 and others). The explicit focus of a considerable amount of research on Arab families from the fields of anthropology, sociology and psychology is Egypt, which has enjoyed a pivotal cultural and political position in the Middle East. This profusion of scholarship which spans more than a century of research of Egyptian society and family life, grapples with such issues as intergenerational dynamics, family formation, women's status and gender role attitudes in Egypt. Despite the volumes of literature produced on Egyptian families, however, the bulk of it continues to be shaped and regulated by two major discourses which have notably influenced knowledge production in the post-colonial Middle Eastern region.

One discursive formation, which weaves narratives through some of the work, is that of Orientalism. Edward Said (1978) demonstrates that Orientalism imbues the status of scientific truth to various long-standing beliefs about Egyptian families harkening back to the work of Edward William Lane (1908). Orientalist writing is not limited to the early twentieth century but is alive and well in scholarly work of today. For example, in a number of modernizing works which aim at improving gender relations for the "advancement of women," we find that nuclear families are

idealized. Nuclear families are assumed to encourage the mobility of small families required by the new market place while traditional family forms are dismissed as antiquated. The other discursive formation is the national question. Government sponsorship of regionally produced research continues to endorse national political agendas in the Arabic language scholarship on the family. This has served to localize much of the literature produced in Egypt and to marginalize it from the more internationally mobile scholarship. Moreover, as some scholars point out (Hatem 1992, Kandiyoti 2001) governments are often caught between international development agendas and pressures from Islamist organizations in the country which is reflected in some of the Arabic literature on families from the last two decades.

This wide spectrum of contemporary literature on Egyptian families poses a challenge to any project attempting a cohesive literature review, which neatly categorizes the literature into topics and subtopics. Instead, this chapter will attempt to organize the literature with a particular focus on the last two decades, relying on a roughly chronological scheme, which broadly situates scholars within currents of thought. The goal is to not only reflect on trends generated by the field itself, but also to consider those which directly result from socio-economic changes and global interests in what is commonly called the ‘family’. Within the social, political and economic transformations of the last five decades in the country, the range of disciplines examining Egyptian society produce varying definitions of the family. Diane Singerman (1999), for example, defines the family as a group sharing common ancestry while Judy Brink (1987) avoids defining “family” altogether and instead employs the term “extended family” as a non-nuclear one. In demographic studies the family is understood to be the group of kin who share the same dwelling, where “household” is defined as a group which shares both a dwelling and a common budget (Khedr and Zeini 2001)¹. Similarly, Kenneth Cuno (1995) defines the household as a group of people living

and eating together under the same roof. Cuno describes the multiple or joint family household as consisting of more than one related conjugal pair in a common residence. Authors of the social histories of Egyptian families ground their conceptual definitions in the Arabic language. Mary Ann Fay (2003) points to the conflation of the terms ‘a’ila (family) and bayt (house) in eighteenth century Egypt.

The following review is organized around prominent thematic groupings addressing the subject of Egyptian families in the Arabic and English language scholarship of the last two decades. Following the discussion of two early foundational works examining families in Egypt, three themes are explored in the review: participation of women in the labor force, patriarchy and family structures and lastly, the planning of family. The review also aims at highlighting the ways in which scholars account for family as a changing social unit within wider social and economic transformations in the country.

Early Foundations

Two early works continue to define the interests of Egyptian family studies in contemporary research. The foundational work by the English traveler Edward W. Lane Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians (1908) remains to this day, a work of pivotal importance continuously cited by contemporary social scientists. In his descriptions of Cairene and upper class Egyptian society during several trips beginning in 1825, Lane details Egyptian domestic life, childhood, education, religious practice and law. Written to satiate English audiences’ fascination and colonial interest in the Orient, the book established some directions of inquiry to be picked up in later generations of scholarship (Said 1978). Lane’s authority and

widespread distribution is illustrated by Said as an outcrop of Orientalism which enjoyed hegemony over the production of knowledge at the time Lane made his famous contributions.

Lane devotes much attention to matters of family, marriage and divorce, exploring their legal and religious ramifications. Later scholarship discussing patriarchy and family structure reflect the importance of Lane's early descriptions. His observations reveal insight into the ways in which authority exercised by each of the parents in the child's upbringing inspires different types of affective ties, and consequently different modes of ensuring support for mothers and fathers in old age. Lane recognized, for example, the importance of children to their mother's economic security- precarious because of the threat of divorce (Lane 1980, 18). He remarks that Islam plays a powerful role in the socialization of Muslim children who, in Lane's Egypt, were brought up in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet and the instructions of the Qur'an. Lane's work details the rituals surrounding birth, circumcision and kuttab² education of children, which he notes intensifies children's Islamic socialization. He notes with admiration the deep reverence for parents demonstrated by children, which is socially instilled into them in adherence with Qur'anic injunction (Lane 1908, 57). A number of studies mentioned below illustrate the ways in which Lane's work has inspired scholarly interest in the socialization of children in Egyptian families and the factors which influence this process such as male migration and female employment on child-rearing practices.

Noteworthy in Lane's writings is his attention to gender differences which reveals a somewhat colonial fascination with the notion of the "exotic Oriental woman." In drawing a comparison between western women's and Egyptian women's sexuality (the latter greatly occupies Lane), the writer concludes that his Egyptian objects of study show that their, "indulgence of libidinous passions ... certainly exceed more northern nations" (Lane 1908, 303).

Lane goes on, however to counter misconceptions among his fellow countrymen regarding the oppression of Egyptian women. Though he points to inequality among the sexes in the areas of education, inheritance, divorce and so forth, Lane links women's socio-economic status as an additional variable in determining their relative freedom, where in his opinion, greater wealth corresponds with less freedom. Although, Lane does not escape the application of a western frame of reference in his analysis of Egyptian society, he nevertheless introduces the subject of gender difference and the status of women in society as a significant field of study; topics which have continued to this day to influence the study of the Egyptian family.

The second foundational work discussed here contrasts with Lane's perspective as a western observer. This work was produced by a native Egyptian who examines the practices of his own village. Hamed Ammar (1954) contributes to the study of Egyptian families through his seminal work of an ethnography of a village of Upper Egypt. Though published in 1954, the field research for Growing Up in an Egyptian Village: Silwa, Province of Aswan was conducted prior to the Free Officer's revolution of 1952. Modern education, part of the state's modernization efforts, had just begun to reach rural villages. According to Ammar, the family is the basic social unit around which the life of the individual revolves, and through which a moral ideology reinforces group solidarity (Ammar 1954, 42). He maintained that in rural society, there is no value for the individual without the family.

Ammar describes Silwa, as a homogeneous and relatively isolated village where "rigid sex-distribution in occupation," separates women's work from men's (Ammar 1954, 28). He goes on to maintain that descent, inheritance and prestige are patrilineal, whereas sentiment and emotional ties are matrilineal (55). Ammar describes the evening meal as an occasion where family unity, hierarchy and discipline are consolidated. The father distributes food

according to age and sex while women eat afterwards (37, 38). The villagers, he notes, consider children a blessing following Qur'anic teaching. Clearly, Ammar's study embodies later trends which recur in the scholarship on the Egyptian family, such as the focus on strict gender division of labor, the patriarchal nature of the family structure and the pronounced social preference for large families. His observations and the topics of special focus such as the value of the family versus the individual, patriarchy and the gendered division of labor in the family unit, chart the course of later scholarship as this review will show. Ammar's work also reflects the growing priorities of the Egyptian ruling regime during the fifties and subsequently the principles of Nasser's reforms which emphasized the importance of the family as the basis of society in the Egyptian constitution. Egyptian nationalism and the revolution's development agenda drew upon the notion of the family as a central theme designed to unite the masses and to create national pride. Although, Egypt's president Nasser chose not to tinker with the Personal Status Laws governing the family, his reforms nevertheless influenced the family as a social unit. Consequently, the bulk of the Arabic-language scholarship produced in Egypt by Egyptian scholars, continued to reflect the interests of nationalist agendas. The control the state enjoyed over academic production mainly through subsidizing education and creating government-run academic institutions continues to influence research to this day in the country.

Women in the Labor Force

In the years between the work of Lane and Ammar and that of the majority of the authors cited here, Egypt went from Nasser's socialism and pan-Arabism to the infitah (open-door policy) of Sadat. One of the many ways in which these political and economic upheavals

affected the family was the increase of female participation in the labor force outside of the household. More specifically, women began working in the formal sector, earning wages and contributing to the household income. In the 1980s as Egypt became open to western investment, the infitah period, it became possible for women to join the private sector in large numbers (Abdel Qader 1984, Adam 1981, Amin 2002). Even with the subsequent decline in the Egyptian economy witnessed in the latter part of the 1990s, women's presence in the work force continued despite opposition from Islamists and conservatives. This was often due to necessity resulting from the rising cost of living.

Scholarship in both the Arabic and the English language discuss the significance of increased female participation in the workforce, though they often differ in their approaches and perspectives. They bring to the discussion their own assumptions and cultural bias. Moreover by writing in different languages scholars are often also writing for different audiences. In general terms, Arabic language scholarship tends to examine, and at times refute, the potential negative effects and challenges of female participation in the labor force. Until the mid eighties housework and farming were almost the only work avenues available to women. In the latter part of the eighties, however, owing to the increase in the levels of education of women, diploma holders among women chose to pursue careers in secretarial work or teaching professions. Yet, despite the promise of a better 'modern' life, women were unprepared for the sacrifices they had to make. Saber Nayel's work (1985) reflects on the challenges workingwomen have to face. He insists that social development in Egypt depends largely on the participation of women in the work force. Yet, Nayel points out that women are exploited by Egyptian capitalism, a system which to him provides women with job opportunities but does not shield them from inequalities and gender discrimination in the workplace. As a response to the rise of Islamists as a

contending political power to the state, Nayel examines the opposition of a number of Muslim leaders to women's work which, unremarkably, crystallized into an argument justified through religious teachings. Another example which discusses challenges to women's work comes from Mohamed Adam (1981) who goes on to interrogate the circumstance faced by women as they enter the job market. In a study based on samples from Sohag, Fayyum, Aswan, Mansoura, Suez and South Cairo, Adam examines the phenomena of women's sick leave from work. Adam's findings indicate that the lowest rates of sick leave were cited in Cairo and that they decreased with the increase in the participants' ages. He recommends measures to facilitate women's work such as the need to create day care centers at places of work and the importance of training married couples in domestic work.

The interest of Arabic-language scholarship in women's participation in the labor market continued through the 1990s (Ali 1997, Hadyia 1995, Shoker-Allah 1997) shifting in interest as the period saw a decrease in employment opportunities for women. In rural areas for example, educated young women remained unemployed for extended periods of time. Refusing to work in the fields, they became a financial burden to their families. As the economy suffered and jobs became more scarce in Egypt, a number of scholars revisited an old debate; the relationship between women's work and changes in the values of the family and especially child adjustment (Bahlul 1997, Bakr 1997, Beheri 1997, El Qamah 1994, Hassanein 1996).

One study by Iman El Qamah (1994) demonstrates however, that children of working mothers are socially more competent and have higher self-esteem than children of non-working mothers. She relies on the premise that employed mothers are better informed, live at higher socioeconomic levels and possess greater self-confidence than non-working mothers. Stress, depression, social and economic pressures negatively impact the disposition of the child. El

Qamah surmises, however, that a child's notion of selfhood is shaped by various factors and not merely this one factor. As debates over women's return to the home raged in Egypt, authors like Mohamed El Tayeb (1990) examined both sides of the controversy. One view supports women's work and considers it necessary for progress while the other rejects this venture and sees it as harmful to traditional family values and children's upbringing. El Tayeb critiques the assumption that women's work has negative psychological effects on children, his findings supporting those of El Qamah.

By the late nineties only 33 percent of Egyptians were employed in agriculture compared to 53 percent in the early seventies (Hopkins & Westgaard 1998). Structural adjustment policies advised by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund resulted in the retreat of state subsidies in an effort to draw the country into a free market enterprise. The increased urbanization, education and exposure to the media combined to raise the levels of consumption among rural families (Ibid, 1998). Scholars document a marked change in family life particularly in rural Egypt. Some were to note the subtle changes from extended to nuclear families. Others chose to reflect on the changing role of women, now encouraged to venture outside the home as a consequence of strategies of development programs. Judy Brink's (1987) work shares Al Qamah and Al Tayeb's interests in examining the effects of women's work and education on the structure of the family. She studied the effects of greater access to education and non-agricultural work on family dynamics in a village in Giza. Brink observed that educated wives of men employed in non-agricultural wage-work enjoy new privileges, autonomy and decision-making power in the family, decreasing that of their husbands and mothers-in-law. Brink even describes a reversal in the roles of daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, whereby the latter now renders childcare and domestic services to the former (143). According to Brink,

young village women who have received a “Western-oriented education” find nuclear households more desirable, demanding this arrangement before accepting a marriage proposal. Brink maintains that these unions are characterized by companionate relationships and gender equality between spouses. Brink evaluates this shift positively and believes it results from increases in female education and labor participation. An inclination to extol the virtues of nuclear families versus extended families, and to represent working women as more ‘modern’ than those occupied with house work is prevalent in the literature. This is congruent with contemporary market-making policies encouraging the nuclearization of the family and embodying a shift towards the creation of a pool of mobile labor.

A number of other scholars provided alternative views about female participation in the labor force. Rather than join the debate over the pros and cons of women’s work, these studies focused more on the social factors that contextualize the debate. Resonating with some of Nayel’s (1985) work, Mervat Hatem (1986) examines the barriers posed by some Islamists to women’s work. She explores the creation of a neo-conservative gender ideology in Egypt which effectively bars women from the labor force. This ideology, she argues is supported by both Islamist groups and the state. Despite their diversity, Islamists, Hatem maintains, uniformly prescribe a sexual division of labor and define women principally as ‘private’ actors (Hatem 1986, 422). At the same time, she points out that economic conditions necessitate dual-incomes for many families. Thus cultural norms discouraging women’s work and the requirements of economic survival continue to pose a dilemma for most women. Hatem contends that Egypt’s ‘regression’ to traditional family forms has now become enshrined in state law as a result of Islamists’ pressures for the reform of Egypt’s Personal Status Laws, the basic legal family code in the country.

Barbara Ibrahim (1985) also emphasizes the conflicting roles of economic necessity and cultural norms as significant factors determining the rate of female labor participation. She argues however, that the high demand for female labor often takes precedence over cultural barriers, which in the past prevented women from joining the work force. Through a survey conducted in 1977 and 1978, among women employed in public sector factories Ibrahim contends that the degree of financial need as motivation for work varies according to a woman's marital status. Her study shows that women, who turn to work after marriage and childbearing, do so because of the increasing expenses of child rearing and education. On the other hand, those who had begun work prior to marriage attempt to overcome financial crisis. Ibrahim places women's labor force participation squarely in the domain of family economic strategies.

Later work continued to analyze the obstacles to female participation in the labor force. Judith Cochran (1992) observes that the rates of employment among educated Egyptian women are low, despite what appears to be encouragement from family and state. She attributes this to three factors. First, social custom equates women's work with poverty, thus discouraging women from pursuing a career. Second, like Hatem (1986) and Nayel (1985), Cochran points out that Islamist trends are a strong deterrent to employment for Egyptian women. Third, Cochran pinpoints a contradiction in the relation between the family and women's employment. She maintains that whereas female participation in the workforce increases the family's access to income and accumulation of resources, the family's demand for a mother's unpaid labor competes with the demands of a job. Informal labor such as care for dependents and household production often lays a much stronger claim to a woman's time. Cochran criticizes the state's educational system, which she characterizes as "western" for having failed to reconcile the social

and economic roles of women. In the meantime, she argues, women remain frustrated by the competing demands of the market and the family.

More recent work by Barbara Ibrahim and Diane Singerman (2001) supports these conclusions by suggesting that many unmarried women work to prepare for the costs of marriage, subsequently withdrawing from the labor force once that goal has been met. Ibrahim and Singerman estimated the average cost of marriage in 1998 to be four and a half times the GNP per capita. For those living under the poverty line, the proportion is 15 times of the annual household expenditures. Brides today report greater sharing of costs with their grooms than cohorts who married earlier; meeting these costs is possible through participation in the workforce prior to marriage.

Egypt's economic reform and structural adjustment program of the 1990s is the backdrop for the recent discussions of women's labor force participation. Nagah El Bassusi (2001) investigates the experiences of young women recently employed in factories of two urban and one rural site. Al Bassusi, supports the work of Ibrahim and Singerman (2001), and argues that marriage is an important consideration in the decision to work, which is not viewed as an alternative to marriage, but rather a means of meeting potential partners and contributing to the costs of marriage. Whereas many respondents in El Bassusi's study reported an eagerness for greater autonomy, the opportunity to leave the home, meet with peers and earn money, these respondents considered the work exploitative and only acceptable for a short period before marriage.

Studies also deal with the negative nature of some of the opportunities open for women in the labor force, echoing the international debate against globalization. Toth (1993) examines the "feminization of labor" in rural Egypt. He argues that despite internalized notions of abilities

innate to each sex, as well as codes of honor and modesty, individuals regularly perform the tasks of the opposite sex (214). Toth's contribution lies in his illumination of the ways in which employers maintain stereotypes of gendered work in order to depress wages and reduce labor costs. In this context, male labor migration is convenient for employers because it crowds women into certain labor-market segments, thereby lowering wages in the long-term (223). The competition created by capital between men and women over work, transfers conflict into the domestic realm of gender relations. Competition also creates resentment and resistance to women's work from a cultural perspective (224). Kamran Asdar Ali's (1998) work on gender roles, also underscores this male fear of female job competition. Ali similarly argues that this fear converts social and economic problems into tensions within the gender dynamics of the family (Ali 1998, 173).

Thus according to the various scholarly studies mentioned in the above section, financial necessity, cultural norms and Islamist trends pose the biggest challenges to female labor participation. As a consequence, family structure is reshaped, modified and reshuffled to accommodate these powerful factors which form an ever-changing context against which the family is continuously pitted.

Patriarchy and Family Structure

While increasing female participation in the labor force may have affected the nature of the Egyptian family, some of the following work which tends to be more descriptive than analytical, characterizes the family as overwhelmingly patriarchal. Echoing the early work of Hamed Ammar (1954), the bulk of the scholarship produced both in Arabic and English, provides numerous case studies allowing for a rich analysis of the family structure defined within

the strictures of patriarchy. One central theme in these studies, examines the transition from extended to nuclear families and its impact on household dynamics. During the 1990s the debate on the status of women in the family intensifies in the English-language work, and in the Arabic work male labor migration becomes a major concern.

In their examination of gender dynamics and the family structure, Nawar, Lloyd and Ibrahim (1995) argue that socialization within extended families produce women who are less autonomous than men, and who tend to place familial interests above their own personal interests. This continues to be the case even when women are employed. Numerous factors, however, are currently contributing to an overall increase in women's autonomy. The study includes among them, the nuclearization of family arrangements, higher marrying age for women, greater female educational attainment and women's increasing contribution to household budgets. The authors demonstrate that such factors result in greater influence for women in the selection of their marriage partners, use of contraception and decision-making regarding childbearing and child rearing. Despite their optimism, the authors do not deny the agency of parents in controlling the outcome of critical choices pertaining to daughters which later determines these girls' autonomy. The authors' attention to women's autonomy and decision-making power emerges from their interest in population policy as it arose in the wake of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. The authors assume that if women have the authority to take decisions they will opt for family planning and restriction of fertility, presumably because this is in their best interest.

