

***Living Theory: A Comparative Reading  
of Feminist-Postcolonial Resonances in  
Leila Ahmed's A Border Passage  
And Postmodernist Reflections  
In Ihab Hassan's Out of Egypt.***

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## *Abstract*

### *Living Theory: A Comparative Reading of Feminist-Postcolonial Resonances in Leila Ahmed's A Border Passage and Postmodernist Reflections in Ihab Hassan's Out of Egypt.*

*A Border Passage (1999) and Out of Egypt (1986) are two autobiographies that reflect the literary and critical theory informing the work of Leila Ahmed and Ihab Hassan. Both Egyptian-American critics and academics have practically 'lived' theory in different ways; indeed, their paths overlap with their philosophy and theory. The main objective of this study is to analyze how critical and literary theory informs these autobiographies. Indeed, theory transcends informing the memoirs to somehow forming the writers' concept of identity. Nevertheless, the quest is far more complex than the simplistic binarism of Egyptian/Arab, let alone Arab/American. Even causes tackled by Ahmed like the veil and the freedom to wear it are analyzed in a much deeper manner than the mere critique of the colonial-patriarchal joint abuse of it. Furthermore, the paper aims at comparing the positionality of the two critics, as related to theory. Ahmed's liminal space transcends the exilic consciousness or the nostalgia to Egyptian roots to become an effective "border passage" between two worlds. Similarly, the paper probes, what seems at first, Hassan's distanced attitude "out of Egypt" only to unravel the multiple layers of his intellectual stance.*

## الملخص باللغة العربية

" النظرية المعاشة": انعكاسات النظرية النقدية النسوية وما بعد الكولونيالية على "الممر الحدودى" لليلى احمد, ونقد ما بعد الحداثة على "الرحيل من مصر" لايهاب حسن.

توضح هذه الدراسة كيف تنعكس النظرية النقدية على السيرة الذاتية لاثنين من النقاد والاكاديميين المصريين الامريكيين , فيتم عقد مقارنة بين "الممر الحدودى" لليلى احمد و"الرحيل من مصر" لايهاب حسن .

تظهر الدراسة ان انعكاس النظرية النقدية على المذكرات الاكاديمية والسيرة الذاتية هي بالفعل "نظرية معاشة" وليست ثمة نظريات مجردة او اطار خارجى مقحم فحسب. يتضح الاثر جليا فى تشكيل الهوية الثقافية والفكرية والحضارية للكاتبين. يتخطى ذلك الاثر تشكيل الهوية المصرية فحسب او العربية او الامريكية, او مجرد ازدواجية او تناقض او وعى المنفى لكتاب المهجر, فهو يتعدى ذلك الى ما هو اعمق واشمل من ثقافات وخبرات حياتية شديدة الثراء , ساهم فى تشكيلها ومصالحتها على بعضها البعض النظرية النقدية كنقطة انطلاق ثم تعميق للهوية الفكرية والثقافية.

يتجلى ذلك على سبيل المثال فى رمزية الحجاب وعلاقته بالنسوية وما بعد الكولونيالية لدى ليلى احمد, وفى اساطير البعث والانسلاخ من الجذور والتحرر من القيود مثل اوزوريس وسيزيف وبروميشيوس وغيرها التى ساهمت فى تشكيل فكر ايهاب حسن فيما يتعلق بنقد ما بعد الحداثة كتقويض موثوقية الروايات الكبرى مثل الوطنية وما الى ذلك من اطروحات شبه مسلم بها فيما سبق نظرية ما بعد الحداثة .

*A Border Passage* (1999) and *Out of Egypt* (1986) are two autobiographies that reflect the literary and critical theory informing the work of Leila Ahmed and Ihab Hassan. Both Egyptian-American critics have practically ‘lived’ theory in different ways; indeed, their paths overlap with their philosophy and theory. Oddly enough, reading the corpus of her work, one starts to question what Ahmed herself says, “My life, anyway, was obviously completely irrelevant to theory and vice versa” (*BP* 213). However, the sentence rings true if, by theory, she means abstract and philosophical terminology. “The point of theory is application”, Ahmed maintains (*BP* 288). Feminism and postcolonialism, as practical approaches, glimmer beneath the narrative text of Ahmed’s autobiography *A Border Passage*. These turn her autobiography into a counter-narrative to both imperial Orientalist tenets as well as national Arabism. Both approaches are practically applied to her daily experiences and not merely to academic disciplines. Hassan, on the other hand, seems to stand in juxtaposition with Ahmed’s theory as regards the theoretical framework, the abstract and philosophical terminology, and the distanced affiliation that sets him apart from both his

Egyptian roots and from Ahmed. He seems to be the incarnation of the postmodernist rejection of metanarratives, including patriotism and nationalism. This, however, is actually more complicated than it initially seems. For him, quoting Wallace Stevens, “the theory / Of poetry is the theory of life”; Orpheus is the man who plays “A tune beyond us, yet ourselves, / A tune upon the blue guitar” (*Rumors of Change* 122-3). On the other hand, several motifs, such as the Here and Now, the quest, and the initiation rite of passage, which he himself articulated in his critical studies of American literature, underline the significantly-entitled autobiography *Out of Egypt*, recalling Exodus. Hassan beautifully sums this up in, what was recorded in his old notebooks thirty years earlier: “No life wholly satisfied in literature can bring to it the highest vision. No life wholly fulfilled in criticism can bring to literature the deepest insight” (*OE* 15). Significantly enough, this is one of the instances of the zig-zag narrative structure oscillating through the present, near and far past.

*Objectives:*

The main objective of this study is to analyze how critical and literary theory informs the autobiographies

of two prominent Egyptian American critics and academics. Indeed, theory transcends informing the memoirs to somehow forming the writers' concept of identity. Nevertheless, the quest is far more complex than the simplistic binarism of Egyptian/Arab, let alone Arab/American. Even causes tackled by Ahmed like the veil and the freedom to wear it are analyzed in a much deeper manner than the mere critique of the colonial-patriarchal joint abuse of it. Furthermore, the paper aims at comparing the positionality of the two critics, as related to theory. Ahmed's liminal space transcends the exilic consciousness or the nostalgia to Egyptian roots to become an effective "border passage" between two worlds. Similarly, the paper probes, what seems at first, Hassan's distanced attitude "out of Egypt" only to unravel the multiple layers of his intellectual stance.

