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ARAB MASCULINITIES

Anthropological Reconceptions in Precarious Times

KONSTANTINA ISIDOROS

AND

MARCIA C. INHORN,

EDITORS

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INTRODUCTION

MIDDLE EAST ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE GENDER DIVIDE

Reconceiving Arab Masculinity in Precarious Times

MARCIA C. INHORN AND KONSTANTINA ISIDOROS

THE MIDDLE EAST IS A vast and complex region, stretching from Morocco in the west to Afghanistan in the east. The region is host to three major Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and four major languages (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish). In addition, multiple ethnic minority populations, with their own languages and cultural specifities, are found across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), in some cases forming large nations without states (e.g., Berbers, Kurds). In the Arab world alone, there are eighteen Arab-majority countries.[1] Along with four additional nations where Arabic is also spoken, they make up the twenty-two nations of the Arab League.[2]

No one scholarly discipline has been able to adequately capture the complexity of the Middle East, including its social, cultural, linguistic, ethnic, racial, religious, political, and economic diversity. But the discipline of anthropology has certainly tried. Of the five major social sciences—anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology—anthropology has been the most devoted to regional and area studies. The disciplinary hallmark of anthropology is ethnography, an immersive form of field research in which the anthropologist learns the local language, lives with the community for an extended period of time, engages in both participant observation and in-depth interviewing, and attempts to represent the lives of interlocutors through writing that is thick with ethnographic description. Ethnography is sine qua non for anthropology. It is the process of research that defines our discipline. It is also the product of our efforts. Anthropology produces ethnographies, or full-length books describing the results of our field research.

Figure 0.1: Map of the Middle East.

Hundreds of ethnographies now focus on the MENA region, constituting a remarkable anthropological corpus. As of 2020, there were 570 solo-authored ethnographies in English,[3] as well as a number of major ethnographic compendiums on the anthropology of the Middle East.[4] These volumes cover every Arab country, as well as Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan. But very few of these ethnographies shed light on the lives of the men who live there. Middle East anthropology, as we shall see, suffers from a serious gender divide, promoting a view of Middle Eastern masculinity that requires reconception.

MIDDLE EAST ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE GENDER DIVIDE

In her seminal article on Middle East anthropology in the late twentieth century, anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod (1989) pointed to particular zones of theory, or areas of scholarship that had dominated the Middle Eastern ethnographic tradition. At that time, Abu-Lughod was able to identify three major theoretical trends. First was segmentary lineage theory, or the way in which Middle Eastern tribes were purportedly organized. Second was Islam, which she argued had become a theoretical metonym for the region as a whole. Third was harem theory, or the assumption of a vast gender divide, in which Middle Eastern women were relegated to the private sphere.

This latter issue—of a so-called public/private gender divide between Middle Eastern men and women (Nelson 1974)—was the byproduct of two powerful forces. Middle East anthropology up until the 1980s was dominated by male ethnographers, who were almost exclusively interested in nomadic life, tribalism, and political leadership.[5] Most of these anthropologists were Europeans and Americans, and through their work in the MENA region, some became anthropology's most important luminaries (e.g., Talal Asad, Frederik Barth, Robert Fernea, Clifford Geertz, Ernest Gellner, Paul Rabinow).

In general, these early male anthropologists were interested in men's power, authority, domination, and violence—terms that often appeared in the titles of their books.[6] The men in their studies were variously described as "warriors," "heroes," "lords," "masters," "saints," "shaykhs," "khans," "shahs," and "notables," perpetuating a very masculinist ethnographic tradition in which the attitudes, values, and actions of the most powerful men were revealed. This interest in what might be called the "tribal hero warriors" of the Middle East continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s and into the new millennium (Dresch 1990; Peters 1990; Tapper 1979, 1996), with a particular focus on (1) men's leadership of insurrections and resistance movements (Davis 1987; Edwards 1996, 2001, 2017; Fischer 1980; Hart 1981, 2001; Peters 1990); (2) men's public war oratory and

poetic contestations (Caton 1990, 2005; Gilsenan 1996; Meeker 1979; Reynolds 1995; Shryock 1997); and (3) men's religious leadership and authority (Eickelman 1976, 1985; Gaffney 1994; Geertz 1968; Gilsenan 1973, 1982; Hammoudi 1993, 1997; Hirschkind 2006; Messick 1992; Munson 1984, 1993).

Manhood itself—or how men experienced their day-to-day lives as men (Gutmann 1997)—was never the inherent interest of these male anthropologists, nor were gender relations between men and women. Because they gained little access to women's worlds—arguing that such access was simply impossible—these male anthropologists rendered ethnographies of Middle Eastern social life in which women rarely made an appearance, whether as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, friends, or lovers. In other words, this early male-dominated Middle East anthropology upheld the notion of a great gender divide, one that Abu-Lughod (1989) described as anthropology's harem theory.

A second wave of Middle East anthropology set out to correct the ethnographic imbalance but unwittingly magnified the perception of a Middle Eastern gender divide. In the late 1970s, second-wave feminism emerged, and with it the entrance of hundreds of women scholars into the academy. By the early 1980s, the Association of Middle East Women's Studies (AMEWS) was formed by a group of feminist scholars (Inhorn 2014a), including prominent anthropologists who were concerned with the effects of patriarchy, or male power and authority, over Middle Eastern women's lives (Joseph 1993, 1994; see also Kandiyoti 1988). During this early period, feminist anthropologists began to trace the outlines of the feminist movement within the MENA region itself (Hale 1996; see also Badran 1996; Hatem 1993; Moghadam 1994), a scholarly theme that would continue for decades.

This new genre of woman-centered Middle East ethnography eventually prevailed in terms of the sheer number of volumes published, comprising one-quarter of the entire ethnographic corpus by the year 2020. Middle East women's ethnography covered many topics, including (1) women's poetry, storytelling, and oral traditions (e.g., Abu-Lughod 1986, 1993; Arebi 1994; Early 1993; Grima 1992; Hoffman 2008; Kapchan 1996); (2) women's reproductive practices and motherhood aspirations (Ali 2002; Boddy 1989; Delaney 1991; Fadlalla 2007; Inhorn 1994, 1996, 2003; Kanaaneh 2003); (3) women's increasing access to literacy and education (Adely 2012; Barsoum 2004); and (4) women's entrance into informal and formal labor markets (Cairoli 2011; Chakravarti 2016; White 1994). However, as in the original zones of theory outlined by Abu-Lughod, the dominant focus of this literature was on women and Islam, including (1) women's practices of veiling and seclusion (El Guindi 1999; MacLeod 1992; Rugh 1986; Sedghi 2007; Zuhur 1992); (2) the effects of

Islamic personal status laws on women's marriages and family life (Haeri 1989; Hoodfar 1996; Moors 1995; Tapper 2006); (3) the growth of Muslim women's piety movements (Deeb 2006; Hafez 2011; Mahmood 2006; Torab 2008); and (4) how these faith-based movements contrasted with more secular forms of feminist activism (Al-Ali 2000; Brodsky 2003; Peteet 1992; White 2003).

