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Gender Roles And The Social Agent: Framing The Women's Movement(s) In Postcolonial Morocco

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ABSTRACT

For my Independent Study, I conducted a four-week research project on what I will refer to as the "Women's Movement" in Morocco. My initial goal was to understand the framing and aims of this movement. To do so, I sought to explore the different forces impacting the movement – such as local cultural contexts, religion, globalization and colonization – and to analyze the impact of these forces on how different women conceptualize their goals surrounding gender. I studied a variety of scholarship on the Moroccan Women's Movement, focusing on a critical analysis of the state, international interests and non-profit organizations. Throughout my research, I placed academic theory in direct conversation with Morocco's unique historical, social, political and economic environment. To reach my analysis, I combined in-depth academic inquiry with my own observations living in Morocco for three months, the knowledge I gained through SIT-led NGO visits and expert lectures, as well as interviews with Professor Souad Eddouada, Professor Soumaya Belhabib, Professor Sarah Hebbouch and journalist Aida Alami.

At the beginning of my study, I hypothesized that different women, scholars and organizations would conceptualize the Women's Movement in different ways. In one case, appropriations of Western language may coincide with localized understandings of gender, while in another, they may exist at an irreconcilable tension. Ultimately, it is not possible to fully separate the different forces impacting women in Morocco, as they are constantly overlapping and interacting. I am not interested in finding one "right" way to lead a Women's Movement, but in understanding women's hopes and goals through conversation, observation and engaged analysis.

Key Words: Cultural Anthropology, Gender Studies, Regional Studies: Middle East North Africa

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INTRODUCTION

My choice to research the Moroccan Women's Movement arose primarily from a course I took in the Fall of 2019 taught by Professor Lara Deeb, titled "Gender and Islam." While I had learned the Arabic Language, read literature about the colonial history of the Middle East North Africa Region and studied Edward Said's foundational text, "Orientalism," in previous courses, "Gender and Islam" completely changed the way I thought about the world. In particular, studying the work of scholars such as Saba Mahmood, Lila Abu-Lughod and Joseph Massad forced me to rethink the dominant liberal framework present in ideologies such as feminism and LGBTQ+ rights. For so long, I believed that "liberation" looked like one thing. To realize that not only does "liberation" look different for every person and every culture, but that some people may not even be seeking it in the first place, allowed me to reconceptualize my understanding of the world and social movements. Furthermore, criticizing the impact of a "universal" ideology and understanding its relationship to colonization was vital in my growth as both a person and academic (Mahmood 203).

Coming to SIT's Multiculturalism and Human Rights Program, I was extremely interested in how dominant liberal discourse interacts with, or does not interact with, Moroccan social movements. Through what frameworks do different Moroccans view social change? What forces influence how they wish to shape the future of the country, and the world? Over the course of the semester, I realized that Morocco is a rich environment to study these questions.

During an SIT lecture by Professor Soumaya Belhabib, I began to understand the Moroccan Feminist Movement's use of legal and "rights-based" discourse in their attempts to reform the family code. This effort is situated in both the locally-rooted Mudawwana and the universal framework of equality (Belhabib "Lecture"). Professor Belhabib also touched on

feminism's complex relationship to the Islamist Movement in Morocco, and noted the popular resistance to feminist ideology in Moroccan society. In a subsequent lecture by Professor Souad Eddouada, I began to grasp the limitations of the Moroccan Feminist Movement from an intersectional perspective. Professor Eddouada works with rural women whose land is being privatized under neoliberal economic reform. For many of these women, the right to their land is far more important than "equal rights" to the male members of their community. However, their fight for collective land ownership is often unrecognized by feminists in urban areas (Eddouada "Lecture").

In lectures by Professor Taieb Belghazi and Professor Driss Maghraoui, I was able to contextualize the Moroccan Women's Movement within the country's unique political, economic and social contexts. Professor Belghazi enlightened me on the history of the Moroccan regime, as well as its connections to non-governmental organizations, social movements and Islam. He also theorized the merging of the "universal" and the "local" in a Moroccan context, a concept incredibly important to my research (Belghazi "Lecture: Human Rights"). Professor Maghraoui specifically spoke on the powerful role of the monarchy in Morocco – deepening my knowledge of the political climate in which social movements are located.

Lastly, during frequent visits to non-governmental organizations, I watched as everything I learned in the classroom played out in civil society. During our visits to NGOs such as Rawabit Assadaka in Tangier, 100% Mamans in Tangier, Délégation Diocesaine Des Migrations in Tangier, Manos Solidarias in Tetouan and Foundation Hibba in Rabat, we explored a range of issues including funding sources, gender dynamics, migration, racism, state repression, technology, the arts and the role of NGOs in shaping society. It was through these visits that I truly understood the complexity and depth of Morocco as a place to study social movements. I

longed to learn more about how popular goals and actions emerge in the Moroccan context, which has led me to my current research.

For my independent study project, I am researching the framing of the Women's Movement in postcolonial Moroccan society. My project asks the major questions:

- How do women in Morocco understand and conceptualize the goals of the Moroccan "Women's Movement"?

- How do Islam and local cultural frameworks impact, or not impact, the goals of the Women's Movement?

- How does the terminology and ideology of the Women's Movement interact with the globalized "Feminist Movement"?

- How is the Women's Movement influenced by Morocco's colonial history and postcolonial present?

To answer these questions, I have engaged in an extensive literature review to study the history of the Women's Movement, as well as the influence of forces such as colonization, globalization, local cultural contexts and Islam. I have reviewed approximately twenty-five primary sources throughout my research, including academic articles, news stories and books. To reach my analysis, I have combined this literature review with my personal observations, SIT lectures, NGO visits, as well as expert interviews by Professor Souad Eddouada, Professor Soumaya Belhabib, professor Sarah Hebbouch and journalist Aida Alami.

I hypothesize that different women, scholars and organizations conceptualize the Women's Movement in different ways. In one case, appropriations of universal language may merge with Moroccan understandings of gender, while in another, they may directly contradict each other. Ultimately, it is not possible to comprehensively study the historical, social,

economic and political forces impacting women's goals in Morocco, as they are deeply complex and interconnected. I am not interested in wholly documenting the movement, or finding one "correct" way to mobilize social change in Morocco. Instead, I hope to begin to understand women's hopes and goals through conversation, observation and engaged analysis.

During my research, six major themes arose which I will thoroughly explore in my literature review and findings. These themes include:

- The Impact and Limitations of NGOs

- The Omnipresence of the State

- Feminist and Alternative Ideologies

- Neoliberalism, Modernity and Development

- Islamic Feminism, or Lack Thereof

- Technology, Media and the February 20th Movement

These key themes will allow me to analyze the framing of the Moroccan Women's Movement from an intersectional, globally engaged perspective. While this is certainly not a complete analysis, these themes are a vital start to determining the relationship between Islam, local cultural frameworks, globalization, colonization and the formation of the Moroccan Women's Movement. Ultimately, my analysis will shine light on the contexts in which women's rights are situated – and the powerful forces that influence women's hopes and actions to shape their future. This will reveal the varying, connected, and contradicting ways in which different women conceptualize their roles in Moroccan society.

RELEVANT TERMINOLOGY

Neoliberalism

- Neoliberalism refers to the privatization of the global economy alongside a cultural emphasis on personal responsibility and individualism. Neoliberalism is often concerned with shrinking the role of the government and allowing the market economy to function freely, without restriction. Social welfare is diminished and citizens are expected to provide for themselves, regardless of the structural conditions they may face.

- In Cortney Hughes Rinker's article, "Responsible Mothers, Anxious Women: Contraception And Neoliberalism In Morocco," she explains how under neoliberal reform, Moroccan women are expected to use birth control. By having fewer kids, and even spreading their pregnancies apart, families are supposedly able to better financially provide for their children without welfare. Additionally, as they have less children, the "quality" of each child is stressed, and "Moroccan women are under immense pressure to produce future generations who embody particular neoliberal traits – independence, individualism, and responsibility." (Rinker 120) In a newly neoliberal society, Rhoda Kanaaneh describes women's bodies as "fields of contest" through which visions of the nation are defined and contested (Rinker 109). As Rinker states, "'Fields of contest' help in understanding how medicine, neoliberalmodernization, social discourses of gender and the family, new notions of citizenship, and different visions of the future are debated through and upon Moroccan women's bodies." (109)

The Mudawwana

- The Mudawwana, the Moroccan Family Law, or the Moroccan Family Code, was first coded into law shortly after Moroccan independence in 1956. Originally rooted in the Maliki school of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence, it governs issues related to marriage, polygamy, divorce, inheritance and child custody. As explained by Fatima Sadiqi, "The

Moroccan feminist movement has evolved around the Family Law Code. The post-independence family law denied women basic rights and thus fueled the disappointment and anger of the female intellectual elite…legal rights have always constituted a priority in Moroccan women's struggle for dignity in and outside the home" (325). After a decades-long struggle for reform, and minor changes implemented by King Hassan II in 1993, a new family law code was ratified under King Mohammad VI and the Moroccan parliament in 2004. This was a major achievement for the Women's Rights Movement, and legal reform continues to be a vital site of struggle for Moroccan women today.

Feminism

- When I refer to feminism, I am actually referring to a wide scope of "feminisms," ranging from Moroccan Feminism, to Islamic Feminism, to Governance Feminism, to Liberal Feminism. All of these "feminisms" originate from a widely globalized ideology for women's emancipation, most dominantly based in liberal and legal frameworks such as "freedom," "equality," rights" and "liberation" from systems of patriarchy. While feminism originated in elitist, upper-class circles of Wesern women, it has been adopted, appropriated and even rejected by women of varying classes, races and nationalities. When discussing Governance Feminism in particular, Janet Halley explains, "The study of GF is necessarily a comparative project, tracing genealogies of transmission—of production and reception—from the international to the local and back again, from center to periphery and back again, from the ivory tower to the street and back again. And because feminism now takes governance forms, the struggle over production, transmission, and reception of feminist people, ideas, and practices is achieved not only

through their intrinsic charisma but sometimes at the end of a gun" (23). I believe that this quotation highlights the global power – and sometimes violent, colonial instrumentalization – of feminist ideology, as well as the ways it is constantly being adapted and reimagined in local contexts.