*Symbolism of Title:*

*A Border Passage*, starting from its title, implies Homi Bhabha's liminality<sup>2</sup> and American Literature initiative rite of passage. The onlooker/narrator, observer/protagonist creates this spatio-temporal overlapping of positions. The narrative point of view is both from within and from without; paradoxically both

involved and distanced. *Out of Egypt*, on the other hand, clearly recalls Biblical allusions of Exodus, triggering off the negative connotations of the Pharaoh's injustices, the gravity of history, a stance somehow against ancient and modern Egyptians, and an attitude of relief to leave the place of origin once and for all. In both autobiographies, the initiation rite of passage and the journey itself are extremely illuminating. In Hassan, it is an individualistic one for a New Adam, very much like the American Adam in the New World. This is crystal clear in his elaborate critical analysis of *Selves at Risk: Patterns of Quest in Contemporary American Letters*. It is reminiscent of the Oedipal search for Forbidden Knowledge; it is fruitful at all costs, as long as *anagnorisis* and epiphany will follow. In *Selves at Risk*, Hassan wonders "What possessed Captain Ahab, lured Sinbad the Sailor, drove the wandering Jew? Was Odysseus or Alexander a leader, adventurer, seeker? ... And T.E. Lawrence, who became bound to his desert myth like Prometheus to his rock?" (SR 19). Nevertheless, Egypt and ancient Egyptian myths, however negative their connotations for him are, still inform his work. For Ahmed, everything takes her back to her roots but not as a sentimental nostalgia; the

journey construes meanings and builds bridges to link both cultures and to dismantle stereotypes on both sides. For Hassan, it leads to, what Edward Said calls, “affiliation”; for Ahmed, the journey paradoxically ensues in the intertwining of both “filiation” and “affiliation”<sup>3</sup>.

Ahmed’s activism, in a way, further accentuates the practical role she plays, besides her academic one; indeed, this role is mainly inspired by her critical postcolonial-feminist theory. A case in point is her recent *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil’s Resurgence from the Middle East to America*, as linked to her earlier *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. Similarly, it is Hassan’s pioneering postmodernist theory that inspires his somehow detached and philosophical stance. This is crystal clear in his, for instance, *Between the Eagle and the Sun*, as linked to *The Right Promethean Fire* and *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*. As the titles indicate, the creative artist as a rebel, dissenting from the ‘norm’ and all that is considered sacred, is inspired by the Muse or by Classical mythological figures like Prometheus, Orpheus or Icarus. Postmodernism is

linked to the Dionysian ego in *Paracriticisms* (56). For Hassan, it is all about the quest, the journey and the knowledge acquired in the process, all ensuing in personality development. In *Selves at Risk*, he maintains that: “there is a roving curiosity in some fabulous or emblematic space, seeking knowledge, knowledge of being, knowledge *as* being, some gnosis of a dangerous or ultimate kind (SR 19).

Significantly enough, when both Ahmed and Hassan started, they were pioneers who helped develop the necessary terminology and discourse needed for women and gender in Islam, as related to postcolonialism, and postmodernism as critical and literary theories. Ahmed’s *Border Passage* is clearly reminiscent of Bhabha’s “liminal zone”; it is embodied in the “harem” issue, extensively tackled from an innovative, postcolonial point of view, digressing with both the Orientalist stereotype and the formal male version of doctrinaire Islam. Similarly, the notions of Arabism and nationalism, as voiced by Nasser, are undermined and juxtaposed with the intrinsic Egyptian identity, of which Egyptians, from Ahmed’s point of view, seem to be stripped during that era.

*Harem: Ahmed and Women's Studies:*

Ahmed, in her autobiography, tells the story of the nascent Feminism Department in America (BP 79-80) and the difficulties she encountered to grasp the past achievements and relate them to Muslim women (BP 294-5). She had a double mission: to dispel the stereotypes about women in Islam and put up with the derogatory terminology used by mainstream feminists, as well as form discourse and terminology relating Muslim women and gender in Islam to postcolonialism. The discipline back in the seventies, she maintains, was not quite established as an academic one; it stemmed more from vibrant workshops and conferences (BP 296-7). It is particularly this vibrancy versus her own scholarly study in Abu Dhabi before arriving in the US that attracted her. "The point of theory is application" (BP 288). That practical notion could be easily put in juxtaposition with Hassan's somehow abstract, philosophical and theoretical postmodernism. Later on, however, some poststructuralist theorists and postmodernist critics like Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard<sup>4</sup> have managed to pinpoint some practical, ideological and political notions of postmodernism.

Ahmed started reaching out to ethnic and minority feminism, a kind of double marginalization (*BP* 288).

It is worth mentioning that the first essay Ahmed wrote in the US was “Western Ethnocentrism and Perceptions of the Harem” (*BP* 293). In her autobiography, Ahmed redefines the term “Harem” stripping it of its negative connotations, thus dispelling Orientalist stereotypes about women in the Orient. Harem for her is a magnificent place where women gather, talk, have fun, and enjoy themselves. It is exclusively for women; for once, women have their space and freely organize their own world (*BP* 113). Women’s culture, time and space have the supremacy in the harem (*BP* 120). Ahmed starts comparing men’s world in Naguib Mahfouz’s *Palace Walk to Zatoun*, her first experience of the harem (*BP* 101). Ahmed refutes the allegations against the Oriental harem by comparing it to the Western harem and by adding positive connotations to both of them. This is smoothly and skilfully elucidated by Ahmed starting from Ain Shams in Cairo, passing with Soyouf in Alexandria, then ending up with Girton in Cambridge, place of inspiration, poetry and creativity (*BP* 286).

