

## **The Arab Spring with a Female Focus: Challenging European Public Opinion on the Middle East?**

Désirée Emilie Simonetti

*“The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is ‘knowing oneself’ as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory”. Antonio Gramsci (1975)*

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, followed by the 2002 assassination of Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn, the 2004 murder of the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, the Madrid train bombing in that same year, and the 2005 London bombings, Western relations with the Middle East have been rather problematic. In particular, European public discourse on the Middle East increasingly revolves around the assumed incompatibility of Western values and Islam, which reinforces cultural barriers, not only at a state level, but also among civil society.

Before 9/11, the average non-Islamic European knew little about the Middle East and Islam in particular. However, since the terrorist attacks and their explanation within an Islamic framework, public opinion often now associates Islam with terrorism. As a result, “terrorists” and “Muslim fundamentalists” quickly became synonyms for the Middle East. Additionally, “in public debates, Islam and Muslims are typically presented and perceived as threatening national identity, culture, and security”<sup>1</sup>. In other words, stereotypes and prejudices have begun to dominate European public opinion about the Middle East.

In Spain, research conducted by savings bank Funcas indicates that 77% of the interviewees associate immigrants with Moroccans, while in reality they only make up less than 20% of all immigrants in Spain.<sup>2</sup> Another study on international terrorism shows that 19% of the participants would banish Moroccans from Spain and 52% would not marry a Moroccan.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, various studies indicate that since 2002, the immigrants that most suffer racism are Moroccans.<sup>4</sup> As Spain’s ex-minister of foreign affairs Miguel Ángel Moratinos affirms, Spain’s relations to the Middle East and Morocco in particular have improved economically and on security issues, but stereotypes still dominate public opinion.<sup>5</sup>

In the Netherlands, studies report similar conclusions. The Dutch majority morally disagrees with certain Muslim practices and more than 50% believe that Muslim culture opposes the Western lifestyle. In addition, approximately 40% of Turkish and

---

<sup>1</sup> Velasco González et al., eds., “Prejudice towards Muslims in The Netherlands: Testing integrated threat theory,” *British Journal of Social Psychology*, vol. 47 (2008): 668.

<sup>2</sup> El País, 20 January 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Intergallup, 10 May - 18 May 2004. Available at: <http://realinstitutoelcano.org/200406brie.asp>.

<sup>4</sup> Tomás Calvo Buezas in the Centre for Migration and Racism Studies (CEMIRA) at Complutense University, Madrid.

<sup>5</sup> Miguel Ángel Moratinos, “Conversación con Miguel Ángel Moratinos,” *Política Exterior*, vol. XXV, no. 140 (2011): 70.

Moroccan immigrants indicate that they have encountered discrimination.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, leading politicians have taken negative positions on Islam, and Geert Wilders' far-right anti-Islam Party for Freedom that revolves around prohibition of the Koran and of veils and a decreasing Muslim immigration, is now the third largest political party in the Netherlands. In Norway, Anders Behring Breivik carried out the July 2011 attacks convinced that Europe is overrun "by Islamic fundamentalism".

The point of departure for this essay stems from the situation described above. It will discuss European public opinion on the Middle East, how this is formed and influenced by factors such as media and ignorance, and opportunities that may derive from the Arab Spring in general, and the participation of women in particular.

### **Cultural framework**

One way to explain Europe-Middle East relations is within a cultural framework based on the assumption that both cultures have very little in common. A habitual way to explain culture is as a set of shared norms and values that determines the way of life of a group of people. Terry Eagleton however, states that "culture is said to be one of the two or three most complex words in the English language"<sup>7</sup>.

This complexity is seen in ongoing discussions between scholars from different disciplines. The current anthropological discussion for example sees culture, as opposed to nature, as a social and historical construction. This explanation goes beyond the interpretation of culture as solely human behaviour, leaving out other factors such as social, historical and economic. As Edward Said suggests, "all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic"<sup>8</sup>.

The Middle East, widely used to refer to member countries of the League of Arab States, Israel, Turkey, and Iran, far from being a homogeneous group of countries, is characterized by its economical, social and geographical differences.<sup>9</sup> In other words, "cultural differences" may not be sufficient to explain international relations between two heterogeneous regions and there are other factors that influence European public opinion on the Middle East. First there is the media.

### **Media**

The media is our principle source of information. It is therefore empowered to influence the way we understand situations we are unable to witness ourselves.