Judy Brink makes a similar argument earlier in 1987 when she contends that educated and workingwomen achieve greater status and benefits in the household with respect to their domestic duties, control of household budget and relationships with husbands and in-laws³.

Brink focuses further on the changes in intergenerational power, where the new generation struggles to break away from domination by their elders. Husband-wife relationships are described by Brink as authoritarian in nature, being further affected by the lack of time couples spend together (Brink 1987, 138). Women who marry into extended families have very little autonomy and decision-making power as both their husbands and their mothers-in-law restrict their physical and financial mobility. The study shows that young women's autonomy and decision-making power increase, however when they reach menopause (Brink 1987, 139).

While most authors also attest to shifts in women's status in the Egyptian family, not all agree that such shifts represent gains for women. Marcia Inhorn (1997) maintains that the increasing urbanization of rural Egypt has caused the denigration of women's position in the family. In her view, rural-urban migration has resulted in the loss of women's traditional productive roles in the household economy, where the nuclearization of the urban family created a new isolation for women. In stark contrast to Brink (1987), Inhorn recounts the benefits of extended family arrangements from which women could draw on support networks providing them with some alternative against total dependency on husbands (Inhorn 1997, 195).

On a broader level, the literature on Arab families includes a number of contributions by scholars who have departed from the Orientalist portrayal of the Middle Eastern family as the victim of patriarchy, which not only mistreats women and allows them to be objectified by their husbands and in-laws, but is portrayed as also a system which allows for no agency for individuals. Instead scholars as Altorki (1986 & 2000), Haugaard-Bach (1998), Inhorn (1997) and Joseph (1993 & 1994) attempt to examine family relations in their own right thus presenting a variety of new ways from which to examine the family in the Arab world.

While patriarchy is still held in the literature as the structural definition of the family in Egypt, studies reflect a variety of perspectives when it comes to describing family relations and patriarchal dynamics. Gender roles played out in the family reflect gender ideologies and norms that prevail among the wider population. Bahira Sherif (1999) looks at gender contradictions in family relations. Relying on data from ethnographic work conducted among upper middle class families, she contends that gender hierarchy is more myth than it is reality. With economic pressures compelling them to seek employment outside the home, women must navigate between public expectations to conform to the gender ideology of the public, and the need to contribute to the family income. Sherif is particularly concerned with Islamic provisions for married women which obligate their husbands to provide them with financial security. According to Sherif, this ‘religious-legal marriage model’, which dominates married life in Egyptian families, appears to leave no room for shared income between husbands and wives. Her findings show that wives expect that because they assume part of the traditional male role of provider, their husbands should share in domestic duties at home. Thus, as a result of their inability to perform traditional gender roles, husbands and wives find themselves in a state of frustration due to conflicting gender values and expectations. Sherif argues that women negotiate this tenuous gender balance by pursuing several strategies: donning the veil, working with husbands in the same workplace and participating in all-women religious groups in which they demonstrate their piety.

Heba El Kholy (1997) takes another approach in her examination of “everyday forms of resistance” or ways in which women deal with gender politics in poor Cairene families, emphasizing women’s agency through case studies of girls and women’s pursuit of education for themselves and their daughters. She stresses the magnitude of the struggles marginalized women face on a daily basis, mainly poverty as well as the burden of cultural and moral expectations (El

Kohly 1997, 3). The range of strategies which these women adopt, explains El Kholy, encompass actions such as disruption, deception, negotiation, avoidance and accommodation, in a combination of short and long-term strategies. As subordinated women in society, they are forced to act within the ideological and structural limits of patriarchy, which oppresses them but simultaneously shapes their resistance and effectiveness (El Kohly 1997, 4). The author draws on Gramsci arguing that women's consciousness is shaped by the contradictory values and views reflecting the dominant group as well as the practical experiences of the women themselves (El Kohly 1997, 5). El Kholy emphasizes the importance of the cultural idioms that women and men use to denote notions like resistance, domination, agency and discontent (El Kohly 1997, 11).

The later work in this strand of the family literature seems to reach consensus that patriarchy, perhaps more elusive and less menacing than initially believed, will often mutate into new forms under the influence of changing external forces affecting family members. Meanwhile authors contend that, women as members of families are often able to find agency within the family by working through its hierarchical power relations. On the other hand studies have shown that celebrations of women's gains in education and work do not always translate into benefits for women.

The theoretical assumptions put forth by Brink (1987 & 1995), Nawar et al (1995) and others are challenged by an alternative perspective which Kamran Asdar Ali (1998) puts forth in his work. In a thorough review of the existing literature, he states that whereas women's autonomy, decision-making and access to wage labor are regarded as emancipatory, these views often detach women from their family and community contexts. With ethnographic data collected from a village in Sharqiyyah, Ali explores how constantly shifting social contexts alternate between bolstering and challenging existing gender inequality in the family⁴. Ali

argues for a more nuanced investigation of the impact of male migration on women's work-roles which should take account of the complexities of class, household structure, age, etc. of different women. The decrease in oil prices in the last two decades caused migration to the Persian Gulf to become a less lucrative endeavor for the unemployed. This has caused many migrants to return to Egypt. With economic conditions becoming more difficult at home, financial need continues to exert pressure on women to also seek employment outside the home. Ali interprets these changes in familial gender roles to have dire consequences for women. Although men's roles as providers and their authority in the home are challenged, women are deprived of protection and other benefits of the patriarchal bargain (Ali 1998, 173).

Often overlooked in other scholarship, Ali highlights the negative effects of male migration on the emotional bonds between separated spouses (177). Unlike Brink (1987), he does not view marital relationships between Arab spouses as being devoid of caring and mutual support. Ali draws upon the argument of Judith Tucker (178) to critique the assumption that relationships between men and women lack love and support, a recurring theme in Orientalist literature on the Arab family.

In an earlier examination of the effects of migration on family structure, Mary Fadel-Girgis (1983) drew on existing demographic data, participant observation and interviews with a number of elderly Cairenes to investigate family support for the elderly in Egypt. Though she considers social and material support of the elderly, her main emphasis is on the achievement of positive psychological health and morale among the elderly. Fadel-Girgis points out that despite the social position enjoyed by the elderly in society today and the expectation that children care for them, children are prevented from doing so by contemporary urban conditions. First, she explains, international and internal migration has weakened the rural extended family which

typically supported the rural elderly. The demand for old age homes has risen as a result of these problems despite the attendant stigma for adult children and elderly alike. Fadel-Girgis concludes with a number of recommendations including preserving the strong spirit of family relations. Another is to socialize children into taking responsibility for their parents in their old age (Fadel-Girgis 1983, 591). Fadel-Girgis's account is a rare contribution to family studies, one which explains the role of the elderly, linking that to the socio-economic transformations which the Egyptian family is undergoing today⁵.

Contributing to the discourse on the effects of migration on the Egyptian family in the Arabic-language work, Ayman Onsy (1997) and Karima Khattab (1996) similarly agree that the migration of males to the Gulf has been a major factor in the feminization of the family. Onsy links –what he sees as- the disintegration of the Egyptian family to male emigration. He also argues that migration has caused the family's overall loss of importance and has transferred the responsibility of bringing up the children to other institutions. Khattab, however, includes in her study the psychological impact of migration on the father himself, thus supporting Onsy's conclusions. Safaa Beheri (1997) is concerned with the school performance of teenage children whose fathers are absent. Her study, which was conducted on a sample of 500 participants, concluded that the negative impact of the father's absence increases with the decrease in socioeconomic level and is exacerbated when the mother is uneducated. These studies underscore the importance of both parents' roles in rearing children especially among underprivileged families, continuing the discourse launched by Hamed Ammar's description of his native village in 1954.

Planning the Family

This section includes scholarship related to fertility and demographic trends as well as research investigating the role of the family as the institution connecting the individual to the state. Several works considering the family as the basis of the nation-state were written before the scope of this review, possibly instigated by the Egyptian revolution of 1952. Scholars and literary writers took to documenting Egyptian social life, creating a conceptual framework for discussing the family's role in building the Arab Republic of Egypt. Diab (1966), Ammar (1954), Gheith (1962) and Al Khashab (1959) all underscore the importance of the family unit in defining the relationship between the individual and the socio-political environment. Many authors also pay particular attention to documenting various traditions and customs, especially with regards to marital relations and marriage ceremonies.

More recent research on family planning comes from the English-language body of work. Foremost in this group are studies which discuss family connections to the political sphere. Samer Karanshawy (1997) studied the 1995 parliamentary elections by carrying out ethnographic work in a rural Delta village. Karanshawy found that family affiliations of parliamentary candidates were major determinants in the voting behavior of villagers. Candidates use wealth, family connections and marriage to create and maintain allegiances. Karanshawy argues that whereas the state tries to weaken this structure it also tries to exploit it. Political loyalty based on family affiliation has also been partially uprooted by Islamic movements, which, El Karanshawy observes, parallel family structures. Extending this type of analysis to the economic sphere, Malak Rouchdy (1998) and Kathy Glavanis (1990) work examine the importance of family relationships to economic success. Rouchdy interprets family

contacts as strategies for survival, while Glavanis argues that the constraints of this system impede the development of the country's economy.

Homa Hoodfar (1997) shares Rouchdy and Glavanis's interest in pursuing the nature of family and political relations. In her work, Between Marriage and the Market she defines the family as the mechanism by which individuals build social, financial and political assets. Hoodfar analyzes ethnographic data collected from among young families from two working class neighborhoods in Cairo. Like Hatem (1986 & 1988) and Nawar et al (1995), Hoodfar characterizes Egyptians as household members rather than autonomous individuals. She places special emphasis on marriage practices among the urban poor as she considers marriage a central institution for the development of individuals into adulthood and to self-realization. Applying the method of participant observation, Diane Singerman (1997) concludes that the family is the basis of the political institutions available to the poor. Singerman argues that while these informal, family-based networks are largely unaccounted for in mainstream political science literature, they integrate the private units of household and family into the public realm. Among poor families, these networks are a collective resource carefully cultivated over time, and individuals must protect their place in the family in order to claim benefits of its support, legitimacy and power. As such, Singerman argues that further reproduction of the family is a major preoccupation of poor families.

While Singerman speaks of the importance of fertility in informal institutions, one of the most substantial state interventions has been family planning programs. In Planning the Family Egypt: New Bodies, New Selves Kamran Ali (2001) discusses the gap between the policy goals of the state and the realities of individuals' lives. His ethnographic field data suggests that people resist the state's family planning programs. He goes on to say, that the national family

planning program encourages people as individual parents to choose small nuclear families. Ali argues that the main failure of the state has been in its assumption of autonomous, rational individuals, when in fact individuals are subject to communitarian and familial control. The national family planning program is couched in language portraying family planning as an individual whose behavior promotes national interests. Ali maintains that this argument will not work given the power the family exercises over an individual's choices. Hind Wassef's (1996) work, Constructions of Gender in Middle and Secondary School Curriculum in Egypt also investigates the nature of the state's involvement in creating images of the family. Wassef analyzed gender messages contained in the textbooks of the Egyptian Ministry of Education's preparatory and secondary school curricula. The author argues that the curriculum perpetuates the role of women as mothers and housewives to reinforce the state's constructed framework for the family

The structure of Egypt's population is a topic of central importance to the field of demographic studies. A brief selection of these studies is mentioned here, chosen for their success in evaluating the social and cultural determinants of population structure and growth, and especially with regards to women's fertility and the social pressures on young women to demonstrate their fertility. In a report on marriage and reproduction in two Egyptian villages, Leila El Hamamsy (1994) researches the social and cultural factors influencing the age of brides at marriage. According to El Hamamsy, the fear of being labeled a spinster or barren motivates many young women to marry early, despite the existence of laws prohibiting the marriage of girls under the age of 16. The social value placed on women's reproductive ability is also the focus of Marcia Inhorn (1997) who studies the pressures of motherhood among poor urban Egyptian women. She marshals anthropological field data from a sample of lower class

Alexandrian women to demonstrate how conjugal relationships and identity politics affect fertility. Childcare is not naturalized as a woman's occupation, but is also considered the working class woman's only legitimate job (Inhorn 1997, 196). Women, argues Inhorn, do not achieve full personhood, womanhood and adulthood unless they experience motherhood, viewed to be a "natural" personal gratification for women (1997, 194).

These examples from the literature on the Egyptian family structure point to the degree of pressure members of the family and government institutions exert on women to influence their reproductive decisions. While the state has tried to change the 'ideal' of the family, the scholarship indicates that its success has been limited due to a lack of understanding of the current context of the family in Egypt. This section reveals that the family is still regarded as the pivotal axis around which Egyptian society revolves- one which determines not only a woman's value as the source of reproduction, but also the man's role as the able provider. However, changing socio-economic conditions in Egypt pose a challenge to these social norms as phenomena including migration, the feminization of poverty, overpopulation- all contribute to the weakening of the position of the family; once represented by Lane (1908) and Ammar (1954).

Conclusion

In this brief literature review we identify three thematic groupings, with examples of the major works and arguments within each theme. The works included here reflect the contemporary nature of the literature of family and family-related topics in which historical inquiries are relatively rare. Geographically, the literature includes analysis of evidence derived from sources throughout Egypt, though Upper Egypt could be considered underrepresented.

Some topics have been heavily analyzed from one perspective, with little attention given to other angles. In one example, migration has been heavily analyzed from the perspective of its impact on the people left behind in Egypt, but rarely from the perspective of those migrants in their new settings. In addition, while few authors failed to draw comparisons between rural and urban families, and between families of varying socioeconomic status, none but those using quantitative data considered regional variations among families.

This introductory review is by no means comprehensive. The literature extends in a variety of directions beyond the scope of a short review. The richness of work reflected in the variety of disciplines, interests and attention of scholars to the nature of the Egyptian family in a changing society cannot be captured in a single review. Some conclusions can be made from this literature review, which nevertheless remain at the broadest level. Scholars point out that family roles have been challenged by socio-political transformations in Egypt of the past half a century. Gender roles and family dynamics have also shifted with women entering the work force in great numbers. The increasing levels of female education, the fluctuating levels of male migration and the increase in women's participation in the labor force are all changes which have proved to be the defining feature of the socio-political and economic environment. Moreover, development agendas and nationalist policies continue to influence the production of scholarship by shifting research interests to those relevant to their current interests. Perhaps no two examples can best illustrate this than the work of Lane (1908) and Ammar (1954).

Chapter Five

Endnotes

Literature Review: Egyptian Families

1. The authors also arrive at a useful classification of the single-person household, basic family unit, nuclear family household, extended family household and composite household which exist in contemporary Egypt (Khedr and Zeini 2001, 147).
2. Kuttab is a religious formal schooling that was common in most countries of the Middle East and North Africa prior to the advent of missionaries their formal schooling systems. Kuttab teachers were religious scholars who taught wide-ranging topics in addition to Islamic learning and Qur'anic recitations (editor's note).
3. As soon as a young man gains access to an independent income and has the means to do so, however, he establishes a separate nuclear family. Nuclear households are desirable in the view of most young couples, particularly among women who have received "Western-oriented education," according to Brink (142). Indeed, the struggle of the new generation to break away from domination by its elders is a theme that remains just beneath the surface in Brink's account.
4. Ali cites numerous inquiries into the impact of male migration to women's work.
5. Rapid urbanization and the pressures this creates on services, and particularly on housing, has impacted the "structure, values, and capacity of the [urban] Egyptian family ... and the position of the elderly within it" (Fadel-Girgis 1983, 590). Fadel-Girgis examines the spatial, financial, time and energy constraints in providing moral and material support for the elderly in families of varying socioeconomic status.

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Comparative Analysis of Research on Family in Lebanon*

Zeina Zaatari (2004)

In conference after another and press release after another, Lebanese politicians and journalists alike stress the importance of the 'family'. The Arab and Lebanese media in 2004 and 2005 seemed to concentrate on the role of women in society and the number of women in public offices specially when elections were near and women's conferences were taking place in Beirut. Government officials like former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri¹ and parliamentarian Nayla Moawad, reiterated promises of improving the status and role of women as a venue to improving the lot of families. Conferences and public speeches become sites where notions of women and of the family are produced and reinforced. When family is discussed, it is often assumed that women are being discussed and vice versa, as most public and academic discourses reinforce an automatic, often labeled natural association between the two. Academic, official and political writings on Lebanese society, political structure and economic relations almost always preface their discussion with an expression on the importance of family as the main unit of Lebanese society. It is rather surprising or perhaps rather convenient, that despite the stated importance of family by politicians, academics, journalists and religious leaders, research on family in Lebanon is meager and obscure.

In the chapter that follows, an emphasis will be placed on the theoretical frameworks used to understand and write about Lebanese families. First a brief overview of the status of the research and the general trends will be presented. Second, a theoretical periodization is presented. The most dominant school of thought affecting most research on Lebanese families has been the functional/structural approach that continues to permeate even recent research.

Other schools of thought that will be addressed are modernization theory, western psychoanalytic theory and its critiques, and historical. Finally, a presentation of thematic themes and site of family construction will be outlined including: legal and custom framework, war and conflict, conferences and surveys, and 'other' families.

Introduction

Literature on Lebanese families is largely based in non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) attempts at understanding local needs around for example family planning and various health issues. Other literature has been mostly speculative in nature, rarely based on comprehensive studies or extensive research, with the exception of few consistent researchers like Suad Joseph, Akram Khater, Jean Said Makdisi and Najla Hamadeh. Writing from the fifties to the seventies was predominantly functionalist, functionalist-structuralist, and positivist in its theoretical analysis of families of Lebanon. Remnants of these theoretical frameworks, as will be discussed later, continued throughout the years until the present; although more recently they have received some challenges from other schools of thought.

The effect of prolonged years of war during the seventies and eighties (both civil and with Israel) on the state and its various institutions is strongly seen in the lack of funding for research institutions and the failure of, at a minimum level, conducting surveys and statistical analysis of the population. The absence of the role of the state in promoting research about its subjects cannot be underestimated. Few studies were conducted during this period and most remained positivist with little exchange and comparison with theoretical frameworks being innovated elsewhere. At the same time, the weakness of the state entailed a weakness of its monitoring and disciplining power allowing researchers ample freedom in the topics and

locations of studies. Therefore the nature of the Lebanese state has played a complex role vis-à-vis funding and research on families. Funding by international institutions for research declined tremendously between 1975 and 1990 and only started picking up since 1997 with the lift of the travel ban by the United States government. Conditions of war also made it hard to conduct any legitimate national surveys or in-depth studies of areas construed as ‘dangerous zones’. In addition, the political turmoil forced an interest in political structures and processes with family being only tangentially implied in those research projects.

This review cannot but be a reflection of the paucity and weaknesses of research on Lebanese families. It will however, highlight the recent contributions of studies focusing on gender and modernity in postcolonial societies for alternative approaches. In the following pages, I will trace some of the studies conducted on family in Lebanon. This exposition is not comprehensive of all the studies that have been undertaken but it provides an overview of certain trends as it covers research conducted in Arabic and in English.

Writing Paradigms Periodized Theoretically

Research on family in the Arab world including Lebanon, particularly between the forties and eighties, has generally fallen within the positivist and orientalist theoretical frameworks, with few noted and recent exceptions that will be discussed later. In a review of anthropological research in the region, Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) states that most of the early research conducted had been functional in its theorizing and Orientalist in its politics. It targeted certain ‘hot research areas’, which included friendly political regions like Morocco and Yemen and marginal

geographic areas within countries, like tribal or very rural areas rather than major cities with complex governance systems. She argues “that anthropological writing shapes a Middle East of its own, fashioned out of conventions, standards of relevance, imaginative and political concerns, and zones of prestige” (Abu-Lughod 1990: 93). In a typical Orientalist writing, homogenizing convoluted representations of the Arab world and for our purposes here ‘the Arab family’ provided the groundwork and textual referencing for future representations and material relationships. Whereas other approaches namely historical and psychoanalytical have been the told of analysis recently, a variety of functionalist and structuralist perspectives continue to pervade more recent research.

