Representations of Egyptian Women after the Revolution in Local vs. Western Discourses

Roula Hamati

Abstract

Introduction: Post-colonial feminists have highlighted the tendency in the West to constitute the "other" woman as oppressed and in radical opposition to the "Western" liberated woman. Egyptian women as part of the larger category of the "Arab woman" are often the objects of such discourses. On the one hand, the emergence of women during the Egyptian revolution, in both Local and Western media, as an integral part of the mass movement that drove the Egyptian revolution, challenge these preconceptions of the other woman as passive, oppressed, and traditional. On the other hand, various accounts of the victimization of women in the post-revolutionary regime work to reinforce the image of the third world woman victim.

Research Question: Given these contradictory representations of Egyptian women, this paper aims to investigate how different discourses construct Egyptian women in both Western and Local media in the aftermath of the revolution.

Methods: English articles were selected from two US magazines; *Foreign Policy* and *Newsweek*, whereas Arabic articles were selected from to Egyptian magazines, *October* and *Al-Ahram*. The resulting articles were analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis.

Findings: This thesis finds that women are represented as racially and sexually inferior to Western women in Western discourse. By contrast, in Local discourse this thesis finds the representation of women's agency and the expression of resistance to Western hegemonic discourses on the Egyptian woman. It also situates Egyptian women at the intersection of both gender and nationalism.

Keywords: Women, Post-colonialism, Egyptian Revolution, Representation, Discourse.
Words: 21404

Table of contents

1 Introduction

The Middle East has recently been an arena where political changes have been accelerating[1]. From 2003 US invasion of Iraq to the Arab Spring revolutions in Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, a transition from authoritarianism to other types of regimes has been taking place. These transitions were coupled with hopes of development in the forms of economic prosperity and increased freedom for different marginalized groups in society. Arab women are also emerging during this period as an active and politicized group demanding more social and political freedoms.

In this context, Egypt is of particular interest. The emergence of women in Egypt was embodied in the large female participation in the popular demonstrations that ousted the former president Hosni Mubarak out of power. Tahrir square[2] was filled with women from across the political spectrum and from different segments of society; veiled and unveiled, rich and poor, urban and rural, women were driven by their desire for political change.

As a result, both "Western" and "Local" media seem to be taking a special interest in the issue of Egyptian women. Both Local and Western representations of women in the media are important because we come to know about discourses that are taking place in the world through media, and as a result the media plays a huge role in shaping both global and local public opinion (Benelli, 2003:1). Therefore, the media can be said to reflect powerful discourses in society. Moreover, the influence of the media becomes even more important when the knowledge produced is about a distant event that we cannot come to know through experience (Benelli, 2003:1).

Locally, and in the light of a new political regime, women seem to be occupying an important position in the Egyptian media debate; state officials, religious clerics, women's rights activists and other segments of society articulate their competing visions of the role of women in the post-revolutionary Egypt.

In the West as well, the discussion of the role of women in the Egyptian revolution has become a buzzword; audiences seem to be bombarded with numerous articles, interviews and reports. However, a schism between various media outlets is quickly detected whereby some celebrate the Egyptian revolution as the "Women's Revolution" (Lindsey, 2001), and pay a particular interest in

[2] The square where the protests took place.

women's role, while others display a variety of sentimental images and texts where women are being physically and sexually assaulted.[3]

This apparent variation in the representation of Egyptian women in the West, seem to contradict with a huge body of post-colonial and post-colonial feminist literature, in which third world women are uniformly represented as different and inferior, which is accomplished through their representation as victims, oppressed, agentless and as traditional among others.

Research Question:

Given the recent interest surrounding the issue of women in Egypt after the revolution, and given the importance of the media in shaping both local and global opinion, it would be interesting to compare how Western vs. Local discourses construct the role of women in the revolution and the their subsequent roles in its aftermath.

The aim is to explore whether there is a systematic way of representing women in both Western and Local media and to compare differences and similarities between those two. It should be emphasized however that the object of study in this thesis is the actual discourses on women rather than the media. Thus, the media here serves as a mere venue where powerful discourses on women are conveniently located[4], and therefore is thought of as only reflecting important and powerful discourses in society[5].

Thus, this research project aims to address the following research question:

How are Egyptian women represented in Western vs. Local Egyptian media discourses after the Arab Spring in Egypt?

To answer the above-mentioned question, this research will explore the following set of sub-questions:

- *What are the discourses used in constructing women?*
- *Is there a difference between Local and Western media discourses?*
- *How do these discourses connect, complement, or contradict one another?*
- *And what kind of power relations do these discourse reflect?*

Moreover**,** given the above-observed schism between theory and practice of Western discourse, I will address the following sub-question question specifically to the Western media discourse:

---

[3] For example the image of the "blue bra girl", which has gained global recognition, shows a woman in Niqab, the full body veil, being beaten and dragged by soldiers during the demonstration revealing a blue bra under her Niqab.

[4] Conveniently located here means they are easy to identify because everyone can access this public form of information.

[5] Given the view of media as reflecting important discourses in society, in what follows, I use both the terms 'Western discourse' and 'Western media discourse' interchangeably to mean the same thing. The same goes for the use of 'Local discourse' and 'Local media discourse'.

-Do Western discourses in the aftermath of the revolution reflect a more diverse representation of Egyptian women, or do the old stereotypes described by post-colonial theory still apply?

To answer the research question effectively, this thesis is structured as follows. First, since this thesis is written in the field of Development Studies, I will start by explaining how the study of representation of Egyptian women relates to development. Second, a literature review will guide the reader through previous works on the representation of women in both Western and non-Western discourses. Third, the theory section will review post-colonial and post-colonial feminist theories and discuss their operationalization with regard to the above-mentioned research question. Fourth, a methodology section will explain the method used. Fifth, in the analysis section I present the major findings organized along the lines of various discourses. Thereafter, a discussion section will follow where I discuss the significance of the major findings of the analysis section. And finally, this thesis ends with a small conclusion that reiterates the main findings of this study.

2 Relevance to Development Studies

On the one hand, women form an integral part of the development agenda. Gender equality is a pre-requisite for development, not only from the broad human development approach, but also from a strictly economic development perspective. The human development approach that was inspired by Amartya Sen's work (Sen, 2001), views development not only in terms of economic growth, but also from the perspective of expanding people's freedom to develop their own human capabilities. Using this perspective, gender equality is a significant part of economic development because it entails an increase in woman's freedom of choice and agency, which is central to her full use of her human capability (Nussbaum, 2001:14). However, even when adopting a narrower definition of development as economic growth, women still comprise a central pillar of development. Women comprise half of the world's population, which means that disenfranchising this significant segment of society and restricting their equal access to public life inevitably means the loss of human capital, which in turn would reflect badly on economic growth. Thus, any serious attempt to study development, no matter how expansive or minimal its definition is, must consider and include women as an essential part of it.

On the other hand, bringing about development in the forms of gender equality has been used as a pretext by many Western powers to surpass the sovereignty of the nation state. Many scholarly articles have pointed out that gender inequality has been often employed as part of the rhetoric that is used as a justification to war and domination of non-Western societies (Buruma and Margalit, 2004, Stabile and Kumar, 2005).

It is in that conjuncture between the importance of gender equality on the one hand, and the geo-political motivations that underlie the development agenda on the other hand, that works of representation that focus on deconstructing Western media discourses and contrasting it with the Local media discourses become of the utmost importance. By contrasting the Western representations of women to the local representations, the focus is shifted from a Eurocentric perception of gender inequality as influenced by Western discourse, to a more local perception, which could challenge many of the uncontested ideas of the Western discourse. These insights can be used in turn to shape a participatory development agenda that is more inclusive and responsive to needs of the "other" woman rather than on relying on the much-criticized development agenda which is based on Eurocentric ideas of modernization and social progress (Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997: 65).

3   Literature Review

In this literature review, previous research on how women are represented in Western discourse and non-Western discourse will be explored.

The question of identifying the representations of Egyptian women in Western discourse can be situated in the larger debate on the representation of Arab women and third world women consecutively. Post-colonial and post-colonial feminist literature abounds with examples dealing with the question of third world women in Western discourses. Here I review some of the important contributions with special focus on literature dealing with the Arab and Oriental woman[6].

Both Steet (1996) and Megahed et al. (2011) find that Arab women are represented as inferior to Western women, and that this representation of inferiority is mainly an expression of racial and cultural difference.

Steet (1996) investigated the representation of Arab women in National Geographic magazine. She found that the discourse juxtaposes the veiled; sexualized, oppressed oriental woman, read backward, and the progressive, liberated Western women, read civilized. This discourse not only reflected cultural difference but also cultural superiority, and "powerful, if subtle, racist messages" (Steet 1996: 205).

Similarly, Megahed et al. (2011: 403) find that Arab women are perceived in the West as "victims of oppression, hidden behind the veil, and secluded from the world". The veil here functions as the most visible sign of difference that is treated as a metaphor of gender segregation.

Other scholars, like Yegenoglu (1998; In Lewis and Mills) and Loomba (1993) see this inferiority in representing Oriental women, as resulting from the simultaneous intersection between cultural (or racial) and sexual difference:

Yegenoglu (1998; In Lewis and Mills 2003: 542), undertakes a study of the Western 'obsession' with the Oriental female veil. She finds that while the Western stereotype focuses on sexual and cultural difference, both are enacted simultaneously, and therefore, being a woman is equated with the Orient and the Orient is equated with being a woman, in representing both as veiled and deceptive (Yegenoglu 1998; In Lewis and Mills 2003: 553).

Finally, Loomba (1993) explores the images on the sati, the practice of widow immolation, by Englishmen in India. She finds that the sati is a site where gender and racial prejudices are articulated, whereby colonialist treat the sati on the one hand as the exemplary for "female devotion", and on the other hand as a proof of "Hindu barbarism" (Loomba, 1993: 211).

---

[6] The word oriental is used by some of the works reviewed here to designate not only Arab but also everything that is Eastern, and therefore non-western.

Locating literature that deals with the representation of Arab women in Arab discourses was a difficult task. The only two articles that were relevant, dealt with the representation of Arab women in the media, and are the ones I review below.

The first article by Nawar (2007: 9) finds evidence of the portrayal of Arab women in a negative light in local Arab media. Nawar contends that the image of the Arab woman as passive and oppressed as projected by the Western media has been produced and reproduced in parallel by a local conservative Muslim discourse that "tries to establish the hijab as part of the identity of Muslim women" (Nawar 2007: 97).

In the second article, Kirat (2005) also finds the role of women in the social, economic and cultural life to be often omitted from the discourse of the media. Rather, the media focuses on projecting an image of women as dependent on men, passive and submissive whose sole purpose and role in life is to be "wives, mothers, and sisters" (Kirat 2005: 20).

This literature review shows that while works on the Western representation on Arab/Oriental women have been fairly abundant, and built on a large body of scholarship in post-colonialism and postcolonial feminism, not enough work has been done on the local representation of Arab women. It also suggests that while it is more or less expected that Western discourses will reflect a negative view on Arab and by extension Egyptian women, a more unexpected conclusion is that local views on Egyptian women also reinforces this negative perception.

4 Theory

As the literature review shows, previous works on questions of representation of Arab/Oriental women in the West, have been largely based on post-colonial or post-colonial feminist theory, whereas works on the representation of Arab women in local discourses, have been very few and theoretically ungrounded.

Inspired by the literature review, in this section I will review both post-colonial and postcolonial feminist theory and apply them to the two dimensions of my research question; the Local and the Western discourse.

This chapter is divided into three sections; in the first section post-colonial theory will be reviewed, the second section will review post-colonial feminist theory, and the last section will discuss the operationalization of those two theories in relation to this thesis's research question.

4.1 Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory is greatly varied, however, for the purposes of this thesis I explore post-colonialism through the works of three authors; Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak. I will specifically look at key concepts such as the colonizers and the colonized, gender, authority, identity formation, and agency in their works.

Edward Said:
It is believed that Edward Said is one of the first to articulate the postcolonial theory. In his book *Orientalism*, he lays the foundation for a critical theory that came to be known as post-colonialism. In *Orientalism,* Said undertakes the project of reviewing the vast body of literature about people called Orientals produced by Westerners about the Other, who is an object constructed first and foremost by Western imagination of the Orient.

His main argument is that Orientalism is "ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted a binary opposition between the familiar and the strange' (Loomba 2008: 45). Said (1995) comes to the conclusion that a certain mindset towards the third world dictates a certain way of structuring one's thoughts about the third world. These thoughts are structured along the lines of binary opposition of central self and decentralized other. The construction of the "other" delimits the notion of the "Western" selfhood, and the other is always constructed in radical opposition to one's self.

One of the strengths of postcolonial theory as articulated by Said is that it views discourse as a homogenous and deliberate system of knowledge production. The

power/knowledge system[7] is a deliberate effort to subjugate a weaker other, thus knowledge production cannot be separated from the aim of domination.

Said and Agency:
Said envisions the emergence of agency of the Other in terms of producing a differentiated discourse whose aim is to dismantle the Orientalist totalizing discourse from within. This view of agency is in line with Said's view of authority as "indistinguishable from ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgment, it forms, transmits, and reproduces" (Said 1995: 20). Therefore this counter discourse produces new channels of authority whose ideas contradict the orientalist ideas and as a result contribute to reducing its power.

Said and Gender:
Although Said did not address the gender question implicitly, his analysis nevertheless opened up the way for subsequent works to utilize his analysis in a gendered context. Some like Yegenoglu, in "colonial fantasies: towards a feminist reading of Orientalism", critique Said of treating gender in his analysis as a mere subcategory, and therefore, of being guilty of omitting the more important question of "how representations of cultural and sexual difference are constitutive of each other "(Yegenoglu, 1998).

