

Essay

Qatari Women Navigating Gendered Space

Krystyna Golkowska

Faculty of Premedical Education, Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar, Education City, P.O. Box 24144 Doha, Qatar; krg2005@qatar-med.cornell.edu; Tel.: +974-4492-8223

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Abstract: ADespite growing interest in the lived experience of Muslim women in Arab countries, there is still a dearth of studies on the Gulf region. This article focuses on Qatar, a Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) country, to explore its changing sociocultural landscape and reflect on Qatari women’s agency within the framework of the traditional gendered space model. Applying Grounded Theory methodology to data collected from a variety of scholarly and non-scholarly sources, the author offers a themed overview of factors that facilitate and constrain Qatari women’s mobility. The findings testify to a significant increase in female presence and visibility in the public sphere—specifically in the spaces of education, employment, and sports. They also show that young Qatari women exercise agency through navigating the existing systems rather than question traditional socio-cultural norms. The paper identifies this search for a middle ground between tradition and modernity and its ideological underpinnings as the area of future research that should be led by Qatari women themselves.

Keywords: Qatar; gender; space; tradition; modernization; globalization; women; agency; mobility; transformation

1. Introduction

Recent years have seen growing interest in exploring the lived reality of Muslim women in Arab countries (Gonzalez 2013; Falah and Nagel 2005; Sonbol 2003; Sedghi 2007). In this context, the scarcity of studies on the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) countries is striking, especially since modernization and globalization have been dramatically changing the region and bringing with them a host of social issues that remain understudied (Gonzalez 2013, p. 210). Qatar, a small but important Gulf state due to its strategic location, resources, and political positioning, has so far received even less attention than its neighbors. The country’s ambition to play a leadership role in the region usually gets a fair deal of attention locally and internationally, but its changing sociocultural landscape has not been fully examined yet. Among the few studies of the lived experience of women in GCC countries (Sonbol 2012; Pandya 2013; Benn et al. 2011; Gonzalez 2013; Le Renard 2014; Bristol-Rhys 2016), none concentrates on Qatar. There is a clear need for quantitative and qualitative research on the country’s socio-cultural transformations, especially from a gender perspective. The present paper aims to identify a gap in the literature on Qatari women’s mobility and agency and map the territory for future inquiry.

The lens used in the present discussion is shaped by feminist geography. Although in the literature on Muslim women the spatiality of gender relations has not been fully explored (Falah and Nagel 2005, p. 3), feminist geography seems to provide the best perspective for analyzing the complex relationships between bodies, identities, places, and power. Since the 1980s, feminist geographers have been emphasizing the importance of examining the lived experience of particular women at a particular time and in a particular place. Adopting this approach helps to move beyond the perspective of the white, middle-class Western woman—the bias in early feminist research identified by, for example, bell hooks (1984) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984); it also helps to avoid the risk of downplaying differences and defining the subject as “the Arab/Muslim woman” (for

challenges to Orientalist representation of Muslim women see [Mahmood 2005](#); [Falah and Nagel 2005](#); [Abu-Lughood 2016](#)). Moreover, from the beginning, feminist geographers have been interested in the interplay between gender and space (both physical and symbolic), particularly in the division between the public and private spheres and spatial constraints facing women ([Ardener 1981](#); [Domosh and Seager 2001](#); [Moss 2002](#); [Torstrick and Faier 2009](#)). Such theorizations are very relevant in exploring Arab cultures, and are especially useful in examining issues at the intersection of gender, space, and religion in the Gulf.

Since Qatar is a Sunni monarchy with Sharia law as its main source of legislation, Qatari women's present day mobility needs to be viewed in the context of the established patterns in Islamic gender relations. While historically the level of human mobility was high for Muslims, tribal order and strict interpretation of the Qur'an resulted in a rigid spatial organization ([Hidemitsu 2003](#)). For a follower of Islam, space and movement in it are imbued with both social and religious significance. A faithful Muslim makes every effort to live in Dar al-Islam, Muslim space, a binary opposite of Dar al-Harb, a non-Muslim space. This kind of life means literal and metaphorical orientation towards Mecca. Indeed, one of the five religious duties of Muslim is a religious pilgrimage to the holy city and the bodily performance of daily prayers involves facing that direction. Moreover, in Muslim societies religion intersects all types of space. With regard to social relations, a strict interpretation of the Qur'an enforces gender segregation. Hence the division into male and female domains and allotment of roles corresponding to them. Traditionally, public space is perceived as exclusively male; women are confined to the household, where they act out their roles of wives and mothers. Moreover, spatial separation exists within domestic space as well, with parts of the house designated for exclusive use of women and men. Even weddings and funerals are celebrated separately. In brief, as [Belk and Sobh \(2009\)](#) notice, in addition to a more prominent boundary between public and private space marked by walls and windows facing inward, "within Arab Muslim homes, there is a sharper distinction between men's and women's spaces as well as transitional spaces in moving from one to another" (p. 34).