In all this work by women anthropologists, men were hardly present. Women's fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, friends, and lovers were shadow figures looming largely in the background of these ethnographic studies. Husbands and wives were almost never portrayed together as couples, given that marital ethnography was entirely undeveloped in the field of anthropology as a whole (Inhorn 2014b). Thus, the burgeoning anthropological literature on Middle Eastern women's lives gave little sense of wider gender relations, or how men and women might interact meaningfully and compassionately as fathers and daughters, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, mothers and sons, and friends and neighbors. Instead, much of the anthropological literature on Middle Eastern women's lives operated from an implicit feminist assumption that all Middle Eastern women are subject to patriarchy and oppression.

To summarize, then, the purported gender corrective undertaken by women anthropologists of the Middle East had much the same effect as the earlier male-dominated ethnography. Women ethnographers worked only with women subjects, thereby perpetuating their own separate spheres research. Furthermore, because many women anthropologists were inspired by second-wave feminism, they searched for signs of patriarchy and oppression in Middle Eastern women's lives (Inhorn 1996).[7] Whereas male ethnographers were relentless in searching for signs of men's power and domination in the public sphere, female ethnographers were adamant in documenting signs of this male domination in the private sphere. Together, they reinforced the concept of a stark gender divide between Middle Eastern men and women, with men often represented as brutal oppressors.

NEO-ORIENTALISM AND MIDDLE EASTERN HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

In these ways, the discipline of anthropology has unwittingly contributed to dominant stereotypes of Middle Eastern men as dangerous Others, a view that harkens back to the time of the Crusades. In his brilliant analysis entitled *Orientalism*, literary theorist Edward Said (1978) examined Western perceptions of the Orient, or the Middle Eastern lands where women were thought to live in harems—veiled, shut away, and controlled by polygamous men. According

to Said, Western Orientalist scholarship portrayed Middle Eastern men as direct threats to women, as well as to Occidental security and Christian morality more generally. A millennium on, neo-Orientalist caricatures of Middle Eastern men carry forward—today in the powerful terrorist trope that portrays Middle Eastern men (invariably thought of as Muslim) as perpetrators of religious fundamentalism, jihad, barbarous violence, hatred of religious minorities, and misogyny toward women (Inhorn and Wentzell 2011).

Such neo-Orientalizing views of Middle Eastern men and the "trouble" they cause have been incisively questioned by political scientist Paul Amar (2011, 2013), who critiques omnipresent discourses for "misrecognizing, racializing, moralistically-depoliticizing, and class-displacing emergent social forces in the Middle East" (Amar 2011, 36). Such neo-Orientalizing discourses—recast today as toxic masculinity in the Middle East—render illegible more progressive, twenty-first-century men's social realities, including the changing contours of gender and sexuality in the region, and men's participation in social movements for justice and human dignity, of the kind that led millions of young Arab men onto the streets in the much-hoped-for Arab Spring.

Amar points particularly to hegemonic masculinity theory and the ways in which it has been systematically used to popularize discourses of toxic masculinity and Middle Eastern men in crisis. Hegemonic masculinity theory, which has dominated intellectual thought for more than three decades, was forwarded in 1985 by Australian sociologist and gender scholar Raewyn Connell and her colleagues (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1993, 1995). Drawing explicitly from feminist theory and Marxist sociology, Connell sought to reconcile the lived reality of inequality among men with the fact of men's group dominance over women. Connell drew on Antonio Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, a social mechanism through which various groups develop the "will to conform" with a leading group's way of being, thereby facilitating class-based domination. She argued that by using hegemony to understand masculinity, scholars could reveal the various hierarchies within masculinities and the dialectical relationships between social structures and masculine practice.

Connell defined hegemonic masculinity as the strategy for being a man that legitimizes patriarchy in current, local practices of gender. In this formulation, masculinity is shaped by cultural ideals of manliness (e.g., attributes such as wealth, power, and virility). Specifically, Connell argued that most men are not fully able to practice hegemonic masculinity because it requires access to particular social resources. Hegemonic masculinity thus creates inequality among men, making some men hegemonic or dominant over others, whereas subordinate

men can only aspire to elements of hegemonic masculinity as the ideal type. Crucially, the theory of hegemonic masculinity is about relationships—among men, between men and women, and between men and their ideas of other men. Connell (1995, 37) argued, "We must also recognize the *relations* between different kinds of masculinity: relations of alliance, dominance and subordination. These relationships are constructed through practices that exclude and include, that intimidate, exploit, and so on. There is a gender politics within masculinity."

Because of this focus on masculine relationality, hegemonic masculinity theory, once applied by other gender scholars, has tended to cast masculinity into two static types—hegemonic versus subordinated (a.k.a. marginalized, subaltern). Hegemonic masculinity, furthermore, is often conflated in scholarly discourse with dominant notions of manhood that are toxic in practice (e.g., promiscuity, overdrinking, use of force, oppression of women). Thus, portrayals of hegemonic masculinity end up powerfully reinforcing pernicious stereotypes. When hegemonic masculinity is viewed in such negative terms, it may lead to a toxic trait list of manhood—which may or may not reflect men's (and women's) actual social realities and gender relations in practice (Inhorn 2012).

Anthropological representations of Middle Eastern men—whether by male anthropologists enchanted with the hegemonic tribal hero warrior or women anthropologists critical of men as hegemonic patriarchs—have unwittingly served to reinforce these views of toxic masculinity in the MENA region. Marcia C. Inhorn (2012) identifies what she calls the four notorious P's—patriarchy, patrilineality, patrilocality, and polygyny—which are often represented in ethnographic accounts as characteristic of Middle Eastern family life but which may end up vilifying and caricaturing Middle Eastern men in what she describes as "hegemonic masculinity, Middle Eastern style."

The first feature of this caricature presumes that hegemonic Middle Eastern men are family patriarchs who exert their power and authority over women, junior males, and children in their families through coercion and even force. Second, hegemonic men's marriages are never thought to be characterized by love because they are presumed to be arranged by families for the purposes of patrilineal tribal alliance, lineage continuity, and men's power. Third, women who marry into hegemonic men's patrilocal extended households are thought to be in an extremely vulnerable position. If they challenge their husband's hegemonic male authority, they are at risk of violence and repudiation, an Islamic form of divorce in which a man need only utter his intentions without recourse to formal legal proceedings. Fourth, hegemonic men's primary emotional commitments are said to remain with their own patrilineal female relatives (i.e., mothers and sisters) rather than with their in-marrying wives, which

purportedly increases hegemonic men's likelihood of polygyny, or the taking of multiple spouses.