Parallel narrative structure is the key technique to accentuate the harem analogy, with its three settings. The Brontes and Virginia Woolf seem to be her companions in “the second harem perfected” (*BP* 180). However, *A Room of One’s Own* seems to be a morbid intertextuality reminiscent of “the madwoman in the attic”, hence linking Woolf and Charlotte Bronte to the foundational text of feminist theory by Gilbert and Gubar. Ain Shams in Cairo seems to be more “real” than Girton that is linked to Proust and described as the “border between the real and the imaginative” (*BP* 180). Nevertheless, the sad discourse of the “madwoman in the attic” and Foucault’s clinical discourse are like a tragic subtext underneath the happy veneer. This, however, is due to the injustices of society towards women, whether it is against Aunt Aida who is denied divorce by her husband in Egypt (*BP* 119, 120) or her friend at Girton, Cambridge (*BP* 183, 218-9). While Aunt Aida ends up committing suicide (*BP* 28, 221), her friend Veena in Cambridge gets cured of her “psychotic breakdown” at the asylum and goes back to the dormitory (*BP* 223). Significantly enough, a great feminist like Doria Shafik “underwent several mental breakdowns and, like Woolf and Ziyada, killed herself”

(WGI 188); Ahmed explains that social pressure and oppression is an extremely important factor that should be studied:

*Mental breakdown and suicide naturally have many causes. Among them doubtless are the punishing social and psychological effects visited by society on women who, breaking the bounds of femininity, become writers and thinkers and take their stand against the reigning dogmas of the culture, including a male dominance that trails in its wake emotional, psychological, and material brutality to women and children as religiously sanctioned law and accepted social practice and demands that such abuses be covered up in the name of loyalty to the culture (WGI 188, stress mine).*

Ahmed's feminist theory is closely linked to practical and 'real' experiences. Besides Egypt, she is greatly inspired by Bedouin and local women in Abu Dhabi, who were to inspire her specific version of feminism, later on (BP 288). She criticizes the depiction of women in animal imagery in the name of Abu 'Dhabi' itself which means gazelle (BP 275). Embodying

the prejudices against women and their right to equal education opportunities is the chauvinist Haydar (*BP* 277). Significantly enough, all sexist members of the committee are Arab and Egyptian but not Emirati. Ahmed realizes that the Bedouin intuition of the locals is much more refined than the corrupt, supposedly sophisticated, educational system, brainwashing the male committee members (*BP* 274). She traces the origins of such a demeaning attitude back to thirteenth-century Mameluks, who viewed slave women as concubines; this drives the granddaughters of similar cases to be prominent Egyptian feminists, later on (*BP* 99). It is the personal inspiring the national and the private deepening into the public. Ahmed soon links slavery of women to their genital mutilation and, later on, to the dark colours and the inequality in the code of dressing in Abu Dhabi (*BP* 98, 288). Nevertheless, the daring colours underneath seem to embody the rebellious streak of women in Abu Dhabi (*BP* 287).

In *Women and Gender in Islam* and *A Quiet Revolution*, Ahmed evaluates the role played by early Egyptian feminists like Nassef, Shaarawi and Shafik (*WGI* 171, 182-3, 203) and present-day women scholars

of the Quran like Amina Wadud (*QR* 272), and, as she does in her autobiography, traces patriarchal interpretation of religious textual evidence versus female narratives, like Aisha's and Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya (*WGI* 86, 88, 60, 96). Ahmed cites as an example the Arabic root *darab* which has stirred much controversy since male, doctrinaire version interprets it as 'strike' or beat (women), while female provides other meanings like 'leave', perhaps divorce, or 'object to. For the latter, she cites *Sublime Quran* (xliii) by the Sufi Bakhtyar (*QR* 267). On the other hand, she explains that there are facets of the hegemony of Orientalist stereotypes: one is Egyptian feminists, like Qassem Amin, for instance, internalizing imperialist discourse and believing in the supremacy of the Western civilization (*WGI* 158-9); the second is endorsing the trope of "white men saving brown women from brown men" (*QR* 24)<sup>5</sup>. Ironically enough, it was the white man who tried to scientifically prove the inferiority of women (and blacks alike) by offering the different measurements of the skull (*QR* 23).

Nevertheless, Ahmed sounds somehow harsh when she describes Amin's text as embodying "the animus

against women” and not only “turgid”, “contradictory” and steeped in the Western narrative but even betraying “paranoia” (*WGI* 158-9). Reading the texts she quoted from Amin explains her harsh critique of him. Nonetheless, Amin still remains one of the very early pioneers who put up with hardship to help emancipate women; the opinions he ventured to voiced were extremely rare at the time and he risked antagonizing different strata of society against him. On the other hand, “The resistance narrative contested the colonial thesis by inverting it, thereby also, ironically, grounding itself in the premises of the colonial thesis” (*WGI* 166). However, it is natural that human discourse is pyramidal or cumulative, each point leading to the other, either to continue or ‘discontinue’; whether linear or non-linear, progressive or regressive, it is interrelated and enmeshed in the opposing discourse, as a trigger or response. Ahmed’s statement is that Third-World women’s issues have been exploited by both campuses:

[D]iscussions of women in Islam in academies and outside them, and in Muslim countries and outside them, continue either to reinscribe the

Western narrative of *Islam as oppressor and the West as liberator* and native classist versions of the narrative or, conversely, to reinscribe the contentions of the Arabic narrative of resistance as to the essentialness of preserving Muslim customs, particularly with regard to women, as a sign of *resistance to imperialism, whether colonial or postcolonial* (WGI 167, stress mine).

Protecting Muslim women from their chauvinist, patriarchal, and oppressive societies justifies and legitimizes colonialism; it is the much-needed ‘civilizing mission’ against subverted cultures and religions (WGI 243). Certainly, not all Western feminist movements fall under this category; it is just pointing out that accomplices are on both sides. Indeed, the binarism is much more complex; Ahmed discusses two groups of intellectuals as regards their relationship to the West, other than those internalizing imperialist discourse of the East’s dependency complex and the supremacy of the West, and calling for the emulation of the West. Unfortunately, the veil might paradoxically symbolize both. First are those who adopt the veil “as a symbol of resistance to the uncontested hegemonic diffusion of the

discourses of the West”; their discourses of rejection are “informed by the language and ideas developed and disseminated by the West” (*WGI* 235). The second group is exemplified by, for instance, Frantz Fanon and Nawal el-Saadawi, who are critical of the West (*WGI* 235).

*Women and Islam: Veil and Ahmed’s Feminist-Postcolonial Perspective:*

Ahmed sees into women’s intuitive and mystic version of Islam and somehow prefers it to the textual, doctrinaire male version of formal Islam (*BP* 123). If male scholars in the past have rejected the presence of women scholars of religion amongst them, it is men who have always decided which texts to remain and be stressed and which to reject as inauthentic or even obliterate (*BP* 289). The gateway to fundamentalists (*BP* 302) was opened while suppressing tolerant versions like those of Ahmed’s mother, aunts and grandmother (*BP* 123). Patriarchal Islam gave way to the prominence of the Muslim Brotherhood and, oddly enough, to Zeinab el-Ghazali, whose version stands in juxtaposition with Ahmed’s mother (*BP* 123). Equally mystic is Ahmed’s nanny as a model of love and

everlasting mysticism (*BP* 63, 67). Furthermore, it is interesting that Ahmed worked at the Islamic Women's College in Maadi (*BP* 201). It is like an enactment of her belief in the strength of harem and the intuitive version of women scholars of religion.