In terms of family and family relations, the assumptions had been that family is the basic unit of society borrowing from European constitutions since the mandated countries were modeled after their colonizers. Family loyalties and ties were seen as an obstacle towards modernization and becoming a fully developed nation-state. Even when family loyalties were not seen as a major impediment to modernization, they were nonetheless perceived to be a decaying element that will soon be replaced with other types of social relationships and ties more suitable to nation/state modeled after western nation/states. Samir Khalaf (1968) saw the transition away from family and kinship ties as an ‘inevitable’ one, where an emphasis on family associations within urban structure is but a phase (even if a functioning and useful phase).

Functionalism/Structuralism/Positivism

The trend of positivism in the social sciences accompanied by Orientalist political and ideological schools of thought has impacted the kind, quality as well as quantity of research on families in Lebanon. In this part, I will consider research and studies that analyzes families from

the functionalist, structural-functionalist, and/or positivist approach². Such theorists saw the family often as a unit of society without debate. The ways in which families are constituted and constitutive of popular, academic and religious discourses, of societal structures and of the processes of state formation are rarely of investigative interest. “The family is the basic unit of society” (1965, 25), declares Jamal Karam Harfouche in a study of low-income families in Beirut, Lebanon. Broad sweeping generalizations were made about the kinds of relations that exist between members of families and the impact that that has on the health of infants, the aim of the study.

Functionalist/Structuralist Approach, Research of the Fifties to the Seventies: Young and Shami (1997) criticize this normative approach that attempts to “delimit a set of cultural precepts which, through socialization and social control structure the behavior of individuals” (1997, 4). The assumption is that people of particular cultures will behave and act in accordance with what the culture prescribes. Similarly, in the study by Harfouche (1965) the variables taken to understand differences of behavior are an assumed set of ethnic and religious grouping or characteristics. The study followed some 365 women of low-income status into their homes and their clinic visits at the American University Hospital by way of understanding the social structure of the family and “the feeding, growth and illness patterns of infants during the first eighteen months of life” (Harfouche 1965, 1). This trend of unquestioning of the categories of analysis is not exclusive to family studies but extends to many social units of society. In the same study for example, Harfouche analyzed these patterns among three ethnic/religious categories (Armenians, Maronites, and Sunni Muslims) without any discussion of the choice and the groupings and how they came to be. Families were also distinguished in this study based on several characteristics

namely whether they are extended or nuclear, whether they are polygynous or not, and whether they are consanguineal (indicating that husband and wife are relatives of some degree or another).

The normative approach also relies on ‘normative statements’, like folk sayings and proverbs, to support theoretical claims of the structure and nature of families. In an article on group behavior in village communities in Lebanon, Afif Tannous (1942) explains how family is seen as the main and primary group entity for identification for members of a village. The circles of identification after family widen to include religious affiliations and then village/community (Tannous 1942, 238). Tannous indicates that what is dominant in Lebanon is “the joint family, a larger family group consisting of the parents, their children, the paternal grandparents, the paternal uncles and their families, and unmarried paternal aunts” (1942, 232). An obvious patrilineage arises ignoring any ties to maternal kin. He derives these conclusions from an analysis of proverbs, swearing expressions, names of people and forms of address and marriage and conflict resolution. We learn thus that family is an important anchor of ones identity in Lebanese society, and that ones immediate family always comes first in conflicts with others (be they extended family members, community members or religious community members). The reliance on proverbs and sayings, Young and Shami (1997) argue is methodologically flawed as “it draws indiscriminately on a large corpus of normative statements, some of which contradict each other and some of which support each other, and it does not place them in social context” (1997, 5). In what ways are those proverbs and the enacting, the narrating and praxis of such proverbs, constitutive of the making of identity that is primarily focused within family circles? Thinking of proverbs as public discourses on and around family relations while linking them to particular social and historical contexts can be an avenue by

which such research moves away from description and classification and into analysis and understanding.

Edwin Prothro and Lutfy Diab (1974)³ were critical of the earlier evolutionary models of family development and of the early representations of the Arab family. “I was also struck with the extent to which the classical, stereotyped picture of the Islamic family did not agree with my own observations in the Middle East over a period of nearly two decades” (1974, vii) explained Prothro. Nonetheless, they adhered to a functionalist theory of the family, which they believed had “lent itself readily to the study of changes within a society as well as to comparisons among societies [in terms of family]” (1974, 2). The interviews for their study were conducted with wives (only Sunni Muslims were chosen) to focus on the features in the ‘family’ deemed to have changed recently due to ‘modernization’, contact with the West or with ‘foreigners’, as the authors explained. The study examined courtship, engagement and marriage by looking at the changes in the ways men and women choose spouses, the age of marriage, the period of engagement, the dowry and the marriage contract. They also evaluated the changes in extended family ties, in the role and appearance of women, the size of the family as well as divorce and polygyny. The markers thus of social change or modernization⁴ are reflected in those variables that already assume a unilineal trajectory that modern societies head towards. There are thus variables that the behavior and opinion of these women is measured against, which are based on European bourgeoisie family standards.

Other research on birth order in family (Tomeh 1972, 1976) also reflects similar normative and functionalist positions even as it attempts to discuss in more detail interfamily dynamic. In these studies, family is seen as a closed and unified unit. Relying on non-family persons for opinions, sources of knowledge, and advice is seen as an attempt to break away from

'the family' and is perceived to be a non-traditional process. In one study, Aida Tomeh (1976) tries to assess the impact of the birth order of daughters in the family on their exposure to "outside influences." Tomeh takes club membership and mass media exposure as the two variables that can act "as indicators of outside influence." She states, "The extent to which college girls of different order of birth are exposed to such influences is an indication of external forces permeating family life and a reflection of a change in the functions of the family" (1976: 153). The family is seen here as a closed unit with "outside" factors impacting members of the family. Changes in family members are believed to be only constituted by these 'external' discourses.

Fuad Khuri (1970) criticizes some of the shortcomings of functionalist theory in terms of explaining the institution of first cousin marriage (father's brother's daughter, FBD). He argues that the functionalist arguments of wealth, property and power as reasons or uses for the persistence of FBD are problematic. His research in two suburbs of Beirut indicates, "The social benefits which FBD marriage is supposed to achieve (property, power, modesty and honour) can equally well be obtained through exogamous marriage" (1970, 597). Instead, Khuri tries to show that "the particular achievement of FBD marriage is the way in which it perpetuates, after marriage, the same social relationships which prevailed before it" (597). This is a functionalist argument that still focuses on the role that FBD plays in family dynamics, but that takes its focal point the stability of the household (emotional and relational) in terms of the enactment of relationships rather than cultural assumptions regarding wealth and property (material). Both parties (the bride and the groom), although he refers largely to the young man, have already established a set of relationships with their in-laws (aunts and uncles) that are of a particular pattern (respect and obedience as opposed to joking relationship that the man supposedly has

with his mother's brother for example) that then does not require much adjusting after the marriage takes place. This then "nullifies the effects of marriage on the intensity of family relationships" (597).

The critique thus of the functionalist approach towards family is only in terms of which variable or which functions are deemed important to be considered. The emphasis in Khuri on balance and stability are among the most important landmarks of functionalist theory and the points of most major critiques. Khuri's analysis of the interfamily dynamic is based on generalizations about the relationship between a daughter and her father, her father's brother and his wife (her in-laws) and between a son-in-law and his uncle and wife. Assumptions about the introduction of 'outsiders' into the family are also abundant in Khuri's claims; often made with little substantiation. Khuri makes claims about conflicts and interests that appear to the reader arbitrary or based in Western psychoanalytical theory of family and dependency relations. For example, "The possibility of conflict between brothers, and between them and their father, increases with the marriage of sons to outsiders or distant relatives" (608); "Stranger-wives in the Middle East, are, not without reason, reputed to be responsible for strife between father and son, and brother and brother" (608); and "Much of the traditional conflict between mother-in-law (hama) and daughter-in-law (kinni) is derived from the fact that they work for opposed interests [one for the interest of the father and the other the son]" (610). The emphasis on maintaining harmony and order is seen as one of the main reasons for why FBDs are a preferred form of marriage (even when the sample shows that they only constitute 38 percent). "Here consanguine relationships so harmoniously fit into or take precedence over affinal ones that the only necessary serious adjustment to be made after marriage is that between husband and wife" (612).

Functional and Structural: Continued Legacies: Though some recent researchers have shifted their lens and are interrogating the complexity of family life and family dynamic in Lebanon, as we will see later, several studies still fall under the rubric of structuralism and functionalism. Zuheir Hatab (2001), considered to be one of the main scholars on Lebanese family, differentiated between al-‘a’ila and al-usra. He defined al-usra as the smallest social unit and the ‘a’ila as made up of several usar (plural of ‘usra) with cultural, blood and historical continuity. The understanding of the ‘a’ila stems from a tribal analysis of kinship. Hatab insists on a functionalist approach in his analysis indicating that the usra plays biological (reproduction), economic (production and consumption), emotional, educational and social functions. Khaled Amin (1997) defines family as the social unit that binds a male and a female for a lifetime with a relationship based in sexual relationship, love, hope, raising children and devotion. In a recent study on Arab family, Najm A. Najm (1994) indicates that he wants to undertake a structuralist functionalist analysis of the family. The family is defined as a social organization of humans found since eternity and as a natural social order. It is “the basic and natural unit of society and environment that allows for the growth and luxury of its members” (1994, 15). Najm takes no account of the numerous theories around the social constructedness of the family, of gender and sexualities. He insists on the social function of the family in society. Relationships between family members and the management of the household are seen as important arenas of research since earlier policies have often targeted individuals rather than families or family members. In this study, Najm focuses on the evolution of the family and on issues affecting family management. Whereas Najm’s study is a generalization on the Arab family, research focusing on the effects of the war on family dynamics specifically in Lebanon falls within the same paradigms.

Zuhayr Hatab (1997), "Basic Life Jobs of the Family," used a structuralist functionalist approach clearly describing the similarity between a biologically organ kept in balance and family in society. He discussed the variables that impact the ability of the family to succeed in performing its role in society. These included education, work, communication technologies, media and the variety of production and consumption techniques. The main functions of the family included reproduction, economic production and protection of family members, everyday care, socialization, emotional upbringing, and training members to be instrumental subjects of the society they live in. The author believed that certain ingredients are essential to ensure the ability of the family to achieve its goals. These include consensual marriage, self-confidence, financial security and commitment to a set of religious or moral beliefs.

Abdo Kaili (1997a, b) states that we often look at family through its role in society focusing on functions and roles externally. It is also important to focus on the internal mechanism of the family, how members are raised and how their personality develops, Kaili added. Every member of society develops first as an individual in the private space to be able to learn how to deal with the public space later on. The study focusing on the main cities of Lebanon and interviewing 400 people used closed questions (ranking and multiple choice options). The variables by which most answers were cross-referenced include regions (cities, Beirut East, Beirut West), ages (16-29, 30-44, 45- up) and socioeconomic status (upper, middle lower). The significance of these chosen variables and their ranges was not explained. Questions dealt with opinions towards unwanted behaviors, qualities that one wants to instill in ones children, important humanistic attitudes for education, religion, attitude towards violence, attitudes worth sacrificing for, attitude towards scientific advancements, roles and functions in families, family resources, criteria for choosing partners, best marriage age, preferred number of children, obstacles to marriage,

attitude towards civil marriage, priorities for the progress of family conditions in Lebanon, family problems, and basic language of the household. The questionnaire was then a mish-mash of ideas and topics. In terms of family roles and functions, interviewees were asked to state whether a particular function or task is done only by mother/father, primarily by mother/father or in partnership. The author concluded that around 50 percent, and sometimes more, believe in partnership and that it is hard for most tasks to be gender identified (only male or only female).

While reviewing the presented statistics, it becomes evident that in the rush to ensure that Lebanese families have become ‘modern’, the author chose not to combine certain statistics. For example, when asked about household chores, it became clear that most thought it to be the mother’s responsibility (80.3 percent if we combine those who answered that it is only the mother’s responsibility and those that answered that it is primarily the mother’s responsibility). Similarly, 70.8 percent thought that providing for the household (finances and material expenses of life) was either primarily or only the father’s responsibility. Categorically, how can we assume that there is a significant difference between “only” and “primarily” in the minds of the respondents? The choices given to the respondents in the survey are not exclusive. In question 11 that dealt with the criteria of choosing partners, respondents were asked to rank the criteria in terms of its importance or value. Qualities given included: moral characteristics, those involving personality, educational level, social background, family, profession, wealth and finally physical appearance. The researcher thus is insisting on a trajectory towards ‘modern’ behavior and attitudes on behalf of the Lebanese similar to their counterparts in the ‘west’.

Modernity and Social Change

There is an emphasis in some of the conferences, surveys and reports discussed later to insist on particular ideologies around the role that family plays; an insistence for example on change, with a subtext of progress and modernization. These commentaries are often in the form of reflections on the current status of women and the family and prescriptions for behavior. In Fathallah Mufti's (1991) study about divorce among Sunni women in Beirut takes an underlining approach that couples increased divorce rates with modernity. The study uses a particular set of variables to describe and understand divorce changes in society. Fathallah Mufti links increased divorce rates to women's education, work, relation to laws and modernity. On some level, the assumptions made here resonate with earlier discourses of 'modernization' that, whether coming from promoters of nationalism or westernization, discussed the role for the new woman and the new family for the future⁵.

Prothro & Diab (1974) argued that the traditional Middle Eastern family had been represented as 'extended, patrilineal, patrilocal, patriarchal, endogamous and sometimes polygynous'. They added "the pattern of family life in the Levant was usually described as that of the traditional Middle Eastern family until the end of World War I" (1974, 6). They reiterate other scholars stressing the dormancy of change in family life until the 1920s with the advent of the French Mandate on Lebanon. This exposure to 'foreigners' is deemed to be an exposure to modernity by the authors. "Exposure to modernity through other media has increased enormously in recent years. This growth is best documented in Lebanon" (Prothro & Diab 1974, 16). The study's whole outlook was to examine the changes occurring in those major Sunni Muslim cities in terms of various aspects of family life, like courtship, engagement, marriage and family ties. Their observations were strongest in Lebanon where they see a major trajectory

from tradition to modernity. Women were more able to choose their spouses, some family ties were weakening and there appeared to be decreasing trends of young marriage age and of veiling. “Has Lebanon reached a state of modernization which produces an increase in divorce rate, as in Europe and North America?” the authors asked (Porthro & Diab 1974, 174). The unilinear trajectory exemplified by the model bourgeoisie European family is very evident in these studies. An intricate examination of the meaning of modernity and tradition locally, of the transmission and infusion of ideals of family, of the historic and complex relationships between colonizers and subjects of the colony and local historic and economic context are all reduced to key descriptive variables (gleaned from superficial observation of western societies) that become the yardstick for the ‘progress’ of Lebanese society.

Some emphasis, however, was placed on changing values and attitudes towards family as part of a modernization process. The assumption is usually that Lebanese society due to its position between the ‘east’ and the ‘west’ has always been more open to change than other Arab societies. Within a discourse on modernization Muhammad Faour (1998) conducted a research study on The Silent Revolution in Lebanon: Changing Values of the Youth. In this book, the author explained what he perceived to be a silent revolution among the youths’ values in Lebanon. The research conducted in a couple of universities in Beirut between 1993 and 1996 focused on students’ opinions regarding family, war, religion, politics as well as other social issues. Faour indicated that students declared their first loyalty to the family and then to the extended family, then place of birth and then religion. Whereas identities, Faour claims, were multi-faceted, family remains the basic social institution, the strongest identity. He, nonetheless, discerns a decline of identification with the family’s opinion on major issues like war, religion and politics. In terms of relationships within families, “the data reveal signs of

democratization of the Lebanese family-mainly, a high level of the mother's participation in decision-making concerning family matters and a strong adherence by students to gender equality" (Faour 1998:111). Those changes are welcomed by Faour as a modernizing trend in the nation-state where ties drift from family to state and civil society. Ideas and practices fall then in one of two dichotomous positions, 'modern' and 'tradition'.

In a similar vein, Aida Tomeh (1972, 1976) based her studies on the assumption of modernity versus tradition. While evaluating the impact of birth order on the degree of dependency on family (1972) and the impact of birth order on club membership and media exposure (1976), her assumption was that reliance on family was a determinant of whether the daughter fell under 'modern' or 'traditional'. "The extent to which college girls of different ordinal positions perceive the family, as opposed to other adults outside the family, to be influential in the areas chosen for this study is assumed to be a reflection of a traditional orientation and an indication of the significance of the family. On the other hand, dependence upon nonfamilial persons serves, in part, as an indicator of outside influences and possibly a change in the functions of the family" (Tomeh 1972, 362).

Western Family Theory and Its Critiques

Traditional arguments and research around family and fashioning selves have also relied on a functionalist approach of psychological models of family relations, child development, reproductive rights and health as well as health concerns for members of the family or the family as a whole. Suad Joseph (1999) argues that earlier research attempting to analyze the Arab family (including the Lebanese family) often viewed it as dysfunctional. It was described as 'traditional,' in the sense of producing subjects that are not suited to 'modern' life. Since their focus was on the formation of a bounded and autonomous self, an emblem of modernity, family

structures that may produce different types of selves were pathologized. Arab families produced children that were too attached, incapable of being independent and autonomous decision-makers thus not suited for the 'modern' world of the twentieth century. Research on family well being has also used western theorists on the psychological development of individual family members and thus the family as a whole.

Ilham Kallab Bisat (1997) in a paper titled "Situations and Orientations of Family in Lebanon of Today" discussed the conditions of the family of Lebanon of the 90s. The author stated that the family is an ever changing, moving, interacting social unit. Building democracy started with the smallest social unit, the family, the author states. She then provided general diagnostic remarks that show that families are affected by the war crisis, economically, in terms of gender values and norms, increased celibacy and dealing with the media as the main educating competitor of the new generation. Mary Khury (1997), "Family: Making of the Individual and Humanizing Society," focused in her paper on the issues of emotions and love between family members as the mark that distinguishes families from other social institutions. These institutions now compete with the family to provide certain roles to the individual like identity, protection and transfer of knowledge. Nonetheless, the family has a basic role of love and everybody from the government to the individuals has a responsibility towards nourishing families. Both papers are commentaries on family life and its transformative role from a structural system or unit of production to ones of connectedness and emotional ties. The two articles, however, are general commentaries and do not involve research or studies and thus do not delve into the transformative process and the particular socio-historical context in Lebanon within which this supposed transformation takes place.

Understanding the ‘individual as a rational and autonomous actor only, often leads to misunderstanding of the intricate relationships within and without families that do structure the way individuals make decisions and understand that process. Social Change and Decision-Making: Family Planning in Lebanon (N.D.), a dissertation research conducted by Roxann A. Van Dusen, focuses on decisions making in a Lebanese village regarding Birth control in particular. The model used is a rational-actor model, where women’s decision-making ability is studied in a family-planning clinic. The emblem of a functional ‘healthy’ family in the earlier western psychology theory is one that is able to raise ‘independent’ children capable of making ‘rational’ decisions for the futures. Targeting children’s socialization, the future generations of the nation, was important for those attempting to ‘scientifically’ measure their development and for a ‘healthier’ family life. The Development of three to Six Year-Old Lebanese Children and Their Environment (1980), a study by Julinda Abu Nasr, Mary Makhoul and Iridi Lorfing, was conducted to establish a “strategy for a national study of the pre-school child, his or her family, and their common environment” (1). The report is of a small pilot study conducted in certain parts of Lebanon in an attempt to create a national study that would eventually impact policy making and planners in creating programs to aid families with minimal resources, to promote child care programs, and to define measures to protect children by looking at various variables like education and religion that affect the emotional, social, cognitive and familial aspects of a child’s development and the institutions providing care.