The Moroccan Women's Movement

- Like feminism, the "Moroccan Women's Movement" or "Moroccan Women's Movement(s)" is a broad and inadequate term to account for the diversity of women and women's movements in Morocco. While I have not been able to identify a single, unified women's movement in Morocco, I utilize "the Moroccan Women's Movement" as a term encompassing any community action by women, for women in order to shape their futures. These actions range from the "The Moroccan Women's Rights Movement," described by Amy Young Evrard as women working towards legal rights and Mudawwana reform, to the Sulaliyyate, who consist of female land rights activists fighting against the privatization of their collectively owned lands (Evrard 11; Eddouada "Interview"). This term is not meant to inaccurately unify these women under one social movement; it is instead a term of convenience to identify all social actions to change (or preserve) women's roles and lives in Morocco.

Intersectionality

- As relayed by the Howard University Law Library, the term intersectionality was first coined in 1989 by critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw, "who provided a framework that must be applied to all situations women face, recognizing that all the aspects of identity enrich women's lived experiences and compound and complicate the various oppressions and marginalizations women face." For example, Black women cannot

separate their identity as a Black person from their identity as a woman, and these

identities intersect and overlap to create a unique lived experience. Black women also

experience oppression differently than white women or Black men (Howard University).

- For gender specifically, "Intersectionality helps us to understand that while all women are

    subject to the wage gap, some women are affected even more harshly due to their race.

    Another instance where intersectionality applies is cases of LGBTQ murders - people of

    color and transgender people are more likely to be victims than cisgender people"

    (Howard University).

- In the case of the Moroccan Women's Movement, it is important to recognize that

    different Moroccan women experience their identities as women and as members of

    Moroccan society very differently. For example, an upper-class, educated woman living

    in a major city will face different challenges than a lower-class, uneducated woman living

    in a rural area. Gender, class and location intersect to create differing realities. This also

    applies to migrant status, Amazigh identity, race and a number of other factors

    influencing Moroccan life (Eddouada "Interview"; Belhabib "Interview").

Agency

- Oftentimes, in the dominant secular liberal framework, "agency" is solely seen as acting

    in opposition to systems of oppression, or as seeking "freedom" from restraining

    circumstances. However, as explained by Saba Mahmood, this framework is not adequate

    to describe the hopes, goals and actions of all people. The secular liberal framework is

    oftentimes used in a patronizing way to frame the West as the sole voice of morality and

    to colonially "civilize" or "save" those living in the Global South from their "oppressive"

    realities. Mahmood studies an Egyptian Women's Mosque Movement in which women

are not seeking freedom from the Islamic patriarchy; instead, these women are looking to help one another cultivate piety in the public sphere. Their "agency" may not be secular or liberal, but it is still agency nonetheless. Mahmood claims, "I want to suggest that we think of agency not as a synonym for resistance to relations of domination, but as a capacity for action that historically specific relations of subordination enable and create" (203).

- Lila Abu-Lughod resists white feminism's attempts to "free" or "save" Muslim women from their socieities. She asks, "What does freedom mean if we accept the fundamental premise that humans are social beings, always raised in certain social and historical contexts and belonging to particular communities that shape their desires and understandings of the world" (Abu-Lughod "Do Muslim Women" 786). Abu-Lughod argues that it is not white women's job to "save" Muslim women and this rhetoric is often enveloped in colonial violence – such as the War on Terror.

Empowerment

- I take my definition of empowerment from Professor Taieb Belghazi, who effectively summarizes Patricia Hill Collins piece, "Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment."

- Professor Belghazi explains: "Patricia Hill Collins equates empowerment with social justice, education, and community, as well as self-definition and self-reliance. For Collins, although empowerment must come from within, it is enabled by a wider social system. Empowerment is not just personal. Because oppressions are linked, they necessitate transforming unjust institutions" (Belghazi "Lecture: Human Rights")

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LITERATURE REVIEW

THE IMPACT AND LIMITATIONS OF NGOS

There is a wide range of literature on the impact and limitations of non-profit organizations in the Middle East North Africa Region. In Lila Abu-Lughod's seminal piece "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" she addresses the use of "feminism" and "women's rights" as an ideological tool to promote the War on Terror. As Abu-Lughod explains, Western non-profit organizations are often enveloped in Orientalist discourse, employing a racist "white savior" rhetoric to "save Brown women from Brown men" ("Do Muslim Women" 784). Following in Abu-Lughod's footsteps, Joseph Massad and Katherine Pratt Ewing wrote articles discussing the negative impacts of exporting "LGBT" terminology from America and Europe to the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the deep-rooted histories of colonial harm to queer people in the region. Once again, international non-profit organizations are directly implicated in this history.

Moving towards a more direct critique of NGOs, Islah Jad published "The NGO-ization of Arab Women's Movements" in 2007. Jad details the history of "Women's Movements" in Arab countries, which she claims arose in the first half of the 20th century as a result of independence, "secular nationalism" and "Islamic modernism" (34). Today, with the neoliberalization of Arab economies and the rise in international funding, these organizations are structured around a small, professionalized staff – and a hierarchy that places power in the hands of the director (Jad 39). According to Jad, NGOs are reliant on international funding, which means they are often more connected to the globalized economy than their own constituents. The funding they receive is typically limited to short-term projects, which are strictly overseen by their donors. Women's NGOs tend to remain uncritical of the state, and they do not connect

themselves to wider aims for social change – such as class disparity or political corruption (Jad 40). Jad argues that these constraints prevent them from mobilizing popular social movements.

However, Jad also warns against sweeping generalizations and challenges the idea that feminism is inherently colonial. She reminds us that "notions of separate cultures have themselves been produced by the colonial encounter," and she remarks Egyptian women as "active agents in their specific cultural, social and political contexts" (Jad 37). She suggests that rather than generalizing all non-profit organizations, each organization must be studied contextually, considering "their links to other social and political groups, to the state, and to powerful external agencies and their models of development" (Jad 37). In doing so, one will avoid harmful cultural dichotomies.

On a similar line of study, Mona Atia and Catherine E. Herrold's "Governing Through Patronage" explores the impact of funding on NGOs in Palestine and Morocco. In particular, Atia and Herrold define government and international funding as a form of control which increases bureaucratization, professionalization and upward accountability – encouraging NGOs to show more commitment to donors than the communities they serve. In 2005, King Mohammad VI formed the "National Initiative for Human Development," a government entity that creates, supports and oversees thousands of NGOs in Morocco. According to Atia and Herrold, some activists believe that the INDH "deliberately crowded out associations that were critical of the government," taking advantage of NGOs dependance on their donors (1051). In this way, certain Moroccan NGOs function as "apparatuses of governing" and carry out the king's postcolonial liberalization efforts faithfully (Atia & Herrold 1044).

In general, I am in agreement with the work of Abu-Lughod, Massad, Pratt Ewing, Jad, Atia and Herrold. After visiting different NGOs in Morocco over the last three months, I am

keenly aware of the wide-scale impacts of international interests, funding sources and organizational structure. As an American, I have observed the colonial nature of American NGOs both domestically and globally. However, I am grateful for Islah Jad's point, which urges nuance and care when analyzing Arab Women's Movements. The NGOs I visited in Morocco, despite the funding sources they may or may not have had, were run almost entirely by Moroccans – and in some cases, even by migrant populations. It is important to recognize the very real, positive role of NGOs in Moroccan civil society, and to commend those who honestly work towards social change. As an American researcher, I am not in a position to denote the "right" and "wrong" way to act as an agent in one's society. I am only capable of listening, learning and observing the different forces embedded in the Moroccan Women's Movement.

NEOLIBERALISM, MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the course of my literature review, I came across an extensive range of academic articles and news stories detailing the relationship between feminism, neoliberalism and Morocco's post-independence efforts to become a "modern" and "developed" state.

In Professor Souad Eddouada's article, "Feminism and Neoliberalism On Stage," she tells the story of the privatization of communal land in Sidi Kacem, a province in the Moroccan Al-Gharb. The government and certain non-profit organizations have framed land privatization as a "feminist" issue, in which rural women will finally gain equal access to land inheritance rights (Eddouada "Fem & Neo"). However, as Eddouada points out, this notion of women's rights has become "the principal framework for land grabbing endeavors, providing a necessary moral support for both the eradication of the commons and the rapid implementation of neoliberal efforts to commodify communal land" ("Fem & Neo" 5). Eddouada also critiques the

National Initiative for Human Development, a government agency focused on women's

education, entrepreneurship and workforce inclusion. The INDH's emphasis on

income-generating skills is neoliberal and capitalistic – positioning "equality" as equivalent to a

woman's ability to work alongside men (Eddouada "Fem & Neo" 8-9). Eddouada explains how

legal rights such as "equality in the workforce" are not always applicable to women in rural

Moroccan villages, where social custom is more heavily recognized than legal text.

    In journalist Aida Alami's article, "In a Fight for Land, a Women's Movement Shakes

Morocco," she tells the story of rural land rights activists who fight for the ownership of – and in

some cases, compensation for – their stolen land. It is important to note that many rural women,

as Alami's article shows, are eager to gain equal inheritance rights under the law. After the

forced privatization of their land, some rural women partnered with urban NGOs to learn about

their rights and continue to protest for inhertiance equality to this day (Alami "In a Fight").

However, as Eddouada's article explains, the government and many women's NGOs do not view

communal land ownership, or forced land privatization, as a "feminist issue." The stealing of

communal land, which is extremely damaging to the lives of rural women, is swept under the rug

– overshadowed by the issue of inheritance equality. While many rural women resonate with the

language of "equality" and inheritance rights, others feel it is not representative of their reality,

which is most directly centered around communal land ownership. They do not wish to privately

own their land, they wish to communally own their land under customs which are being

destroyed by neoliberal efforts (Eddouada "Fem & Neo"). I believe that feminism must be

intersectional and recognize the unique struggles that rural women face, as well as the

connections between class, gender and the privatization of land. While inheritance rights may be

desirable to some women, for others it is inconsequential when compared to the loss of their community-centered lives and homes.

