CONTESTING ARAB-AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Through a Study of Egyptian-Australians and the Arab Spring

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By

Carla Liuzzo

Department of Modern History, Politics and International Relations

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ABSTRACT

In 2011 the Arab world erupted in a wave of social and political protest popularly labelled the Arab Spring. The events captivated the world's attention and emphasised the flaws in the conceptualisation of Arab identity which has long been underpinned by Orientalist views of the Middle East and its people.

In Australia the Arab Spring events provide an opportunity to question assumptions underlying Arab identity in Australian society. Despite recent increased migration from Arab countries under the policy of 'multiculturalism' the dominance of timeworn ideas about Arabs still persist. Arab-Australians are often represented in popular discourse in ways that deny them membership to the imagined Australian community.

This study contributes new empirical knowledge about the multiple layers of self-identification of members of the Arab-Australian community. Through a media content analysis of coverage of the Arab Spring in Egypt and interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community it is demonstrated that identity constructs such as Arab-Australian, are not homogeneous monoliths nor are they exempt from resistance from those within them.

Examining Arab-Australian identity as a response to constructed notions of Australia's dominant 'mainstream' culture, this thesis highlights the gaps between how Arab-Australians are represented and how they represent themselves. Limited empirical evidence exists about the experiences of different groups within the Arabic speaking population and this thesis seeks to address the lack of diversity in the way Arab-Australians are represented within the broader ongoing debate about identity, nationalism and belonging in Australia.

This thesis demonstrates the need for more adequate representation at all levels of discourse by highlighting the diversity within constructed identity categories. Furthermore this thesis argues that identities should be subject to continuous challenge in scholarly discourse, particularly those burdened with heavy and pervasive stereotypes, such is the case with Arab-Australian identity.

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of Macquarie University and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

C.M Liuzzo

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PREFACE

The challenge for any researcher is to start with a clearly defined research map, such an approach is both advantageous, if not a necessity.[1] Ritchie *et al* highlight the argument that as a means of ensuring 'valid' findings, researches need to consider their approach carefully and 'should maintain consistency between their philosophical starting point and the methods they adopt.'[2] The nature of the PhD research thesis, as indeed any funded project, is that it is constrained along time and budgetary lines. Added to this is the fact that for many early researchers the PhD thesis represents the largest research project undertaken to date. Thus there is much that is daunting at the commencement of any research project and the desire to minimise uncertainty through meticulous planning and theoretical groundwork is palpable. There is some solace found in the words of Turkel who when speaking of the process of interviewing subjects touches on some broader truths about early stage researchers in general:

> You start level in the unconfidence, in not knowing where you are going…. You do it your own way. You experiment. You try this, you try that. With one person one is best, with another person another. Stay loose, stay flexible.[3]

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[1] This desire is likely to have come from previous experience with research projects with a quantitative focus where a greater emphasis is placed on research design and establishing methodological parameters before commencing work.

[2] Jane Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, 13th ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2014): 2.

[3] Cited in Tim Rapley, "Interviews," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Clive Seale and others (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004): 30.

Acknowledging The Early Stage Of Research Career

It is valuable to acknowledge that a PhD occurs in the early stages of a research career. This may have bearing on the approach to this research project. Prominent writers on conducting qualitative research and engaging with critical discourse encourage an open mind and pragmatic approach, especially in the early stages of one's research career. In particular Martyn Hammersly (2004), David Silverman (2011) and Rosaline Barbour (2008) are amongst those who urge caution against younger researchers polarising themselves with rigid conformity to theoretical tradition.[4] Ritchie et al describe such rigidity as an act of 'epistemological determinism'.[5] Hammersly concludes that 'we should encourage students to become neither ostriches nor fighting cocks',[6] while Rosaline Barbour implores us to consider that there is 'nothing shameful about developing hybrid approaches'.[7]

The Transformative Research Journey

It should be acknowledged this thesis bears little resemblance to the initial research hypothesis proposed. Rather it is the result of a transformative research process. Originally proposed was a study that sought to 'critically analyse the impact of the Arab Spring on the political involvement of diaspora communities in the Australian political system.'[8] This was reflective of the atmosphere of expectation which surrounded the events of 2011 and was prior to the commencement of interviews with members of the Egyptian community. At the outset the study assumed the Arab Spring would impact the political involvement of

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[4] Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice*: 19.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Clive Seale, *Qualitative Research Practice* (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 2004): 557.
[7] Rosaline S. Barbour, *Introducing Qualitative Research: A Student's Guide to the Craft of Doing Qualitative Research*, 1st ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd, 2008): 25.
[8] Originally submitted PhD research proposal.

diaspora communities living in Australia, an assumption which did not materialise.[9] What is presented herewith reflects a more inductive outcome to the research process. Specifically this thesis is a response to what emerged from the qualitative research process − an identity construct in need of attention.

The Egyptian Community In Australia

Egyptians are generally known to be a non-migrating people, with strong ties to their land.[10] The history of Egyptian migration to Australia is a relatively recent one and prior to 1933 there were less than 500 Egyptian-born people in Australia.[11] The latest Census in 2011 recorded 36 533 Egypt-born people in Australia, an increase of 9.1 per cent from the 2006 Census.[12] Of the total ancestry responses for the Australian population 39 300 responses indicated Egyptian ancestry.[13]

Migration from Egypt has predominantly occurred in two waves during the 1950's and 1960's after the social and political disruptions of post-independence. More recently migrants have settled under the family reunion scheme, however around three-quarters of Egyptian migrants arrived prior to 1976.[14]

New South Wales has the largest number of Egyptian-born people, predominantly residing in Sydney, followed by Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.[15] The Egyptian-Australian population is highly educated. Stephanie Ho and Paul Ashton observed that

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[9] As will be explained in Chapter Seven of this thesis.
[10] Stephanie Ho and Paul Ashton, "The Egyptians in Sydney," *Sydney Journal* 2, no. 1 (2009), 72-74: 72.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Australian Department of Social Services, "The Egypt-Born Community", https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia/programs-and-publications/community-information-summaries/the-egypt-born-community.; accessed 08/12/2015.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ho and Ashton, *The Egyptians in Sydney*: 72.
[15] Australian Department of Social Services, *The Egypt-Born Community* accessed 08/12/2015.

qualification levels amongst Egyptians generally exceed those of the average Australian.[16] The religious makeup of the Egyptian-Australian population is mostly Christian, with approximately 72 per cent of the population claiming Coptic, Catholic or Eastern Orthodox affiliation.[17]   This is in stark contrast to the makeup of Egypt itself where approximately 90 per cent of the population is Muslim, predominantly Sunni.

At the 2011 Census of the Egypt-born population the participation rate in the labour force was 50.1 per cent and the unemployment rate was 7.3 per cent. This represents a lower than average workforce participation than the Australian population (65 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively).[18]

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[16] Ho and Ashton, *The Egyptians in Sydney*: 72.
[17] Australian Department of Social Services, *The Egypt-Born Community*.
[18] Ibid.

INTRODUCTION

On the 13th of January 2011 US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addressed a forum of government and civil service leaders in the Gulf Arab state of Qatar. There were rumblings in the Middle East and the official agenda of Clinton's visit had been effectively sidelined.[19] Yet few could have anticipated the Middle East stood on the verge of the most dramatic changes in the post-colonial era.[20] At the time Clinton made a statement that encompassed both the West's unease and the hopes of the moment:

> Those who cling to the status quo may be able to hold back the full impact of their countries' problems for a little while, but not forever. If leaders don't offer a positive vision and give young people meaningful ways to contribute, others will fill the vacuum. Extremist elements, terrorist groups, and others who would prey on desperation and poverty are already out there, appealing for allegiance and competing for influence. So this is a critical moment, and this is a test of leadership for all of us.[21]

Shortly after this speech the Arab world ignited in a blaze of popular uprising. The year that followed brought seismic political shifts. Long-established dictatorships in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen all fell and governments teetered in Bahrain, Morocco, and

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19 The agenda for this visit was stated to be consultation 'with key allies on immediate issues such as Iran's nuclear program which many leaders especially in the Gulf view as a direct threat.' "Clinton Talks Tough to "Stagnant" Mideast Allies,", accessed http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/01/13/us-usa-arabs-idUSTRE70C1YA20110113; accessed 18/06/2015.

20 Sari Hanafi, "The Arab Revolutions; the Emergence of a New Political Subjectivity, Contemporary Arab Affairs 5, no. 2 (2012), 198-213: 199.

21 "Clinton's Remarks at Forum for the Future, January 2011", http://www.cfr.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/clintons-remarks-forum-future-january-2011/p23831, accessed 10/07/2015.

Jordan. While Syria embarked down the path to a protracted civil conflict. The uprisings were given the term, in the Western media at least, of the Arab Spring[22].

These events in the Arab world accentuated flaws in the reductionist views of Arab identity - long underpinned by Orientalism. The wave of social uprising captivated the world's attention. In a rare moment of self-determination, rather than outsiders, it was the Arab people setting the course of their own agenda. Fethi Mansouri fittingly describes how Orientalism has provided the 'conceptual framework for the West to construct knowledge about the Orient from a position of cultural superiority and political power.'[23] These events were disruptive to the long-regimented Orientalist narratives of Arab identity. For a time it seemed Arab identity would be irrevocably recast in the rejection of the tired, official narratives of the Arab world and its' people.[24] Arabs imagined themselves as 'subjects (and not, as the official narratives would have it, objects) of history.'[25]

Section One - The Need To Enhance Arab-Australian Identity

The discourse surrounding the events of the Arab Spring has given much needed space for new articulations of Arab identity. In Australia the events provide an opportunity to question some of the assumptions that underlie Arab identity. In line with much of the Western world, Arab identity has been shaped by Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people. The racial vilification of Arabs and Muslims has been documented as far

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[22] The term 'Arab Spring' was coined to describe the massive social and political protests that occurred in 2011. However the term has been heavily criticised on a number of grounds namely that it is reductionist and a Western imposition. For further discussion of the naming of the Arab Spring see Mariz Tadros, "Introduction: The Pulse of the Arab Revolt," *IDS Bulletin* 43, no. 1 (2012), 1-15.

[23] Fethi Mansouri, "Citizenship, Identity and Belonging in Contemporary Australia," in *Islam and the West : Reflections from Australia*, eds. Shahram Akbarzadeh and Samina Yasmeen (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2005), 149-164: 149.

[24] Tarik Ahmed Elseewi, "The Arab Spring| A Revolution of the Imagination," *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011), 1197-1206: 1197.

[25] Ibid.

back as the latter part of 19[th]century when both Afghan Muslim camel drivers and Syrian traders were the subject of major colonial campaigns accusing them of criminality and disease.[26] The immigration regulations of post-Federation Australia systematically reduced the Arab and Muslim population.[27] During the conflict with the Ottoman Turks in the First World War Australians with Lebanese and Syrian backgrounds were categorised as 'Turkish subjects' vilified and in some cases interned as enemies.[28] Despite recent increased migration from Arab countries under the policy of 'multiculturalism' the dominance of timeworn ideas about Arabs and Muslims still persist in Australian society.

Similarly, despite increasing diversity, both in the religious and cultural backgrounds of people in Australia, the Arabic speaking population remains inadequately represented in the various areas of public discourse. Arab-Australians are often represented in ways that deny them membership to the imagined Australian community.[29] A binary relationship exists between what is perceived as 'mainstream Australia' and the Arab-Australian Other.