---

<sup>6</sup> Mérove Gijsberts and Marcel Lubbers, "Wederzijdse Beeldvorming," in *Jaarrapport integratie 2009* ed. Mérove Gijsberts and Marcel Lubbers (The Hague: SCP/WODC/CBS, 2009): 266.

<sup>7</sup> Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2000): 1.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1993): xxix.

<sup>9</sup> Jilian Schwedler and Deborah J. Gerner, *Understanding the Middle East* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2008): 2.

Particularly with regard to the Middle East we are highly dependent on Western media, since language barriers make obtaining local information difficult.

Especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, news items regarding the Middle East, Arabs and Muslim immigrants<sup>10</sup> mainly cover issues such as terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, patriarchy, human rights violation, and references to a region opposing Western civilized and democratic societies.

Joris Luyendijk, a Dutch journalist and professor who worked as a Middle East correspondent for five years, has explored media limitations, explaining why they are only able to reproduce part of the reality. Countries ruled by dictatorships, in particular, generate considerable barriers for quality journalism. He mentions four filters responsible for this problem in dictatorships: the citizen's fear to speak out, a lack of statistics, numbers and facts in order to put information into perspective, the vulnerability of sources, and the media companies' mechanisms of selecting whether a story is a story, based on various criteria such as surprise factors, given that many situations in the Middle East are on-going.<sup>11</sup>

It is also argued that ideology creates barriers for media objectivity. This refers to a set of ideas that constitutes how we see things, in the case the Middle East. Besides, ideology according to James H. Kavanagh, "is a social process that works on and through every social subject, that, like any social process, everyone is "in," whether or not they "know" or understand it"<sup>12</sup>. One of the ways ideology reaches us is by social apparatuses such as the media, which makes it difficult for information to be purely objective.

There are several consequences deriving from these media limitations. First of all, media images may uphold negative generalizations, stereotypes and prejudices. According to Graciela Malgesini and Carlos Giménez, stereotypes are "the cognitive component of a specific attitude" and people's attitudes mainly depend on the image they have of the world.<sup>13</sup> More important, stereotypical behaviour can easily lead to bias and a step further towards discrimination and islamophobia.

Secondly, these images reinforce boundaries and the notion of "us versus them" between the West and the Middle East. "Boundaries are analyzed in the divergent

---

<sup>10</sup> These terms are often inappropriately mixed. The term Arab refers to someone who is native in a country where Arabic is the official language, and Muslims are adherents of Islam. Not all Arabs are Muslims and not all Muslims are Arabs.

<sup>11</sup> Joris Luyendijk, *Het zijn net mensen*, 26st ed. (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Podium, 2011).

<sup>12</sup> James H. Kavanagh, "Ideology," in *Critical Terms in Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): 310. 306-20.

<sup>13</sup> Graciela Malgesini and Carlos Giménez, *Guía de conceptos sobre migraciones, racismo e interculturalidad* (Madrid: Catarata, 2000): 148.

domains of language, religion, citizenship, and race, tracing how collective identity and notions of difference are shaped through various institutions”,<sup>14</sup> such as the media.

In other words, perceived information regarding different cultures has to be understood within a framework of media limitations. Since images and texts shape and influence a certain image that we consider to be reality it may be questionable as to whether Western and Middle Eastern cultures are merely opponents. As Epictetus puts it, “man is disturbed not by things, but by the views he takes of them”.

### **Multiculturalism**

Muslim immigration and its related integration policies also contribute to European public opinion on the Middle East. Muslim immigration to Europe started in great numbers after the decolonization period in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For many years, these integration processes were characterized by a multicultural model. The multiculturalism hypothesis embraces cultural diversity in one country by encouraging integration without forcing complete assimilation. In this idea, not only are the rights of all citizens recognized, but also their culture and history.

Today however, tolerance towards cultural variety is decreasing in a number of parts of Europe. Especially with regard to Muslim immigration, integration without assimilation has caused difficulties and immigration policies have shifted towards far-right positions. The Netherlands, for example, has long been considered as one of Europe’s most successful examples of multiculturalism, but today the Dutch majority considers that immigrants should quickly assimilate to Dutch culture.<sup>15</sup>

### **Islam and the role of women**

A third factor that influences European public opinion is ignorance. From a European point of view, a striking aspect of Middle East culture is gender inequality, and the so called “women’s issue” reinforces boundaries between both. Public discourse moreover associates this with Islam. A 2009 study by Anna Korteweg and Gökçe Yurdakul concludes that in the Netherlands “boundaries are produced as violence against women is tied to religion, i.e. to Islam”<sup>16</sup>.