Aida Alami also wrote an article titled, "Workers in Spain's Strawberry Fields Speak Out on Abuse," which explores an agreement between the Moroccan and Spanish governments to employ thousands of rural Moroccan mothers in Andalusian strawberry fields. The agreement required that the workers be mothers so they would most likely desire to return to Morocco after their employment. The agreement was seen as "an earning opportunity for the poor Moroccans, which gave Spanish farmers much-needed low-cost labor" (Alami "Workers"). While these women were promised short-term economic opportunity, they were met with sexual abuse and labor violations. Many of the women attempted to sue for the violence they faced, but the Moroccan and Spanish governments refused to hold themselves accountable (Alami "Workers"). In my opinion, this article sheds light on the harm of neoliberal reform – which creates global profit and undermines the rights and lives of poor, rural, working-class mothers.

Lastly, I reviewed the article "Responsible Mothers, Anxious Women," in which Cortney Hughes Rinker explains the connection between contraception and neoliberalism in Morocco. While acknowledging that many working-class women use contraception in order to cope with daily stresses in their lives, Rinker argues that it has been implemented through neoliberal reforms to create a "modern" and "developed" Moroccan society (109). The fewer children women have, the more they are able to work and the more money they have to invest in their children. Women are increasingly encouraged to produce "quality" children, which means they must provide them with excellent educational and job opportunities (Rinker 120). While contraception provides women with control over their bodies and relief from the physical and mental stress of raising a large family, they experience increased pressure to produce the ideal,

neoliberal citizens – regardless of their class statuses (Rinker 117). During my own visits to NGOs, I have witnessed the emphasis on contraception during women's workshops. I never would have recognized the connection between contraception to neoliberalism, and this awareness has opened my eyes to the relationship between women's roles and the building of a modern nation-state. I am particularly distressed by the pressure working class women face to produce "ideal citizens," regardless of their access to wealth, quality school systems and accessible employment. This shows that when feminism and neoliberalism are interconnected, intersectionality is often erased and working-class, rural women are left behind.

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF THE STATE

According to a Human Rights Watch report titled "'They'll Get You No Matter What,'" the Moroccan state utilizes "physical and electronic surveillance, abusive incarcerations, biased trials...character-assassination campaigns" and occasionally even "physical violence and intimidation" to silence its critics. Many state-dissenting journalists and activists are imprisoned on the basis of alcohol use, premarital sex and adultury – incredibly private acts which are made public by state surveillance and defamation campaigns (Human Rights Watch). The state has even they have begun to falsely accuse journalists of rape in order to imprison them. While imprisonment for dissent, or defamation of the monarchy, would appear undemocratic from a Western perspective, the weaponization of the "Me Too Movement" maintains the Moroccan government's image on an international scale (Human Rights Watch). This level of punitive censorship has created a culture of fear in Moroccan society, where freedom of speech is highly controlled and limited.

The Moroccan state's appropriation of Western feminism, such as their instrumentalization of the "Me Too Movement," is not a new phenomenon. In Fatima Sadiqi's article, "The Central Role of the Family Law in the Moroccan Feminist Movement," she details the origins of Moroccan state feminism. While the government did not necessarily believe in the rights of women for women's sake, they desired to paint an image of "modern Islam" to the Western world (Sadiqi 326). Mohamed Hassan Ouazzani, a nationalist intellectual who studied and lived in France, advocated for equitable inheritance laws not solely because these laws were harmful to women, but because "equitable inheritance laws were 'tokens' of a modern egalitarian society" (Sadiqi 326). In 1957, King Mohamed V unveiled his daughter in public, stating the need to "emancipate women in order to develop society" (Sadiqi 326).

In the Preface and Chapter 2 of Janet Halley's book, *Governance Feminism: An Introduction*, she explains the theory behind *Governance Feminism* and traces the history of feminism in the United States. Given feminism's inevitable connection to the state and political sphere, Halley reminds us that "engagement in politics can be fully responsible only if one is willing to look down and behold the blood on one's own hands" (Halley xv). Blood is not only expressed through war or violence, but also what she coins as "'the five C's': collaboration, compromise, collusion, complicity, and co-optation" (Halley xv). Halley also historicizes the collaboration between "Liberal Feminism" and "Dominance Feminism," which originated in the United States and employ a legally-rooted, punitive framework – wholly devoid of intersectional analyses. This form of feminism boasts a binary model of morality, and it assimilates easily into U.S. political and legal frameworks (25). While this framework is the most commonly "exported" across the world, it certainly does not represent the beliefs of all feminists, nor does it capture the complexity and multiplicity of the ideology today. As Halley warns, "U.S. feminism,

like U.S. citizens, has a passport that can travel almost everywhere without applying for an entry visa: this very salience and transportability have made U.S. feminism a little deaf to its own limits and to the intense resistance it has provoked among some non-U.S.-based feminists" (Halley 24).

In my own research, I have only scratched the surface of the state's role in the Moroccan Women's Movement. I was particularly struck by the Human Rights Watch's analysis of censorship and political prisoners in Morocco; I found the piece to be an excellent investigative pursuit on Moroccan state repression. In regards to Sadiqi's piece, I believe that the Moroccan government is influenced by Western "liberal" and "dominant" feminist discourse, as well as "modernization" and "civilization" efforts, which in and of itself are colonially-rooted. It is important to note that the state must also combat a global ideological campaign racializing Muslim men, and Islam itself, as violent and misogynistic. I wonder how the Moroccan state interacts with these forces while governing a postcolonial society. I am also interested in the government's "feminist" agencies, efforts and collaborations with women's non-profit organizations. Given King Mohammad VI's 2004 Mudawwana reform, as well as my conversations with NGOs and scholars, it is clear to me that the Moroccan Women's Movement has lobbied and collaborated extensively with the state.

FEMINIST AND ALTERNATIVE IDEOLOGIES

In Souad Eddouada's "Feminism in Morocco: Between the local and the global," she argues that mainstream "feminism" in Morocco, or what she calls "militant feminism," may not resonate with all Moroccan women. Militant feminism presumes that women are a homogenous group who all require the same legal recognition in order to be "liberated" and succeed. It is

primarily run by middle and upper-class urban women, and its focus on "universal rights" has the potential to reproduce power structures both within the movement and in greater Moroccan society. As Eddouada states, "Political feminism claims for the women what the man has, i.e. a new identity constructed on the patriarchal model" ("Fem in Mor" 66)

Universal human rights poses Islam as inherently oppressive and secular feminism as liberatory. Accrding to Eddouada, these goals disregard "the centrality of theological discourse on women's rights issues within the context of a Muslim majority country" ("Fem in Mor" 68). Militant feminism does not attempt to advocate for women's rights from within an Islamic framework through, for example, re-interpreting religious text from a feminist perspective. Furthermore, mainstream Moroccan feminism does not account for the experiences of lower-class Moroccan women or Moroccan women living in rural areas. In rural areas, most women are not even aware of the 2004 family code, and they do not think to acquire prenuptial agreements when entering marriages. Additionally, many rural women work within an informal economy, which is not recognized by the law (Eddouada "Fem in Mor" 72). While Eddouada recognizes that militant feminism has increased awareness around gender justice in Morocco, in practice, she believes its narrow scope does not account for all Moroccan women. Additionally, its focus on gender equality under the law reproduces a power structure that creates hierarchies, reinstates gender roles and labels Islam as oppressive (Eddouada "Fem in Mor" 71).

In the introduction to Amy Young Evrard's book, *The Moroccan Women's Rights Movement,* she explores Moroccan women's plight to gain legal rights, particularly concerning the 2004 Mudawwana reform. According to Evrard, these women had two major goals: to gain legal rights for women and to translate legal language into a Moroccan. This effort was deeply concerned with framing its goals to reach a wider public and shift women's perceptions of

themselves in society. While many scholars dismiss it as "elite" or "Western," Evrard believes that these women and organizations "tapped into a transnational feminist movement with universalist ideals of women's equality and rights yet had increasingly fostered a determination to find and speak with local voices" (3). Evrard argues that "universal rights" are never truly "universal," and Morocco provides a useful example of how they are applied in a local context. Further, the term "transnational" does not only apply to concepts transmitted from the West, but implies "multidirectionality and multivocality," in which communities in the Global South hold power (Evrard 7). In Morocco, women produced a movement "that is uniquely Moroccan yet resonates with women's concerns in the region and throughout the world." (Evrard 4)

I resonate with both Eddouada's criticism of the militant feminist movement and Evrard's appreciation for the Moroccan Women's Rights Movement. I wish to include both of their research in my ISP, and I believe that their arguments are not necessarily in opposition to each other. Evrard's book centers around a primarily urban movement, which locally frames universal ideology, while Eddouada's article focuses on rural and pious perspectives – which are often situated outside of universal legal frameworks. While I agree that the Women's Rights Movement is incredibly accomplished, I do not believe it has the capacity to unify all Moroccan women under its current aims. However, unification under a single social movement may not even be possible or desirable in the Moroccan context, due to the sheer diversity of Moroccan women. In Lila Abu-Lughod's "The Active Social Life of 'Muslim Women's Rights: A Plea for Ethnography, Not Polemic,'" she urges scholars to refrain from judging Muslim women's rights movements as "successful" or "unsuccessful," or from characterizing women in a certain country as "having rights" or "not having rights." Instead of engaging in debate, she suggests we follow "'Muslim women's rights' as they travel through various worlds and projects, circulate through

debates and documents, organize women's activism, and mediate women's lives in various places" (Abu-Lughod "The Active" 2). I prefer to adhere to Abu-Lughod's framework when analyzing the Moroccan Women's Movement, rather than ranking or privileging academic opinions on its successes and limitations.