Furthermore, and as noted in Inhorn's critical analysis (2012), hegemonic masculinity in the MENA region is considered by default to be heterosexual, because homosexuality represents the ultimate form of male subordination. In short, Middle Eastern men who perform hegemonic masculinity are necessarily heterosexist and sexist—gaining respect and authority over women and "lesser" men through domination, fear, and threats of violence.

THE NEW MASCULINITY STUDIES IN MIDDLE EAST ANTHROPOLOGY

But do these extremely negative portrayals of hegemonic Middle Eastern men's toxic masculinity bear any resemblance to the reality of modern men's lives across the region? When portrayals of Middle Eastern men as dangerous terrorists and brutal oppressors of women circulate freely around the globe, it becomes incumbent on anthropologists to engage with these discourses and attempt to deconstruct them.

In twenty-first-century anthropology, a move is afoot to reconceptualize masculinity and, in so doing, advance gender studies. Anthropologists of Latin America were among the first to investigate the meanings of manhood, in part to explore gay men's lives in the new era of HIV/AIDS (Carrillo 2001, 2018; Parker 1991, 1998) but also to unseat prosaic and taken-for-granted assumptions of Latino men's irremediable machismo (Brandes 2002; Gutmann 1996). The work of anthropologist Matthew Gutmann was crucial in this regard. He interrogated the meanings of macho in his ethnographic research on young men's lives in Mexico City (Gutmann 1996). In his now famous *Annual Review of Anthropology* article "Trafficking in Men: The Anthropology of Masculinity," he defined four ways in which masculinity could be conceptualized: (1) as "anything that men think and do," (2) as "anything men think and do to be men," (3) as "some men [being] inherently or by ascription considered more manly than other men," and (4) as "anything that women are not" (Gutmann 1997, 386).

Gutmann went on to edit a seminal volume on *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America* (Gutmann 2003), which was followed in short order by three other edited collections from around the world: *Asian Masculinities* (Louie and Low 2003), *African Masculinities* (Ouzgane and Morrell 2005), and *Men and Masculinities in Southeast Asia* (Ford and Lyons 2012). Middle East anthropology was not immune to this new wave of masculinity studies. Indeed, three edited volumes touching on Middle Eastern masculinities actually predated some of these other works even though they received less attention, perhaps because the editors were mostly women.

In 1994, Andrea Cornwall and Nancy Lindisfarne published a globally encompassing ethnographic compendium called *Dislocating Masculinity: Comparative Ethnographies*. Two chapters focused on Middle Eastern men: one on the "honour and shame" complex and the stresses of male (im)potency during wedding-night defloration ceremonies (Lindisfarne 1994), and the other by Turkish feminist scholar Deniz Kandiyoti (1994), who questioned the taken-for-granted assumption of male privilege in homosocial settings where some men may face significant forms of masculine vulnerability and discrimination.

Men's vulnerability was also a major theme in Mai Ghoussoub and Emma Sinclair-Webb's (2000) collection on *Imagined Masculinities: Male Identity and Culture in the Modern Middle East*. Both a literary and ethnographic compendium, this book offered a major section on military masculinities, or the ways in which Middle Eastern youth are "made into men" through conscription in the army, sometimes in dangerous roles such as commandoes (Sinclair-Webb 2000). In one ethnographic account focusing on Israel's Zionist masculine ideology, mandatory military service was deemed "a second bar mitzvah" for young Israeli men (Kaplan 2000). However, for Palestinian youth living under Israeli rule in the occupied West Bank, beatings and detentions were framed as rites of passage, becoming "central in construction of an adult, gendered (male) self with critical consequences for political consciousness and agency" (Peteet 2000, 103). The Palestinian-Israeli conflict was also a central theme of a third edited volume, Lahoucine Ouzgane's (2006) *Islamic Masculinities*, which showed how Palestinian men living in Israel attempted to navigate their Otherness—their "stranger masculinities"—in a postcolonial setting (Monterescu 2006).

Military masculinity in the Middle East has continued to absorb a newer generation of anthropologists. Six ethnographies focus on Algerian ex-combatants (Bucaille and Rundell 2019), Israeli soldiers (Ben-Ari 2001; Grassiani 2013), Turkish soldiers and veterans (Açiksöz 2019; White 2012), and Palestinian Bedouin soldiers serving in the Israeli military, often as scouts and guides (Kanaaneh 2008). The most recent of these volumes, by anthropologist Salih Can Açiksöz, focuses not on combat per se but on the aftermath of war. Calling his book *Sacrificial Limbs*, Açiksöz (2019) highlights the experiences of masculinity and disability among wounded warriors, most of whom are Turkish veterans of the country's war against the Kurds.

To some degree, these new ethnographies of Middle Eastern soldiers represent a continuation of the earlier Middle East anthropological focus on tribal hero warriors. Although men who have fought in wars deserve to be seen and

heard—perhaps especially when their masculinity is tested by disability—it is extremely important to recognize that most Middle Eastern men are not combatants. Portrayals of ordinary civilian men in the Middle East—for example, recent accounts of Palestinian stone masons (Ross 2019) and Egyptian migrant workers in the Gulf States (Schielke 2020)—are also necessary, in part to move the new masculinity studies in anthropology beyond the recurrent trope of men's toxic violence.

In this regard, four recent ethnographies on the lives of ordinary Middle Eastern men bear mentioning and are significant for several reasons. First, they are all written by women anthropologists who conducted research directly with men, thereby disproving the long held but untested assumption that cross-gender research is impossible in the MENA region. Second, these ethnographies focus on gender relations, or the ways in which Middle Eastern men and women actually interact in daily life, shaping each other's senses of masculinity and femininity. Third, they focus on new themes, including men's fertility and use of new reproductive technologies; men's work and participation in community life; men's capacities to nurture their families in the domestic sphere, partly by getting food on the table each day; and men's support for their families through careers in the Middle Eastern music industry.

The first of these books to be published was Inhorn's (2012) *The New Arab Man: Emergent Masculinities, Technologies, and Islam in the Middle East.* In her study, Inhorn foregrounds the reproductive life histories of Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian men who are struggling to become fathers, sometimes because of their own male infertility problems but also because of their wives' reproductive troubles. Through marital ethnography conducted with husbands and wives, Inhorn demonstrates how Arab men are embracing new medical technologies and reproductive practices, decoupling manhood from fertility and virility in the process. Analyzing these changes as emergent and transformative, *The New Arab Man* not only questions patriarchy within marriage and family life but also foregrounds the changing emotional worlds of Arab men as they describe their love stories, their family commitments, their friendship circles, and the ways they have struggled within their nations in a postwar setting.

