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The Orthodox Dichotomy between the Secular and Islamic Feminisms in Moroccan Young Activists

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ABSTRACT

There has been an ongoing interest in youth activism in recent decades, especially in western countries where youth organizations and associations are very common in schools and colleges. Heather Lewis-Charp et al. confirm that although there is an increasing interest in youth political engagement, there are very few empirical studies on the subject matter (Shawn Ginwright 2006, 22). This lack of research applies to the issue of youth activism and political engagement not just in Morocco, but across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In the wake of the so-called Arab spring, the focus on youth political engagement and activism grew, given the important role of youth and other marginalized communities – especially women – in protests around the region. In Morocco, a large number of the protesters in the February 20th movement were young people; of these, many were actively associated with feminist organizations and work. This is in contrast to the continued association between feminist activism in Morocco and older generations. This chapter will start by sketching a history of feminist movements and organizations in Morocco and will follow with a discussion of recent activist work by two prominent activists, Zineb Fasiki and Youssef Gherradi.

1. Secular and Islamic feminisms in Morocco

The feminist Moroccan movement started with leftist women who organised themselves outside of the left's formal political parties to defend women's rights (Aqertit 2014, 78). These women realized that, after Moroccan independence, the majority of political parties, including those on the left and the government were focused on state-building, and consequently saw women's rights and status within the new nation as a minor issue. This was compounded by the "male-dominated and hierarchical structure of the leftish parties", evidenced when Malika Al-Fassi - the only woman from the *Istiqlal* party to sign the Declaration of independence - was not offered a position in the new government after the independence (Aqertit, 2014, p.35; Ennaji, 2006, p.56). These women deviated from the established left and embraced a humanistic approach to defending women's rights on behalf of all Moroccan women (Aqertit 2014, 78).

By the 1980s, established women's organizations in Morocco started appealing to international organizations to legitimize their struggle and build support (ibid). These new civil society organizations facilitated women's access to government positions with decision-making power (Aqertit 2014, 87), and helped them reach judicial, religious, economic, journalistic, and political professionals who regulate and influence societal values (Aqertit 2014, 96). Most importantly, these organizations pushed for reforms to family law (Moha Ennaji 2016, 32). In 1992, the *Union de l'Action Feminine* (UAF) initiated the 'one million signatures' campaign with the aid of its newspaper *8 Mars*; the campaign was a huge success, contributing to reforms made in the following year (Moha Ennaji 2016, 33). Secular women's organizations continued their battle against the existing family codes until the new *Mudawana* (Mococcan Family Code) was passed in 2004 (Moha Ennaji 2016, 33-43).

Moha Ennaji notes that it was the secular women's movement that has opened the door for these changes to happen, and argues that they are among the most effective NGO's in the Islamic world (Moha Ennaji 2016, 35-36). This efficiency, it should be noted, does not imply that the secular women's movement was a "united" movement; instead, it was divided along a spectrum from "moderate" to "extreme" views, especially concerning the place of Islam. The radical secularists see the religious texts as anti-women, while the moderates focus on their reference on the international human rights conventions and Islam's compatibility with these laws. (Moha Ennaji 2016, 53). The moderates do not disregard Islam completely, but instead promote the idea of re-interpreting the religious texts in the light of modern changes in our society (ibid). Feminist moderates are aware that if they reject Islam, they risk alienating the majority of Moroccan women.

Islamic feminism, on the other hand, developed in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989; leftish ideology consequently weakened, and political Islam continued to gain popularity across the region (Moha Ennaji 2016, 55). Ennaji argues that the Islamic movement often criticizes the secular women's movement for being a 'foreign feminism' that poses a threat to the local culture and religion (Moha Ennaji 2016, 37). For Islamic feminists, it was important to ground their work within their "own" framework, in other words, to ground feminist work in Islam instead of a "Western", secular framework. Sadiqi points out that Islamic feminism, "is often geared towards using gender as an analytical tool to produce *Ijtihad*-based reforms that offer new women's-friendly interpretations of the sacred texts" (Moha Ennaji 2016, 62). She adds that Islamic feminism was largely initiated by male Islamist politicians as a strategy to disempower the secular feminists (Moha Ennaji 2016, 64). Empowering Islamic feminism would not only counter the secularists, but it would encourage women to support Islamic parties and government officials (ibid). Islamic feminism argues that "the biological differences between men and women lead to different social statuses and different rights. Hence equity, and not equality, should be targeted" (ibid). Sadiqi criticizes this notion of equity and explains that "equity was presented as legal and legitimate inequality of rights and seemed to be founded on a rejection of individual autonomy as a woman was first and foremost a wife and a mother… the project of Islamic feminists in Morocco is still a moral order doubled by the traditional political patriarchy founded on sexual discrimination (Moha Ennaji 2016, 65).