ISLAMIC FEMINISM, OR LACK THEREOF

In 2001, Saba Mahmood published the piece "Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival." This article is an ethnographic account of a women's Islamic education movement at a mosque in Cairo, Egypt. These women teach the importance of piety through prayer, dressing modestly and cultivating submissive and shy dispositions. Mahmood's analysis challenges the norms of the secular feminist movement, which often equates women's agency to resistance against patriarchal structures. This article sparked debate among anthropologists, and it was responded to by scholars such as Samuel Schielke, Nadia Fadil, Mayanthi Fernando, Lara Deeb and Mona Harb.

In 1992, American scholar Amina Wadud published *Qur'an and Women*, the first feminist interpretation of the Qur'an. She went on to publish *Inside the Gender Jihad,* which introduces the Islamic feminist movement and examines its tensions, textual foundations and successes.

In the piece "Islamist Feminism in Morocco: (Re)defining the Political Sphere," Meriem El Haitami discusses the history and impact of Islamic Feminism in Morocco, specifically in relation to the Party of Justice and Development and the Justice and Charity Movement. She documents the increase in Islamic Feminism and women's political participation after the Arab Spring and explains the concept of "post-Islamism," in which Islamism integrates itself into

democratic processes (El Haitami 83). As the PJD integrated into the Moroccan government, while women were initially given greater political participation, El Haitami claims their voices were eventually "sidelined under hegemonic state structures" (75). In the Justice and Charity Movement, led by Abdessalam Yassine and his daughter, Nadia Yassine, women theorize their rights by re-reading and re-interpreting religious texts. The movement is openly critical of the state and the Maliki school of thought. It bases its feminism on *ijtihad* which Nadia Yasssine defines as "the intellectual effort of adapting the sacred texts to the ever-changing context" (El Haitami 86). However, after the death of Abdessalam Yassine, the movement lost its momentum.

Utimately, El Haitami argues that Islamic feminists face two fronts of oppression in politics: male Islamists and female liberals. Women in Islamic parties are expected to simultaneously represent modernity and maintain a proper image of the traditional Islamic woman. They are also criticized by secular liberals, who see Islam as antithetical to women's rights (El Haitami 75). While women in both the PJD and JCM were able to reshape public religion and promote women's participation in the political sphere, they have not been able to truly gain equality, collaborate with liberal feminists or assert themselves in state-sponsored religious programs (El Haitami 75). They also face an increased challenge with the rise of state-sponsored *murshidat*, or female preachers, who have posed competition to female Islamists in Moroccan political, social and cultural spheres (El Haitami 87).

I think that it is incredibly important to consider Islam and Islamic Feminism in an analysis of the Moroccan Women's Movement. Saba Mahmood's critique of secular liberal feminism and Amina Wadud's reinterpretation of the Qur'an are vital groundwork for scholarship on these issues today. Mahmood's understanding of agency and Wadud's feminist practice from within an Islamic framework are key components of my research. Further, El

Haitami's tracing of Moroccan Islamic Feminism in political organizations sheds light on the obstacles Islamist women face from the state, Islamist men and secular liberal women. In my own research, I am curious to examine whether there has been a merging of liberal and Islamic ideologies in the Women's Rights Movement. So often these forces are portrayed in opposition to one another, when in reality, both compose an important part of Moroccan postcolonial society. I can't imagine that one could be fully separated from the other in the framing of the Moroccan Women's Movement. Regardless of whether a movement uses a primarily "universal" framework, Islam is embedded in Moroccan life and is most likely considered – whether consciously or subconsciously – in any call for social change.

TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA AND THE FEBRUARY 20TH MOVEMENT

"Gendering the February 20th Movement," a piece by Houda Abadi, describes women's use of digital campaign videos, webpages, blogs, youtube videos, films and aesthetic demonstrations to form a locally-rooted, intersectional and communal call for change during the Arab Spring in Morocco. Online and aesthetic activism became important spaces for women to participate in the February 20th Movement, and they opened up an opportunity for collective identity formation and inclusion. Women who did not normally have the chance to advocate for societal change occupied the frontlines of February 20th activism. As Abadi notes, women-driven media and aesthetic demonstrations "deconstructed the perception of the Arab women as powerless, invisible, and voiceless" (9-10). Additionally, gender equality sat at the center of the protest movement in Morocco – interconnected with greater demands for economic, social and political change.

Campaign videos sought to cultivate a Moroccan identity "inspired by a sense of *intersectionality* (youth and older generation that cut across class, gender and ideological divides)" (Abadi 16). All Moroccan people were portrayed as equal stakeholders in the fight for justice and democracy. The movement also used local symbols and languages to appeal to the wider public. For example, in one campaign video titled *I am Moroccan and I will Protest,* a variety of Moroccans (young, old, male, female) state "I am Moroccan" and describe their reasons for protesting. The campaign video ends with an older woman speaking in *Darija*, calling for the right to protest and describing her experience being beaten by the police (Abadi 15).

Despite the movement's momentum, the street remained a dangerous place for women. Female activists faced extreme difficulties with sexual assault and terrorization, alongside prevailing structural inequalities. Abadi claims, "Due to a lack of security, oppressive practices returned and reproduced marginalization of women" (10). After the Arab Spring ended, the movement petered out and many of the radical roles women had taken on went unrecognized. As is also true with the fight for Moroccan independence, "Women during post revolutionary transitions are regularly marginalized and lose many of the gains they might have gained during the height of the revolutionary struggle" (Abadi 11).

Elham Gheytanchi and Valentine N. Moghadam also discuss the role of media activism in the Middle East and North Africa, with Morocco as one of their case studies. After independence, women's movements were primarily led by elite, upper-class women. As the NGO model arose on an international scale, the majority of NGOs in the MENA region employed a hierarchical, centralized organizational structure. However, in recent years, decentralized and leaderless activism has emerged, aided by the role of "ICTs," or information

and communications technology. ICTs have enabled wider public participation in political discussion and allow activists to creatively bypass state censorship. For women, ICTs have "feminized" the public sphere through "on-line and off-line discussions, debates, and commentaries on women's rights, state policies, or the impact of socio-political changes on women" (Gheytanchi and Moghadam 6). ICTs produced "accidental activists" who stumbled upon topics that resonated with them and became invested (Gheytanchi and Moghadam 7). Gheytanchi and Moghadam detail ICTs contribution to Moroccan debates around marriage, sexual assault, Mudawwana reform and the February 20th movement. Prior to their 2004 successes, advocates for Mudawwana reform produced a range of dialogues, publications, press releases, flyers, advertisements and articles to distribute information on a wide scale. They actively shifted the framing of the movement based on public reactions to their campaign (Gheytanchi and Moghadam 15). ICTs have also successfully forged transnational solidarities. As Gheytanchi and Moghadam assert, the internet has become "an indispensable tool for women struggling for change within authoritarian or patriarchal contexts" (18).

Technology is central to the present day Moroccan Women's Movement and helps to forge connections within repressive environments and even across state lines.. I am in agreement with the arguments of Houda Abadi, Elham Gheytanchi and Valentine N. Moghadam, who emphasize technology's power in framing social movements as collective, decentralized, inclusive and transnational forces. In my own research, I have taken note of technology's impact on the February 20th Movement – where there was widespread participation across urban, rural, age and class divides. I am also keenly aware that all of the young Moroccans with whom I've interacted use social media, and they are eager to connect with globalized trends and social movements. Even the 2022 World Cup is an example of the media's potential to inspire

Moroccan society on a massive scale.

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METHODOLOGY

My methodology has changed significantly throughout the research process. Initially, I set out to conduct interviews and participant observation at three non-profit organizations. My analysis would consist of an organizational ethnography, documenting and theorizing the framing of the Moroccan Women's Movement at these specific organizations through fieldwork and background literature. I sought not to pass judgment or place hierarchy onto these organizations, but instead to understand their conceptualizations of gender justice on their own terms.

Upon my first visit to an NGO focusing on migrant needs, I found myself uncomfortable with continuing research there. A number of factors led me to this conclusion. First, I became keenly aware of a language barrier between myself, all of the beneficiaries present at the organization and a majority of the staff members there. I did not have the proper resources to acquire ethically conducted translation. Further, given the time limitations, I was not able to build the proper foundation to conduct mutually beneficial research, or give back to the organization in any way. I lacked a substantive prior relationship with the organization, which prevented me from truly connecting to staff and beneficiaries there. It is vital to build trust and camaraderie during the research process – especially with vulnerable populations. Lastly, upon introducing myself, I sensed discomfort from the leader of the organization with my conducting research there. Taking into account my inability to speak French or Arabic, time limitations, my

lack of substantive connection to the organization and my positionality as a white American researcher, I decided against conducting further research at non-profit organizations.

I recognize that my decision to discontinue research at NGOs was wrapped up in my own perceptions of power dynamics and positionality, as well as my difficulty confidently asserting myself in the field. In order to successfully connect with members of the organization, I needed to put myself "out there" more than I did at the time. However, I also wanted to take into consideration my personal boundaries throughout this project. I ultimately decided it was necessary to prioritize my comfort and the ethical implications of my work over asserting myself at these organizations in a short period of time – especially with significant language limitations.

Moving forward, I shifted my methodology to focus primarily on my experiences living in Morocco for three months, my observations during SIT-guided lectures and NGO visits, an in-depth literature analysis and expert interviews with Moroccan professors and journalists.

In order to conduct an in-depth literature analysis, I referred to the syllabi from Professor Lara Deeb's course, "Gender and Islam," alongside Professor Taieb Belghazi's course, "Multiculturalism and Human Rights in Morocco." I was also directed to a number of enriching articles by Professor Belghazi, Professor Souad Eddouada and journalist Aida Alami over the course of my research period.