Suad Joseph’s (1993 a, b) work on the concept of relationality and connectivity transformed the debates around development and self-making from a focus on rational-actor models using functional theories to a focus on the interconnectedness within families and the relationship between families and various other social structures within any given society. Work

around these particular processes of constructing selves views the process as socially constructed as opposed to essential or ‘natural’. Joseph (1993b) defined connectivity as “relationships in which a person’s boundaries are relatively fluid so that persons feel a part of significant others” (467). This flows into people’s notions of rights, inter-family relationships as well as relationship to state structures, religious structures (particularly significant in Lebanon), and national structures (for example, contestations of Palestinian refugees’ national loyalties in Lebanon). Connectivity is not seen as an explanation or an excuse for dysfunctionality, which is how it has been described by western theorists of alternative models of subject making. Rather it is “a description of a process by which persons are socialized into systems that valorize linkage, bonding, and sociability” (1993a, 456). These relationships become constitutive of the social relationships of the Lebanese state and how it governs its subjects. Citizenship and citizenship rights are also a matter of relationships to the states and various state actors⁶.

Joseph also argues that connectivity is not necessarily patriarchal or oppressive. However, it is within a framework of a patriarchal society (premised on male and age hierarchy) and state structures that it becomes patriarchal connectivity, giving power to elders and men over youth and women.

Connectivity supported the production of selves who invited, required, and initiated involvement with others in the shaping of the self. Patriarchy privileged the initiatives, desires, and feelings of males and seniors. Coupled, connectivity and patriarchy supported the production of selves with fluid boundaries organized for gendered and aged domination in a culture that valorized kin structures, morality, and idioms in kin and nonkin relations” (468).

As becomes clear in Joseph (1999d) and Jean Said Makdisi's (1999) narratives, the process of self-making is fluid, continuous and deeply imbued with inter-family dynamics in the Arab World in general and in Lebanon in particular. The narratives also clearly articulate that connective relationships are not necessarily about domination, but are a process of love and power, where women have the ability to mold "matrifocal familial dynamics within ... patriarchal culture" (Joseph 1999d, 55). These concepts allow Joseph (1999b) to investigate the relationship between brother-sister in Lebanese families without adhering to an either/or position of analyzing the relationship as a manifestation of patriarchal relationships or romantically viewed as a safe haven within a cold authoritarian structure. Joseph argues "the brother-sister relationship became a critical vehicle for the socialization of males and females into culturally appropriate gender roles, thus helping to reproduce patriarchy" (123). Theorizing connectivity and relationality places emphasis on sibling relationship as well as parent-child relationship, the latter being the landmark of western psychoanalysis theory. Joseph found that parents and other members of the community often encouraged brothers and sisters to idealize and romanticize each other. This was expressed in cultural terms and idioms, in the expectations of duties and responsibilities long after each has established his or her conjugal family, and in the naming of children after the other's name. Unmarried sisters often devoted their lives to caring for their brothers and sisters sought the approval of brothers for their self-presentation. At the same time, this relationship was an expression of power-dynamics. "Training for relationships of power organized around gender; brothers and sisters were used in the family system and used each other to learn culturally appropriate hierarchal masculine and feminine and feminine roles and identities" (132). Moving beyond functional approaches and dysfunctionality helps us better

understanding gender dynamics, cultural norms and practices through an analysis of the intricacies of inter-family dynamics.

Historical Frameworks

Leila Dirany (1997), “Basic Life Jobs That the Familial Household Provides”, based her comments on a study conducted by Najwa Yahfoufi in 1989 regarding marriage and families. She stated that it is often the case that authority is in the hands of men who mostly control financial issues in the family. The mother’s role is often household management and raising the children and the way that she can participate more in decision-making is through a larger financial contribution. Usually, any study that deals with women’s role, status, and work is often related to family. Women in Lebanon are predominantly seen within the family context. This seems to be true of other family members as well, as most studies of family start by stating that family is the basic social institution in Arab society and for that matter in Lebanese society. Nonetheless, women are rarely described or analyzed outside of the family context. When they work, they are not studied as workers or employees, but as wives and mothers who work outside their home and then how it impacts the family. The Economic Contribution of Women and Its Effect on the Dynamic of the Family in Two Lebanese Villages (1985) was a study of two villages in the Western Biqa’a that attempted to look at paid and unpaid work that women provide to their families. The researchers found that this amounted to 5-25percent of the total household income. Starting from an assumption that income is an important factor impacting women’s productivity, the researchers found that with more income, women’s role as producer increased? Nonetheless, “their primary role as home-makers takes precedence over their role as producers of goods and services” (Lorfing & Khalaf 1985:26). The automatic link between increased income and ability to exercise power through decision-making in the family is

problematic. It constitutes a particular functionalist feminist school of thought that places financial independence as a main condition for emancipation. My research (Zaatari 2003) in South Lebanon with micro-credit institutions indicates that decision-making in the family is not always tied directly to financial contributions. In many instances women were borrowing money under the pretext of owning a small business, where in reality they were handing the money to their husbands or their sons who run the business. Without a fuller examination of family dynamics, inter-family relations as well as economic and political context historically, it is easy to reinforce a linear trajectory of female liberation.

Adele Abou Diab (1981) discusses the changes and continuity in family patterns in a Druze village in Mount Lebanon. The assumption of the study is that there have been transformations among Druze from one generation to the other in terms of their beliefs and practices around marriage and family. The study focuses on the wife's ability to make decisions and her ability to find alternative child care, an indication of outside involvement as the main indicators for change. Georgette Saleh (1994)'s study of family and social change in a small village in north Lebanon was based on narratives and open-ended interviews. The author focuses on the environment and geography of the town as elements informing the nature of social relationships. She follows lifestyle changes over three generations living in the village. Her study shows the linkages between economic transformations within the society and changes in family dynamic. She discusses the changes from a strictly agricultural work system to one focusing on agriculture, handcrafts, masonry and services in the second generation of the village. The age of the silk industry lead to many changes within the society. Eventually, immigration transformed social relations even further where many including women immigrated⁷ looking for

prosperity or escaping from war. The author argues that this transformed the society into a more individualistic one and the conjugal family type created fostered independency.

Akram Khater (2001) on the other hand rejects this simplistic attribution of ‘modern’ versus ‘tradition’. He argues that,

To varying degrees, both the European imperial and the indigenous discourse on the ‘modern’ came to depend on-and construct- absolute polarities of modern and traditional, secular and religious, rational and emotional. Within European imperialist narratives, these dichotomies were all located around a new colonial geography which separated the world neatly and profoundly into West and Orient. Many local-and later nationalist-discourses on the ‘modern’ reacted to this colonial mapping of the world by emphasizing their ‘modernity’ in the face of claims to the contrary (Khater 2001, 4).

Conferences, reports, and census conducted by universities and various institutions discussed below fall under this rubric of attempting in essence to ‘safe face’, reiterate that Lebanese society is modern and part and parcel of the twenty-first century. Khater instead understands the family, like other social concepts to be socially constructed and continuously changing. Families cannot be seen as static and uniform. “Instead, we find that the family has to be contextualized as yet another set of dynamic social relations between individuals of varying ages with rather unequal decision-making powers” (5). Khater attempts to understand how ‘women’ and ‘family’ are socially constructed within the dynamics of the processes of modernization. He examines home, family and the role of women that accompany the changes taking place in Mount Lebanon in the silk industry, immigration and return migration. In his analysis he insists on two trajectories. “First, we have to link social and cultural history in ways that connect discursive signifiers to social relations” (2001, 7). The connection thus between discourse and material reality of social

relationships is emphasized. “Second, we need to introduce a vertical view of class into our analysis of the multilayered language of ‘modernity’” (2001, 7). In his study, Khater takes a close look at the silk industry evaluating how this industry was gendered. As the silk export increased, the industry flourished and this prosperity was generated mostly with women’s hard labor. At one and the same time, this kind of work transgressed previous gender and class boundaries while it reinforced them. Their actions were constitutive of new social orders and value systems around family and interfamily dynamics. Working with men who were not family members stigmatized “factory girls” who worked in the small silk factory shops. At the same time this work allowed the women to challenge patriarchal and capitalist notions by aiming to increase their wealth.

Decline in the prices of silk globally (1870) affected the local industry and many faced with difficulties immigrated to the United States in search of work. Some women followed their relatives while others traveled on their own and worked as peddlers and shop workers. Khater then traces some of the re-immigration patterns as many migrants went back to their towns and villages. Those returning came back with their assumptions about their old home and the ‘mahjar’, which they had just left. The home they left had changed and transformed but in their minds it carried its own persistence. As subjects, they had also been transformed and thus they had to recreate themselves once again. Women’s journals were flourishing and they were promoting their own ideas about house, family, society and modernity. One of the avenues for women to participate in society was by extending their role as mothers from the domain of the ‘private’ or the ‘domestic’ onto the real of the ‘public’ or civil society.

Khater argues that women were rejecting those assumed boundaries between the private and the public that the nation-state building project promoted. Suad Joseph (1997) argues that

states create these distinctions by way of masking the regulating and monitoring of the 'domestic.' "By creating the domain of the domestic, the state constructs a particular sort of family system with legal privileges, however. The domestic can be seen as a state-imagined sphere deployed to define and police householding arrangements" (80). Women's work inside the home was transformed, Khater argues from "house" to "goddess" of the house (1999, 2001). Her role now was about managing the household and raising responsible citizens (good sons and daughters of Lebanon), in a prescription very similar to Qassim Amin's call in Egypt and the transformations taking place in Iran⁸. "Mothering society, as an extension of 'mothering' one's family became an avenue for departure from the confines of the home. These departures were made on singular and collective basis" (Khater 2001, 160). These practices of mothering society at the turn of the twentieth century continue to be acceptable and legitimate practices for women of Lebanon of today. Within secular and Islamist frameworks, the importance of the role of the mother in building family and in building society was reiterated by the women activists of South Lebanon and was also declared in some of the organizations' mission statements (Zaatari 2003).

Thematically Constituted

There are several notable areas that require mentioning briefly on their own due to the importance of the issues addressed. The theoretical schools of thought discussed above are infused in the thematic discussion to follow. In this section, I will focus on four areas: legal and customary rules, war and family, conference, surveys and reports, and 'other' families. It is my hope to show that there are many arenas that require further investigation and analysis that family relations are complex and cannot be reduced to a simple definition of patriarchy, patrilineality and endogamy.

Conferences, Surveys and Reports: Conferences on Lebanese family issues indicate that there is a heightened interest among professionals, politicians and scholars in the role that families play in Lebanese society and the making of the Lebanese citizen. Specifically during the post-civil war period, there was a renewed interest in understanding ‘the family’, ‘its needs’, and the effects or marks that the war left on families and their role in society. Government institutions such as the Ministry of Social Affairs or the Ministry of the Interior did fund several conferences and minor research studies. Nonetheless, the most direct result of these monographs has been to be stacked on the shelves of the libraries of universities, international institutions such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)⁹ and local non-governmental organizations such as the Family Planning Association (FPA)¹⁰. As a long time observer of Lebanese society, I notice that often times efforts are reproduced in collecting research and coming out with reports and statistics but governments, civil society associations and non-profit economic associations have at most paid lip service to the studies and attempts at real incorporation are yet to come.

One such conference, An-Numuw al-Sukany wa Tanzym al-'usra (Population Growth and Family Planning) in 1995, is a commentary on the recommendations of the UN Population Conference in Egypt. This commentary reiterates the problems that family and family planning suffer from in Lebanese society and provides some indicators of health, income and education among others. The government’s statistical department has attempted recently some studies that deal with family life. Conditions de Vie Des Menages dans la Region de Baalbeck-Hermel en 1997 (Conditions of life of Household in the Region of Baalbeck-Hermel in 1997) is a statistical survey that collected information on household composition, economic activity of family

members, the cost incurred by households (including lodging, health, education, transportation, debts, and general costs) and family revenues (including main, secondary and other professions). The census was conducted over a five-week period that supposedly covered all households in Baalbeck and Hermel. Answers to the survey were counted and laid out in tables, but analysis was not attempted. Categories were taken for granted as self-evident; family, household, income, among other variables are not questioned or interrogated but assumed.

Notre-Dame University conducted a conference in 1996 whose proceedings were gathered in the publication Family in Lebanon (1997). Various professional backgrounds were among the participants as an attempt to link policy makers, researchers, politicians and social activists. The conference included politicians involved in women's and family issues as well as activists from a variety of local and international NGOs, religious leaders along with scholars of sociology, psychology and law. A study was conducted before the conference as part of a project that aims to stress citizenship participation, reinforcing public space, building a scientific secular research path, reinforcing university role and providing information for university researchers to build on. The study was seen as the pre-cursor for the conference and was presented in some of the papers as well as in an issue of *Al-Raida*¹¹ (1997) on Women in the Arab Family.

Several studies organized by and for family planning work and associations focus almost exclusively on attitudes and perceptions. Even when the studies are conducted by academic, there is little deviation from a traditional quantitative approach that provides percentages and numbers but very little analysis of social change. Nur Kamil Dajani's study (1976) focused on the attitudes and practices of people in a town in south Lebanon regarding fertility and family planning. In 1974, Raja Saliba Tanas analyzed family planning attitudes and practices in Tyre, a city in south Lebanon. Both of these studies look into certain variables that are assumed to

measure a person's willingness to use family planning. They do not however delve deeply into inter-family dynamics or other concerns that may impact people's choices that do not fall within the framework of a rational-actor model. Faour's (1996) study of the attitudes towards the Family Planning Association's (FPA) work in the southern suburbs of Beirut in the nineties takes on a quantitative approach. The FPA study addresses fertility practices, evaluating what methods used by the FPA staff work and what does not. Another study by Illiyya (1984) focuses on the fieldworkers of FPA and their ability to interact with the community and promote awareness around contraception and the role of family in society. In Hatab's (1988) study of the attitudes of men towards family planning, men's attitudes are examined via questions regarding their beliefs around the role of family planning, the role of women in society, and in relation to their education and marriage age. However, the underlying assumptions in these studies of what an ideal or 'normative' family is are not questioned or interrogated on behalf of the staff or clients.

Constituted through Legal and Customary Frameworks: Whereas some studies focused extensively on legal and judicial aspects, concise interrogation of the implications on the social level, on the practice and beliefs were rare. Questions such as the ones that follow remained unvoiced and unanswered. In what ways do these laws impact the social institutions, the values and mores of the society, the relationships between families and among families? How do they affect the making of family members and of citizens in different historical moments of the development of Lebanese society? How are laws constituted in public discourse, at moments of crisis and war, and through individuals' practices? Lur Mughayzl's (1985) study focused on the constitution and the location of women in terms of labor, citizenship laws and some family laws. Al-Rifa'iy's study (1990) Family System¹² dealt generally with the issue of Personal Status Laws

in Arab countries and specifically in Lebanon as it relates to Islam and Christian theologies. The author observed that in the Lebanese constitution, the country is defined as a set of families. In Lebanon there were 17 sects, but 6 recognized religious courts¹³. The Christian courts include Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican, and the Muslim courts include Sunni (following Abi Hanifa), Shiite (following the Twelfth Imam Ja'afari sect) and Druze. The law of April 1951 declared that each of these sects would govern certain issues related to family life based on their own jurisprudence. Differences in terms of the domain of governance between the Christian and Muslim courts existed, according to Rifa'iyy. Whereas discussions of the theological context of those differences were tackled, the social implications were not discussed.

In her book, Huda Abed al-Baqi (1989) attempted an exposition of the problems that she perceives to be present in the Personal Status Laws, Religious Laws and Civil Laws and that impact women and children negatively. The problems that she listed include: 1- Polygyny for Muslims, 2- working women's problems, 3- abandoned child, 4- adoption in Islam, 5- poverty and double standard morality, 6- women's ignorance of her role in social struggle, 7- inequality between men and women due to customs and traditions, 8- religious jurisprudence that does not do justice to women, and 9- separation and abandonment of marriage for Christians. Implicit in her arguments is modernity versus tradition theorizing that presupposes a liberal autonomous subject. The author tried to explicate these problems in more details as they relate to each of the religious sects and courts in Lebanon always stressing that the laws have drifted away from the essence of the religions and the teachings of their prophets. Abdul-Baqi presumes that polygyny is a problem in general, rather than explore its context in Lebanon. Her base model is a nuclear and monogamous family, i.e. a western, ideal¹⁴ bourgeoisie family.

In a more complex study that takes into consideration social, historical and economic contexts as well as an analysis of social relationships, Najla Hamadeh (1999) addresses polygyny without necessarily promoting a particular value judgment of it. By looking at the practice comparatively among a rural Bedouins society and an urban Beirut society, Hamadeh analyzed the practice of co-wives. Hamadeh presents a complex image of women in an urban area where discourses of love, marriage and consumption are a product of local and global circles interacting. Co-wives among the Bedouins she studied in the Bīqā‘a valley worked together and had an amicable relationship in direct contrast to those in Beirut who resided in separate homes and had no contact with each other. She concludes that “the basis of this structural difference lies in the fact that the husband occupied a more central position in the practical and social lives of urban women than in those of Bedouin women and the self construction of urban girls is built around their future role as wives, whereas that of Bedouin girls is more enmeshed with their situation as daughters of their families (or tribes or ashirahs)” (1999, 156). While indicating that co-wives is not a common practice in Lebanon of today, Hamadeh is though more concerned with understanding the structural differences, the discourses and ideas around the practice and the effect all of these have on interrelationships within families. She argues against a simplistic formula that sees a man marrying more than one woman as immediately problematic to society and to family as other researchers have concluded (pointing out Hisham Sharabi and Prothro & Diab). “It is essential to avoid biases and generalization, for example, the fact that urbanity or Western ways holds many desirable traits should not lead to the assumption that any motion in their direction is desirable and completely positive” (1999, 170). She found that Bedouin

societies, in which women are firmly embedded in their tribal society, ensure women more power than nuclear households with patriarchal structures.

From a social work perspective, Jamila Khury (1997), “Social Services: Current Conditions and Hopes”, stressed the need to empower families, members of families and networks that provide families with help and train individuals to become citizens. Anna Mansour (1997) in an article titled “Some Thoughts on Necessary Projects and Services to Improve the Condition of Families in Lebanon” proposed projects that would aid and support the family’s role in society by training its children on dialogue, democracy and responsibility. Among the projects proposed were social health centers (specially in the rural areas), consulting centers (that provide educational/awareness programs and legal support), developing and supporting clubs and associations that care for children and help working mothers, and finally the availability of mediators to solve family conflicts.

Family and War: Most research related to war in Lebanon comes from two disciplines, Psychology and Political Science. One chronicles the psychological traumas that individuals have to recover from and the other detailing the incidents, the history, the factors and the players in the civil war of Lebanon. Neither approach takes a closer look at societal transformations due to the war, the impact on the interrelationships within and without families nor at the new forms of subjectivity being created through the process of participating as an active agent, as a commentator, or as an object of those conflicts and wars. ‘Afyfa al-Sayyed (1997), “Household/Family Conditions: Facts and Reflections”, presented an overview of the problems of the family today and of the need for the government to take a more active role in family life. Because of the war and the sectarian nature of the political system in Lebanon,

religious/sectarian leadership has been the main resource for and on families in Lebanon. The author commented that the Government has been providing recently more services to citizens including some health care systems, yet public education as well as civil institutions are still lacking.