However, there are many ongoing discussions about compatibility between Islam and women’s rights, since it has to be acknowledged that Islam, as any other religion, has an interpretative nature. “Since the interpretation of the text is social by nature and depends on the community of experts, like all learned activities it will be an

---

<sup>14</sup> Ana Korteweg and Gökçe Yurdakul, “Islam, gender, and immigrant integration: boundary drawing in discourses on honour killing in the Netherlands and Germany,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2009): 218.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 234.

independent dynamic entity, abstracting from individual interpreters.”<sup>17</sup> One can therefore not speak of “one Islam”. Besides, there are scholars who argue that Islam is a dynamic religion and should be adapted to the realities of Middle Eastern society. And in these societies, women have become active in economic, social, and political activities.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, in our 2009 study on women in the Islamic Republic of Iran, we found that there are various other historic, economic, demographic, and social factors that influence the role of women in Islamic states, such as their participation in movements and revolutions.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Iranian Green Movement**

Iran’s Green Movement as a result of the 2009 presidential election, often considered fraudulent, is said to be the first popular uprising after the 1979 Iranian Revolution. It is argued that the Green Movement has served as a model for the Arab Spring in opposing current autocratic regimes<sup>20</sup> in demands for freedom, democracy, social justice and dignity and the rule of law. The colour green was used during Mir Hossien Mousavi’s presidential campaign and after the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad it became a symbol for the protests.

According to Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani, an eyewitness, feminine power dominated the demonstrations. During this movement, opposing Ahmadinejad’s dictatorship, saw “women, religious and non-religious, traditional and secular, young and old, rich and poor, in fact women from all walks of life, at the forefront of these protests, at times even outnumbering men”.<sup>21</sup> As a result of modern media such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, the movement was able to quickly draw European attention. Similar to the Iranian Revolution, Western stereotypical images were challenged, showing an active civil society, including both men and women.

The presidential election and its aftermath have impacted Iranian society and specifically Iranian women. As Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani points out, a few months before the elections in June of 2009, for the first time in Iranian history women created a coalition which united a variety of actors such as NGOs, media, civil rights advocates,

---

<sup>17</sup> Mirjam Künkler, “In the Language of the Islamic Sacred Texts: the Tripartite Struggle for Advocating Women’s Rights in the Iran of the 1990s,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 25, issue 2 (2004): 382.

<sup>18</sup> Azadeh Kian- Thiébaud, “From Islamization to the Individualization of Women in Post-revolutionary Iran,” in *Women, Religion and Culture in Iran*, ed. Sarah Ansari and Vanessa Martin (Surry: Curzon Press, 2002), 135.

<sup>19</sup> For more details on these factors, please see *Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: the Paradox of less Rights and more Opportunities* (Madrid: CEU Ediciones, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> Mahmood Monshipouri and Ali Assareh, “The Islamic Republic and the “Green Movement”: Coming Full Circle,” *Middle East Policy*, vol. XVI, no. 4 (2009): 43.

<sup>21</sup> Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani, “Green Women of Iran: The Role of the Women’s Movement During and After Iran’s Presidential Election of 2009,” *Constellations*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2010): 78.

women active in presidential campaigns and trade unions.<sup>22</sup> Awareness was raised, although its success has been limited. At least Ahmadinejad appointed Marzieh Vahid-Dastjerdi, the first female minister after the Iranian Revolution.

Today, the Green Movement continues online in silence and in safety. According to Internet World Stats, Iran has the biggest Facebook communities in the Middle East and the highest number of internet connections in the region. Users have become journalists and share their experiences with the rest of the world through blogs and pictures on social network sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

### **The Arab Spring**

High unemployment rates, educated young populations, urbanization, social changes in family life, roles of women and the youth in the public sphere, neoliberal policies of privatization and union-busting, corruption, rising food and energy prices, decades of frustration with dictatorships, social media tools etc., there are and will be many explanations for the sudden Arab revivals at the end of 2010 that surprised many experts, as few expected the region to change so quickly. But the revolutions have been the result of years of demographic transitions since the 1970s, which “have given rise to the Arab society of today which is, for the most part, young educated and urban – and also tremendously politicized”.<sup>23</sup>

Never before has the Middle East received as much media coverage as during the events that became known as the “Arab Spring”. A common negative view gave way for some more optimism to take over and the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria and Libya suddenly changed the stereotype of the oppressed, repressed, suppressed, passive, and patriarchal Middle East society<sup>24</sup>. Instead, the “new Arab” is courageous, strong, capable, progressive, and opposes the authoritarian regime. He is also educated, young, and female.