After reviewing literature, I conducted expert interviews with Professor Souad Eddouada, Professor Soumaya Belhabib, Professor Sarah Hebbouch and journalist Aida Alami. I reached out to Professor Eddouada, Professor Belhabib, and Aida Alami through email, and Professor Hebbouch through Whatsapp, to ask if they were comfortable being interviewed. Once they agreed to be interviewed, I sent them a copy of my "participant consent form" (see Appendix A) and provided them with the option to remain anonymous. All four interviewees were comfortable

being identified. I proceeded to conduct interviews with Professor Belhabib, Professor Eddouada and Professor Hebbouch over Zoom and with Aida Alami over email (at her request). During Zoom sessions, I asked permission to record the interview and clarified the terms of anonymity before asking any questions. The interviews themselves were fairly informal, as I had established a prior connection with most of these individuals when they came to present for Professor Belghazi's "Multiculturalism and Human Rights" course. While Professor Hebbouch did not come to lecture for our class, I connected with her through Professor Belghazi and introduced myself as his student. I created an interview guide and also asked questions based on each expert's specific research. I chose these individuals based on their identities as Moroccan women, their compelling research specialties and my overall interest in their respective lectures to our class. My expert interviews only convey a small collection of professional opinions on the subject, and they are not representative of the opinions of activists, specific organizations or the general Moroccan public.

Lastly, in order to analyze my personal and SIT-guided experiences in Morocco, I referred to a range of field notes written over the course of my time here. I decided to focus on the moments that felt most complementary to the background literature review and expert interviews I conducted. These included a wide range of experiences – from informative lectures by Professor Taieb Belghazi, Professor Souad Eddouada, Professor Soumaya Belhabib and Professor Driss Maghraoui, to my personal experiences with street harassment in Morocco, to a collection of SIT-guided NGO visits across the country. The NGOs we visited focused on a variety of issues such as migrant safety, youth education, workforce training, women's empowerment and economic solidarity.

I recognize that my choice of literature, interviews and moments to analyze is not "objective," nor did I intend for it to be. My methodology for this research project is not impartial, it is based on subjective, personal interest. Due to this reality, I am not claiming to conduct a complete review of the Moroccan Women's Movement, nor conclude the "right" direction that the movement should take. I also do not wish to denote Islamic, secular liberal, or other conceptions of gender roles into a sort of binary or "societal hierarchy." Instead, to the best of my ability, I am attempting to understand different frameworks for the Women's Movemnt, taking into account a variety of forces – such as colonization, globalization, Islam and local cultural contexts – which I find relevant to include.

To protect the identity of my interviewees, I have maintained clear and direct communication around consent to be identified and detailed the terms of this research project to each interviewee. I have also sent each interviewee a copy of their included quotations to review before publishing the project. I will secure all research data in a locked digital folder and a locked notebook for five years, at which point I will delete and dispose of all the information.

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FINDINGS

THE IMPACT AND LIMITATIONS OF NGOS

In order to analyze the impact and limitations of NGOs, I reflected on my experiences at an SIT-led site visit to a rural area in Southern Morocco, an interview by Professor Souad Eddouada and an SIT lecture by Professor Taieb Belghazi.

On an excursion to Southern Morocco, I visited a network of interconnected organizations alongside my colleagues and professors at SIT. This network functions as an

alternative economic space, connecting nonprofit organizations, entrepreneurs and activists to collaborate and support one another. During my time in Southern Morocco, I observed an explicitly gendered dynamic within the network. Although the majority of entrepreneurs and members of the organization were women, there was a disproportionate number of men on the leadership board. Furthermore, in public settings, the male leader of the network spoke significantly more than any of the women we interacted with.

During a conference with the leader of the network, SIT students, professors and many members of the network, multiple female members spoke to the group about their experiences. One woman stated how meaningful it was to be able to run her own business without being literate. Another woman described how before discovering the network, she didn't even feel comfortable leaving her home. During this conference, an SIT student asked whether female members were given the opportunity to learn literacy skills. Furthermore, the student inquired whether literacy was necessary to join the network's leadership team. It was unclear to me whether there was a miscommunication in the translation of the question from English to French. However, in response, the leader of the network grew defensive. He stated that the organization was incredibly equitable, noting the number of women on the leadership board, and urged SIT students to not project "Western" conceptions of gender onto the network. Later that night, during our SIT student debrief, Professor Taieb Belghazi asked us to think about social change through a culturally relative lens. While my conceptions of the network leader may not have aligned with an American understanding of gender equity, in the rural area we visited, this organization is truly radical.

In Thierry Desrues and Juana Moreno Nieto's article "The development of gender equality for Moroccan women," they cite Guy Rocher's definition of social change. The

definition states, "Social change is understood as 'any observable transformation that affects, in a way that is neither provisional nor ephemeral, the structure or function of the social organization of a given collective, thus modifying the course of its history.'" (Desrues and Moreno Nieto 25-26). Thinking about the stories entrepreneurial women shared during the conference, it was clear they felt pride in being able to start their own businesses, join a community-based network and enter the public sphere. Furthermore, as Professor Belghazi reminded us, in a relatively rural area, it is incredibly rare for women to work alongside men, let alone attend conferences with them. Given Rocher's definition of social change, it is clear that this network created an "observable transformation" within the area's economic and social spheres. It is vital to root any criticisms of the organization within an understanding of rural Southern Morocco and its cultural history. This analysis brings Mahmood and Abu-Lughod's critiques of secular liberal frameworks to my mind. It is important as students and researchers to refrain from dictating what women's goals should be, particularly in relation to our own Western context – in which secular liberal frameworks are harmfully seen as neutral or objective.

I also interviewed Professor Souad Eddouada, who discusses the relationship between land rights activists in Kenitra and a large NGO called Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc. In the early 2000s, the Moroccan government – in partnership with real estate groups, international governments and organizations – decided to "integrate" communal land into the "market economy." When land was privatized in Kenitra, women were denied the opportunity to privately "own" their stolen land because inheritance laws stated that only men could inherit land. One land rights activist, devastated by this reality, reached out to a number of organizations, political parties and associations until she landed upon Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc, or ADFM, a women's rights association in Rabat. ADFM helped to

educate this activist and her wider community on constitutional law, feminism, human rights and equality so that they were able to advocate for themselves (Eddouada "Interview"). When asked to generalize whether land rights activists in Kenitra resonate with this rights-based language and NGO partnership, Professor Eddouada responds:

> Well, yeah, if we want to generalize, for many women, yes, it does resonate. But then for others – because this is an issue where you do not find the same exact situation from one village to the other – there are situations where this feminist discourse would not resonate, because the issue would be more than just gender discrimination. It would be, for example, a situation where the land was taken from the people illegally. And so the people will be displaced, men and women. In that case, the women's rights NGO would think this is not a feminist issue. So those who are able to look for all kinds of evidence for discrimination are welcome. And they're supported. But those who would say, well, it is about discrimination, but it's also about abuse of power, it's about corruption, then they would not stand as a case… And so lots of women I worked with had left this partnership, because they felt that the way in which the issues are presented does not really correspond with how they experience it on the ground. So for them, feminism is an abstract notion that doesn't speak to their struggle for their land. (Eddouada "Interview")

While NGOs such as ADFM were able to support women in gaining legal rights to inherit privatized land, they were not able to support them in fighting to regain communal land because this was not considered a "feminist" issue. In this way, as Professor Eddoauda states, "feminist discourse becomes this authority that is never questioned" ("Interview"). I believe that

this relates to my experiences with the network in Southern Morocco. Upon initial glance, other students and I witnessed a gendered power dynamic in the network, and we believed we knew what feminism should look like for the rural women we interacted with. However, instead of dictating what feminism should be, it is necessary to listen to rural women, and women of different backgrounds from ourselves, and respect their desires, plights and realities as they are. It is also necessary to connect the Moroccan Women's Movement to other factors such as race, class, urban or rural location, and larger structural conditions. By viewing the Moroccan Women's Movement from an intersectional lens, we may avoid homogenizing all women and ensure that women's goals are viewed in the context of each person and community.

Women's NGOs in Morocco are connected to the Moroccan government and international funding sources, as explored in my literature review of Islah Jad's "NGO-ization of the Arab Women's Movement" and Mona Atia and Catherine E. Herrold's "Governing Through Patronage." The language and goals of these organizations do not arise out of a vacuum and are often in connection to a wide array of state and international influences. The fact that ADFM was unable to consider land rights activists' fight against neoliberal policies as "feminist" may be related to the history and limitations of Moroccan NGOs.

In his SIT lecture titled "Human Rights and Multiculturalism in the Moroccan Context," Professor Belghazi explains the connection between NGOs and the monarchy in Morocco. After NGOs became prevalent in the Moroccan political sphere, the monarchy created its own NGOs – as well as its own opposing political parties – to defend its mission and platform. The government describes women's rights as "technical" rather than political, depoliticizing issues and delegating support for women to NGOs (Belghazi "Lecture: Human Rights"). Due to these factors, NGOs are overworked, limited in scope and often closely tied to either government

funding or, in many cases, international governments and organizations – which also place strict limitations on the work they do.

NEOLIBERALISM, MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

When discussing the issue of communal land rights in Morocco, Professor Souad Eddouada also connects land privatization to neoliberalism and dominant global feminism. Millennium Challenge, an American foreign aid corporation, is omnipresent at land grabbing endeavors and often requires a "gender policy" alongside land privatization for Morocco to receive aid (Eddouada "Interview"). As Eddouada explains in an interview:

> There are literacy classes that are now given to women everywhere in this region to prepare them to become land owners, because this project comes with a requirement that the Moroccan government has to adhere to that gender should be integrated in this policy. They even have officials and departments in the Millennium Challenge called gender inclusion. And they have a clear stand on this, that the Moroccan government has to align itself with. And I was told by many different people that it is because this organization insists, and international aid always comes with this as a package, so you can't really get international money or international aid if you do not have a gender perspective. And so for me, that was an interesting example showing the role these international organizations play and how they partner with the Moroccan government and how much that also affects local people on the ground. And so, for example, this policy had to be put in practice through local associations, because it is the local associations who would be responsible for the management of these literacy classes. So, this is an example that connects

international organizations, local associations and the Moroccan government. (Eddouada "Interview")

During her lecture to SIT's "Multiculturalism and Human Rights" class, Professor Eddouada further addresses the impact of structural conditions like neoliberalism and colonialism on women's conditions in Morocco. As researchers, she advises that it is necessary to consider what structural conditions shape the lives of people in the region, as well as how gendered relations and knowledge about women's lives are shaped within those conditions. In this way, personal observations and interviews must interact with critical insights about the broader context of states in which research is conducted (Eddouada "Lecture"). In Morocco, there are a number of structural challenges to consider, which include:

- Liberal feminism as the dominant discourse

- Neoliberal developmentalism as the dominant discourse

- Views of region as "ancient" and "traditional," singling out cultural factors as the primary factor for gender inequality

- Essentialization of culture as patriarchal

- Academic industry funding very positivist research

- Focus on gender based violence, ignorance towards colonial and economic violence

- Racialized blame on the "Oriental Muslim man"

These factors, presented in Professor Eddouada's lecture, allow me to understand the structural backdrop for the connection between neoliberalism and feminism in Morocco. This can be related to Cortney Hughes Rinker's "Responsible Mothers, Anxious Women: Contraception and Neoliberalism in Morocco," in which increased pressure is placed on working-class women to use contraception in order to produce quality neoliberal citizens.