Others on the other hand, have recognized the centrality of the negative stereotypes of Middle Eastern women in projecting a "negative depictions of the region and its culture" (Abu-Lughod, 2001: 103) and thus took on the task of analyzing the construction of women in such a light connecting it to the larger orientalist project. Other works inspired by Said have also concentrated on producing a differentiated account of oriental women, one that aims to highlight their agency.

However, one problem with this approach is that works that aim at combatting stereotypes of Eastern women and at highlighting their agency are inevitably caught in the orientalist dilemma of producing knowledge of the Orient to a Western audience. This problem is exacerbated by the relationship between knowledge and power or domination that Said's *Orientalism* reveals. As Abu-Lughod (2001: 105) eloquently argues:

> *"It must be recalled, however, that Orientalism was not just about representations or stereotypes of the Orient but about how these were linked and integral part to projects of domination that were ongoing. This raises an uncomfortable question about all of our work of the combatting-stereotype sort [...]. First we have to ask what liberal values we may be unreflective validating in proving that "Eastern" women have agency, too. Second, and more importantly, we have to remind ourselves that although negative images of women or gender relations in the region are certainly to be deplored, offering positive*

---

[7] Said borrows the power/knowledge system from Foucault to mean that power cannot be separated from it knowledge component and vice versa.

images [...] will not solve the problem posed by Said's analysis of Orientalism. The problem is about the production of knowledge in and for the West. As Yegenoghu puts it, following Said's more Foucauldian point, the power of orientalism comes from its power to construct the very object it speaks about and thereby establish the identity and the power of the subject that speaks about it". As long as we are writing for the West about "the other", we are implicated in projects that establish Western authority and cultural difference".

Homi Bhabha:
Bhabha's conception of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and colonial discourse differs markedly from the one presented by Said. Bhabha does not understand colonial discourse in terms of binary opposition between colonizers and colonized, for him the relationship is more complex. Bhabha critiques Said's construction of the colonizers and the colonized as too "monolithically powerful and unitary", instead the colonizers hold contradictory sentiments that translate into their discourse (Schwartz and Ray 2005: 457). These sentiments operate at the level of the unconscious and are based on desire; the desire to be in the place of the other and fear; the fear from the other. The colonial stereotype, according to Bhabha (1983: 22) "is a complex ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive". This ambivalence however does not reduce the effectiveness of the stereotype in dominating the colonized, because its effectiveness lies in its ability to deny difference and therefore to focus on a "fixated mode of representation" (Bhabha 1983: 25).

Colonial Identities and the notion of *Hybridity*:
Bhabha, suggest that "liminality[8] and hybridity are an essential attribute of the colonial condition" (Loomba 2008: 148). Hybridity, for Bhabha, is the result of the *process of identification*, in which the colonized come to assimilate an aspect, attribute, or a property of the other, and is partially or wholly transformed thereafter into a hybrid form of existence. Identification rests on the basis of the relationship between the demand that reaches outside the self and that has the other as its locus and outlook, and the place or the position that this other occupies (Bhabha 1994: 44). Moreover, for Bhabha the place of identification "is a place of splitting" because it essentially combines elements of both identities; the colonialist and the colonized (ibid). By giving the example of the slave whose desire is to occupy his masters' place, Bhabha shows how the slave is in the two split places at the same time; being in the place of the master in the realm of his desire, and at the same time still occupying the place of the slave in his "avenging anger" (ibid).

Bhabha and Resistance:
Hybridity for Bhabha is not only a source of mixing, it is also a source of resistance albeit not intentional one. Hybridity is a source of resistance to colonial power

---

[8] Liminality means occupying a position on the both sides of a boundary

simply because colonial power's inability to replicate itself perfectly works from within to undermine it (Loomba 2008: 149). Thus, Bhabha breaks away from the traditional conception of mimicry as a self-conscious tool of resistance that the colonized employ. Mimicry is rather seen to undermine "colonial authority specifically because it is the result of the ambivalent colonial discourse that can never achieve its goal" (Loomba 2008: 149), in other words because the colonized can never fully become like his/ her "master". By adopting a part of the colonizer's culture, the colonized are engaged in eternally changing and resisting that culture.

Critique of Bhabha's hybrid:
One of the main critiques of the concept of hybridity is that Bhabha's hybrid is undifferentiated by intersectional logic embracing gender, class, or location. He is assumed to have a similar universal and agonistic experience of being split between two places and two worlds (Loomba 2008: 150). Thus the weakness in Bhabha's work, although he recognizes the plurality in the colonizers and the colonized, is that the colonized emerges as homogenous entity that does not leave a room for a difference of experience across gender, class, time and space.

Other critiques have also accused Bhabha's concept of hybridity of underplaying the tension between the colonizers and the colonized. They cite nationalists' movements' reliance on representing a binary opposition between the 'authentic' self and the colonialist as proof that resistance does not lie in hybridity (Loomba 2008: 152).

Gayatri Spivak:
Spivak was the first to employ the term "the Subaltern" to designate those who have no access to social mobility. Although the subaltern does not univocally designate third world women, much of Spivak's work focused on the latter group. She challenged "a simple division between the colonizers and the colonized by inserting the 'brown woman' as a category oppressed by both. Elite native men may have found a way to 'speak', but, she suggests, for those further down the hierarchy, self-representation was not a possibility" (Loomba 2008: 195). Spivak sees the agency of the subaltern group, in that case the women, as being used and exploited to serve the interest of both the colonizers and the colonized and thus the questions of whether the subaltern can acquire a voice become a central one in Spivak's writing. Her essay ends with a radical realization that the "Subaltern" can never acquire a space from which to articulate their experience. Spivak makes use of the concept of *epistemic violence* to express the destruction of the non-Western ways of thinking, perceiving and understanding the world, which in her opinion make the subaltern caught in translation and unable to speak.

To understand the absolute silence of the subaltern, one must look at Spivak' s text more deeply. "Can the Subaltern Speak" was addressed as a critique to Western academician who champion the cause of the oppressed by writing and seeking to represent their voices, and who according to Spivak, unknowingly achieve the opposite of further silencing these voices.

Critique of Subaltern Silence:

The main criticism waged against Spivak is that by focusing solely on the discourses of the West, Spivak specifically ascribes the status of a unitary and uncontested ideology, which leaves no room for competing and resisting ideologies to operate, and this is precisely why in Spivak's text the Subaltern can never speak. This needs not to be the case however, if one looks at the notion of ideology from a Gramscian perspective, the subaltern can and does speak.

In the "prison notebook" Gramsci, (1995) makes a distinction between two sets of ideology. In the first set, ideologies operate to maintain social cohesion and expresses the interest of the ruler whereas the second types is the ideologies the one held by the exploited and which expresses the protest against the current order. Consequently, the oppressed comes to possess a dual consciousness; "that which is beholden to the rulers, and complicit with their will, and that which is capable of developing into resistance" (Loomba 2008: 29). Therefore, applying a Gramsci notion of ideology, the subaltern are already engaged in resisting dominant discourses, and although the subaltern's discourses are not hegemonic, they nevertheless convey opposition to the power structure and can be thought to possess a voice:

> *Spivak's work contradicts a crucial corollary of the articulation of subalternity with hegemony in Gramsci's thinking. This is that the oppressed can- through greater consciousness of self and class interest- organize to eventually overthrow the hegemonic order. Thus, [... Spivak] pays little attention to how the contemporary subaltern might 'come to voice. [...] From this perspective, and in the light of abundant historical evidence of how the effective resistance of even the subaltern female, Spivak might justifiably be considered to unnecessarily deterministic and politically pessimistic*" (Moore-Gilbert, In Schwartz and Ray 2005: 464).

Ania Loomba was also own critical of Spivak's work. She attributes the absence of the agency in Spivak's subaltern agency in the expectation that this agency would manifest as a "pure opposition to the order it opposes" (Loomba 2008: 198). Rather for Loomba, subaltern agency is much more complicated: "the subaltern agency, either at the individual level or at the collective level, cannot be identified as pure opposition to the order it opposes; it both works within that order and displays its own contradictions" (ibid). Consequently there is a need for sensitivity in rewriting the history of the subaltern and reclaiming their voices. Special attention must be given to situating the subaltern with a multiplicity of hierarchy and discourses and look at the way in which these different discourses and hierarchies are woven together (Loomba 2008: 200).

4.2   Feminist Postcolonial Theory

The first wave of feminism focused on the experiences of the middle-class 'white' woman and thought to universalize this experience to third world women and women of color, and by doing that did not allow for any difference of experiences to emerge. Feminist postcolonial theory was born out of first wave feminism and was a direct critique to it.

According to the feminist postcolonial theory, women are not a pre-constituted category; their experience cannot be universalized. There are many differences that underlie women's experience in third world from that of women in the first world. To understand the experience of third world women one must look at the intersection of race, class, gender etc.

Post-colonial feminism also introduced the concept of *the third world difference,* whereby women in the third world are often viewed by their first world counter-parts as being doubly oppressed; first for being a woman and second for being third world. Third world women are positioned in radical opposition to the self-image of first world women and the image of the other woman is created; they are viewed as traditional, religious backward, uneducated, domestic, abused etc., whereas as women in the first world are viewed as free agents, responsible for their own choices and destiny (Mohanty 1988). Thus, Western white women's representation of third world women, while positively motivated deprives third world women of their agency and represents them as all victims of an overarching patriarchal structures, paying no attention to differences among these women.

Finally, perhaps the most valuable contribution of post-colonial feminism is in considering gender not as a mere subcategory of being third world, but in understanding sexual and racial difference as being enacted simultaneously (Yegenoglu 1998; In Lewis and Mills: 542, and Loomba 1993: 209).

Critique of postcolonial feminism

Post-colonial feminism has made a lot of contributions in understanding the difference that underlie women's experiences, however it leaves many problems unaddressed. Firstly it does not answer the question of who is "qualified" to represent specific women and what are the criteria that separate third world from first world feminist leaving a grey area of in-betweeners to emerge. For example a person like myself, a third world woman educated in the West and in the third world, a woman who acquired western values, where am I positioned in this divide? Can I then claim to be a 'true' third woman? And whom can I claim to represent?

This brings us to the second point, adopting difference among women as a basis for theory makes it extremely difficult to say anything meaningful about any group of women. Asserting the existence of difference on the basis of race, class, education, location, etc. means that the division among women is very extensive, and as a result post-colonial theory can lose its explanatory potential.

4.3 Operationalization

In the previous section I presented a selection of two theories that could be helpful for my analysis; post-colonialism in the works of Said, Bhabha and Spivak and postcolonial feminism. In this section I am going to form my own theoretical framework relying on various inputs from these theories that can be used to answer my research question.

My research question has two dimensions the first relates to the representation of Egyptian women in Western discourse and the second relates to the representation of Egyptian women in Local Egyptian discourse. To answer the first part of the question inputs from Said, Bhabha, and postcolonial feminism can be used, although each might yield slightly different interpretations.

Applying Said's reasoning a binary opposition between the "us" versus "them" would be expected to emerge in Western discourse. This opposition is an intentional strategy by the West to dominate and rule the Orient. In that sense the "other woman" is only one category of the other that the West wants to dominate. Male and female therefore are similarly positioned in this interplay of power. As a result there is nothing special in the category of women. This does not mean however, that such analysis cannot be pursued, but rather the category of woman holds no more value than the category of man. This very idea is contested in post-colonial feminism that stresses the importance of paying special attention to the intersectionality of the female other, whose life is a doubling experience of her gender and race. Thus the native woman as a category of analysis holds a different weight than the category of the native man and is as such worthy of analysis as distinct from the mere experience of colonization.

Furthermore, far from seeing the Western discourse on the Orient as being a binary construction of "them" vs. "us", Bhabha sees the colonial stereotype as essentially ambivalent and contradictory. Thus, Bhabha's input can be used to understand contradictions in the Western discourses without overlooking the role that discourses play in projects of Western domination and power.

Thus, in line with Bhabha I see the colonial discourse as greatly ambivalent and contradictory. The strength of using Bhabha's conception of discourse as ambivalent is that the contradictory representations of the colonized needs not to be seen as a sign of weakness of the colonial discourse but rather as an essential attribute that gives it its currency. Therefore, the intentional character of discourses that Said emphasized needs not be contradictory with the ambivalence of discourse. Lastly, owing this insight to postcolonial feminism, the category of the Egyptian woman and her experiences is expected to differ significantly from the experiences of Egyptian men or Western women, this difference is due to the intersection of her gender and race and render her experience as a distinct analytic category worth studying.

Answering the second part of the research question involves some complex theoretical reasoning since most of the post-colonial critique focused on the colonizer's representation of the colonized, and not enough on the colonized self-representation. However using Bhabha's concept of hybridity and Spivak's notion

of epistemic violence and subalternity, such task is made possible. To analyze how Egyptian women are constructed in the Local/ Arab discourse from a postcolonial perspective is to study how the relationship of colonization have altered the fabric and the identity of the colonized. Bhabha undertakes this task and in doing so terms the concept of the hybrid; who is the product of this encounter and whose identity combines elements of the colonizers and the colonized. The hybrid is an "in-betweener" whose existence is characterized by constant agony, and who by the mere fact of existing in that state, is ascribed with agency and works to dismantle colonial discourse from within. Applying Bhabha's notion of hybridity will thus imply that representation of Egyptian women will reflect that state of hybridity and will therefore be a combination of local "authentic" component and the Western component. This hybrid representation will be however, a form of articulation of agency and opposition to the colonial discourse. Spivak's notion of epistemic violence is less optimistic when applied to the local representation of women. Since local ways of knowing and understanding the world have been destroyed by colonization, local Egyptian discourse on women will reflect western ways of knowing. The voice of the subaltern woman cannot be recalled and she "must always be caught in translation, never [allowed to be] truly expressing herself" (Sharp, 2008).