By examining notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' explains how Arab-Australians have historically been located as the Other and outside the 'imagined community'.[30] Significant events, or flashpoints, have defined the representation of Arab-Australians in largely pejorative ways. Global and local events such as 9/11, the Bali Bombings, the 'gang rape' debates and the 'war on terror' have compounded anti-Arab-Australian sentiment. More recently local events such as the Lindt Café siege in Sydney in December 2014, global events involving the emergence of ISIL (Da'esh) and issues

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[26] Mansouri, *Citizenship, Idenity and Belonging in Contemporary Australia*, 149-164: 150.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Graeme Turner, "After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community," *Continuum* 17, no. 4 (05, 2003), 411-418: 412.
[30] For analysis of this concept see the work of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Third ed. (London, United Kingdom: Verso, 2006).

relating to extremism and foreign fighters abroad have further compounded the conflation

of the terms Arab, Islam and terrorism in the mainstream media and popular discourse.[31]

Mansouri and Wood describe this heightened security state as 'national paranoia'[32] that has

'resulted in a racialised, exclusionary discourse of demonisation, misrepresentation and

mistrust aimed at Australians of Muslim and Arabic backgrounds.'[33]

Objectives Of This Study

This study seeks to examine Arab-Australian identity beyond existing works in the fields

of cultural studies and politics. This is timely in the wake of the Arab Spring and the recent

global interest in the Arab world. In a domestic setting there is a need to address the lack of

diversity in the way Arab-Australians are represented within the broader ongoing debate

about identity, nationalism and belonging in Australia. It is necessary to examine Arab-

Australian identity as a response to constructed notions of Australia's national narrative.

By contributing fresh research it is hoped the conceptualisation of Arab-Australian identity

will be broadened. Furthermore this study of Arab-Australian identity from the perspective

of one sub-group, Egyptian-Australians, adds a new dimension to the study of Arab-

Australian identity. This is important for enhancing scholarly discourse and public policy

but also holds social implications in Australia's multicultural setting.

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[31] See Adrian Cherney and Kristina Murphy, "Being a 'suspect Community' in a Post 9/11 World – the Impact of the War on Terror on Muslim Communities in Australia," *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* (May 07, 2015).; "Australia in the Eye of the Jihadist Storm," , http://www.researchgate.net/publication/277715718_Australia_in_the_Eye_of_the_Jihadist_Storm.; and "Why the Threat of ISIS Suddenly Feels very Real in Australia," , http://mashable.com/2014/09/26/isis-influence-australia/.; accessed 12/06/2015.

[32] Fethi Mansouri and Sally Percival Wood, *Introduction: Arab and Muslim Australians in the Current Socio-political Context*. Melbourne University Press, 2008, 1-148: 2.

[33] Ibid.

This study is underpinned by the belief that identities are grounded in power relations and the struggle for definition over cultural spaces.[34] As such identities are materially exercised across all levels of discourse with serious consequences for the people they represent and the places they inhabit.[35]

This thesis is strongly rooted in the notion of Australia's historical and current context of 'national paranoia' and the assumption that Orientalism has shaped the discourse and treatment of Arab-Australians. The central research premise which guides this study is:

> Arab-Australian identity is a constructed identity that continues to be shaped largely by Orientalist ideas about the Middle East and its people. How are Arab-Australians themselves engaging with, challenging or resisting this constructed identity?

In addressing these central research premises, this study identifies and demands greater attention to the nuanced nature of the Arab-Australian identity construct and highlights the gaps in how Arab-Australians are represented and how they represent themselves. This is significant to why, in this heightened national security context, attempts to engage the Arabic speaking community using programs and rhetoric which treat the community as a homogeneous entity may be at best ineffective and at worst detrimental.

This holds practical implications for the wider disciplinary fields of academia, for policy making and for disrupting the assumptions and conventional thinking that tend to treat Arab-Australian identity as a homogenous construct. This thesis contributes to existing

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[34] Kevin Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography to Engage Contested Constructions of Ethnicity and Citizenship in Sydney," *Social & Cultural Geography* 4, no. 2 (06/01; 2013/05, 2003), 153-165: 154.
[35] Ibid.

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knowledge of Arab-Australian identity by demonstrating how one particular group within the Arabic speaking community has contested the identity construct and how this is a further affirmation of the material effects of Othering in Australian society. This research engages with the Arab-Australian identity construct to contribute to redressing the Othering of Arab-Australians. New insights are garnered from two areas of empirical inquiry which enhance the understanding of Arab-Australian identity. The challenge for policy makers and broader public discourse is not only to address the continual conflation of Arabic speaking people and Islam but also to redress the persistent Othering of Islam, largely along pejorative Orientalist lines. The prospects of countering such representation may lie in creating space for discourses that challenge the common assumptions about certain identity constructs, such as those pertaining to Arab-Australians. The many ways groups relate to and resist identity constructions, present important opportunities to further advance the thinking about the complexities and nuances which occur at the group identity level. By acknowledging that groups such as Arab-Australians contain within them multiple layers of identity and in-group/outgroup categorisations, increases the likelihood that discourse relating to such groups may reflect the more dynamic reality.

The findings of this study speak to how identity is constructed in Australia. In particular how culture and national identity are powerful tools which manifest in media and political discourses to support dominant national narratives. This study has implications for understanding how groups who are Othered by the dominant culture relate to and respond to their identity and their situation. As such this study offers important insight for enhancing media and public discourse in the areas of Arab-Australian identity and multiculturalism in Australia.

Previous Studies Of Arab-Australian Identity And Negative Social Position

Arab-Australian representation as the Other is manifest in the social and economic space. In particular Arab-Australians suffer from lower employment and poorer education and workplace experiences when compared to the broader Australian community.[36] Impediments linked to assumed traits, stereotyping and perceived attitudes within the wider-community have led to Arab-Australians expressing a sense of isolation, despite a desire for closer interaction.

Research first published by Sue Kenny *et al* in 2005 examined indicators for wellbeing and social connectedness amongst Arab-Australians to analyse the 'inter-cultural relations from the perspective of Arab-Australians and their willingness and capacity to engage beyond their own community.'[37] The study speaks in terms of social capital where Bonding Social Capital refers to the extent to which Arab-Australians feel connected through mutual links with other members of the Arab-Australian community while Bridging Social Capital refers to the extent of connectedness outside the Arab-Australian community. Kenny et al found that Bonding Social Capital amongst Arab-Australians was generally high and evident in a range of forms including common language, close cultural links and the tendency to live in close proximity to other members as an important source of mutual support.[38] However Bridging Social Capital was less evident in Arab-Australian communities with connection between Arab and non-Arab groups found to be limited.[39]

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[36] Sue Kenny et al., *Arabic Communities and Well-being: Supports and Barriers to Social Connectedness* (Deakin University, Victoria: The Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights, 2005): 7.
[37] Ibid., 6.
[38] Ibid., 7.
[39] Ibid.

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Kenny et al argue that the social climate in Australia has become increasingly difficult for Arab-Australians who 'experience a sense of being undervalued by the broader community, including when applying for work or accessing public services'.[40] Socio-economic concerns rank highly amongst Arab-Australians and poor labour opportunities contribute to comparative asset-poverty, especially in newly arrived groups.[41]

In what can be described as a basic lack of understanding of the diversity of the Middle East, the conflation of Arab and Muslim communities into one homogenous group has been fundamental to the negative social position experienced by many Arab-Australians. The common assumption that all Arabs are Muslim represents a 'widespread ignorance in the West of the diversity of religious faiths in the Arab lands and their diaspora.'[42]

There is evidence of rising Islamophobia in Australia which is compounding negative sentiment towards Arabs. The Scanlon Foundation study has revealed that close to one quarter of people in Australia hold negative views towards Muslims.[43] The findings of the study reinforce that discrimination based on religious faith is becoming increasingly prevalent in Australian society.[44] Particularly concerning are the negative attitudes towards Islam - around five times greater than negative attitudes towards Christian and Buddhist faiths.[45] This point is reflected in the experiences of Egyptian-Australians interviewed in this study who expressed a cognisance of the negative attitudes held by many people towards Muslims and by association, people of Arabic speaking background.

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[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., 8.
[42] Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry, "Climates of Hate: Media and State Inspired Victimisation of Muslims in Canada and Australia since 9/11," *Current Issues in Criminal Justice* 19, no. 2 (2007), 151-171: 152.
[43] Andrew Markus, *Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2014* (Caulfield East, Victoria: Monash University, [2014]): 1.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

In the view of Kenny et al the impediments facing Arab-Australians are linked to perceived attitudes within the wider-community which are based on assumed traits and stereotyping. Arab-Australians express a sense of isolation, despite a desire for closer interaction. Global and local events involving terrorism have led to the stigmatisation and marginalisation of Arab-Australians the result of which is a barrier to a more active participation in the community.[46] Kenny et al note that Arab-Australians feel less secure in Australia since the events of September 11 2001 (9/11) and the subsequent 'war on terror'. This is due to heightened suspicion and greater negative community sentiment and there is particular concern with regards to police violence and competence when dealing with the Arab-Australian community.[47]

By and large there is a strong level of support for multiculturalism in Australia.[48] However there exists an important policy challenge in the area of social cohesion. In particular in low socioeconomic areas with high cultural diversity, indicators of social cohesion are markedly low and this is reflected in 'lower levels of trust, sense of safety, political participation, involvement in volunteer work, and higher levels of discrimination.'[49] The findings of this study support this and the fact that discrimination based on religious faith is becoming increasingly prevalent in Australian society. As earlier outlined there are now high levels of reported experiences of discrimination with around 18 per cent of people experiencing some form of discrimination.[50] Particularly concerning are the negative attitudes towards Islam - around five times greater than negative attitudes towards

[46] Kenny et al., *Arabic Communities and Well-being*: 8.
[47] Ibid.,7.
[48] Markus, Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2014: 4.
[49] Australian Multicultural Council, The Australian Community: The Australian Multicultural Council's Report on Multiculturalism and Social Cohesion in Australian Neighbourhoods (http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/22965/The_Australian_Community.pdf: ,[2013]): 3.
[50] Markus, Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2014: 1.

Christian and Buddhist faiths.[51] In addition as previous studies with members of the Arab-Australian community have demonstrated, social and economic disadvantage and feelings of isolation exist within the Arab-Australian community.

In 2003 the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) in Australia conducted the Ismaع project. The project held consultations with around 70 Arab and Muslim communities. The aim was to examine whether Arab and Muslim Australians were experiencing higher levels of discrimination and vilification post-9/11 and to document the nature and impact of these experiences.[52] Most participants indicated that they had experienced an increase in the level of discrimination and vilification following 9/11.[53] The report highlighted that various local, regional, national and international crises, such as the Bali bombings in October 2002 and the war in Iraq in 2003, were times of peak discrimination and vilification.[54] The report indicated that since 9/11 amongst the Arab and Muslim community women were more likely than men to experience racism, abuse or violence and that especially common was alleged discrimination against Arab and Muslim job applicants and employees.[55] In describing the extent of the increase in negative experiences for Arab and Muslim Australians the report stated:

> Most significantly, 93 per cent of those surveyed felt there had been an increase in racism, abuse and violence against their ethnic or religious community with 64 per

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[51] Ibid.
[52] The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), *Ismak - Listen: National Consultations on Eliminating Prejudice Against Arab and Muslim Australians* (Sydney: The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC),[2004]): 15.
[53] Ibid., 43.
[54] Ibid., 44.
[55] Ibid., 47.

cent reporting 'a lot more' discrimination and vilification directed at their community.[56]

When asked about the negative impacts after 9/11, participants described 'many circumstances in which they believed they had been discriminated against because of their race or religion'.[57] The HREOC report identified three main themes or categories for which participants attested experiencing discrimination or vilification. Firstly, 'Australian Arabs and Muslims share responsibility for terrorism or are potential terrorists'.[58] Secondly, that 'there is no place in Australia for Arabs and Muslims'.[59] Thirdly, 'new migrants to Australia should assimilate and discard their 'foreign' dress codes, languages and cultural practices'.[60] Taken from the report is the following statement made by a participant which frames the experience of many Arab-Australians:

> I've had people in shopping centres walk past and say 'Go back to your own country'. Which part of the country would they like me to go back to? I'm seventh generation Australian, my ancestors came on ships, that's how far, I can't get much further back than that. So it's extremely insulting to say that to me.[61]

There is little doubt that the post-9/11 world for Arab-Australians is one marked by anti-Muslim sentiment and the normalisation of questioning the place of Muslims and people of Arab background in Australia. This manifests in the social and economic space and has

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[56] Ibid., 47.
[57] Ibid., 51.
[58] Ibid., 50.
[59] Ibid., 51.
[60] Ibid., 52.
[61] Ibid., 52.

consequences for the people represented by Arab-Australian identity and the places they inhabit.