Regardless of their economic circumstances, by having less children, women are expected to support their children in obtaining educational and career opportunities. They are also required to raise children who embody the traits of "independence, individualism, and responsibility" (Rinker 120). In both land privatization and contraception policy, neoliberalism ignores women's intersectional concerns and structural conditions, appropriating "feminism" for its own agenda. By requiring women to take literacy courses after stealing their communal land, American aid companies place value on women only as individual, literate landowners, capable of supporting the global economy. By requiring women to use contraception in order to responsibly raise neoliberal citizens, the Moroccan government and international interests place increased pressure on working-class Moroccan women to defy their structural conditions and adapt to the needs of the Moroccan economy.

In Aida Alami's article, "Workers in Spain's Strawberry Fields Speak Out on Abuse," she explores an agreement between the Moroccan and Spanish governments to employ thousands of rural Moroccan women in Andalusian strawberry fields. As explained in my literature review, upon their arrival to Spain, these women face labor violations and sexual assault, a situation which continues to be inadequately addressed by the Moroccan and Spanish governments (Alami "Workers"). In an interview with Aida Alami, she details her experience writing the story:

> I had been following for years the works of scholars about allegations of sexual
>
> abuse in Spain of Moroccan seasonal strawberry pickers. At that moment, there
>
> was the right news peg with the lawsuit to pursue it. (Alami "Interview")

Alami continues:

> I have looked at many issues that intersect gender and human rights: the plight
>
> of strawberry pickers in Spain is one of them. The women were not just women

but also economically vulnerable migrants. It is impossible these days to produce

honest work without taking into consideration a context. It applies to imported

concepts from the West on gender dynamics that need to be contextualized in

the Moroccan reality. (Alami "Interview")

In the case of Moroccan strawberry pickers in Spain, the relationship between states and

the global economy is prioritized at the expense of the lives and conditions of rural,

working-class mothers. When participating in the workforce, these women's ability to produce

low-wage labor is valued over their safety and wellbeing. This is representative of

neoliberalism's larger impact on women's lives – particularly for economically, socially and

politically marginalized women.

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF THE STATE

In order to address the omnipresence of the state in the Moroccan Women's Movement, I

will refer to SIT lectures by Professor Taieb Belghazi and Professor Driss Maghraoui alongside

an interview by Professor Soumaya Belhabib.

In his SIT lecture on September 13, 2022, Professor Belghazi explains that in Morocco,

the state is not simply representative of the Moroccan governing body, it is a fearful state of mind

and a pervasive power – which some refer to as the "deep state" ("Lecture: Social Movements").

In Professor Maghraoui's lecture on October 17th, he expands on this concept, stating that

Morocco is not run under values of citizenship, it is run under values of autocracy. Citizenship in

Morocco is a formality; citizens may have a legal paper, but they do not have freedom of speech

(Maghraoui). Maghraoui points out that Moroccan citizens cannot criticize the king because his

persona is seen as "invaluable." He argues that autocracy is weaved into Morocco's systems and structure (Maghraoui).

In an interview by Professor Belhabib, she addresses the role of the state in Moroccan feminism and women's rights. Belhabib relays the various agencies, ministries and state efforts supporting women's rights – including the Ministry of Social Development, Family and Solidarity, the National Observatory on Violence against Women, the National Institute of Social Action, and the Plan for Equality (Belhabib "Interview"). She explains how government institutions set up grants to support women and women's organizations. Collaboration with the government increases organizations' visibility and legitimacy. From her experience working at NGOs, Belhabib has seen how they have benefited from specific government agencies, programming and funds. For example, NGO trainings for beneficiaries can be certified and legitimized by government agencies. However, the relationship between NGOs and government agencies depends on the disposition and ideology of the ministers in power at the time (Belhabib "Interview").

Taking this information into consideration, alongside my literature review of *Governance Feminism* and Human Rights Watch's Report, "They'll Get You No Matter What," it is clear that the state plays an extremely powerful and omnipresent role in the Moroccan Women's Movement. I am certain that censorship, fear and international interests influence this role. I feel as if I need more information to accurately analyze the state's involvement in women's rights through agencies and initiatives. It is evident that although government funding can be a limiting force, shown in my earlier analysis of NGOs, these initiatives also have positive roles in financially and politically supporting women's organizations.

FEMINIST AND ALTERNATIVE IDEOLOGIES

To delve into feminist and alternative ideologies, I will refer to lectures by Professor

Taieb Belghazi, Professor Souad Eddouada and Professor Soumaya Belhabib, alongside

interviews by Professor Eddouada and Professor Belhabib.

In a lecture by Professor Belghazi on September 13, 2022, he theorizes whether universal

human rights need to be contextualized into local environments. Referencing the concept of

"democratic iterations," coined by Seyla Benhabib, he claims there is always tension between the

universal and the concrete. The abstract qualities of the universal are thus reinterpreted in every

social movement (Belghazi "Lecture: Social Movements").

In a lecture by Professor Belhabib, she discusses the difficulty of adapting "universal"

language to the Moroccan Women's Movement. She expresses the struggle of translating words

like "gender," "women's rights" and "feminism" into Arabic (Belhabib "Lecture"). Further, as

relayed in the lectures of both Professor Belhabib and Professor Eddouada, there is a major

tension in Morocco between Islamists and secular, progressive feminists. These groups are often

placed in opposition to one another; Islamists are seen as anti-imperialist protectors of Moroccan

tradition and communal family structure, while secular feminists are viewed as modern, elite

puppets of the West (Belhabib "Lecture"; Eddouada "Lecture").

Professor Belhabib further expands on the language and ideology of feminism in an

interview. She explains that the word itself is loaded with meaning for Moroccans. Some

women's rights activists do not believe in identifying as "feminists" due to its colonial, elitist

connotations and the public backlash against the Moroccan Feminist Movement (Belhabib

"Interview"). For Professor Belhabib, she believes public opinion on the term "feminism" needs

to change, and to do so, the feminist movement must shift its framing. Feminism must be inclusive of not just women, but also men. Further, it is vital to recognize that not all women experience oppression in the same way. Women are plural, so feminism must be plural as well. While feminism originated with urban, upper-class women – privileging secular liberal ideology – it must also take into account the plights of rural women, pious women, Amazigh women, Saharian women, land rights activists, single mothers, and so on (Belhabib "Interview"). While she does believe that feminism has become more inclusive over time, due to the diversity of Moroccan women she concludes that it is nearly impossible for there to be a fully unified Moroccan Women's Movement (Belhabib "Interview").

Professor Belhabib also discusses strategies for shifting public perceptions of the Women's Movement in Morocco. While the Mudawwana was updated in 2004, it is still inadequate, because there is a difference between what the law says and how it is implemented. It is necessary to shift public perceptions in Morocco in order to make further gains for women's rights (Belhabib "Interview"). Professor Belhabib emphasizes the importance of education and women's empowerment. Even the masters students with whom she works were never taught gender theory or the idea that gender is a social construct. There must be widespread gender education so that women are given the choice to either respect or change their roles in society (Belhabib "Interview"). Many women accept their gender roles because they believe their circumstances are "normal." There are invisible social codes that are written nowhere, but that everyone upholds. While some women may ultimately choose to adopt conservative gender roles, they should at least be made aware that it is something they can choose and change (Belhabib "Interview"). She highlights the role of youth in producing new media and educational movements confronting gender norms in Moroccan society – such as Soultana, the first female

rapper in Morocco, Zaineb Fasiki, a feminist cartoonist and engineer, and Zanki Bla Violence, a youth theater troupe that raises awareness around street harassment (Belhabib "Interview").

In an interview on November 18, 2022, Professor Eddouada conveys her skepticism over the possibility of a "unified" Women's Movement in Morocco. She believes it is impossible to discuss a unified women's movement because "not all Moroccan women are experiencing inequality in the same way" (Eddouada "Interview"). There are stark disparities between, for example, "the countryside and the urban space, and social classes interfere with possibilities of this unification" (Eddouada "Interview"). When addressing the concept of universalism, she expands:

> Universal feminism is not negative in itself. It has all these ideals that people aspire to everywhere in the world but I think with a country like this one, where gender issues or feminism or women's rights or women's issues are connected with other structural issues like poverty, like marginalization, like political authoritarianism, like the absence of accountability, women cannot be separated as a homogenous community and abstracted from these structural conditions. So that's where there is a need to translate the language of feminism into local meanings. (Eddouada "Interview")

Professor Eddouada also elaborates on feminism's relationship to her research with land rights activists:

There is a need to have a genuine feminist engagement and an understanding of what

collective land means for people who are living in this land, and who have nowhere to go.