In Islam, the principle of gender separation is further signaled through spatial practices related to clothing. The rule of modesty requires that a woman covers her body and wears a hijab (a headscarf). Likewise, the prohibition against attracting the male gaze regulates female body language and behavior in a mixed gender environment. Perhaps no other concept has been more hotly contested in the literature on Muslim women than the veil ([Mernissi 1992](#); [Secor 2010](#); [Ahmed 2012](#)). Nowadays, especially in the diaspora, the practice of wearing a hijab can be interpreted as signaling a variety of attitudes; it can function as a sign of religiosity, respect for tradition, political beliefs or a combination of any them ([Secor 2010](#)). Originally, however, the practice of veiling used to denote the status of Muslim females and shelter them when they ventured outside their domestic sphere. Thus, by symbolically upholding the division between the male and female space it allowed women some mobility while enforcing the rule of avoiding the male gaze.

Since women are perceived as bearers of the family honor, their movement outside the household is controlled and restricted ([Sharabi 1988](#); [Barakat 1993](#)). Many females in the Gulf still travel only with a family member. Under Sharia law, a woman is not allowed to travel the distance of "three days and three nights/48 miles" without her husband or a Mahram, a male guardian for whom it would be unlawful to marry the woman due to blood relation or marriage ([Central Mosque 2003](#)). Nowadays, a single Qatari woman under the age of 25 needs to obtain her father's or husband's permission to travel abroad; this can be seen as a sign of progress as previously this age limit used to be 50 years of age. On the other hand, male Qataris need a guardian's permission only until they reach the age of 18 ([Ministry of Interior Qatar 2013](#)). Married women are entitled to travel without permission irrespective of their age, but in case the husband does not want his wife to travel, he can approach the competent court to prevent her journey. Overall, although in general Qataris travel a great deal, women's freedom of movement remains regulated.

Now that advances in transportation and communication have increased global connectivity and interdependence, traditional spatial boundaries need to be constantly renegotiated. In the case

of Qatar, industrialization and modernization resulted in an influx of expatriates from all over the world, all arriving with different beliefs regarding gender and spatial practices. More importantly, the government's decision to pursue modernization and build a knowledge-based economy meant importing Western models of education and modern patterns of social life. Hence, the newly created physical and symbolic space offers opportunities for growth as well as potential tension between Western liberalism and local conservative interpretation of Islam. This situation gives rise to many questions, chief among them being how Qatari women navigate between modern and traditional codes of conduct and spatial practices.

The present paper begins with a brief overview of factors that facilitate Qatari women's advancement and hamper their progress. The section on the government policy and public discourse on gender is followed by a brief discussion of female presence and gender identity performance in public space. Available data gathered from the literature as well as ethnographic observation and shared narratives suggests that Qatari women operate within the traditional gendered space model and show little desire to question it. Instead, they try to find agency in modifying established codes of conduct or spatial practices. It is this search for the middle ground and the potential emergence of a culturally defined notion of agency that the paper identifies as the area for future research. The author suggests that this type of inquiry should be led by Qatari women themselves.

2. Parameters of Qatari Women's Mobility

This section gives an overview of the government-sponsored narrative of change and discusses the challenges and opportunities it affords Qatari women.

2.1. Qatari Government's Agenda and Public Discourse on Gender

In Qatar, like everywhere in the Gulf, the oil and gas boom of the 1950s created a new physical and sociocultural landscape. The most immediate change was urbanization and an influx of foreigners. At present, 92% of the country's residents live in the country's capital, Doha ([Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics 2016](#)). Moreover, in a short period of time, the Qataris became a tiny minority in their own country. For example, in 2016 there were 313,000 Qatari nationals in Qatar, which means that expatriate Western "experts" and a cheap labor force from East Asia and Africa accounted for approximately 88% of all residents ([Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics 2016](#)). As the skyline keeps rising, the expanding space of the city is becoming progressively more complex and multilayered, filled with diverse and sometimes conflicting discourses.

