



# Exploring the Close Correlation between Queer Theory and Feminism and Its Impact on Contemporary Egyptian Literary Narratives

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موقع المجلة الإلكتروني:

## **Exploring the Close Correlation between Queer Theory and Feminism and Its Impact on Contemporary Egyptian Literary Narratives**

### **Abstract:**

The field of queer sexuality studies focuses on the aspects that are excluded or devalued within the dominant identity binaries, as well as what is marginalized within the mainstream hegemonic discourse. The term "queer" refers to non-normative sexual identities or the LGBTQIA+ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Transgender, Asexual, Intersex) community. Queering resists the dominance of heteronormativity by centering on the sexualities that are excluded by the heteronormative framework.

In the contemporary Egyptian context, queer identities are often portrayed as taboo, especially considering the criminalization of adult consensual same-sex relationships under the Egyptian Penal Code. Besides homoerotic desire and practices violate Islamic regulations. This perception of queer identities as unnatural has led to a lack of visibility for non-conformist and non-heterosexual identities in mainstream Egyptian literature, cinema, and other media. However, in current days English literature and even Arabic literary works, series and films have managed to provide greater representation for these sexual minorities. This is very evident even in international ceremonies and festivals for example; the opening ceremony of Paris Olympics 2024 contains scenes of gay men and drag queens which in many parts of the world has sparked controversy and backlash. Consequently, the paper examines the relationship between queer theory and feminism and sheds more light on the outbreak of this phenomenon in both English and Arabic (Egyptian) literary works.

**Keywords:** Queer theory, Feminism, hegemonic discourse, LGBTQIA, lesbian, bisexual, homosexual, Egyptian literary works, Alaa Al Aswany, Naguib Mahfouz

## Introduction

In point of fact, the primary concentration of introductory books in the field of gender studies, which is sometimes referred to as women's studies or feminist studies, is on the topic of gender identity. In a similar vein, sexual identity is discussed in the introductory textbooks of sexuality studies, which are sometimes referred to as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) studies. On the other hand, there are not a lot of introductory works that expressly investigate the interaction between sexual identity and gender identity. The process of striving to decisively specify the sufficient and necessary requirements for membership in any given category is a reductive technique that queer theory rejects. In spite of this, it is sometimes important to provide a starting point for those who are unfamiliar with the subjects in question. It is possible to act as an entry point by presenting contextualized explanations and conversations, without making any promise to provide a fixed or definitive account of something that is fundamentally fluid and always evolving in relation to the aforementioned theory. Krista Benson (2010) offers straightforward explanation of queer theory that it is "complicated". The process of making something more complicated is what we mean when we talk about queering, and this is not something that is exclusive to sexual circumstances alone. Engaging in philosophical discourse without resorting to conventional reasoning or living in a manner that challenges firmly held preconceptions about gender, sexuality, and sex are both examples of behaviors that might be categorized as queer. The word "queer" refers to those who do not identify as transgender, lesbian, bisexual, gay, or homosexual, but who are unable to cleanly fit into the strict societal prescriptions surrounding sex, gender, and sexuality. This includes those who do not consider themselves to be transgender.

Rather than attempting to simplify or classify these themes, queer theory acknowledges the intrinsic complexity that has been present throughout them.

### **Homosexuality and the social history of lesbian**

Due to the outbreak of queer theory in English literary works, novels, movies, films, and series, it is important to understand and discuss this phenomenon and its impact on our Arabic literary works. First of all, Understanding the intersections between queer theory and feminist thought, and their influence on Egyptian literary and cultural production, necessitates a thorough engagement with the historical development of these critical paradigms within Western intellectual traditions. We have also to fully grasp the definitions of some key words relevant to the theoretical frame work, such as homosexuality. According to Foucault, the contemporary Western understanding of homosexuality originated during a time when sexuality was ostensibly being repressed. However, in reality, it was the result of the formulation and propagation of discourses about sexuality, notably from the professional area of medicine.

Using Foucault's work as a foundation, John D'Emilio challenged the concept of an "eternal homosexual" and instead linked the emergence of a unique homosexual identity to the latter half of the 19th century. The explanation offered by D'Emilio, on the other hand, is not the same as the one offered by Foucault. D'Emilio linked this phenomenon to the emergence of wage labor and capitalism, which enabled individuals to become increasingly autonomous from the traditional structure of extended families. Both Foucault and D'Emilio connected the modern conceptualization of homosexuality to broader social and historical

changes, though they differed in their specific analysis of the underlying causes and timeframes.

I contend that homosexual lesbians and men have not always been present. Rather, they are a byproduct of history, having emerged within a particular historical period. Their emergence is linked to capitalist relations; it is the historical evolution of capitalism—particularly its free labor system—that has enabled numerous individuals in the late twentieth century to identify as gay, perceive themselves as part of a community of like-minded individuals, and engage in political organization based on that identity. (D'Emilio, 1983, p.102).

As a result of the emergence of capitalism, there was a steady transition away from the family farm as the basic unit of economic output. The family unit took on a new relevance as an emotional unit rather than a productive one as more individuals, particularly males, started engaging in wage work outside the house. This was especially true within the context of the United States. It evolved into a safe haven away from the public world of labor and industry, and it was no longer motivated by the need to satisfy economic requirements. Furthermore, the diminishing significance of children's work meant that the act of procreation was no longer as significantly important. According to D'Emilio, this resulted in a shift in perspectives on the function of sexual intercourse within the context of marriage, which was no longer simply for the goal of generating kids inside the marriage. To put it another way, the shift from a family-based economy to a capitalist one brought about changes in both the function and perception of the family unit. It grew less reliant on economic output and more focused on emotive relationships, which in turn had an effect on ideas of sexuality and the role it plays within marriage.

. Alterations were also made to the concept of heterosexual relationships. Over seven children were born to each woman of reproductive age in colonial New England, setting the average birth rate for the region. The work of children was necessary for both men and women. The production of children was just as essential to one's existence as the gathering of food. The purpose of sexual activity was to produce offspring. Instead of celebrating heterosexuality, the Puritans celebrated marriage. They condemned any kind of sexual expression that occurred outside of the context of marriage, and they did not discriminate between sodomy and heterosexual fornication in a clear and distinct manner. (D'Emilio, 1983, p.104)

Sexual connections inside marriage ceased to perform an important productive purpose as a result of the demise of the family farm as the basic economic unit under the capitalist system. Sex became more closely tied to intimacy and the private sphere, distinct from the public world of work. As individuals became more independent economic agents, unbound from the heterosexual family structure, it became possible for them to construct personal lives and identities based on same-sex attraction. In the years leading up to the establishment of a separate category for gay identity, homosexual behavior was not necessarily seen as more serious than other sexual offenses.

The scholars - McIntosh, Foucault, Bray, and D'Emilio - agree that the creation of homosexuality as an identity, as opposed to just a sexual behavior, represented an important historical shift. While they differ somewhat on the precise timing and causal factors, their analyses are ultimately compatible. D'Emilio links the rise of homosexual identity to the transition from family-based to wage-labor economies, while Foucault emphasizes the role of emerging medical discourses. However, these social and discursive changes

were likely intertwined, as the optimism of the industrial revolution contributed to the proliferation of scientific-medical understandings of sexuality. The scholars also note that the development of a collective gay identity may have first occurred in specific urban contexts before spreading more broadly, though the emergence among poorer or rural populations is less well-explained.

Despite the fact that homosexuality is not necessarily a gendered notion, meaning that it may apply to either male or female homosexuality, the historical interpretations that have been presented by academics such as Bray, McIntosh, and Foucault have a tendency to concentrate exclusively on male gay identity.

While the shift to a wage work system was taking place, women continued to be financially reliant on males for a much longer period of time. As a result of being relegated to the private. home realm rather than the public social arenas where male gay roles were negotiated, female homosexuality did not get as much historical attention or record as male homosexuality, at least not until more recent times. In other words, while homosexuality encompasses both female and male experiences, the existing social histories have disproportionately centered on the male homosexual identity, with D'Emilio's work representing a notable exception in exploring the development of lesbian identity as well.

"Female homosexuality does not occupy the same positions as male homosexuality in the discourses of law or medicine," writes Annamarie Jagose (Jagose, 1996, page 13). This is according to Jagose's research. When the concept of homosexuality among men was publicly attacked and ridiculed, the concept of homosexuality among women was generally ignored. This is very clear in Jagose's words:

For instance, the British court system, which was widely influential on a global scale and, during the time when Britain was a colonial power, was accepted or imposed as the legal pattern in many other nations, criminalized homosexual activities committed by men while dismissing the potential of homosexuality among women. Activities of "gross indecency" between "male persons" are expressly prohibited by the Labouchère Amendment of 1885, which establishes the foundation for a significant portion of the anti-homosexual legislation that is now in place in western countries. However, equivalent activities between female persons are permitted by default. To a similar extent, and in part due to the fact that it has a distinct relationship to criminalization, it took a far longer period of time for female homosexuality to establish itself as the foundation of a community and subcultural identity than it did for male homosexuality. (Jagose, 1996, p.13)

Sexologists started examining what they called "sexual inversion" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This disorder was considered to entail a full reversal of gender, including attraction to members of the same sex. It was not until the late 19th century and early 20th century that the medical profession began to acknowledge female homosexuality. *Psychopathia Sexualis*, written by Richard von Krafft-Ebing and published in German in 1886 and in English in 1892, and *Sexual Inversion*, written by Havelock Ellis and published in 1897, were two important publications that dealt with this subject matter. These concepts were further popularized in Radclyffe Hall's book *The Well of Loneliness*, which was published in 1928. The work had a male protagonist named Stephen who experienced love for other women. This was a reflection of the fact that, at the time, there was no clearly defined societal function established for female homosexuality outside of the medical area. The fact that the novel



was banned in both the United Kingdom and the United States of America suggests that there was some reluctance to accept the concept of female homosexuality. This is despite the fact that the publication of three additional lesbian-themed novels in England in 1928 indicates that others were beginning to extend the distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality to female sexuality.