In Ahmed, the veil works as a symbol of abuse, both as a negative stereotype in Orientalist discourse and as a chauvinist, not religious, symbol of hegemony in a patriarchal society. In both cases, it is portrayed as deterring the progress of nations. Ahmed discusses Frantz Fanon's tenet of veiling and unveiling Algeria as an example of politicizing the symbol (*WGI* 164). She adds that class and culture are "the precursor and prototype of the debate around the veil" (*WGI* 164). Ahmed's last recorded visit to Egypt in her autobiography calls for a historical comparison of the veil in the late 1990's and Egypt under Nasser and pre-Nasser eras. Similarly, she draws a spatial comparison of the attitude to the veil in Islamic and Western worlds in her latest work *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil's Resurgence from the Middle East to America*.

As I knew, the veil no longer meant what it had in my day. The women wearing it were quite

likely to be educated professional women, working women, upwardly mobile women. The veil did not connote for them, as it had for my grandmother, women's seclusion, invisibility, confinement to the home. Quite the contrary, it meant exactly the opposite: it was affirmation of their right to work and to be in the public world pursuing professional and working lives (*BP* 300).

Earlier in her autobiography, Ahmed analyzes the significantly historic moment when Hoda Shaarawi took off her veil: "It was about then, the mid-twenties, that Huda Shaarawi, returning from an international women's conference in Rome, would formally set aside her veil as she stepped off the boat in Alexandria" (*BP* 94). The problem, however, is that taking off the veil does not entail dismantling all sexist attitudes in a patriarchal society or Orientalist stereotypes in a Western society, simply because, like the harem, the piece of cloth was laden with negative connotations on both camps.

The veil is politicized and charged with meanings that are the furthest from religion. Even nowadays, in

America, it might be abused as a symbol of resistance and self-affirmation of the identity of a marginalized minority. Ahmed details the resurgence in America and the activism of such movements like ISNA (*QR* 233-306). It is related to immigration, converts, the unresolved tension between the Islam and the West (*QR* 4, 11). From early twentieth-century Egyptian history, Ahmed cites prominent liberal intellectuals like Salama Moussa and how disgusted he was at the fabrication of a non-existent Islamic enemy to justify colonial savagery (*BP* 45), yearning to the golden age of Coptic-Muslim harmony. Similarly, both patriarchy and the political agenda of Islamizing the society have abused the veil for their own purposes (*QR* 4, 9). The Muslim Brotherhood, as Ahmed explains in *Quiet Revolution*, has played a huge role in abusing the “signature dress” (*QR* 4, 9) as self-affirmation of ‘*gam’a mahthoura*’ or an illegal group. As in modern Egypt, the motive behind wearing it could be socio-political pressure; it is not always purely religious. In her autobiography, Ahmed maintains that “Still, the veil might go, but not necessarily the attitudes that accompanied it, the habits of seclusion and the cultural conditioning about the meaning of seeing and not seeing, of being visible and

invisible” (*QR* 280). Being visible and making their voice heard are not enough evidence of consequent equality of treatment, whether in the East or the West. Today, after the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups takeover of authority in, what is ironically known as the Arab Spring, the veil might have lost ground; now it is linked to the hegemony of oppressive authority in the ‘Greater Middle East’, backed by American and world leaders.

*Theory in Practice: Minority Literature, Postcolonialism and Marxism:*

At the “harem perfected”, in Girton, Cambridge, Ahmed starts linking gender to imperialist discourse, postcolonial and Marxist theories. All is inspired by the invisibility of the marginalized immigrants in exile and the literary canon. Similarly, classes other than the mainstream white middle class were totally silenced and absent in the curricula (*BP* 212). Marginalized blacks, women or lower classes were not “generating the theories and critiques” (*BP* 212). Even radical oppositional theories or countercultural, anti-establishment trends were those of the powerful and the dominant. Ahmed wonders, “Does the white male

academic canon, and the white male perspective on other cultures and other races or on women, represent a 'truer', more valid, more universal understanding of human experience than any other perspective?" (BP 213). She then starts posing epistemological and postcolonial questions like: "Who is it that defines what constitutes 'true' knowledge?" (BP 213). Later on, in America, there is the *anagnorisis* and the epiphany that "thereafter my life becomes part of other stories, American stories (BP 296).

It becomes part of the story of *feminism* in America, the story of women in America, the story of people of *color* in America, the story of *Arabs* in America, the story of *Muslims* in America, and part of the story of America itself and of American lives in a world of *dissolving boundaries* and *vanishing borders* (BP 296, stress mine).

The overlapping spatio-temporal territories and the convergence of narratives explain the liminality inherent in the "border passage" of the title of the autobiography, hence the "dissolving boundaries and vanishing borders". Significantly enough, all this was

harmoniously blended in the Sufi poetry of Jalaluddin Rumi in Anatolia. “At his death, all of Konya mourned. Jews, Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus, as well as Muslims, walked in his procession, weeping” (*BP* 306). Even his cat refused to eat, dying under his bed as a symbol of “Rumi’s deep connection with all beings” (*BP* 307). Ahmed meditates on the music of the reed in Sufi poetry as the quintessential music of loss”, where “the reed forever laments the living earth it once knew” (*BP* 5). Ahmed considers it a metaphor for the human condition, haunted by nostalgia and reminiscence. Rumi’s presence in the several epigraphs attests to the Sufi and intuitive version of Islam that she loves. Moreover, the multiplicity of layers enriches and deepens the experience. It is worth mentioning that Ahmed’s supervisor was Arberry, the prominent Sufi critic and translator of the Quran (*BP* 208).

Significantly enough, amongst the epigraphs Ahmed chooses in her autobiography is a poem by the black British poet Meiling Jin “Strangers in a Hostile Landscape”: “We were a straggly bunch of immigrants / in a lily white landscape” (*BP* 196). The poem bitterly relates invisibility to colonialism and imperialism. “One

day I learnt / A secret art, / Invisible-Ness it was called” (*BP* 196). In Girton, Cambridge, Ahmed starts to level critique at her imperialist British schooling in Egypt; she also notices the visible and invisible in the academic canon (*BP* 212-13). She managed to foresee the future revolution to be fuelled by minorities like women, blacks and immigrants in the West, who “understood their exclusion from the academic curriculum and set to work to make their own perspectives and histories academically visible” (*BP* 212). Cases in point were feminism, black and cultural studies, once “relegated to the edges of consciousness” (*BP* 213). Ahmed also wonders, “Whose experience and whose perspective should be at the centre of our studies in the academy?” (*BP* 213). Does the intellectual living in Cambridge or New York offer a more authentic and authoritative reading than the one living in Delhi, Lagos or Cairo? (*BP* 214); Ahmed wonders why America is central to theory while Ghana, Egypt or India are “completely irrelevant” (*BP* 213); what about Native Americans or lower-class black women? (*BP* 213) Indeed, Ahmed might be partly focusing on Third-World Muslim women because of their triple marginalization (*BP* 287).