It is therefore not surprising to learn that the Islamic feminists associate the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with "Western individualistic approaches" that foster gender equality, while Islamic feminism sees that it is the family, not the individual, that needs protection and it is complementarity rather than complete equality that is essential (Moha Ennaji 2016, 70). Similar to the secular feminist movement, Islamic feminism in morocco is heterogeneous, and follows two primary trends. The first trend is connected to the Movement of Reform and Unity (MUR), and the second one represents the Party of Justice and Development (PJD) (Moha Ennaji 2016, 38). These two trends share the view that Islam has granted women all their rights; all that is needed is for women to start implementing them in their everyday lives (Moha Ennaji 2016, 39). Many activists within these trends argue that the secular feminist movement addresses 'fake' issues while tackling the Moroccan women's 'real' issues (ibid). Sadiqi further discusses the role of tradition and culture within the secular and Islamic feminist frameworks:

> While [tradition is] seen as versatile, dynamic and fluid by secular feminists… Islamic feminists generally associate tradition with "old" practices that counter "true" Islamic teachings. However, while Islamic feminists tend to combat traditional practices and reject them as acts that diminish women in and outside the family, they stress women's traditional roles as wives and mothers and support a heavy system of prescriptions on how women should behave in and outside home with an emphasis on non-mixity and the segregation of the sexes in publish spheres… secular feminists are more vocal in advocation "progressive" change in women's behavior and practices, Islamic feminists focus more on "protecting" the "threatened" family values (Moha Ennaji 2016, 69).

2. Third wave feminism and youth activism

Sadiqi describes the third wave feminism in Morocco as being characterized by (virtual) activism (Moha Ennaji 2016, 60), which started with the February 20th movement that was initiated on the Facebook platform by a young woman under the name of Nidal Hamdache Salam (Moha Ennaji 2016, 61). On the other side, Adnie Kaeh Garrison argues that it is still problematic to define third-wave feminism, but she contends that we can generally describe it as "…a name for young women who identify as feminists (but not the feminists of the sixties and seventies) and, especially among its detractors, it is a name assigned to those who have no clear sense of what feminist ideology /praxis, feminist movement, or feminist identity have{*sic*} meant across time and place…" (Stacy Gillis 2004, 24). So, it appears that third-wave feminism is categorized among the youth and utilizes social media as a platform for their activism, which perfectly fits the two prominent activists I am going to discuss. They also fit these definitions in the sense that, through their social media posts, I would not consider any of these activists as feminist 'sage' people.

Two main activists that I have studied for this paper are Youssef Gherradi and Zineb Fasiqi. Youssef is in his twenties and has created few years back the organization 'Without She I wouldn't be a He'. Zineb is 23 years old and she is an engineer and an artist. Her art went viral across social media platforms and raised a lot of debates about sexuality and the female body. Both these

activists have in common their dependence on social media to spread their word, though they both come from opposing ideological backgrounds.

2.1 Zineb Fasiki: Women Power

Zineb Fasiki is an engineer and a comic artist who dedicates all her work to the feminist cause. Her art is seen by many as 'extreme' because she often portrays her naked body. She promotes body positivity and takes pride in her body as she often says in her pictures. She is not only a social media influencer in Morocco, her success has crossed the continents as she exhibits her work in Spain, France and Japan, in addition to giving presentations in many European universities.

She launched a project called *Hshouma* which can be translated to 'shameful' or 'embarrassing'. The project contains a website, a comic book, and a series of events that she conducts with other partners on the same subject. The aim of her project is to break the taboo surrounding sexuality. She stated in a video that during her life she experienced a lot of sexism and her purpose is to bring up these taboo topics and raise awareness about sexual education (Le360Live 2018).