The idea of female homosexuality did not exist within the framework of the old worldview. On the other hand, according to Vicinus, there were at least four unique characterizations of women who departed from conventional feminine norms throughout the 18th century in both Europe and North America. The "passing woman" was the first kind of woman. This was a woman who disguised as a male and was often successful in obtaining employment, freedom, or even the chance to serve in the military.

Eighteenth-century broadside ballads praised the 'female warrior' who went into battle in order to find her beloved. Most versions raised the possibility of sexual transgression but resolved matters in the final verse with a happy marriage or other appropriate female destiny. (Vicinus, 1992, pp.473–4).

The "mannish woman" was the second kind of woman, which refers to women who would continue to dress as men long after a conflict had ended. The "sexually free woman" was the third kind of woman. This type of woman, whose looks and conduct may indicate an erotic interest in women, also selected male companions as prostitutes, courtesans, or mistresses. Lillian Faderman's description of women who were involved in "romantic friendships" brings us to the last point. Before the turn of the 20th century, these passionate connections between women, which could or might not have entailed physical contact, were not only disregarded but were actively promoted.

The manner in which males perceived women's aspirations to have sexual relations with people of the same gender, rather than the actual actions or attitudes of the women themselves, was what brought these four characterizations together, as stated by Vicinus. It is Faderman's contention that the public's acknowledgment and disapproval of sexual intimacy within the context of female love friendships emerged only as a reaction to the demands for social change that were made by the revolutionary feminist movement. Vicinus says that criticism of female homosexuality is directly related to male fears, and that "only when a woman seemed to contravene directly masculine priorities and privileges was she punished." (Vicinus, 1992, p.477).

The challenge that women's greater independence presented to male authority and privilege was a significant factor in the development of lesbian identity. The public identification and rejection of lesbian identity was seen by both Faderman and Vicinus as a reaction to the perceived danger that was being faced. Although D'Emilio believes that the construction of lesbian identity became feasible as women achieved greater freedom from conventional family structures, it is important to note that this independence was not an immediate or unavoidable result of changes in the economy. There was a significant contribution made by the women's rights movement to the expansion of women's freedom and independence.

Faderman and Vicinus also highlighted the role of "lesbian-baiting" - labeling women as lesbians for violating gender norms, even without engaging in same-sex relationships. This was a way to discredit feminism by associating it with lesbianism. While some women were able to forge lesbian identities, they lacked the cohesive subculture that developed among gay men. Lesbian

identity was more dispersed and locally-specific, reflected in ethnographic studies of particular lesbian communities.

Compared to the single, persistent stereotype of gay men, expectations around lesbian identity have been more inconsistent and less cohesive. This lack of a unified stereotype offers an opportunity to construct alternative, more inclusive paradigms of sexuality beyond the heterosexual norm.

## **Feminism**

It is important to keep in mind that gender is not just about language and cognition, but also about lived experiences and deeds, and the concept that gender is a performance (Butler, 1990; Lorber, 1994) serves to remind us of this fact. Both gender and feminism are not only academic exercises; gender is not merely a theoretical idea that is detached from practice. In reaction to and as a reflection of the experiences that actual individuals have had in their lives, feminism has come into being. As a result of the views and actions of individuals who are actively participating in feminist social and political movements, the discourses that are generated by feminist researchers in academic fields such as women's studies are influenced, and vice versa. Gender is not only a question of words and ideas; rather, it is profoundly embedded in the lived reality of individuals as well as the manner in which they act out and perform their gender in the world.

While describing the history of feminism as a social and political movement, particularly in the United States, it is usual practice to utilize the metaphor of waves. This is especially true in the United States. During waves, there are moments of increasing activity and momentum, which are subsequently followed by periods of ebb and retreat. Waves are defined by these phases. It is usual practice to

associate the first wave of the women's movement with the suffrage battle, which ended in the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920, which provided women in the United States the legal right to vote. This amendment was the culmination of the process that led to the suffrage campaign. The second wave is linked to the greater women's liberation movement, which led to a range of legal and social gains. This movement was responsible for the second wave. A greater emphasis is being placed on the issue of violence against women, and there has been an increase in the number of women who are engaged in paid work. These changes encompass both of these things. However, those who urge for a third wave often relate it to ideals of pluralism and the respect of diversity among women and people in general. There is a large amount of controversy about whether or not the second wave has reached its conclusion.

A significant number of the writings that are linked with the first wave of feminism originate from the arena of politics, and they often take the shape of speeches and editorials. The second wave was characterized by the birth of women's studies as an academic field over a substantial portion of the Western world. This was in addition to the fact that the second wave generated a considerable quantity of political literature. Consequently, this resulted in an increasing focus among academics on feminist problems.

One of the most essential concepts in the field of women's studies, as well as in other fields that are connected to it, is the distinction between sex and gender. This division raises at least two significant problems: first, whether men and women are essentially biological or social phenomena, and second, whether they are fundamentally similar to one another or fundamentally different from one another. Both of these questions are crucial. These two problems are inextricably linked: if it is believed that men and

women are basically the same, then any differences that exist between them must be the result of chance or the result of education. In feminist studies, one of the most significant issues to consider is the conflict that exists between sameness and diversity.

In their work titled *Theorizing Feminisms*, which was released in 2006, Elizabeth Hackett and Sally Haslanger present three basic approaches to theorizing sex oppression. The "sameness" or "humanist" approach, the "difference" or "gynocentric" approach, and the "dominance" approach are the three approaches that are being discussed here. One of the fundamental tenets of the humanist approach is the notion that demonstrating respect for humanity in general is comparable to demonstrating respect for women in particular. This is because women and men are basically the same. On the other hand, the dominant approach steers clear of problems about sameness and diversity in order to concentrate on the subjugation of women. In addition to these, there are other methods to characterize the conceptual contrasts that exist across the various feminist theoretical perspectives.

The conceptual space that is included within feminist theory may also be partitioned along a variety of directions. As opposed to Hackett and Haslanger, who explore the struggle that occurs between sameness and variation, or between humanism and gynocentric feminism, others employ the more prevalent labels of liberal feminism and cultural feminism. In contrast, Hackett and Haslanger discuss the tension that exists between these two categories. In a similar vein, the "dominance approach" that Hackett and Haslanger advocate for is sometimes referred to as radical feminism.

Over the course of time, influential surveys of feminist study, such as Tong's *Feminist Thought* and Jaggar and Rothenberg's *Feminist Frameworks*, have characterized the area in a variety of

different ways. In the version that Tong published in 1989, feminism was broken down into the following categories: radical, liberal, Marxist, psychoanalytic, cultural, socialist, postmodern, and existentialist. Care-centered, multicultural, global, postcolonial, and ecofeminist perspectives, as well as third-wave feminism, were included in subsequent editions, which also included the expansion of the list. For example, Marxist, liberal, radical, multicultural, socialist, and global feminism are all included in Jaggar and Rothenberg's paradigm, even if it has not been updated as thoroughly as other frameworks.

It is clear from the discrepancies that exist across editions and publications that the categories that have been presented to differentiate feminist ideas do not adequately reflect all points of view. On the other hand, these categories continue to be helpful for categorizing the wide range of feminist writing. Assuming the areas of greatest overlap represent the most widespread and well-established forms of feminist theory, the noteworthy approaches would include Marxist, liberal, radical, and socialist feminism, as well as the emerging areas of multicultural and global feminism.

Postmodern feminism and third-wave feminism are both linked to ethics, feminist theory, and epistemology, necessitating more examination. The inventory of feminist articulations today encompasses Marxist, liberal, radical, multicultural, socialist, global, ecofeminist, care-ethics, feminist empiricist, postmodern, feminist viewpoint, and third-wave feminism, after the incorporation of these two perspectives.

Two seminal texts that established the foundation for early feminist writing are Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869). Liberal feminism, grounded in political liberalism, assumes a universal rationality, positing that sound

reasoning may achieve social justice. Similar to political liberalism, it rejects the notion that the circumstances of one's birth may rationalize an unequal allocation of resources, including rights and opportunities. Liberal feminism refutes the idea that nature justifies women's lower position, hence establishing a separation between sex and gender. Liberal feminism posits that sexism arises from flawed thinking, with its objective being to rectify these errors, especially within the legal framework. As Mill explained, reason, not prejudice, should determine the proper treatment of women:

The minimum requirement is that the issue should not be regarded as predetermined by current facts and prevailing opinions, but rather as open to deliberation based on its merits, as a matter of justice and expediency: the resolution of this, like any other societal arrangement, hinges on what an informed assessment of trends and outcomes reveals to be most beneficial to humanity as a whole, irrespective of gender. The discourse must be substantive, delving into foundational principles, rather than being content with ambiguous and broad claims. It is inadequate to claim, in broad terms, that humanity's experience has endorsed the current system. Experience cannot determine between two options if only one has been encountered. Should it be said that the principle of gender equality is just theoretical, it must be acknowledged that the opposing principle is also founded purely on theory. (Mill, 1970, p.147)

Alice Walker defined womanism as a counterpoint to the sometimes white and racially biased perspective of conventional feminism. Rachel Fudge categorizes womanism within the wider framework of liberal feminism owing to their mutual focus on liberation techniques; nevertheless, the principal distinction lies in womanism's emphasis on intersectionality, which liberal feminism

does not address. Intersectionality denotes the concurrent influence of gender, race, and class on the experiences of Black women.