Towards A More Diverse Concept Of Arab-Australian Identity

Through engagement with existing literature and the findings of the empirical work in this study, identity labels such as Arab-Australian are shown to be constructed, fluid and nuanced. The treatment of identity constructs as static is contested and it is argued greater diversity exists within Arab-Australian identity than is commonly represented. This study demonstrates how one group within the Arabic speaking community is resisting the homogenisation of Arabs often forced upon them by mainstream representations of Arab-Australian identity.

When interrogating the term Arab-Australian it is necessary to consider the extent to which ethnic labels can be considered a personal choice or as this thesis' seeks to emphasise such labels are tied up in a more complex array of social factors. Joane Nagel urges researchers to consider:

> The notion that ethnicity is simply a personal choice runs the risk of emphasising agency at the expense of structure. In fact, ethnic identity is both optional and mandatory, as individual choices are circumscribed by the ethnic categories available at a particular time and place. That is, while an individual can choose from among a set of ethnic identities, that set is generally limited to socially and politically defined ethnic categories with varying degrees of stigma or advantage attached to them. [62]

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[62] Joane Nagel, *Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture,* "New Tribalisms: The Resurgence of Race and Ethnicity". Edited by Michael Hughey. NY: New York University Press, 1998: 242.

A framework for considering Arab-Australian identity as a constructed social label is validated by the point that conceptualisations of Arab-Australian identity has little to do with essential or natural features of Arabs themselves but rather is an identity category which has been constructed in relation to the dominant national identity.

Australia's past, specifically a national history of racial discrimination, assimilation and more recently policies of multiculturalism, along with the ongoing construction of a 'strong national identity'[63] represent cultural dominance. Inevitably this has led to Othering and subjugation of particular groups in the process.

This thesis interrogates Arab-Australian identity by exploring consciousness of the term amongst Arabs themselves and in the media content of the Arab Spring. The extent to which consciousness forms ideology and eventually spurs action in regards to identity construction is considered. In particular Arab-Australian identity as a categorisation subject to subordination and social stigmatisation is explored and it is demonstrated how groups outside the dominant identity, in this case Egyptian-Australians, 'shift from a situation in which group members simply accept their status to one in which they express a sense of grievance as victims of injustice, perceive a lack of legitimacy in the social hierarchy, and eventually set about collectively to correct the injustices.'[64] In this regard Arab-Australian identity is interrogated in this thesis for how the categorisation functions at the group consciousness level.[65]

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[63] This is the rhetoric used by successive Australian governments and will be explored further in following chapter.

[64] Arthur Miller, Patricia Gurin, Gerald Gurin and Oksana Malanchuk. "Group Consciousness and Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 3 (1981): 497

[65] To further explain this point Miller *et al* allocate group consciousness with four explanatory components; i) *Group identification* which is the psychological feeling of belonging; ii) *Polar affect*, which is a preference for members of one's own group and a dislike for those outside it; *Polar power* which is the expressed satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the group's current status, power or material resources in relation to that of the Other; and finally *individual vs. system blame* which is the extent to which a belief exists that the responsibility for a

As this study highlights Egyptian-Australians express themselves in a complex and nuanced process of identity construction. An intricate situation exists where rather than refute pejorative stereotypes of Arab-Australians, Egyptian-Australians often legitimise these stereotypes through processes of social categorisation and distinctiveness. In doing so Egyptian-Australians demonstrate a particular response to Othering through the polemic refuting of their membership to the Arab-Australian identity construct and by invoking the idea of Egyptian exceptionalism to set themselves apart.

The findings within highlight that identity constructs such as Arab-Australian, are not homogeneous monoliths nor are they exempt from resistance from those within them. The prospects of more adequate representation at all levels of discourse centres on acknowledging the diversity within identity categories. It is highly appropriate therefore that identities be subject to continuous scholarly challenge, particularly identities burdened with heavy and pervasive stereotypes, such is the case with Arab-Australian identity.

This thesis enhances the existing framework for understanding how Arab-Australian identity has been constructed. In particular this study calls for a more robust conceptualisation on the basis that Arab-Australian identity has been constructed largely around the Lebanese community. In privileging Lebanese identity over other non-Lebanese groups the diversity of the Arabic speaking community in Australia has not been adequately represented. A more vigorous conceptualisation is gained by expanding the research focus to other groups within the Arabic speaking community and in particular how these groups perceive the construction and functioning of Arab-Australian identity.

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group's low status in society is attributable to individual failings or to inequities in the social system. Arthur Miller, Patricia Gurin, Gerald Gurin and Oksana Malanchuk. "Group Consciousness and Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 3 (1981): 497.

Considering Arab-Australian Identity Beyond Lebanese Dominance

This study finds that Egyptian-Australians believe the Lebanese community in Australia to be more representative of the Arab-Australian identity construct. The Arab experience in Australia has largely documented the experiences and perspectives of Lebanese migrants and more recently Australian born people of Lebanese background. This is due in part to the larger numbers of migrants and the long history of Lebanese migration to Australia. The result of this is a discourse of Arab-Australian identity that has often mitigated differences within the broader community by asserting shared language as a signifier of cultural commonality. Within the identity group there are implications for how smaller minorities are able to define themselves while occupying the space with a larger group holding such prominence.

The expansive works of scholars such as Ghassan Hage, Scott Poynting and Paul Tabar acknowledge Arabs in Australia to be 'of quite diverse and different ethnic and national origins'[66] and 'a diverse group both socially and economically'.[67] However there is no escaping the fact that scholarly literature to date has been largely rooted in the Lebanese experience, arguably making the term Arab-Australian interchangeable or synonymous with Lebanese-Australian.

By no means is this written to detract from the impact these works have made, indeed to date these works represent the most influential thinking on Arab-Australian identity, especially with regards to how Arab identity relates to the dominant 'Australian' identity

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[66] Scott Poynting and Victoria Mason, "The Resistible Rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim Racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001," *Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 1 (March 01, 2007), 61-86: 62.
[67] Ghassan Hage, *Arab-Australians Today: Citizenship and Belonging*, 1st ed. (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2002): 296.

construct. However further analysis of how the non-Lebanese Arabic speaking community relates to the identity construct is beneficial to broadening the thinking on Arab-Australian identity and issues relating to the representation of Arabs in Australia.

Theory And Reflexivity Of Study

Inspired by the mass uprisings in the Arab world, the initial research agenda of this study set out to look at the impact of the Arab Spring on Arab-Australians. In that sense the initial (and very broad) research question involved a deductive logic, specifically that the political upheaval in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world would have some measurable impact on the Arab-Australian community. However a far more inductive logic emerged once some investigations had begun into precisely *who* were Arab-Australians? There emerged an identity construct in need of greater scholarly attention. Thus the conceptualisation of Arab-Australian identity began to inform the direction of this project with the Arab Spring providing the context for collecting empirical data from media content and one-to-one interviews.

Like many research projects in the social research field that use qualitative data, the final conclusions of this thesis bare little semblance to the starting point or research proposal. This is reflective of the long path of discovery and the necessity for openness and to being flexible along the research journey. Rosaline Barbour describes 'flexibility [as] the hallmark of qualitative research. Even the focus of the research can alter as data is generated and preliminary analysis suggests a new or slightly shifted emphasis. [68]

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[68] Barbour, *Introducing Qualitative Research* : 30.

The Arab Spring And The Focus On Egyptians In Australia

In this study, the Arab Spring is the prism through which to examine important questions about Arab-Australian identity and its representation. The events in Egypt in particular have brought Arab identity to the fore, for the first time Egypt was in the public eye for more than its touristic icons, the pyramids and the Nile. The Arab world was for a fleeting moment applauded rather than berated for the popular uprisings against corrupt and oppressive governments. Equally these events gave cause to reflect on how Arab identity is considered in Australia. The Arab Spring events provide a discreet window in time through which to observe Arab-Australian identity in practice. These important events have the potential to disrupt the stereotypes of Arabs in Australia and to challenge the status quo of how Arab-Australians are represented in political arenas and in the media.

During the Egyptian uprising there was a myriad of commentary much of which failed to distinguish that events in Cairo, Alexandria and elsewhere were first and foremost an Egyptian uprising. This reflected a tendency to group together all events in the Middle East and likewise its peoples. It is evident that in Australia little nuanced understanding exists about the diversity in the Arab world and certainly there is limited knowledge about modern Egyptians. This study fills a gap in existing knowledge by focusing on the relationship between Arab-Australian identity and the lesser researched Egyptian community.

Egypt is often described as the pulse of the Arab world and in 2011 Egypt was indeed the beating heart of the Arab Spring uprisings.[69] With a long held leadership role Egypt has

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[69] Muqtedar Khan, 2003. *Egypt's Lead in the Arab World*. accessed http://www.theglobalist.com/egypts-lead-in-the-arab-world/. 05/07/2015.

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been central to the Arab world both strategically and culturally. The Egyptian scholar Gamal Hamden described Egypt as the meeting place of the Arab family or the "oasis" of Arabs.[70] Muqtedar Khan articulates the significance of Egypt to the Arab world when saying that 'discourses emerging from Egypt, both secular as well as Islamic, have shaped the frames of references employed by Arabs elsewhere.'[71] Tarik Elseewi described how in 2011 'people in the streets refusing to obey the state—violate[d] conventional wisdom about national political life.'[72] Thus the uprising which ended the 30 year rule of President Hosni Mubarak dislocated the status quo and signalled a new relationship between governments and those they govern. So while Egypt doesn't represent the Arab World it has an important cultural and leadership role in the wider Arabic speaking community.

Having a singular and material event through which to witness Arab-Australian identity in action enhances and gives originality to this study beyond the theoretical components. The Arab Spring represents a significant and unique event that has brought Egypt and Egyptians to the forefront of the news, more importantly these events have exposed how diversity amongst the Arabic speaking community could be better represented in Australia. The Arab Spring therefore is the platform for connecting with members of the community and provides a basis for analysing media representation of Arab identity in Australia.

Western Imposition – The Term 'Arab Spring'

In assessing how the events of the Arab Spring have been conceptualised by Arab-Australians themselves it is important to consider the language and terminology expressed

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[70] Cited in Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State / Halim Barakat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993): 4.
[71] Khan, *Egypt's Lead in the Arab World.*
[72] Elseewi, Tarik Ahmed. 2011. "The Arab Spring| A Revolution of the Imagination." *International Journal of Communication* 5: 1197-1206: 1197.

by members of the Egyptian-Australian community regarding the relevance of the term 'Arab Spring'. In the media content analysis in Chapter Three, the term Arab Spring is used by various Australian media outlets to describe the social and political upheaval in the Arab world. The same terminology has also been engaged by popular discourse and in academic literature. However amongst Egyptians the term 'Arab Spring' is shown to be almost redundant, only encountered on four occasions during the interviews conducted. The events which are described by the Arab Spring are deeply rooted in the Egyptian experience and while there is acknowledgment that events in Egypt occurred amidst the broader social turmoil in the Arab world, there is an absence of any widespread use of the term 'Arab Spring' to describe the collective upheaval. The Arab Spring therefore may be best considered an imposed label – a point which is further supported in the findings of the media content analysis.[73]

To explain this in greater detail Maytha Alhassen described the Arab Spring as an 'uncritically reproduced phrase that enjoys much Western popularity in the media, pop culture, and academ[ia] and on social media'.[74] The term 'Spring' was first applied by Western commentators to the Arab world in 2005 in reference to the democratic "flowering" of the Arab world suggested to be the flow-on benefit of the invasion of Iraq.[75] The term has American Cold War anti-Soviet genealogy and refers to the democratisation of previously oppressed peoples.[76] Joseph Massad goes so far as to denunciate the term as a tool of Western, and particularly US domination:

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[73] See section 'Terminology Of The Arab Spring' in Chapter Three.