During the conference on Women and War in Lebanon: The impact of War on Women in the University and Familial Sectors, organized by the Family Planning Association in 1990, Zuhayr Hatab presented a paper that summed up some of the main points regarding Familial Relations in the Lebanese War: the Position of Women Within It. He raised a methodological question regarding studying the conditions of women during the Lebanese war. He stated that there are two ways by which we can view war. We can see it as a succession of violent incidents or as “the framework of a historical period within which society is being configured in a specific way, as such the structural changes that occur within it goes beyond the social morphological boundaries to cover all levels and sectors of society” (Hatab 1990:202). As such, Hatab argues, we can start to see how the war itself reconstitutes society and sets the stage for major social changes. To evaluate and understand the role of women we can use a number of viewpoints. One stresses the economic and political role including familial relationships prior to the war and those due to the war. Families were getting to be of lesser importance as identity and parents’ role was to prepare child to become a citizen. Due to the war and the weakening of the state, family ties gained in strength. The second perspective stresses the philosophical and holistic factors. The author states that family was the main reason society did not totally disintegrate due to the war. In this perspective families seem to be natural and beyond or outside of society. The third approach stresses local conditions to general factors focusing on each particular case on its own. This approach is bound to capture regional variety the most. Some of the new phenomena

that arose during the war according to Hatab include the decline in financial and economic ability of the family and mostly of the husband, the breadwinner. This altered the relationship between husband and wife, as she becomes more aware of his financial ability and may be asked to help out either through saving or finding some alternative work. Other phenomena include a reshuffling of the roles of husband and wife, change in the ties of families to society and environment and a crisis in the family authority as it competes with other institutions like universities, political parties and militias. This study provides a questioning into conceptual frameworks used to understand war and its relationship and impact on familial life in Lebanon.

‘Othering’ Identities and Other Families: The distinction between Palestinian and Syrian families and Lebanese families is rarely made in the literature of research done in the past. This is due in part to the fact that the lines between such families have not been historically clearly outlined whether in terms of cultural attributes, blood and kin ties, and national identities. Jean Said Makdisi’s family memoir, *Teta, My Mother and I*, (2006) clearly shows the degree of interconnectedness historically of families from different villages, and cities in what is today Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. Family interconnectedness expands to Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. Nonetheless, Lebanon has a large Palestinian refugee population, an Armenian population (though today integrated in Lebanon’s political structure), a Kurdish minority, and a Syrian population. Due to the more recent political transformations, I believe we may witness a new set of essentialist categories based on assumed nationalist distinctions.

In addition, since the mid eighties, foreign domestic workers from a variety of Asian and some African countries have been ‘contracted’ to work as live-in maids in large numbers. Ray Jureidini (2004), AFWG Core Group member, is undergoing research on a variety of issues in

relation to foreign domestic workers, looking at the issue historically, in relation to migrant labor patterns, and addressing the racist and exploitative nature of these relationships. In addition, several graduate students have also focused on changing aspects of family dynamics with the introduction of a live-in maid into the house and the effect on the socialization of children as the main caregivers (the foreign domestic worker), the object of affection at an early age, is also or becomes the despised and lower-ranking 'other' as the children get older. One study by Beyene (2005) focuses on three households of Ethiopian and Eritrean female migrant workers and their ability to access housing.

Few studies address Palestinian families in Lebanon directly, instead discussions of family life, perceptions, relationships are usually obfuscated by a focus on the ever traumatic national scene. The national issues are so paramount in Palestinian lives and discourse making it too close to impossible for scholars to address other concerns from without it. In her book *Gender in Crisis*, Julie Peteet (1991) addresses the concerns of women, tracing the Palestinian women's movement in its transformations in the camps in Lebanon throughout the different phases of Palestinian liberation struggle. The family as a conceptual construct is paramount in the national narrative and in the focus on the right of return. As the Palestinian community fights for its continuation in exile, it centers the generational continuity and the family connections even if across miles and seas. As a strong push to dehumanize and break up families has been exerted since 1948, there is an attempt by most in society to hold on. Peteet discusses families as arenas for women's oppression and also for women's support and empowerment. It may be a policing or a controlling entity, however, it also provides women with the social network they need especially when residing in exile in a country whose laws discriminate against them. Given the role of maintaining the society in exile both literally and figuratively, women feel pressure on

them to reproduce many children. However, hard economic situations were also in family planning discussions.

Conclusion

What is striking about most of the conferences and reports stemming from genuine research and those based on speculations through experience (social workers) or observation (politicians and religious leaders) is the fact that they all see the family as the basic unit of society. Not only that, but families are also seen as 'natural' units of interaction. This statement is mentioned by way of an introduction into the topic. There are but very few research studies and scholars who have taken the extra leap into contextualizing and analyzing. That a family constitutes of a mother, a father and children is taken for granted even when it might be accepted that households could include more individuals. It does not seem to be possible for one to imagine interaction within society outside of a family unit. It seems to define one's identity, one's relationship to society, the state, the religious institutions and other members of society.

There is a strong need to move away from a structural and functional analysis of families and away from a traditional psychology explanation of the roles and relationships between family members. Several macro level events and forces are influencing Lebanese society today and will continue to the future. Globalization patterns, intensification of the media outlets, the wars within and without and the increasing trends of capitalization and privatization in Lebanese society along with a growth in civil society organizations, an influx of international NGO interest, a wave of varying religious movements as well as increased migration of youths outside the country are important factors that any discussion of family life cannot but address. The way

families are constructed through a myriad of social factors influencing the lives of family members in Lebanon is important.

Comparative Analysis of Research on Family in Lebanon

Endnotes

* I would like to acknowledge Suad Joseph for her help and guidance. Suad read the first draft of this chapter and provided helpful comments.

1. Rafic Hariri giving a keynote address at a conference on Women's Participation in Politics held at the UNESCO Palace in 2004 indicated that Lebanon should be Ministers and should be more represented in elected offices (Abu Nasr 2004).

2. Whereas there are some obvious distinctions between functionalism, structural/functionalism, and positivism, they are of no great consequences in relation to the purpose and analysis of this paper. I have made the decision that focusing on the differences will not add significantly to the analysis and this will not be undertaken.

3. The study by Prothro and Diab focuses on the Arab East, but basically they do a comparative study of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan including the two main cities Beirut and Tripoli and on village Burajj in North Lebanon, in addition to court records of Saida, Lebanon. Therefore, I feel that the data is abundant from Lebanon and that is why this study is included here.

4. The issue of social change and modernization will be discussed in the following pages in more detail.

5. Writings by Qasim Amin for instance focused on what the role of the woman should be for a modern future in Egypt. El Skakry analyzes some of these trends in relations to child rearing in Egypt and Afsaneh Najambadi discusses similar discourses in relation to wife and mother role in

Iran. Kandiyoti reiterates similar ideas in regards to the discourse on women's role in turkey by the Kamlists and the westernists.

6. Citizenship is gendered, as Lebanese women who marry foreign men are not able to transmit their citizenship to their husbands or their children. In addition, citizenship is sectarian in Lebanon as Palestinian refugees of 1948 who were Christian were for the most part naturalized, however Palestinian refugees who were Muslims and those that were exiled in 1967 do not even have civil rights in Lebanon.

7. Many studies have traditionally also targeted the issue of the effects on women and household when fathers or husbands leave or immigrate to work outside the country. These include Irini Lorfinig's (1984) study Effects of Father's Labor Migration on the Structure of the Family and Irini Lorfinig and Mona Khalaf (1985) on The Economic Contribution of Women and its effects on the Dynamics of the Family in Two Lebanese Villages.

8. For more on Egypt, see Leila Ahmad, Mervat Hatem and Omnia El-Shakry; for Iran see Afsaneh Najmabadi.

9. ESCWA's headquarters moved after the civil war to Beirut and that generated more small research projects to be focused in Lebanon and more regional studies to add Lebanon as one of their comparative sites.

10. FPA has organized and sponsored numerous studies, conferences and commentaries over the years on various issues in family planning, from reproduction to fertility, to choice, to accessibility, etc... At the moment I am awaiting summaries of some of these monographs by FPA and ESCWA from our research assistant and will incorporate some of the findings in this section.

11. Al-Raida or the Pioneer in English is women's magazine published quarterly in English by

the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) of the Lebanese American University.

12. This and all thereafter-Arabic texts, titles, quotes, etc are Edited by the author of this report from Arabic to English using the IJMES transliteration Style.

13. Currently there are 18 officially recognized religious sects and 15 court systems that officiate by different sets of Personal Status Codes.

14. I used idea because many have argued that this construct of the family was perceived as the ideal form of a family and was promoted by a capitalist society where the household is no longer the unit of production but is mostly the unit of consumption and perhaps of emotional ties (D'Emilio).

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Thinking About Palestinian Families: Foundations, Ruptures, New Directions

Penny Johnson and Lamis Abu Nahleh (2004)

A review of literature on Palestinian families may seem an easy task given the paucity of works that have Palestinian families as their central or explicit concern. Despite lip service centrality accorded the family as a (or sometimes “the”) main institution in Palestinian society by scholars, pundits and politicians alike, family studies are neglected in both the Palestinian academy and global scholarship on Palestine. This is perhaps part of a general neglect in Palestinian studies of sociology and anthropology and a stronger concentration on political science and political, military and diplomatic, rather than social history. Recent interest and writing on Palestinian women is often, but certainly not always, disconnected from research and analysis on families, although offering many insights and posing important questions. Nonetheless, assumptions on “the Palestinian family” run through scholarship and popular writing on Palestinian society and politics alike, whether attributing national survival to the strength and coherence of the Palestinian family, or blaming the patriarchal and “traditional” family for failures in Palestinian democracy.

A main reason for the dearth of family studies is the rupture in Palestinian scholarship after 1948; the same reason speaks to the difficulties of definition and method in investigating Palestinian families. The exile and dispersion of Palestinians and the fragmentation of Palestinian society in the wake of the 1948 war and the creation of the state of Israel meant not only that there were and are many diverse locations where Palestinian families found themselves, but also that there was no existing “Palestine” to anchor national, family and individual

identities. Given the dominance of the nation-state in the twentieth century, a continuing tradition of scholarship and research-its preservation, development and support-seems to require in part a nation-state. Admittedly, nation-states may also do their best to obstruct or suppress research, but Palestinian statelessness and dispersion only exacerbated such obstructions. The Arab states in which Palestinian refugee families and communities resided after 1948 were not always receptive to research on Palestinian communities in their midst, although at certain periods (for example Kuwait or Lebanon at specific times in the late 1970s and early 1980s), research in Palestinian studies markedly increased. Palestinian and other scholars based in the West also played a pivotal role in keeping scholarship alive, but were overwhelmingly concerned with researching and writing a Palestinian historical and political narrative to counter the hegemonic pro-Israel discourse.

The absence of a continuous tradition of family or family-related studies leads us to also examine how families are constructed in other types of studies on Palestine whether local histories, village studies, statistical reports or literature on Palestinian women. In this brief literature review, the relatively small body of scholarship of works explicitly centered on “family” will be highlighted and works in other genres that provide avenues to understanding aspects of family studies will also be noted as models. While some studies are noted, there is a highly regretted neglect of research and writing on refugee and diasporic communities outside historic Palestine; this review here unfortunately mirrors a weakness in scholarship on Palestinian families, rather than remedies it.

Foundations and Interruptions

Given Western interest in the Holy Land, travelers' accounts, particularly those of women, offer some vignettes into Palestinian domestic life in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, despite their obvious biases. In particular, Mary Rogers (1862, 1989) has an eye for domestic detail and her prejudices themselves are worthy of reflection. However, if there is a foundational "classic" in studies of Palestinian families, it is probably the two volumes of careful, indeed shrewd, anthropological observations by Hilma Granqvist (1931, 1935) based on her fieldwork while residing in the Bethlehem area village of Artas in the 1920s. Distancing herself from the Biblical models of many previous Western writers, Granqvist's grounded analysis of marriage patterns, dower, polygamy, wedding arrangements and other matters provided not only information but a contextualized approach that shed light on the political economy of these institutions, as well as their cultural and symbolic meaning. Her understanding, for example, of the material exchanges in marriage contracts and the agency of women in shaping these contracts, as well as her criticism of European views that equate bride price with bride purchase, have both historical and contemporary relevance. On the latter point, Granqvist notes that women received a portion, or sometimes all, of the "bride price."

Two points that Granqvist raises are helpful in developing models for family studies in the Palestinian context. The first point is her emphasis on difference, which has been overlooked by writers of her time and of those coming after. A main problem in prior writing on Palestine, according to Granqvist is the fact that "quite inconsistently with the great differences in country and people ... generalizations have been made as to local habits and customs and earlier writers... have quite unconcernedly given it out as Palestinian in general." Her warning remains apt today as the 1997 Palestinian national census and other surveys since 1995 find sharp

regional differences in marriage and fertility patterns, for example, not only between the West Bank and Gaza but among regions in the West Bank. Such differences become even more acute when considering patterns in refugee communities. The second is her understanding of the “dissonance between idea and reality” (Granqvist 1931, 92) in ideologies and practices of family life. This is notable in her respondents’ valorization of first cousin (ibn amm) marriage in contrast to the findings of her detailed survey of village marriages where the majority, in fact, marry “strangers”. Only 13.3 percent of men marry a bint il amm while 42.8 percent marry wives from outside the village entirely (Granqvist 1931, 81-82). This close eye for actual marriage and family practices becomes largely lost for a number of decades after Granqvist.

If Granqvist’s work is foundational in family studies of Palestine, it is of great interest, and an even more interesting question to consider who has built on these foundations. Once again, the modern history of Palestine has great relevance in explaining the long hiatus in work on the issues identified by Granqvist, for example patterns of marriage and divorce and dower. The situation differed to some degree inside the new Israeli state where several Israeli anthropologists took up some of these issues in studies of Palestinian villages in the Galilee (Rosenfeld 1976, Cohen 1965). Cohen focused on the re-emergence of the hamula (clan), while Rosenfeld argued for its persistence within a framework of the growing salience of class¹. Whether re-emerging or persisting, clan structures were seen as either obstacles to modernization or encouraged by Israel for purposes of control and patronage, or both. Of particular interest is an identification of rising patterns of endogamous marriage, which Rosenfeld explains largely in terms of the new role of men as an insecure proletariat where security comes to reside in the manipulation of women within the marriage system (Rosenfeld 1976, 121). His linkage of colonial modernity with re-constituted “traditional” practices is illuminating, but his explanation

falls short in terms of understanding women's agency in marriage arrangements. Other internal dynamics, differences, economies and social practices of Palestinian families went largely unexamined. Ata (1986) notes that there are "areas" in family studies "where no research has been done, especially since Granqvist's work." A similar point could be made about the foundational work of the Mandate-era Palestinian scholar Toufiq Canaan on folklore. Indeed, a British anthropologist writing in the early 1980s still relied on Granqvist's patiently collected data in Artas to develop a sophisticated statistical model of bride price (Papps 1983).

Several generations of scholarship after Granqvist, Annelies Moors (1995) produces anthropological work that follows and reshapes Granqvist. Moors studies women and property in the Jabal Nablus region from 1920 to the 1980s. Moors engaged in participant observation, collected topical life stories and employed archival sources, particularly shari'a court records, to explore how women in different settings and of different generations negotiate and utilize their right to property. Women's means of acquisition of property-through the dower, inheritance or paid labor-as well as their class circumstances, were determining factors in the meaning and use of such property. She illuminates the differences in dower practices among women by examining urban-rural or class divides as well as the practice of renunciation of inheritance in favor of male relatives (brothers or children). She also traces patterns over time in regular, token and deferred dowers and analyzes their social meaning. Her examination of historical patterns leads her to hypothesize an increase in conjugality, with kinship becoming "less important as a social principle of organization." She connects a social devaluation of the dower to a shift in women's roles "from daughter to wife" and a definition of women as "dependent wives" (Moors 1995, 125). This is intriguing but the analysis is perhaps best viewed as exploratory, rather than conclusive. Overall, Moors' work provides an important framework for looking at historical

change in Jabal Nablus that begs for further exploration in other areas of Palestine, as well as in the topics addressed.

Tradition or Change: Two Approaches

Prior to Moors' publication, two works by social scientists in the 1980s attempt to conceptualize, in one case The West Bank Palestinian Family (Ata 1986) and in the other, Family, Women and Social Change in the Middle East: The Palestinian Case (Abd-Zubi 1987). Their approaches provide a useful contrast in method and conceptual framework. Nahla Abdo's monograph has the virtue of a political economy approach that periodizes family structures through time (Ottoman, Mandate and post-1948) and space (Palestinians in Israel, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, and Palestinians in refugee camps in Lebanon). This approach reminds us of the importance of patterns of land ownership, usage and inheritance in shaping family types and relations. It suffers from a number of unanalyzed or unproved assumptions while being more knowledgeable in some areas² than others. She offers a useful critique of the work of Israeli anthropologists in communities in the Galilee. However, some of her assumptions about families in the West Bank are flawed, such as the idea that "families tended to be composed predominantly of female members." Her interest in change contrasts sharply with some of the essentialist premises found in the work of sociologist Ibrahim Ata in his presentation of survey results from interviews with over 900 families in the Jerusalem and Bethlehem regions in the mid 1980s. He declares, for example, that "family structure in the West Bank is a replica of any patrilineal household" (119) and asserts that traditional roles are "rigidly conscribed" (104). While he is to be commended for his tenacity in conducting one of the very rare surveys by a Palestinian scholar under the Israeli military occupation, his citation of the toll that occupation

took on families, such as land confiscation or harassment, does not lead to a consideration of its effects on family relations. Indeed, his essentialism tends to obscure some of his own interesting survey results, particularly a set of questions on marital problems and the worst and most pleasant aspects of married life.

In the same period (1980s), other sociologists and anthropologists began to produce studies on rural labor (Tamari 1981,1983), on ethnographies of particular villages and on political economy of villages (Migdal 1980) that return to the question of kin-based identities and hamula politics but also focus on change shaped by economic and social transformations in the period of Israeli military occupation. Writing in the early 1980s on a central West Bank village, Tamari observed, “the prolonged absence of young men from the village-whether in commuting to Israel or for work abroad-has had a dramatic effect on village social fabric” (Tamari 1983, 393). While women may take on a greater role in a highly reduced agricultural cycle, “the result is not a trend towards greater homogeneity in the worlds of women and men but its opposite” (Tamari 1983, 393). These studies, however, are primarily about changes in peasant households and families and should be understood in that context. Works on camp and urban life in specific locales are also needed.