One of the most common criticisms leveled against liberal feminism is that it places an emphasis on the liberal principles of autonomy and equality. Alimony was essential for the survival of many divorced women during a period of time when paid work was impossible for the majority of white, middle-class, and upper-middle-class housewives in the United States and Europe owing to a lack of training and societal pressure to remain at home. Therefore, early feminists advocated for legislative reforms that would give actual options for women to abandon relationships that were unhealthy. Nevertheless, in the context of an ideology that is founded on the principles of autonomy and equality, the identification of women, or at the very least housewives, as a class that requires special legislative protection is a denial of their standing as equal and independent members of society.

A dissatisfaction with liberal feminism has resulted in an investigation of the systemic restrictions that contribute to the subjection of women, notably capitalism. In the same way that Marxism recognizes capitalism as the cause of oppression, Marxist feminism sees capitalism as the source of oppression from the perspective of women. According to this point of view, the origin of women's roles in modern Western society is not from biological factors but rather from the development of capitalism. Because of this, the answer is to either socialize domestic work or integrate women into the wage labor system in a more comprehensive manner. This is because women need economic leverage and authority.

A criticism that has been leveled against Marxist feminism is that it seems to reduce the oppression of women to a subcategory



of economic oppression. In her groundbreaking examination of rape, Catharine MacKinnon discusses the limits of both Marxist and liberal approaches to feminism. Specifically, she focuses on the constraints of rape. When seen through the lens of an economic model, rape is interpreted as a matter of property rights. Sexual activity is only considered to be a kind of rape when it takes place as an act of unlawful possession between a woman and a man to whom he does not have a sexual responsibility. The legal difference between rape and consensual sex, according to MacKinnon, supports the position of males as those who seek a commodity (sex) that is held by women or their male defenders. MacKinnon's argument is that this divide reinforces the masculine role.

MacKinnon contends that many feminist theories, by making a distinction between sexual assault and rape, unintentionally contribute to the perpetuation of a system that includes sexual violence against women. As a consequence of this, she embraces radical feminism and promotes the concept of consensual lesbianism as an alternative to the power imbalance that is often associated with heterosexual partnerships.

In a similar vein, Adrienne Rich calls for consensual lesbianism, which is sometimes interchangeable with the term "woman-identification," as an alternative to the repressive system that maintains the heterosexual norm:

Woman-identification serves as a source of energy and a potential wellspring of feminine power, which is severely restricted and squandered within the framework of heterosexuality. The rejection of reality and acknowledgment of women's affection for women, their selection of women as allies, partners, and community members; the compulsion to conceal such relationships and their fragmentation under significant pressure have resulted in an

immeasurable detriment to the collective power of women to transform gender relations and to emancipate ourselves and one another. The fallacy of obligatory female heterosexuality now impacts not just feminist study but also every profession, reference work, curriculum, organizational endeavor, and interpersonal contact or dialogue it influences. It engenders a significant deception, duplicity, and frenzy within heterosexual discourse, since every heterosexual interaction is experienced under the unsettling glare of that falsehood. Regardless of how we elect to identify or how we are categorized, it sometimes influences and distorts our existence. (Rich, 1980, p.657)

Although not all radical feminists are against heterosexuality, the most of them are in agreement that it is problematic from both a historical and social perspective. This is because heterosexual partnerships often serve to reinforce patriarchy. When it comes to social structures, patriarchy is defined as a system that gives more weight to the male or masculine than it does to the feminine or female.

Marxism and radical feminism come together to form socialist feminism, which is a synthesis of the two. On the other hand, it views male and capitalism sexual domination as equal partners in the subjection of women, in contrast to the Marxist analysis that places a greater emphasis on class and the radical analysis that places a greater emphasis on sex. As a consequence of this, socialist feminists are of the opinion that socialist reform is essential; yet, in order for it to be sufficient, it must take into account the female half of the labor force, which is often overlooked. It is the belief of socialist feminism that males from lower socioeconomic classes are both privileged and disadvantaged. This means that they have power over women, but

they do not have influence in the greater social environment. Therefore, socialist reform will not be adequate unless it includes feminist reform as well.

In summary, global and multicultural feminisms exhibit an appreciation for the lived realities of women beyond the dominant white American and European cultures. Multicultural feminism, commonly known as "women of color feminism," is a feminist framework that addresses the unique challenges faced by women from racial and ethnic minorities, arising from the interconnected influences of gender, ethnicity, class, and sexuality on their cultural identities. Anzaldua's examination of the dual identity he developed as a Mestiza, sometimes referred to as a border dweller, exemplifies this approach.

As a mestiza, I am Because I am every woman's sister or possible lover, in spite of the fact that I have no nation, my homeland has expelled me, I am considered to be a part of every country. (Because I am a lesbian, my own people do not recognize me as belonging to any one race; nevertheless, I am every race because there is a part of me that is queer in every race.) (Anzaldua, 1987, p.80).

The feminist theory of the second wave and some concepts associated with traditional lesbian and gay studies are very incompatible with one another conceptually. There are considerable conceptual inconsistencies between the two. Despite the fact that there is a strong solidarity between lesbian and gay rights and feminist philosophy, this is the situation that we find ourselves in.

An idea of rights that is derived from liberal political theory is used by the second wave of liberal feminism. Women and men, according to liberal feminists, are basically the same and need to be granted the same rights and opportunities because they are

fundamentally the same. Second-wave liberal feminists were among the first to distinguish between sex as a biological phenomenon and gender as a social construction. It was their contention that the vast majority of the differences that may be seen between the sexes are acquired via learning rather than being innate. According to this point of view, the only thing that distinguishes men and women is the sex organs that they have in their bodies.

The current lesbian and gay rights movement seeks to achieve the same goals of liberal feminism, which is to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, are afforded equal rights and opportunities. In the same way as liberal feminists believe that women and men are essentially the same, with the only difference being the organs that are associated with their sexuality, many advocates for gay and lesbian rights say that heterosexuals and homosexuals are fundamentally the same, with the only difference being their sexual orientation. Socialization, on the other hand, is not seen by the lesbian and gay rights movement to be a component that determines sexual orientation. This is in contrast to liberal feminism, which considers socialization to be the primary reason for the majority of the disparities that exist between men and women. Consequently, the lesbian and gay rights movement often provides support for biological determinism, in contrast to liberal feminism that views it with skepticism.

It is possible to interpret the feminist phrase "the personal is political" in a number of different ways. One interpretation is that the societal acceptability of domestic violence can only be changed by attracting attention to such private problems. This is because domestic violence is an extension of larger social imbalances between men and women. On the other hand, supporters for lesbian

and homosexual rights often claim that what takes place behind closed doors is an issue that should be treated as totally private. Intimate relationships are a matter of political and public concern for second-wave feminists, but for the gay and lesbian rights movement, they are a matter of personal and private concern.

An additional meaning of the phrase "the personal is political" may be found among more radical second-wave feminists. This interpretation suggests that societal structures, notably mandatory heterosexuality, contribute to the perpetuation of the oppression of women by males. According to this point of view, heterosexuality ought to be disregarded in favor of lesbianism that is offered voluntarily as a form of political opposition. In contrast to this, the majority of people who are involved in the struggle for lesbian and gay rights believe that sexual orientation is something that is inherent and involuntary, rather than something that can be chosen at will.

In contrast to feminist theory, which is primarily concerned with tackling sexism, feminist philosophy, in a more general sense, covers the same themes as mainstream philosophy, such as topics related to ethics. Research in the early 1980s suggested that women and girls may be inclined towards an ethics of care, which provides a feminine and feminist alternative to justice-based ethics. However, concerns have been raised that this ethics of care approach risks reinforcing gender essentialism and the historical relegation of women to domestic labor.

Traditional methods to ethics, which have a propensity to focus on the application of reason by individual moral actors, continue to be the subject of a significant amount of research, and there is still a significant amount of interest in developing alternatives to these approaches. In spite of the fact that the ethics

of care has seen a decline in popularity in contrast to the height of its popularity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this is the consequence. Within the area of conventional ethics, the two viewpoints that are most often referenced are deontological ethics, namely Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, and teleological ethics, specifically the utilitarian attitude that was championed by John Stuart Mill. Both of these perspectives are considered to be the most influential.

Mill and Kant both provide their own set of guidelines for differentiating between actions that are morally correct and those that are morally wrong; yet, they both agree that there are universal guidelines that may be used to discern such distinctions. Additionally, Kant, Mill, and most philosophers in the contemporary Western tradition regard morality as achieved through individual choices in the face of moral dilemmas.

This is in contrast to the ethics of care, which provides an alternative explanation in which morality is positioned inside relationships as a whole, rather than in single decisions, acts, or the moral laws that govern them. The ethics of care provides a different perspective on the foundations of morality compared to the traditional focus on individual reason and universal rules.

Comparable to the ethics of care, ecofeminism is characterized by its resistance to the temptation to create universal moral principles. Ecofeminism, on the other hand, is an approach that aims to unearth and confront what Karen Warren calls "the logic of domination" in the interactions that exist between individuals or groups, as well as the ties that exist between people or groups and other aspects of the natural world.