And so there is that need to combine the two, and to acknowledge that gender intersects

with other issues. I mean, [feminism] as a concept, it's too narrow, to be able to include

the struggle of somebody who loses her land, whose husband or whose father or brother

is arrested because he tries to defend his land, or who has to deal with police harassment

every day and be evacuated from her own house because of the alliance of money and

politics in this country. So and there are lots of situations that I came to see of injustice,

that do not necessarily show only gender discrimination, but show the intersection of

politics, the socioeconomic situation, and so on. (Eddouada "Interview)

Professor Eddouada addresses the need for an intersectional approach to women's issues in Morocco. Reflecting on the insights of Professors Belghazi, Belhabib and Eddouada, alongside my literature review of scholarship by Professor Eddouada, Lila Abu-Lughod and Amy Evrard, I have concluded that "universality" is a false concept. No social movement or social theory can ever truly be "universal" as it always has origins in a particular social context. Globalized "universal language" is thus reappropriated in the case of every social movement, as detailed by Professor Belghazi. In the case of Morocco, unification under a single women's rights platform is most likely impossible – and not necessarily even desirable – due to the diversity of women in the country. However, it is necessary to educate the Moroccan public on the situation of women in Morocco through an intersectional framework. In this way, women will be given greater mobility in deciding their futures for themselves.

ISLAMIC FEMINISM, OR LACK THEREOF

As discussed in the previous section, "Feminst and Alternative Ideologies," Islam and secular feminism are often rhetorically posed as contradicting forces in Moroccan society. I am curious as to where the women's movement and Islam interact or do not interact. To tackle this subject, I will refer to a lecture by Professor Driss Maghraoui, as well as interviews by Professor Soumaya Belhabib and Professor Sarah Hebbouch.

In his lecture on October 17, 2022, Professor Driss Maghraoui discusses the anthropomorphization of Islam by the Western media and secular liberal ideology. In the West, there is a tendancy to associate Islam with extremism, or a lack of rights. Professor Maghraoui maintains that extremism and human rights abuses cannot be connected to Islam itself, but rather the instrumentalization of Islam. He emphasizes that Islam is not a person, and the religion itself does not have agency. Islam is a series of texts, and Islamic ideology shifts based on interpretation. It is important to not view Islam as inherently "oppressive" (Maghraoui). Like every religion, there are more conservative, more moderate and more liberal interpretations of Islam . Professor Maghraoui argues that the Western world lives more in "ideology" than it does in reality, which often goes unrecognized by its white inhabitants (Maghraoui). Colonialism and racialized ideology have embedded themselves into white Western understandings of the Global South.

Professor Belhabib elaborates on this subject in relation to the Moroccan Women's Movement. She argues that when laws change, such as the Mudawwana, there are increased calls for traditional, conservative gender roles. These gender roles are often justified by a biased reading of Islamic text (Belhabib "Interview"). There are Islamic feminists who have been attempting to re-read and re-interpret the Qur'an, such as Asma Lamrabet and Fatema Mernissi. However, whenever Moroccan women try and open up new views on women's rights, there is

backlash from a very conservative reading of Islam that says the religion doesn't allow women's rights (Belhabib "Interview"). Professor Belhabib highlights the importance of education and reframing women's mindsets in order to combat these challenges.

Professor Sarah Hebbouch researches the Qadiri Boutchichi Sufi order in Morrocco, otherwise known as "folk" or "popular" Islam, which employs a more moderate interpretation of women's role in Islam. Throughout her research, Professor Hebbouch claims:

It was really intriguing to look at the discrepancies between the commonly held belief that women are excluded from positions of leadership and from the spiritual authority and, for example, how these [Sufi] women get to define leadership and public performance. (Hebbouch)

She continues:

It was fascinating to see women participating in significant numbers in the tradition and that the tradition itself is diverse and eclectic, and there exists multiple models of participation and leadership. And I learned that there are several avenues for women to practice their authority and get recognized as spiritual authorities. (Hebbouch)

There is a longstanding tension between Sufism and "Orthodox" Islam – also known as legalistic, or even Sunni Islam – in Morocco, where women are more heavily relegated to traditional gender roles and occupy strictly separate spheres from men. Sufism is often seen by Orthodox practitioners as heterodox or aberrant. In Sufism, women are allowed to attend rituals, perform while menstruating and participate in communal practices while unveiled. Further, in Sufism women's practices of spirituality expand beyond formal spaces of worship, like the mosque, which often adheres to strict gender restrictions (Hebbouch). According to Professor

Hebbouch, in Morocco, the tensions and blends between Orthodox and Sufi camps have allowed women to seek refuge in Sufi Islam as an "alternative space of religious expression" (Hebbouch). Additionally, after the rise of Islamic extremism and the Global War on Terror, the state instrumentalized Sufi Islam as a tool to counterbalance extremist ideologies in Morocco. Regardless of the state's political agenda, state recognition had a positive impact on Sufi women's acceptance and visibility (Hebbouch).

Historically, the role of women in Sufi Islam has been invisibilized in scholarship on Sufism. Professor Hebbouch believes that this is for a number of reasons, including the dominance of men in academia, an ideology which places men and women in separate spheres – which contributes to Sufi women's "rejection of the limelight" – and the inability to describe women's bodies textually due to religious tradition (Hebbouch). As explained by Professor Hebbouch, "This attitude has the backdrop of why anonymity surrounded the lives of a wide number of women who appeared in a number of narratives as majhulad" (Hebbouch). *Majhulad* means anonymous in Arabic. Today, Sufi women are increasingly becoming more visible, thanks to the vital scholarship of women like Professor Hebbouch, as well as renewed state interest in Sufism (Hebbouch).

When asked whether Sufi women resonate with "feminism" or "women's rights," Professor Hebbouch maintains that Sufi women work solely within a religious framework, while "feminism" and "women's rights" work primarily within a secular liberal framework (Hebbouch). Sufi women work to change their positions within their religion, and within patriarchal structures. This does not correlate with the challenges that women's rights activists tackle in Moroccan society (Hebbouch).

Combining what I've learned from Professors Belhabib, Maghraoui and Hebbouch alongside an in-depth literature review, I have determined that it is vital to consider interpretation when studying Islam's relationship to women's rights in Morocco. When women's rights is placed in opposition to Islam, this is often referring to very specific interpretations of both religion and women's rights. These interpretations denote conservative, orthodox Islam and elitist secular liberalism as pure forces in Moroccan society, which are always directly contradicting to one another. However, in reality, there are multiple interpretations of women's role in society in both Islamic tradition and women's movements; these interpretations are highly dependent on sect, race, class, religiosity, and a number of other factors. In some cases, such as the practice of "Islamist Feminism," explained by Meriem El Haitami, or a feminist re-reading of the Islam, spearheaded by Amina Wadud, Islam and feminism may overlap. In other cases, they may be in direct opposition. And as explained by Sara Hebbouch, in many cases, they are working from within entirely different frameworks.

TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA AND THE FEBRUARY 20TH MOVEMENT

Lastly, to explore the concepts of technology, media and the February 20th movement, I will refer to interviews by journalist Aida Alami, Professor Eddouada and Professor Belhabib, as well as lectures by Professor Belghazi and Professor Eddouada.

In an SIT lecture on September 6, 2022, Professor Belghazi describes the February 20th movement as decentralized and hybrid both politically and generationally. When asked about the role of women in the February 20th movement, Aida Alami claims "it was a blend of people asking for social justice" (Alami "Interview"). Professor Eddouada points out that the uprisings actually originated in rural towns, and rural communities were very active in the movement

("Lecture"). When asked if the land rights activists she worked with were involved in the February 20th movement, she responds:

> Some of the women I worked with as land rights activists, they also participated in marches organized by the 20 February movement, and they have connections with the activists who supported them. (Eddouada "Interview")

The collaboration between land rights activists and February 20th activists endures to this day. However, while Professor Eddouada agrees that the February 20th movement was radical and intersectional, she expresses concern over the movement's ending. She explains that there are competing cultures of "fear and activism" in Morocco, noting that while the movement certainly had a major impact, it was short lived and suppressed:

> So one of the things that I saw and read and observed is that it's true, the movement was radical and was intersectional. Women were very much at the front, and it was very much a youth led movement. But unfortunately, it didn't last. There is a spirit of what happened that I think is still around, this idea that people could protest and something can happen. So it created a possibility in people's heads. I think it is more of a spirit than a concrete thing because most of the activists either left the country or they were arrested. (Eddouada "Interview")

Professor Belhabib expands on the aftermath of the February 20th movement, stating that while women protested in the streets alongside men, after the movement ended the gains they made were ignored. Women were quickly expected to return to the gender roles they occupied before the revolution (Belhabib "Interview").

In my literature review, I analyzed the February 20th and women's movements' use of technology to advance their causes. In an interview by Professor Belhabib, she explores

present-day Moroccan "Third Wave Feminism" and its use of media to advocate for womens'

rights. Moroccan youth in particular have found new and innovative ways to create change –

from comic books about women's shame, to podcasts on toxic masculinity, to television ads

portraying men participating in household chores. Moroccan feminists have also become

increasingly engaged in transnational feminist trends through social media, and they have been

active in their own social media campaigns as well (Belhabib "Interview").

It is clear to me that the February 20th movement was a radical, intersectional and

creative movement, aiming to dramatically alter Moroccan society. While the movement may

have been suppressed and co-opted by the monarchy, it paved the way for contemporary

Moroccan social movements to utilize media and technology to mobilize on a mass scale and

bypass state censorship. Whether the spirit of the February 20th movement will be reinvigorated

is unknown, though unlikely given the power of the state and the culture of fear in Morocco.

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CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of this study, I hypothesized that different women, scholars and

organizations would conceptualize the Women's Movement in different ways. In one case,

appropriations of Western language may coincide with localized understandings of gender, while

in another, they may exist at an irreconcilable tension. I believed it was not possible to fully

separate the different forces impacting women in Morocco, as they are constantly overlapping

and interacting. I was not interested in finding one "right" way to lead a Women's Movement,

but in understanding women's hopes and goals through conversation, observation and engaged

analysis.