[74] Maytha Alhassen, "Please Reconsider the Term "Arab Spring"", *The Huffington Post*, 10 February 2012, accessed http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maytha-alhassen/please-reconsider-arab-sp_b_1268971.html.

[75] For further in-depth consideration of the origins of the term 'Arab Spring' see James L. Gelvin, "Where did the Phrase 'Arab Spring' Come from and how Appropriate is it to Describe Events in the Arab World?" in *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 37-39.

[76] Joseph Massad, "Love, Fear, and the Arab Spring," *Public Culture* 26, no. 1 (Winter, 2014), 127-152: 136.

The dubbing of the uprisings in the Arab world by western governments and media as an "Arab Spring" (it is said that the American journal Foreign Policy coined the term first) was not simply an arbitrary or even seasonal choice of nomenclature, but rather a US strategy of controlling their aims and goals.[77]

The Unique Nature of Arab Identity

Arab identity is in many ways unique in its convergence of national, ethnic, cultural and religious parameters. To this end Martin Kramer remarks that Arab identity remains both difficult to generalise and 'dauntingly complex'.[78] In particular Arab identity is tightly bound to Islam both linguistically, through Arabic, and socio-culturally. At the same time Arab identity is imbued with a uniquely political dimension not found in other identity labels. Acknowledging the unique nature of Arab identity strengthens this study and its findings.

The Centrality Of Constructivism To This Study

As will be evident in the following chapters this study is grounded ontologically in a constructivist approach to identity. The constructivist logic is that knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of people and the meanings which they take from their lived experiences, most importantly, it acknowledges the socially constructed nature of those meanings.[79]

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[77] Ibid.

[78] Martin Kramer, 1993, "Arab nationalism: Mistaken identity", *Daedalus,* vol. 122, no. 3; 171.

[79] Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice*: 12.

This thesis accepts the premise that 'researchers also construct meanings and interpretation'[80]. To any project a researcher brings with them their own subjectivity and areas of interest. According to Ritchie, Lewis, Mcnaughton, Nicholls and Ormston, it is Immanuel Kant that best explains in *Critique of Pure Reason* that 'those practicing qualitative research have tended to place emphasis and value on human interpretation of the social world and the significance of both participants' and investigator's interpretations and understanding of the phenomenon being studied.'[81] Ritchie *et al* concur with Kant's position when stating that 'reality is affected by the research process, facts and values are not distinct, and objective value-free research is impossible.'[82]

Understanding Individual Verses Collective Identity In This Study

Approaches such as the one taken by this study, emphasise the existence of structured dominant national identity and may be criticised on the basis they neglect to sufficiently account for the role of the individual in the identity construction process. Furthermore, they can be argued to reduce 'the individual to a cultural-social object and the group to a cultural tool of social conformity.[83] While the primary concern of this study is with collective power and power at the institutional level it does not imply that the individual is a bystander in the process of identity construction. Of course it is the individual who must interpret his/her surroundings and internalise the social constructs imposed. Moreover the individual is not a one-dimensional construct defined only by ethnicity. Rather as Henri Tajfel asserts, social identity is but one facet of an individual and 'the image or concept that the individual has of himself is infinitely more complex, both in its contents and its

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 11
[82] Ibid., 12
[83] Gabriele Marranci, *Understanding Muslim Identity: Rethinking Fundamentalism*, 1st ed. (United Kingdom: Pelgrave Macmillian, 2009): 7.

derivation'.[84] Notwithstanding this point this study places intentional subjective importance on membership to one particular social category, namely Arab-Australian identity and its role in shaping the lived experiences of those it is associated with. Identity is limited to concepts of self that are relevant to aspects of social relations, namely identity and representation.[85]

The Multidisciplinary Approach And Applied Research Focus

This thesis by its nature adopts a multidisciplinary approach which encompasses the disciplines of politics, sociology and cultural studies. This work draws on critical theory for understanding the intersection of power and identity. Indeed the study has much to do with 'identifying ways in which material conditions (economic, political, gender, ethnic) influence beliefs, behaviour and experiences.'[86] The study of the relational aspects of Arab-Australian identity has a sociological slant evident. There is also much to garner from the media content analysis and surrounding discussion, in this regard the work has a strong cultural studies element too. In support of such a multidisciplinary approach Ruth Wodak observes 'problems in our societies are too complex to be studied from a single perspective.'[87]

David Silverman asserts that 'without theory, research is impossibly narrow. Without research, theory is mere armchair contemplation.'[88] From the outset of this research the use of theory to explain empirical observations about Arab-Australian identity was considered

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[84] Henri Tajfel, "Introduction," in *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*, ed. Henri Tajfel, 1st ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1-11: 2.
[85] Ibid., 3.
[86] Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice* : 19.
[87] Ruth Wodak, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Clive Seale and others (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 2004), 168-202: 188.
[88] David Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, ed. Clive Seale, 2nd ed. (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2005): 115.

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paramount. Therefore perhaps unremarkably, this study attests to taking an applied research approach. There is strong support for ensuring research has relevance and applicability beyond the theoretical. Silverman states that 'theory is only worthwhile when it is used to explain something.'[89] While Denzin and Lincoln have argued that good theoretical research should also have applied relevance and implications.[90] Jane Ritchie *et al* explain that good social research must be informed by theory and interpreted in light of theory[91] and that social research 'is at its most useful when theoretical insights and social investigation are mutually enhancing.[92]

As such both theoretical rigor and practical applicability are of great concern to this project. Clive Seale describes this as a research dialogue between the outer and inner research logics where 'the outer dialogue concerns the external relations of a research project – its relevance to practical and political projects, its consequences, uses and overall purpose. The inner dialogue concerns its internal logic (for example, the adequacy of links between claims and evidence).[93]

Informed by the necessity to balance theoretical rigor and practical applicability this study explores the material conditions explained by concepts found in critical theory through personal experience and media discourse. To account for and explain the nature of Arab-Australian identity this study explores theory and practical evidence and seeks to explain existing linkages. Maintaining an outlook which takes into account the two logics of theory and applicability beyond theory was of great importance in the completion of this study.

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[89] David Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, Fourth edition, (London: Sage, 2013): 115.
[90] Cited in Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice:* 28.
[91] Bulmer 1982 cited in Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice:* 28.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Clive Seale, "Quality in Qualitative Research," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Clive Seale and others (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 2004): 380.

The Importance Of Qualitative Research To This Study

Alan Bryman describes a qualitative research approach as 'broadly inductivist, constructivist and interpretivist'.[94] The attractiveness of qualitative research to this study lies in the fact that it could adequately inform and imbue the theoretical study of Arab-Australian identity and provide grounds for asserting originality in this study. Importantly qualitative research is a means of 'in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about the sense they make of their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories.'[95] This was a crucial element in the aims of this research study. Rosaline Barbour asserts the merits of qualitative methods on the basis that they allow researchers to access 'embedded' processes in social relations 'by focusing on the context of people's everyday lives.'[96]

On a practical level qualitative research was much more applicable to this study than its methodological alternative quantitative research, not least because it is generally more elastic with findings informing further research and research pathways. Barbour describes this as a more flexible research agenda whereby 'interview schedules and focus group topic guides [are] revised as they are employed and with the research question even being subject to modification in the course of the research.'[97]

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[94] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods / Alan Bryman*, 4th ed. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 380.
[95] Ritchie et al., *Qualitative Research Practice :* 4.
[96] Barbour, *Introducing Qualitative Research*: 13.
[97] Ibid., 160.

This section sets out the research approach taken in this study including the choice of methods and the exact steps taken to conduct the study. Evaluating suitable research methods from the ever increasing array of methods available took into account practical and ethical considerations. Primarily questions of evaluation came down to what methods of eliciting data were going to generate the sort of data of interest to this project?[98]

A mixed method approach was employed. Research design was predominantly qualitative, but involved some quantitative components. Interviews and media content analysis provided the qualitative material. Within this, two datasets were generated. Some quantitative analysis was undertaken to make use of the demographic and publication information gathered.

The inclusion of both one-to-one interviews and a media content analysis in addition to the literature review and discussion of the relevant theoretical debates was thought would provide a more holistic account of Arab-Australian identity. Rosaline Barbour asserts that 'mixing methods can play a valuable role in providing a multifaceted account or explanation of the phenomena we seek to study.'[99]

The media content analysis complemented the one-to-one interviews by proving a thematic scheme of the representation of Arab-Australians which was then used as the basis for discussing representation in the media with interview participants. The two datasets were analysed using separate coding frames but with shared coding themes. The media content analysis highlighted the nature of representation of Arab-Australians by providing practical

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[98] Ibid., 41.
[99] Ibid., 156.

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examples of word choice and framing, while the interviews provided insight into how this representation was interpreted by Arab-Australians and especially the effect of media representation on identity.

There were a number of advantages to having both one-to-one interviews and the media content analysis as empirical evidence of the representation of Arab-Australians. The two research components complemented one another to provide a more dynamic, fuller picture of the representation of Arab-Australians. The media content analysis provided a view to the trends in representation. These included the way media framed particular issues relating to Arabs in Australia, the frequency and use of stereotypes and the common themes that serve to contextualise coverage within broader Australian setting.

The interviews provided a more complex account of how media and public discourse are interpreted by the people they represent. The interviews allowed a much broader array of perceptions of representation to be highlighted and it was from the interviews that a more complex reality of Arab-Australian identity emerged.

Creating two different but complementary sets of empirical data adds further rigor to the research findings. Barbour remarks that one of the strengths of taking a multipronged or mixed method approach is that it is 'possible to subsequently mine rich qualitative datasets in order to write more theorised accounts which can engage with our own disciplinary concerns as social scientists.'[100]

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[100] Ibid.,165.

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The Media Content Analysis

The following approach was employed in conducting the media content analysis component of the empirical research for this study. This section will outline the selection and inclusion of content, the classification of media content and the way content was analysed as well as the limitations to this aspect of the study.

Selection of Media Content

A comparative content analysis of Arabic language newspapers and mainstream Australian print media was undertaken. Two Arabic language newspapers were selected based on their circulation figures. The first publication, *El Telegraph* is based in Bankstown Sydney, the newspaper is published five times per week and has a 'committed readership numbering well in excess of half a million people.'[101] The second Arabic language paper selected was *Al Mestaqbal* which is published twice per week and has a target audience of 'over 750,000 Lebanese and Arabic people of permanent residency in Australia'.[102] Three English language newspapers were selected. The first was the national broadsheet *The Australian* which has a total audience of close to 3.5 million people.[103] The second publication included was *The Daily Telegraph*, a Sydney tabloid newspaper whose content is also shared with its Melbourne publication the Herald Sun, the total audience for the *Daily Telegraph* is stated to be over 4 million people.[104] Both the *Daily Telegraph* and *The*

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[101] "About Us," El Telegraph Newspaper, accessed November/18, 2014, http://www.eltelegraphnewspaper.com.au/.

[102] "Introduction," Al Mestaqbal (Future), accessed November 18, 2014, http://www.futurenews.com.au/.

[103] "SMH: Advertise with Us," Fairfax Media, accessed December 8, 2014, http://adcentre.com.au/brands/the-sydney-morning-herald/.

[104] "The Daily Telegraph", News Corp, accessed February/10, 2016,. http://www.newscorpaustralia.com/brand/daily-telegraph

Australian are owned by News Corp[105]. The final publication selected was the *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, which has an audience of 757 000.[106] The SMH is owned by Fairfax Media and shares content with its sister publication in Melbourne, *The Age*.