5 Methodology

In the methodology section I aim to address three important aspects that pertain to the choice of method, and the collection of data, and the procedure for analysis.

5.1 The Choice of Method

Titscher (2002: 8) defines an empirical method "as a set of procedural rules which has available a set of principles governing how investigators should gather experiences and how they should organize their observations if they wish to proceed scientifically".

Methods are never chosen at random but the choice of method is mainly dependent on the general research question (Titscher, 2002: 6). Thus, a specific method cannot answer every research question, and specific research question does not lend itself to all scientific methods. Given the importance of the research question in the choice of the research method it might be useful to remind the reader of the research question and sub-questions:

"*How are Egyptian women's represented in Western vs. Egyptian discourse after the Arab Spring in Egypt?*"

- *What are the discourses used in constructing women?*
- *Is there a difference in the articulation of these discourses between Local and Western discourse?*
- *How do these discourses connect, complement, or contradict one another? And what kind of power relations do these discourse reflect*

Discourse Analysis:
My research has two important aspects that render it particularly appropriate for discourse analysis. First, this research focuses on obtaining data from secondary sources, namely the media, and therefore methods that are not textually based, like interviewing, focus groups, ethnography among others are inappropriate from the start for this the type of data. The second factor is that the research question itself explicitly looks for discerning different discourses on women and therefore, discourse analysis lends itself particularly well for this type of questions.

Discourse analysis is not only a method but also a theory, and therefore it constitutes a "methodological whole" (Jorgensen & Philips 2002: 4). Thus to make the use of discourse analysis as a method, the compatibility between ontological

and epistemological assumptions that research starts from and those of discourse analysis need to demonstrated.

Jorgensen and Philips (2002:5) summarize the assumptions of discourse analysis in four points. First, to be able to use discourse analysis the researcher must share the view of knowledge and representations of the world not as an objective truth, but as a product of discourse. The second assumption is that representations of the world are historically and culturally specific and therefore can change over time and place. Thirdly, knowledge about what is true and false is created through social interaction. And finally, "different social understandings of the world lead to different social actions, and therefore the social construction of knowledge and truth has social consequences" (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 6).

Although this research does not adopt discourse analysis as its main theory, it nonetheless shares these four assumptions since; firstly, it seeks to identify various representations of Egyptian women, and does not equate this representation with reality. Secondly, this research explicitly theorizes a difference between Western and Local discourses, which support the claim that it assumes to talk of representation and not reality. Predicting a difference between Western and Local discourse means that it assumes that knowledge is socially, culturally and historically specific and therefore subject to change in time and place. It is also in line with the view that knowledge about the world has social consequences since this essay seeks to identify the relationship various discourses have in producing power.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a major method of discourse analysis that lends itself for the investigation of change (Jorgensen and Philips 2002:7). Unlike its other variant, the theoretical approach to discourse analysis, it posits the existence of a social reality outside of discourse, and therefore is against reducing all social changes to discourse: "discursive practice is viewed as one dimension or moment of every social practice in a dialectical relationship with the other moments of social practice" (Jorgensen and Philips 2002:18- 19). This corresponds with the assumption of my research question that treats the Egyptian revolution as a social event situated outside of discourse, but one that has important discursive implications. CDA therefore seems to be the most appropriate method here, as it enables me to study the impact of the revolution on discursive practices without equating the revolution as a social practice with its resulting discursive practices. In other words, it enables me to place the revolution outside of discourse and study its results on the discourse.

How is the analysis conducted?

It is recommended that the researcher engaging in CDA follows three analytically distinct steps that are required to effectuate the analysis (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 81):

a- Text: Analyzing the text means focusing on the linguistic aspect of that text, and studying the ways in which discourses "are activated textually and arrive at, and provide backing for, a particular interpretation" (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 83). There are many textual markers that can be used to effectuate the analysis,

however, I will only discuss the ones that are actually employed in the thesis. This will be done under the section "The analytical procedure"

b- Discursive practices: has to do with the ways producers of texts draw on existing discourses and genres and how consumers of texts also draw on these discourses and genres to interpret and make sense of that text (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 69). Discursive practices focus mainly on two aspects: *Interdiscursivity* and *Intertextuality*.

Interdiscursivity "occurs when different discourses and genres are articulated together in a communicative event" (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 73). Interdiscursivity can manifest as either creative discursive practices or as conventional discursive practice. In the former case discourse types "are combined in new and complex ways" in a way to indicate both a "sign" and a "driving force" for discursive change and thus by implication to social change (ibid). Conventional discourse practices on the other hand stand for the way discursive practices are mixed in a conventional way and which indicate and contribute to the sustenance of the dominant order (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 73).

Intertextuality on the other hand is when different texts draw on one another either through direct citation, or by relying on ideas produced by other texts. As (Hansen, 2006) puts it: "no text is written without traces of previous text, […] a text is simultaneously drawing upon a textual past and constructing this past into a unique new text". Hansen (2006: 59) further argues that the inter-textual relationship is mutual; it is not only that the new text drawing on the previous one that is gaining credibility, but that the status of the old one is being confirmed. Thus, analyzing the inter-textual relationship between texts can reveal how different texts can constitute the field of knowledge about a certain issue.

c- Social practice: this phase of the analysis comes the latest, and involves two important steps. The first step is to explore the relationship of the discursive practice to the order of discourse, or the sum of what has been said about a topic (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 86). And the second one, to make the connections between "the partly non-discursive, social and cultural relations and structures that constitute the wider context of the discursive practice" or what Fairclough calls the social matrix of discourse (Jorgensen and Philips 200: 86).

In this phase of the analysis, questions of whether discursive practices reproduce or challenge the order of discourse are asked and relationship between the order of discourse and the social change is analyzed (Jorgensen and Philips 2002: 87). More importantly perhaps is the question of whether "discursive practice[s] conceal and strengthen unequal power relations [… or whether they] challenge power positions by representing reality and social relationship in new ways" (ibid).

5.2   The Collection of Data

Identifying and tracing all Western discourses on Egyptian women's role in the Spring revolution is an impossible task. As a result I identify samples from those discourses. This was achieved through the selection of two US based magazines *Newsweek* and *Foreign Policy*. The choice of these two magazines was motivated by the high readership as well as their pronounced interest in covering foreign affairs. Furthermore while *Newsweek* is placed at the liberal side of the political spectrum, *Foreign Policy* insists on affirming its ideological independence and is often classified as moderate. Selecting two popular magazines with different political orientations was done to diversify the discourse and guard against presenting a biased picture.

Similarly, two Egyptian Magazines were selected, *October*, and *Al-Ahram* magazines. These two magazines were selected on the basis of recognition and high readership in the country. Both magazines are semi-state owned, but generally reflect independent and critical views. Both magazines are published in Arabic, this however did not pose a problem since Arabic is my native language.

It must also be clarified, that although careful measures have been adopted to guard against selection bias and ensure diversity in discourse in both cases, this thesis does not aim to generalize its findings beyond the texts from which it makes its inference. The aim is not to say something about how Egyptian women are represented in the entirety of Western or Local discourse, but rather to analyze how these women are represented in the subcategory that I identify of that discourse. Thus I treat the text I analyze as a sample that gives an idea of the kind of discourses that are taking place, but I do not hold them to represent all the discourses, nor do I deny the possibility of existence of different discourses and different representation. In that sense this thesis has no concern for *external validity* because it does not aim to generalize.

Article Search Procedure:
The search was effectuated on the online websites of the magazines in question using the keywords of: "Women" and "Egypt" and its corresponding Arabic words "Alamaraa" and "Misr". The resulting articles were examined for relevance. I employed a set of criteria in selecting the texts and determining relevance, which is the following:
   a) The subject of the text must deal implicitly with the issue of Egyptian women, or the subject of the text must discuss an issue that is of concern to Egyptian women[9]
   b) Texts have to be analytical and not of the news-reporting type, and

---

[9] For example "The Price She Paid" disuses a foreign reporter's experience of who sexual assault in Egypt, although Egyptian women occupy a marginal position in that text, it has been included in the analysis because sexual assault in Egypt is an issue that has been discussed in relation to Egyptian women.

c) Texts have to be published from the 25[10] of January 2011 onwards[10].

All other articles were excluded. This resulted in 22 English articles; 15 belonging to *Newsweek* and 7 belonging to *Foreign Policy*, and 9 Arabic articles, with 6 in *October* magazine and 3 in Al-Ahram magazine. These texts were analyzed using CDA.

5.3   The Analytical Procedure

As has already been mentioned the texts were analyzed using Critical Discourse Analysis - this method has been discussed in detail previously. However, for the sake of clarifying the operationalization of the method this section aims to explain how this was accomplished in relation to my analysis.

Firstly, posing a series of question in relation to each text was very helpful to start the analysis process. Addressing a series of similar questions relating to every text under analysis allowed me to stay focused on what I was looking for and assess texts in a similar manner regardless of the different topics they treat. These questions were initially inspired by the sub questions of the thesis as listed above, although they take a more elaborate and concrete form:

i-   How does the text portray Egyptian women? Does it portray them in a positive or negative light? How is this construction accomplished?
ii- How does the text portray Egyptian women as opposed to other categories in that text; for example, Egyptian men, foreign women etc?
iii- How is the agency (or the lack of) of these women articulated?
iv- What themes are evoked in relation to Egyptian women? How is this accomplished?
v-   Finally, do these themes represent women in a position of strength or weakness

After posing these questions to each and every texts two main questions were posed to the aggregation of text:

A- How do different text connect or complement one another, do they contradict each other, or do they state basically the same thing, and how?
B- Is there a pattern that emerges from the examination of these texts and how can this be explained?

Secondly, at the level of the text a series of semantic markers inspired by Wood and Kroger (2000) were identified a priori to aid in the analyses process and these were applied systematically to all the articles.

---

[10] The 25th of January 2011 is the official date of the start of the revolution where protests against the regime of Mubarak started.

First, I started by examining the kind of language that each author employs to talk about women. For example a passive sentence formulation would in that case suggest that the author sees women as a non-agents, conversely describing women using the active form connotes that the author ascribes agency to women. Ex: the woman was left alone, is a passive formulation, whereas the woman stayed alone is an active one. Moreover, the use of obligation modal "should" "must" is also in line with a view of women as patients (Wood and Kroger, 2000). Finally, the analysis of language must also pay attention to the lexical field that is being used to describe women. For example a pejorative lexical field would indicate that the author has a negative view of women, whereas a positive lexical field will indicate a corresponding positive attitude. Thus the linguistic part of the analysis will pay attention to the kind of language being used to accomplish a certain meaning, with special attention to the passive/active divide, the use of a lexical field and the different modals that are at play.

The examination of the degree of identification that the author has with his/her statement, which is generally referred to as "footing" was also accomplished (Wood and Kroger, 2000). Footing can be detected through the use of direct quotations or by explicitly indicating an instance of reported speech, for example through the use of "she said". Conversely, invoking direct experience of the matter that is being discussed implies that the author identifies with his/her statement.

Third, the general structure of the articles was considered as a marker for the information that the author chooses to emphasize, ex the title and the first paragraph, the quote that is enlarged in the text, all indicate that the author attributes special importance to this information.

Forth, absence was also used as a marker of presence. The choice to omit a certain representation of women is as telling as the choice to represent them in a certain way. Thus, the ways in which Egyptian women *have been* represented in the text were contrasted to the other possible representations that *could have been* included. This contrast between what is present and what is absent is very telling about the author's attitude towards the participants in his text and the characteristics he/she accords to them. For example talking only about the experience of sexual harassment of a woman and not of how she resists, can indicate that the author views her as a victim.

6 Analysis

Before starting the analysis it would seem important to define two terms that are often repeated in this thesis but which could hold ambiguous meanings. These two terms are revolution and discourse.

A revolution can be defined in a variety of way. I define a revolution as a "dramatic and wide-reaching change in the way something works or is organized or in people's ideas about it"(Pearsall and Hanks, 1998). Thus as a result the mere act of demonstrating against a dictatorial regime constitutes a brake in the dominant paradigm and a start of a revolutionary act. As a result, this thesis treats all articles that were issued after the 25 of January 2011, the date when the demonstration against the regime of Hosni Mubarak started, as belonging to the category of after the revolution.

Similarly discourse could mean many things. I understand discourse in line with Foucault's view as a "group of statements which provide a language for talking about- a way for representing the knowledge- a particular topic *at a particular historical moment*. […] Discourse is (therefore) about the production of knowledge through language" (Hall, 1997). As a result, discourse can be thought of as constructing the subject, as defining what constitutes acceptable knowledge and what does not.

The analysis that follows sums up the major findings organized along thematic lines. In what follows I draw up the major discourses that go into constructing Egyptian women in the media supported by proofs from these various articles.

6.1 Western Discourse

After effectuating the analysis many discourses started to appear across various English articles, these discourses are the discourse on othering, the discourse of agency/non-agency, and the discourse of sexual assault.

6.1.1 The Discourse on Othering

In the aftermath of the revolution a discourse on Othering can be discerned in the texts analyzed and is manifested in two ways. The first way is by constructing a temporal comparison between the Egyptian woman of today and that of the past, where the woman of the past serves as the superior other to that of the present. The second manifestation of othering is more in line with the mainstream meaning of

the concept, in which the Egyptian woman is constructed as different and inherently inferior from the Western woman.

A- The Egyptian Woman of the Past as the Better Other:

The now and then comparison:
A temporal comparison between Egyptian women of the past and the Egyptian women of today can be discerned in the discourses of the aftermath of the revolution. The contrast between the "now" and "then" can be best analyzed by looking at the two articles that appeared in *Foreign Policy,* "Once Upon a time in Egypt" (Foreign Policy, 2011) and "The Sisters of the Brotherhood" (Gattoni, 2011) in April 24, 2011 and November 17, 2011 respectively. Both these articles give a representation of women at a certain point in Egyptian history; the former Egyptian women in the 1950s and the latter Egyptian women in the present time.