Qatar's present-day geopolitical agenda favors the advancement of women. To build a knowledge-based economy, become a regional leader in research and innovation, and play an important role on the international scene, the country needs to mobilize the potential of all of its citizens. A roadmap to Qatar's human, social, economic, and environmental development was drawn by its leadership in *Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030)*, a document made public in October 2008. As it is officially stated in *QNV 2030*, the national narrative is shaped by the desire to balance a push for modernization with respect for tradition. This principle underlies all government-sponsored reforms or initiatives and shapes the design of the newly created public places. It also clearly defines the parameters within which gender roles are being rewritten.

The ambitious goals spelled out in *QNV 2030* meant opening new vistas for Qatari women. Gender equality was guaranteed in 1999, when Sheikh Hamad Al-Thani approved a new constitution enabling women to vote, hold elected offices, and exercise other rights given to all citizens. Under the leadership of HH Sheikha Mozah Almissned, the emir's wife, education and employment opportunities for women became a national priority. An impressive investment was made to reform primary and secondary schools, and build Education City (later renamed Hamad Bin Khalifa University), a mega campus that hosts six top ranking American universities. Due to this bold initiative, women who could not travel abroad were able to pursue world-class education in their own country. In addition to establishing gender equality in the job market, legislative measures were adopted to support women's

entrepreneurial initiatives. Furthermore, Qatari women's entry into public space was deemed complete when in 2012 for the first time in its history Qatar sent female athletes to the Olympic Games in London. Again, the reasons for this move were complex and intertwined. In Qatar's vision for the future, building a sports culture and increasing women's physical activity are important for the nation's physical well being as well as for economic and political reasons. Like in other regions of the Gulf, obesity and lack of regular physical activity are prevalent in Qatar and result in a very high incidence of diabetes, hypertension, and cancer. In view of this health crisis the government must take action to foster a healthier lifestyle. At the same time, sponsoring major sports events such as the Asian Games in 2006 or FIFA 2022 is important for financial and leadership reasons, whereas promoting gender equality in sports empowers women and helps to brand Qatar as a modern country. Overall, it is such a combination of political, economical and ideological motives that now creates a favorable climate for Qatari females' advancement.

In the space of public discourse, the government-sponsored narrative of modernization is promoted by the local media that highlight the progressive agenda and individual success stories. At the same time, the message of change is counterbalanced by a strong emphasis on the traditional role of women in the domestic sphere. *QNV 2030* clearly highlights the importance of female contribution to nation-building through keeping the family strong, both physically and mentally. It also appoints women as the guardians of moral values and the country's cultural heritage. The existence of the tradition-modernity dichotomy and tension related to it is openly acknowledged in the document, as reflected in the following statement:

Qatar's very rapid economic and population growth have created intense strains between the old and new in almost every aspect of life. Modern work patterns and pressures of competitiveness sometimes clash with traditional relationships based on trust and personal ties, and create strains for family life. Moreover, the greater freedoms and wider choices that accompany economic and social progress pose a challenge to deep-rooted social values highly cherished by society ([General Secretariat for Development Planning 2008](#), p. 4).

In brief, the model promoted in *QNV 2030* affirms gender equality in legal terms but also leaves women with the task of bridging the divide between modern practices and local custom regarding gender relations.

2.2. *Shifting Socio-Cultural Landscape: Qatari Women in Public Space*

To what extent have Qatari women availed themselves of the opportunities unknown to the generations of their mothers and grandmothers? The available statistics paint a picture of increased small- and large-scale mobility. Progress has been especially evident in the areas of education and employment.

As observed by [Willoughby \(2008\)](#), "it is within the GCC countries that the sharpest rise of educational achievement has been witnessed for women in the whole Arab world" (p. 85), and in Qatar the gains have been spectacular. Not only in Qatar University, the single national tertiary level school in the country, but also in the institutions following North-American curricula, Qatari females outnumber and outperform males academically ([Ridge 2014](#); [Walker 2014](#)). RAND, the renowned research institution commissioned by Qatar to oversee its educational reform, highlighted this fact in its 2007 report stating, "the educational attainment is trending in opposite directions for men and women, with women becoming better educated over time while men's level of education declines" ([Stasz et al. 2007](#), pp. 14–15).