Articles from the above publications were back-searched over a three year period using the *Factiva[107]* database for mainstream Australian news sources. Physical archive searches were conducted of the Australian Arabic newspapers. Articles were searched in the week following seven key events in the Egyptian revolution dating January 2011 to August 2013. The key events were selected based on their significance to the Egyptian revolution and are described in the following table:

Table 1. Coverage search parameters: Key events in Egyptian Revolution.

Event	Date	Description
First Uprising In Egypt	Jan 25 – Feb 14, 2011	Egyptians stage nationwide demonstrations against the rule of President Hosni Mubarak.
Protests in Sydney	Jan 31, 2011 Feb 05, 2011 Oct 24, 2011 Aug 17-26, 2013	The Egyptian community hold rallies in Sydney at various times during the coverage period.
Parliamentary Elections in Egypt	Nov 29-30, 2011 Feb 16-20, 2012	Egypt holds weeks-long parliamentary elections.
Presidential Elections in Egypt	May 21-26, 2012	Voting in presidential elections, Mohammad Morsi is elected.
President Morsi Increases Powers	Nov 23-26, 2012	Morsi decrees greater powers for himself and his government.
Constitution Referendum	Dec 16-17, 2012 Dec 23-25, 2012	In a two-round referendum, Egyptians approve divisive changes to the constitution.
President Morsi is Deposed	July 4-6, 2013 Aug 27 2013	Military ousts Morsi, suspends the constitution and instates a temporary technocratic government. There is increased violence in the streets.

[105] News Corp is the media empire owned by Rupert Murdoch and is one of the largest media companies in the world.
[106] "SMH: Advertise with Us," Fairfax Media, accessed November 19, 2014, http://adcentre.com.au/brands/the-sydney-morning-herald/#tabs/1004.
[107] English mainstream newspapers were searched using the Factiva database with relevance limited to at least five mentions of the search term "Egypt" in the coverage.

Overview of Content Included In the Study

A total of 576 newspaper articles were included in the content analysis. The mainstream
Australian media returned a total of 469 articles. These comprised 55 articles from *The
Daily Telegraph*, 299 from *The Australian* 115 from the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The
Arabic newspaper search revealed 107 articles, of these 75 were found in the *El Telegraph*
publication and 32 were found in the *Al Mustaqbal* publication. Summary translations of
the Arabic articles were produced by a professional translator. An overview of the content
included in this study is represented by the chart below:

Chart 1. Content Included in the Media Analysis
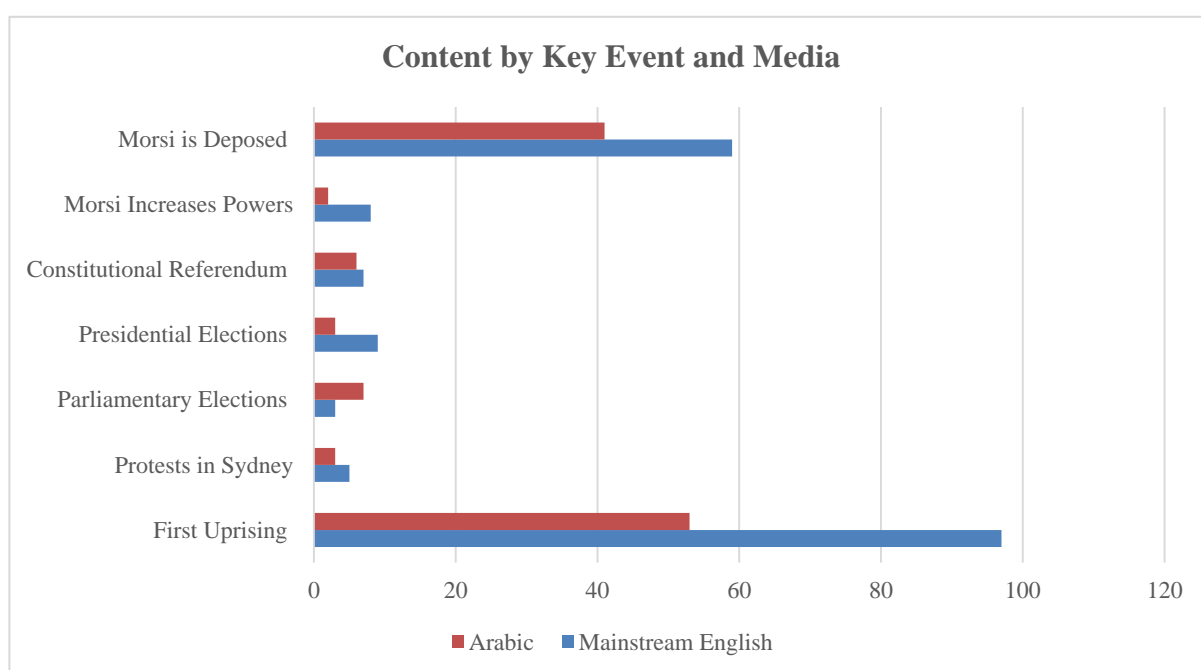
Limitations of the Media Content Analysis

Some limitations have been identified in this aspect of the study. Firstly, the number of
publications being five in number limits the scope of analysis conducted. Variations in the
coverage may have been found had it been possible to search all relevant publications in

Australia during the time period. Secondly, limiting the scope of empirical research to the events of the Egyptian Revolution, does not account for media analysis of events in other parts of the Arab world. This arguably does not provide the full picture of the Arab Spring because events in Egypt may not be representative of events in Libya, Tunisia, Bahrain, Syria and other Arab countries.

Thirdly, the use of a translator to summarise the Arabic articles poses a limitation. While a qualified translator with relevant experience was engaged, a level of influence over the interpretation of media content is inevitably bestowed on the translator.

Research Method For Interviews

The second component of the empirical research were one-to-one interviews. The choice of interviews was both practical and philosophical. On a practical level interviews are preferable to other methods of individual research such as observation owing to the rigorous ethical requirements of ensuring participant consent.[108] Interviews were also deemed to be preferable to focus groups for eliciting personal narratives from study participants. Owing to the very individual nature of questions of identity, representation and political opinion, focus groups were deemed to be less appropriate. Barbour remarks that 'although many people will happily share experiences in a group setting, it can be extremely difficult to tease out individual accounts in the probably somewhat disjointed and jumbled accounts that are likely to arise in focus group discussions.'[109]

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[108] Barbour, *Introducing Qualitative Research:* 47.
[109] Ibid.

This section will outline the methods for conducting one-to-one interviews. Specifically the rationale for sampling, structure of interviews and considerations of representation and generalisation.

Sampling

This study took an approach to sampling and sample size that recognises 'the goal of qualitative sampling is not to produce a representative sample, but is rather to reflect diversity and to provide as much potential for comparison as possible.'[110] As such this study recognises that 'a sample was born from the material impossibility of examining the whole population.'[111]

The participant cohort community, Egyptian-Australians, was firstly examined to garner an understanding of the variance in sample size that would be required to ensure an adequate range of opinions. The size of the community, the religious makeup and the location of community members throughout Australia was taken into account.

Purposive sampling was employed which aimed to represent the diversity within the Egyptian-Australian population. Victor Jupp defines the purposive approach as 'a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research.'[112]

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[110] Ibid., 68

[111] Giampietro Gobo, "Sampling, Representativeness and Generalizability," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Clive Seale and others (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif. : SAGE, 2004), 405-427. 408.

[112] Victor Jupp, *The Sage Dictionary of Social Research Methods*, 2006, London; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications. 244.

The known advantages and apropriatness of this sampling rationale are that it allows the researcher to identify particpants who are likely to provide data that is detailed and relevant to the research question.[113] Therefor the sampling technique is neither random nor does it seek to be representative of the larger population rather it is intended to provide a diversity in responses which can be examined in detail. Thus the approach did not seek to be strictly representative of the population as a whole. For example participants from Coptic and Muslim faith backgrounds were included in roughly equal proportion however this is not representative of the religious makeup of the broader Egyptian-Australian population, rather this is a result of opportunistic or snowball sampling. The criteria for selection in the study coupled with the capacity and willingness of participants to be involved drove the sampling agenda. Given each particpant was asked to comitt a significant portion of time (between 1-3hrs was allocated for each interview) this was considered a factor in particpant's willingness to participate.

Giampietro Gobo argues for this approach in qualitative research saying 'that the most important studies in qualitative research, which produced significant theories, were based on non-probability samples'.[114]

The sampling criteria involved recruiting participants based on the following: Participants be over 18 years old; reside in Australian and be of Egyptian background (a non-regimented approach to this was taken however all participants were either first or second generation Egyptian-Australian). The opportunistic component of this sampling agenda involved accessing further interviewees based on the recommendations of participants i.e. other participants with the same characteristics were recruited by word of mouth.

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[113] Ibid. 245.
[114] Gobo, "Sampling, Representativeness and Generalizability". 412.

A flexible and pragmatic approach to the sample size was taken in this study. This took into account timetable considerations and the research plan while ensuring an adequate range of opinions within the cohort to enable meaningful analysis. This approach was guided by the principle of variance which encourages researchers to take into account the diversity of the phenomenon under study. In this case it was studying identity through the prism of the Arab Spring within the Egyptian-Australian population. Initial sampling revealed variance to be low to moderate. Giampietro Gobo remarks of variance 'if it is high, you need many cases in order to include in your sample each category or class of your phenomenon. If its variance is low you need few cases.'[115] The sampling grid below gives the breakdown of participant diversity in this study:

[115] Ibid., 414.

Table 2. Sample Grid For The Study Of Egyptian-Australians

Age group	Men	Women
18-25	1	1
26-40	4	7
41-60	4	2
60+	6	0
Subtotal	15	10
TOTAL		**25**

Structure Of Interviews

Twenty-five semi-structured or open-ended interviews were conducted over a ten month period. The purpose of choosing semi-structured or open-ended interviews was to allow the respondents the freedom to provide narrative and self-guided information. The open-ended questions provided a safe space for narrative to begin. The interviews were conducted either in person or via Skype[116]. Each interview contained twelve questions asked in the same sequence for each participant.[117] Interviews ranged in duration from 15 minutes to up to one hour. On average around half an hour was required for each participant interview. Interviews were recorded for transcription and analysis.

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[116] Skype is a software application that provides webcam video conferencing over the Internet.
[117] Copy of questions asked during the interviews is located at Annex 1 of this thesis.

Representativeness And Generalisations

As previously stated in the sampling section above, this study did not aim to provide a sample that was representative of the broader Egyptian-Australian population. Rather the purpose of the sample was to provide diversity and variance which would enable meaningful analysis to be undertaken. This is in line with norms in qualitative research within the social sciences. To this point David Silverman argues that 'most qualitative researchers would claim that they do not aim to produce a science of laws (like physics) but simply to produce a set of cumulative generalisations based on the critical sifting of data'.[118]

Transcription Of Interviews

There was consideration paid to the importance of transcription in this study. Tim Rapley urges us to recognise that 'interview talk is (re)constructed in the process of transcription as a result of multiple decisions that reflect both very theoretical and pragmatic concerns.[119] The process of transcription can impact the analysis of interviews. As such interviews were transcribed personally by the researcher. This provided opportunity for the interviews to be re-examined multiple times and ensured consistency in transcription style. Also this approach allowed for greater description of interviews and ensured the nuanced expressions of participants were reflected in the analysis.

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[118] Silverman, Doing Qualitative Research : A Practical Handbook: 11.
[119] Rapley, *Interviews*, 16-35: 31.

Methods Of Analysis

Following the collection of media articles and one-to-one interviews the content of these sources were classified and coded to enable analysis to be undertaken. Importantly in this study 'coding' was understood in the context of Udo Kelle's definition, which says:

> The word 'coding' was also borrowed from the quantitative stream of social research, namely from the tradition of qualitative content analysis. But unlike in classical content analysis the purpose of qualitative coding is not to extract quantifiable information from unstructured textual data, but to develop (theoretical) concepts and categories from the data.[120]

Coding and Classification Of Media Content

Each newspaper article included in the study was coded according to the predominant or reoccurring themes within its content. Central themes emerged from the content analysis which form the basis of the analysis in Chapter Three. Content analysis applied the four functions of media framing model proposed by Robert Entman to examine these central themes. This framing model is explained further in Chapter Three. Presented below are the central themes which emerged from the coverage of the Arab Spring in mainstream and Arabic newspapers:

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[120] Udo Kelle, "Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis," in *Qualitative Research Practice*, eds. Clive Seale and others (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004), 443-460: 445.