**It is empowering those women who are, like herself, on the periphery rather than in the centre (*BP* 214, 288).**

**Ever since her days in Girton, Ahmed somehow seems to have enjoyed the practical traditional theory and vocabulary at the Oriental Studies department, where she wrote her thesis on Edward Lane, more than French theory, including “structuralism, poststructuralism, Levi-Strauss, Barthes, Foucault, Derrida” (*BP* 214), which had started to be in vogue at the time at the department of English (*BP* 212-14). At the “Oriental Studies” Department, “they spoke only the old-style, perfectly comprehensible academic language” (*BP* 214). It is noteworthy that much has changed since the late sixties, when Ahmed was in Girton. Minorities have a much stronger voice; they are more represented in anthologies and included in the canon, and French theory has become much more comprehensible due to the intensive academic studies and the several publications by the same theorists elucidating their own ideas.**

**Ahmed seems to be influenced by Frantz Fanon’s treatise on colonial inferiority and dependency complex and relates this to her father internalizing imperialist**

supremacist discourse (*BP* 24-5, 33-4). Unlike feminist discourse, especially as related to Islam and Postcolonialism, anti-Orientalist discourse was solidly developed by Edward Said, who refuted many imperialist allegations and dismantled several stereotypes. This had taken place when Ahmed was in Abu Dhabi (after her time at Cambridge). “Most particularly it gave us a way to speak of being Arab in the West and of what it was to live embattled in a sea of prejudices, prejudices that came at us as ‘knowledge’ and as ‘objective’, ‘neutral’, ‘transcendent’, ‘unbiased’ ‘truths’” (*BP* 240). Nevertheless, Ahmed disagrees with Said as regards his critique of Lane. She explains that it might be because Said has tackled “centuries of history” and “scores of writers” (*BP* 241). This, however, she maintains, never detracts from the “validity of Said’s broad thesis” (*BP* 241). On the other hand, Ahmed personally believes that Said seems to “flatten and erase other aspects of being Arab” (*BP* 241), although she, like “the vast majority of academics in the Western world”, is “naturally enormously indebted intellectually to Said’s work” (*BP* 241). Ahmed has a negative experience of Arabism, both intellectual and personal (due to her Palestinian Arabic school

teacher (*BP* 243) and Nasser's regime's persecution of her father). She spends chapters to delineate and analyze the complexity of the question of Arab versus Egyptian identity. To her, the former seems to have colonized the latter, though never succeeding to obliterate it. As a Palestinian in exile and "out of place", Said's experience of Arabism is quite different from Ahmed's.

*Re-membered Osiris, Dismembered Orpheus:  
Postmodernism Incarnate:*

Mythical and Biblical allusions in Ihab Hassan's *Out of Egypt* unravel the layers of the memory-oblivion, filiation-affiliation antithesis underlying his work. In his Preface, he compares figuring out the significance of his self-imposed exile to collecting the scattered bones of Osiris; construing the meaning and the ulterior motives helps resurrect his inner self. The narrative, however, is fragmented, like the process of reminiscence. Postmodernist theory informs both the form and content of the book; masternarratives like patriotism and nationalism are undermined. Hassan is like Orpheus the postmodernist not the modernist; he loves the lyre and the song as emblems of creativity and

individuation but he does not necessarily believe in the song (RC 112-3). Even the narrative process is undermined by the huge leaps from present to far past, then near past, from the present setting in America back to Egypt, then to Germany. The authenticity of the narrator is itself dismantled. In a very short introductory paragraph, the reader is overwhelmed by “disjunction”, “fragments”, “scraps”, “re-membered”:

My story began in Egypt, continues in America.  
But how tell that story of disjunction, self-exile?  
In fragments, I think, in slips of memory, scraps  
of thought. In scenes and arguments of a life  
time, re-membered like the scattered bones of  
Osiris (OE ix, stress mine).

This fragmentation could be illuminated if linked to the four stages of the hero’s initiation journey and his quest in *Selves at Risk*: “*Agon* or conflict, *pathos* or death struggle, *sparagmos* or (provisional) dismemberment, and *anagnorisis* or recognition of a newborn world (SR 23).

Elsewhere, as the titles *The Right Promethean Fire* and *The Dismemberment of Orpheus* indicate, the creative artist as a rebel, dissenting from the ‘norm’

and all that is considered sacred, is inspired by the Muse or by Classical mythological figures like Prometheus, Orpheus or Icarus in *Between the Eagle and the Sun*. Osiris was alienated from his land by his evil brother Set; however, he was restored to life by Isis to have their posthumous son Horus. The dimensions of rebirth, however, are more personal than national. The lyre of Orpheus was taken away, his “voice, / For the first time, moved no one” (*OE ix*). In *Rumors of Change*, Orpheus symbolizes the distinction between modernism and postmodernism:

Modernism, as I see it, was essentially authoritarian in form and aristocratic in its cultural spirit... Orpheus sings his song with a premonition of his ritual (recurrent) dismemberment, yet still he believes the song will reshape the earth and perhaps heaven.

Postmodernism, on the other hand, is essentially subversive in form and anarchic or eclectic in its cultural spirit... Orpheus is not only dismembered; his severed head seems to sing of sinking even as it sinks into the river Hebrus (*RC 112-13*).

Significantly enough, like Osiris, “The poet’s limbs lay scattered”; like the Nile, “Hebrus River took the head and lyre” (Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, quoted in the epigraph to *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*). The “lyre without the strings” or the poet without a lyre symbolize, in Hassan’s terms, the crisis of language and literature (*DO* xiii). Oddly enough, “Orpheus consents to dismemberment”. To Hassan, this is “the true meaning of the avant-garde” (*DO* xvii).