Shari‘a Court Records: Family Law and Social Practice

Moors (1995) uses shari‘a court records in Nablus, particularly marriage contracts, divorce registrations and summaries of court cases, to provide an analysis of historical patterns in registration of the dower, for example, and to place life stories into a wider context. Moors notes that such records cannot directly reflect social practice, since a registered dower may not actually be given. However, these records do allow an understanding of change and contestation that is

invaluable. Several other scholars have utilized court records to illuminate both historical and contemporary practices and transformations. Lynn Welchman's (1999) work is a case in point. In a volume written for a Palestinian women's organization, Welchman examines shari'a court records in six courts for four specific years both before and after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. In a model of activist-generated scholarship, a largely statistical analysis of court practice is complemented by an explication of existing law and indications of possibilities for reform, using a comparative approach to other Arab countries. Welchman joins with researchers from the Institute of Women's Studies in a Palestinian case study exploring the constraints and opportunities for reform of family law in the interim period of the Palestinian authority (Welchman 2004). In that study, Rema Hammami analyzes public opinion poll data and finds popular legitimacy for an extension of women's rights in family law, with male resistance most evident in matters of divorce and property. She also notes multiple and contradictory values (even within the same individual) and suggests that a legal reform strategy cannot simply be based on one principle (such as equality) without addressing the countervailing values with which it coexists.

Other authors had addressed aspects of the structure and practice of family, in particular Fahoum Shalabi's (1992) study of divorce in the Ramallah district. Shalabi presents a statistical analysis of divorce analyzing the impact of the 1987 intifada on patterns of divorce. A few years earlier, Diab Ayyoush (1984), writing in the Bulletin of Bethlehem University, also analyzed marriage and divorce patterns. This suggests an interest in local research communities both in family research and in defining "social problems" in Palestinian society. The first intifada also generated new initiatives by women to establish research centers. The Women's Affairs Centers in Nablus and Gaza as well as the Women's Studies Center in Jerusalem, brought local feminist

visions and methods to a range of issues, for example a study of early marriage (Safadu 1992) in West Bank villages. Choice and Power (Ghali 1999) researched and written for a local women's NGO in Gaza, explores the issue of early marriage in the Gaza Strip through the examination of Shari'a court records and a questionnaire to 399 married women, 17 years or younger. The purpose of the study is both social investigation and advocacy in the sense of challenging normative assumptions and identifying factors for change. The study concludes that 'choice' is an expression of lack of alternatives and not of free will. Lack of a broad range of alternatives maintains the hegemonic influence of the family.

Shari'a court records have also begun to be mined by historians providing "a record of how women lived their family lives" (Tucker 1991, 234). Judith Tucker's article on family relations in eighteenth and nineteenth century Nablus offers suggestive directions for further research, including her observation that a "crude patriarchy" (Tucker 1991, 250) did not seem to be at work, but rather a complex web of family relations (and inequalities) through which women negotiated their rights and responsibilities. Tucker's book (1998) falls outside the chronological scope of our study but examines the Islamic legal thinking through the fatwas of muftis in Palestine and Syria before the state codification of family law. That legal thinking often opted for broad and flexible interpretation of Islamic law as opposed to a codified and rigid law.

Social History: Elites and Merchant Families

Although historians working on the era before 1948 of Palestine have often viewed historical processes and dynamics through the lens of notable families, a recent emphasis on social history links family dynamics and networks in particular settings with larger social, economic and political processes, providing insights into families as commercial and political

actors. Beshara Doumani utilizes shari‘a court records, family papers and city records in the Jabal Nablus area during the Ottoman period (1700-1900). He unpacks family and kin-based trade networks of and between merchant and peasant families to investigate “merchant life, urban-rural relations and the connections between family, trade and culture” (Doumani 1995, 36). Illan Pappé’s (2000, 2001) work on the powerful Husseini family in Jerusalem in the Ottoman and Mandate period is rich with generational tensions and alliances and also shows the limits of family-based politics and networks when faced with the modernizing and colonizing Zionist movement.

Another genre to note here is “family history” written from a genealogical or memorial perspective, of which the work of father and son, Aziz and Naseeb Shahin is a good example (Shahin 1982, Shahin 1992). Aziz Shahin’s volume in Arabic on Ramallah history includes detailed family trees and is subtitled “lifting the veil on ancestors and genealogies,” casting history very much as a family affair. Naseeb Shahin, on the other hand, presents photos from family albums to construct Ramallah’s past in a meticulous manner. The serendipitous inclusion of documents, such as an 1837 (Greek Orthodox) divorce agreement where a Ramallah husband pledges to give his divorced wife “two hundred piasters in cash, six measure of wheat, a jar of olive oil, a piece of cloth, and ten rotls of onion” each year or a 1903 prescription for a cocaine-based remedy to be filled at the German Pharmacy in Jaffa, add to the book’s browsing pleasures. In both works, the intent is to preserve-or even cherish-family histories, and the community through them, whether temporally (through historical lineages) or spatially (through locating far-flung family members) as well as memorialize the “customs” that have also been lost to time and space. While town and family memorial books are not uncommon in the Arab region

and elsewhere, the dispersal and fragmentation of Palestinian society lends these projects a special urgency.

Diaspora Families: Families and National Survival in Exile

Writing on Palestinian families in Kuwait, Shafeeq Ghabra (1988) affirms, “no understanding of the Palestinian family is possible without a firm grasp of its cross-national character” (64). He observes that family survival in the conditions of Palestinian dispersal required that the family become “a more flexible unit” which incorporated both close and distant patrilineal and matrilineal relatives. The latter pattern was very uncommon before 1948. Noting the prevalence of family economic ties through enterprise and family funds and the establishment of family centers in exile (diwan or madafa), he sees Palestinian families weaving a “new social fabric” across locations. While Ghabra notes the family meaning of these centers, they also often signify place, as in the original village or city in Palestine. Susan Slymovics (1998) notes, for example, the madafa in Irbid, Jordan of the Abu al Hayja clan from the Galilee village of Ayn Hawd. Its sign announces in large script “Madafat Al Abu al-Hayja” and in smaller letters “Ain Hawd” (151).

Unfortunately, few scholars to date have pursued this initial approach to the cross-national (or transnational) nature of Palestinian families. Nonetheless, recent survey data offers a statistical picture. A 1999 survey of 2254 households in the West Bank and Gaza, for example, found an average of 1.2 migrants directly related to the head of household per household (Giacaman and Johnson 2002, 29). Other studies have explored the transmission of national memory and identity through (changing) family ties. Rosemary Sayigh (2002), using oral histories of Palestinian women in refugee camps in Lebanon, shows the strengthening of the

mother-daughter tie in the conditions of exile (due partly to the weakening of hamula affiliations). She add, “it was mainly mothers who were recalled as telling their children about Palestine, or as embodying Palestine in their use of language, clothing, food preparation or style of mothering” (Sayigh 2002, 66).

Families Through the Lens of the Village: Studies in Arabic

Interestingly, the Arabic literature reviewed here, mostly written in the 1990s in the West Bank and Gaza, exhibits a strikingly consistent interest in the hamula and in family and kin networks as a central source of Palestinian survival and national identity. Of particular note, hamula and family are almost always analyzed through the site of the village. While this might not be surprising, given the rural character of the West Bank and the loss of Palestinian urban culture in 1948, the village as a trope for Palestine and Palestinian culture is widespread and has great influence in shaping approaches towards Palestinian families and viewing families-like rural culture-as repositories of national culture. At least two types of Palestinian village studies can be identified that focus on families or more widely on hamula and kin networks. The first is a traditional folkloric description of village physical arrangements which includes a history of village families and the second is a sociological or development analysis.

Exemplary studies representing the first type are the writings of Fahed Abu-el-Haj (1994), Fathi Ahmed (1992) and Amin Hafez Al-Dajani (1993). Abu-el-Haj (1994) discusses four Palestinian villages, Qibya, ‘Imwas, Beit Nouba and Yalo. The last three villages located in the Latrun Salient, were destroyed in 1967 by the Israeli army in the aftermath of the June 1967 War and their population was dispersed. The study is thus also a memorial book in the vein of the more ambitious and comprehensive survey of destroyed villages from the 1948 war, All That

Remains by Walid Khalidi (1988), where family histories and practices are part of a national narrative of loss and dispossession. Al Haj's book lists families and hamulas in each village and presents family trees, giving their ancestral origin and their political affiliation. In addition, the book lists male and female martyrs and the conditions of their death. These lists show that most women were killed in their houses, a reminder of Peteeet's observation that "the continuous violation of the home" has been a common feature of the numerous wars, occupations and assaults against Palestinian communities (Peteeet 1997, 108).

In Abu-el-Haj's study, the social and economic changes in the life of villagers (such as transformations from peasants to wage laborers) are referred to only to indicate the effect of Israeli occupation procedures. The author's main objective is to describe the ancestral structure of the families-as if for the historical record-however, he does not hesitate to make a strong statement regarding the role of the Palestinian family in preserving the social and cultural traditions, without giving any evidence or analysis. He states, "The family tree reveals the solidarity and unity of the Palestinian family no matter how hard its living conditions were due to the dispersal and deprivation. It remains a 'storage' for genuine Arab norms and traditions" (Abu al-Haj 1994, 103-104).

Fathi Ahmed gives a detailed description of the history of Palestinian rural life during the Ottoman rule, focusing on the Beni Zaid group of villages in the Ramallah district. Using an oral history methodology and review of documents, the author describes the history of these villages up to the end of the Ottoman rule. He lays out village geography, location, authority, land property and ownership, tariff system, village physical arrangement, ancestral origin, names of village members, village society, housing, dress code, food, education, agricultural activities, popular medicine, religion and social traditions. Family relations, women's roles and status are

seen as part of the village cultural traditions. A chapter is devoted to cultural and social traditions, including mainly wedding and marriage traditions like internal, arranged marriages, early marriage, dower, circumcision and wedding arrangements and festivities. It also refers to the traditional gender division in dress codes and space and a strict gendered division of labor. For example, women were not allowed into the madafa except for a court appeal, instead women gathered at the water spring. In brief, women's status and roles (their productive and reproductive roles, the importance of having children, especially males) are focused as a reflection of cultural traditions. A similar perception of the family is seen in the Palestinian Encyclopedia (Al-Mawsu'a al-falastiniyya 1990a, 1990b).

On the other hand, Amin Hafez Al-Dajani's book on the twin cities, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, and the surrounding villages, provides a clearer perception of the Palestinian family or more precisely the hamula. The absence of social, political and economic security, and the absence of the central government and rule of law affected both family structure and relations and physical structure of the village. Family cooperation and solidarity were necessary to cope with social and economic conditions and modes of production, and later on it developed to become a central part of cultural traditions and values. The village structure formed a nucleus of housing blocks inhabited by patrilineal families. The village nucleus expanded hierarchically over time, accommodating immigrating individuals and communities. The older the family or the hamula, the closer it was to the center, either at the top of the mountain or near the water spring or wells. Housing arrangements are formed of closely built houses and include the two most important physical structures. The family house and the hosh meet all the needs of the peasant, so that he would not refer to others. The hosh provides complete privacy for the family and for women to perform their household tasks. Public places, male-dominated domains, are

seen as clubs for men and include al-madafa, the coffee shop, the barber shop, the mill, the mosque and the olive press. As for women, their domain includes the water spring or wells, al-taboun and al-tannour, where women meet to socialize, arrange marriages and cooperate on the basis of “give and take.” Similar to the other two sources, the author here gives a detailed description of the social and cultural traditions pertaining to marriage and wedding related issues (engagement, dower, kisweh, hinna, zaffe and nqout, among other matters).

The second type of village study, which is developmental and sociological, is illustrated by the work of Malki and Shalabi (1993). Studying three Palestinian villages during the 1987 intifada, Malki and Shalabi discuss the factors and conditions that reproduce the peasant household and examine the relation between subsistence economy, wage labor and kin and non-kin networks. As Taraki (1998) observed, the two authors show that households are not stable in their formation, nor do they develop linearly. Peasant households are constantly formed and reformed in order to cope with lack of secure employment, the absence of a social security system and political instability. Nuclear family households get transformed into extended households to adapt to the socio-economic conditions and to guarantee their reproduction. Interestingly, in a paper commissioned by the Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs on the role of the Palestinian family in preserving identity, anthropologist Sharif Kanaana (1997) continues to use the village lens even though his subject is more wide-ranging. He considers the Palestinian family as “the only shield that stood in protection of the individuals and the only body that interacted with these conditions, to preserve the individual’s body and identity; although it was shattered, the family remained the only social structure on which the individual depended.” Taking this as a point of departure, the study proceeds to discuss the impact of the political conditions on family structure and formation, organized chronologically. These include

the perpetuation of village norms and traditions, the persistence of the extended family, housing arrangements, the flexibility of the family boundaries, the establishment of the diwan or the madafa and persistent high fertility. In addition, conjugal relations, primarily internal and arranged marriages, continued to preserve the social units and the identity of small communities.

Palestinian Women: Family as Obstacle or Support?

A relatively substantial literature on Palestinian women, most written from the 1980s onwards, has focused on women's role in national resistance. However, women's relation to, roles and responsibilities in families are inevitably addressed and it is interesting to examine how various authors conceptualize these relations and roles. A pioneering writer on Palestinian women (Sayigh 1981) offers the useful insight that Palestinian "familialism" is not a cultural remnant but an adaptive response to crisis and survival (Sayigh 1981). In addition, an anthropologist working on gender and resistance in Palestinian camps in Lebanon (Peteet 1999, 177) writes that the family is a "form of both solidarity and oppression." Peteet also raised the interesting question of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) "family policy" where resistance cadre in camps intervened in domestic matters such as negotiating marriage and divorce, preventing abuse or stopping honor killings.

The first Palestinian intifada (1987-1993) generated the largest body of writing on Palestinian women in nationalist resistance. A comprehensive discussion and listing of those studies is beyond the confines of the limited space of this paper. However, several such studies were written by local scholars engaged in that intifada and in international scholarship. In this literature on political participation, the family as a location for a highly gendered division of labor is frequently, but certainly not entirely, seen as an obstacle to women's full participation in

politics and society. Islah Jad (1990) observes that this division of labor is not addressed in the national movement, which has no social agenda, and criticizes the “home economy” movement in the intifada for its blindness to the negative consequences of this division. Writing in the first year of the intifada, Rita Giacaman and Penny Johnson (1989) note the view of family as obstacle but observe that many women “enlarged or extended their traditional role, rather than adopting a completely new role” expanding the defense of the family to community (Giacaman and Johnson 1989, 161). Other scholars, working both with ethnographic fieldwork conducted during the intifada and surveys in its aftermath, expanded this insight to examine transformations in families, whether mothering or intergenerational crisis and their linkages to political processes and political violence.

Intifada: Mothering, Intergenerational Crisis and Youth

It is telling that a major political watershed in Palestinian history—the Palestinian intifada of 1987-1993 and its mass resistance to Israeli military occupation—was understood by a number of scholars as both rooted in Palestinian families, their relations and social networks and as producing significant changes in family, generational and gender dynamics. It is quite interesting that “mothering” and in particular the relationship between mothers and sons, both real and putative (as shebab, the young men involved in street actions), engaged the attention of anthropologists (Peteet 1997, Jean-Klein 2000). Their work was both influenced by and critiquing feminist theories of mothering, particularly essentialist notions of mothering or a Eurocentric location of peace activism in the practice of mothering. Peteet notes, “nationalist politics are still a prominent framework for communities and for the practice of mothering” in the Palestinian context and elsewhere (Peteet 1997, 108). Peteet usefully compares how

Palestinian women have reconstituted the meaning of motherhood in refugee camps in Lebanon and in the first Palestinian intifada. Maternal sacrifice in Lebanon validating a critique of the movement (in its defeat and evacuation in 1982), while maternal practice and sacrifice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory “have become components of feminist demands for equal rights” (Petee 1987, 104). In partial contrast, political scientists studying the 1987 intifada tended towards analyses of intergenerational conflict between fathers and sons, again both real and putative³.

Jean-Klein’s (2000) work offers both provocative theories and empirical problems. Based on fieldwork in a Ramallah neighborhood in 1989-90, Jean-Klein uses the notion of “cross subjective self enactment” to highlight the role of mothers and daughters in constituting their sons’ or brothers’ heroic selves, both through their narrative strategies and their social support. The moral self and status promotion of young men is seen as independent-and even opposed-to fathers and their weakened patriarchal authority but not outside the bounds of kinship. This is a rich theoretical direction that raises many empirical questions as well, particularly whether and how older men’s roles and influence wanes (and waxes) in this massively popular uprising. Jean-Klein’s link to domestic processes and the “nascent state” is welcome, but her assumption of a relocation of authority from the domestic patriarch to the “nascent father state” is too sweeping and untested.

In contrast, Brian Barber (1999), using data from a Palestinian Family Survey conducted in 1993, examines the lasting effects of political violence during the Palestinian intifada on children and youth (aged 7-13 during the intifada) but does not detect major transformations in family relations. He does note, however, a higher level of parental conflict with daughters and a higher depression among daughters. He views the family as a cohering force from the viewpoint

of youth themselves and posits an “evident stability of family relations ... due to the deep historical and cultural value placed on family life in Palestinian culture,” (210) as well as the unity of parents and children in their understanding of the purpose and meaning of the Palestinian struggle. The resilience of children in political conflict-particularly in the Palestinian case when children and youth were major actors as well as victims-is an important point, but while Jean-Klein might be said to be suffering from an over-abundance of theorizing, here a dearth of theory leads to an empiricism that is wanting in questioning its own limitations. A related study uses data from the same survey (Huntington et al. 2001) to test a multivariate model predicting traditional family roles of contemporary Palestinian woman. The model failed to show that such factors as women’s education, political participation or religiosity, made a significant difference, leading the researchers to conclude, rather uneasily, that “Western theories about modernization, including education, employment, and political involvement have limited applicability in this non-western culture” (Huntington et al. 2001, 1). It may well be that the multivariate model, whose main instrument for predicting “modernization” was a single factor of women’s income generation was not able to capture family and gender dynamics. Indeed, the study’s most “surprising” finding, that “family roles and power are shared to a remarkable degree,” (1) remains unexplained.

The second Palestinian intifada has not yet generated a coherent-or even contested-body of writing on gender and women. An initial work suggests a greater interest in families as sites where the profound crisis of the second intifada-including its very uneven civic participation-is experienced through pressure, contradictions and burdens placed on family and gender roles and responsibilities. Penny Johnson and Eileen Kuttub (2001), borrowing a term from Elizabeth Thompson’s (2000) work on post-World War I Lebanon and Syria, propose that the conditions

of the second intifada seem to be generating a “paternity crisis.” This is reflected in the idea that paternal capacities for provision and protection are severely compromised, both in the capacities of actual fathers and in the functions of the quasi-state.

Interim Issues: Survey Research, Gender Agendas

Scholarship of the first and the second intifada emphasized women, families and national resistance. However, there is a period of studies in between those two, the interim period of transitional rule of the Palestinian Authority. Gender researchers in this period concentrated first on gender and development issues with an eye to influencing policy. Published in the first years of interim self-government, the Palestinian Women: A Status Report (1997) series from the Institute of Women’s Studies is one example. The contradictory indicators of women’s status explored in these reports (Taraki 1996, Giacaman 1997, Johnson 1997, Hammami 1997), namely low labor force participation, high educational attainment, persistent high fertility and high informal political participation, directly led to a renewed interest in family dynamics and processes. A second concentration was in gender and citizenship (Hammami and Johnson 1999, Jad et al. 2000). A relevant point in this second concentration was how “an ethic of familialism structures power” inside the Palestinian Authority and the PLO (Hammami and Johnson 1999, 324) as well as how women’s caring and domestic work might be excluded from new social and national entitlements.

Gender whether as fashion or conceptual tool was present in situation analyses and reports by international organizations and the new Palestinian ministries, at least when the subject addressed was women and children. One such analysis (UNICEF and the Palestinian Authority 2000) explored “continuity and transformation in family life,” citing conditions of

dispersal and uprooting as challenging and transforming family relations. Palestinian families faced challenges that shook the basis of family relationships. The concept of hamula, for example, became less restricted to blood and location ties and more based on solidarity across time and space. It has undergone changes in form but preserved its relevance. The study concludes that the brother-sister bond and the husband-wife relationships remain among the strongest family relationships that express familial authority. Gender remains the organizing principle in social life as well.