In contrast to the image of Middle Eastern women limited to the private sphere, women have turned out to be key players at the forefront of the Arab Spring protests. They do not “just” have a gender agenda but fight for national freedom next to men.

### **Tunisia**

Since independence aspirations from France started to grow in the 1940s, women have been leaders in protest movements and social change in Tunisia. 71 % of Tunisian

---

<sup>22</sup> Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani, “Green Women of Iran: The Role of the Women’s Movement During and After Iran’s Presidential Election of 2009,” *Constellations*, vol. 17, no. 1 (2010): 84.

<sup>23</sup> Casa Árabe, “The power of IT as a new instrument for democracy in Arab countries,” *Europe’s World*, no. 18 (2011): 130.

<sup>24</sup> Haizam Amirah Fernández, “Nota para el Observatorio: Crisis en el mundo árabe,” *Real Instituto Elcano*, no. 4, 17 February 2011.

women are literate, one fifth is employed, and they represent 43% of the almost half-million members of the 18 existing local unions.<sup>25</sup>

The Tunisian revolution has been caused by educated youth eager for dignity and employment. Moreover, women refusing primitivism and passiveness have played an important role in the Tunisian freedom demonstrations, marching up the streets in Tunis, which is what launched the Arab Spring.<sup>26</sup> Women such as Hand Sabry, a prominent Tunisian movie star, used social media such as Facebook to challenge former President Ben Ali.

Under the rule of Ben Ali, Tunisian women were considered to have an enviable position within the Arab world. It is doubtful whether their rights will improve now that the Islamic party Ennahda is emerging. However, the constitutional assembly election has been postponed to October 2011 and the High Commission has announced that party lists will have to include an equal number of men and women.

## **Egypt**

Similar to Tunisia, close to one fifth of Egyptian women work. Employment has turned out to be a powerful tool and since 2004, some 3000 strikes have taken place, sometimes led by women.<sup>27</sup>

In Egypt, the revolution is believed to have been encouraged by Aasma Mahfouz's video posted on Facebook. In this video, she called on young people to massively demonstrate against President Mubarak in Tahrir Square on 25 January 2011. Social media have proved to be a very powerful tool in the uprisings. Also Leil-Zahra Mortada posted a photo album on Facebook where women's participation is shown.

Today, laws discriminating against women are associated with Mubarak's dictatorship and therefore their abolishment is being considered. Moreover, for the first time in the history of Egypt, a woman, Buthaina Kamel, is running for president in the upcoming elections next October 2011, something unthinkable in the Mubarak era.

## **Yemen**

Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, in Yemen only 25% of the women are literate, approximately 15% have finished school and only 5% work. Still, especially in urban areas, women do have important job positions and more than 25% are enrolled in Universities. Women have been participating in protests as column writers against President Ali Abdullah Saleh. In April, after Saleh expressed his discontent with the

---

<sup>25</sup> Juan Cole and Shahin Cole, "An Arab Spring for Women," *The Nation*, 26 April 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Radhi Meddeb, "Europa ante un Túnez anclado al mundo libre," *Política Exterior*, vol. XXV, no. 140 (2011): 33.

<sup>27</sup> Megan Cornish, "Women Workers in Egypt: Hidden Key to the Revolution," *Al-Jazeera: Cross-Cultural Understanding*, 11 April 2011.

mixing of women and men in public, women have been coming out on the street in great numbers throughout the country to demonstrate against him.<sup>28</sup>

## **Bahrain**

Also in Bahrain female protagonists such as Munira Fakhro have played influential roles in the Pearl Square demonstrations demanding change. Furthermore, Zainab al-Khawaja became known as a leading figure by going on a hunger strike. As Bahraini human rights activist Maryam al-Khawaja pointed out: "Women have always had a presence (in public demonstrations in Bahrain) but this time it was very strong".<sup>29</sup>

## **Syria**

In Syria, women blocked roads to demonstrate for the release of their husbands and sons from prison. "Syrian women have staged all-female marches to demand democracy and changes in regime policy".<sup>30</sup>

## **Libya**

In Libya, women are generally rather well represented in the public sphere as lawyers, teachers, doctors, etc. although they suffer from salary discrimination and hold few influential positions.<sup>31</sup> Libya is considered very conservative, especially when it comes to relationships between boys and girls. More specifically, it has a reputation as a stronghold of Muslim fundamentalism.