These two articles juxtaposed together convey the unique message of the difference of the Egyptian women of today from that of yesterday. To understand the function of that comparison it is important to start by looking at how women are constructed along the lines of the "now" and "then" and how this is achieved.

The "now" and "then" in Once upon a Time in Egypt:
In "Once Upon a Time in Egypt" the temporal comparison is apparent as soon as one reads the title; "Once upon a time in Egypt; beaches and bikinis from when Alexandria was Club Med". The reader is given the impression that Egypt was a place where women strolled on the beaches in "bikinis" but not anymore. The use of expressions of "once upon a time" and "were ordinary […] as they would be extraordinary today" , "pictures […] capture the last days of an Alexandria *that would be all but unrecognizable today*" mark the difference between the present and the past (Foreign Policy, 2011).

The "then" in Egypt is represented as a place where women wearing revealing bikinis was considered normal; "revealing bathing suits *were* as ordinary as they *would be* extraordinary today" (ibid). Egypt is represented as a place of equality where "foreign visitors and Egyptian are [were] *alike*", a place where "*Young Egyptians* of Arab, Sephardic, and European Descent" were considered Egyptian (ibid). Thus the Egypt of the past did not articulate any racial difference or sexual difference from the West; it was just like any other "cosmopolitan city" in the modern world. However this all has changed long ago.

By contrast the "now" in Egypt is marked by its divergence and radical difference from the past. Although the author does not make it his aim to talk about the Egypt of today, by using the above quoted phrases: "Alexandria [is …] all but *unrecognizable*", "revealing bathing suits were as ordinary as they would be *extraordinary today*", Egypt is rendered radically different from what it once was (ibid). The contrast between "were" and "would be" on the one hand and "ordinary" and "extraordinary" on the other and the use of the future tense in "would be", convey the message that not only women who wear revealing swimming suits are not the norm anymore, but that indeed they are impossible to find. This plays a role in constructing an image of a woman who is not allowed to go to the beach, or even

perhaps not allowed to go outside the home. One that has lost any freedom over her body, let alone the freedom to dress as she pleases. This contrast is used strategically to mark the difference between the woman of the past and the woman of the present, where the woman of the present is represented as a different, a worse version of that of the past.

The "now" and "then" across the two articles:

It can be argued that these two above-mentioned articles are related inter-textually. For one thing, these two articles supplement one another. The first article focuses on representing the women of the past as superior to the one of the present and on conveying deterioration in the status of women in Egypt (Foreign Policy, 2011), whereas the second article focus exclusively on the bad status that Egyptian women experience (Gattoni, 2011). Secondly, both these articles appeared in Foreign policy within a few months difference. Therefore, this homogeneous representation of women as undergoing negative transformation by foreign Policy deserves special attention. Relating these texts inter-textually tells the story of a negative transformation that these women underwent; from the good state of the past, to the negative state of today.

Given that images play an important role in the argument of these two articles, textual discourse analysis will be supplemented by visual discourse analysis that focuses on the pictures. Bringing up the difference between Egypt of today and Egypt of the past is realized through a discussion of two main axis; fun and happiness vs. duty, sexual liberation vs. sexual segregation.

The idea of fun and happiness vs. the idea of duty:

Perhaps the most apparent way in which *difference* is articulated between the "then" and the "now" lays in the sharp contrast between how the participants are depicted. One the one hand, women in "Once upon a time in Egypt" are represented as happy, and free. Pictures of these women show them leading a tranquil life on the beach; they are always smiling, mingling in the company of both men and women[11]. The lives of these women as portrayed in these photos seem to resolve around having fun and being happy. Furthermore, all the women are youthful, rich looking and "cosmopolitan". Pictures are bright and the background is a beautiful beach in Alexandria. All of these elements convey a message that life is very natural. This is also substantiated by the positioning of participants who are looking at each other and not directly at the camera, which conveys the idea that the camera captures life as it is for Egyptian women back then, the natural order of things, undisturbed by the presence of the camera.

Thus, these upper class, cosmopolitan women are represented as the stereotype for the Egyptian Woman in the 1950s and therefore the experience of leading a fun-filled and satisfying life is represented as *the experience* of all Egyptian women, with disregard to their social status, economic status among many other factors. Thus, the choice of the author to *only* select pictures of upper class women at the

---

[11] Appendix A picture number 1

beach to stand for all Egyptian women back then is questionable but nonetheless intentional, as is the image that this article projects of Egyptian women in the past as a-temporarily and overwhelmingly leading a free, happy, and fun-filled life. It is questionable in the sense that it only applies to that segment of the women back then, it is also intentional in the sense that it was selected to give the reader the impression of how much better women had it in the past compared to the present state of affairs.

The intentionality of that message is not fully realized until it is contrasted to another article that appeared in *Foreign Policy* a few months later; "The Sisters of the Brotherhood". The text claims to feature an insider's look at the lives of women in the Muslim Brotherhood by talking to and photographing some women in the organization. While the text is dominated by non-agent-like representations of women[12], its meaning and message are not fully captured unless contrasted to the image that "Once upon a time in Egypt" conveys.

Unlike the earlier representation of women as free, happy and having fun, the Sisters are represented as duty-bound, where duty is a fun-free activity. Duty in that context is understood as the duty to the family, a duty to society, a duty to God, and a duty to the organization.

As Amr, a sister in the organization is quoted saying: "' I believe my role as a mother is much more important than my job" and "[Amr] a graduate from the School of Law in Cairo, she does not work" (Gattoni, 2011). This quote illustrates how the duty to the family is occupying the central role in Amr's life and as a result any other desire fades away in comparison, even the desire for self-achievement. The portrait that the photographer chooses to represent Amr substantiates this idea further[13]. She is photographed inside the house playing with her child. Thus, Amr projects the idea of the Muslim Egyptian woman who is confined to the house and bound by her duty to her family. Amr duties and bondages contrast sharply with the women represented earlier who are totally free and who lead independent lives (no children or family members represented).

Like, Amr, all the sisters represented in the article are pictured as fulfilling some kind of duty. Some are fulfilling a social duty, one caption reads: "Women in the group participate in the Orphan Day in Cairo" (ibid). Others are fulfilling religious duty: "[…] listens to the Friday prayer", while some fulfill a political duty; "attend a weekly [Muslim Brotherhood] gathering in Cairo" (ibid).

Further, duty is pictured as tiresome, a fun-free activity, and not as a gratifying activity. For example, the portrait of Awatef Saad[14] contrasts sharply with that of the women in "Once upon a time in Egypt"[15]. Awatef's picture is taken indoors, she is placed in front of a wall, and the picture is dark and reflects a sense of sadness. This contrasts with the bright outdoors pictures that are put to represent Egyptian

---

[12] Agent-like representations are only articulated in "women lay an active role in the organization". The use of the active voice and the use of the adjective "active" accord an agent role for women in the organization.
[13] Appendix A picture number 2
[14] Appendix A picture number 3
[15] Appendix A picture number 4

women in the 50s and that reflected a joyful ambience. The veil that covers her hair is a constant reminder of the bikinis the 'other' women wore some 60 years ago on the beach. Moreover, unlike the women of the past Awatef does not occupy the center of the picture; rather her reflection on the wall occupies the center as if her presence is reduced to a shadow. Her expression is not that of a happy woman; she is neither smiling nor looking directly at the camera- although it seems obvious that there is nothing else going on to distract her attention as she is alone in a dark room.

Thus, this contrast in the images *constructs in binary terms* how women have gone from being liberated, happy, and carefree to being oppressed, unhappy and worrisome.

The idea of sexual liberation vs. sexual segregation:
The other two ideas that are contrasted by the use of this temporal comparison are that of sexual liberation and sexual segregation. On the one hand, women belonging to the "then" are represented as sexually liberated by the way they dress and by the presence of men in the picture. The bikinis that women wore figure both in the texts and in the images; "revealing bathing suits were ordinary" (Foreign Policy 2011). Pictures indeed shows women wearing a one piece swimming suits, bikinis and when dressed they were shown to wear shorts and other Western beach-appropriate clothes[16]. In addition, the presence of men in the pictures both as in what looked like as friends or lovers give further evidence of the representation of women as sexually liberated and available[17].

In sharp contrast, the sisters are all veiled, men are almost absent from all the photos and when they are present they are placed in separate spaces than the one occupied by women. Even pictures of women in public places seem to reflect this gender segregation, where women seem to always exist in groups. The text itself alludes to the idea of gender segregation by presenting the profile of these women as an oxymoron. This contradiction is structured along the lines of education and occupation. The author seems in fact to review in every case the education and the occupation of the sister in question in a consecutive manner. For example, returning to Amr, the author portrays her in the following manner: "A graduate from the School of Law in Cairo, she doesn't work to spend time with her children" (Gattoni, 2011). Here her education as a lawyer is contrasted against her current occupation as a housewife, as if to suggest that Amr is overly qualified to being just a housewife. A similar strategy is employed in talking about Marwa, another sister; "a graduate in Commerce from Cairo University, she currently works from her house". And also in portraying Awatef "[she] has a masters degree in science […] today she runs a small company" (ibid). Thus, it seems that in every case the author makes special effort to highlight the lost potential of these women who are educated but do not live up to their potential; women are represented as not working or doing "small" things.

Furthermore, it is evident in the text that the author suspects that the reason behind these women not living up to their potential is something beyond their desire

---

[16] Appendix A picture number 5
[17] Appendix A picture number 1

to stay at home or not work. When Amr explains her decision not to work, the author quotes her fully:"I believe that my role as a mother is much more important than my job" (ibid). The use of direct quote instead of formulating that statement along the lines of: 'since motherhood is so important to Amr she decided not to work', indicates that the author is distancing herself/himself from the statement that Amr made, which also suggest the author does not agree with that statement. By suggesting that there is more to these women then not wanting to work, the author conveys the message that they are not living up their potential essentially because as women they are segregated against by men.

Thus these two articles inter-textually related convey a binary opposition between the woman of the past as liberated, modern, free, natural and happy, and the woman of today as oppressed, unnatural, unhappy, and therefore as inferior. This practice although new and unconventional constitutes nonetheless a practice of othering.

B- The Western Woman as the Better Other:

After the revolution, a discourse of sexual harassment and violence has been highlighted in the press. This discourse drew both on cases of sexual harassment/violence of Egyptian and foreign women. Samira Ibrahim, and Lara Logan are two women who experienced severe sexual assault, both cases were widely publicizes in the global media. The comparison of the different construction of these women's similar experiences in the Western media can point to practices of othering. In this section I undertake the analysis of four articles; two dealing with Samira Ibrahim; "Egyptian Court Bans Army's Virginity Tests, Calls Them Degrading" (Lindsey, 2011a), "Samira Ibrahim, 'Virginity Test' Victim, Fights Egypt's Military Rule" (Adel 2012) and the two others dealing with Lara Logan; "The Price She Paid" (Kurtz, 2011 a), and "the Price Lara Logan Paid" (Kurtz, 2011 b). In order to engage in this comparison I will examine the different construction of these women, their character, and their agency through the discussion of their experience of sexual assault.

In the two articles that are devoted to discussing the case of Lara Logan, the author discusses her character as being brave and altruistic. In both article we see a repetition of the word "fearless" and the use of formulation "kept coming back, even after […] even after" (Kurtz, 2011 a) that denotes that no matter what were the obstacles Lara was so courageous that she never abandoned her job. Furthermore, her courage was also marked using the expression of "marveled at her compulsion to keep defying danger" (ibid). Moreover, Lara's fearlessness is also supplemented with her altruism. After having children, the author states that Lara has changed; "having children changed her", however, that change that meant that she was no longer fearless, is also described as being a result of altruism, or the care she has for her children and not the fear for her life; the author quotes Lara saying "I think about that child growing up without a mother" (ibid). Thus even the change in her courageousness, which is one of her best qualities, is described as a result of her possessing another great quality, namely altruism.

In addition to bravery, Logan is constructed as an agent who despite the 'un-agent-like'/victim-like situation that she went through, is nonetheless still an agent. Thus the sexual assault is only seen as a situation where she was a victim, however Logan is not defined by this victimization. On the contrary, by drawing on *a discourse of agency* (which will be discussed later in the analysis), Lara's resistance is highlighted throughout many passages in the text. For instance, even when discussing her previous arrest, the author uses the active voice to designate her: "Egyptian soldiers had arrested, handcuffed and blindfolded the 39 year old" (ibid). This formulation not only contrast with the type of passive language that is used to describe Ibrahim, but also with the general passive voice that is used to describe all Egyptian women and which is given special attention in the discourse on agency.

The discussion of the sexual assault that she was subjected to occupies a secondary position in the article, which suggests that the intention was to minimize her victimization and optimize her agency. The positioning of the incident towards the middle of the article and after the affirmation of Lara's courage and good character puts less emphasis on the victimizing event and more emphasis on her agency. The discussion of the incident itself is done briefly only in the following passage: "Surrounded by a frenzied mob in Tahrir Square, she was separated from her crew, severely beaten, and sexually assaulted" (Kurtz, 2011 b).

Here the author does not go into details about the nature of the sexual assault as in the usual journalistic discursive genre, but rather states very briefly that she was sexually assaulted. Furthermore, the above-mentioned quote is directly followed up with a reaffirmation of Lara's bravery and the repletion of the word fearless that was mentioned earlier' "Lara is utterly fearless", "she has guts and courage under fire" (ibid). Following up the discussion of her assault with a reaffirmation of her courage suggests that the author is deliberately attempting to eliminate any representation of Lara as a victim.