Table 3. Coverage Themes Identified In Media Analysis

Theme	Percentage of Coverage
Christian Persecution	3.75
Comparisons to Alternate Revolutions/Models	5.2
Democracy	28
Economy and Stability in Egypt	4
Islamists Takeover	8.45
Israel	17.05
People's Demands and Objectives	4.60
Role of the Army	5.35
Stability in Region (for Israel)	5.45
Western Dominance of the Middle East	12.2
Youth Movement	5.95
Total	**100**

In addition to the key themes which are outlined in the table above, media coverage was also classified by newspaper title, newspaper language and by publication type. Publication type referred to the following:

1) News report – This category referred to news produced either by in-house writing or by reproducing media reports from overseas using news agencies such as Reuters, Agence France Presse, and Associated Press. News articles relating to events in Egypt, such as elections, were categorised as "News Egypt" and articles relating to news in Australia, such as protests held in Sydney, were categorised as "News Australia".

2) Opinion editorial – This referred to articles written by an in-house journalist or third-party which provided commentary, opinion or editorialised the events. This was content which expressly discussed further ramifications of the events. Articles relating to events inside Egypt were categorised as "OpEd Egypt" and articles relating to events and interests in Australia were categorised as "OpEd Australia".

In summary, both the Arabic and the mainstream Australian media predominantly published articles of news relating to events occurring in Egypt, categorised as "News

Egypt". The mainstream Australian newspapers provided more Opinion Editorial "OpEd" than the Arabic newspapers. The proportion of news reporting relating to Australia "News Australia" was fairly comparable between the Australian mainstream and the Arabic newspapers. A breakdown of this is represented below:

Chart 2. Coverage By Content Type And Publication

Coverage by Type and Media
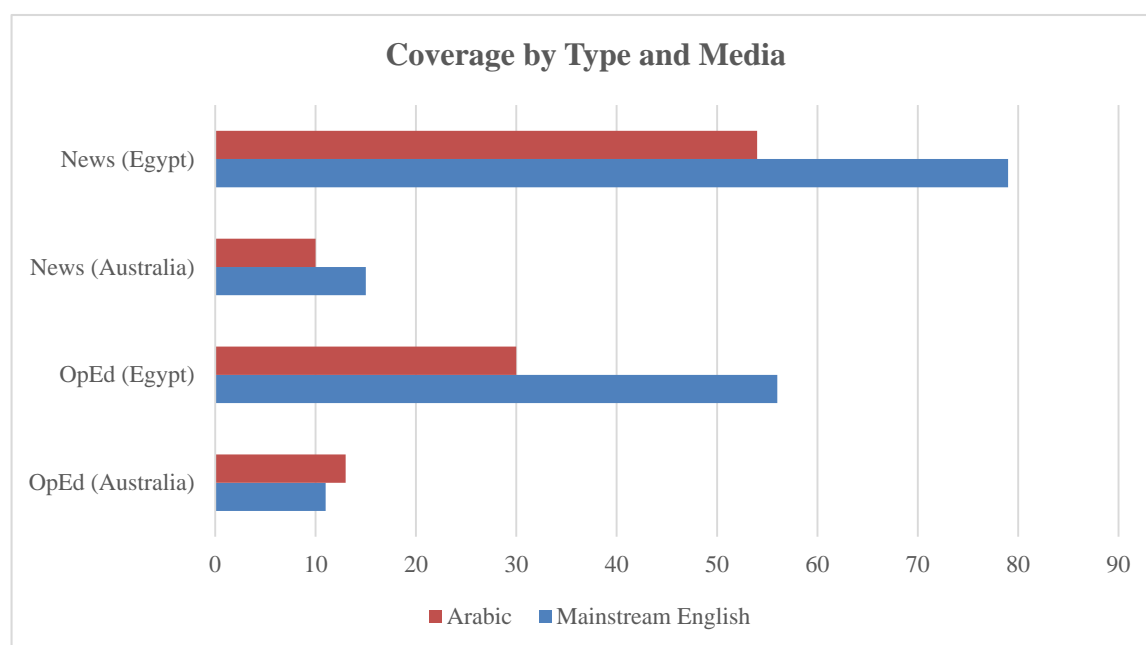
Classification And Coding of Interviews

Participants who were interviewed during the one-to-one interview process were classified using demographic information such as gender, age and occupation. Participants were also classified based on their stated religion, occupation and citizenship as well as the length of time they had lived in Australia. The depth of demographic information gathered from participants provided an important source of comparison based on aspects of diversity amongst Egyptian-Australians. The table located at Appendix 1 documents all participants of this study.

The thematic content analysis employed both deductive and latent approaches. Familiarisation with the interview data had occurred at the conducting and transcribing stage prior to formal analysis. Similarly the media content analysis and theoretical framework for understanding Arab-Australian identity had been undertaken prior to the formal analysis of interview data. As such coding and theme development were largely influenced by existing concepts or ideas and there were assumptions relating to the research question which underpinned the analysis of interviews.[121]

A complex coding framework emerged from iterative interrogation of the one-to-one interviews. Some central coding themes were shared with the media content analysis, which became an important point of analysis, while some coding themes emerged which were exclusive only to the interviews. Coding by central theme, across codes and by demographic features enabled analysis of similarities and differences between participants. Reoccurring themes which were discovered through the coding process provided the basis for the critical analysis undertaken in this study.

Coding levels emerged from the data. The top level coding grouped concepts relating to the research question based on three themes; firstly, existing ideas expressed by participants about how Arabs are classified and categorised in Australia; secondly, participant ideas of Australia's political system and discourse relating to the conceptualisation of Arabs in Australia; and lastly, ideas about the media systems and discourse relating to Arabs in Australia. The lower level themes were then identified from broader patterns that emerged from the data which could be informatively categorised. The

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[121] The University of Auckland, *About thematic analysis,* 2016, accessed https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/our-research/research-groups/thematic-analysis/about-thematic-analysis.html.

viability of each theme was evaluated based on the number of times it featured in the data and the extent to which the information was compelling to the research question. To this extent Nvivo (data managing software further explained below) was harnessed to allow broader analysis beyond tallying the frequency of themes within the data. Rather, through the use of Nvivo themes could be overlapped and coded multiple times to discover linkages and split or combined to develop an informative coding framework. This coding framework became the basis for analysis contained in Chapters Four through to Seven.

Below is a graphic representation of the overarching coding schema which emerged from the interviews. This is representative only of the top-tier of the coding framework, the lower tiered coding schema was made up of numerous sub-themes.

Figure 1. Top-tier Coding Schema For One-To-One Interviews.
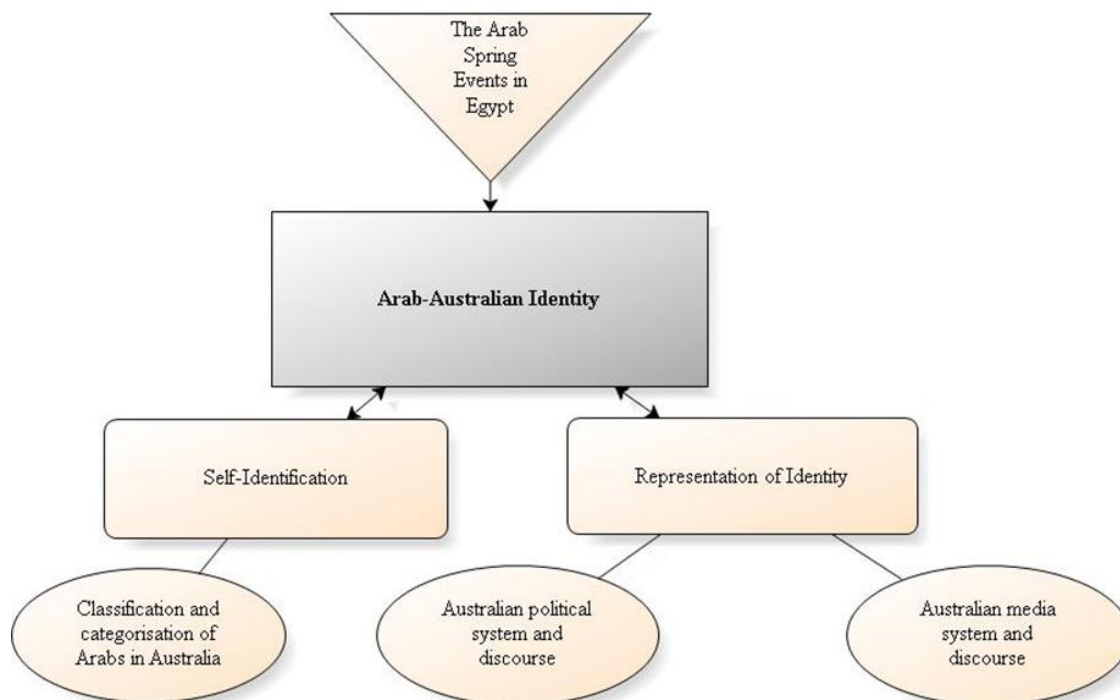
Use Of Nvivo Computer Software To Support Analysis

Nvivo software was selected to support the qualitative analysis undertaken in this study. Nvivo presented as a feasible way to deal with the large volume of media content and transcribed interviews. Employing computer software was a means of maintaining the efficiency and rigor of this study.[122] Nvivo was utilised to store and manage data across both the media content analysis and the interviews. It assisted in managing ideas and formulating conceptual knowledge that emerged from the data itself. The software was used to support the coding framework for the study and to apply this coding framework to the data. Nvivo ensured data could be readily queried, coded and retrieved as the software allows both simple and complex information to be quickly retrieved from the media content and interview datasets. Coding themes which emerged from the data sets and structuring those into categories in a hierarchical coding system was greatly streamlined by the use of Nvivo.[123]

The use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis is a well-established qualitative method in the social sciences.[124] However some opposition exists to its widespread use. Doubts have been expressed by those who have an aversion to technological solutions and those concerned about the possible implications for how research is done.[125] Kelle argues the potential methodological merits and dangers of computer use in qualitative research are 'like many other controversies in the field of social research methodology, the debate is overburdened with rather abstract concepts and ideas.'[126] It is not within the scope of this thesis to engage the larger debate except to say that Nvivo and other computer software

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[122] Patricia Bazeley, *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo,* (Los Angeles; London: Sage, 2007): 3.
[123] Ibid., 4.
[124] Ibid., 443.
[125] Ibid., 7.
[126] Kelle, *Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis*, 443-460: 443.

programs represent a methodological advance in the way researchers approach coding and analysis.[127]

Chapter Outline Of Thesis

This thesis is structured around existing literature of Arab-Australian identity and two areas of new research into how members of the Egyptian-Australian community relate to the identity construct and the role played by the media in the representation of Arab-Australian identity.

Chapter One contains the theoretical premise for how identity is considered in this thesis. A framework for conceptualising identity and ethnicity is established in this early work. The chapter informs the broader thesis by establishing the convergence of two critical concepts, identity and power. In doing so this work provides justification for how identity labels like Arab-Australian come about. Accounting for the dominance of cultural identity in the modern nation and how governments recognise the necessity of a unified national identity locates Arab-Australian identity, amidst broader power relations.

