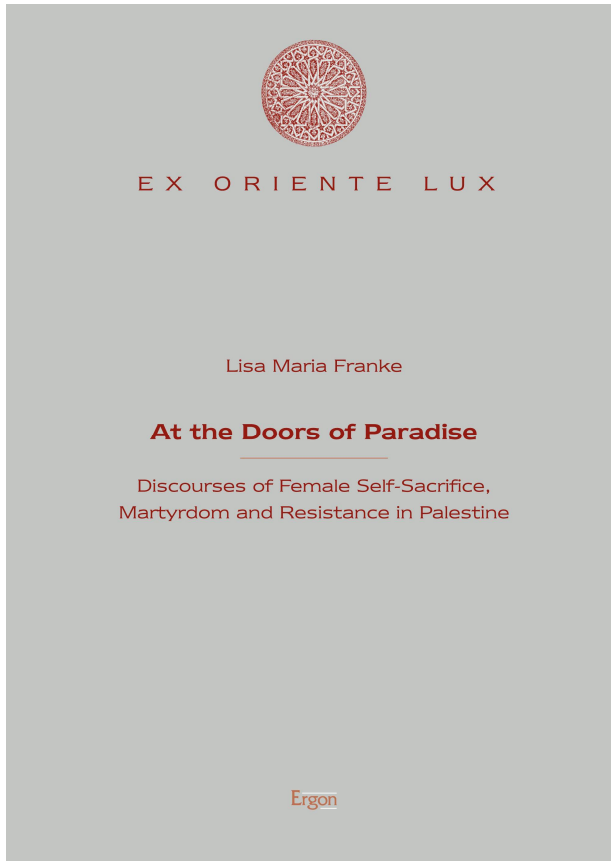


Lisa Maria Franke

At the Doors of Paradise

Discourses of Female Self-Sacrifice, Martyrdom and Resistance in Palestine

(= Ex Oriente Lux |15)



The participation of Palestinian women in active combat has triggered complex discourses about the *istišbādīyāt* within Palestinian society, which are analysed in the book. This is but one part of the much larger and no less diverse political discourse on the Palestinian issue, elaborated in this work.

The study focusses on the influence that discourse can have on the development of opinion or decisions. In this context, ideologising, propagandistic, and manipulative processes play a role. Here, the myths that surround the *istišbādīyāt* are viewed from a gender perspective – focusing on the symbolic and the discursive level.

The author delineates various ways in which Palestinians engage the *istišbādīyāt*-phenomenon, how they glorify them within the realm of martyrdom and resistance, or not, and how ideological practices are employed. Although modern discourses play a decisive role in the construction of the *istišbādīyāt*, the figure of the modern martyr has its roots in religious tradition. How can the relationship between the religious and the nationalist element be described? What are the processes that glorify the *istišbādīyāt* as martyrs? What is the impact of these modern discourses on the changing role of women? The present study demonstrates that no single discourse regarding the *istišbādīyāt* prevails in Palestinian society. It is rather a conglomerate of power relations and interests in which this controversial topic is negotiated.

Würzburg, Ergon-Verlag, 1. Auflage 2015
302 Seiten | 23 Abbildungen | Festeinband

Hiermit bestelle ich ___ Exemplar(e) des Buches mit der ISBN 978-3-95650-069-5

zum Ladenpreis von 45,00 € als Rezensionsexemplar

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Ergon-Verlag GmbH · Keesburgstraße 11 · 97074 Würzburg · Deutschland
phone +49 (0)931 280084 · fax +49 (0)931 282872 · email service@ergon-verlag.de