The New Arab Man forwards the trope of *emergent masculinities* to capture all that is new and transformative in Arab men's lives in the twenty-first century. Inspired by Marxist scholar Raymond Williams's (1978) concept of emergence, Inhorn argues that the term emergent masculinities—intentionally plural—can be used to embrace historical change and new patterns of masculine practice. Emergent masculinities encapsulate individual change over the male life course, change across generations, and historical change involving men

in transformative social processes (e.g., male labor migration, new forms of political protest, the harnessing of social media). In addition, emergent masculinities highlight new forms of male agency, including men's desires to enter into romantically committed relationships before marriage, live in nuclear family residences with their wives and children, use the latest technologies (from mobile phones to reproductive technologies), and be involved in political and gender equality activism.

The local social and emotional worlds of Arab men are also highlighted in anthropologist Farha Ghannam's (2013) book *Live and Die Like a Man: Gender Dynamics in Urban Egypt.* Based on more than twenty years of ethnographic research in a low-income neighborhood in northern Cairo, Ghannam shifts the attention away from gender oppression and patriarchy to explore how men are collectively "produced" as gendered subjects, including through interactions with the women in their lives. Forwarding the conceptual analytic of *masculine trajectories,* Ghannam traces how masculinity is continuously maintained and reaffirmed by both men and women under changing socioeconomic and political conditions.

In the economic aftermath of Egypt's failed 2011 revolution, Ghannam shows how adult men struggle daily to provide for their families, often engaging in physically taxing, backbreaking forms of labor to do so. Focusing on the stories of ordinary, working-class Egyptian men, *Live and Die Like a Man* considers the extraordinary efforts that many men make to care for their families, as well as how the masculine caretaker role has been complicated by the challenges generated by Cairo's rapid urbanization, neoliberal policies, and political and economic instability. Ghannam's sensitive study underlines the affective dimensions of men's lives, exposing the vulnerabilities, dependencies, and inner conflicts faced by poor and working-class Egyptian men, particularly as they struggle to put food on the table.

In a similar vein, anthropologist Nefissa Naguib (2015) questions the so-called public-private gender divide in her book *Nurturing Masculinities: Men, Food, and Family in Contemporary Egypt.* Based on long-term fieldwork in Egypt among men of a variety of social classes, Naguib explores men's practices of food provision, nurturance, and care in the domestic realm. Egyptian men's practices of food provision are one measure of their lives as active and caring family members. Attention to individual men's aspirations as providers and ideas about masculine fulfillment capture the variety of ways in which Muslim men conduct themselves in a caring, nurturing mode as sons, husbands, fathers, friends, and community members.

Developing the concept of *nurturing masculinities,* Naguib (2015) argues that humanizing ethnographic portrayals of ordinary Arab men render legible the

social realities of gender relations, including how the lives of Arab men and women often intersect on a much different, more humane level in relation to care, respect, love, nurturance, and intimacy in domestic life. Furthermore, beyond the domestic sphere, *Nurturing Masculinities* focuses on the tumultuous days of the Egyptian revolution, revealing how male protestors managed to feed and care for one another while occupying and defending Tahrir Square.

Finally, the newest ethnography, also from Cairo, Egypt, focuses on the life history of one man, Sayyid Henkish, who is a musician from a long family line of wedding performers. Anthropologist Karin van Nieuwkerk (2019) uses Henkish's autobiography to explore changing notions of masculinity over the male life course. Sayyid Henkish's story is one of an *ibn al-balad*—or an "authentic" Egyptian male of the lower-middle class who articulates his manliness as being associated with nobility, integrity, and toughness. However, like many Egyptian men of the *baladi,* or working classes, Henkish faces profound difficulties in providing for his family in the face of the socioeconomic and political changes taking place in contemporary Egypt.

Van Nieuwkerk situates Sayyid Henkish's account within the professional context of the Middle Eastern music and entertainment industry—an industry in which the performers, both male and female, face distinct moral ambiguities for being part of a religiously debated profession. However, van Nieuwkerk shows that the moral challenges faced by Egyptian men like Henkish are not limited to the world of entertainment. Through one man's autobiography, van Nieuwkerk is able to offer many insights about masculinity and moral uncertainty in today's Egypt, where profound post-2011 economic and political disruptions are transforming and unsettling received notions of manhood.

Since the publication of these four books—all of which focus on heterosexual married men and their families—a new focus on queer men in the MENA region has also emerged, perhaps inspired by anthropologist John Borneman's (2007) auto-ethnography of his own gay desires and encounters in the Syrian city of Aleppo prior to the civil war. A decade on, a generation of younger scholars has begun to study queer life in the Middle East, mostly in the major cities of Beirut, Lebanon (Merabet 2015; Moussawi 2020); Ramallah, Palestine (Atshan 2020); Istanbul, Turkey (Özbay 2017); and Tehran, Iran (Kjaran 2019). These books chart the ways in which Middle Eastern gay men are navigating urban and sometimes transnational spaces in order to express same-sex desires and enjoy relationships with other men. Yet all these ethnographies also focus on queer men's struggles in their own societies against inequalities and discrimination, homophobia, religious condemnation, threats of violence and detention, and human rights violations. Indeed, as argued by Ghassan Moussawi (2020) in his book *Disruptive Situations,* which focuses on gay men, lesbians, and transgender people, the daily survival strategies of LGBTQ people in Beirut are not only "queer" but are made even queerer by living in the midst of a "queer situation." *Disruptive Situations* in Lebanon examines profound economic precarity, sectarian strife, the arrival of millions of refugees in the country, and the ongoing threat of regional war.

PRECARIOUS TIMES FOR ARAB MEN

Indeed, it is fair to say that no other region of the world has suffered so much war and population disruption than the Middle East, including the majority of Arab nations within it. By 2011, the year of the Arab uprisings, fifteen of twenty-two Arab League nations—comprising 85 percent of the region's population—had already suffered from complex emergencies due to protracted conflicts (Mowafi 2011). By 2011, Arab countries already had the largest percentage of forced migrants in the world, the majority of whom had fled from ongoing conflict, persecution, and political instability by crossing international borders as refugees or by becoming internally displaced persons (IDPs) within their own countries.

