

Smadar Lavie - Mizrah Feminism And The Question Of Palestine



Smadar Lavie

Photo:en.wikipedia.org

This paper analyzes the failure of Israel's Ashkenazi (Jewish, of European, Yiddish-speaking origin) feminist peace movement to work within the context of Middle East demographics, cultures, and histories and, alternately, the inabilities of the Mizrahi (Oriental) feminist movement to weave itself into the feminist fabric of the Arab world.

Although Ashkenazi elite feminists in Israel are known for their peace activism and human rights work, from the Mizrahi perspective their critique and activism are limited, if not counterproductive. The Ashkenazi feminists have strategically chosen to focus on what Edward Said called the Question of Palestine—a well funded agenda that enables them to avoid addressing the community-based concerns of the disenfranchised Mizrahim. Mizrahi communities, however, silence their own feminists as these activists attempt to challenge the regime or engage in discourse on the Question of Palestine. Despite historical changes, the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi distinction is a racialized formation so resilient it manages to sustain itself through challenges rather than remain a frozen dichotomy.

Source: *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* · April 2011

Download Full Text: [Lavie_MizrahiFeminismandtheQuestionofPalestine](#)