There are significant linkages, according to ecological feminists (also known as "ecofeminists"), between the treatment of

nonhuman nature on the one hand and the treatment of women, people of color, and the underclass on the other. In the context of environmental ethics, ecological feminists argue that any kind of environmentalism, feminism, or environmental ethics that does not take these linkages seriously is severely insufficient. The establishment of the nature of these links, in particular what I refer to as women-nature connections, and the determination of which of these connections have the potential to be liberating for both nonhuman and women nature is a significant undertaking for ecofeminist philosophy. (Warren, 1997, p.3)

There is an additional criticism of present Western notions about the power and extent of human reason and rationality that may be found in feminist epistemology. Before attempting to comprehend this criticism, it is essential to first have a solid understanding of the fundamentals of conventional epistemology, notably logical positivism.

Logical empiricism, which is often referred to as logical positivism, is a philosophical approach that combines positivism, which is the view that only assertions that can be verified via experience are meaningful, with logic, which is a mathematical system that analyzes formal links between propositions. There is a school of thought that maintains that scientific knowledge is generated via the process of applying logical analysis to empirically verified observable data in order to either validate or invalidate hypotheses and theories. This theory is based on the assumption that it is not only feasible but also desirable for scientists and other epistemic agents to be neutral and impartial in the process of data collection and assessment, to the extent that any one agent may be substituted for any other agent.

Feminist epistemology challenges this traditional view by highlighting how the presupposed neutrality and objectivity of reason and rationality is in fact shaped by androcentric biases embedded in the Western philosophical tradition. Feminist empiricism shares with logical empiricism a commitment to scientific neutrality, but argues that sexism and other biases are difficult to avoid completely. Feminist empiricists have revealed a number of instances in which scientific groups that are largely comprised of males have misrepresented or disregarded women, which has resulted in incorrect results. It is no longer regarded appropriate, for example, to conduct tests with just male volunteers in order to generalize the results to the whole human population. This is because feminist empiricists have brought to light the hidden biases that are present in this technique. Specifically, the ethics of care evolved as an alternative to conventional ethics due to the fact that feminist research on moral development in children discovered that earlier study had concentrated almost entirely on males. The failure of scientists to reason with the same level of care and objectivity that they should is seen to be an example of sexist science, according to feminist empiricism. Consequently, feminist empiricism serves as a corrective mechanism.

In their critique of feminist empiricism, critics point out that sloppy thinking is not the only issue in the scientific community that feminism has to confront. Taking the claim that medical research has allocated more resources to the healthcare requirements of males than it has to the needs of women as an example, this does not necessarily mean that scientists have bad reasoning skills; rather, it demonstrates that strong thinking alone may not be sufficient to guarantee scientific neutrality. The viewpoint theory proposes that social borders may function as epistemic barriers and that those who are subjected to situations of



domination may have a more comprehensive perspective than those who oppress them. When compared to the conventional assertion that all rational actors are epistemologically equivalent, which is supported by feminist empiricism, this comes as a significant difference. According to this point of view, epistemic communities are made up of two groups: a dominating group, also known as the "centre," and a dominated group, also known as the margin:

You are considered to be a part of the total, but you are not considered to be a member of the main body. The train tracks served as a constant reminder of the marginalization that black Americans who lived in a tiny town in Kentucky experienced on a daily basis. There were paved streets on the other side of those tracks, businesses that we were not allowed to visit, restaurants that we were not allowed to dine in, and individuals that we were not allowed to look squarely in the face. On the other side of those rails was a world in which we might work in whatever capacity we choose, even as prostitutes, maids, or janitors, so long as it was in a service role. We were able to enter that world, but we were unable to live there completely. We had no choice but to go back to the outskirts, to the places beyond the railroad lines, to the shacks and abandoned homes on the outskirts of the town. The laws were in place to guarantee our safe return. You ran the possibility of being penalized if you did not return. As a result of living in such a precarious situation, we formed a unique perspective on the world around us...Our continued existence was contingent upon both a sustained public awareness of the divide that existed between the margins and the center, as well as a continuous private recognition that we were an essential and indispensable component of that totality. (hooks, 2000, p.xvi,)

Along the same lines as feminist empiricism, the primary function of viewpoint theory is to remedy problems. The viewpoint theory, which is also comparable to feminist empiricism, proposes that some points of view are epistemically superior to others. On the other hand, in contrast to feminist empiricism, standpoint theory suggests that this privileged and corrective viewpoint can only be obtained from the social edges, and not from the center.

One significant critique that may be leveled against perspective theory is that it offers an extremely simplified dichotomy between those who are insiders and those who are outsiders, or the center and the margin. A social reality in which the status of women is peripheral to that of males is what the feminist viewpoint theory conceptualizes as being the case. On the other hand, there are situations in which the status of some women is subordinate to that of other women, and there are also situations in which the position of certain men is subordinate to that of other men. When it comes to the concept of a distinct barrier between insiders and outsiders, factors such as race, class, and sexuality may be disruptive. If it is commonly accepted that the marginal viewpoint of women is more favorable than that of males, then the even more marginal perspective of black women would seem to be more favorable than that of white women. Similarly, the perspective of impoverished black women would be more favorable than that of middle-class or rich black women, and so on.

Individuals' epistemic perspectives are influenced by their social standing, which is something that postmodern feminism recognizes. In order to have a deeper comprehension of postmodern feminism, it is beneficial to have a fundamental understanding of postmodernism. Similarly, in order to comprehend postmodernism, it is beneficial to first comprehend modernism. When used in

common contexts, the term "modern" refers to everything that is new or occurring at the present time. According to a more technical interpretation, the term "modernism" refers to certain periods and schools of thought that may be found within a variety of fields, such as philosophy, scientific studies, art history, and so on. In the field of art history, the concept of modernism may have a quite different meaning than it does in the field of scientific studies.

The modern era in philosophy started in the 17th century, against the background of the scientific revolution, and continued until the 19th century, within the framework of the Enlightenment. This period of time is known as the classical period. An upbeat and cheerful celebration of the capacity of reason to unearth the truth and realize human potential was a defining characteristic of the Enlightenment. Exactly this is the position that postmodernism takes against.

There is no such thing as an unquestionable truth in the context of postmodernism in general and postmodern feminism in particular. Every effort to differentiate between reality and fiction is a political enterprise, and it is founded on ideology and values just as much as it is established on facts and logic. Postmodern feminism holds that there is no fundamental truth about sex or gender. This is the meaning of the term. A comment made by Judith Butler that is considered to be controversial argues that not only gender, but also sex itself is a socially created concept. She refers to this concept as a "ideal construct" that is manifested by the coercive reiteration of regulatory norms. (Butler, 1993, pp.1–2).

### **Queer theory and its intimate relation to feminism**

There is considerable overlap among the various feminist categories mentioned. First-wave feminism, liberal feminism, and

feminist empiricism are all linked by their shared belief in the power of reason to uncover truth and achieve justice. Similarly, multicultural feminism and feminist standpoint theory are connected through their emphasis on recognizing and valuing the diverse experiences of individuals outside the dominant social groups. Global feminism and ecofeminism both explore the effects of patriarchy on women worldwide. Additionally, postmodern feminism intersects with third-wave feminism and queer theory.

Third-wave feminism is a term used to describe the contemporary feminist movement, particularly among younger generations. It emerged in response to the idea, suggested in a 1992 New York Times article, that society had entered a post-feminist era, a notion that Rebecca Walker challenged by coining the term 'third wave.' (Baumgardner and Richards, 2000, p.77) While some argue that the successes of the second wave have rendered feminism less necessary, particularly in Europe and North America, others contend that the work of the second wave is unfinished and that feminism is still very much needed.

Partially due to the fact that it is still in the process of defining itself, and partly due to the fact that it admits the presence of many interpretations of feminism, even within third-wave feminism itself, third-wave feminism is difficult to define in a clear manner. Postmodern feminism, third-wave feminism, and queer theory all share the notion that efforts to define concepts are essentially attempts to take control. This is a common thread that runs across these three schools of thought. One notion that exemplifies this is the "charmed circle," which was developed by Gayle Rubin. This concept highlights how the definition of sex is also an exercise in control, so establishing a gap between what is deemed "normal" and "deviant" sex. Rubin's charmed circle, which

is portrayed as a circle with a dominating center and an outer boundary, is a reflection of the way that feminist perspective theory depicts the depiction of peripheral and central social positions. Those sexual acts and practices that are socially sanctioned are located in the center, while those that are socially banned are located on the periphery within the spectrum.

In a conversation that was published, Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin explored how Rubin's analysis was partially a reaction to feminist viewpoints on the difference between sexual behaviors and practices that are acceptable and those that are not acceptable. Many of these perspectives produced difficulties between gay men and feminists.

In addition, feminism was used rather often as the political theory of homosexual male politics, and while it was successful, it was not particularly effective. Very little of the conduct that is considered to be homosexual and masculine was really given the feminist mark of approval. Many feminists found the majority of the real practices that are associated with gay male culture to be repulsive. They vehemently attacked drag and cross-dressing, gay public sex, gay male promiscuity, gay leather, gay male macho, gay fist-fucking, gay cruising, and pretty much everything else that gay men did. I was unable to accept the typical lines that explained why all of this thing was horrible and anti-feminist, and I believed that they were typically a manifestation of reconstructed homophobia (Rubin, as interviewed by Butler, 1994, pp.76).

The complex relationship that exists between gender, sexuality, and sex is something that Rubin admits. In point of fact, she was the first person to use the phrase "sexgender system" in 1975. She used it to describe "the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human

activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied" (Rubin, 1975, p.159). It is possible to unearth prejudices that may otherwise go unreported and unquestioned if one were to concentrate on these three connected concepts—gender, sex, and sexuality—as shown by this example. In addition to this, it encourages the investigation of possible alternatives to the existing framework of gender, sexuality, and sexual characteristics.