In *The Right Promethean Fire*, “Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture” is an innovative play where Pretext, Mythotext, Heterotext, Context, Metatext, Posttext and Paratext are the characters, all related to, what Hassan calls, Prometheus, the forethinker, as performer (*RPF* 187-207). It is noteworthy that the frame-within-the-frame, together with montage (*RPF* 6) or cinema cuts, is broken with the comments of the Paratext or the speaker (*RPF* 8, 187). This postmodern technique is also used both in *Out of Egypt* and *Paracriticisms*. Another technique underlying Hassan’s work is the interchange of perspectives, point and counterpoint (*Paracriticisms* 88-9). Cases in point are the postmodern traits he

delineates, a theory he is a pioneer of postulating, “parodic reflexiveness”, the “recreation of reality”, “non-linear forms” (*Paracriticisms* 85-6). In *Between the Eagle and the Sun*, Hassan uses the same counterpoint technique as regards the American cowboy myth, as related to the Japanese internationalization and transculturation. The Japanese viewed the cowboy as “the quintessential loner” while the American students explained him as “teamwork” (*BES* 106). In *The Right Promethean Fire*, Hassan elucidates how the “creative” and “critical faculties” are complementary. In the frame-within-the-frame, he cites Oscar Wilde’s:

The crude commercialism of America, its materializing spirit, its indifference to the poetical side of things, and its lack of imagination and of high unattainable ideals, are entirely due to that country having adopted for its national hero a man, who according to his own confession, was incapable of telling a lie, ...  
George Washington (RPF 8).

Wilde’s idea is immediately deconstructed: politicians can easily lie not only misrepresent; this is

**simultaneously linked to American utopia and dystopia, the dream and the nightmare:**

**Wilde could not have known about Cambodia, Watergate, and the grisly antics of the CIA... Yet more than most nations, America manufactures dreams, nightmares, and profound critiques of both (RPF 8, stress mine).**

***The Here and Now: Setting and Time in Hassan:***

**Setting and time are the here and now; Hassan's relating America to her own creation of time and place is extremely significant, especially as it is antithetical to that of the whole world, however historic and ancient it is.**

**Europe possesses a past; America makes one; but the past America makes becomes elsewhere in the world an optative future. That is, America, alembic of time, distills the future in the present, and so permits other nations to choose their destiny. This does not always win gratitude.**

**The historic role of America? Beyond language, nation and clan, to create (precariously, violently) *a new order of diversity*. Neither “melting**

pot” nor “rubbish heap”, neither sociolect nor idiolect, but the One and Many mediated dangerously, toward a *uni-verse*. The world’s dream? (*OE* 45-6, stress mine).

Significantly enough, this “Interlude” is one of the several fragments interrupting the narrative flow of the autobiography, if any, with what Hassan calls “Interlude”. This zig-zag structure, with philosophical comments abruptly interrupting the episodes, is part of, what Hassan calls, the postmodernist “disjunctive” “anti-form” (*The Dismemberment of Orpheus* 267). This seems to be an intellectual, philosophical statement that somehow gears the reader into posing the constantly renovating and innovative America versus the stagnant, “eternal” Egypt (*OE* 16). The above quotation somehow evokes the idea of all-in-one and the just dictator, where America is rightfully the sole superpower, as well as Shelley’s “Ozymandias”, where the pharaohs are submerged by the sand of oblivion.

Juxtaposing the preface to *Out of Egypt* with its very last paragraph, the reader gets a better glimpse of the symbolic significance of the dismemberment of Orpheus. From Egypt, young Hassan “fiercely fled”,

coming “deliriously” to America, where the “true time” and “everything real” are (*OE* 113). “I know that Time has kept its secret from my praying mind, and that all my writing, this autobiography, remains vain” (*OE* 113). It might initially seem like Egypt is the ‘simulacrum’ and America is the original utopia, “a land violently dreaming the world into a better place” (*OE* 113). Hassan starts his book *Selves at Risk: Patterns of Quest in Contemporary American Letters* with an epigraph from Herman Melville. “We Americans are the peculiar chosen people, the Israel of our time... We are the pioneers of the world” (Epigraph *SR*). Reading his other work, however, somehow undermines this simple naïve binarism; initiation rites are part of the individuation process of maturity, both personal and national. He himself touches upon “the obscure schism in our private lives”, the “fanaticism of the heart” (*OE* 21). This, however, is not without a price. *Out of Egypt* abounds with colonial terms of dismissal and stereotypes, where Egypt is “stagnant’ (*OE* 35) and Egyptians are like “nomads” in the “timeless sand” of the “deserts” (*OE* 41), the exact notions terribly rejected by Edward Said. Significantly enough, while Hassan considers Egyptian critique of imperialism a

kind of “historical paranoia” (*OE* 26), “false pride” and “colonial complex” (*OE* 25), he discusses the anti-Oedipus notion of the slaying of the father (*OE* 31), which, somehow applies to his own severe process of uprooting himself. His parents, for him, had been already dead before being buried in the grave (*OE* 31), in a way explaining why he has never ever returned to Egypt not even once. “My childhood lay in an invisible field of force” (*OE* 21).

*Initiation Journey: Radically Innocent Heroes:*

Hassan offers an extremely interesting paradoxical interpretation of the “dialectics of initiation”, as related to the “radically innocent” hero and American literature. “The hero, who once figured as Initiate, ends as Rebel or Victim. The change in his condition implies destruction, and presages rebirth” (*RI* 9). This can be easily related to Hassan’s journey out of Egypt. Furthermore, his detailed innovative critical analyses of American literature, especially the motifs of Jungian individuation, quest, flight, schizophrenia, self-abolition, utopia and dystopia could be seen in the light of the innocence of American Adam and Eve which is, paradoxically, radical (*RI* 11, 13, 17). “In a limited

sense, therefore, every hero is a scapegoat, and a radical innocent. Thus was Prometheus chained to a rock and Oedipus banished from Thebes” (RI 327). Like Dionysus, it is divine, creative, sacrificial innocence endowing the American Adam with the energy of being (RI 7). Nevertheless, it is still burdened with engagements from the Old World; it is very close to, what Toni Morrison calls in *Playing in the Dark*, the subtext glimmering underneath<sup>6</sup>.

Though American literature is unique and individualistic, it is still tainted with residues of guilt; the victim sometimes turns into the tormentor (RI 9). “But the most diabolic perversion of this ideal is witnessed when the victim adopts the values and prejudices of his tormentor in the very act of torment, and when contrition is created in the victim to excuse the guilt of the oppressor” (RI 16). This statement rings true nowadays in Egypt, as regards the Muslim Brotherhood adopting the terror tactics of the previous regime, thus betraying the trust of Egyptians and strangling the revolutionary dream of freedom.