The representation of Lara as an agent also finds further evidence in the discussion of themes relating to responsibility. By representing Lara as responsible; "she felt a responsibility to tell the story" (ibid) and evoking the idea that she paid a price in the title "The price she paid" she is being constructed as an agent, since only an agent can bare responsibility for her action, or even feel a responsibility towards others. Finally, Lara's agency and oppositional consciousness is highlighted again in the text with when the author quotes Logan saying: "Always there's a moment when you think, oh, my God, I just don't want to die". Here Logan is portrayed again as someone who fights back, and whose desire to life motivates her action.

The construction of Logan as a courageous, altruistic, agent contrasts sharply with the construction of Samira Ibrahim. Ibrahim the woman who was subjected to a forced virginity test by the army is constructed as a victim by drawing on a discourse on of non-agency.

Unlike Logan the profile of Ibrahim does not occupy center stage, rather it the sexual assault that is discussed at length in the article. The discussion of Samira's - among many other's- sexual assault is done through the use of the passive voice: "women […] were arrested. […] "The women were insulted", "accused of prostitution", "beaten", and "tortured" (Lindesy, 2011). At a military camp to which

they were transported, seven of the women- those who were unmarried- were subjected to 'virginity tests', striped and inspected by a male military doctor while officers looked on" (ibid). Here the difference between Logan and Ibrahim is marked by drawing on *a discourse of sexual assault* to characterize the experience of Egyptian" "accused of prostitution", "striped", "subjected to virginity tests" etc… women and the omission of the use of such discourse in the discussion on Logan's assault, where the reader is given very minimal information about the actual assault.

Furthermore, the discussion of Samira's profile comes later in the text and does not serve the purpose of raising sympathies for her, as it is the case of Logan. By contrast the evocation of Samira background as a being from "Egypt's conservative rural South where opinion on the case is divided" (Adel, 2012) introduces doubts in her deeds; the author continues by saying, "some believe the Army could have never behaved as she described, while others support her" (ibid). This phrase alludes to the possibility that Samira might be lying or that she herself must have done something wrong to deserve that treatment. This idea is echoed later in the text when the author quotes an army general saying: "females protesters aren't like your daughter or mine because they had camped overnight in the square with men".

Although the author here is merely reporting the opinion of others without expressing any support to these opinions, these opinions indirectly suggest the possibility that Ibrahim indeed had done something wrong. The introduction of differing opinion was not done in the two pieces that talked about Logan, for example there was no suggestion in the text that she was reckless to be going to a dangerous place etc., instead a monotonous representation of Logan's virtue was effectuated.

Finally, perhaps the most striking difference between the representation of Logan and that of Ibrahim is their recall of the incident. As it was already mentioned Logan expressed a strong will to live: "oh, my God, I just don't want to die" (Kurtz 2011, 1) - which highlighted her agency, whereas Ibrahim was quoted saying: "they are breaking you" and "on that day, I truly wished for death" (Lindsey, 2011a). The phrase they are breaking you suggest that they succeeded and that Ibrahim is already broken. Finally, the representation of Ibrahim as a victim culminated in that final quote "I truly wished for death". This quote is very powerful because it contrasts sharply with the reported will to live that Logan is described to possess. The wish to dies embodies the fear she felt and the submission to her situation, this draws a portrait of her as fearful, one that contrasts sharply with the attribution of Logan as "fearless". Thus, unlike Logan, the "racially and sexually" inferior Ibrahim is not a hero, but one who is filled with fear, passivity, non-agency and submission.

It is important to establish how the text represents Logan as a metaphor for all Western women and how Ibrahim is the image of all Egyptian women. Not only is Logan an educated, white, South African but is also treated in the text as an exemplary image of the Western female journalists and by extension of Western women. The author identifies Logan in the text as being Western; having discussed her experience of her sexual assault, the author goes from the specific to the general by declaring: "It has been a tough decade for Western war correspondents" (Kurtz 2011, b). Here belonging to the West and being one of the "us" is not contingent on

geography, but on having certain values, on being educated, middle class etc. The role of race cannot also be denied here, if Logan were a black South African she would most certainly not be considered Western. However, as I explain later, the definition of belonging to the West expands sometimes to include those who are not necessarily white[18].

Ibrahim is also treated in the text as a stereotype of the Egyptian woman. Her experience is not discussed in its individuality but treated as part of an aggregate experience that Egyptian women go through. This is marked by the repetitive use of "women were" through which the incidence and experience of Ibrahim is described: "women were […] arrested" "subjected" "accused" "insulted" (Lindsey, 2011a).

Thus, Ibrahim and Logan are made to represent Egyptian women and western women respectively. Therefore, the radical opposition between these two women; the former being fearful, a victim and a non-agent and the latter being fearless altruistic and an agent, is extended to embody the difference between Egyptian women and Western women. "Othering" is therefore accomplished by drawing upon the notion of racial difference. Those two women share the same gender and the same experience of sexual assault. What they do not have in common however is the same race, and this is the best place where difference can be ascribed.

6.1.2 The Discourse on Agency/Non-Agency

In the all the texts analyzed, articulation of agency comes across as being complicated, or even at times contradictory. Women in the aftermath of the revolution are represented as both agent and non-agent. However, this contradiction is not unintentional, but as a result of articulating these competing visions, the average Egyptian woman is being constructed as a non-agent as I show later. This is accomplished by drawing upon discourses of othering and sexual harassment, as I will discuss in this section.

Women as non-agent and the third world difference:
A very controversial piece on women was published in *Foreign Policy* in the issue of May/June2012, and was entitled "Why do they hate us? The real war on women is in the Middle East" (Eltahawy, 2011). The article talks about misogyny in the Arab world with particular examples inspired from Egypt. The author makes the argument that all the abuses in women's rights in the Middle East are due to misogyny, the simple fact that men hate women. Here I will not debate the author's argument, I will instead show how while in making this argument, she constructs a picture of Egyptian women as passive recipients of men's actions, a non-agents.

The author starts her piece by quoting a story from the Egyptian writer Alifa Rifaat about a married Egyptian woman who is not satisfied with her sex life with her husband; this woman "is unmoved by sex". But it is her husband to be blamed

---

[18] This discussion can be found on the discourse on agency when discussing the story of Alia Mahdy

for her dissatisfaction, he refuses to "prolong intercourse until she climaxes" and as a result he constantly "denies her an orgasm" (ibid). One day while she was "mak[ing] coffee dutifully for her husband" she realizes he was dead, "she was surprised at how calm she was" (ibid).

The author treats the story as a metaphor for all Egyptian women who are hated by their husbands yet cannot do anything about it. It is not that they do not hate their husbands back, after all the woman in the story was relieved to realize her husband was dead, but it is the hate of the husband that is productive in the sense that it has concrete consequences. It is the hate of the husband that is denying her the orgasm, yet her hate does not seem to affect his. Rather the woman despite her hate continues with carrying out her "duti[es]" towards him, a duty that is never reciprocated.

The rest of the article reaffirms the idea that men's hate towards women is what matters and vice versa by always talking about women as passive recipients of men's actions. This representation of women as passive non-agents is often done by drawing upon a discourse of sexual assault where the woman is the helpless recipient; women are, " sexually assaulted", "Egyptian women *are subjected to* humiliating virginity tests", "women are covered up, denied the simple mobility […], forced to get permission from men […], unable to marry" (ibid).

By contrast men are represented as always talked about in an active voice: "They want to silence us" "they want to chase women back home" "[they] still oppress us" "her husband denies her" (ibid). This contrast in the use of language constructs women in complete passiveness and silence, by focusing on what men do to oppress women and by completely ignoring how women resist or oppose these acts women are constructed as an a-temporal and a-spatial victims.

These views are all the more surprising when looking at statements where the author, Mona Eltahawy, who the article establishes as an American-Egyptian feminist, identifies with these women through the repetitive use of the "we" and the "us" and by orienting to her own experience through the use of "I" in the text. Phrases such as "we have no freedom because they hate us", "we women need" "they want to silence us", "I was sexually assaulted […] near Tahrir square" suggests that the author identifies with Egyptian women (ibid). Yet she a privileged, educated American-Egyptian represents women as passive recipients just because in that 'different' culture men hate women. In doing so the author reflects views on Egyptian women that resonate with Western feminism's *third world difference* of the 'other' woman who is dually oppressed by her gender and by her race. This can be observed in the following statement: "Yes, women all over the world have problems; yes the United States has yet to elect a female president, and yes women continue to be objectified in many "Western" countries (the oppression of gender) [… but] "when it comes to the status of women in the Middle East, it's not better than you think. It's much, much worse" (ibid). This quote draws on a *discourse of othering*, where being a female in that "other" culture is so bad that it is left as wild object of imagination. Thus women in Egypt are represented as double oppressed by their gender and by the fact of being third world, which means that no matter how bad women have it in the "West" they still have better than these Egyptian women that have the simultaneous disadvantage of being third world as well as female. The message that this article carries to its Western audience, "you the

outside world" (ibid), does nothing more than to confirm the stereotypes that the West already has of Egyptian women as being a different other, of being passive, oppressed, and therefore inferior.

Women as agents but…

Now we turn to the discussion of positive representation of agency in the texts. Although some texts reflect some positive images of Egyptian women, these images are not completely positive in two ways. On the one hand, some texts like "The Women's Revolution" (Lindsey, 2011b) show women as having a degree of autonomy, and a capability to act but they do not represent them as full agents. On the other hand, texts like "Egypt shocked after female dissident Blogger Posts Nude Photos" (Esfahani-Smith, 2011) and "Egypt's Game Changers" (Burleigh, 2012) represent some women as agents, but these very women are placed in opposition with other Egyptian women, and presented as an exception.

a- The semi-agent: In the first article "The Women of the Revolution the author to describes the role that these women played in the revolution as supplementary. For instance, the supplementary role of women is reflected in the phrase: "helped organize" (Lindsey, 2011b) the revolution instead of using the word 'organized', the author chose to add the word "help" that functions to attenuate the contribution of these women in the organization of the revolt. Further the role that women are represented to play and that is celebrated as 'revolutionary' is in nothing more than traditional. The author also speaks of the revolutionary role of women as being mothers and as speaking: "mothers of the young men" "spoke to the crowds" and "urged them" (ibid). This quote demonstrated that men are the real agents, whereas the revolutionary role of women is at best traditional whereby they are mothers who are talking about their sons, they are urging the crowd, but real action is left for men.

b- The "few" as an exception to the "many": In the other two articles mentioned above, "Egypt Shocked after Female Dissident Blogger Posts Nude Photos" and "Egypt's Game Changers" agency can be detected through some passages. For example in the former article Aliaa Mahdy, a female blogger who as the title suggests posted nude photos as an act of defiance of a patriarchal society, is referred to using active terms and expressions such as: "dissident", " [doing an] act of political rebellion", "defiance", "to protest", "courageous" (Esfahani-Smith, 2011). The active voice in those terms work to highlight the agency of Mahdy. Moreover, the use of adjectives such as "courageous" and "dissident", and nouns such as "rebellion" "defiance" constitutes a positive break with the traditional depictions with women's agency being articulated in more traditional ways (such as above).

However, Mahdy's position as an agent is contrasted by the positioning of the other Egyptian women in the text. Egyptian men are depicted as "radical Islamists" who "hide their women", "have them swim at the beach with their chadors, and force them to pray in separate quarters of the mosque" (ibid). By extension women are described as agentless objects whose men do with them as they please from hiding them to forcing them to do things against their will.

By contrasting the two sections together it becomes apparent that agency accorded to Alia is merely employed to contrast with the representation of the non-agent average Egyptian woman. The author here also draws on a *discourse of othering*, in which Mahdy, although ethnically Egyptian, has become Western, a one of "us", by virtue of her "courageous" and politically rebelling act of sexual liberation, and has been juxtaposed to the image of the average, non-agent Egyptian woman connoted by the use of expressions like "challenging her community" (ibid). Thus Western selfhood is no longer limited to being geographically in the West or even to being white, but is being extended to whatever is different from those that we know to be different from us. This finds evidence in the text when the author compares Alia's actions to American feminism: "The experience American feminists in the 20th century proved that women's political liberation intimately tied to their sexual liberation. There's no reason to believe that the same wouldn't be true for women of the Arab world" (ibid). Bringing Western feminism into the discussion shows that the author orients to Alia as being a Western feminist. Furthermore, by suggesting that sexual liberation will lead to political liberation in Egypt, the same way it has happened in the West, the author positions Alia as not merely as Western feminist but also an agent of that Western feminism that will ultimately liberate Egyptian women.

Thus the discourse on agency/ non-agency works in clever ways. Examples such as Eltahawy's (2011) article in which women are represented directly as non-agent are a rare occurrence. However, the discourse works in more complex ways; by according 'some agency to all women' or by according 'full agency to some women', the average Egyptian woman is constructed as non-agents and as a different other.

6.1.3 The Discourse on Sexual Assault

In the after the revolution period a new type of discourse began to take shape. This is the discourse on sexual assault; I chose the term assault as an overarching category to include both sexual harassment and sexual violence on women.

Although sexual assault in Egypt as a material reality existed before the revolution as many of the articles analyzed here avow: "attacks on women […] are not a new phenomenon in Egypt" (Salama, 2013) it only became a target of discourse or itself constituted a discourse in the aftermath of the revolution.

The main features of that discourse are that it represents Egyptian women as helpless victims of sexual assault and Egyptian men as eternal harassers. This is accomplished with reliance on other discourses of non-agency and othering on which the discourse of sexual assault both draws upon and reinforces

a- The image of women as helpless victims of sexual assault:
In the texts analyzed an image of women as being helpless victims of sexual assault is projected. Harassment is portrayed as a universal feature of the life of an Egyptian woman, one that is happening all the time to all women. For example, in the article entitled "Egypt's Sexual Harassments Epidemic" the author states that "[sexual

harassment] happens all the times of the day", "The assault, though not always brutal, happens to one of us almost every single time we head out", "even fully veiled women are harassed on Cairo's streets" (Jones, 2012),. Furthermore, sexual assault is represented as an unstoppable force, an "epidemic" (Jones, 2012) and even "terrorism" (Salama, 2013). Therefore, women cannot do anything to stop it; "we open our closets in the morning and debate what to wear to lessen the harassments- as if this would help" (Jones, 2012). The interjection "as this would help" reinforces the idea that women are helpless victims and have no real power to stop the assault, and as a result are a non-agent.