Queer feminism is essentially the integration of queer perspectives on gender, sex, and sexuality into feminist theory, and vice versa—applying feminist insights to queer theory. Although the term 'queer' is often linked with sex and sexuality, queer theory encompasses not only these aspects but also gender, challenging traditional binary and hierarchical views. Despite the fact that the exact emphasis of feminism varies among its many manifestations, almost all of them address issues pertaining to sex and gender, and sometimes sexuality as well. This results in the formation of an intrinsic relationship between queer theory and feminist theory, which is a connection that queer feminism has made clearer.

A queer lens is combined with feminist theory, and a feminist lens is combined with queer theory. This is what is known as queer feminism. The appeal of merging these two theories lies in their shared concerns, particularly around gender, sex, and sexuality. Queer theory places a greater emphasis on sex and sexuality, while feminist theory focuses more on sex and gender. By combining these theories, a queer perspective can enhance the focus on sexuality within feminist theory, and a feminist perspective can highlight gender issues within queer theory.

However, the integration of queer theory into feminism and feminism into queer theory involves more than just emphasizing sexuality or gender. Both theories encompass a

broader range of issues and perspectives. The first portion below discusses the implications of adopting a queer orientation into feminist theory, while the second section below investigates the implications of incorporating a feminist orientation into queer theory. Both sections are located below.

In the same way as there has been a history of prejudice against lesbian women, gay men, bisexual individuals, and transgender people within the political ideology of feminism, there has also been a history of prejudice against women in the area of sexuality studies, including queer theory. This prejudice has been present for a long time. With queer feminism, there is a clear method to address such challenges, and that strategy is the explicit focus on gender. Furthermore, in the same way that racism and classism have been known to exist within the feminist canon, they have also been observable within the gay canon. I would want to reiterate that I believe that including an extra critical viewpoint or stacking additional filters may be of assistance in filtering out these biases as they appear.

The combination of the words "feminism" and "queer" is not without its challenges, despite the fact that it is beneficial in queer theory from the perspective of confronting many types of oppression. It seems that queer theory denies the existence of any categories, including categories of gender, such as feminine, and categories of sex, such as female. This is one of the consequences of queer theory's severe criticism of binary thinking. A theoretical approach that is structured around sex and gender identity could seem to have little value if there are no true females, nothing that is really feminine, no women, and not even any men. This is because there are no women. To the extent that the word "feminism" alludes

to pre-existing sex and gender binaries, it may seem to be in contradiction with the rejection of binary forms of classification.

Despite the fact that this seems to be a contradiction, I have purposefully selected the problematic title of "queer feminism," well conscious of the irony that it displays. It is via poststructuralism, and more specifically through Derrida, that I have gained the understanding that meaning cannot be set in a permanent manner; rather, it must be continually negotiated within particular circumstances. This is the way that racism, sexism, and other types of oppression operate in the world. With expectations and standards being evaluated and altered on a regular basis, it becomes more difficult to realize them. In spite of this, these goals and aspirations serve as the benchmarks by which we are evaluated. While it is vital to acknowledge the ways in which relevant meanings have been set in relation to the oppressive contexts in which they are employed, it is also necessary to react against sexism and racism. The term "strategic essentialism," which was coined by Gayatri Spivak in 1985, comes to mind to describe this phenomenon. (Spivak, 1996).

Strategic essentialism is a tactic in which organizations that share common objectives and interests briefly portray themselves to the public as being basically the same for the sake of expediency and presenting a unified front, while also engaged in continual conflict and discussion that is less public in nature. Using the word "queer feminism" is another way that I want to bring attention to the issues that are inherent in the mere concept of "feminism." It would seem that the oppression of women, or any other group, in the past and in the present, is ultimately related to binary thinking, which always gives emphasis to the favored side of the relevant binary. This is in line with the views that are



presented in queer theory. As a result, the idea of feminism is itself queer, in the sense of being "questionable" or "suspicious," since it contributes to the exact issue that it seeks to cure. The use of the word "feminism," on the other hand, serves to remind readers that, despite the fact that the world is built in binary terms, the world is constructed in such a way that persons who are given the label of "female" or "feminine" are often at a disadvantage. As long as or until the 'feminism' in 'queer feminism' is made meaningless via significant linguistic and conceptual shift, the 'feminism' in 'queer feminism' will continue to be important.

Following an examination of the historical evolution of queer theory and its interconnection with feminist thought, it is essential to explore the intricate social, political, and religious dynamics that inform the representation of queer identities and feminist themes within Egyptian literature. This includes a depiction of the role played by state censorship, prevailing cultural norms, and religious conservatism, as well as the divergent ways in which these issues are perceived, negotiated, and expressed across varying demographic and geographic segments of Egyptian society.

### **Structural and Cultural Determinants of Queer and Feminist Representation in Egyptian Literature**

The representation of queer identities and feminist themes in Egyptian literature cannot be adequately understood without situating it within Egypt's broader social, political, and religious context. These intersecting forces produce a literary and cultural environment in which gender and sexuality are not merely aesthetic concerns, but deeply politicized and regulated forms of expression.

## **1. Censorship and State Control**

Egypt maintains one of the most stringent censorship regimes in the Arab world. The Supreme Council for Media Regulation, along with state-controlled religious authorities like Al-Azhar, routinely monitors and intervenes in cultural production. Literary works that touch on sexuality, gender non-conformity, or critique of patriarchal and religious authority risk being banned, censored, or subjected to public defamation. This often compels authors to self-censor or rely on metaphor, allegory, and subtext to broach taboo subjects.

Queer narratives, in particular, are policed not only through official censorship but through indirect mechanisms such as book banning, withdrawal of publishing licenses, and media blackouts. The criminalization of homosexuality under charges like "habitual debauchery" and "public morality violations" extends beyond legal repression—it also permeates literary discourse, often silencing or pathologizing queer voices.

## **2. Cultural Norms and Social Morality**

Cultural norms in Egypt remain heavily shaped by patriarchal and heteronormative values. The idealized family unit, binary gender roles, and the sanctity of marriage are central components of societal expectations. Consequently, literature that challenges these constructs often provokes controversy or moral panic. Feminist narratives that depict women's sexual autonomy, critique male dominance, or reject traditional family roles are frequently dismissed as "Western imports" or threats to social cohesion.

For queer characters or themes, literary representation is often trapped between erasure and demonization. While more

recent works—such as *In the Spider's Room* by Mohamed Abdel Nabi—have begun to humanize queer experiences, such portrayals still struggle to find mainstream acceptance due to the stigma attached to LGBTQ+ identities.

### **3. Religious Authority and Interpretive Hegemony**

Islamic discourse holds profound sway in Egyptian society, not only in shaping moral values but also in legislating gender and sexual behavior. Dominant interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence often frame homosexuality and gender non-conformity as sinful or unnatural. These interpretations are reinforced in Friday sermons, school curricula, and media narratives, leaving little space for dissent or reform.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that religious discourse in Egypt is not monolithic. A small but growing body of Muslim feminists and queer Muslims are engaged in reinterpreted projects that challenge patriarchal and heteronormative readings of scripture. Nonetheless, these voices remain marginal in the mainstream and are frequently dismissed or attacked for deviating from "authentic" Islam.

### **4. Demographic Variations in Reception and Representation**

The engagement with feminist and queer themes varies significantly across Egypt's diverse socio-economic, geographic, and generational landscapes. Urban centers like Cairo and Alexandria—home to more liberal arts scenes, foreign-educated authors, and international NGOs—often produce and consume literature that is more open to feminist and queer discourse. Here, underground literary circles, art exhibitions, and independent publishing houses offer relative safe havens for expression.

By contrast, in rural areas, small towns, and conservative governorates—especially in Upper Egypt and the Nile Delta—feminist and queer narratives are often met with suspicion or outright hostility. Class and educational background also play pivotal roles: university-educated, middle- or upper-class readers are more likely to encounter or accept literature dealing with gender and sexuality in critical or experimental ways, while working-class audiences may find such themes alien or offensive, often equating them with cultural degradation or moral decline.

Furthermore, younger generations, particularly those with access to digital media and global discourses, show a greater openness to questioning normative structures. Online platforms have enabled a growing number of young writers to engage with feminist and queer ideas—though often anonymously or under pseudonyms, to avoid social or legal consequences.

The interplay between queer theory and feminism in Egyptian literature reflects a complex negotiation of identity, resistance, and socio-political constraint. Although overt representations of non-normative sexualities remain rare—due in part to censorship and cultural taboos—Egyptian writers have increasingly found subtle, allegorical, and psychologically nuanced ways to explore gender fluidity, same-sex desire, and patriarchal oppression. These texts, when read through feminist and queer theoretical frameworks, reveal the ways in which Egyptian authors critique normative structures while also grappling with the limitations imposed by their socio-political and religious contexts.

Despite the sociocultural and institutional constraints placed on feminist and queer discourse within Egyptian society, the evolving influence of queer theory in Western intellectual traditions continues to inform and reshape contemporary Egyptian literary

production, contributing to a gradual expansion of representational possibilities and thematic engagement.