*Self-creation*: a sovereign fiction that yet enabled me to *resist*, even to remake, “things as

they are". It helped me slip through my birthrights: language and the *clutching blood*. Slip? We tear ourselves free. We learn *murder in the family*, as the ancient Greeks knew, and rehearse the pride of *Oedipus* before the Sphinx. With luck, courage, grace, we may shed our violence at last and, like *ancient heroes*, rise to myth (*OE 6*, stress mine).

The absolute need for radical freedom comes at a certain price; this is very close to Hassan's uprooting or severing from emotional entanglements in Egypt. It is like Icarus' need for independence and absolute freedom or the anxiety of influence and the Oedipal slaying of the father<sup>7</sup>.

*Between Autobiography and Criticism: A Question of Identity:*

One of the reasons why both Ahmed and Hassan write their autobiography is an attempt to figure out their identity. This is stated by Hassan in *Between the Eagle and the Sun* and in the epigraph to *Out of Egypt* derived from Walter Benjamin's *Reflections*: "He who has begun to open the fan of memory never comes to the end of its segments... for he has seen that it can be

unfolded, and only in its folds does the truth reside” (Epigraph to *OE*). Hassan wonders if autobiography makes a point or intrudes: “In any case, it defines but one of several strains in my work, a strain I mean neither to indulge nor to deny” (*RC* xiii). All the epigraphs set at the outset of *Out of Egypt* discuss autobiography as a hybrid genre of confessions and criticism: “a subtly equivocal mode that one might call ‘confidential criticism’ (Yukio Mishima’s *Sun and Steel*, epigraph to *OE*). Similarly, Hassan quotes Oscar Wilde’s *Interventions*: “[criticism] is the only civilized form of autobiography” (Epigraph to *OE*). In a way, this explains Hassan’s harsh critique of Egypt; criticism in the epigraphs might comprise critique as well as literary theory. Hassan’s son, who visited Egypt twice while Hassan never returned to it (*OE* 11, 1), “asks incredulously: ‘Dad, you’re writing an autobiography? But you never spoke of Egypt at home!’” (*OE* 11). Hassan himself reminisces about his family and why as he “escaped Egypt”, he “had so fiercely longed to leave them all behind” (*OE* 18).

This wilful uprooting can be easily seen in the light of the postcolonial notion of “affiliation” and of the

postmodernist tenet of dismantling all masternarratives, even home, patriotism and nationalism: “For all autobiography is myth, like Death itself, in its deepest reality imaginary” (OE 3). Similarly, roots and the sense of belonging to homeland are somehow mythical too:

*Roots, everyone speaks of roots. I have cared for none. Perhaps in my case, they were too old and tangled; or perhaps they withered early from some blight, which I have long ceased to mourn...I bore away no kinship feelings. Still, who knows but that their Ka, uniting Life and Death in its Essential Self, did not inscribe some hieratic message in my soul? (OE 4, stress mine).*

Unfortunately, whenever ancient Egyptian mythical figures or symbols are mentioned, it is ironic. “Tutankhamen has just *invaded* the city”; “Amon, Horus, Set, Hathor, Nu, Mut, Khnum, Anubis, Isis, Osiris: they all *haunt* the world’s museums” (OE 5, 3, stress mine). Obviously, the words “invaded” and “haunt” bear negative connotations; however, this can be seen within the mythical framework of self-creation and initiation. “Egypt” is defined by Hassan as “a

palimpsest of cultures, her history an echolalia of conquering tongues” (OE 3). Analyzing the semantic import of ‘palimpsest’, we are encountered with layers that could be easily erased; ‘echolalia’, on the other hand, implies a pathological repetition of what is said by other nations or cultures, passively echoing them.

This does not mean that the way Britain, for instance, is regarded is better or that America is not criticized in his work. It is close to Auerbach’s journey that Said upholds as an example of secular criticism<sup>8</sup>.

*The sting of colonialism is rarely visible; its ravages lie within. The British rumoured themselves “civilized colonials,” and so they were, compared to the Spanish, French, or Portuguese. Subtle, distant, and discreet, The British divided to conquer, and acted ruthlessly in whatever touched their needs (OE 24, stress mine).*

Patriotism, resistance and nationalism are also myths. The ironic tone persists even when describing the ‘so-called’ and much celebrated heroism of his father:

*Like every schoolboy, I grew up with fierce fantasies of liberating Egypt... Once, before my*

*birth, [the British] detained my father three days for some unacknowledged deed; that single feat provided my family with its myth of heroic resistance for years (OE 24, stress mine).*

Hassan asks a series of reasonable questions undermining established myths about colonialism deterring the development of the colonized: “Did it impose poverty on the fellah for millennia? Who makes imperialism possible? And how healthy, free, or affluent are Egyptians...after their liberation?” (OE 24). Unfortunately, the same questions ring true today: we still have the same debate going on nowadays after the 25 January Revolution; some argue that it is entirely our sin (like Ali Salem, for instance) while many others (like William Engdahl and Lamis Gaber)<sup>9</sup> attribute this to the ‘so-called’ conspiracy theory of American-Zionist manipulation of pre- and post-revolutionary Egypt. Oddly enough, both arguments sound true. Nevertheless, Hassan himself sometimes endorses the Foucauldian notions of the epistemological power of discourse and the inextricable bond of knowledge and power<sup>10</sup>. The following conversation is one he reported to have had with his father, who said, “It’s the way of

power... But also remember Champollion and the Rosetta Stone. That's power of a different kind." Hassan, then, admits that knowledge remains "*chained to power, language to tyranny.*" (OE 17-18, stress mine).

Like Ahmed, Hassan admires pre-Nasser Egypt more. "Luxuriantly cosmopolitan, almost as much as in Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, pre-Nasser Egypt has now gone" (OE 13). It could be related to socialism, the myth of Arabism, nationalism, the absence of cosmopolitanism, etc. "Cairo itself has become a place of unspeakable pollution or occlusions", Hassan adds quoting *The New York Times*, "crumbling under the weight of its people" (OE 14). Hassan puts this within a larger philosophical context, like the above argument on colonialism. While Ahmed criticizes "internalizing imperial discourse" (BP 25) and probes the danger of the colonial "dependency complex", relating this to Frantz Fanon's theory (BP 24-5, 32-3), Hassan wonders, "What profound political or cultural reforms? This, then, is the paradox of 'developing countries': they seem hardly to develop at all" (OE 14). Right after, the ironic orientalist terms of dismissal persist: "Meanwhile, Eternal Egypt endures" (OE 14). He feels

a stranger in his native land, where there are “numberless peasants dying in the dusty streets which serve them as home” (*OE* 14). The insulting mocking tone, “I do not know how to ‘speak Egypt’” accompanies the releasing concept of “self-ignorance” as he tries to avoid beggars asking the ‘foreign’ man for *baksheesh*. “I realize how much of my Egypt has vanished, available neither to history nor legend, only to dubious, private recall” (*OE* 14).

