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Reading Log 1

This is a critical reading log of two articles. The first article is "What is Troublemaking by Sara. The second article is "How not to Study Gender in the Middle East" by Maya Mikdashi, a Professor at the New Jersey-based Rutger University.

An objective evaluation of gender develops as one thinks critically about this conception. Mikdashi (2012) indicates that gender does not involve "what is perceptible to the human eye but the manner in which what exists comes to manifest."[1] Therefore, a researcher ought to acquaint himself with the history of a specific region before engaging in a discussion about gender. In this respect, Sara indicates that reflecting is a critical skill when it comes to matters concerning social transformation.[2] Sara develops the concept of troublemaking to explain how she organizes her queer and feminist thoughts. She indicates that reflection directs her sentiments as she deliberates on troublemaking.

I find Mikdashi's and Sara's articles insightful as they inform the reader about the intricacies that underpin gender. I connect these works with my comprehension of gender as a construct that involves men and women rather than directing all the focus on issues concerning women in society. Mikdashi is mostly concerned with studying gender in the Middle East, and her article deduces the principles that define gender.[3] She asserts that researchers should direct

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[1] Maya Mikdashi, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East," Jadaliyya, July 10, 2017, accessed August 29, 2023, https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/25434.

[2] Sara, "What Is Troublemaking?" TROUBLE, accessed August 29, 2023, https://trouble.room34.com/archives/5.

[3] Maya Mikdashi, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East."

focus to the object of the study. In particular, Mikdashi emphasizes that a researcher should be specific regarding the region, country, and period that forms the background image of a specific study. Sara seemingly expounds on this idea by indicating that troublemaking has significant value to the individuals who engage in political, theoretical, personal, and ethical projects associated with social transformation.[4] I connect with Sara's position because she emphasizes that troublemaking helps researchers organize their thoughts in relation to feminism. Mikdashi adds that studying gender requires the incorporation of sexuality since this is an integral part of gender analysis.

My evaluation of Mikdashi's and Sara's works leads me to conclude that gender involves every person. Mikdashi indicates that no person can classify himself or herself as ungendered, while Sara contends that critical thinking about troublemaking plays an integral part in challenging the status quo.[5] Mikdashi supports this position by indicating that attention to gender should not be limited to matters like genitalia or the sexual preferences of a specific group of people, as this recreates the study of gender as an evaluation of the manner in which men treat their women. Sara conceptualizes troublemaking as a way of perceiving and acting differently in the world.[6] She indicates that troublemaking brings together different practices as a way of developing critical thought, which is designed to challenge the status quo. Mikdashi seemingly responds to this position by indicating that gender politics do not always come in packages that are neat and familiar since matters such as gender justice and exercises in epistemological

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[4] Sara, "What Is Troublemaking?"

[5] Maya Mikdashi, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East."

[6] Sara, "What Is Troublemaking?"

hegemony are involved.[7] Ideally, the two readings support the position that matters relating to gender should be evaluated through an objective lens instead of dwelling on the prevailing social norms.

In conclusion, Mikdashi and Sara articulate gender issues. Mikdashi advocates troublemaking as ideal in addressing systemic gender issues. On her part, Sara cites gender issues in the Middle East as not exclusive to women or the LGBT community but as also affecting men. Mikdashi's and Sara's, therefore, calls for an open mindset rather than reliance on mainstream notions about gender or ways of doing things.

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[7] Maya Mikdashi, "How Not to Study Gender in the Middle East."

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