The article also draws on a discourse of non-agency to reinforce the image of the woman as victim. Women are referred to using the passive voice and their acts of opposition are omitted from the discussion. For example, the article talks about a young woman as "being snatched by military officers, dragged and kicked, and undressed" another woman as having "endured a brutal sexual assault" (ibid). The focus is therefore on what has been done to those women and not how these women fight back or resist. Moreover, the relationship between discourses of sexual harassment and discourses of non agency is reciprocal. For example Eltahawy's (2011) article drew on a discourse of sexual assault to represent women as non-agents. This suggest that discourses of non-agency and sexual harassment draw on one another and reinforce one another, this point will be discussed further in the discussion section.

Finally, the author alludes that sexual harassment or sexual assault is a gender problem and not a racial one women, by inserting to the discussion their experiences of being harassed as "white girls" and by avowing that sexual harassment "happens both to Egyptian women, and to foreign women" alike (ibid). However, this presentation of sexual harassment as a gender problem is rendered possible only through the othering of Egyptian men as all harassers, this will be explored in the next section.

b- Men as eternal harassers:

As it has been briefly mentioned above, rendering women, both Egyptian and foreign, as victims of sexual harassment is made possible by constructing Egyptian men as harassers and therefore of racially othering them, or representing them as a different other.

Egyptian men in the discourse of sexual assault are presented as evildoers, as harassers, as even perpetuators of "terrorism" (Salama, 2013). The use of the word terrorism in the title of one of the articles "Egypt's Sexual Terrorism" is especially peculiar. A mental image of the Arab male terrorist is evoked in the title, and this a-priori negative image of the Arab man as terrorist is associated with yet another negative image that of the sexual harasser. The evocation of sexuality and terrorism is used to spike fear in the minds of the readers with a first question coming to mind: how terrible will that same terrorist culture be towards their women? This ideas finds further proof in the article already discussed "Why do they hate us" where the Arab culture at large is qualified as a "misogynistic culture" (Eltahaway, 2011).

The most powerful articulation of the stereotype of Egyptian men as harassers draws on a discourse of othering and is incarnated in "Egypt's Sexual Harassment

Epidemic" where the text projects the image of a different other, a harasser; "it happens at all times of the day […] young boys, grown men, police officers, military officers, and almost everyone in between. They make all kinds of noises as we pass: slurps, hissing, barking, and even machine-gun sounds. It is strange to say, but we are constantly scared of small children" (Jones, 2012)

The image that the above quote gives of Egyptian men is an image of a dangerous, omnipresent threat, that would do everything even bark to harass a woman. Further it is not only a part of Egyptian men that engages in such activities but is all men; young and old, law enforcement or not, even children in that culture are not innocent but are very threatening. All of these elements combine to yield an image of Egyptian men as different, where all are harassers with no exception. Harassment seems to be a natural quality of their being something innate in all of them.

Thus, it seems although the problem is initially framed as a gender problem, it is underlined by a subtler racial stereotype of that "other" culture. This stereotype has implications for both men and women. By representing men as natural oppressors, harassers and aggressors, women are naturally seen to be the corresponding oppressed, harassed and aggressed.

6.2   Local Discourse

Similarly in Local discourse, discourses on sexual harassment, agency, and othering were articulated, although their articulation varied greatly from the Western discourse.

6.2.1   The Discourse on Sexual Assault

Unlike in Western Discourse, the discourse on sexual assault does not project a monolithic image of women as victims of such assault; neither does it project a monolithic image of Egyptian men. Rather the discourse on sexual assault is more diverse in the sense that it represents both the variation in the reaction of the women who are harassed; from agents to non-agents, and does not offer a reductionist view of the harassment as merely being the result of a third world essence.

Before elaborating further it is important to note that in all the Arabic texts analyzed the word assault did not figure. Instead, the less powerful world harassment figures instead. Therefore, in this section I will use the world harassment to stay true to the text, however, I chose to keep the name of the discourse as sexual assault for the sake of comparison with Western discourse.

Women not as helpless victims of sexual harassment:
As I mentioned above, in the discourse on sexual assault, women in the texts analyzed are both represented as victims and agents, depending on the situation they find themselves to in. For instance the article entitled "Confessions of Harassment

Victims" (Abdel Kader, 2013), interviews several women who were sexually harassed in Egypt, the text reports the variation in their reactions from not doing anything about it, to screaming or even beating the aggressor.

The first group of interviewees tells of their experiences of protesting through screaming beating or by any other means. The first interviewee says "he pulled my hand and I screamed and people gathered round", while the second "recalls laughingly" "a man put his hand on my shoulder, I pulled a pin from my hijab (veil) and pocked him in the hand, he was in pain but did not dare to do anything as he knew well what he had done" and the third one recalls: "I only felt that I was beating him [the harasser] senselessly" (ibid)[19]. All these experiences testify to the agency, defiance and resistance of these women who defended themselves against aggression. These voices are often omitted from Western discourse where only the silent woman, the woman as victim is discussed.

The other group that the author also discusses is those who *choose* to remain silent; "I did not tell anyone *because* we live in a conservative society", "I did not do anything *because* I was thinking how will people perceive me and react" (ibid). This group of women is the one who is always overemphasized in Western discourse, and the reaction of not doing anything is often attributed as a proof of their non-agency. Yet the way the author talks about these women, by citing a reason for their actions marked by the repetition of the word "because" suggests that he does not see them as non-agents, but that their agency lays not in their behavior but in their ability to choose whether or not to react.

Unlike Western discourse where actions are being *done to* women and not *done by* women, and drawing on a discourse of agency, Egyptian women in local discourse are be in control of their reaction. Even the choice of not doing anything is indeed a choice of an agent. Non-agency could be understood here not as a description of how the Egyptian woman *is*, but a temporary state that is merely situational and therefore contingent. The assumption here is that while women might be in a situation where their agency is not articulated, this does not however deny its existence.

This perception of a woman as agent and not as a victim also translates in the use language. All the texts analyzed used action verbs and the active voice to talk about the women who were harassed and fought back, the ones who were harassed and chose to remain silent, and even in the language used to describe women protestors against harassment. For example, women who resisted their harassers report saying: "I beat him" "I poked him [with a pin]" "I screamed" "I insulted him" "I slapped him" … While those who remained silent express their emotions saying; "I was boiling [with anger]" "I just left feeling angry" (ibid). In a similar vein, women who protest against sexual harassment in Egypt were described as "raising their voice" 'leading the protestors" (Khaled, 2013). The use of the active voice coupled with action verbs supports the claim that women are not represented as passive non-agents, but rather as active agents regardless of their situation. Thus, the discourse on sexual harassment draws on a discourse of agency to represent

---

[19] It must be noted that all the quote in the "Local Discourse" section were originally in Arabic and are therefore my own translation into English.

women not as victims of this act but as full agents who are capable to act in self-defense.

Harassment not a result of third word difference, but a social problem:
Contrasting to the deterministic image of sexual harassment in Western discourse as an epidemic inflicted upon every Egyptian man, local discourse treated sexual harassment as a social problem, which has multiple causes and effects. This is accomplished through the use of different strategies; first by the presentation of sexual harassment as a global gender problem, second by presenting the present state sexual harassment as extraordinary, outside the norm, and finally by discussing causes and solution to this problem.

Many articles analyzed start by alluding to the idea that sexual harassment is an historical and global phenomenon, and by doing so they are establishing the similarity between Egypt and other parts of the world and the fighting the penchant for exceptionalism.

"Humanity has a long history of using the bodies of women; in World War II, more than 250000 women were raped"; "the fact of the matter is that sexual harassment is a global phenomenon and therefore it is Arab, the same way it is Western" (Al-Ahram, 2012).

By inserting the West into the discussions the author is trying to establish a similarity between Egypt and the West, and therefore trying to establish sexual assault as global *gender problem* i.e. men assaulting women, rather than a *race problem*- i.e. Egyptian men assaulting Egyptian women. By doing so, Egyptians are no longer a different 'race' whose actions are due to this *difference*, but become a part of a global humanity who is facing this gender problem.

In a similar vein and in order to efface the third world difference, some authors recourse to the use of a different strategy. This strategy consists of presenting sexual harassment as an old phenomenon, but one that has increased in frequency: "Sexual harassment has been on the rise in the past few years" "it used to happen on occasions however it has become organized now" (Khaled, 2013). These two sentences suggest that since systematic sexual harassment is a new phenomenon it is not an intrinsic quality of Egyptian men to be rapists, aggressors, or harassers. Sometimes it is even represented as a new phenomenon altogether; "this phenomena is very new to Egyptian society" (Abdel Kader, 2013). It is also represented as "un-Egyptian" one that goes against the religion and norms of the Egyptian society. The bottom-line of what seems to be contradictory statements "old/new" is the attempt to represent sexual harassment as unnatural to Egyptians, and as a result not an intrinsic quality of them being different, but an exception to the sameness that they share with the West and the rest of humanity.
Finally the text presents harassment as a social problem that results from years of "oppression" "sexual segregation" "poverty" "inequality between the sexes", and by doing so putting more emphasis on the social structure that leads to harassment then on the harassers himself (Khaled). This could also be understood as a strategy to mark sameness, by suggesting that any nation that comes at the intersection of this structure is bound to face a similar problem as the one Egypt is facing today.

6.2.2 The Discourse on Agency

Many texts analyzed in the Local discourse category pay special attention to representing women as agents. Agency in the texts centers around the discussion of two axes; the idea of the historical agent role that Egyptian women have played and continue to play, and the idea of opposition to sexual harassment.

<u>Agency as the norm and not the exception:</u>
The idea that Egyptian women were and still are agents for struggle and social change is reflected in many texts that were analyzed. Here I discuss this idea using example from two articles; "The history of the revolutionary struggle of Egyptian women" (Basyouni, 2013), and "It will not break her will" (Hussein, 2013). In both articles a repetition of the idea that Egyptian women historically played a role in social change is observed: "It was not the first time that women took the streets in the January 25 revolution", "In 1919, […] was the biggest women demonstration in protest against the British colonial occupation in Egypt" (Baysouni, 2013). These quotes suggest that the agent position of Egyptian women is not newly acquired, as some Western media seem to allude to, but that women were agents long ago in history. Thus the January revolution is nothing but the latest manifestation of women's agency that has existed and was exercised throughout history.

Furthermore, the revolutionary role of the women is also presented as the norm and not the exception by the evocation of specific examples of history where women played various roles in fighting colonialism; "the biggest women demonstration in protest against British colonial occupation", in defending the nation against aggression: "during the triad aggression on Egypt women formed fighting brigades" and in toppling dictatorships "during the January revolution women played a big courageous role" (ibid). These specific examples suggest that agency is not newly acquired but was rather an intrinsic characteristic of Egyptian women that was proven to exist time after time in times of need.

It is also important to emphasize that women's agency in the texts analyzed is articulated in relation to defending the nation, and contributing to progress of that nation and not in relation to any other themes (the family, the workplace etc..). This suggests that the text is emphasizing the role of women in nation building in relation to other roles where women's agency could be articulated.

Finally, unlike the texts analyzed under the Western Discourse category, local discourse shifts the discussion from the Western question of whether women will obtain their rights after the revolution, to whether women's gains will persist after the revolution. It is therefore a question of "whether the [Egyptian] woman will keep the gains that she achieved during the previous decades" "after she has obtained lots of rights and entered into many realms of life" (Hussein, 2013). The most noticeable aspect of this quote is the wording of it which resonates with the Western discourse on questioning the future of the gains of the feminist movement in the West. Thus by adopting a similar standpoint the texts are alluding to the resemblance between Western female agents and their Egyptian counterparts. The texts are also giving support to the idea that Egyptian women are not at all oppressed but that on the contrary, they are agents, as they have always been.

Agency in opposing sexual harassment:
The agency of women in the texts seems to be also enacted at the intersection between the discourse on agency and the discourse on sexual assault. As it has already been discussed in details in the Discourse on Sexual Assault, women are portrayed in relation to sexual harassment as capable agents who are in control of their reaction (whether to fight back or not), who choose to oppose, protest, and even resist the harasser and the practice of harassing.

6.2.3 The Discourse on Othering

The discourse of othering can be discerned in the article entitled "reinventing the woman" (Abdel Ghani, 2013). The main argument of this articles is that the West-through the UN document on combatting violence against women- is trying to reconstruct women in Egypt in a way that is both unnatural and against God's creation.

While Othering in postcolonial studies is usually equated with othering done by the West to the rest, this article is significant because it establishes a new direction of othering, one that is done in a reversed direction; othering of the Western woman in relation to the Egyptian woman. What is even more interesting about the discourse on othering is that by delineating the other it dictates how the self *ought to be*- and not how the self is, especially how Egyptian women ought to be or behave and by doing so enact a specific power relation on in constructing the Egyptian woman.

The discourse of othering here is built around the central idea of an unbridgeable cultural difference between the West and Egypt. Cultural norms in the West, embodied by the UN- and the UN document on violence against women that "are claiming universality" are incompatible with Egyptian norms, culture, and religion. As a result 'Egyptianess' is constructed in opposition to the Western culture that is represented as permissive amoral and decadent. This also has implication to the construction of the Egyptian woman whose sexuality, rights and existence is contingent on her difference from the sexuality, rights and existence that the Western woman enjoys.

