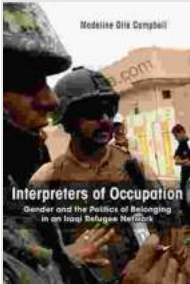


Gender and the Politics of Belonging in an Iraqi Refugee Network: Negotiating Tradition, Identity, and Empowerment



Interpreters of Occupation: Gender and the Politics of Belonging in an Iraqi Refugee Network (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East) by Jonathan Alter

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2875 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 263 pages



The experience of displacement and resettlement is often gendered, with women and men facing distinct challenges and opportunities. This article explores the complex interplay between gender, culture, and the politics of belonging within a network of Iraqi refugees in a Western resettlement context. Drawing on qualitative research, the article examines how gendered norms and expectations shape refugees' experiences of displacement, resettlement, and social integration. It also analyzes how women and men negotiate these norms and expectations to construct and maintain their sense of belonging within the refugee community and the broader society.

Background

Iraq has been plagued by conflict and violence for decades, resulting in the displacement of millions of people. In recent years, a significant number of Iraqi refugees have resettled in Western countries. These refugees come from diverse backgrounds and experiences, but they all share the common experience of displacement and the challenges of rebuilding their lives in a new context.

Gender is a central organizing principle in Iraqi society, shaping individuals' roles, responsibilities, and opportunities. In the refugee context, gendered norms and expectations can both hinder and facilitate refugees' experiences of displacement, resettlement, and integration. For example, women may face barriers to accessing education, employment, and healthcare due to traditional gender roles and expectations. At the same time, women may also find opportunities for empowerment and agency as they negotiate their roles and identities in the refugee context.

Methods

This article is based on qualitative research conducted with Iraqi refugees in a Western resettlement context. The research employed a range of methods, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. The data was collected over a period of 18 months and included interviews with 50 Iraqi refugees (25 women and 25 men) as well as participant observation in refugee community events and organizations.

Findings

The research findings reveal a complex interplay between gender, culture, and the politics of belonging within the Iraqi refugee network. Gendered

norms and expectations shape refugees' experiences of displacement, resettlement, and social integration in a number of ways.

1. Gendered experiences of displacement

Women and men experience displacement differently due to gendered norms and expectations. For example, women may be more likely to be responsible for caring for children and other family members during displacement, which can limit their ability to participate in activities outside the home. Men, on the other hand, may be more likely to be targeted for violence and persecution, which can also affect their ability to flee and resettle.

2. Gendered experiences of resettlement

Gendered norms and expectations also shape refugees' experiences of resettlement. For example, women may face barriers to accessing education, employment, and healthcare due to traditional gender roles and expectations. Men, on the other hand, may be more likely to find employment, but they may also face discrimination and prejudice in the workplace.

3. Gendered experiences of social integration

Gendered norms and expectations also shape refugees' experiences of social integration. For example, women may be more likely to be confined to the home and have limited contact with the outside world, which can make it difficult for them to learn the language, make friends, and build new relationships. Men, on the other hand, may be more likely to have contact

with the outside world, but they may also face discrimination and prejudice from the host community.

4. Negotiating gendered norms and expectations

Despite the challenges they face, women and men negotiate gendered norms and expectations in order to construct and maintain their sense of belonging within the refugee community and the broader society. For example, some women may challenge traditional gender roles by pursuing education and employment, while others may find ways to maintain traditional roles while also adapting to the demands of the resettlement context. Men, too, may negotiate gendered norms and expectations by finding ways to balance their traditional roles with the demands of the resettlement context.

The experience of displacement and resettlement is often gendered, with women and men facing distinct challenges and opportunities. This article has explored the complex interplay between gender, culture, and the politics of belonging within a network of Iraqi refugees in a Western resettlement context. The research findings reveal that gendered norms and expectations shape refugees' experiences of displacement, resettlement, and social integration in a number of ways. However, refugees also negotiate these norms and expectations in order to construct and maintain their sense of belonging within the refugee community and the broader society.

The findings of this study have implications for policy and practice. First, it is important to recognize the gendered nature of the refugee experience and to design policies and programs that address the specific needs of

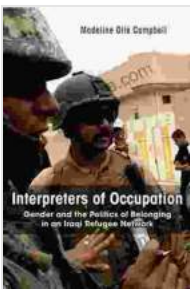
women and men. Second, it is important to support refugees' efforts to negotiate gendered norms and expectations in order to construct and maintain their sense of belonging. This can be done through a variety of means, such as providing access to education, employment, and healthcare, as well as supporting refugee community organizations and initiatives.

By understanding the complex interplay between gender, culture, and the politics of belonging, we can better support refugees as they rebuild their lives in a new context and create a more inclusive and just society for all.

References

- Amel, E. (2017). *The politics of belonging: Refugee women's experiences in Canada*. University of Toronto Press.
- Bakewell, O. (2010). *Gender and displacement: A global perspective*. Taylor & Francis.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Precarious life: The powers of mourning and violence*. Verso.
- Castles, S., & Miller, M. J. (2009). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world*. Guilford Press.
- Fagence, M. (2013). *Gender and displacement in the Middle East: Rethinking migration and refugee studies*. Routledge.
- Harrell, T. (2007). *The political economy of displacement: Refugee camps in the developing world*. Oxford University Press.
- Jacobsen, K. (2014). *Gender, conflict, and displacement*. Rowman & Littlefield.

- Kofman, E. (2004). The politics of belonging: Refugee women in Canada. University of Toronto Press.
- Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J. E. (1993). Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal. Population and Development Review, 19(3),431-466.
- Sassen, S. (2012). The global city: Its form, its meaning, its future. Princeton University Press.



Interpreters of Occupation: Gender and the Politics of Belonging in an Iraqi Refugee Network (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East) by Jonathan Alter

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2875 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 263 pages





Killing A King: The Assassination Of Yitzhak Rabin And The Remaking Of Israel

The Assassination Of Yitzhak Rabin And The Remaking Of Israel ## **
An Event That Reshaped a Nation's Destiny ** On an autumn evening in 1995, a single shot shattered...



Death in Benin: Where Science Meets Voodoo

In the West African nation of Benin, death is not simply the end of life. It is a complex and mysterious process that is believed to involve both the physical and spiritual...