Recently, the gains in education have begun to translate into participation in the job market. Women's employment rates have increased to 36% ([Al-Tamimi 2016](#); [Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics 2016](#)). This rate is the highest in the Gulf region, but still disappointing considering that 88% of Qatari females pursue higher education ([Al-Tamimi 2016](#)). Remarkably, 44% of women cite cultural reasons as an obstacle in pursuing professional goals ([Walker 2016](#)). Moreover, Qatari

women still occupy only certain segments in the job market. Not unlike their counterparts in other GCC countries (Willoughby 2008), they continue to seek a narrow range of employment opportunities, either jobs traditionally considered female (for example, teaching) or highly-valued prestigious careers such as medicine (Stasz et al. 2007). Some professions are still deemed inappropriate or less desirable for women. Thus, for example, there are very few Qatari females working as lawyers, flight attendants, hospitality workers, or nurses (Bahry and Marr 2005). Although a number of women study chemical engineering, many choose not to pursue their careers once they realize that employment in construction companies or petroleum and petrochemical industries requires frequent visits to the site and work in a dominantly male environment. Similarly, although women outnumber men among students of political science at Qatar University and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, they occupy very few important political positions. For example, there are no women on Majlis Al Shura, the legislative body of the Monarchy of Qatar, and there are only two women on the Municipal Council and one female ambassador out of 100 (Al-Tamimi 2016). Furthermore, restrictions on showing photographs of females or even posting pictures on social media limit women's participation in the media. In the workplace, gender stereotypes often continue to prevent women from reaching their full potential. During the 2010 conference organized by Qatar University, the panelists acknowledged the existence of bias against women. Nouf Al Sulaiti, Director of Legal Affairs Department at Vodafone stated, "For women in the Arab society, there is a cap on the level of achievement they can reach, there isn't a level of surety of how high women can reach in the workplace in Qatar" (Toumi 2010). In this situation, enterprising women who establish their own small business companies, usually related to marketing women's products or services, seem best placed to combine traditional familial obligations with individual aspirations.

In the space of public discourse, a new way of thinking about gender is signaled by attempts to reevaluate Arab women's agency. Thus, for example, a recently published study on the spatial organization of Qatari households emphasizes the dynamic and modern nature of female space in contrast to a more static male space (Belk and Sobh 2009, p. 34). Likewise, the desire to deconstruct stereotypical notions of Arab women as passive and oppressed guides a number of analyses of cultural products (Al-Ghadeer 2009; Al-Malki et al. 2012) and reverberates in conversation with women of all ages. Qatar has seen an effort to validate women's experience by publishing anthologies of women's narratives (Henderson and Rajakumar 2008, 2010). Last but not least, one needs to acknowledge the effort led by Sheikha Al Mayassa, the daughter of Sheikha Mozah, to document and preserve the work of women artists in the region.

In the cityscape, signs of change include the normalization of Qatari women's presence in advertisements related to business, commerce, banking, and other services. It is not too far-fetched to link everyday physical movement in public space with social mobility, so one can also point here to the results of the government's push to increase Qatari women's participation in physical activity. There is not enough data yet to ascertain that gains at the elite level of sports have been accompanied by an increase in sports activities in the community, but the government's campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of regular exercise has had some success. This can be seen in the growing popularity of walking, the easiest and least controversial form of exercise for women. Campaigns such as *Walk for Health, Every Step Counts* have legitimized the idea of women engaging in some form of physical activity in a mixed-gender multicultural public space. Modification of clothing practices can serve as yet another example of embodied cultural change that has become noticeable in the last decade. In public, Qatari females used to wear a long black overcoat called abaya and a black headscarf called sheila. Even though outside the country some women would substitute modest attire for their abayas and keep just their sheilas, in Qatar they continue to wear abayas as a sign of ethnic and national identity. While for more conservative women the dress code remains unchanged and even includes a full-face veil, Doha has recently seen the emergence of "the new abaya." No longer plain and uniform in style, this garment can be elaborately ornamented as well as vary in cut and lately even in color.

In other words, it resembles more an evening gown than a plain, identical garb and thus reflects individual taste, creativity, and awareness of latest fashion.