In the above text, ‘dubious’ is the keyword; it is the permanent questioning spirit of intellectuals; it is reminiscent of the philosophical notion of the ‘blank slate’. Hassan explains “self-ignorance” when he mentions the number of books and old notebooks he took with him to Munich to write this autobiography: “This tardy reckoning, though, may evade both the old Egypt I knew and the new Egypt I ignore” (*OE* 14). He wonders how diverse emotions like “anger”, “reconciliation”, “bemusement” intermingle, “run strong, surprising in their twists” (*OE* 14). This ‘overflow of powerful emotions’, or “access of professional angst” (*OE* 15), strikes him as unexpected. The interplay and interchange of roles harken back to

the Jungian theory of roles; Hassan wonders, “Can humanists learn to dream again, and dreaming wake to mediate actively between Culture and Desire, Language and Power, History and Hope” (*OE* 15). The present triggers a flash back to the near past, as recorded in his notebooks.

And I wonder how all these emotions touch my American career as “teacher”, “critic,” “humanist”.

I am first a man. Asked to define my philosophy or politics, I always state my name.

But I am also a teacher, and my responsibility adheres to a vision of the human adventure, not to canon, method or text (*OE* 15).

Like Hassan, Ahmed yearns to pre-Nasser Egypt, where Egyptian identity was stressed. Ahmed insists on her Egyptian, not Arab, identity. She justifies this emotionally and intellectually. Her first encounter with her Arab identity was somehow conditioned by the slap on her face that she got from her Palestinian Arabic school teacher (*BP* 243), accentuating her hatred of Arabic, while the persecution of her father under Nasser, for opposing the High Dam project, intensified

this dubious position. The conversation with her schoolteacher is very indicative of her spontaneous reaction: “You’re an Arab!” “And you don’t know your own language!”, says her teacher. Ahmed immediately and spontaneously answers, “I am not an Arab”; “I am Egyptian! And anyway we don’t speak like this!” (*BP* 243). Her mother tongue, she says, is not Arabic but colloquial Egyptian. Her blunt answer and the fact that she furiously banged the book on the desk elicited the nervous reaction on the part of the teacher. Although Ahmed criticizes the imperialism of her English school education, she always excludes the vibrancy of the English language. To English, she compares the vivid colloquial oral Egyptian, as distinct from, what she considers, the stale and stagnant written Arabic. She cites as examples of her multi-cultural upbringing and background, the Anglicized version of her name, ‘Lily’, used by her family, and the Turco-Circassian origins of her mother (*BP* 6). This attitude, indeed, is not very common among some other Arab American writers who come from, for instance, Syria, Lebanon, or Palestine. This is probably because standard Arabic is incorporated into the daily lives of the children and taught in a more practical way than in Egypt.

On the other hand, Ahmed believes that asking Egyptians to relinquish their Egyptian identity, to reinforce their Arab one, is very much like asking the British or the French to choose their European identity at the expense of the British and French. Ahmed also compares accusing Egyptians of being “un-Arab” if they criticize the Arabism propaganda under Nasser to the McCarthy era in America, where people were accused of being “un-American” (BP 246). Nowadays, as a reaction to the Islamist undermining of the ancient Egyptian heritage and exclusion of Copts and liberals, there are parties, like *Misr elFataa*, founded by the grandson of Ahmed Lutfi elSayed, which advocate going back to the ancient Egyptian roots. There are writers like Sherif elShobashi and channels like OTV that endorse colloquial Egyptian and all dialects within the Egyptian society. Ahmed explains that Egyptians “define themselves as African, Nilotic, Mediterranean, Islamic, or Coptic” (BP 11). She starts giving all the different synonyms of the word Egypt, in an attempt to show the diversity and ancient history of this civilization: ‘Kemi’, ‘Mizraim’, “Musur”, ‘Aigyptos’, for ancient Egyptians, in the Bible, to Assyrians, etc. (BP 11). It is noteworthy that the only time Ahmed

addresses her daughter is when she ends her chapter entitled “On Becoming Arab”: “And so that, O my daughter, is what happened. That, in those years, is what happened to us” (*BP* 270). The ‘-ing’ indicates a process very much like naturalization; it is not her original identity. The epigraph preceding this chapter is symbolically taken from Zora Neale Hurston: “I remember the very day that I became colored” (*BP* 243).

## *Notes*

1. 'Living Theory' is a replay of Edward Said's "Travelling Theory" in *The World, the Text and the Critic* 226

The following abbreviations will be used:

*Border Passage: BP*

*Women and Gender in Islam: WGI*

*A Quiet Revolution: QR*

*Out of Egypt: OE*

*Radical Innocence: RI*

*Dismemberment of Orpheus: DO*

*Right Promethean Fire: RPF*

*Selves at Risk: SR*

*Rumors of Change: RC*

*Between the Eagle and the Sun: BES*

2. See Homi Bhabha's "liminal zone" and "the third space of inunciation", *Location of Culture* 37

3. See Edward Said's "filiation-affiliation" in *The World, the Text and the Critic* 174, 177

4. See Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, in *Foucault Reader* 172, 175, See also Baudrillard's *The Illusion of the End* 10, 35, 62

5. See Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* xi
  6. See Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* for a profound understanding of the cultural and literary anxiety of influence in the light of the Oedipal slaying of the father
  7. See Said's discussion of Auerbach as an oppositional, secular critic in *The World, the Text and the Critic* 5-9
  8. In *QR* 24, Ahmed is quoting Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak" 296
  9. See Engdahl's "Egypt's Revolution: Creative Destruction for a 'Greater Middle East'?"
- The debate between Salem and Gaber was aired in Emadeddin Adib's "Behoudou" on the Egyptian independent channel CBC on 20, May, 2013
10. See Foucault's *The Foucault Reader* 175 and *Power/Knowledge* 52

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