The "Us" vs. "Them":
Throughout the text the author presents a struggle of civilizations; between Islam and the West whose battlefront is the Egyptian woman where the enactment of society's values, morals and chastity takes place. This is translated in the text the adoption of a binary opposition that differentiates the "us" vs. "them" where the atheist amoral West is trying to subjugate a faithful and morally superior Egypt.

The "them' in the text is delineated by the use of derogatory terms to designate the West, for instance the author accuses the West as being "atheist", of having "poisoned ideas" and "deviant values", of belonging to "a devilish denomination" and of having sex freely "like animals", all of these practices are seen to be "spreading vice" to humanity (ibid). By extension to that view of the West in

general, Western woman is represented as "sexually loose" one "who is in constant conflict with men", she is seen as "unnatural" and as going "against how God has created her" and is indeed nothing but "an invention" of mankind (ibid).

By contrast, Egypt is seen as a believing nation that would "not abandon its religion", one that is based on "love" "values" and "mercy". A nation one that is resisting; marked by the repletion of the expression "we will not accept" (ibid).

<u>Anti-colonial struggle and implications for gender</u>:
It is also important to understand the function that this discourse on othering plays in relation to the local power dynamics that is being exercised on women. By defining the struggle not as a gender struggle to end violence against women but as struggle between the "us" and the "them", a struggle of civilizations; "a struggle between the West and Islam", the author is justifying the domination of Egyptian women in the name of resistance, religion and culture (ibid).

He is also setting up an ideal type of how the Egyptian woman should behave that is marked by its difference from her Western counterpart. The author orients towards his the issue of violence against women is deceptively used by the United Nations as a pretext to promote its own project of creating a homogeneous global culture: "we will not accept, and will not fall for the United Nations deceptive attempt to transmit to us, under the false pretext of combatting violence against women, its poisoned ideas on gender and its deviant values about the relationship between men and women and religion" (ibid). This quote clearly shows that the author does not consider the gender struggle to be the pivotal issue but rather that the UN is adopting that as a pretext to meddle for the continuation of the Western hegemony over the 'East'.

This idea finds further evidence also in the following quote: "These are the same obsessive issues that the West is also insisting to intervene in, trying to surpass walls of dogmas and beliefs" (ibid). The expression "the same" suggests that indeed the issue of intervention in the issues of Egypt is not new, and whose latest manifestation is the issue of combatting violence against women. The two above mentioned quotes thus suggest that the issue at hand in not the rights of women per se but a more colonial interest in the region as a whole including Egypt, an interest that "reflects the viewpoint of the West and its atheist capitalist civilization" (ibid). By framing the struggle as a colonial struggle all means become indeed permissible and even required to counter this attempt at dominion including and starting with the refusal of all these values that come from the West but are disguised as universal values.

The author also draws an image of the Egyptian woman who is complicit in his project of resisting the cultural hegemony of the West; "me and you, my wife and your wife, we will not accept that the intimate relationship between a man and his wife, shall be moved to the authority of the police and judiciary" (ibid). By shifting the discussion from the anonymous "we" in the previous "we will not accept" to the "my and you my wife and your wife, we will not accept", the woman is strategically inserted into the discussion and given a voice in the text. It is the woman's voice that he longs to represent, one that despite all of his attempts is never recovered.

The aim is not to recover the lost voice of the woman, but the true aim is to put a front that all Egyptians, men and women, are united in their refusal of these values. And it is specifically in that instance that the part that ideal Egyptian women *ought* to play in resisting the West becomes enacted in the text in their refusal of the UN principles, the refusal of "western values of sexual liberation", and values of the "freedom of sexual orientation", their refusal of the UN document combatting violence against women, and all that comes from the West (ibid). In other words their self-differentiation of the other woman by any means possible- i.e., by rights, behaviors, even in ways of dressing etc.

My point here is *not* that Egyptian women do not engage or wish to engage in anti-colonial struggles; as many other texts clearly point out that they do (the discourse on agency illustrates this point). I am merely suggesting that a post-colonial struggle from a woman's perspective will be different from the author's anti-colonial project as a refusal of sexual freedom, domestic violence protection. And by imposing/presenting this vision of the "authentic" Egyptian woman, uncontaminated by Western values, disguised as genderless project is indeed exercising power on the Egyptian woman who's existence is reduced between a choice of being the "authentic" woman; the one who's subjugated and anti-Western, and the Westernized Egyptian woman; the one who is "sexually loose" and unpatriotic. The possibility of reconciling sexual freedom and national struggle in one woman is thus eliminated through this binary opposition.

7 Discussion

The aim of this section is to review the findings of this study in relation to the theoretical framework, which centers on post-colonial and post-colonial feminist theories and discuss ways in which they connect, or contradict this framework. This thesis will end with a small conclusion where the significance of contrasting these two discourses will be discussed and where the main findings of this study will be reiterated.

7.1 Western Discourse

7.1.1 The Colonial Stereotype

Findings from this study suggest that Western discourse is still frequently engaged in stereotyping Egyptian women, and that the old stereotype that postcolonial theory talks about is still applicable even after the revolution. This stereotype takes shape by representing Egyptian women as racially and sexually inferior to Western women. For example the discourse on othering is partially built around a comparison between the Western woman and the Egyptian woman where the Egyptian is represented as inferior; fearful, passive, submissive, a non-agent, and the Western woman represented as a fighter, courageous, altruistic (Lindsey 2011a; and Kurtz 2001 a). Thus, *difference* between the two women is due to racial inferiority. Moreover it appears that racial difference is what constructs sexual difference; for example the discourse on sexual harassment constructs women as helpless victims of sexual harassment, this construction of women as victims of sexual assault- sexual difference- cannot exist independently of the construction of the Egyptian men as harassers (Jones, 2012; Salama, 2013). Therefore by presenting the Egyptian race as different the representation of Egyptian women as sexually different is rendered possible.

This discussion of racial and sexual difference brings us to the bigger question that has been unresolved in the theory section on post-colonialism and post-colonial feminism on the supremacy of gender or race. While the discussion above where the articulation of sexual difference is rendered possible only through the articulation of racial difference points to the supremacy of race over gender, other texts also show how "othering" can be portrayed mainly as a gender issue. For example in the discourse on sexual harassment there is reference to both foreign and Egyptian women being harassed in a similar way. However, this image of sexual harassment that includes both foreign and Egyptian women, is rendered possible only through picturing Egyptian men uniformly as harassers, i.e. that

would harass anyone and everyone, and therefore by explicitly relying on the assumption of racial difference. Thus, it seems that in the texts analyzed an assumption about race precedes and informs the discussion about stereotypical traits associated with being a woman. This should not be taken to mean that gender is a mere subcategory in the discussion of race, one that does not deserve special attention. On the contrary the category of an Egyptian woman yields a very unique experience, one that this different from the Egyptian man and one that deserves special attention. In the next section that discusses Local Discourse I will address this issue in more details trying to recuperate the voices and experiences of these women.

Finally, having explained what the stereotype consists of, it is equally important to explain its nature and effectiveness. For achieving this task, a combination of insights from the works of Said and Bhabha can be useful.

As it has been discussed previously Said views the construction of the 'Other', or the 'Oriental' in terms of a binary contradiction between the 'us', the West, and the 'them' the Orientals. For Said, the colonial stereotype is particularly effective because it is built on a coherent set of binary opposition between "us" and "them" that leaves no room for alternative representations. The colonial stereotype in the form of a coherent set of binary oppositions manifests itself in the texts in the discourse on othering, where the Egyptian woman of today is represented as inferior and radically different from:

i- The Egyptian woman of the past: the contrast between the woman of the past and woman of today is achieved through the opposition between fun and happiness which is contrasted to duty, and sexual liberation that is contrasted with sexual segregation. Sexual liberation, fun, and happiness are attributed that are appropriated to the Egyptian woman of the past whereas duty and sexual segregation characterize the one of the present (Foreign Policy, 2011; and Gattoni 2011).

ii- The Western woman: this is accomplished through the comparison of the representations of a Western woman and Egyptian woman experience of sexual assault. The Western woman is represented as courageous, altruistic, and an agent of resistance, whereas the Egyptian woman is represented as scared, submissive, victim and a non-agent (Jones, 2012; and Salama, 2013).

The articulation of the colonial stereotype in terms of a binary contradiction attests to the idea that an opposition between the "us" and the "them" does indeed take place in the texts analyzed. However, the binary opposition is not the only way in which the colonial stereotype is articulated.

In the discourse on agency, the articulation of the stereotype is not a simple "us" and "them", but consists of a more complex three-category representation where women are represented as non-agents, as semi-agents, and as full agents. These three categories as previously discussed in the analysis do not testify to the diversity of Egyptian women; on the contrary they contribute to projecting a monolithic image of these women. By establishing these contradictory categories, where the agent is represented as the exception and is rendered a one of "us", a part of the "West", and by portraying the semi-agents as *the* (exclusive) agents in the Egyptian society, the stereotype is projecting a powerful image of the average

Egyptian as a woman with no agency. These contradictory articulations of agency lend support to Bhabha's view of the colonial stereotype as ambivalent, and whose ambivalence does not diminish its effectiveness, but on the contrary renders it more productive and powerful in achieving its aim. The contradiction in the representation of the agency of Egyptian women does not reduce the effectiveness of the stereotype of these women as non-agents, because by presenting the exception, the woman as agent, is reinforcing the rule, or the image of the non-agent.

The results of this study sustains that there is a discursive use of colonial stereotype as both a binary contradiction; as in the discourse on Othering, and as an ambivalent representation; as is the discourse on agency. However, understanding the colonial stereotype as ambivalent allow us to understand more complex situations where the colonial image is not as straight forward but nonetheless has the same power in projecting a certain image on the colonized.

7.1.2 The Power of Discourse

As previously discussed, the power of discourse for Said (1995) lays in its ability to achieve a homogeneous representation of the object of discourse, one that leaves no room to alternative representation. The mechanism by which this is achieved in Said's (1995) texts, is through the binary opposition between the "West" and the "Rest" that represents the "Rest" as negatively diverging from the Western self.

While I agree that the power of discourse is situated in its ability to represent the object of discourse homogenously, I see the achievement of this homogeneity as taking place inter-discursively and inter-textually. What this means is that rather than taking the difference between the homogenous image of the other and the western self as a sign of the power of discourse, focusing on how different discourses and texts draw on one another to create a fixated representation or a stereotype is a better indication.

In the texts analyzed this precisely what I have discerned. Different discourses gain power by relating and building upon other discourses in an inter-textual fashion (Hansen, 2006). The analysis has distinguished three main discourses; these are the discourses of othering, of agency/non-agency and on sexual harassment. Each discourse builds on the two others in creating the image of Egyptian women. For instance, the discourse on othering draws on both discourses of non-agency and of sexual harassment. For example, in marking the difference between the Egyptian woman and the foreign women both discourses of non-agency and sexual assault are used in relation to the former whereas discourses of agency are used in relation to the latter.

Similarly, in the discourse on non-agency the construction of women as agentless victims is accomplished by employing a discourse of sexual assault for example: "women are subjected to humiliating virginity test". The discourse of non-agency also builds upon a discourse of othering where being a woman in that other culture is much worse than being a woman in the West, or where being an Egyptian

woman-agent is associated with being Western or one of us, that contrasts with the agentless "them" (Eltahtawy, 2011).

Finally, the discourse of sexual assault relates in a similar manner to discourses of othering and non-agency. Men in Egypt are constructed as a different other and therefore established to be natural harassers in that discourse, and by drawing on the image of women as agentless the picture of the woman-victim of assault is achieved (Lindey 2011, b).

Thus the power of the Western discourse is connected with its ability to draw upon a priori knowledge of Egyptian women. Therefore, by knowing one part of the discourse (say the discourse on othering) the other discourses can be anticipated (non-agency, and sexual assault). For example, since we already know that Egyptian women are different from the Western "us" (discourse of othering) we therefore we are inclined to think of them as non-agents (discourse of non-agency) and as victims of sexual assault (discourse of sexual assault). Finally, these discourses seems to be connected by a causal relationship; because Egyptian women are different, they are agentless and victims, or because they are agentless, they are therefore different and victims and vice versa.

7.2   Local Discourse

7.2.1 The Intersection of Gender and Race

A thorough examination of the local discourse analyzed points to the presence of a unique experience of the Egyptian woman as being situated at the intersection of gender and race. A previous observation in the analysis pointed to how the discourse of agency was articulated solely as an opposition of sexual harassment on the one hand and of colonialism/dictatorship/ aggression on the nation on the other. Opposition to sexual harassment here represents the opposition to gender oppression, whereas opposition to colonialism, dictatorships and acts of aggression represent the loyalty to 'race' or the nation. Here I do not claim that other categories such as social class, education among others are not an important part of this intersection as indeed they might be. I am only claiming that gender and race appear to be pivotal categories in the discourses I have analyzed.

It must be noted however; that this intersection between gender and race is not a confortable fit for it is a place where contentions are articulated. The discourse on othering reveals one of these contentions, where being a "true" or "authentic" Egyptian woman, as framed by Egyptian men, means fighting colonialist Western values. The fight of Western values however, takes place and is enacted on the body of the Egyptian woman; i.e. what are her rights, how should she behave etc. Thus Egyptian women find themselves at the intersection of and subjected to the power of colonialism and the power of gender combined.

This however should not be taken to mean that they are doubly oppressed as 1st world feminism would claim, because local discourse shows otherwise. As it has previously mentioned women's agency or oppositional consciousness was enacted

in local discourse as both an opposition to gender oppression and an opposition to colonialism. Thus, instead of being doubly oppressed women could be considered as doubly the agent.

