



## Woman in Culture and Arts

### The Study of Social Capital in Palestine Using Pierre Bourdieu's Sociological Model (Case Study: Nozhah Ramlawi's Novel, *City Carnival*)

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article type:</b> Research Article</p> <p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 24 April 2023 Received in revised form: 12 August 2023 Accepted: 30 June 2025 Published online: 31 December 2025</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Nezhah Ramlawi,</i> <i>Social Capital,</i> <i>Palestine,</i> <i>Pierre Bourdieu.</i></p>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Pierre Bourdieu is a contemporary French anthropologist who is particularly interested in the capabilities of literature and the representation of social situations. According to him, the extent of an individual's involvement in the management of the field of power and their strength in various fields are not contingent upon a specific capital, but rather on the volume and combination of different categories of capital. Bourdieu's critical sociology, which in addition to the objective and structural dimension, also considers the subjective dimension of social life, can equip the authors with the requisite ability to identify the various forms of social capital in the novel <i>City Carnival</i>, thereby enabling their audience to comprehend the circumstances.</p> <p>Nozhah Ramlawi's novel <i>City Carnival</i> (2019, Quds) is a unique narrative that, despite struggling with these issues, attempts to transition from these components to a different and effective paradigm for the advancement of women's dignity and their achievement in the world. The majority of the works written by women writers emphasize common elements such as violence against women, forced marriage, women's financial independence, narcissism and similar issues.</p> <p>This novel is a social narrative that emanates from the Palestinian people's sufferings. It reflects the freedom-loving voice of Nozhah Ramlawi in Arab societies and narrates the lives of Palestinians residing in Jerusalem, including women, men, and children, in order to convey the sufferings of the camp residents. The author was able to portray the pain and suffering of her compatriots in the novel <i>City Carnival</i> after the construction of the barrier wall in occupied Palestine. She also discussed the daily attack of the Zionists on the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the insult to the sacred objects of Muslims, and the courage of the people of Quds in confronting the occupiers. While recounting the poverty, destruction, disease, and death that are prevalent in the Palestinian camps, Ramlawi also discusses the conflicting perspectives of Arabs and Jews in their opposition to the Zionist enemy. She also commends the camp residents for their bravery and resistance in the face of the ongoing attacks by the occupiers. Additionally, she offers a feminine perspective on the social issues of Palestinian society in this narrative, which has been less extensively explored. She asserts that women can disseminate the message of freedom to the entire world by extending their awareness and knowledge, which necessitates their standing up, in light of the Palestinian people's capitals and capabilities. The authors have attempted to analyze the frameworks governing the lives of the primary characters of the novel as a reflection of the social and cultural realities of Palestinian society by examining the capabilities of this theory, as it contains many of Bourdieu's social capitals.</p> <p>The authors are attempting to address the primary question: Which of the categories of capital proposed in Pierre Bourdieu's theory is more prominent in the novel <i>City Carnival</i>, given the context of Palestinian society?</p> <p><b>Methodology</b></p> <p>Based on Bourdieu's sociological theories, this article employs content analysis to analyze the novel under discussion.</p>

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### Findings

In terms of cultural capital, the primary characters of the narrative, Tamer, Rabhi, Aref, and Soraya, are not only deprived of the most fundamental cultural necessities, such as education, security, peace, and life in the homeland, but they also lack a suitable social, scientific, occupational, and familial position. They have been denied the opportunity to develop, advance, and reside in a satisfactory social and cultural environment, as well as their homeland.

However, the social capital of the novel is the most noteworthy element, as it is significantly impacted by the other capitals. In reality, the negative social capitals in the novel *City Carnival* are exceedingly vivid due to the constraints they impose on the characters in the narrative, including the Palestinian people, detention, repression, and control. Furthermore, Rabhi applies the negative social capitals in the private lives of Tamer and Soraya, which affects their ability to benefit from other capitals, such as cultural capital (education, social status, etc.) and economic capital (wealth, assets, real estate, and things that can be converted into money).

In this novel, the Palestinian people's economic capitals, which include land, residences, and real estate, are at risk of seizure due to Israeli domination. The economic capital of the primary characters in the narrative is at risk due to the political unrest and the presence of immigrants in the Palestinian society. Tamer and Soraya were the inheritors of numerous properties; however, they were compelled to sell their assets in order to survive the oppressions and injuries of Tamer's stepfather, as a result of the negative obstacles of social capital, such as addiction, violence, and control. Consequently, they were compelled to live in financial poverty.

Symbolic capital can be regarded as a strength in the individual and social performance of the primary characters of the narrative. In fact, the most apparent social symbolic capitals of this novel are the presence and manifestation of love, which includes the love of a man and a woman for each other, the love of a mother for her child, and the love of people for their homeland. These funds have enabled Tamer, Soraya, Aref, and Rabhi to demonstrate the requisite fortitude and power in the face of the challenging life and unfavorable social conditions of their society and land, thereby fostering the spirit of freedom and combating tyranny and occupation to the extent that the constraints of social, cultural and economic capitals have been incapable of annihilating or defeating them.

### Conclusion

Finally, it is important to note that Nozhah Ramlawi has successfully expressed elements in a variety of symbolic capitals in her novel *City Carnival*, utilizing her feminine perspective that may have been overlooked by male writers. Through the expression of the role of a woman, the role of a mother, the role of love, and other symbolic capitals that were identified in this novel, she demonstrates that women can generate awareness by engaging in actions and deeds that are at odds with traditional norms, as well as by generating knowledge and awareness. This enables them to achieve symbolic power and construct a world that aligns with their desires, free from any form of discrimination.

### Conflict of Interest

This article, titled "A Sociological Critique of Ramlawi's Novel *City Carnival* Based on Bourdieu's Theory of Capital Types," is an independent study conducted by the authors and contains no conflicts of interest.

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**Cite this article:** Molla Ebrahimi, E., Nobakht, S., & Kouhi, M. R. (2025). The Study of Social Capital in Palestine Using Pierre Bourdieu's Sociological Model (Case Study: Nozhah Ramlawi's Novel, *City Carnival*). *Woman in Culture and Art*, 17(4), 423-440. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.22059/jwica.2023.357757.1911>



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Publisher: The University of Tehran Press.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.22059/jwica.2023.357757.1911>

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