

Glacier, Osire. *Femininity, Masculinity, and Sexuality in Morocco and Hollywood*.

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In *Femininity, Masculinity, and Sexuality in Morocco and Hollywood*, Osire Glacier seeks to elaborate what she calls “an ideology of emancipation for Moroccan women” (1). In order to do this, Glacier examines the various structural mechanisms that have led to women’s dehumanization and exploitation in Moroccan society through an analysis of language, media, literature, legal texts, and cultural productions. Bourdieu’s *La domination masculine* provides the primary theoretical ground on which Glacier demonstrates the hierarchical, androcentric, and phallogentric nature of gender relations in Morocco. Permeating the analysis throughout the book, Glacier discusses how gendered bodies are organized within a set of structural oppositions. A few mentioned in the book include superior/inferior, outside/inside, and vertical/horizontal, where male and female gendered bodies metaphorically correspond to one side of these oppositions and where male bodies serve as self to the female other (who has no fully realized self in Morocco). Such structural oppositions have been long debated within scholarship on gender and sexuality, particularly within anthropology and as it relates to how intersexuality/transsexuality complicates our notions of sex and gender (Fausto-Sterling 2000; McCormack and Strathern 1980; Ortner 1996). Scholars have problematized these oppositions as a product of Western structuralism, seeking to complicate the gendered nature of their constitutive metaphors to better understand women’s position within various sociopolitical systems. Consider the corollary oppositions of strong/weak, rational/irrational, and wild/tame; in varying contexts, women and men may be complexly linked to both sides of the opposition, thus raising questions about gendered identity, power, and agency. Critiques of structuralist binaries, however, have been limited to nonstate sociopolitical formations and have not included urbanized, state-level societies within the Middle East and North Africa. A productive move forward would be to assess the tensions that complicate binary notions of male and female in Moroccan society and how women and men negotiate their positions and roles to build satisfactory lives for themselves.

Having posited this structural binary system as the basis for understanding gender in Morocco, Glacier discusses how it represents unequal relations of power with consequent political implications; this structure is reproduced through processes of socialization, discriminatory legal codes, and media and discursive representations. Drawing on Foucauldian biopolitics, Glacier highlights the centrality of sex and sexuality as disciplinary techniques that help to construct both women and men as separate social groups. Biopower here

is deployed as the mechanism through which these structural binaries are maintained within Moroccan society, where bodies are trained in particular ways that naturalize the differences between women and men. In three chapters focused on “A Negated Body,” “A Negated Intellect,” and “A Negated Life,” Glacier fleshes out this biopolitical process in detail. Throughout these chapters, Glacier contrasts the Moroccan context with that of the West through an examination of the Hollywood film *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* (2005) as a means through which to underscore how entrenched such discriminatory structures are globally. In her final chapter, “General Conclusions: Rehabilitating Women’s Humanity,” she offers recommendations for how Morocco may move beyond its discriminatory gender system in order for women to realize their full human potential.

In chapter 1, “A Negated Body,” Glacier examines how constructions of femininity and masculinity are grounded in androcentric conceptions of sexuality. The masculinized ordering of Moroccan society, where men are dominant vis-à-vis a subordinate female, leads to women’s dehumanization, where they are denied their own bodies and where violence against them becomes normalized. Glacier notes that biopower naturalizes this ordering by linking it to biology (21). She offers a structural analysis of how language serves as a biopolitical tool for producing (and also exposing) a gendered order that dehumanizes women; sex and sexuality underpin the dualistic asymmetry that exists between men and women and represents the ultimate way in which to “renounce the self and dominate the other” (38). In androcentric writings, Moroccan men’s sexuality is valorized while women’s is denied; men direct while women follow; men are active while women are passive. Women are ranked according to their sexuality, as virgins or whores, house girls or street girls, wives or widows/divorcées/women without a man; men are rarely, if ever, ranked in this way. Within this chapter, Glacier posits how masculinity becomes confused with violence: it is through physical and symbolic violence that women become the object of masculine domination, leading to their impoverished sense of self. This holds up in *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, despite what might appear at first to be Jane Smith’s (portrayed by Angelina Jolie) disruption of generally accepted gender norms. Glacier critiques how John Smith, rather than his wife, dominates their marriage. What emerges in this analysis is a Moroccan female body with no autonomy or agency, one that is simply acted on but does not act. While Glacier hints at the possibility of women subverting the gender system and that love can exist between men and women, there is an almost totalizing vision of women’s rather destitute situation. She does an excellent job of explicating women’s structurally lesser position than men. However, something to consider analytically is whether and how women can/do have full selves, can be / are active