In the decade following the 2011 Arab uprisings, hopes of a revolutionary Arab Spring were dashed by the collapse of states, increasing authoritarianism, escalations of sectarian tensions, new wars added to ongoing conflicts, high rates of civilian casualties, refugee and humanitarian crises, and unrelenting economic despair. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, by 2020, Arabs and Afghans made up the majority of the more than 70 million forcibly displaced persons in the world (UNHCR News 2019). Of the world's 25 million refugees registered with the United Nations, the largest population consisted of Palestinians, 5.5 million of whom were living since 1948 under the mandate of the second largest UN refugee agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Syrians comprised the largest newly created refugee population, with nearly 6.7 million refugees and an equal number of IDPs in need of humanitarian assistance (UNHCR 2019, 6). The non-Arab country of Afghanistan placed second on the UNHCR's list of globally displaced persons, with 2.7 million Afghans registered with the United Nations, despite not having formal refugee status in the neighboring host countries of Iran and Pakistan. Adding up these numbers, Middle Eastern refugees made up more than half of the world's total refugee population.

What's more, the worst man-made humanitarian crisis in the Arab world was unfolding in Yemen, where Saudi Arabia led a nine-state coalition in a

devastating war. By 2020, UNHCR (2019) estimated that 24 million Yemenis, or 80 percent of the total population, were in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. Two out of three Yemenis were unable to afford food, and half of the country was on the brink of starvation. One million cholera cases occurred in Yemen between 2018 and 2019, 25 percent among children, making this the largest cholera epidemic in the world.

Beyond the suffering of refugees and IDPs, the certainty of daily life has diminished for ordinary people in many Arab nations, especially in the aftermath of 2011. The post-2011 period has brought with it unprecedented levels of economic, political, and social upheaval. Arab men and women who have remained in politically precarious home countries often face disappearing labor opportunities, high unemployment rates, rampant corruption, oppressive military rule, and increasing (although often internalized) rage against governing forces.

How have Arab men responded to these political disruptions and economic uncertainties in the post-revolutionary period? A state-of-the-art survey—undertaken by a nongovernmental gender advocacy organization called Promundo, in conjunction with UN Women and a variety of international funding agencies—attempted to answer that question. Called the "International Men and Gender Equality Study in the Middle East and North Africa" (IMAGES MENA, or IMAGES for short; https://imagesmena.org), the study relied on local teams in four MENA countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine) where quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken with nearly ten thousand Arab citizens, mostly men between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine.

The IMAGES study was unprecedented as the first large-scale empirical investigation of the lives and struggles of Arab men since the uprisings of 2011. This comparative study was designed to assess Arab men's involvements as sons, husbands, and fathers at home and at work, as well as in public and private settings, in an effort to better understand how Arab men see their positions as men in the current economic and political climate, and to explore contemporary male attitudes toward gender equality. The results of this study were published under the title *Understanding Masculinities: International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)—Middle East and North Africa* (El Feki, Heilman, and Barker 2017).

The IMAGES study highlighted the tremendous levels of stress in Arab men's lives, particularly in countries affected by conflict and displacement. Across all four countries surveyed, half of the male respondents said that they fear for their family's well-being and safety, as well as for their own.[8] In Palestine, for example, 65 percent of men reported at least one form of occupation-related violence or discrimination. In Lebanon, where Syrian refugees were also included in the study, Syrians were at least two to three times more likely than Lebanese men to report that they had experienced some form of physical violence or been arrested, imprisoned, or detained by police.

These effects of conflict—as well as the challenges of finding paid work and fulfilling the traditional masculine provider role in times of economic scarcity—were frequently cited in the study as the main reasons for, or aggravating factors in, men's depressive symptoms. For example, the majority of Palestinian men in the IMAGES study reported being frequently stressed or depressed because of unemployment and underemployment. Similarly, in Lebanon, both Lebanese and Syrian refugee men showed signs of stress and depressive symptoms related to their inability to find remunerative work. All told, one-fifth to one-half of Arab men in the four countries reported being ashamed to face their families because of their lack of work or regular income.

Despite the many challenges facing Arab men across the region, *Understanding Masculinities* concluded on a positive note. In its final analysis, the IMAGES study emphasized that a "sizeable minority" of Arab men in the four countries surveyed—from the most elite to the most marginalized—showed support for gender equality and women's empowerment. Arab men were described as cracking the armor of patriarchy and encouraging an equal playing field for men and women. Moreover, qualitative interviews undertaken with Arab men in all four countries yielded many "stories of tenderness, of deep caring and caregiving" (El Feki, Heilman, and Barker 2017, 20). As the IMAGES authors concluded, "While it is fashionable to talk about a 'crisis of masculinity,' in reality, men and women are at a crossroads as they try to find their way in a shifting world" (El Feki, Heilman, and Barker 2017, 263). The goal of the IMAGES report, then, was to "cut through the stereotypes and prejudices that too often obscure the complexity of dynamic gender identities and relations in the region" (El Feki, Heilman, and Barker 2017, 14).

The IMAGES study was historic as the first large-scale social survey to examine the views and lived experiences of Arab men on a comparative basis across the MENA region. Yet in typical fashion, the Western media reported the study results in highly negative terms. For example, the right-leaning British journal the *Economist* led with this nested series of headlines in its May 4, 2017, edition: "Down and out in Cairo and Beirut," "The sorry state of Arab men," "They are clinging to the patriarchy for comfort."[9]

Unfortunately, the *Economist*'s reporting is nothing new. As argued by media scholar Jack Shaheen (2008), ever since the 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, Arab men have been deemed intrinsically

Guilty—the title of his book—in popular Western media representations. This portrayal of Arab men as dangerous Others has been fueled by unrelenting media attention on Islamist terrorist activities and attacks, especially violence inspired by what is known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). As a result, amid the worst Middle Eastern refugee crisis since World War II, many European countries justified their refusal to accept Arab refugee families by claiming that Islamic terrorists were entering Europe disguised as refugees. Similarly, in the United States, President Donald Trump's 2017 Executive Order 13780, entitled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" but commonly known as the Muslim ban, clearly drew on the terrorist trope to keep Muslim men out of the country, despite the fact that not a single terrorist act had ever been committed by a refugee on US soil (Inhorn 2018).

As clear from these studies, statistics, and executive orders, Arab men have found themselves in increasing situations of precarity in the post-2011 period, with economic insecurity and violent political upheavals compromising men's daily lives, including their sense of security, moral order, future aspirations, political rights, and overall human dignity. According to social theorist Judith Butler (2009, ii), precarity is "that politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death. Such populations are at heightened risk of disease, poverty, starvation, displacement, and of exposure to violence without protection." Central to Butler's notion is the politically induced nature of precarity, which can result in "maximized vulnerability" of human beings through exposure to violence perpetrated by the state or other actors, or through inadequate state protections.

In short, Arab states are no longer able—if they ever were—to adequately protect their citizens. Where does this leave Arab men today? The chapters in this volume aim to provide answers to this question.

