



Gender Paradoxes in the MENA Region: Understanding Women's "Invisible Presence" in Political Life

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Building on a review of the literature combined with concrete examples from my research in Morocco, this talk will focus on one of the main paradoxes that characterize women's political participation in North Africa and the Middle East: the combination of both their absence and their presence as political actors. It will show that women's underrepresentation in formal politics does not mean that they do not participate, but rather that they participate in alternative spaces. For a full picture it is therefore important to broaden our understating of political participation and to consider the interactive dynamics that are observable between formal and informal politics.