It is very evident that the spirit of queer theory and queer feminism has become more prominent in Western literary works, movies, media, series, cultural jamming, zine making, sports games and advertisements. Even in its depiction, they normalize all queer practices and show them as something familiar besides distorting any opponent to these queer practices. For example, "Red, White & Royal Blue" by Casey McQuiston (2019) — which is a contemporary romance that follows the story of Alex Claremont-Diaz, the son of the President of the United States, and Prince Henry of Wales, who unexpectedly fall for each other. It's a heart-warming tale of love, politics, and coming out in the public eye. Another example "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo" by Taylor Jenkins Reid (2017) - While not exclusively focused on lesbian love, this novel delves into the complex romantic life of Evelyn Hugo, a reclusive and notorious former movie star who reveals her truest love affair with another woman. It's a captivating story of love, ambition, and the secrets kept within Hollywood's golden age. Moreover, "*Honey Girl*" by Morgan Rogers (2020) - This novel tells the story of Grace Porter, a Black woman who quits her job, buys a one-way ticket to London, and embarks on a journey of self-discovery. Along the way, she falls in love with a woman named Sidney, exploring themes of identity, sexuality, and the pursuit of happiness. In addition, "*Felix Ever After*" by Kacen Callender (2020) - This young adult novel focuses on Felix Love, a Black transgender teen who is waiting for his top surgery. When an anonymous student starts an online post revealing Felix's dead name, he begins to navigate the complexities of his identity, love, and revenge. The novel also explores Felix's relationship with a love interest, Ezra. These novels offer a range of perspectives on

gay and lesbian love, from contemporary romance to young adult coming-of-age stories, each with its unique narrative and themes.

The impact of queer theory and its prevalence has expanded not only on English literature, but also on our Arabic and Egyptian literary works, movies and series. The depiction of queer theory in Egyptian novels began early with Naguib Mahfouz's novel *Midaq Alley* (1947) followed by Alaa AlAswany's novel *The Yacoubian Building* (2005). As postcolonial authors, Naguib Mahfouz and Alaa Al-Aswany endeavor to depict the conflicts and corruption or diseases within Egypt's contemporary political and social frameworks (Bassnett and Trivedi 20). Both of these authors are highly regarded not just in Egypt but also on the worldwide arena, which means that their works are subject to a twofold scrutiny: they are in the spotlight of literary circles across the world, while at the same time they are being scrutinized by the watchful eyes of Egyptians. In order to show the political and social repressions that confine contemporary Egyptian culture, the films "*Midaq Alley*" (1947) and "*The Yacoubian Building*" (2005) make use of a variety of themes, one of which is homosexuality. Both "*Midaq Alley*" and "*The Yacoubian Building*" have acquired a substantial amount of attention, both domestically and internationally. This success may be attributed, in large part, to the fact that both of these films explore the taboo issue of homosexuality in Cairo's culture. Al-Aswany overtly talks about social and political injustice in Egypt and prominently highlights the problem of homosexuality in 1990s Egypt. Mahfouz was the pioneering Egyptian and Arabophone novelist to discuss homosexuality in a book. Al-Aswany addresses the topic of homosexuality in Egypt more than any other author. It is possible that certain topics are controversial within a local context; nevertheless, when they are translated into a language that is

translated beyond national lines, they become even more controversial.

The literary careers of Mahfouz and Al-Aswany started in Egypt, and they were quickly recognized as major writers within the setting of their respective national contexts almost immediately. Mahfouz was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, which is the greatest international distinction that can be bestowed upon an author. Al-Aswany, on the other hand, was introduced to audiences in Europe and the United States with his best-selling book *"The Yacoubian Building."* Both writers went on to achieve worldwide acclaim.

In the beginning, the concept of homosexuality went through a metamorphosis as a result of Western cultural hegemony and colonialism. This change resulted in the loss of some of the traditional aspects of homosexuality, such as the ghilman system. Consequently, contemporary Arabic communities started to embrace Western ideas of homosexuality, which were impacted by what Joseph Massad refers to as the "inciting discourse on homosexual identities" (Massad 362-374). Additionally, this demonstrates the influence that queer theory has had on the literary works of western nations.

According to Massad, a large number of Western intellectuals, organizations, and even Arabs living in the United States push for tolerance and acceptance of gay identity throughout the Arab world. This is in contrast to the approval of homosexual activity or practice. According to Massad (385), these international groups, in their professed attempts to free and protect gays in the Arab world, impose their own political limits that are confined to either complete acceptance or violent opposition of homosexuality. In his argument, Massad contends that these prohibitions or laws do not

only outline social norms and rights for gays; rather, they impose the organizations' own policies without taking into consideration or thoroughly studying the old legacy and current culture that these persons encounter in their Arab environment. As a consequence of this, this "missionary achievement will be the creation of not a queer planet but rather a straight one" that adheres to particular rules in order to be accepted by the world community (385).

It is suggested by Al-Samman's viewpoint that a single portrayal of homosexuality in works such as *Midaq Alley* and *The Yacoubian Building* might incorporate characteristics from more than one category. This viewpoint unifies the three categories that Hadeed established. To put it another way, the fact that characters such as Boss Kersha and Abduh are gay is a reflection of a wide range of problems that exist in society. I will examine how homosexuality is portrayed and translated in *Midaq Alley* and *The Yacoubian Building*, primarily with the intention of shedding light on the intricate relationships that exist between various social classes within a single society (in a local context) and between the Arab world and the West (on an international level). This will be done in light of the brief background information on homosexuality in Arabic societies. *Midaq Alley* and *The Yacoubian Building* have garnered a lot of attention due to the obvious theme of homosexuality that is present in each of these places. The way in which the Egyptian audience responds to the theme of homosexuality is distinct from the way in which audiences from other countries react to it.

Not only does the topic of homosexuality in contemporary Arabic literature pique the attention and curiosity of Arab readers, but it also piques the interest and curiosity of Western visitors. That being said, audiences from both the West and the Arab world are



attracted to the topic of homosexuality in contemporary Islamic communities for a variety of diverse reasons. The representation of gay characters has been "draped in the judgmental cloak of puritanical Islamic ethics" (Al-Samman 278), which is a factor that Arab audiences find troubling. These audiences are concerned about the way in which Islamic mores and regulations regulate their lives. Arab readers are influenced by this religious viewpoint, which causes them to evaluate gay persons through the prism of Islamic norms. In addition, there are some philosophical perspectives in Egypt that consider homosexuality to be a sort of disease. According to the mandates of their respective religions, Egyptian and Arabic readers see homosexuality in their cultures either as a fault or as an incurable sickness that ought to be avoided.

Mahfouz is credited with being the pioneering contemporary Egyptian author to address homosexuality in his work *"Midaq Alley,"* whereas Al-Aswany is recognized for his groundbreaking portrayal of both the physical and emotional aspects of homosexual relationships in *"The Yacoubian Building."* This part seeks to explore the depiction of homosexuality by Al-Aswany and Mahfouz through the characters of Abd Rabbuh and Kersha, respectively, within the Islamic cultural context of Cairo over the last half-century.

Mahfouz's portrayal of the character of boss Kersha, whose name means in Arabic "a filthy part of the animal's (typically a sheep's) intestine," the colon, displays Mahfouz's attitudes about homosexuality as those of a vulgar and uneducated individual. As an additional point of interest, the physical description that Mahfouz provides about Kersha, which states that "a dim, evil light shone in his dead eyes, with open mouth and slack lip" (43), substantiates the author's conviction that homosexuality is a sinful

disposition. The narrator of Mahfouz makes a passing reference to homosexuality as a morally reprehensible practice, although they never state this clearly. The homosexuality of Kersha is described by Mahfouz as "al daa al wabeel," which translates to "noxious malady," and he presents it as a pathological illness.

Kersha himself does not view his homosexuality as a weakness, but rather as a vice akin to smoking hashish. His wife, Umm Hussein, sees him as her lord and master, maintaining her exclusive claim on him and always seeking to recover him, regardless of the grip of sin. She is proud of him and would not respect him if he were weak but stands by him despite any illness or malady. Thus, the portrayal of homosexuality in *"Midaq Alley"* is that of a secretive and morally questionable condition.

Not only does Al-Aswany's *"The Yacoubian Building"* feature a gay character close to half a century after *"Midaq Alley,"* but it also presents a homosexual connection between the aristocratic journalist Hatim Rasheed and the impoverished and illiterate soldier Abd Rabbuh/Abduh. Despite the fact that both books include intertextual elements, the later offers a more in-depth investigation of the topic of homosexuality in contemporary Cairo culture. In the post-colonial state of Egypt, the connection between Hatim and Abduh is a reflection of the decadence, degeneracy, and suffering that Egyptian society has allowed itself to become overwhelmed with. In this work, Al-Aswany dives into the complexities of their relationship, as well as the ideas and views of each individual character.

While both Abduh and Hatim are victims of social corruption, Al-Aswany's characterization of them in the story is fascinating. Both of them are classified as corruptors by society owing to their sexual connection, despite the fact that they too are victims of social

corruption. Both Idris and Abduh belong from a lower social level and have comparable physical characteristics, such as dark complexion and Upper Egyptian features like big lips and large noses. Additionally, both originate from a socioeconomic class that is considered to be disadvantaged. While Idris was the one who brought Hatim into homosexuality, Abduh was the one who led Hatim into a relationship with another gay. However, both Idris and Abduh used Hatim in different ways. Idris exploited the lonely youngster Hatim for sexual fulfillment, providing care and attention in exchange. Abduh, on the other hand, used the socially adept Hatim Rasheed to enhance his life. It is not Hatim Rasheed who is the victim of Abduh; rather, it is the social and economic conditions that he is in.

When analyzing Abduh's situation, it is necessary to look at his current state of affairs. In accordance with Al-Samman, the connection between Hatim and Abduh is founded on the concept of a master-slave relationship. From the perspective of the social order, their relationship seems to be that of a master and a slave, with the socially strong Hatim Rasheed having dominance over the less fortunate and ostracized Abduh. On many occasions, Abduh refers to Hatim as "Hatim Bey," and Hatim asks Abduh, near the conclusion of the book, "you'd strike your master, you dog of a servant?" This is a pretty obvious indication of this. According to Al-Aswany (78, 133, and 235).