Chapter Two establishes the existence of a binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Arab-Australian Other by considering the historical factors that account for the construction of Arab-Australian identity. Latent Orientalism[128] is explored as a central concept to understanding depictions of Arabs in Australia. Disruptions to social relations caused by globalisation and neoliberalism emphasise the importance of a coherent national identity to the modern nation. The neoliberal paradox explains how governments

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[127] Bazeley, *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*: 7.
[128] Edward W. Said, "Latent and Manifest Orientalism," in *Race and Racialization: Essential Readings*, eds. Tania Das Gupta and others, First ed. (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2007), 45-56: 45.

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have promoted economic openness to the global marketplace, while at the same time have quelled the discomfort this openness brings by encouraging a sense of cultural exclusivity and clearly defined cultural boundaries. Arab-Australian identity is a constructed identity which emerges from this context as the Other in relation to core or 'mainstream Australian' culture.

Chapter Three begins to evidence the Othering of Arab-Australians with a media content analysis. This analysis supports the existence of a binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other in the presentation of events in the Middle East. Two Arabic and three mainstream English newspapers' coverage of the Arab Spring in Egypt illustrate how news events relating to the Arab world are reported in line with long-held Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people.[129] The content analysis provides examples of how Arab-Australians are represented in Australian mainstream media as the Other and supports the point that Othering has largely digressed from non-white racism to Islamophobia in recent times. This chapter demonstrates how often the media does not reflect the diversity of broader society but rather 'reflects the perspectives and interest of established power'.[130]

Chapter Four provides further empirical evidence of the current problematic state of Arab-Australian identity. Interviews conducted over a ten month period with Egyptian-Australians demonstrate the negative representation of Arab-Australians. Egyptian-

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[129] See seminal works by Edward W. Said, *Orientalism / Edward W. Said* (London: Penguin, 1995) , Edward Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered," *Cultural Critique*, no. 1 (Autumn, 1985), 89-107. And Edward Said, "Orientalism Once More," *Development and Change* 35, no. 5 (2004), 869-879.
[130] Noam Chomsky, "Democracy and the Media: Section Three from Necessary Illusions: Chapter One," Genius, last modified 2014, accessed December, 2014, http://genius.com/Noam-chomsky-democracy-and-the-media-section-three-annotated.

Australians illustrate through their personal views, patterns of Othering in media and political discourse.

Chapter Five highlights the gap or disparity between how Arab-Australians are represented in media, political and popular discourse and how Arab-Australians represent themselves. Through new knowledge about the self-identification of members of the Arab-Australian community, critical insights emerge about the contested nature of Arab-Australian identity. This chapter finds that Egyptian-Australians hold both strong opinions of and an aversion to the identity construct Arab-Australian. The negative social position attributed to Arab-Australian identity and the effects of Othering are demonstrated in the responses of Egyptian-Australians. Through these findings it is revealed how one group within the Arabic speaking community is resisting the homogenisation of Arabs which is forced upon them by mainstream representations of Arab-Australian identity. This chapter also demonstrates that in reinforcing existing negative stereotypes of Arab-Australians, Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people can become internalised, even by those Orientalism subjectifies.

Chapter Six introduces the concept of 'Egyptian exceptionalism' as a means of Egyptian-Australians distancing themselves from the Arab-Australian identity construct. Egyptian-Australian participants in this study demonstrate a marked aversion to the Arab-Australian identity construct. 'Egyptian exceptionalism' is argued to be a response to the negative social position attributed to the Arab-Australian identity construct, specifically its' location as Other. What is also further demonstrated is Egyptian-Australians engagement with existing pejorative stereotypes of Arab-Australians. Egyptian-Australians in this study largely believe that the term Arab-Australian relates primarily to the larger, more prominent Lebanese community. In effect by invoking existing negative stereotypes

Egyptian-Australians are contesting mainstream beliefs about *who* Arab-Australians are while at the same time reinforcing negative representation of the group.

Chapter Seven provides further evidence of Egyptian-Australians contesting mainstream notions of Arabs by focusing on how the Australian context of media and public discourse has influenced attitudes to the Arab Spring. Egyptian-Australians are shaped by their exposure to and experience with the Australian political system. Egyptian-Australians are both frustrated at the outcomes of the Egyptian uprisings and hold strong positive attitudes towards the Australian democratic system. The findings of this chapter undermine questions about the Arab world's capacity and readiness for democracy evidenced in the Orientalist discourse of the Arab Spring.[131]

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[131] As illustrated in the media content analysis in Chapter Three.

Chapter 1 – Grounding Identity In Constructivism And Power

1.1 Introduction

This chapter establishes the centrality of identity to this study. A conceptualisation of how identities emerge is required prior to explaining Arab-Australian identity and representation. In moving beyond notions of identity that consider it as innate, organic or biological reveals identity as both a construction and a potential resource for power. This is basis upon which this thesis considers Arab-Australian identity.

Identities are a complex function of human socialisation. The manner in which identities are formed and what they represent are particular matters of contestation. This is despite the rising prominence of identity studies in the social sciences, a topic which has been well-documented.[132] This chapter engages firstly with the contestation in the terminology and definition of identity and the foremost disciplinary debates. This is important for justifying the approach taken to identity in this study. Secondly, this chapter informs the broader thesis by establishing the convergence of two critical concepts, identity and power. In doing so provides justification for how identity labels like Arab-Australian come about. Ideas grounded in critical theory explain how access to social resources and power in the process of national identity construction provide the basis for understanding identity labels.

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[132] Identity has prized open the realist power-interest-anarchy trichotomy which typified the study of politics for so long and has accompanied the increased recognition of alternative sources of power in the international system. The importance of identity coincides with a newfound general appreciation for psychological influences in political analysis. See Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, 1st ed. (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishing, 1996).

Taking a step back, this chapter reflects on the origins and necessity of a cohesive national identity in Australia. By considering the role of nationalism in modernity and post-modernity this chapter lays the foundation for understanding how concepts of 'Mainstream Australia' have flourished in the national narrative. Both by homogenising Australian culture and by fostering an aversion for diversity, the process of constructing a national identity built upon 'Mainstream Australia' has to a large extent defined the way Arab-Australians and other minority identities experience Australia.

1.2 Conceptualising Identity And Ethnicity

Despite the many works about identity the social sciences remain without a standardised conceptualisation of identity that is widely effective across the disciplines involved.[133] In defining the meaning of identity Jonathan Friedman and Scott Lash point to 'schemes of classification and categorisation [that] are essential to social interaction and [that] provide the basis for establishing one's sense of personal and group identity'.[134] Henry Brady and Cynthia Kaplan define identity as an 'intersubjectively agreed-upon categorisation of individuals that is widely and publicly understood to have meaning within a society.'[135]

Approaches to identity and its formation can be best described as dynamic insofar as identity is endowed with the status of a variable in wider studies and thus is open to a plethora of features and defining attributes. Arguably the concept is 'fit for purpose' in that it can be adapted based on which discipline is exploring it and based on the particular requirements of any given study. However at the theoretical level there are concerns about

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[133] Ibid., 31.

[134] Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, *Modernity and Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992): 4.

[135] Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott, *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 33.

the apparent 'conceptual fuzziness'[136] and ambiguity of identity and the limitations this places upon its usefulness.

Ethnicity as a sub-topic to identity studies constitutes a substantial share of the literature and typically focuses on race-derived conflict and explaining ethnic violence in often deeply divided societies. Civil wars, riots and other forms of violence (most recently terrorism) along ethnic and/or lines of racial or religious difference have engrossed identity literature. Debate about how identity is best explained has been bubbling away for some time and this is to the betterment of a deeper conceptual understanding of ethnicity.

1.2.1   The Foremost Theoretical Debates

Academic debate regarding the concept of identity has occurred on a continuum with Primordialism/Essentialism at one end and Constructivism at the other.[137] Primordialism had a monopolistic hold over the conceptualisation of identity for most of its early study until challenged by constructivist notions in the late 1980s.[138] Primordialism in identity studies was first discussed in the 1950s with Edward Shils[139] credited for forwarding the first primordialist thesis.[140] Prominent subsequent primordialists include Clifford Geertz and Anthony D. Smith; the latter treating modern forms of ethnicity as 'nothing but a resurgence of more primordial identifications associated with 'ethnies''.[141] A revival of primordial thinking in the 1980's included the prominent sociobiological approach of

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[136] Charlotte Epstein, "Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics", *European Journal of International Relations,* **17:** 2 (2011): 328. Also see work by Abdelal et al in Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott, *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[137] Aletta Norval, *The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity*, (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2012): 306.
[138] See prominent foundational constructivist works by Friedrich Kratochwil (1996), Nicholas Onuf (1989), John Ruggie (1998) and Alexander Wendt (1992).
[139] Edward Shils, "Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties: Some Particular Observations on the Relationships of Sociological Research and Theory", *The British Journal of Sociology,* **8,** (1957)**:** 2.
[140] Norval, *The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity*: 306.
[141] Ibid., 307.

Pierre van den Berghe which returned to biological essentialism to assert that ethnicity always has a genetic basis. [142] To explain why primordial thinking pervaded the social science literature for so long James Fearon and David Laitin coined the term *everyday primordialism* and asserted the following:

> The answer, implicit in much constructivist work, is that people often believe, mistakenly, that certain social categories are natural, inevitable, and unchanging facts about the social world. They believe that particular social categories are fixed by human nature rather than by social convention and practice. Beliefs in the naturalness of a social category might be rooted in beliefs about alleged implications of biology (for example, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in some formulations) or about theology and morality.[143]

It is against this backdrop of primordial thinking about identity that labels such as Arab-Australian flourish largely unquestioned in popular discourse. In opposition this study adopts a constructivist approach to the process of identity categorisation. While it is outside of the scope of this chapter to provide a full précis of the two approaches to identity (primordialism and constructivism), it is necessary to provide analysis justifying the chosen approach to conceptualising identity in this study.

1.2.2   Arguing For A Constructivist Approach In This Study

Primordialism is asserted by Aletta Norval to be a flawed logic which naturalises ethnic groups.[144] Primordialists receive greatest criticism due to the static nature of their

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[142] See Pierre Van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967).
[143] James Fearon and David Laitin, "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity", *International Organization,* **54:** 04, (2000): 848.
[144] Norval, *The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity*: 307.

conceptualisation of identity and an apparent inability to account for change and diversity. Constructivism on the other hand is a theoretical approach which recognises ethnicity as resource for different interest groups.[145] One of the primary streams within constructivism is an approach to identity that hinges on neo-Marxist treatment of ethnicity as an instrument grounded in social class. This approach accounts for the mobilisation of people around interests and at its core views ethnic categories as malleable and open to manipulation.[146]

From a constructivist perspective, identities are subjected to ongoing reconfiguration and reordering. Geoffrey Stokes remarks that 'wherever identity is given prominence there exists a continually unfolding political project based upon unrealised ideals and aspirations.'[147] It is the idea that identity is an *ongoing political project* which speaks to its constructivist nature and which sets the basis for exploring the power dynamics contained within. A constructivist approach which locates Arab-Australian identity within the broader context of Australia's hegemonic identity appeals to this study.

The historical context of identity gives it validity but also emphasises the natural progression of identity through space and time, not as a fixed concept but as a malleable and responsive mechanism. Stuart Hall supports this point and urges us to consider the historical fluidity of identity when stating:

> They [identities] undergo transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous "play" of history or culture, and

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[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Geoffery Stokes. *The Politics of Identity in Australia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 10.