I feel as if I have successfully deepened my understanding of the women's movement, while avoiding essentializations or definitive conclusions. The forces that I studied – NGOs, neoliberalism, the state, feminism, Islam, the February 20th Movement and technology – cannot be fully separated from one another. My insight on one of these topics is often strongly connected to another. A summation of my final analysis is as follows:

- Many Women's NGOs in Morocco are closely tied to the Moroccan government and international funding sources, which can pose limitations on their ability to mobilize change. However, it is important to study each organization within its local and structural contexts. Many NGOs contribute to women's lives in radically positive ways, and if their successes are to be "measured" at all, they should be measured by the experiences and opinions of their beneficiaries.

- In Morocco, neoliberalism's cooptation of feminism tends to devalue the lives of its most economically, politically and socially marginalized women. In order to be intersectional, the Moroccan Women's Movement must value the lives and goals of rural women and poor women over the market economy.

- No social movement or social theory can ever truly be "universal," as it always has origins in a particular social context. Globalized language is reappropriated in every social movement in which it is utilized.

- In Morocco, unification under a single women's rights platform is unlikely due to the diversity of women in the country. However, many scholars I spoke with believe it is necessary to educate the Moroccan public on the situation of women through an intersectional framework. Through intersectional education and

awareness, women will be given greater mobility in deciding their futures for themselves.

- It is vital to consider Mahmood's definition of "agency" and Mahgraoui's understanding of interpretation when studying Islam's relationship to women's rights in Morocco. Dependent on interpretations of both Islam and women's rights, in some cases, Islam and feminism may overlap; in other cases, they may be in direct opposition; in many cases, they are working from within entirely different ideological frameworks. However, it is false to claim that they are always, without question, "in opposition" to one another.

- The February 20th movement was a radical, intersectional and creative movement, aiming to dramatically alter Moroccan society. While the movement may have been suppressed and co-opted by the monarchy, it paved the way for contemporary Moroccan social movements to utilize media, technology and aesthetic demonstrations to mobilize on a mass scale and bypass state censorship. The future of these contemporary movements, and whether they will lead to another mass mobilization, is unknown.

Looking back on my conclusions, I realize I have more concrete opinions on the Moroccan Women's Movement than I expected in my hypothesis! While it is not up to me to dictate the future of women in Morocco, nor do I wish to, my research sheds light on the framing of the Women's Movement and helps to uncover the forces that shape women's goals and mobilizations. My research enhances the existing body of knowledge on the topic by conducting a broad survey of women's collective action in Morocco, putting a variety of issues and movements in conversation with one another. I personally am a strong believer in the power of

social movements, and in order to effectively organize social movements it is necessary to understand them from a critical, ethnographic perspective. In the wake of calls for gender justice and regime change in Iran, racial justice in the United States, liberation from occupation in Palestine and widespread distrust of the nation-state across the world, Morocco is an important part of the global political landscape. Throughout my research, I wondered whether it was possible for there to be a unified Moroccan Women's Movement, and whether this movement could connect to wider calls for change in Morocco and transnationally. Most of the scholars I spoke with were skeptical of a unified Moroccan Women's Movement, particularly due to the diversity of women in the country. I still remain hopeful. Ultimately, while I do not have definitive answers to these questions, I am eager to continue the study of social movements in Morocco and transnationally.

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LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

My positionality and background certainly pose limitations for the study. As someone who was born in New York City shortly before September 11th, 2001, I was exposed to an extensive ideological campaign that demonized Muslim men and victimized Muslim women. At the age of 3, I moved to a primarily Zionist suburb in New York. Here, the majority of residents racialized Muslim people as "terrorists" and outwardly denied colonial violence. While I have spent the majority of my college career attempting to unlearn these ideologies, it is important to recognize their early existence in my life. As a white American "researcher" with the ability to "study abroad" in Morocco for three months, my identity may cloud my own observations or create a power dynamic between myself and participants in my research. It is possible that some

of my interviewees may have felt guarded, wary of my intentions, or unsure of my understanding of the Moroccan context. My identity also contributes to my inability to speak Arabic fluently, which meant all of my interviews needed to be conducted in English. English is my native language, but not the native language of my interviewees. This limited who I was able to speak with, and I ended up confining my interviews to professors and experts.

Due to time limits and language barriers, my interviews were conducted with professors and experts who I had met through Professor Belghazi's "Multiculturalism and Human Rights" course. As my research period was only four weeks long, and I do not speak Darija or French, I did not feel I had the time or access to be able to conduct participant observation at an NGO, government agency, or other organization. I did not conduct participant observation with my interviewees, and the interviews were limited to 30 minute to 2 hour zoom calls or email chains. This certainly poses limitations to my research, as these are time-limited "expert" interviews with English-speaking individuals who are established in their fields. I did not establish long-term connections with these people, nor did I participate in their lives or the organizations they work with. To supplement these limitations, I included my observations at SIT-led lectures and NGO visits, as well as my own personal experiences living in Morocco for three months.

Additionally, throughout my undergraduate education, I have engaged with anti-colonial, anti-capitalist and politically left academia – which has strongly influenced my own political beliefs. These beliefs are omnipresent throughout my research. My strong political ideology may have limited my ability to holistically process and analyze literature, interviews and experiences.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

There is a wide range of further studies that may be conducted on this topic. Due to my limitations in conducting both interviews and participant observation, there should be a similar study conducted that includes in-depth interviews and participant observation with a variety of Moroccan women, activists, organizations and government entities. Furthermore, because I only brushed the surface of topics like non-profit organizations, neoliberalism, feminism, Islam, the role of the state, the Arab Spring and technology, there are possibilities for a range of in-depth studies on one or more of these topics in relation to the Moroccan Women's Movement. While a wide breadth of studies already exist on all of these subjects, I believe it is always necessary to conduct more research – particularly with the framing of social movements and Mahmood's understanding of agency in mind. I am also interested in the formation of transnational feminist movements between Moroccan women and women across the world, as well as the (im)possibility for the unification of social movements in Morocco.

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APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
Title of the Study: Gender Roles and the Social Agent: Framing the Women's Movement in post-Colonial Morocco

Researcher Name: Lily Ross

My name is Lily Ross, and I am a student with the SIT Multiculturalism and Human Rights program.

I would like to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of the SIT Study Abroad program. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and you will be given a copy of this form.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to understand different frameworks for achieving women's rights in Morocco, as well as the personal, social and political context behind such frameworks.

STUDY PROCEDURES
Your participation will consist of a 30 minute to 1 hour interview. With your permission, I will audio-record this interview. You can participate without being recorded, if this is your preference. This interview will take place in whatever space/format you are most comfortable.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
You may feel uncomfortable with answering certain interview questions and sharing your personal opinions on the women's movement. To minimize this discomfort, I will show you the interview questions before we begin the interview. During the interview, you do not have to answer any questions or share any information you are uncomfortable with.

This paper may be shared in the form of an article on SIT's website and my own social media, such as my LinkedIn. If you are uncomfortable with certain content or quotes from your interview being shared publicly, you may contact me to redact any part of your interview from the record up until December 1st.

There are no penalties should you choose not to participate; participation is voluntary.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
Understanding different goals for and approaches to women's rights in Morocco can help strengthen activism locally and internationally. Speaking on this issue may be a positive and/or empowering experience for individuals.

PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION
There is no financial compensation for this project.

COMPLETION AND PUBLICATION OF STUDY
This study will result in an article and presentation. The presentation will be presented to my professors and classmates at SIT. The article may be published on SIT's website under the "Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection." Here is the link to this collection: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/

I may also share this article on my LinkedIn profile and resumé, which will be shared with future employers to convey my research experience.

CONFIDENTIALITY
I will store all identifiable information in a password protected folder on my laptop and in a safely secured notebook. All of this information will be deleted after being stored securely for five years.

When the results of the research are published on SIT's website and/or my social media, you may choose whether identifiable information is included. If you wish to remain anonymous, I will anonymize your name, location and position – as well as any other identifiable information.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

"I have read the above and I understand its contents and I agree to participate in the study. I acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older."

Participant's signature _____*Date*_____

Researcher's signature _____*Date*_____

Consent to Include Identifiable Information
Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to include identifiable information such as my name and position in the final article and presentation

_____ (initial) I wish to be anonymized

_____ (initial) Other

If other, explain the terms of anonymity here:

Consent to Quote from Interview
I may wish to quote from the interview either in the presentations or articles resulting from this work. If you wish to remain anonymous, a pseudonym (fake name) will be used in order to protect your identity.

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to interview quotes being included in the presentations or articles resulting from this work.

_____ (initial) I do not agree to interview quotes being included in the presentations or articles resulting from this work.

Consent to Audio-Record Interview
Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to my interview being audio-recorded. _____ (initial) I do not agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

RESEARCHER'S CONTACT INFORMATION
If you have any questions or want to get more information about this study, please contact me at lily.ross@mail.sit.edu or my advisor at taieb.belghazi@sit.edu

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION
In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by an SIT Study Abroad Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research participant or the research in general and are unable to contact the researcher please contact the Institutional Review Board at:

School for International Training Institutional Review Board
1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676 Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676 USA

irb@sit.edu

802-258-3132

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- What challenges do women face in contemporary Moroccan society?

- How would you describe the Moroccan "women's movement(s)"?

- What are the major aims of the Moroccan women's movement(s) today?

- How do the aims of the movement(s) differ based on class, race, age and location?

- What are some tensions or challenges impacting the women's movement(s)?

- How do non-profit organizations influence the movement(s)?

- What is the role of the Moroccan government in the women's movement(s)?

- What is the role of international organizations in the women's movement(s)?

- How do Islam and secularism influence the women's movement(s)?

- What is the place of "feminism" in Morocco?

- How is "universal human rights" localized in the Moroccan context?

- What aspects of the women's movement(s) are uniquely Moroccan, or influenced by local social realities?

- How is gender connected to other social justice / human rights issues in Morocco?

- What issues are you most concerned with regarding women in Morocco?

- Do you believe there is/can there be a unified women's movement in Morocco? How does/would this movement frame its goals and approaches?

- Have you done any research on the topic? If so, I'd love to hear or read about it!