Zineb rose to fame when she drew a caricature about an incident of rape on a public bus. She captioned the picture saying "buses are made to transport people and not rape girls" (fasiki 2017). This does not imply that sexual harassment has never been discussed in Morocco, but what Zineb managed to do is to broaden the scope of the discussion to the wider audience through social media and through her bold depiction of a naked body which is still considered a taboo in Morocco. This graphic raised hot debates – less about sexual harassment, more about how a female artist could dare to draw naked female bodies in a conservative society. Although I would say that her portray reflects her own body as a female more than that of the victim, because as we can see the body shape is 'perfect' in her illustration and it is pictured as if she is appealing and offering herself to her rapists. It should be noted also that the real victim is homeless and considered 'insane' and I doubt that a girl in such conditions has this physical appearance as in the illustration. Yet, I think Zineb's success lies in the extended reach of her work; the fact that she uses social media allows a much wider audience to engage with the illustrations and controversial subject matter. For so long, feminism in Morocco has been an elitist topic that circulated only among the 'elites' of Morocco. Now, with the help of social media, Zineb is able to raise awareness among average Moroccans, including those who have never heard of "feminism".

Zineb later lunched a project called "WOMEN POWER – I have the right to be safe in the public spaces", a comic book that contains the drawings of many female comic artists with the aim to address street harassment in Morocco. (Fasiki, zainab-fasiki 2019). Zineb's own work in the book portrays herself naked, and surrounded by a snake and quoting "Dkhol so9 rassk (which means 'mind your own business') – I am free". (Fasiki, zainab-fasiki 2018). Here, the message is that she has the right to be and dress up however she wants, no one has the right to interfere in it.

Another interesting illustration (see figure below) is a drawing of five women, ranging from black, veiled, blond, a brunette and a redheaded girl(s) (Fasiki, zainab-fasiki 2017). In each of the quotation bubbles, the cartoons "refuse" the sexist, racist, and gendered stereotypes that often target women. For example, one woman says: "My name is not a 'negro'," another says "my name is not 'a whore'" and another says "my name is not 'sexy'". Men commonly use these slurs to harass women in the streets. These labels are a type of verbal violence against women and girls in an attempt to send them back into the private sphere. These statements make the public sphere a violent and dangerous place for women, claiming the public sphere as a place only for men. In this illustration, Zineb did not draw herself only as she commonly does, but she also included other identities as well; in doing so, she is stating that Moroccan girls and women are no longer accepting verbal harassment and they are much more than just their beauty or physical appearance.

So, can we consider Zineb a feminist activist? To be an activist starts from a belief that there is something wrong that needs to be addressed and changed. Jessica K.Taft writes that "activists

are people who try to create changes, not just people who want change to happen" (K.Taft 2011, 32). Jenkins also touches on the notion of 'transmedia activism' by Lina Strivastava and how "other media production is designed to reach beyond the counter public to identify and educate potential supporters as part of an attempt to shape public opinion" (Henry Jenkins 2016 , 24-26). The question now is: does Zineb create change? The simplest meaning of the word 'change' in relation to activism includes concrete change that is tangible. Tangible change, it is important to note, can also be subtle in terms of consciousness raising and altering normative mindsets. Though Zineb's activism is not "traditional" – she is not striking in front of the parliament demanding to change the *Mudawana*, nor is she at sit-ins. Instead, Zineb's agency lies in the fact that she is foregrounding feminism – something that many schools and universities do not teach to their students. Except for the English departments at the Moroccan universities, it is very rare that other students studying other subjects even in the humanities know or study feminism, and this is one of the reasons why feminism remained in Morocco an elitist topic. Her controversial illustrations are not only changing the average Moroccan's mindset, but they are raising questions about what has been accepted as the status quo for centuries concerning the women's issue. If Zineb can change somehow mindsets trough her art, why would she bother risking going to 'traditional' forms of protests and getting arrested, or worse?

K. Taft studied girls activism throughout the USA, Mexico and Canada and she concluded that "the discursive association of youth with both political inability and political rebellion implied that youth activism and youth social movements are an irrational, silly, or ill-conceived approach to politics and social change" (K.Taft 2011, 68). Zineb might not be an intellectual feminist, but she is Moroccan girl who has lived and experienced what an Arab woman experiences in a conservative society. Her art is not just an "extreme" reaction to the everyday lives of Moroccan women, but it is a representation of it. So, comic art or any other artistic forms can be an effective means of activism, even if it is considered non-traditional.

2.2 Youssef Gherradi: Without She, I Would Never be a He

Youssef Gherradi was in his twenties when he created the hash tag 'Without She, I Would Never be He', which later become a United Nation (UN) campaign to promote women's equality. From the official Facebook page, it says that the association bloomed from religion (Islam) which is a religion of love that treats women with dignity (Without She, I Would Never be a He 2019). In an article by the founder himself, Gherradi stated that the association was inspired by a *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammed: "Heaven lies at the feet of all mothers, granting them a place of honor and equality, not only in issues of faith but in Islamic culture and everyday life" (Gherradi 2016).