ORGANIZATION OF THE VOLUME

In the midst of such life-shaping precarity in many Arab countries, it is vital to understand how Arab masculinities are being experienced and reshaped. This is the goal of the present volume. Through thick ethnographic descriptions of Arab men's lives across the region, we intend to examine in concrete detail how men's current understandings of their *rujula*, or masculinity, are being affected in these precarious times.

Our aim as anthropologists is to innovatively challenge received wisdoms in the long-standing debates on Middle Eastern patriarchy and the gender divide, and to further explicate the political contexts in which gender relations are

actually conducted. This collection of groundbreaking ethnographic studies reflects our mounting dissatisfaction with earlier anthropological and feminist works that treat Arab patriarchy as timeless and intractable and that reinforce untested assumptions of toxic, hegemonic Arab manhood. Instead, we attempt to contest crisis of masculinities discourses and the reentrenchment of Western political interventions to "save" Arab women from Arab men (Abu-Lughod 2013).

The foundational premise of this book is that there is an urgent need for a more profound anthropological understanding of Arab men and masculinities that breaks away from the political debates, media hysteria, and misinformed stereotypes of Arab men that are unequivocally intensifying, particularly in the United States and Europe. In challenging these representations, this book offers unique insights into the mostly private spaces of Arab men's lives—stories that rarely enter the public arena. Each author delivers stimulating and thought-provoking analysis from rarely accessed field sites to understand the everyday realities of Arab men, women, and children—in their lives together, as well as apart.

All the anthropologists contributing to this volume have undertaken ethnographic research projects within the same four countries as the IMAGES MENA study—namely, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine. Although there is no formal connection between the IMAGES study and our anthropological investigations, these overlapping sites of research clearly reflect issues of research access and closure in the turbulent post-2011 period. (For example, scholarship within war-torn Syria or Yemen is now virtually impossible.) Furthermore, the anthropological studies carried out by researchers in this volume are of a fundamentally different nature than those of the IMAGES study. Whereas IMAGES researchers collected large-scale, aggregate, quantitative data, the anthropologists in this volume offer small-scale ethnographic portrayals of particular men's lives while at the same time innovating methodological, epistemological, and conceptual approaches to Arab masculinity more generally.

In this regard, it is important to note that the anthropological research presented here foregrounds the voices and stories of male interlocutors. Nonetheless, we take methodological care to skillfully interweave gender more broadly so that women also inform the analyses about Arab men's lives, hopes, and dreams. Indeed, this volume provides a rare opportunity to look closely at the ways in which both men and women are rethinking and unseating Arab patriarchy today.

Part I. Masculinity and Precarity: Class Conflict and Economic Indignity

Because of the overarching attention to conflict in the MENA region, structural and economic forces have received relatively less attention. Yet economic

conditions either create possibilities or intensify struggles in the everyday life worlds of Arab men. In the three chapters in this section, the authors interrogate the meaning of masculinity when morality, piety, dignity, and justice are continually being undermined by economic and political powers beyond men's individual control. The first two chapters offer postrevolutionary reflections on Egyptian men's perceptions and experiences of the country's worsening economy and growing social class disparities. These two chapters argue against monolithic constructions of Egyptian masculinity. Instead, they capture the ways in which differently positioned Egyptian men, living in the same society, actively choose to respond to their local class ascriptions. In the third chapter on Morocco, men's very personal efforts to renegotiate and reconstitute the social and moral order amid intensifying class stratification suggest that social class and class-based identities are being reinterpreted in the present era, often along religious lines.

In chapter 1, Bård Helge Kårtveit explores the new othering taking place between middle-class and working-class men in the setting of Alexandria, Egypt. Among middle-class Alexandrian men, Kårtveit finds men placing conjugal connectivity (Inhorn 1996, 2012) at the center of their masculine aspirations, in their intentions to strive toward better communication with their fiancées or wives, and to achieve a greater sensitivity toward their needs. Kårtveit argues that middle-class Egyptian men are attempting to break away from certain patriarchal ideals, enabling them to establish, explore, and initiate "softer" forms of masculinity with middle-class group approval. In doing so, they define themselves in opposition to men of earlier generations but also in opposition to the uneducated working-class men, or *fellahin,* that constitute their masculine, predatory Other. Seen as lacking in culture and civility by middle-class men, these working-class men are regarded as sources of trouble and as perpetrators of sexual harassment in public spaces. Thus, Kårtveit's study is a powerful reflection on how worsening, postrevolutionary economic conditions in Egypt are exacerbating preexisting class tensions.

In chapter 2, Jamie Furniss examines the reactions of young working-class men in Cairo to popular media representations of themselves as violent "thugs." In a nuanced ethnographic portrayal of audience reactions to the 2016 summer hit series *Al-Ustura* (*The Legend*), Furniss examines which men liked and disliked the television show and why working-class men identified with the show's violent and vengeful folk hero. Furniss's ethnographic analysis captures how middle-class Egyptian men condemn what they see as the working-class predisposition toward violence. But the chapter focuses primarily on working-class men's reactions because these men perceive quite differently the moral of

the story of *Al-Ustura*. In the process of outlining and describing these class-based masculine perceptions, Furniss shows how Egyptian working-class men resist their stigmatization and, in so doing, redefine meanings of masculinity and violence.

In chapter 3, Hsain Ilahiane captures the experiences of working-class Moroccan men who, unlike many of their counterparts, chose not to migrate to Europe. Making a living in the streets of Casablanca, they take their chances as informal laborers. But as these Moroccan men struggle to earn a daily living, they also lament the compromised ethical order of things, a time of injustice that they call *al-hogra*. This chapter examines contemporary meanings of al-hogra in Morocco and North Africa more generally, where feelings of al-hogra were the very spark that ignited the Arab Spring protests in Tunisia. Ilahiane's chapter focuses on the stories of individual Moroccan men, whose circumstances render them economically vulnerable and who rail against the perceived corruption and domination of society's ruling elites. Ilahiane finds that these working-class men—who toil to be good providers and to pursue a decent way of life—must face inherent contradictions between making a living and achieving their Islamic ideals of masculine piety. Ilahiane voices Moroccan men's stories of pain as they struggle to "earn a piece of bread." In search of dignity and fulfillment, Moroccan informal laborers imagine a day when al-hogra will no longer exist and men can provide a decent standard of life for their families without compromise.