However, women have been active in the Libyan revolution since the first day. They have been important in wresting control of entire cities from Muammar Gaddafi. They have been writing blogs and creating associations. At the beginning of the Libyan revolution, men and women were equal until it was decided that women should have their own space to demonstrate, first demarcated with stones, later with metal fences, to become a wooden wall by the end.

According to the 23 year-old Nada Gathrouni, the events that have been taking place since 15 February, 2011 are tremendous for Libyan women, "we don't know yet what the new Libya is going to mean for us," she says. "But one is certain: we won't let us put aside so easily anymore".<sup>32</sup> Regarding the post-Gaddafi political agenda, the National Transitional Council has 5 out of 70 government seats for women.

---

<sup>28</sup> Juan Cole and Shahin Cole, "An Arab Spring for Women," *The Nation*, 26 April 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Xan Rice, et al., eds., "Women have emerged as key players in the Arab Spring," *Guardian*, 22 April 2011.

<sup>30</sup> Juan Cole and Shahin Cole, "An Arab Spring for Women," *The Nation*, 26 April 2011.

<sup>31</sup> Gert van Langendonck, "Female protesters: demonstrating separately but much is changing," *NRC Handelsblad*, 24 June 2011.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

While it is premature to draw conclusions, women have been key players in the Arab uprisings, but it remains a big challenge for them to change their position in the resulting new systems. This starts with education, both for men and for women. As we have seen after the Iranian Revolution, Algeria, and Kuwait, the patriarchal system and judicial system in particular may remain unchanged.

## Conclusions

This essay has attempted to analyze how European public opinion regarding the Middle East can be challenged by the Arab Spring. Since 9/11 and the subsequent terrorist attacks in various European countries, the dominant understanding of Islam has stressed its incompatibility with Western culture, which reinforces “us versus them” ideologies. Two dominant factors reinforce these assumptions, the media and ignorance.

Pre-9/11, most non-Muslim Europeans knew very little about the Middle East and Islam in particular. Today, the Middle East dominates the foreign section of any particular European newspaper or news channel. For many years, the media has mainly been reporting on issues such as terrorism, Muslim fundamentalism, oppression, human rights violations, authoritarian regimes, among others, justified by Islam. Since media are our main source of information, these images have caused stereotypes, prejudices, and islamophobia.

Media limitations impact on the work of journalists and their ability to objectively portray reality. According to Joris Luyendijk, the media are only able to reflect part of the reality, especially in countries with authoritarian regimes. Journalism in many countries in the Middle East is therefore affected by the citizen’s fear of speaking out, a lack of statistics, numbers and facts in order to conceptualize received information, the vulnerability of sources, and media companies’ mechanisms of deciding whether a story deserves to be broadcasted, based on various criteria.<sup>33</sup>

A logical consequence is ignorance, since few people possess the ability to consult local sources due to language barriers. One example is associated with the variety of interpretations of Islam as a whole and the dominant assumption that Islam is responsible for gender inequality in particular. However, ongoing discussions on compatibility between both reflect the complexity of this matter and other factors seem to influence women’s position in Islamic society, such as social, demographic, economic and historic factors.

Women have been key players in the Arab uprisings that became known as the Arab Spring. In Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, and Libya, both women and men have been fighting for freedom and democracy against authoritarian regimes. Although it is still uncertain how the uprising will change societies, the Arab Spring may challenge both factors described above.

---

<sup>33</sup> Joris Luyendijk, *Het zijn net mensen*, 26st ed. (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Podium, 2011).

Firstly, media coverage of the Arab Spring has surprised Europe and challenged stereotypes by portraying the Middle East as societies with courageous, young, religious and secular, men and women from different social classes. Women's participation in particular has clashed with the image of passive women restricted to the private sphere.