However, in one of the main research developments of the period in the West Bank and Gaza, households, rather than families, become a main unit of analysis, particularly with the rapid development of survey research and statistics oriented towards planning and policies for economic (and to a lesser extent) social development. From an initial living conditions survey (Heiberg and Ovensen 1993), to the enormous corpus of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), including the first national census since 1967, a wealth of data on “households” and population is available for analysis. Of most interest in the PCBS series are a 1995 demography survey, a 2000 health survey, a time-use survey, an access to resources survey, a population projections, a marriage and divorce survey, consumption and expenditure surveys, labor surveys and the rich material from the census, which is generating a range of publications. The Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science conducted living conditions surveys among Palestinian camp residents in Lebanon and Jordan (Ugland 2003, Khawaja and Tiltnes 2002). A survey of living conditions in Jordan (Hanssen-Bauder et al. 1998) offers a window on Jordan’s majority population of Palestinian refugees and analyzes the refugee and non-refugee population.

Internal household dynamics and patterns are suggested in a few publications-such as the PCBS 2000 time-use survey-but not greatly addressed. The Institute of Women’s Studies, in a

community-based household survey (Giacaman and Johnson, ed. 2002) is perhaps the first major attempt to consider such dynamics, examining, for example, paternal preferences for sons and daughters in marriage and child-bearing, work and education, as well as divisions of labor in the household. Other researchers, often working with NGOs, began to bring issues of domestic and sexual violence to public attention (Haj Yahia 1999, Shaloub-Kervakian 1999). Nadera Shaloub-Kervakian's work in particular seeks not only to investigate violence against women, but to reconceptualize these acts of violence, whether probing cultural definitions of rape or proposing a concept of "femicide" to address a range of violent acts, including so-called honor killings.

Family and Nation: Re-Considerations

In a time when Palestinians, whether in Palestine or exile, are experiencing perhaps the most profound national and political crisis since 1948, the continuing exploration of the links between family and national survival and the pressures, adaptations and transformations in family and gender relations produced by the crisis, are of obvious importance. Writing in the introduction to a volume of essays that both reflect on findings in the Institute of Women's Studies household survey (noted above) and attempt to go beyond them, Taraki notes "the theoretical and methodological journeys traveled by the authors" and notes that "just as it is imperative that we ponder the larger political and social context, the most salient aspect of which is the reality of colonial rule with all its dynamics-not only of dispossession and repression but also of resistance, resilience, and survival" (Taraki 2005, forthcoming).

Emerging scholars are also bringing to bear new and cross-disciplinary approaches to understanding the politics of family life in the complex circumstances of Palestinian existence. The highly contested politics of reproduction inside the Israeli state, for example, is examined by

Rhoda Kanaaneh (2002) through ethnographic work with Palestinian women in the Galilee, which illuminates the entangling of reproductive decisions in projects of modernity, reactions to colonialism and assertions of national and self-identity. Both the richness of theory and the detail of ethnography seem vital to the next stage of family studies in Palestinian scholarship.

Chapter Seven

Endnotes

Thinking About Palestinian Families: Foundations, Ruptures, New Directions

1. For a cogent criticism of the implicit ideology in Cohen's work, see Talal Asad 1972.
2. For example, Abdo contributes effectively to the literature on family and kin, among Palestinians in Israel where she offers a critique of Israeli anthropologists.
3. See Schiff, Zeev and Yaari, Ehud. 1989. Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising-Israel's Third Front. New York: Simon and Schuster.

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Chapter 8

THE ARAB FAMILIES WORKING GROUP PROJECT: BEGINNINGS

Suad Joseph (2004)

Genealogy of AFWG

The Arab Families Working Group (AFWG), formally launched in 2001, is nearing a decade of history. As AFWG has reached out to work with stakeholders, media, graduate students, NGO's, as well as other scholars, we have been asked a number of times how we managed to organize our project and sustain its momentum for so long. One of our funders, the International Development Research Center, asked us to evaluate our work as a template that might be reproduced in other arenas. As a group of fifteen scholars, now living in four continents (West Asia, North Africa, Europe, North America) and six countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, England, the Netherlands, the United States), trained in seven different disciplines (Anthropology, Economics, History, Health Sciences, Linguistics, Literature, Sociology), we have reflected on the vision which launched us, its high and low moments. This chapter is offered as a brief history of AFWG – a vision of a collaborative, interdisciplinary, comparative, inter-generational project with a list of successes and failures from which we have learned much about the limits and possibilities of the such a project. AFWG has a recent genealogy and a long genealogy. The recent genealogy is full of serendipity, opportunities seized, careful planning,

and miscalculations. The long genealogy is full of stubborn persistence, missed opportunities, and chance.

A Short History of the Long Genealogy of AFWG

The long genealogy of AFWG begins in 1975 when a small group of Middle East anthropologists and historians began meeting in New York City once or twice a year to develop a collaborative project on new paradigms for studying Arab families. The core group included Suad Joseph, Barbara Larsen, Ylana Miller, Lucie Wood Saunders, and Rachelle Taquq. As some members eventually left Middle East studies and others left New York City, the core group disbanded after several years of intellectually provocative meetings. Since we did not publish our collaborative work, the insights and dynamism of those discussions were an opportunity to shape new research that was lost. In 1977, a small group of faculty and graduate students began a study group on families based in Davis, California and the San Francisco Bay Area. Meeting for a couple of years, that family study group (Mary Ann Castle, Darlene Gardetto, Suad Joseph, Sheila Powers O'Neil) focused on the comparative study of families. In 1981, Suad Joseph and Rachelle Taquq, trying to revive the spirit of the New York group, organized a panel for the Berkshire Women's History Conference on "History, Anthropology and the Middle Eastern Family". In 1984, Joseph presented a paper at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) on "Women, Family and State in the Middle East", followed by a MESA panel in 1987 on "Reassessing Arab Family Studies". Between 1986 and 1991, several planned panels for MESA – again intended to stir interest in the study of Arab families – did not materialize. The 1991 MESA panel on "Culture and Psychodynamics of Arab Families" did materialize, becoming the basis for the edited book, Intimate Selving in Arab Families (Joseph 1999). In 1993, a

conference Joseph organized at University of California, Davis on “Women, Family and State in the Middle East” (Etel Adnan, Suad Joseph, Smadar Lavie, Mary Layoun, Afsaneh Najmabadi) drew a large audience, but produced no publication and no collaborative project. In each phase of this long genealogy, there were interested scholars but little sustainable momentum to create a collaborative project on Arab families. Timing, luck, and context changed in 1999, beginning the recent genealogy of AFWG or the AFWG genealogy of AFWG.

The AFWG Genealogy of AFWG

The recent genealogy emerges from the 1999-2001 term of duty of the founder and coordinator of AFWG, Suad Joseph, as Director of the University of California Education Abroad Program (UC EAP) at the American University in Cairo (AUC). In an effort to develop closer relations for the University of California with regional universities, Joseph proposed to the UC EAP Director (John Marcum) and the President of AUC (John Gerhart), the development of collaborative initiatives between UC and AUC with a focus on women, family and children. Marcum and Gerhart supported the idea. Nicholas Hopkins, Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and Egyptology (SAPE) at AUC, invited Joseph to co-organize with him a conference on Arab families for Spring of 2000 at AUC. The planning committee included Hoda Rashad (Director of the Social Research Center, SRC of AUC) and Barbara Ibrahim (Director of the Population Council, Cairo), Hopkins and Joseph. Independently, Bishara Doumani (Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley) was planning a conference on Arab family histories at UCB also for Spring of 2000. Through combined efforts, we raised funds for a number of scholars to participate in both conferences (subsequently published, Hopkins 2001, Doumani 2003).

Joseph approached Hoda Rashad (AUC, SRC) in the Fall of 2000, with the idea of building from the Spring conference to develop the Arab Families Working Group by organizing a workshop in 2001, in Cairo at AUC. Rashad offered seed funding. Rashad and Joseph invited Barbara Ibrahim (Director, Population Council, Cairo) who joined the effort, with the Population Council contributing seed funding and eventually program-development funds. Joseph approached Leila Bisharat (Regional Representative, UNICEF, Cairo) who matched AUC's seed funding. Joseph presented the idea to Dina Craissati, Program Officer of the International Development Research Center (IDRC, Cairo). Craissati joined the project and committed seed funding. The combined funding paid for a full-time research assistant and supported the framework building Phase I and II of AFWG. AUC Provost Tim Sullivan offered AFWG an office and use of the AUC server for our web page and UC offered a grants officer, office computing equipment, and seed funds.

The planning committee for the May 2001 workshop included Leila Bisharat, Dina Craissati, Barbara Ibrahim, Suad Joseph, Hoda Rashad, as well as Soraya Altorki (AUC), Samia Mehrez (AUC), Martina Rieker (AUC), and Maalak Zalouk (UNICEF, Cairo). The planning committee agreed that the participants in the workshop (except those from UC) would have affiliations with regional institutions involved in research, policy or planning on Arab families in order to work locally on knowledge production by encouraging institutional commitments to research on Arab families. The invitees would come from multiple disciplines to encourage interdisciplinarity. AFWG would focus on Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt as the Arab countries with the longest history of institutional development around women's studies and family studies. The three-country comparative research would aim to de-essentialize Arab families while

assessing continuities in a contextualized manner. The invitees would include graduate students to senior researchers, to support capacity building and the training of new scholars.

Over 40 scholars, planners and policy makers were invited to the first AFWG workshop in May of 2001, held at the Social Research Center of the American University in Cairo. Twenty four participated and came to constitute the AFWG Core Group in Phase I (eventually stabilizing at 15 Core Group members several years later). In three days of discussions and debates, we developed a program of action organized around three main empirical research projects: Arab Families and Public Discourse; Arab Families and Border Crossings; Arab Families and Well Being. AFWG Core Group members each joined one of the three projects. Minutes were recorded and distributed, as they have been for all subsequent meetings. We developed the AFWG website with a section for public access and a section exclusively for Core Group member use (see below). We organized the AFWG office at AUC and began the development of the AFWG library (see below).

AFWG Phase I & II 2001-2005

What we have come to call Phase I and II of the AFWG project entailed the development of the theoretical framework for our research and the initial contours of three research project groups. Each of the Research Projects met, during that following year, in separate workshops to develop their research projects. The AFWG Core Group met again in March 2002 in Cairo. It became clear we needed to clarify what collaboration meant in practice. We devoted that meeting to our Protocols. This entailed deciding what “belonged” to AFWG and what belonged to the individual researchers, most of whom had research programs paralleling that of AFWG. We had to decide when we would single author and when and how we would collaboratively

author. We had to consider how the contributions of individual scholars would be documented in jointly authored works. We developed review procedures for all documents which would be considered “AFWG” products. We outlined how one became a member of or lost membership in the Core Group and the relationships between the Core Group and the Research Projects. The meeting was the most difficult of all the AFWG meetings, as it put to the test our different concepts of and commitments to collaborative work. The Protocols, over the next two years, became guiding principles rather than rules. We revised the Protocols to reflect a growing sense of how we actually could work together.

Seed funding was largely exhausted by the end of 2002, with the exception of a much needed injection of project development funds from the Population Council. During that year, the Research Projects members met separately to develop their research proposals. The proposals from the three projects were synthesized into a proposal which we began circulating to potential funders by the end of 2002. As we met with foundations, we went back to the AFWG Core Group with questions and requests for revisions. Foundations, we found, were interested in funding one of the specific Research Projects, rather than AFWG as a Core Group. We developed an approach for keeping all the groups moving forward, despite the unevenness in funding for specific Research Projects. Our first major grant for the empirical research came from the Ford Foundation in Cairo, at the end of 2003. By 2004, the International Research Development Center had awarded AFWG a major research grant. These grants expired in 2006/2007 but were renewed with equivalent or more funding through 2010/2011.

By Winter of 2003, we decided that we needed to both share our work with the scholarly and activist community and launch empirical work, as funding materialized to do so. We committed to launching the Arab Families Working Group edited book series with one university

press. The February 2003 AFWG Core Group meeting in Cairo worked through the framework and chapters of Volume I of the AFWG series, most of which were to be collaboratively written. In June 2003, the Core Group met in Ain Sukhna, Egypt for a three day writing workshop on the Volume. We had received a positive response from Syracuse University Press expressing their interest in the AFWG Volume I as part of an AFWG series, offering us an advance contract for publishing the series. During the next year, various members met in small groups to work on their assignments, co-writing various chapters. We used some of the funding to hire research assistants to do background work for the chapters. As we worked on the chapters, we were faced with the difficulty of collaborative writing and interdisciplinarity, especially long-distance. The length of time from the framing to the publishing of Volume I testifies to that difficulty. The time and diligence required for these efforts, may have eventually led to later more individually-based research. Phase I & II of the AFWG project are basically captured in Volume I of AFWG and in the development of the three Research Project Groups, which by the end of Phase II were beginning to dissolve themselves.

Phase III 2006 - 2011

Phase III of the AFWG project took a number of different pathways. Early in Phase II, one of the Research Project Groups (Well Being) had dissolved itself, mainly through attrition as several members found their own work agendas did not allow them to continue, leaving AFWG with 15 Core Group members. As funding became available for empirical research at the end of Phase II, the Core Group set out to identify and commit to specific projects. Here, a watershed moment occurred. From the 15 Core Group members 13 research projects emerged, all individually based except one collaborative project. Clearly the recognition of the difficult of on

the ground collaborative projects across three countries had set in. We worked to link the projects within the framework we had developed and group them into theoretical thematics. The groupings shifted several times as the scholars began research and reshaped their projects in response to findings. We met twice a year, reporting to each other findings and discussed frameworks for understanding those findings. The more empirically ground our research became, the more intersections emerged among the 13 projects. It became important to discuss the specific research projects as a whole Core Group, rather than in the two remaining Research Project Groups. By Phase III, we had dissolved the separate Research Project Groups and regrouped as a whole. By the second year of Phase III (2007) we had grouped the projects into two large thematics for purposes of publishing two special issues of journals: “War and Transnational Families” (submitted to the Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies) and “Contesting Youth” (submitted to Comparative Studies in Society and History). Each thematic group had guest editor(s).

Towards the end of Phase II (February 2005) and continuing into Phase III AFWG launched a series of outreach activities: stakeholder workshops, media seminars, meetings with NGO’s, and workshops and conferences with international scholars and training a new generation of scholars to do research. AFWG organized a Stakeholder workshop in conjunction with each Core Group meeting in Cairo, Beirut, Ramallah. We attached to those meetings, when we could, meetings with representatives of the public media (local TV, radio, newspaper and magazine journalists). We organized a major international conference to share our research (March 2007, Cairo). In 2008, we began a series of workshops for graduate students and NGO activists to train them in proposal writing for research funding, in new conceptual thematics around Arab families, and in methods of doing research.

We also restructured AFWG internally by the end of 2007. We had dissolved the Research Project Groups earlier and continued our work as a body of the whole. However, much of the management of AFWG work was organized through Joseph's staff and leadership. We established four committees to distribute the work among the full membership: A publications committee, a grants/fund raising committee, a program/workshop/conference committee, and a website development committee. Each member joined a committee and took on responsibilities. Throughout our organizational history, we were learning what worked and how to work together. Our willingness to adapt, change, shift our organizational structure, as well as our vision of the work to adjust to the realities rejuvenated AFWG so it could continue when we came up against obstacles and limits. What were the lessons of almost a decade of AFWG?

Lessons and Assessments:

AFWG's Process:

AFWG set out to develop a collaborative, interdisciplinary, comparative, transnational, inter-generational, long-term research project. We had a vision of bringing together scholars, policy makers and planners in a concerted effort to advance the state of our empirical and theoretical knowledge on Arab families. We anticipated that every research project would be done comparatively in each of the three research countries. We felt that anything we produced as AFWG should be written collaborative, with no single-authored publications. We envisioned an AFWG series, produced and owned collectively by "AFWG". We developed protocols for reading and revising any work produced by AFWG. We developed procedures by which scholars could become members (or lose membership) in AFWG.

As we look back at almost a decade of work, many of these ambitions proved difficult to impossible to realize. The first three-four years of theoretical formulation were all collaboratively carried out. Once we developed the empirical projects, and learning from the experience of writing Volume I, we shifted towards individual research projects which always had systematic collective input. The exception was the Birzeit research project on war and marriages which involved three Core Group scholars. While initially, to some of us (me especially), there was a disappointment that we did not implement carrying out the same research projects in each of the sites, what emerged was even more interesting: The 13 projects developed provocative overlaps in thematics and comparative outcomes. Even though we had “individualized” the empirical research, the collaborative engagement had filtered into our thinking on each of the projects.

AFWG’s plan of action envisioned research carried out, analyzed and written collaboratively. The purpose in the collaborative process was to ensure the highest possible productivity from our individual and collective efforts and to break through frontiers of knowledge that working in the isolated scholarly fashion, we were less likely to accomplish. While AFWG meetings entered domains of theory and paradigmatic shifts which none of us, alone, would have produced, collaborative writing turned out to be extremely difficult, especially long distance. Our best effort was the Ain Sukhna retreat, in which we spent three days, holed up in rooms working together. It was a productive experience, but difficult to sustain in the absence of more frequent and longer-lasting meetings.

Interdisciplinarity remained a goal. Family studies are necessarily interdisciplinary and require multiple methodological approaches. Family studies are also necessarily inter-sectional – evaluating global issues, state/nation issues, local issues, race, community, religion, class,

gender, and sexuality. It became clear from the first AFWG Core Group meeting, however, that interdisciplinarity is simply hard work. Talking across the fields of demography, literature, history, psychology, politics, economics, sociology, anthropology was always challenging. Concepts that seemed commonplace to some from one discipline, seemed arcane, skewed, overdrawn, under-nuanced, misplaced to some from other disciplines. Methods that made no sense to some, were foundational to others. The approaches of some appeared to be a direct challenge to the frameworks of others. In the end, it took patience, commitment to translation, tolerance of miscommunication and a dose of good will to not only develop common language, but also to develop empirical projects which embodied interdisciplinarity. This part of the AFWG project is a work in progress, unfolding as we operationalize our concepts and commitments. While interdisciplinarity was not achieved in the sense of each project having scholars from multiple disciplines involved, it was achieved, nevertheless, to some degree, through our constant collective interrogation of each other's work.

We envisioned working directly with policy makers, including government officials. That too proved to be difficult. Our hope to have an impact on government policy, turned out to be more ambitious than our project allowed. AFWG stakeholders' workshops, in which we have regularly engaged with activists and professionals in the three localities (Cairo, Beirut, Ramallah), however, were all energetic exchanges in which we learned as much as we may have given. As interesting and dynamic, were the training sessions for graduate students and NGO professionals, who responded with enthusiasm for the work we did together. This was another aspect of our inter-generational commitment. Inter-generational organization was at the heart of AFWG. We specifically set out to make AFWG's Core Group inter-generational. Core members included very senior scholars well known and established in their fields, junior scholars

beginning their research trajectories, and graduate students still formulating their research trajectories – from a variety of disciplines. The purpose was to bring together the corpus of knowledge and thinking of the most experienced researchers with the freshness of training of younger thinkers, thereby fostering not only that productive exchange, but a continuing production of critical knowledge that will outlast the founders of AFWG. Two of the Core Group members were graduate students in 2001 (both have completed PhD’s and begun professional careers since), and a third were junior scholars (all of whom have moved forward in their careers). The mentoring within AFWG supported those careers as well.