In 2017, he became the representative of Morocco in the international program of leadership in the UN in Washington, D.C. where he worked for a program entitled 'Government and organization's roles in fostering and developing women's issues'. The organization has also lunched many 'Young Women Diplomats Academic' trainings to help young women develop skills in leadership skills, women's empowerment, persuasion, negotiation skills, and diplomatic competence. The strength and the success of the association is related to the fact that these trainings are based on the UN model of diplomacy, in addition to the fact that it collaborates with the well-known institutions such as *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Maroc* which works mainly on democracy, human rights, civil society, private economy associations as well as state institutions and political parties.

What is interesting to note about the organization is that the founder stems from Islam to give it a fresh, youthful and new meanings when talking about women's issues. In an interview with the Aftenposten, which is a Norwegian newspaper that tackles Feminism and Islam in Morocco, Gherradi stated that "It is important to have the courage to look at the Quran and the Holy Scriptures with new eyes. The one's that have been interpreting Islam the last thousands years have mostly been men. Now it is about time for men and women to work together and recover a biased perspective" (Without She, I Would Nerver be a He 2016). Also, in many Facebook posts there are references to Quranic verses and *Hadiths* about women. In this example there is reference to the fact that women are glorified by Allah by putting paradise beneath their feet (US Embassay Rabat 2017). The whole statement provides religious justification, saying that violence against women has no roots in Islam as God glorified women by putting paradise under their feet. No doubt the association bases itself on an Islamic identity that allows it to work from within to give new meanings and readings of the religious texts. Shawn Ginwright *et al* discusses the notion of "identity-based social movements" where:

> [C]ivic activism groups facilitate collective action among marginalized youth in two key ways. First, they nurture collective forms of identity by helping young people come to understand their connections to others who share their race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, (religion), and so on. Second, they make social change tangible through systematic work on issues that youth find meaningful and relevant to their lives (Shawn Ginwright 2006, 23).

Most young Muslim activists do not find their voices in the 'European' discourses of feminism where only the 'White, middle-class, Christian' woman is being discussed. There is absolutely no reference to the issues Muslim, Arab, post-colonial women face. Gherradi's association was able to foreground the experience of the Arab-Muslim women at the global level, and it shows that Islamic feminism can be an answer in the quest for women's rights.

Yet, the official Facebook page also posts controversial images about women. For example, we have in this image (see figure below) a veiled woman standing as a shadow for her husband so she can block the severe heat while he is praying (Without She, I Would Never be a He 2017). It captions " من تجليات بدونها لن أكون، سيدة تقوم مقام الظل ليصليزوجها بالحج لشدة الحرارة.", which can be translated to "one of the manifestations of Without She, I would Never be a He, is a woman acting as a shadow to protect her husband from the severe heat in the pilgrimage so that he can pray". This can also be understood as a stereotypical image of women as the heroines who sacrifice everything including themselves for the sake of others. To quote Valerie Stead and Carole Elliott, this is an image of the "Selfless Heroine" who 'does' the feminine gender (Elliott 2009, 56). This image reinforces the idea that women are by nature protective of their loved ones and when they act in that role as protectors, we glorify the act. Feminism's mission is to destroy and correct those stereotypical images of women as protective, heroines, passive, submissive beings who accept their roles without question. But again, the association has an Islamic feminism orientation which believes in equity rather than equality to say the least. So, the woman in the picture accepts her role as being the veiled woman and as the protective heroine who is just doing what nature assigned her to do.

Tellingly, the official Facebook page posted another similar image that captions "مظهر من مظاهر رحمة الزوجين بالحرم المكي" (an illustration of mercy between a married couple in the Grand Mosque of Mecca) (Without She, I Would Never be a He 2017). In this one it is the man who is holding an umbrella to protect his wife against the heat while she is praying. I guess this post was intended to correct the 'misconception' which resulted from the previous post by showing that also men can be the heroes who take responsibility in protecting their wives. In theory, the association may tend to favor veiled women, but in practice they do accept non-veiled women as their trainers and trainees as well.

In June 2016, the association also launched a campaign during the holy month of Ramadan where they talked mainly to men and kids in the streets of Rabat about how to treat women. They distributed symbolic white flowers and cards containing lessons about how to treat women that were inspired by the *Hadiths* of the Prophet *Muhammed*. Their aim was to highlight the important role women play during Ramadan as they work outside the house, they do the housework, and they have also to prepare the *Iftar* (Gherradi 2016). The association, again, emphasizes Islam as the key to promoting women's equality.

