



Middle East – Topics & Arguments

Call for papers # 14 – Gender:

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The peer-reviewed online journal “Middle East – Topics and Arguments” (META) is calling for submissions for its fourteenth issue, which will be entitled **Gender**.

Facing recent events and upheavals in the Arab World, this issue of META intends to conceptualize the category of gender in the context of changing social, political, and ideological configurations. Special attention will be given the collective protests that took over the Arab world in 2010 and 2011 and the second wave in Sudan and Algeria in 2019, when women and men claimed freedom and dignity side by side. The visibility of women in public spaces rekindles the ambiguous relation between feminism, patriarchy, and nationalism. It underscores the fluidity of borders that cuts across traditional concepts of bodies and voices and their respective spaces and opens political discourses for new diverse arrangements.

In the context of these upheavals, violence is an important aspect to consider. Although the protests had intended to be peaceful, violence was always present. This points to a systematized use of violence based on gender vulnerabilities. Governmental violence is not only thought to control protesting bodies in public spaces, it also controls bodies' sexualities and sex orientations using accusations of “public indecency” and “inciting immorality”. These forms of sexualized and governmental violence contradict the presence of women as fighters in the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. We can observe the emergence of female militias, jihadists, and suicide bombers, as well as activist-heroes (e.g. Nadia Murad) and victims

(e.g. the abuse of Yazidi women and children). At the same time, questions arise of the masculinity of the soldiers dragging the “blue-bra woman” in Egypt and of the appearance of violent popular suburban male heroes in TV series. These performances reassess the interplay between roles of femininity and masculinity in the wars and upheavals in the MENA region and modify traditional concepts of gender.

In this issue, we aspire to attract papers that go beyond classifying events of people’s demonstrations as ruptures or dichotomies of failure and success. We instead seek to perceive those events that include most of the Arab countries as a continuation of the decolonization process in a post-independence era, to observe the imploding of the old frameworks, and to scrutinize the reciprocity between the political and gendered body apart from men/women binaries to open the field to see gender empowerment in flux.

In this conceptual realm, we are interested in papers that look at gender relations as dynamic spaces establishing new political and/or ideological regimes in different historical periods and different spaces. Contrary to essentialist notions of gender, gender is understood here as being brought about by social and cultural norms and being constructed through historical and current discourses. Understanding gender as a productive category in the study of power relations, the publication is looking for practices and theoretical approaches, including queer theory, in order to look at how regimes try to establish their hegemonic approaches via the regulation of gendered bodies and at subversive answers to it.

We are interested in textual and visual representations of gender relations; this can include artistic productions as well as everyday life practices that reflect, negotiate, and subvert new forms of gendered hegemony. Against the background of the practical and material turn, we invite papers that include ideas of “practices”, “objects”, and “infrastructures”.

An additional focus will be the intersectional relationships of gender. Although the Arab world is often perceived through a gendered perspective, other aspects – including social or ethnic backgrounds, class, national affiliations, generation, etc. – are relevant to explaining inequality and insecurity.

We are seeking articles from different disciplines that involve the Near and Middle East and North Africa, including history, ethnography, comparative literature, media studies, sociology, political science, and others.

Papers presenting new and original research findings on the issue's topic will be published in the journal's FOCUS section. Articles in this section should be between 2,800 and 4,600 words. In addition to papers for the main section, we call for contributions for META journal's special sections:

The META section also relates to the issue's focus topic, with papers discussing gender from a theory-centered perspective or articles that go beyond the Middle East. Articles in this section should be between 2,800 and 4,600 words.

The CLOSE UP section features a short written portrait of a person, institution, or object that has a special relation to the issue's main topic, e.g. a researcher, an activist, an event, or any object that has shaped the discussion of gender in the MENA region. Article length is 1,500 to 3,000 words.

The ANTI/THESIS section juxtaposes two rivaling positions that highlight different lines of argument, pros and cons, and/or competing narratives. These can be presented either together by one author or by two authors in two different articles. Article length for each article is 1,500 to 3,000 words.

Articles that fall into the general framework of the journal, but do not relate to the special topic "Gender", can be taken into consideration for the OFF TOPIC section. offtopic@metajournal.net

Before developing a complete manuscript, authors are asked to submit an **abstract** (max. 300 words), a **short CV** (max. 150 words), and **3-5 key bibliographic sources**. Please clearly indicate the research question, the method to be used, and the empirical material your research will be based on.

The editors will make a preliminary decision regarding the topic's relevance to the journal's aim and scope and may provide suggestions for developing the manuscript, at the latest four weeks after the proposal submission deadline.

All manuscripts must adhere to our [stylesheet](#) and will not be taken into consideration if they exceed the stated word count. All manuscripts published with META journal are [peer reviewed](#), according to a [review guideline](#) on which the reviews should be based. The

process is open by choice; author(s) and reviewers choose whether to reveal their own names.

The deadline for abstract submissions is July 15, 2019

The deadline for article submissions is February 15, 2020

Proposals, manuscripts, and other editorial correspondence should be sent to:

submissions14@meta-journal.net