Secondly, the "us versus them" ideology has been challenged, since Western values such as democracy and liberty have been key items on the Arab Spring's agenda. It has also been proven that dictators, Muslim fundamentalists and terrorists only make up a minor part of the population. It can therefore be argued that there might be more similarities between modern Middle East culture and European culture than previously believed. After all, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, European countries such as Germany, Italy and Spain were also controlled by authoritarian regimes.

Thirdly, based on the assumption that authoritarian regimes limit media's coverage of the Middle East, it might be argued that this will improve now that various countries are experiencing political transitions.

Fourthly, the Arab Spring has challenged incompatibility of Islam and Western values since predominantly Muslim countries have demonstrated democratic aspirations through a more liberal interpretation of the Koran. However, democratization in terms of basic rights and freedoms should not be interpreted as a copy of Western liberal democratic projects.

In conclusion, the Arab Spring may be an opportunity for Europe to challenge its negative public opinion regarding the Middle East and improve international relations. Europe should now take the lead in helping the Middle East in its transition from revolution to democracy.

## References

Eagleton, Terry. *The Idea of Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2000.

Casa Árabe. "The power of IT as a new instrument for democracy in Arab countries," *Europe's World*. No. 18, 2011: 130-133.

Cole Juan and Shahin Cole. "An Arab Spring for Women." *The Nation*, 26 April 2011.

Cornish, Megan. "Women Workers in Egypt: Hidden Key to the Revolution." *Al-Jazeera: Cross-Cultural Understanding*, 11 April 2011.

Fernández, Haizam Amirah. "Nota para el Observatorio: Crisis en el mundo árabe." *Real Instituto Elcano*. No. 4, 17 February 2011.

Gijsberts, Mérove and Marcel Lubbers. "Wederzijdse Beeldvorming." In *Jaarrapport integratie 2009*, edited by Mérove Gijsberts and Marcel Lubbers, 254-290. The Hague: SCP/WODC/CBS, 2009.

Kavanagh, James H. "Ideology." In *Critical Terms in Literary Study*, edited by Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 306-320. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Kian-Thiébaud, Azadeh. "From Islamization to the Individualization of Women in Post-revolutionary Iran." In *Women, Religion and Culture in Iran*, edited by Sarah Ansari and Vanessa Martin, 127-142. Surry: Curzon Press, 2002.

Korteweg Ana and Gökçe Yurdakul. "Islam, gender, and immigrant integration: boundary drawing in discourses on honour killing in the Netherlands and Germany," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Vol. 32, no. 2, 2009: 218-238.

Künkler, Mirjam. "In the Language of the Islamic Sacred Texts: the Tripartite Struggle for Advocating Women's Rights in the Iran of the 1990s." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*. Vol. 24, Issue 2, 2004: 375-392.

Langendonck van, Gert. "Female protesters: demonstrating separately but much is changing." *NRC Handelsblad*, 24 June 2011.

Luyendijk, Joris. *Het zijn net mensen*. 26st ed. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Podium, 2011.

Malgesinsi, Graciela and Carlos Giménez. *Guía de conceptos sobre migraciones, racismo e interculturalidad*. Madrid: Catarata, 2000.

Meddeb, Radhi. "Europa ante un Túnez anclado al mundo libre," *Política Exterior*. Vol. XXV, no. 140, 2011: 32-37.

Monshipouri, Mahmood and Ali Assareh. "The Islamic Republic and the "Green Movement": Coming Full Circle," *Middle East Policy*. Vol. XVI, no. 4, 2009: 27-46.

Moratinos, Miguel Ángel. "Conversación con Miguel Ángel Moratinos." *Política Exterior*. Vol. XXV, no. 140, 2011: 68-82.

Rice Xan et al., eds. "Women have emerged as key players in the Arab Spring." *Guardian*, 22 April 2011.

Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage, 1993.

Schwedler, Jilian and Deborah J. Gerner. *Understanding the Middle East*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2008.

Simonetti, Désirée Emilie. *Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: the Paradox of less Rights and more Opportunities*. Madrid: CEU Ediciones, 2011.

Tahmasebi-Birgani, Victoria. "Green Women of Iran: The Role of the Women's Movement During and After Iran's Presidential Election of 2009," *Constellations*. Vol. 17, no. 1, 2010: 78-86.

Velasco González, Karina et al., eds. "Prejudice towards Muslims in The Netherlands: Testing integrated threat theory." *British Journal of Social Psychology*. Vol. 47, 2008: 667-685.