Another article reports that the organization launched a discussion about creating private women's beaches to minimize sexual harassment. The article mentions that Mr. Gherradi claims that 67% of the Moroccan people agreed with the idea (Chaymae 2016), and he urged the government to start new measures towards this goal.

3. Discussion

It might be observed that neither Gherradi nor Fasiki accomplished concrete, large-scale achievements like changing the law, though it might be argued that they do not have to. Both these activists are working on raising awareness and changing mindsets that the government failed to do so through education. Unless you major in gender studies in the English departments in Morocco, or you're an activist in women's associations you will hardly find any discussions on women's issues in the everyday, average life. Both these activists started off from personal experiences and concerns and as such they transformed them to incorporate a larger audience in an attempt to influence the public opinion and why not create a social change. Ginwright confirms that social change stems from personal experiences. He states: "the desire for social change is often rooted in personal needs and experiences, and as such, connection to collective forms of identity can be a precursor to social change" (Shawn Ginwright 2006, 27). So, what drives Fasiki is the sexism she has experienced in her life, and Gherradi sees that the secular feminism does not represent his Islamic identity.

Although Fasiki is often criticized for portraying the "perfect" body which is not realistic, I would personally align with her message concerning the sexual harassment issue, because the majority of Moroccans think that sexual harassment is the result of how girls dress up or how much skin they show, which is ridiculous in the 21th century where the human rights declaration, which Morocco

has already signed, grants individual freedoms. It's exactly the same justification given to victims of rape when the first question they are asked is how you were dressed. It is also believed that the more a girl covers up the more likely she would avoid being harassed which is not true as many veiled women and girls face sexual harassment as the non-veiled ones. How a girl dresses up in the public space should not be a justification of sexual harassment or even rape. I absolutely agree with her in her idea that Morocco needs to develop sexual education in schools and erase that stigma on sexuality and the body of both females and males. For so long we have been told that sex is a sin and the body is profane, while when you think about it, it is God who created our bodies and we should celebrate it and take pride in it as it is our wheel through this life. I think we should reconsider the idea that the body or our sexuality is that "disgusting earthly thing" we have, as it is God who created the sex urge in all creatures to revive and create life on this planet which is scared. There is this Arabic saying 'كل ممنوع مرغوب' all forbidden is desirable' which says a lot about the Arab or Moroccan society. We have high rates of kinship rapes, we have high undocumented cases of abortion which presents a high risk of women's lives, and we have a high rate of abandoned new-born children. If sexual education is introduced in our schools, we will definitely save a lot of lives and decrease the rate of such grave social issues.

As for Mr. Gherradi, I would really question his very "modern" Islam when he still emphasis on the importance of *Hijab* on many occasions, while many religious scholars have proved that it is not an obligation in Islam. I think he is trying to sell a 'modern' version of Islam, but underneath it there is a conservative mindset. This is also further emphasized by his celebration of the idea that women as the 'heroines' and protectors, is a stereotype which feminism has been trying for centuries to deconstruct. In addition to the fact that the statistics he mentioned in an article about women's private beaches is very debatable. First, they are conducted through the association's official Facebook page (Without She, I Would Never be a He 2016), which cannot be conclusive because it's viewers are the page followers only; and second it is not academic and it's not conducted on a national scale. As women we do not face sexual harassment on the beaches only, we face it everywhere and all the time and it does not really matter whether you are dressed properly or not. Sexual harassment is common in schools, universities, hospitals, administrations, and overall the public sphere. So, if we want to eradicate it we better start from schools and education, and we should stress on the reinforcement of the law. As a conservative society we still have an unconscious stigma about the body and sexuality, and so unless we start a sexual education in our schools, 'private' women's beaches will not fix the issue of sexual harassment. The solution of 'private women's beaches' won't fix mind sets that haven't yet reconciled with their bodies, we still see bodies as profane and that's exactly what needs reconsideration.

Besides the risk of jail, the youth are very sceptical towards the effectiveness of formal politics. Youth political participation declined in most countries throughout the world, because young people no longer believe in the credibility of their governments. They opt now for more creative ways to speak up their minds and make their voices heard. Bulbeck's study confirms that 'young people in general do not see a need for "old-style feminist activism any more…and most find formal politics boring' (Anita Harris 2008, 232). Indeed, as millennials both these activists use new ways in their activism that correspond to their Internet generation.