The novel's connected storylines, on the other hand, demonstrate that none of the characters are completely blameless. This is revealed by a closer investigation. Abduh and Hatim are both victims and perpetrators of victimization at the same time. This partnership is paradoxical since Hatim, the partner who is socially engaged and prominent, is sexually passive, but Abd Rabbuh, the

Sa'idi who is ignorant, impoverished, and physically powerful and who is from Upper Egypt, is sexually dominating.

In this particular connection, one could be curious about who is the master and who is the slave, and the answer is that none of them is the master. Despite the fact that Hatim seems to be in charge of the dynamic, Abduh is the one who is truly driving it, and he is the one who eventually decides the outcome by murdering Hatim. Abduh is influenced by Hatim, who provides him with a job, money, and a place to live for his family. Hatim also makes Abduh a victim of seduction. By entering into this agreement, Abduh does not become a slave; rather, he is made a servant to the life that Hatim promises him as a means of escaping the precarious financial and social conditions that he is now experiencing. In essence, Abduh is the one who is taking advantage of his connection with Hatim, which is analogous to a genie having the ability to fulfill Abduh's wishes. That Abduh would sell his body to Hatim, in a manner analogous to prostitution, in return for relief from his poverty is one interpretation of the situation.

However, in the end, both Hatim and Abduh are enslaved as a result of the harsh socioeconomic circumstances that have existed in Egypt for more than fifty years. During his youth, Hatim was subjected to maltreatment at the hands of inattentive parents who were preoccupied with their own social position. On the other hand, Abduh is a victim of social injustice that marginalizes him, in addition to being ignorant and living in poverty. In light of this, the ultimate master is the vicious cycle of tyranny and exploitation, and both Abduh and Hatim are caught up in this dominant system. The two of them are dependent on one another to meet their wants; Abduh gives Hatim sexual pleasure, while Hatim gives Abduh an

escape from the harsh realities of his life. Their connection may be considered as a barter of advantages.

Al-Aswany provides a disclaimer in the introduction, indicating that he "used only the name of the real building in the novel." These words are included throughout the novel. Every other item is a product of sheer imagination. Both the people and the events are completely fictitious" (xvi). The inclusion of this disclaimer seems to be an attempt to defend the work against any possible allegations that it may be offensive to Egypt or that it may promote orientalist stereotypes.

When Al-Aswany discusses Hatim's past, for instance, he compares Hatim's father, who is a "leading figure in the law in Egypt," to well-known figures in Egypt's judicial life such as "Taha Hussein, Ali Badawi, [and] Zaki Naguib Mahmoud" (73). This is just one example of how Al-Aswany depicts the gay characters in a different way. It is possible that readers may get confused about Al-Aswany's fictitious figures as a result of the combination of fictional and actual persons; yet, this combination contributes to a feeling of realism that assists Egyptian readers in better visualizing the novels' universe. Particularly due to the fact that it is the first representation of homosexuality in contemporary Arabic literature, the homosexuality of Kersha in *Midaq Alley* has attracted a great deal of attention from critics and academics. The sexuality of Kersha, on the other hand, quietly displays the social facade and the inner conflicts that are present inside this setting. Hassan and Darraj 120 state that his homosexuality is more than just a "fondness for young boys"; rather, it is a multidimensional critique on a variety of societal concerns. Kersha has characteristics that seem to be in opposition to one another: he is impolite and hostile toward his son, his wife, and his neighbors; but, he is also compassionate and

generous, and he often quotes the Quran while he is speaking to the "young boy." In addition, Kersha is subjected to criticism from a number of individuals throughout the book, including the narrator, who, although maintaining an impartial tone throughout the book, delivers a description of Kersha's physical appearance that has animalistic elements. "[the latter] used the term shothoth (deviance) to refer to Kirsha's sexual practices with men, that term was not limited to homosexual sex, but to all nonnormative sex and general public conduct," according to Joseph Massad, Mahfouz is said to have equated homosexuality with societal illnesses. Massad's statement can be found in Mahfouz's second book, which was published in 278.

Simply said, Mahfouz uses the concept of homosexuality as a means of drawing attention to a variety of societal and personal difficulties that depart from the norms and ethics that are generally accepted. This includes the destructive ambition of Hamida, the betrayal of nationalist pride by Hussein via his collaboration with invaders for the sake of profit, and the immoral behaviors of Dr. Boushi and Zeita, who exploit others by producing beggars in order to maintain their own existence.

While Mahfouz's omniscient narrator may appear objective regarding Kersha's homosexuality, it can be argued that Mahfouz himself does not condemn Kersha in the same way. Instead, he subtly links homosexuality—widely rejected by society—to other societal transgressions that often go unacknowledged as immoral. Through this connection, Mahfouz encourages readers to reflect on the sins they commit unknowingly. In this light, Mahfouz draws parallels between Kersha's sexual deviation, Hamida's moral corruption, and the exploitative practices of Dr. Boushi and Zeita.

In the same way that his peers in *Midaq Alley* have not changed, Kersha has not changed. As a result of Umm Hussein openly beating him in the alley in Chapter 12, which causes him to run with a bleeding nose and never return, the last look that readers get of Kersha is his escape. In a later chapter, Chapter 25, Kersha discovers another handsome youngster who satisfies his wants. This individual is Hussein's brother-in-law, who remains nameless. Mahfouz's hilarious approach to sexual topics is seen in the comic description of the battle between Kersha and his wife, which is observed by the inhabitants of the alley. This conflict causes readers to grin and causes the characters to chuckle.

In *The Yacoubian Building*, which was written by Al-Aswany fifty years later, the author presents a more explicit examination of homosexuality. The novel focuses on the terrible connection that exists between Abduh and Hatim that they share. The scope of this connection goes beyond simple sexual encounters, diving into the psychological complexity, the ebb and flow of emotions, and the dynamic between feelings of pleasure, remorse, love, and vengeance. Hatim is a victim of his self-absorbed bourgeois parents, whereas Abduh is imprisoned by poverty and ignorance. Both characters are simultaneously victims and victimizers. Hatim is a victim of his parents. On the other hand, Hatim uses Abduh as a tool to coerce him into their sexual connection, while Abduh uses Hatim's riches and prestige to his advantage in an effort to better his financial situation.

Furthermore, both Abduh and Hatim meet terrible ends, with Wael's death and Hatim's murder, which might be seen as divine punishment for their misdeeds or as reflections of societal injustice and cruelty. Both of these events occur in the story. In other words, their deaths might be understood as either a consequence of living

in civilizations that lacked tolerance and justice for their queerness or as a result of something that they deserved as a result of the activities that they took. The purpose of Al-Aswany is to emphasize the double standards that are present in the connection between Abduh and Hatim, regardless of how the interpretation is interpreted.

As a result of the almost half-century that has passed between the publication of *Midaq Alley* and *The Yacoubian Building*, there are considerable distinctions in the way that homosexuality is represented in the two works. In contrast to the circumstances surrounding Kersha, Abd Rabbuh and Hatim Rasheed show a different example. The method used by Al-Aswany is more forthright and straightforward. When it comes to his representation, Al-Aswany is more forthright and specific. He even brings a final conclusion to the lives of his gay characters inside the book, either physically or metaphorically. The narrative of Kersha, on the other hand, is allowed to continue beyond the end of the novel by Mahfouz, which provides hints of a new gay connection. In the meanwhile, Al-Aswany orders Abduh to have Hatim assassinated, and Abduh also suffers the loss of his son, which ultimately leads to the end of both of the characters.

Moreover, both authors provide secondary representations of homosexuality apart from Kersha and the relationship between Abduh and Hatim. In *Midaq Alley*, Mahfouz introduces Susu, a belly dancing instructor whom Hamida encounters at Farag's place. While Susu's homosexuality is never explicitly stated, he is portrayed as effeminate. In *The Yacoubian Building*, Al-Aswany illustrates Taha's rape by police during an investigation, an incident that ultimately leads him toward terrorism. Although Susu and Taha appear unrelated, both exemplify social deviance. Susu serves as a



distorted figure in Hamida's new life, training her to adapt to that world. Taha, on the other hand, faces systemic injustice due to his social status (having been denied military service), and when he seeks refuge in religion, he suffers rape. Through the lens of homosexuality, both Mahfouz and Al-Aswany address themes of deviance and injustice. As Allan notes, "Ignoring this parallel [between sodomy and homosexuality] means overlooking the delicate operation complicating the terms of a civilizational discourse that would place the homosexual and the terrorist at opposite ends of a divide" (14).

The cinematic adaptations of *Midaq Alley* and *The Yacoubian Building* are approached from distinct perspectives. The focus is primarily on two aspects: how homosexuality is portrayed in the films and how audiences react to these portrayals. In the film adaptation of *Midaq Alley*, Kersha's homosexuality is only subtly referenced in a single scene, where Sheikh Darwish describes Kersha as "ill." This portrayal makes it likely that some viewers may not even recognize Kersha's homosexuality, effectively minimizing its presence.

In contrast, the film *The Yacoubian Building* takes a different approach, presenting both Hatim and Abduh and their struggles more openly. On the other hand, Hatim is not slain by Abduh, which is a key distinction between the two versions. As a matter of fact, he is killed by an unknown person who first suffocates him and then takes his money (Allan 9). The narrative shifts its attention to Hatim's terrible ending, which seems to act as a retribution for his involvement in wooing Abduh. After the death of his son, Abduh just disappears from the story, moving the focus to their tragic end.