Finally, it must be acknowledged that this study is challenged by what Spivak termed the impossibility of recovering the subaltern voices (Loomba 2008: 195). The voices that were used as a representation of the local voices are those that have access to channels of expression through the media, namely the educated and powerful. And as such, I cannot claim to capture *the voices* of the subaltern in the Local discourse. This discourse therefore merely functions as a reflection of the debates and ideas that are taking places in society, and I therefore acknowledge the impact of social status and class in gaining access to channels of expression through the media.

7.2.2 The Counter-stereotype

Another interesting finding and one that deserves some special attention, is that the othering drive is not only a characteristic of Western discourse. Local discourses engage in what could be termed "Occidentalism", or in stereotyping the West. Like Orientalism, "Occidentalism"[20] also is built around the idea of othering, whereby the other is represented as different and inferior from the self. Gender is also a space where Occidentalism is articulated, a space were the Western woman is seen as morally corrupt, and inferior.

So what can all this tell us about the representation of Egyptian women? Well, firstly at the most basic level it says that the Western stereotype of Egyptian women is countered not only by according agency to Egyptian women, but by also by producing its own stereotypes of Western women.

Secondly, the production of a differentiated discourse is as Said (1995) puts it a space of resistance and a space where the agency of these women can emerge. By asserting that Egyptian women have agency too and by highlighting that the negative view of Egyptian women in the West is countered by a negative perception of the Western woman in Egypt, this discourse is actively engaged in resisting and challenging the totalizing discourse of the West on Egyptian women. It also seems to suggest that the production of knowledge is not unidirectional, or knowledge about the East produced to the West, but that the flux is goes both ways. Producing knowledge about the West in the East seems to solve the problem put forth in the theoretical framework earlier of "the production of knowledge in and for the West" that implicates its producers in "projects that establish Western authority and cultural difference" (Abu-Lughod, 2001: 105).

Thirdly, some writers specifically questioned Occidentalism as an anti-Western reaction, and traced it back to Western culture itself[21], which for them undermines

---

[20] I borrow this term from Buruma and Margalit, 2004, to refer to the stereotypes view of the West by the East, or in other words the inverse of Orientalism.

[21] The ideas of the moral corruption of the Western democratic countries, or the ideas of the supremacy of the nation state (Burma and Magalit, 2004)

its status and influence (Buruma and Margalit, 2004). Even if "Occidentalism" is not "indigenous" and even if it is indeed a result of contact with Western ideas, it does not follow that it is not a site of resistance. As Bhabha points out hybridity, or adopting some aspects of the colonizers' ideas, is a site of resistance specifically because it is based on mimicry, or the imitation that is never fully acquires the property of the idea it imitates. Thus, by rejecting the West on the basis of Western values, Occidentalism is engaged in altering and resisting the Western culture.

7.2.3 The Power of Discourse

After reviewing two important discourses where local resistance has been enacted, the reader must wonder; since local discourse attributes agency to women and is engaged in what has been termed as 'Occidentalism', why is it then that the image of the woman non-agent continues to dominate Western discourse? Put very simply, it is a question of the power.

Unlike Western discourses that project and reinforce a homogenized vision of the Egyptian woman, local discourse is fragmented and engenders many tensions. One of the tensions that I could discern during my analysis is the tension between the difference between Egypt and the West. The discourse on 'Occidentalism' tries to differentiate Egypt from the West. The discourse of sexual assault, on the other hand, tries to establish a similarity between the two by framing sexual harassment as a global gender problem. These tensions seem to undermine the hegemony of either discourses and to weaken the claims of both.

Unlike Western discourse, not all the discursive markers in the local discourses draw on one another. For example, while discourse of agency and sexual assault inter-textually and inter-discursively draw on one another in representing women as agents facing sexual harassment. The discourse of othering, or 'Occidentalism' does not draw on any other discourse or text. Thus, it could be said that the discourse on agency and sexual assault is more powerful than the discourse on Occidentalism.

8 Conclusion

In sum, in this thesis I have attempted to contrast the constructions of Egyptian women in Western media to those of the Local media in the aftermath of the Egyptian Revolution through performing a critical discourse analysis of two US and two Egyptian magazine articles. Here I summarize the main findings, strengths and challenges of this research.

One expected finding, was that in line with post-colonial and post-colonial feminist theory, this thesis finds support to the representation of Egyptian women, as part of a larger group of third world women, as sexually and racially inferior to the Western women even after the revolution. It also finds that the apparent schism in the post-revolutionary Western literature between agent and non-agent like representations of women is in fact an articulation of the "ambivalence" of the colonial stereotype. This ambivalence however, reinforces the stereotype of racial and sexual difference of the average Egyptian woman.

Some unexpected findings also emerged from this investigation. While the literature review suggested that Arab women are perceived negatively in the Arab media, this research found no evidence for this representation. On the contrary, Local discourses clearly show agent-like perceptions of women. Moreover, these perceptions coupled with negative perception of Western women is the way the Local discourse is actively engaged in resisting and challenging the hegemonic discourses of the West on Egyptian women.

The main strength of this research is that it does not focus exclusively on the representation of the Egyptian woman in the West. By comparing Western discourses to local discourses it allows for a differentiated account to emerge, and therefore does not accord absolute power to Western discourses. Moreover, by choosing to study the Local representation of Egyptian women this research is contributing to the knowledge about the self-representation of third-world women, an issue that has not been studied extensively in the literature.

Finally, it must also be acknowledged that this thesis suffers from some shortcomings. First, given the type of data, magazine articles, the resulting discourses, both local and Western, are influenced by the social positions of those who wrote them. In that sense, I cannot claim in this thesis to have captured the subaltern voices, because the voices and discourses that are articulated in the media are the ones belonging to a certain social class, and possessing a certain social status. Second, given the nature of the method, and the extensiveness of the coverage of the Egyptian revolution, I had to limit my scope with a sub-section of the discourses. This means that the findings ought not to be generalized. They nevertheless, contribute to increasing the knowledge on Egyptian women and in doing so partially contribute to increasing the knowledge on third world women.

9   References

Abu-Lughod, L. 2001. Orientalism and Middle East Feminist Studies. *Feminist Studies,* 27**,** 101.

Afshar, H. & Maynard, M. 1994. *The Dynamics of Race and Gender: Some Feminist Interventions*, Taylor & Francis Group.

Benelli, E. 2003. The Role of the Media in Steering Public Opinion on Healthcare Issues. *Health policy (Amsterdam, Netherlands),* 63**,** 179.

Berg, B. L. 2009. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences / Bruce L. Berg*, Boston : Allyn & Bacon, cop. 2009

Bhabha, H. K. 1985. Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817. *Critical Inquiry,* 12**,** 144-165.

Bhabha, H. K. 1994. *The Location of Culture*, Routledge.

Buruma, I. & Margalit, A. 2004. *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism*, Atlantic Books.

Derrida, J. 1983. Homi Bhabha the Other Question. *Screen,* 24**,** 18-36.

Gramsci, A. 1995. *Futher Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, U of Minnesota Press.

Hall, S. 1997. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, SAGE Publications Limited.

Hansen, L. 2006. *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, Psychology Press.

Jørgensen, M. W. & Phillips, L. J. 2002. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, SAGE Publications Limited.

Kelly, S. & Breslin, J. 2010. *Women's Rights in the Middle East and North Africa : Progress Amid Resistance / Sanja Kelly, Julia Breslin, Editors*, New York : Freedom House ; Plymouth : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, cop. 2010

Kirat, M. 2005. Women in the Media in the Arab World: A Critical Appraisal. *Journal of Social Affairs,* 22**,** 85.

Lewis, R. & Mills, S. 2003. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory : A Reader / Edited by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills*, Edinburgh : Edinburgh Univ. Press, cop. 2003.

Loomba, A. 1993. Dead Women Tell No Tales: Issues of Female Subjectivity, Subaltern Agency and Tradition in Colonial and Post-Colonial Writings on Widow Immolation in India. History Workshop. JSTOR, 209-227.

Loomba, A. 2005. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism / Ania Loomba*, London : Routledge, 2005

Mohanty, C. T. 1988. Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Feminist review***,** 61-88.

Nussbaum, M. C. 2001. *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, Cambridge University Press.

Pearsall, J. & Hanks, P. 1998. *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, Clarendon Press.

Rahnema, M. & Bawtree, V. 1997. *The Post-Development Reader*, Zed Books.

Said, E. 1995. Orientalism. Reprint. London: Penguin. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty.(1990). The Postcolonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues. London: Routledge.

Schwarz, H. & Ray, S. 2005. *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Sen, A. 2001. *Development as Freedom*, Oxford Paperbacks.

Sharp, J. 2008. *Geographies of Postcolonialism*, SAGE Publications Limited.

Stabile, C. A. & Kumar, D. 2005. Unveiling Imperialism: Media, Gender and the War on Afghanistan. *Media, Culture & Society,* 27**,** 765-782.

Steet, L. 1996. Gender and Orientalism:" National Geographic's" Arab Woman. *The High School Journal,* 79**,** 202-210.

Titscher, S. 2000. *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis / Stefan Titscher ... ; Translated by Bryan Jenner*, London : Sage, cop. 2000.

Wood, L. A. & Kroger, R. O. 2000. *Doing Discourse Analysis : Methods for Studying Action in Talk and Text / Linda A. Wood, Rolf O. Kroger*, Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage, cop. 2000.

Yegenoglu, M. 1998. *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*, Cambridge University Press.

Yegenoglu, M. 1998. Veiled Fantasies: Cultural and Sexual Difference in the Discourse of Orientalism. *In*: Lewis, R. & Mills, S. 2003. *Feminist Postcolonial Theory : A Reader / Edited by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills*, Edinburgh : Edinburgh Univ. Press, cop. 2003.

English Internet Sources:

Adel, D 2011. *Samira Ibrahim, 'Virginity Test' Victim Fights Egypt Military Rule*, Newsweek, accessed March 20, 2013 <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/03/19/samira-ibrahim-virginity-test-victim-fights-egypt-s-military-rule.html>

Burleigh, N 2012. *Egypt's Game Changers: Samira Ibrahim and the Women Who Speak up About Sexual Violence*, Newsweek, accessed March 20, 2013. <www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/01/21/egypt-s-game-ch…a-ibrahim-and-the-women-who-speak-up-about-sexual-violence.html>

Eltahawy, M 2011 Eltahawy. *Why Do They Hate Us? The Real War on Women is in The Middle East*, Foreign Policy, accessed March 25, 2013 <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/23/why_do_they_hate_us?print=yes&hidecomments=yes&page=full>

Esfahani-Smith, E 2011. *Egypt Shocked after Female Dissident Blogger Posts Nude Photos*, Newsweek, accessed March 23, 2013. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/11/17/egypt-shocked-after-female-dissident-blogger-posts-nude-photos.html>

Foreign Policy, 2011. *Once Upon a Time in Egypt, Beaches and Bikinis from When Alexandria Was Club Med*, accessed at March 25, 2013. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/04/25/once_upon_a_time_in_egypt?print=yes&hidecomments=yes&page=full>

Gattoni, M 2011. *The Sister of the Brotherhood, Portrait of the Women inside Egypt's most powerful political movement*, Foreign Policy, accessed at March 25, 2013. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/11/16/the_sisters_of_the_muslim_brotherhood?print=yes&hidecomments=yes&page=full>

Jones, S 2012. *Egypt's Sexual Harassment Epidemic*, Newsweek, accessed March 24, 2013. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/06/27/egypt-s-sexual-harassment-epidemic.html>

Lindsey, U 2011 a. *Egyptian Court Bans Army Virginity Tests Calls Them Degrading*, Newsweek, accessed March 20, 2013.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/12/27/egyptian-court-bans-army-s-virginity-tests-calls-them-degrading.html >

Lindsey, U 2011 b. *The Women's Revolution*, Newsweek, accessed March 22, 2013.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/09/25/egypt-s-women-still-fighting-for-their-rights.html>

Kurtz, H 2011 a. *The Price She Paid*, Newsweek, accessed March 20, 2013
< www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/02/20/women-in-harm-s-way.html>

Kurtz, H 2011 b. *The Price Lara Logan Paid*, Newsweek, accessed March 20, 2013
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/02/20/lara-logans-life-on-the-front-lines-before-her-egypt-assault.print.html>

Salama, V 2013. *Egypt's Sexual Terrorism*, Newsweek, accessed March 25, 2013
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/02/13/egypt-s-sexual-terrorism.html>

Arabic Internet Sources:

Abdel Ghani, 2013 A. *Reinventing the Woman*, October, issue 1900, accessed at April 1, 2013.
< http://www.octobermag.com/Issues/1900/artDetail.asp?artID=136413>

Abdel Kader, M 2013. *Confessions of Sexual Harassment Victims*, October, issue 1895, accessed April 1, 2013.
<http://www.octobermag.com/Issues/1903/artDetail.asp?artID=137193>

Al-Ahram 2012. *Towards an Anti-sexual Harassment Culture*, Al-Ahram, accessed March 28, 2013 <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/282604.aspx>

Basyouni, R 2013. *The History of the Revolutionary Struggle of Egyptian Women*, October, issue 1903, accessed 28 March, 2013
<http://www.octobermag.com/Issues/1903/artDetail.asp?artID=137193>

Hussein, S 2013. *It Will Not Break Her Will*, October, isue 1903, accessed 28 March, 2013
<http://www.octobermag.com/Issues/1898/artDetail.asp?artID=136021>

10 Appendix A

Picture 1: picture of Egyptian women on the beach from "Once Upon a Time in Egypt", (Foreign Policy, 2011)

Picture 2: A picture of Amr, from "The Sisters of the Brotherhood" (Gattoni 2011).

Picture 3: Portrait of Awatef, from "The Sisters of the Brotherhood" (Gattoni, 2011).

Picture 4: An Egyptian woman and friend "Once Upon a time in Egypt" (Foreign Policy, 2011

Picture 5: Egyptian women in beach clothes, "Once Upon a Time in Egypt" (Foreign Policy, 2011).