Part II. Masculinity and Displacement: Moving, Settling, and Questions of Belonging

In many ways, the first three chapters of the volume are about internal transformations in social and moral ideas of manhood. The four chapters in this section turn to external worlds, particularly to the displacements of Arab men as both migrants and refugees. In this section, we see the complex interplay between "moving" and "settling," and how manhood is being made and contested in these oscillations. In chapters 4 and 5, movement emerges as a key domain through which Arab masculinity is shaped. Clearly, movement is essential to understanding the experiences of Arab men who have been forced to migrate because of economic circumstances. However, for Arab political refugees who have already fled their homes, displacement and resettlement may render them "stuck in place." In this next section on refugee displacement, we focus on the relative immobility of refugee men who have been encamped across national borders in other MENA countries. In some cases, such refugee displacement can last for generations, with little hope of return. How do Arab men respond to such circumstances? Chapters 6 and 7 attempt to answer this question, arguing

that displaced Arab men find creative ways of "doing" gender and masculinity, including in their encounters with the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies that often structure their refugee camp existences.

In chapter 4, Alice Elliot focuses on the ceaseless movement of Moroccan men who migrate to Europe for work. Here, migration simultaneously ensures, but also erodes, men's social, physical, and gendered existences, given that repeated movement can either underpin or undermine the making of manhood. Elliot's ethnographic study traces how migration becomes constitutive of what it means to be a Moroccan man, as well as how repeated movement can become corrosive of the very familial, social, and existential trajectories that migration is usually imagined (and assumed) to sustain. Classic analyses have tended to portray male migration as a definitive rite of passage from boyhood to manhood. But Elliot's work focuses instead on the difficult challenges—emotional, structural, and physical—required of Moroccan emigrant men in order for them to remain men despite the odds. Elliot coins the term *repeating manhood* to argue that masculinity can be built up or diminished over time through repeated movements. Thus, becoming a successful migrant man is never guaranteed. As the stories of Moroccan men in this chapter show, migrant manhood is always a precarious achievement.

Whereas Elliot's work focuses on migrants still on the move, chapter 5 takes us to Denmark, where Arab migrant men attempt to resettle with their families. As seen in this chapter by Anne Hovgaard Jørgensen, fatherhood among Arab migrant men becomes a sociomoral battleground in which Arab men must repeatedly attempt to overcome what Jørgensen calls *mistrusted masculinity*. Jørgensen's study focuses on interactions between Arab migrant fathers and the schools in which their children are educated by Danish professionals. In the Danish school system and in the welfare state more generally, Arab men often try their best to act on behalf of their children's best interests. Yet these efforts are frequently hindered by inherent distrust on the part of Danish teachers. Through nuanced ethnographic stories, Jørgensen focuses on fathers' reactions to these negative ascriptions and on the strategies men develop to forge new fatherhood identities for themselves. The chapter showcases Arab men's investments in their children's futures, including their hopes that their Arab offspring will eventually be integrated as part of the Danish "next generation."

In chapter 6, Gustavo Barbosa takes readers to the Shatila refugee camp in southern Beirut, Lebanon, where NGOs and development projects are active. His ethnographic study captures the dynamics of gender workshops sponsored by NGOs, as well as the responses of the young men (*shabāb*) who question the meaning of these various "gender performances." As Barbosa shows, the

promotion and framing of gender by certain NGOs as solely relations of power and subordination fail to capture the experiences of young Palestinian men in Shatila. These shabāb have limited access to power and become framed as emasculated, due to the political-economic constraints placed on them. Barbosa challenges this by developing a very different frame, that of the *NGOization of gender*. He argues that once gender is reconceptualized beyond NGOs' limiting frames, shabābs' lives appear ethnographically much richer than those suggested by the stereotype of brutalizing and brutalized Arab men. Outside of these gender workshops, Barbosa's study shows how Palestinian shabāb excel in both care and competition of prized pigeons—whose flight outside the camp is a poignant reminder of young Palestinian men's relative captivity. For the Shatila shabāb, much more than "just gender" is at stake; the well-being and survival of their pigeons serves in some ways as a metaphor of Palestinian refugeehood.

In chapter 7, Konstantina Isidoros also finds definitions of gender to be similarly displaced in her study of Sahrawi refugees in North Africa. This chapter focuses on Sahrawi men's ancient practices of full facial veiling—a form of veiling quite different from those of most other Muslim and Arab societies. Furthermore, Sahrawi men are increasingly becoming admired by international legal campaigners and aid organizations as steadfast refugee-statesmen, human rights activists, and skilled diplomats. Isidoros explores a poignant political moment in 2016 when these warrior-nomads lowered their customary male veils—while still using a traditional camel and goat hair tent—to receive then UN secretary general Ban Ki Moon in their desert heartland. She argues that these customary practices of *masculinity on the threshold* have become woven into new ideas about what it means to be a "modern" Sahrawi man and statesman. Like Barbosa in chapter 6, Isidoros finds conventional gender constructs to be rendered almost useless when differentiating cultural norms around gender. Instead, masculinity is best understood as skirting thresholds—sitting on the edges of habitable domains, circumnavigating the boundaries of international law, or adjusting the folds of cloth around the face. Today for Sahrawi refugee men, masculinity is achieved by successfully managing, moving with, and sitting in these risky, life-changing thresholds.

Part III. Masculinity and Familial Futures: Sex, Marriage, and Fatherhood under Threat

Men's deep concern over domestic responsibilities reemerges in the final section on masculinity and familial futures. These chapters follow Arab men in their roles as husbands and sexual partners to their wives and as fathers to their children. These chapters highlight the importance of marriage and

family-making in the Arab world, with men achieving full adulthood through these accomplishments. However, marrying, having sex, and making a baby are not always easily achieved. These chapters focus on masculine embodiment by exploring the most intimate realms of sexuality and reproduction, where men's bodies may be imperiled. As we shall see in this section, Arab men may be forced to put their bodies on the line—facing imprisonment as political activists or undertaking risky medical treatments to restore their threatened sense of masculinity.

In chapter 8, Sabiha Allouche's Lebanese interlocutors reflect on their futures in a country that has faced twenty-five years of civil war and Israeli occupation, an ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, and decades of economic precarity. Drawing on narratives collected during fieldwork with men and women in Tripoli, Allouche captures the affective components, such as hope and desire, that accompany discourses of ideal masculinity. Allouche's key finding is that Lebanese women construct the ideal husband along highly nationalistic lines, often referring to the slogan "Lebanon is for the Lebanese." Allouche argues that such findings are paradoxical given the long history of interaction and kinship alliances between the Lebanese, Palestinians, and Syrians in the region. Yet Allouche shows that this new interest in the Lebanese man occurs at the same time as Lebanese men struggle to function in a stagnant economy with high unemployment and emigration rates. Moral discourses of Lebanese emasculation are increasing, along with this escalating precarity. Thus, far from being fixed, ideas about Lebanese masculinity are constantly shifting, particularly as Lebanese men and women struggle to come to terms with Others (i.e., Palestinian and Syrian refugees) in their midst.