Despite some real change, a great deal of public space in Doha maintains the traditional divisions. Hair salons, hospitals, and clinics remain gender segregated, and many establishments have separate waiting rooms for men and women. Some restaurants have family rooms, and all gyms and swimming pools observe “ladies only” hours or activities. Although the branch universities in Education City and private secondary level schools are co-educational, public schools and Qatar University—the only national tertiary level educational institution—are gender segregated. There have been intermittent attempts to enforce the rule barring single men from entering malls on Friday (a religious holiday and day free from work) to ensure more privacy for women, and in 2012 conservative backlash resulted in a public campaign against immodest clothing practices. Negative gender stereotypes are still prevalent in Qatar, and many women have internalized them. For example, a recent study confirmed that three out of four Qataris believe that men are better qualified than women to play an active role in politics, and 40% of Qatari of men and women (with no significant difference between the sexes) believe that it is not acceptable for a woman to run for a political office (Al-Tamimi 2016). Finally, in the space of public discourse, some topics remain taboo. For example, there is little public acknowledgement or discussion of issues related to marriage and family life that run counter to modern practices such as arranged marriages, polygamy, consanguinity (marriage between first cousins), or misyar marriages (short-term contracts allowing for legal cohabitation without the stigma of prostitution).

To sum up, although the leadership’s agenda has given Qatari women access to public space, it is not clear how the increased women’s participation in the job market and sports and their spectacular gains in education have impacted gender relations in the private space or transformed commonly held beliefs about gender roles.

3. Qatari Women’s Perceptions of Their Mobility and Agency: The Case of Female Students

The least researched area in studies on Qatari women—and Gulf women in general—is the area of their perceptions. It would be important to establish how young Qatari women view their mobility and agency; specifically, what obstacles they think they have to overcome in the process of entering and appropriating the traditionally male space, how much agency they believe they have, and what changes in gender roles they see or would like to see in the future. Such an inquiry could begin with female undergraduate and graduate students, since they are at the forefront of socio-cultural changes in their country, and the affective domain of their experience is worth exploring. Especially females studying North American curricula in Education city—a transnational mega campus—find themselves in a space filled with disparate and often conflicting discourses; thus, they are most likely to experience the tension between modernity and tradition identified in *QNV 2030*. The preliminary exploration presented here results from applying Grounded Theory methodology to data collected from the literature, ethnographic observation, and shared narratives of Qatari women.

The dominant theme that emerges from the data is appreciation of access to education and professional careers. The authors of essays published in *Qatari Voices* (Henderson and Rajakumar 2010), *Qatari Narratives* (Henderson and Rajakumar 2010), or WCM-Q and TAMU-Q anthologies highlight the contrast between the students’ lives and the lives of their mothers and grandmothers, and pride in pursuing a college degree. This is hardly surprising, considering that 50 years ago there was no public education system in Qatar and most women were illiterate (Al-Misnad 1985). In informal and public statements, young women students also point to their role models, HH Sheikha Mozah and other members of the royal family, as evidence of change. In general, they seem to have internalized and acted upon the message of female empowerment spelled out in *QNV 2030*.

In terms of obstacles hampering progress, balancing culturally defined familial obligations with professional duties remains the biggest concern for young women and their families. In fact, young women worry more about satisfying expectations associated with gender roles in private space than about being recognized or rewarded for fulfilling professional obligations. Although maids and

nannies are easily available and commonly used in Qatari households, professional women still face a double burden. Qatari tradition requires attending numerous family celebrations, making social calls, and taking care of younger siblings and sick or elderly family members. Generally, prioritization of the familial and tribal obligations over individualistic goals is expected of all members of the society, yet the burden of emotional work that it requires falls disproportionately on women. Understandably, younger women may find it hard to deal with the pressure from conservative family members. Understandably, inability to live up to the internalized norms and expectations can result in a feeling of guilt and inadequacy, the invisible cost of visible gains.

Although Qatari female students state that their aspirations are hampered by societal expectations, they do not acknowledge (or choose not to talk about) the existence of any significant restrictions on their agency (Qutteina et al. 2016). Neither do they question the traditional division between males and females in private or public space. On the contrary, even in the school's coeducational setting, division between genders is respected and observed through self-segregation, modifying verbal and non-verbal behavior (for example, no hand shaking with members of opposite sex) to comply with the Islamic principle of modesty.