AFWG has not achieved many aspects of its original vision; yet it has made inroads into many. We cannot yet quite claim an “AFWG” approach to Arab families. Perhaps this reflects the necessity of the work. This first Volume of AFWG can be taken as a call for more critical interdisciplinary and comparative research, more critical theory, more critical historical and ethnographic work. While AFWG is an imperfect project, it is engaged in this visionary effort.

AFWG’s Core Group

The membership of the Core Group has shifted. A few of the original 24 participants in 2001 had conflicting commitments and could not continue with AFWG, changing the disciplinary and institutional affiliational mix. At the same time, we added two new members. A number of the Core Group members moved to new positions, affiliations, and even countries, shifting the regional distribution of AFWG as well as the institutional affiliational mix again. The original approach committed the planning committee to try to represent all the key disciplines, the key countries of research, and the key institutional settings which were relevant to research on Arab families. While that produced a productive set of conversations, it is

possible that we were too focused on our preliminary criteria, especially the insistence (mine) that scholars have institutional affiliations. The scholars who could not continue with AFWG were designated as affiliates of AFWG, a category which included research assistants and others actively involved in AFWG work (see Acknowledgments and Front matter lists). The intent was to involve them in other ways, but this did not materialize. However, several non-Core Group scholars have worked collaboratively with various Core Group members on AFWG research.

The AFWG Core Group of 15 scholars and planners are affiliated with universities, NGO's and research foundations, whose work focuses on Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt. The majority of Core Group members are located in Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt, with others located in the United States or Europe. The original intent was that all the scholars would be located regionally, with the exception of the UC scholars. Scholars, however, are mobile, so eventually AFWG came to have six members no longer regionally located.

The early effort was to make the AFWG Core Group the dialogic site for the groups interdisciplinary and comparative work. The Research Project Groups were to design and implement the empirical research whose over arching framework was developed by the Core Group. While the Core Group has carried out this function, the coherency of the Research Project Groups gave way to the more productive conversations which took place within the Core Group as a whole.

AFWG Research Projects: Joint and Individual:

Committed to bringing together scholars, policy makers and planners in a concerted effort to advance the state of our empirical and theoretical knowledge on Arab families, AFWG Core Group was initially organized into three smaller Research Projects: Arab Families and

Public Discourse [including relations to state, citizenship, education/socialization, law, cultural production]; Arab Families and Border Crossings [including diasporas, immigration, emigration, war and peacemaking]; Arab Families and Women, Work and Well Being [including household structure and dynamics, income, division of labor, economic activities]. When the Research Project Groups dissolved themselves, individual research became the driving force of AFWG program. Once individual projects became ascendant, it became more challenging to maintain the focus on interdisciplinarity, especially in research methods. Except for one project, that focus has become the responsibility of the work of the Core Group meetings, when, twice a year, we report to each other about our research process and outcomes.

AFWG Protocols

AFWG developed its Protocols in the second year of our work. No sooner had we settled our commitments on the questions of joint authorship, the collective writing process, AFWG copyrights, co-publishing, “ownership” of AFWG research, then it became clear that decisions had to be made situationally. We revised the Protocols a number of times. Finally we stopped revising them and dealt with each situation as it came up. Most particularly were the concerns of the junior scholars who needed publications for their promotions and needed to identify their “ownership” of ideas. In two cases, the Universities with which AFWG Core Group members were affiliated objected to our notion of collaborative copyright, and collaborative publishing (which sometimes meant delays in publishing to allow time for the collaborative process). We learned that an innovative project can bump heads quite readily with institutionally recognized methods of evaluation, especially as it affects career paths.

Policy Implications of AFWG Work

AFWG's intent was to work directly with government officials to affect policy. This did not materialize. However, we have worked with stakeholders, media, NGO's, and graduate students. This offered another avenue to link scholars and practitioners which we found productive. Even in working with these communities, it was not always self-evident whom we should invite, what to say to them, and how to translate our work to them, and learn what they needed our research to do for them. Most interestingly, the objective of working with stakeholders, media, NGO's and graduate students came from our funders. The Ford Foundation and the International Development Research Center, in particular, were keen on outreach. The AFWG project was collaborative not only within the Core Group, but also in partnership with our funders.

AFWG Translation Projects

While we did not work with all the constituencies we had initially imagined, we still hoped to reach them. Towards that end, we committed to translation. In developing the AFWG contract with Syracuse University Press for Volume I, we negotiated the right to publish the book in Arabic simultaneously or even before the English edition. We raised funds for the translation project. We committed to translations of future work as well. We found translation critical to the kind of conversations we wanted to have in the countries of research.

AFWG Website

Development of the web page became important to the outreach work of AFWG. AUC hosted the AFWG web page from the beginning in 2001 at www.aucegypt.edu/academic/afwg.

After 2001, the University of California, Davis, offered AFWG an office and a UC supported server, the AFWG web page was mirrored at <http://sjoseph.ucdavis.edu/afwg>. Later it was moved to a public site, <http://afwg.org>. The first years, the emphasis was on developing the web page as an archive for the AFWG Core Group and Research Projects. The AFWG Core Group was interested in using the web page for public dialogue and information sharing with scholars and activists in the field. Towards that end we worked on bibliography projects, archives and other documents, to be posted on the web page. With the new website committee, the AFWG website moved to <http://afwg.info>. A number of public dissemination projects are underway for the website as it is revised.

AFWG Bibliography

As we worked on AFWG's Volume I, we decided to compile as extensive a bibliography as we could of all sources on Arab families from the late 19th century to the present. We collected 2,000 items, mostly in English, but also in Arabic, French and German. This became, in some ways, an on-going headache as multiple styles and formats had to be negotiated. Finding the Arabic sources was especially difficult as databases are not as well developed for Arabic sources. French and German sources are not well developed in the bibliography because we were not well staffed with research assistants who could compile in these languages. The bibliographic project, however, continues to be updated, and to continue to be posted on the AFWG webpage for free public access.

The AFWG Library

The AFWG library, housed at the AFWG office at AUC and duplicated at UC Davis, was intended to gather research reports and documents not ordinarily found in university libraries.

The aim was to scan and post these on the AFWG website for free public access. In the first two years, we devoted time to contacting NGO's and research foundations and public agencies to request reports and documents from them on Arab families. This was more problematical than we envisioned. We did not have sufficient staff to support the work. In the second and third year, we invested time researching and copying articles and documents which appeared in newspapers, popular magazines and other media on Arab families and archiving them in the AFWG library. Again, our ambitions were greater than our resources and we found we could not continue effectively in this endeavor. Additionally, many organizations would not give us their reports or give permission for posting them on AFWG's website. Nevertheless, a modest library developed, housing materials we could not find in university libraries. The AFWG library is non-circulating, but available to researchers. When funds are available, we photocopy articles and documents from the library for interested scholars upon request.

AFWG Scholars database

AFWG began developing a database of scholars who work on Arab families. Modeled on the Scholars' Database of the Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures, this database offers free public access and searchability to encourage scholars to network with each other in relationship to research on Arab families.

Housing AFWG and Affiliations

AFWG is co-housed at the American University in Cairo, Egypt and the University of California, Davis. AFWG has a dedicated office at the American University of Cairo and an office at the University of California Davis. In both offices, AFWG has a modest library.

AFWG has a number of affiliated institutions as well: The Population Council, Cairo; the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies (AUC); the Women's Studies Program, Birzeit University; the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World; the Women and Gender Studies Program of the University of California, Davis.

AFWG Funding

AFWG has been fortunate to have funding from multiple agencies and institutions. The first grant from the American University of Cairo's Social Research Center gave us seed money to leverage other sources of support. AUC also provided us with offices and use of their servers for our web page. This was followed by a grant from UNICEF, Cairo office; four grants from the International Development Research Center (2001-2010). The Population Council, Cairo, was our main funder (offering four grants) in the first three years – and the bridge between the theoretical Phases I and II to the empirical research Phase III. AFWG's first research grant aimed at the empirical research came from the Ford Foundation, in our third year and later renewed (2004-2011) and followed by new IDRC research grants. The University of California, Education Abroad Program provided the staff support of a grants officer and use of its computers. The University of California, Davis provided AFWG with an office, a server, and research assistant support through workstudy funds and a grants manager. The partnership of all these organizations was more than through funding. Extensive conversations with the Population Council, IDRC, and Ford directly shaped the research project itself, most especially the outreach aspects of our project. Indeed, representatives from UNICEF, the Population Council, and IDRC became active members of AFWG for a period of time and representatives from the Ford Foundation and IDRC have attended AFWG meetings. AFWG learned how to

work with funders as active partners to our research, listen to their priorities and integrate them with our vision. The outcome, in all respects, was richer and more productive AFWG projects.

Future Plans of AFWG

As AFWG nears the end of its first decade of work, its plans focus on completing Phase III of the empirical research projects; planning Volume II of AFWG series with Syracuse University Press; completing the two special editions of journals based on Phase II and early Phase III research; working to train a new generation of scholars; continuing conversations with stakeholders, NGO's and the media; planning the second international conference. The AFWG website is being redesigned to be more resource-loaded, including syllabi, translations, news items and multiple media. As we have been asked by our funders to do a self-study, reflecting upon and evaluating our research process, we will devote time to considering our successes and failures. When AFWG's Phase II grants expired (prior to confirmation of Phase III foundation funding), the Core Group addressed the issue of commitment. We asked each other, do we want to sign on to working with each other another five years? The answer was an emphatic yes. Perhaps that is its own answer to the vision of a collaborative, interdisciplinary, comparative, transnational, inter-generational project – with its limits and possibilities.

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Bibliography of Arab Families

Introduction and Methodology

Zeina Zaatari and Fawn Scheer

During the Arab Families Working Group's (AFWG) first meeting in May 2001, participants presented a brief overview of the challenges facing families and of the scholarly and political discourse on Arab families in Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, and their diasporas. It quickly became clear that there are particular trajectories in research for certain theoretical frameworks that become dominant at one period in time or from a particular region. Outlining the theoretical and other parameters of previous studies that group members were interested in entailed an assessment of the literature that has been conducted previously. Presenters discussed the challenges of conducting research on Arab families where a historical trail of earlier studies was not easily accessible or available. Locating research material and fieldwork studies was not an easy venture. Finding resources in various languages was even harder as library databases do not usually include foreign language journals, theses and dissertations. Whereas many of the western writings presented us with the orientalist gaze, local writing was difficult to locate with no centralized databases and fewer regional academic journals. This obviously alerted the group to the kinds of research voids and the innovative theoretical perspective that may be needed to address the concerns of Arab Families of today.

At the same time, however, this void brought to the attention of AFWG members the need to compile and produce a searchable database of all research, studies, and publications

conducted on Arab families. Core groups members quickly realized the wonderful opportunity that researching Arab families in various sites presented. Through an extended network of the core group members in various countries, institutions, universities, and programs, and with the help of research assistants, AFWG would be able to collect an exhaustive list of research and studies conducted on Arab families. Whereas initially, the idea was to present the research results in this Volume 1, it quickly became clear that to reach out to other researchers, scholars, graduate students and the general public there is a need to ensure ease of accessibility as well as a continued process of updating. AFWG's commitment to engaging the public, informing public debates, and influence policy necessitates finding other spaces in addition to the print media to present findings. Thus, the purpose for publishing this bibliography is to present, in one place, critical work on Arab families in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries from sources that include books, journal articles, thesis and reports that pertain to the current and historical situations of Arab families. An exhaustive bibliography list on Arab families is presented in the following pages and in several languages. However, the project is on-going on AFWG website, where the bibliography is continuously being updated through active research of new and old publications. The long-term goal of this project is to build on this bibliography to develop and maintain a searchable, regularly updated bibliographic database, accessible through the AFWG webpage (www.afwg.net).

Sources and Criteria

This bibliography represents over five years (2001-2006) of cumulative research conducted and compiled by multiple research assistants working with AFWG in addition to contributions by AFWG core group members. The sources were gathered using electronic

bibliographic databases, Internet search engines, published bibliographies, university libraries, and references cited in works relating to Arab families or provided by AFWG core researchers. A valuable resource guide was a bibliography on Arab families titled: *Al-‘a’ila fi al-‘alam al-‘araby* [The Family in the Arab World] published by UNICEF and organized by Leila Bisharat.

Initially, a collection of bibliography items were collected from AFWG members as they conducted their research and wrote the various chapters of this volume. The second stage involved research assistants searching online library catalogues, conducting Internet searches, and visiting offices of non-governmental organizations, university departments and other institutes in Cairo and Beirut to gather reports and other documents of relevance on Arab families. These centers included: the American University of Beirut, the Lebanese American University, the Notre Dame University, the library at the UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), the Lebanese University Sociology Institute, the Collective for Research and Training, the American University in Cairo, Cairo University, Population Council – Cairo, and Institute of Women’s Studies at Birzeit University. In 2005, with access to a larger number of electronic databases, research assistants gathered information on numerous additional sources using the OCLC FirstSearch electronic bibliographic database. All gathered material needed to be double checked for accuracy of dates, pages, publishing, correct titles, and spelling. This included material that has been cited in other books or studies as well as items found in one database or another.

Initially, citations were selected according to broadly defined criteria to include all relevant sources on Arab families, including sources specific to Arab women and children. At a second stage, elimination of sources that focused specifically on women, children or other themes without any direct discussion or analysis of families took place. AFWG publications

director initially did all the screening of appropriate articles, books, and essays eliminating what was perceived to be only tangentially related to families. At a third stage in 2005, specific protocols were developed to narrow the criteria for inclusion by defining a hierarchical order of databases to search and by defining keyword combinations to use. This led to an elimination process at the search phase as opposed to at the editing phase. Beginning in 2005, only sources specific to Arab families, and not sources broadly relevant to Arab women, were included. It is important here to point out that often work on women tends to be included in family, a remnant of earlier analytical frameworks. It was important to distinguish between works that actually analyzed families through analyzing women and others that addressed women's role in society and somehow located it within familial spaces. Even though we have not been able to read all of the sources, efforts were made to ensure that material addressing women and gender issues that is included has a substantial focus on family, familiarity, and family relationships.

Search and Selection Criteria

After the first set of collected sources were classified and eliminated. Using the new protocols, research began with the OCLC FirstSearch database. The keyword hierarchy used two main descriptors in varying combinations with each other. For each search, one geographic identifier, i.e. "Arab," "Middle East," "North Africa," "Near East," or specific names of Arab states (i.e., "Egypt," "Lebanon," "Palestine," etc.) was combined with a kinship keyword such as "child," "youth," "mother," "father," "parent," "marriage," "divorce," and similar family-based identifiers. This allowed for specific selection of published pieces that did not address the region as a whole but were closely tied to research on families in the select locations.

Criteria for selecting citations were based on the specific relevance of the citation to the scope of this project. Most sources on Arab children were included; however texts on Arab women were excluded if they were not specific to the role of women in families or of women's influence over family life. Poetry, fiction, and children's literature were excluded, as were general works on Arab countries or cultures. Highly clinical documents (e.g., a journal article on spina bifida in Egyptian children) were excluded unless content was considered relevant to the context of Arab families. Biographies about certain figures (primarily if discussing childhood/family life in Arab countries) were included.

Access to the full text of the sources was limited, thus decisions to include sources were based on the available information found in database, internet searches, and first hand knowledge of articles and books. Electronic sources provided basic information on author, title, publisher, etc., as well as abstracts, tables of contents, and other supplementary information (such as web links to electronic versions of publications, author addresses, etc.). However, because publication information found in databases was occasionally erroneous or missing, it was necessary to verify the accuracy of citations by searching for alternative references to the cited sources; the accuracy of the citations was authenticated to the greatest degree possible. A detailed library and internet search was possible to provide accuracy of sources in English. However, the process was more difficult in Arabic and other languages as databases in Arabic were not available and transliteration can vary tremendously based on style and expertise. Nonetheless, Arabic sources were cross-referenced with other sources in internet databases and in other physical sources at libraries and centers. Research assistants that visited libraries at universities in Lebanon and Egypt as well as human rights and family planning centers were able to see the sources first-hand and often were summarizing notes for intensive research.

Sources in Arabic and Other Languages

Arabic citations were found in transliterated form as well as in original Arabic. Citations in original Arabic were transliterated and all Arabic citations were formatted in a standard transliteration style using the International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES) guidelines. Non-English titles were also translated into English. Sources in languages other than English and Arabic were occasionally found in database search results and are included in this bibliography. However, systematic search of citations for sources in other languages was not sought. We acknowledge that there are numerous sources on Arab families published in other languages, and do not attempt to present these non-English citations as exhaustive.

Form and Organization

The citation style used in this bibliography follows the Syracuse University Press guidelines, and where no instruction is given, follows the Chicago 15 bibliographic style. Citations are arranged in alphabetical order by author's last name, and are grouped by language of the published text. For Arabic names that have the 'al' or 'el' in the last name and that do not appear to be connected intrinsically to the name, the 'al' and 'el' are ignored in the alphabetical ordering. For sources known to be published in multiple languages, the citation is listed in each respective language group. The language grouping format was chosen over a topical grouping to prevent duplicate listing of citations across topics and for ease of searchability. There are four sections to the bibliography, starting with sources in the English Language, then Arabic, then French and finally German. The last two language sources in particular are extremely limited as

they were among the least researched or sought after and thus do not reflect at all the quantity or quality of research and publication conducted in those languages.

Benefits and Limitations

The above methods streamlined the compilation process by enabling access to numerous publications, including sources available in government and institutional offices, small and large libraries, and international locations. Access to the bibliographic databases and use of Internet search engines allowed cross-checking to verify sources and provided supplemental information about document topics and affiliated authors and organizations.

The compilation of this bibliography was limited by inadequate citation information, obscure sources, and cumbersome database software. The online bibliographic databases frequently included typographical errors or inaccurate or incomplete publication information. Obscure, archived, and unpublished sources were often difficult to verify. The Endnote database software, used to compile the citations in this bibliography, was somewhat restrictive in its design and function capabilities and it periodically malfunctioned. However, the research methodology was adapted to overcome the bulk of these constraints.

AFWG Online Bibliography

While this bibliography contains a large number of sources, it is not exhaustive. The AFWG website (www.afwg.net) will host a searchable online bibliography on Arab families – an expanded and continually updated version of the print bibliography. Using the research protocols developed in 2005, AFWG Research Assistants (RAs) will search bibliographic databases in the following order (based on the expected volume of search results relevant to Arab

families): OCLC FirstSearch: www.oclc.org/firstsearch; ISI Web of Knowledge: isiwebofknowledge.com; Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA) Illumina: www.csa.com/csaillumina/login.php; NISC Biblioline: www.nisc.com; Proquest: www.proquest.com; RLG's Eureka: www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=4201; JSTOR: www.jstor.org; ProjectMUSE: muse.jhu.edu/journals/. RAs will also use the same keyword combinations described in a previous section. The online bibliography will contain supplementary information about many sources, including keywords and abstracts for sources; users will be able to search for sources based on author name, date, title words, keywords, and language of publication. The online database is expected to be available shortly after the publication of this volume.

Updates and Contact Information

Efforts have been made to include all publicly accessible documents and publications relevant to Arab families in both the print and the online bibliographies. AFWG encourages authors and other parties interested in adding to this public access database to send detailed information to AFWG address. Authors who would like their work included in AFWG's online bibliography are encouraged to contact AFWG at afwg@ucdavis.edu or sjoseph@ucdavis.edu.

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Bibliography on Arab Families
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