In chapter 9, L. L. Wynn forwards the concept of *masculinity under siege* to examine married men's sense of embodied peril. In Cairo, Wynn discovered Egyptian men's widespread and often daily use of the narcotic pain reliever, tramadol, thought to give them energy and treat their erectile dysfunction. As an opioid, the neuropharmacology of tramadol would predict an erection-wilting, rather than an erection-producing, effect. Yet as Wynn found, this narcotic pain reliever is being used as a substitute for Viagra, and both drugs are claimed to restore Egyptian masculinity and sexual vigor. In her chapter, Wynn offers an important contextualization of this emerging opioid epidemic. Namely, socioeconomic hardships in Egypt today make men feel that they are constantly gripped by pain and physical depletion. Thus, Egyptian men ingest tramadol to help them absorb the shocks and blows of an ailing economy, as well as to uplift their exhausted and failing bodies in order to meet the challenges of domestic life, including men's conjugal responsibilities.

In chapter 10, Laura Ferrero starts by critiquing the research on gender in Palestine, which she argues has overemphasized fighting, resistance, and imprisonment as crucial attributes of Palestinian masculinity. As Ferrero shows, the Palestinian struggle can have a twofold effect on manhood. On the one hand, it affirms masculinity through political resistance, but on the other hand, it may lead to long periods of detention in which reproduction and aspirations for fatherhood are at stake. Because scholarship on Middle Eastern men has emphasized their masculine reproductive imperative (Inhorn 2012), Ferrero's ethnographic research shows how imprisoned Palestinian men work with their visiting wives to secretly smuggle sperm outside of the prison complex. As a result, between 2012 and 2017, more than fifty Palestinian in vitro fertilization (IVF) babies were born using smuggled sperm. These "miracle" births have often been greeted with public announcements and widespread celebration. Based largely on ethnographic interviews with prisoners' wives, Ferrero finds that this recent practice of sperm smuggling has enabled prisoners' wives to become mothers and has offered Palestinian political prisoners a life-affirming chance at fatherhood.

CONCLUSION

The chapters of this volume offer rare ethnographic insights into the shifting ideas and practices of Arab masculinity. These emergent masculinities (Inhorn 2012) are being shaped by particular historical temporalities and political conditions, which render Arab masculinities in a current state of flux. Even so, as shown in these chapters, Arab men are setting out to counteract, amend, and reset new principles for what it means to be a good man in difficult times, thereby achieving personal senses of achievement and life fulfillment. The studies in this volume illuminate how men develop alternative strategies of affective labor and how they attempt to care for themselves and their families within their local moral worlds. Indeed, these chapters offer fresh insights into what it means to be an Arab man—a father, a husband, a son, a lover—but also what kinds of difficult compromises Arab men must sometimes make in order to fulfill these masculine commitments.

The chapters in this volume capture Arab men's unhappy awareness of how the post-2011 nation-state and world order have failed them, thrusting them into new conditions of political and economic insecurity. Indeed, as of this writing, the MENA region finds itself in the midst of a new form of life-threatening precarity as the COVID-19 pandemic spreads across the region, causing infection, death, and mass burials. How Middle Eastern men's own health, employment, and family well-being will be affected by COVID-19

remains to be seen and studied. But it is likely that with COVID-19, Arab men will again become caught up in the responsibilities of manhood as they care for their sick relatives, bury the dead, and, in the midst of government-imposed quarantines, attempt to put food on the table.

Ultimately, Arab men's longing for security and relief from unremitting stress may be this volume's most important, overarching message. Arab men face the discomfort of being betwixt and between worlds—worlds that involve both movement and stasis, acceptance and distrust, hope and despair. Caught in a precarious world, Arab men in Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, and Palestine long for a different future in which political stability, economic security, health, and well-being enable their best selves and ideal masculinities to emerge.

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NOTES

1. These countries are Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.
2. The four additional countries are Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania, and Somalia.
3. This is the total number written over a seven-decade period, from the end of World War II to the beginning of the 2020s.
4. These include Soraya Altorki (2015); Daniel Bates and Amal Rassam (1983); Donna Bowen, Evelyn Early, and Becky Schulties (2014); Dale Eickelman (2001); Sherine Hafez and Susan Slyomovics (2013), Judith Scheele and Andrew Shryock (2019), and Lucia Volk (2015).
5. Seminal ethnographies included Richard Antoun (1979), Talal Asad (1970), Thomas Barfield (1981), Frederik Barth (1961), Daniel Bates (1973), Donald Cole (1975), Ian Cunnison (1966), John Davis (1987), Edward Evans-Pritchard (1949), Robert Fernea (1970), Ernest Gellner (1969), David Hart (1981), William Irons (1975), Fuad Khuri (1980), William Lancaster (1981), Richard Tapper (1979, 1996), and Amal Vinogradov (1974).
6. Some examples include Asad's (1970) *The Kababish Arabs: Power, Authority and Consent in a Nomadic Tribe*; Eickelman's (1985) *Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth Century Notable*; Fernea's (1970) *Shaykh and Effendi: Changing Patterns of Authority among the El Shabana of Southern Iraq*; Khuri's (1980) *Tribe and State in Bahrain: The Transformation of Social and Political Authority in an Arab State*; Michael Meeker's (1979) *Literature and Violence in North Arabia*; and Paul Rabinow's (1975) *Symbolic Domination: Cultural Form and Historical Change in Morocco*.
7. Inhorn's (1996) second book, *Infertility and Patriarchy: The Cultural Politics of Gender and Family Life in Egypt*, was devoted to this search. Although Egyptian women unable to have children "lived" patriarchy in their interactions with their in-laws and community members, their husbands were often extremely supportive, protecting their infertile wives and helping them to seek treatment. Inhorn coined the term *conjugal connectivity* to capture these marital commitments.
8. See Promundo's main website for the full range of country-specific reports, regional reports and executive summaries: https://promundoglobal.org (retrieved April 2018).
9. https://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21721651-they-are-clinging-patriarchy-comfort-sorry-state-arab-men (retrieved April 2018).

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MARCIA C. INHORN is William K. Lanman Jr. Professor of Anthropology and International Affairs and Chair of the Council on Middle East Studies at Yale University. She is author of six books, including *America's Arab Refugees: Vulnerability and Health on the Margins*; of *Cosmopolitan Conceptions: IVF Sojourns in Global Dubai*; and of *The New Arab Man: Emergent Masculinities, Technologies, and Islam in the Middle East.*

KONSTANTINA ISIDOROS is Lecturer in Anthropology at St Catherine's College and Research Affiliate of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Oxford. She is author *of Nomads and Nation-Building in the Western Sahara: Gender, Politics and the Sahrawi.*