On the other hand, there are signs of change and indications that young Qatari females seek agency through modification of traditional gender rules. This strategy is reflected in new marriage contracts that contain clauses allowing for travel and study (Rajakumar and Kane 2016). Evidently, such modifications of existing social norms give women more direct control over their lives. One can argue that if a girl views a college degree as a way of increasing her marriageability rather than a step towards a career, she can hardly be called liberated—at least in the Western meaning of the word. On the other hand, any assertion of a woman's right to education cannot but be seen as positive, regardless of its motivation. Another example of altering traditional practices is the young females' preference for the new abaya. Trivial as it may seem, this modification of the traditional garment shows how some Qatari women try to satisfy the need for self-expression without rejecting customary norms.

One would be remiss not to point to another positive development. From its inception, Education City was envisaged as a research hub, an incubator of ideas and training grounds for future leaders. Through grants and event sponsorship, the Qatar Foundation encourages students and faculty to engage in research. Even a cursory look at the *Annual Research Conference Proceedings* will reveal a positive trend with regard to women's issues. In the period of 2010 to 2015, only a small percentage of papers in the *Social Science, Art and the Humanities Pillar* section focused on women. To be specific, in 2010 there were three such papers, in 2011 two, in 2013 one, and in 2014 again two (no *Proceedings* available for 2015). However, in 2016 there were already seven papers discussing a broad range of women's experience, three of them resulting from projects involving female undergraduate students.

A recent study argues that young Qatari females "are caught between their own beliefs about gender equality and larger Qatari societal norms" (Qutteina et al. 2016). That certainly sounds true; however, it is still not clear what these beliefs really are and what shapes them. Overall, young Qataris lack the terminology and preparation to discuss gender issues from a feminist perspective. Moreover, as shown by Qutteina et al. (2016), their understanding of concepts such as freedom or agency differs from the way these concepts are understood in the West. As elsewhere in the Gulf, in Qatar secular feminism is viewed by many as alien or suspect. At the same time, it is not at all clear how Qatari women position themselves vis-à-vis Islamic feminism. In general, any type of feminism still has negative connotations in Qatar, as illustrated by the reaction of the audience to a recent lecture in Education City (Lindsey 2017) or last year's campaign to fire a Qatar University professor espousing Islamic Feminism (Badawi 2016; Al Fassi 2017). Discussing Gulf women's attitudes, Gonzales argues that Islamist feminists "are finding ways to negotiate for progressive women's rights within the conservative constraints of their culture" and are most successful when they present their arguments for women's rights as legitimately sanctioned by "the sociological sources of legitimate authority within Islamic contexts, namely religious texts, the community, and authority figures" (Gonzalez 2013, p. 2). Right now, at least on the surface young Qatari women's behavior seems pragmatic rather than

ideologically inspired. But that may be changing. As Al-Malki et al. (2012) observe, every day Arab women have to make choices between the value systems of globalization and Islam, and the challenge for them is not to reject either but to “take reflective ownership over the complex hybrid identities they have tacitly accepted” (p. 233) in search of a new way of being. If there are signs that Qatari women are ready for a change from within and finding a middle ground between tradition and modernity, they need to be documented and explored.

4. Concluding Remarks

One can conclude that at present change in Qatar is elite-led, and female mobility—as understood in the Western sense of the word—is exercised unevenly. For the most part, Qatari women have availed themselves of the unprecedented opportunities created by the government-sponsored narrative of change. The biggest gains have been made by the younger generation of college educated females who have been moving into traditionally male dominated spheres and increasing their visibility in public space. Some of these women appear to seek autonomy through navigating the existing social systems and spaces rather than trying to question or deconstruct them. Thus, they seem to have embarked on the way towards creating a culturally shaped definition of agency and mobility. If Qatari women begin to create a third space between Western feminist ideology and traditional female Arab identity, exploration of this process and its affective domain should come from the women themselves. Research incorporating oral history methodology and principles would be particularly relevant in this context. Collecting oral narratives would give voice to women of different age groups and communicative competence, and thus provide a more balanced and complete picture of the ongoing transformations. Additionally, Qatari females’ perceptions of their effort to establish themselves in the traditionally male space could also lead to new policies and initiatives providing them with much needed support.

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