

Kohl: a Journal for Body and Gender Research



“Counter-Archives”

Vol. 7, No. 1, Summer 2021.

This issue has been produced with the financial assistance of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung - Middle East Office, Beirut. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and can therefore not be taken to reflect the opinion of HBS.

Acknowledgments

This issue started as “A Revolutionary Archive of 2020,” and acquired a life of its own. It took the shapes and contours of the writing circle Kohl called for in early 2021. The circle met virtually for eight Saturdays. Tearing through the realisms of lockdown, migration, COVID-19, and occupation, we created an oasis for us to grieve, breathe, be in solidarity with each other, and do community differently. Our counter-archives spilled over disembodied archives. Despite all the odds, the circle continues to be our queer utopia in the making.

We would like to thank Kohl’s advisory board, Arianne Shahvisi, Elisabeth Armstrong, Maie Panaga, Nadjé Al-Ali, Sabiha Allouche, and Sawsan Abuldrahim, for their commitment to feminist knowledge and to Kohl. We would particularly like to thank advisor Lola Silva for helping Kohl settle in France over the past year, and departing advisor Rola Yasmine for her wisdom and principled determination.

We are indebted to the tireless work of our team of translators Adham Selim, Ahmad Hamdan, Amal Shaheen, Bernadette Daou, Dima Hamadeh, Marina Samir, Ousama Slim, Rania El-Ghazal, Rola Alaeddine, Sandy Mounji, Sylvana Khoury, Viviane Akiki, and Yasmeen Mobayed who made the Arabic version of Kohl possible and generously accommodated our tight deadlines.

We have made magic happen with circle collaborators Ahmad Qais Munhazim, Ahmed Awadalla, Alina Achenbach, Barbara Dynda, Cindy Salame, Dalal Alfares, Debarati Sarkar, Farah Galal Osman, J. Daniel Luther, Jean Makhlouta, Lina Koleilat, Hanna Al-Taher, Maria Najjar, Maya Bhardwaj, Madhulika Sonkar, Malek Lakhal, Myriam Amri, Niharika Pandit, Nour Almazidi, Roya Hasan, Sara Elbanna, Sara Tonsy, Sherine Shallah, Wazina Zondon, and Zenab Ahmed. Some you will encounter by name in the pages of the issue; others have left their imprint, or are musing still, resisting capitalism’s deadlines a bit longer. The circle welcomed three guests, Aslı Zengin, Srila Roy, and Kyoung Kim, who shared precious, affective, and deeply insightful moments with us all.

Other contributors also humbled us with their generosity and commitment to feminist causes. Thank you, Benazir Ruqayya, Bouchra Saab, Emily Yue, our very own Sabah Ayoub, and Samia Mehraj, for trusting us with your writings, and to Debarati Sarkar and Golrokh Nafisi for their artwork illustrating this issue. We would also like to thank Zahra Ali and Carolina Bracco for entrusting us with translations of their publications.

Our immense gratitude goes to the peer reviewers of this issue’s editorial review board, Arianne Shahvisi, Maie Panaga, Nadjé Al-Ali, Nicole Khoury, Sabiha Allouche, Sara Salem, and Saron Abuaker, who have generously provided us and the authors with detailed and thoughtful feedback. We look forward to future cooperation.

We cannot thank Layal Khatib, our web developer enough. Her work has been crucial to our digital autonomy.

This issue has witnessed the departure of two of our team members, Safa Hamzeh, who was Kohl's Communications Manager for two years, and Hiba Abbani, who was Kohl's Translation Manager for one year. We are immensely grateful for their intellectual contribution and labor. We wish we had worked together in less tragic, more joyful times, and wish them a soft landing in other feminist shores.

We would like to thank Heinrich Böll Stiftung and their Middle East Office in Beirut for their continuous financial support since Kohl's beginnings. We are grateful for the support of Mama Cash, Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and Global Fund for Women.

The Kohl Team,
Ghiwa Sayegh, Sabah Ayoub, Maya Zebdawi, and Zuhour Mahmoud