decision-makers within/reproducing structures that disadvantage them, and can be / are dominating forces in Morocco.

Chapter 2, "A Negated Intellect," continues in this analytic vein; Glacier directs attention to how women are denied their own capabilities in Moroccan society. As masculinity and femininity precede the body, the work of society is to transform female bodies into "women." Glacier notes this starts within the family, the primary locus for the reproduction of the androcentric order. Within the Moroccan family a gendered division of labor is created that reverberates throughout the structure. Women's education and work in the public sphere is devalued and often not prioritized by families, which leaves women in a position of potential illiteracy, lacking in understanding of how society functions, and susceptible to exploitation in the workplace. Such devaluation is part and parcel of the misogyny that also results in women's demonization. *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* similarly encodes these structures, with Glacier noting that Jane Smith is as disagreeable a personality as John Smith is agreeable and that she performs less well than her husband in a number of scenes throughout the movie. In chapter 3, "A Negated Life," Glacier lastly asserts that Moroccan women are denied their very lives because they are not born for themselves. Here, female bodies only assume the status of women through the act of sexual penetration. Single women are failures, defective and rejected, though they appear to have some level of autonomy that married women lack. Drawing loosely on Levi-Strauss's kinship theory, Glacier discusses how women are geared largely toward marriage (which represents a market), where they serve as a type of symbolic good within a system of exchange. Male control of women is solidified within marital relations. Androcentric interpretations of religion bolster this system by underpinning legal and disciplinary structures, including marriage, that disadvantage women. Here, the analyses in these chapters would benefit from two things. The first is a problematization of the structuralist logic that underpins this analysis, which renders women as always object and never subject. The second is an intersectional approach that accounts for class and racial variation and/or a more expansive theorizing of sexuality to complicate how we understand the ordering of gender in Morocco.

In her conclusion, Glacier argues that women's humanity in Morocco may be achieved along two primary lines: (1) through a secular democratic politics that recognizes the lawfulness of women's rights; this effectively represents institutional change at the level of political society, and (2) a quiet cultural revolution from below, which involves cultural change (changing mentalities) around gender, to be facilitated through equal access to and reform of the educational system. Glacier rightly advocates a need to eliminate "the logic of the male predator and the female victim" (169). She highlights the need

for more dignified representations of women in media and various cultural productions, temporary quotas in the labor market and political leadership, and the need for families and individuals to recognize women's humanity and that they are not objects to be used by others. Essentially, Glacier promotes both top-down and bottom-up directional change; multidirectional change is vital in challenging any patriarchal system. Moving forward, theorizing strategies for how this might be approached, and the promises and perils of various approaches, would prove beneficial for scholars and activists critiquing, advocating, and mobilizing for gender justice. A critical assessment of democracy, liberalism, secularism, movements, and emancipation/freedom would offer also a more robust theory—or ideology—of sociopolitical change.

Glacier's book will appeal to gender, sexuality, and feminist studies scholars and contribute to a growing body of work on this subject within Middle East and North African (MENA) studies. It offers a detailed analysis of textual data and will no doubt stimulate vigorous debate not only on systems of gender in Morocco and the MENA but also on structuralist and post-structuralist analyses of the politics of gender and sexuality more broadly.

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