Following in the footsteps of Naguib Mahfouz and AlAswany in expressing homosexuality in Arabic literary works, the Egyptian

novelist Muhammad Abdelnabi was recently in Paris for the French edition of his book *La Chambre de L'Araignée*, which was translated by Gilles Gauthier. Hani Mahfouz, a homosexual man who was caught up in the real-life police raid on the Queen Boat in Cairo in 2001, is the protagonist of his book, which was published in 2016. The book was published in English under the title *In the Spider's Room*, which was translated by Jonathan Wright. It was also shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction in 2017, which has been awarded annually since then. In addition, Abdelnabi was awarded the first-ever inaugural Story Prize sponsored by ArabLit, which he shared with translator Robin Moger, for his short tale titled "Our Story."

His translator, Gilles Gauthier, a professor at the Sorbonne University named Frédéric Lagrange, a doctoral student named Gabriel Semerene who studies sexuality and gender in Arabic literature, and a professor at Smith College named Mehammed Amadeus Mack, who has written on gender, sexuality, and diversity in French suburbs banlieues, were all members of the panel that Abdelnabi participated in at the Arab World Institute. The panel was titled "Homoeroticism and Homosexuality in Arab Culture."

A comprehensive and illuminating analysis of the development and acceptability of homosexuality-related language in Arabic was offered by Semerene. He made the observation that, up until quite recently, even among authors, there was a lack of understanding and sensitivity to phrases that did not negatively connote homosexuality. In the novel *Midaq Alley*, which was written by Naguib Mahfouz in 1947, the character Kirsha is referred to as a "homosexual" by the sheikh Darwish of the neighborhood. In the original Arabic text, the word "condition" is used if it is translated into English. In contrast to phrases such as *shaath*, which may be

seen as implying deviance and is used to characterize Hatim in Alaa al-Aswany's *The Yacoubian Building*, Semerene underlined those terms such as *mithliyy* and *mithliyah*, which denote to those who are attracted to the same gender, have become universally accepted.

Gauthier, who is homosexual and translated *The Yacoubian Building* into French, said that he had communicated his displeasure to Al-Aswany on the usage of the term "shaath," despite the fact that Al-Aswany had not intended for the word to be used in a pejorative manner. Given that Gauthier thought it was an unattractive phrase, he argued that *mithliyy* would have been a more suitable alternative.

When Farouk Mardam-Bey from Actes Sud brought Gauthier Abdelnabi's *In the Spider's Room* to his attention for the first time, Gauthier was "enchanted" by it. This was particularly true due to the fact that the subject matter struck a chord with him on a personal level. He was there in Egypt during the Queen Boat incident, and he is still in touch with someone who was detained in 2001. The statement that he made was, "I adored this book; it was a wonderful experience to translate it." This is a very courageous deed. Following the opening of a door and the taking of a step by Muhammad Abdelnabi, things will never be the same again. "Here is a book that not only openly addresses the topic of homosexuality but also has a satisfied conclusion!"

Queer theory has begun to exert a growing and noticeable influence on Egypt's cultural and literary landscape, emerging in a diverse array of contemporary artistic works that engage with queer themes and identities. The Lebanese band Mashrou' Leila, widely embraced by Egyptian audiences, played a pivotal role in regional queer representation through songs like "Shim El Yasmine" and "Tayf," which openly explore same-sex love and personal identity.

Independent filmmaking—often produced within Egypt or by its diaspora—has also been instrumental in this cultural shift. Films such as *Shall I Compare You to a Summer's Day?* (2022) by Mohammad Shawky Hassan reimagine queer storytelling through Arab folklore and aesthetics, while Hesham Issawi's *Tamantashar Eila* (2004) offers a rare depiction of a gay son within a traditional Cairo family. Literary works like Mohamed Abdel Nabi's *In the Spider's Room* delve into the psychological and societal complexities of queer life under repression. In the realm of underground poetry, collectives such as Qaws Quzah have carved out intimate, defiant spaces for queer expression, blending classical Arabic poetic traditions with subversive content. Similarly, visual artists like Ganzeer and Huda Lutfi incorporate gender-fluid imagery and critiques of heteronormativity that resonate with queer aesthetics, even when not overtly labeled as such. Together, these varied forms of cultural production reflect a growing synthesis of global queer theoretical frameworks and the particularities of Egypt's social and political terrain, creating a dynamic space for resistance, visibility, and the reimagining of identity.

## Conclusion

The field of queer sexuality studies focuses on the aspects that are excluded or devalued within the dominant identity binaries, as well as what is marginalized within the mainstream hegemonic discourse. Queering resists the dominance of heteronormativity by centering on the sexualities that are excluded by the heteronormative framework.

There is a strong sense of solidarity between women's issues and LGBT issues, which goes beyond the acknowledgment that feminism should include the experiences of heterosexual and non-heterosexual women, and that all people deserve equal rights. The

idea that the oppression of women and the repression of the existence of LGBT people are fundamentally interrelated is the foundation upon which this solidarity is built to begin with. The conventional categories of gender, sexuality, and gender identity are challenged by both the feminist identity and the LGBT identity.

There has been friction between feminist studies and sexuality studies, particularly queer theory, despite the fact that women's studies and sexuality studies share a link. Throughout the history of feminist discourse, there have been instances of prejudice directed at those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Similar to the previous point, there have been instances of racism and classism within the realms of queer theory and feminist theory. When it comes to queer theory, the criticism of binary and hierarchical thinking confronts all kinds of oppression as a component of a logic of dominance, which is also a problem in ecofeminism.

Queer feminism, which emphasizes sexuality, can help address these biases. However, it is important to recognize that no theoretical orientation is immune to perpetuating bias. The integration of queer and feminist perspectives can act as a filter to catch and remove unintentional biases.

Linking queer theory with feminism provides a direction for contemporary feminism, particularly third-wave feminism, moving away from post-feminism, which suggests that feminist goals have already been achieved and that women simply need to take advantage of existing opportunities. Post-feminism often reduces feminism to consumer choice, while queer feminism offers a critical perspective that challenges mainstream culture.

The representation of queer and feminist themes in Egyptian literature is not merely a matter of individual authorial choice; it is

shaped by a matrix of state control, religious authority, societal norms, and demographic variability. These factors operate both overtly and subtly to regulate which narratives are told, how they are framed, and who is allowed to speak. For scholars and critics, attending to these dynamics is essential for a holistic understanding of literary production and the politics of representation in contemporary Egypt.

To sum up, there is a close relationship between feminism and queer theory. The spread of the usage of homosexuals in recent English literary works, social media, movies and series has a great impact on Egyptian literary works, movies and series. As a result, in the contemporary Egyptian context, queer identities have transitioned from being taboo and prohibited to a state of acceptance, gaining prominence and prevalence in mainstream culture. This is very evident in Egyptian literary works how the presentation of homosexuality in Naguib's Mahfouz (*Midaq Alley*) differ from Alaswany's (*The Yacoubian Building*) and Abdelanbi (*The Spider's Room*). The perception of queer identities in mainstream Egyptian literature has become more explicit and acceptable to the reader and the authors become more defiant and managed to provide greater representation for these sexual minorities in a more explicit way. Consequently, more researches and studies have to investigate the relationship between queer theory and feminism and the outbreak of this phenomenon has to be analysed and studied carefully with its relation to Feminism.

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## استكشاف العلاقة الوطيدة بين نظرية المثلية والفكر النسوي وتأثيرها على السرد الأدبي المصري المعاصر

### الملخص:

يركز مجال دراسات "الجنس المختلف" على الجوانب التي يتم استبعادها أو تقليل قيمتها ضمن الثنائيات الهوية السائدة، بالإضافة إلى ما يتم تهميشه ضمن الخطاب الهيميني السائد. ويشير مصطلح "الجنس المختلف" إلى الهويات الجنسية غير النمطية أو مجتمع المثليين والمثليات، العابرين جنسياً، ثنائيي الميول الجنسية، الجنس المختلف، المتحولين جنسياً، وغيرهم.

في السياق المصري المعاصر، غالباً ما يتم تصوير الهويات الجنسية المختلفة على أنها محرمة ومحظورة، خاصة في ضوء تجريم العلاقات الجنسية الرضائية بين البالغين من نفس الجنس بموجب قانون العقوبات المصري. علاوة على ذلك، فإن الرغبات والممارسات الجنسية المثلية تتعارض وتخالف اللوائح الإسلامية. لقد أدت هذه النظرة إلى اعتبار الهويات الجنسية المختلفة غير طبيعية إلى غياب الرؤية للهويات غير المعيارية وغير المغايرة جنسياً في الأدب المصري السائد، والسينما، ووسائل الإعلام الأخرى. إلا أنه في الآونة الأخيرة، تمكن الأدب الإنجليزي وحتى الأعمال الأدبية العربية، والمسلسلات والأفلام من تقديم تمثيل أكبر لهذه الأقليات الجنسية تأثراً بانتشارها في العالم والأدب الغربي. يظهر ذلك بشكل واضح حتى في الفعاليات والمهرجانات الدولية، على سبيل المثال؛ حفل افتتاح دورة الألعاب الأولمبية في باريس ٢٠٢٤ الذي يتضمن مشاهد لرجال مثليين وملكات دراج، مما أثار الجدل وردود فعل سلبية في العديد من أنحاء العالم. وبالتالي، تدرس هذه الورقة العلاقة الوطيدة بين نظرية المثلية والفكر النسوي وتسلط الضوء على انتشار وتغشي هذه الظاهرة في العالم ومدى تأثيرها على الأعمال الأدبية الإنجليزية والعربية (المصرية)

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** نظرية المثلية، الحركة النسوية، الخطاب الهيميني، مثلية، ثنائية الميول الجنسية، مثلية الجنس، الأعمال الأدبية المصرية، نجيب محفوظ، علاء الأسواني.