My intention to include these two activists with complete opposing ideological backgrounds is to show how the orthodox dichotomy between the secular and Islamic feminisms that have dominated the feminist scene for ages in Morocco is still persistent in the youthful generation. This never-ending debate between the secular and the Islamic feminists has roots in the old generation of feminist activists, and it has also branches in the new generation of the young activists. Zineb wants to liberate the female body through her art and raise awareness about sexual education, while Gherradi wants to give feminism a new Islamic perspective that aligns with the identity of the Moroccan conservative society.

The agency of the two activists might not be as powerful as to reach and change decision making, but the very fact that they can mobilize mentally and physically a number of other young activists is a powerful act that can contribute to social change. Ferry Lovell (2003) uses Bourdieu's work to give a new framework for agency that resides within the collective rather that the 'the (subject) self' (Kennelly 2011, 114-115). Agency for him lies within "the social relations of political (inter)action, and the specific historical conditions of particular social transformations" (ibid). It's a union of the force where one single voice can't do much, but many voices can create a change.

Postmodern thought deconstructed the idea of the "true" or "original" identity, and humans are in a constant movement which allows everything to change all the time. It is not that I advocate for the eradication of traditions, but I am against the idea that the past contains our 'pure' Moroccan and Islamic identities. The past is a building block that we need to stand on to move to our next future, and to adapt to global changes including the new technologies and the universalization of human rights. We should admit that Moroccans do not have one single identity embedded in Islam. Rather, it is more complex and could be defined more in alliance with Homi K. Bhabha's notion of the 'third space' where the Moroccan subject is hybrid. It is partly French, Amazigh, Saharian, Refi, Sousi, Jebli, middle class, working class, black, women, men, a citizen of the world and much more. Bhabha exemplifies that:

> What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences.

> These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood-singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself (Bhabha 2004, 2).

The universe is not one single unit, its diverse and people are different within the same country, the same region, the same city and even the same family. As a Moroccan culture that consists of many different cultures, I think it is very important and healthy to have feminisms representing all these singular and different voices that again represent the diversity of the Moroccan culture(s).

4. Conclusion

The historical battlefield between the secular and Islamic feminisms in Morocco, as detailed by Sadiqi has its manifestations among young activists as well. As the ancestors did, the new generation is also trying to defend a feminism that stems from their personal ideological and intellectual background. The new generation has its ways and methods to participate in the political life which can mainly be described as non-traditional. K.Taft advocates that there are multiple spaces beyond the state as fields where activism can take place (K.Taft 2011, 33). She adds that "changes in discourse, ideas, meanings, consciousness, and gender regimes should all be considered as significant political "outcomes" or goals" (ibid).

Judging from my personal experience as a civil rights activist since 2009, in addition to the severe sentences the Rif militants got (up to 26 years prison even after the appeal) I have been avoiding going on street protests for a long time now and I have been trying to figure out ways that would enable me to speak up my mind and defend my cause without taking the risk of going to jail. Hava Rachel Gordon also concluded that race, gender, and class affect the mobility and participation of young people in civic life (Gordon 2010, 180). Maybe Fasiki and Gherradi cannot change the law or the constitution, but they manage to shake up the Moroccan patriarchal mindset in implicit ways. K.Taft comments that "innovation and rebellion are characteristics of youth that are, to a degree, rooted in social narratives of youth as a time becoming, of exploration, rather than following already fixed social rules, including rules for political engagement and action" (K.Taft 2011, 60). This same idea is shared by Henry Jenkins when he stated that "young people have refreshed and renewed the public's symbolic power as they fight for justice; they often push back against inherited forms and search for new mechanisms for asserting their voice" (Henry Jenkins 2016 , 2). He also reported a view point by Melissa Brough and Sangita Shresthova quoting:

> Over the last decades, younger generations in particular have become civically and political engaged in new and different ways, related less to electoral politics or government or civic organizations and more to personal interests, social networks, and cultural or commodity activism (a form of protest that is typically levied against private companies rather than governments). These modes of political participation are often enacted through informal, non-institutionalized, nonhierarchical networks in and around the Internet… they are political insofar as they aim to influence or change existing power relations (Henry Jenkins 2016 , 8-9).

Secular feminists fought fiercely for women's rights in Morocco and they succeeded in bringing about a lot of advanced rights for women. And it is high time to continue their fight by initiating discussions about taboo issues like politics, abortion, the inheritance, and the LGBT community.

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