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power. They are made within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning.[148]

Leone Huddy also argues for a flexible conceptualisation of identities that recognises 'identity is fluid, contingent, and socially constructed'.[149] Huddy describes the tendency amongst identity researchers to impose a 'minimal intergroup situation'[150] which 'assigns members to groups and simply assumes the uniform development of group identity'.[151]

To adequately account for power in the process of identity construction, external factors outside of the individual become 'enormously influential'.[152] Richard Jenkins asserts that ethnic identity should be understood within the context of wider processes of social categorisation – which are set amidst wider power subtleties.[153] Acknowledging the role of external categorisation and collective identity opens the door to discussing the 'importance of power and authority relations (domination)'[154] and furthermore the manipulation of the identity construction process itself. Identity therefore is an ongoing process of construction[155] and there exists no 'primordial period table of social identities'.[156]

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[148] In Carmen Luke and Allan Luke, "Theorizing Interracial Families and Hybrid Identity: An Australian Perspective," *Educational Theory,* 49, no. 2 (1999), 223-249: 231.
[149] Leonie Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory," *Political Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2001), 127-156: 127.
[150] Ibid.,131.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Richard Jenkins, "Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization and Power," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17, no. 2 (1994), 197-223: 197.
[153] Jenkins, "Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization and Power":197.
[154] Ibid.
[155] It must also be acknowledged that identity construction is a more convoluted process in the information technology age because concepts of time and space have been significantly altered as suggested by Chris Ogden who says, 'technological innovations, from satellite-based telecommunications to the internet, have impacted on how identity is imagined and regulated, and how populations regard and conduct themselves transnationally, allowing for the creation of interpersonal networks across physical boundaries'. Chris Ogden, "Diaspora Meets IR's Constructivism: An Appraisal," *Politics,* 28, no. 1 (2008), 1-10: 3.
[156] Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott, *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*: 33.

1.2.3   The Ontological Basis For Considering Ethnic Identities In This Study

The inadequacy of Marxism in analysing social division of a non-class nature has been dealt with by the likes of Floya Anthias,[157] Madeline Davis,[158] John Gabriel and Gideon Ben-Tovim[159]. Despite this criticism much of contemporary thinking regarding identity and ethnicity remains underpinned by classical Marxist ideas. Central themes like the distribution and struggle for power between social classes and control over the cultural means of production remain relevant to many of today's modern global conflicts and issues.[160]

One shortcoming relevant to this study in particular is the alleged foundational flaw that Marxism interchanges ethnic groupings for some form of class division.[161] Michael Hechter agrees there is a tendency for class theorists to treat ethnicity as some form of disguised class consciousness.[162] Doing so forces a link between class and ethnicity that may or may not exist. For instance the probability that all members of an ethnic group could occupy the same class standing, in practical terms, is low.[163] Floya Anthias argues this deficiency is a form of 'reductionism'[164] in what can be described as a lack of attention given to ethnic categories in Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches.

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[157] Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis. "Contextualizing Feminism: Gender, Ethnic and Class Divisions", (1983), *Feminist Review,* 15.

[158] Madeline Davis, "The Marxism of the British New Left", *Journal of Political Ideologies,* **11,** (2006)**:** 3.

[159] John Gabriel and Gideon Ben-Tovim, "Marxism and the concept of racism", *Economy and Society,* **7,** (1978)**:** 2.

[160] See Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

[161] Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "Contextualizing Feminism": 63.

[162] Michael Hechter, Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labor, *American Journal of Sociology,* (1978), **84:**2: 295.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Floya Anthias, "The Concept of `Social Division' and Theorising Social Stratification: Looking at Ethnicity and Class" , *Sociology,***35:** 4(2001): 848.

Despite this criticism there remains a usefulness in exploring identity constructs alongside themes about class. Both class definitions and ethnic categorisations share or at the very least are grounded in similar ideas, namely a struggle for access to cultural resources and social power relations.

Ethnicity and ethnic identity constructs may be best accounted for in the 'struggle, negotiation and [the] use of ethnic resources for the countering of disadvantages or perpetuation of advantages'.[165] When identity is constructed outside the individual, that is amidst the broader social context, then it is the conditions of the group in question, be it Arabs, Chinese, Aboriginal etc., that shape or define the identity label itself. Therefore class, along with the social representation of groups, may explain identity more adequately than has been previously acknowledged.

To further labour this point class divisions may inform ethnic divisions and vice-versa. So while non-class categories such as ethnicity and gender are not explicitly conceptualised by classical Marxist theory these divisions are underpinned by the struggle for cultural capital which is so fundamental to Marxist discourse. The extent to which class and ethnicity are perceived to be connected depends largely on whether one views class in pure terms of economic resource allocation or takes the wider view that class is embedded in the whole of culture.[166]

The social divisions of ethnicity can serve to reinforce the material inequality or hierarchical standing of individuals, similar to the way class functions.[167] For example, representation of one ethnic group may be disproportionately high in a certain form of

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[165] Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "Contextualizing Feminism": 66.
[166] Anthias, "The Concept of `Social Division' and Theorising Social Stratification": 850.
[167] Ibid.,852.

lower-paid work, while this has obvious class implications this phenomena cannot be depicted as a class process in and of itself.[168] Rather it is better explained by considering the barriers and/or struggle over access to resources and social power relations which define social division. In some extreme cases, a person's occupation may be stereotyped purely based on information about their ethnicity[169] further reinforcing hierarchical difference. Anthias describes this as the 'structuration of places or positions within the social order of things'.[170] Michael Hechter further describes this as a niche effect in the way labour is divided, arguing that:

> The two defining parameters of the configuration of a cultural division of labour are its degrees of hierarchy and of segmentation. A cultural division of labour is hierarchical to the extent that the groups within it (ethnic groups in this case) are differentially stratified. A cultural division of labour is segmental to the extent that the ethnic groups within it are occupationally specialised to a high degree.[171]

This point is evidenced in the stereotypes of welfare dependency and vocational occupations of some segments of the Arab community. These stereotypes feature in the responses of Egyptian-Australia participants and form part of the mechanism for Egyptian exceptionalism detailed in Chapters Five and Six.

Manuel Castells explains how the meaning or symbolic content of identities are largely determined by who constructs the identity and for what purpose.[172] Castells purports an

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[168] Ibid.,851.
[169] Hechter, "Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labor": 300.
[170] Anthias "The Concept of `Social Division' and Theorising Social Stratification": 845.
[171] Hechter, "Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labor": 312.
[172] Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture- Volume 2*, 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley & Sons, 2011): 7.

inextricable link between external influences and identity formation.[173] This supports the

point that ethnic identity labels are best conceptualised as existing as part of a wider social

milieu, because ethnic categories do not develop in a vacuum but rather are influenced by

factors external to the individual. Ethnic identity is particular to its surroundings and can

be regarded as 'merely a marker for deeper, more significant social divisions'.[174] In

contrast to other forms of social divisions such as gender, ethnic categories cannot be

grounded in some separate sphere of relations and cannot be systematically ascribed.[175]

The historical trajectory of ethnicity is one of 'migration, conquest and colonialisation'

which has 'developed a vast heterogeneous body of historical cases'[176] and conceptual

idiosyncrasies. Therefore identity categories such as Arab-Australian are constructed

amidst the broader social context that is always 'marked by power relationships'.[177]

Ethnicity, race and other identity politics in Australia must be studied in the context of

Australia's particular history and nation-building agenda.[178]

1.3 Identity And Power In The National Identity Construction Process

National governments usually have the first claim on the right to form national

identities.[179] As such identity and the identity construction process can be a political tool

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[173] The three categories of origins for identity formation proposed by Castells are i) *Legitimising identity:* which is identity 'introduced by the dominant institutions of society to extend and rationalise their domination vis a vis social actors'; ii) *Resistance identity:* which is 'generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival'; iii) *Project identity:* which is 'when social actors, on the basis of whichever cultural materials are available to them, build a new identity that redefines their position in society and by so doing, seek the transformation of overall social structure' in Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Vol 2*, 1st ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1997).
[174] Norval, *The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity*: 307.
[175] Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "Contextualizing Feminism": 66.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid., 7.
[178] This forms a foundational component of the following chapter.
[179] James Jupp in Geoffrey Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 132.

for governments in the context of nation building. James Jupp argues that 'in seeking votes or public support for their policies, political leaders have commonly made reference to national identity, as it was thought to be or as it could become.'[180] John Kane supports this when saying that 'assertions of national identity aim to anchor cultures or nations in time, orienting them towards a future and linking them to a real or imagined past.'[181] This is an important point for explaining the emergence of identity categories in Australia, such as 'mainstream Australia' and Arab-Australian.

The invention of the modern nation marks the beginnings of Benedict Anderson's well-known concept of 'imagined communities'.[182] In the context of growing nationalism Anderson describes how elites create, mould, and manipulate a strong national identity for the purpose of social cohesiveness. This point helps to understand and account for the existence of so called 'mainstream Australia'. Similarly it has implications for understanding the development of Arab-Australian identity in response.

It is important to consider the relationship between identity and power and in particular identity construction in the context of nation-building endeavours. For governments, identity represents a means of fortifying political stability and enhancing social cohesion. The modern nation is arguably built upon promoting the existence of a collective history and the promise of a collective future. Therefore the construction of a dominant culture is vital to the social cohesiveness and the function of the modern nation.[183] Dan Rabinowitz explains this point when stating; 'the emergence of state hegemonies as politically

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[180] Ibid.
[181] John Kane in Geoffrey Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 117.
[182] Anderson, *Imagined Communities:* xi.
[183] This point has important consequences for exploring the treatment of the Other in the national identity construction process.

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motivated brokers of culture suggests a keen realisation on their part of the potential that

lies in the construction and manipulation of notions of culture for strengthening solidarity

and mobilising support.'[184]

If the nation is an entirely modern phenomenon then the process of national identity

building should be briefly explored for its place in modernity. Treating the nation as an

entirely modern phenomena is of course not novel; it is the well-trodden path of prominent

and less-prominent constructivist alike.[185] Nonetheless it is an important point when

considering the connection of power to identity and for understanding both identity

constructs - 'mainstream Australia' and Arab-Australian.

John Tomlinson describes the importance of identity as a 'considerable dimension of

institutionalised social life in modernity'.[186] The conceptual dominance of national identity

is evidenced by the fact practically the entire global population lay claim to one form of it

or another.[187] Tomlinson elaborates that 'since the eighteenth century, national identity has

been the most spectacularly successful modern mode of orchestrating belonging.'[188]

Anthony Giddens expresses the view that nationalist elements of the modern nation

constitute the 'moral component of sovereignty'.[189] Giddens expresses the relationship of

power to identity in terms of the way national identity 'provide[s] a core of political

discourse that significantly shapes both the rhetoric of national solidarity and of

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[184] Dan Rabinowitz, "Oriental Othering and National Identity: A review of Early Israeli Anthropological Studies of Palestinians", Identities*: Global Studies in Culture and Power,* **9:** 3,(2002):   306.
[185] See Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, and Anthony Giddens, "Class, Sovereignty and Citizenship," in *The Nation-State and Violence. Vol 2 of A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, ed. Anthony Giddens, 1st ed. (Berkeley, USA: University of California Press, 1987), 198-221.
[186] John Tomlinson, "Globalization and Cultural Identity," in *Global Transformations: Anthropology and the Modern World*, ed. Michel-Rolph Trouillot (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 269-277: 271.
[187] Ibid., 274.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Giddens, *Class, Sovereignty and Citizenship*: 221.

oppression.'[190] To further explain this manifestation of power Eric Hobsbawn speaks of state-empowered 'imagined traditions'.[191] Hobsbawn argues there are three overlapping types of 'imagined traditions' that support the function and indeed existence of the modern nation, these are:

> A) those establishing or symbolising social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimising institutions, status or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialisation, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviour'.[192]

Tomlinson describes how national identities achieve dominance by being the 'product of deliberate cultural construction and maintenance via both the regulatory and the socialising institutions of the state: in particular, the law, the education system and the media.'[193] By understanding that national identities serve a purpose is key to explaining how 'mainstream Australia' has emerged as the dominant national identity.

1.3.1   The Necessity Of Identity For Maintaining The Integrity Of The Nation

National identity functions in maintaining 'the integrity of the nation and its borders'.[194] The power of national identity rests upon peoples' belief in the capacity of the nation to protect their interests in the larger political and social setting, while for governments

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[190] Ibid.
[191] Eric Hobsbawn, "Introduction," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, 1st ed. (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14: 9.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Tomlinson, "Globalization and Cultural Identity": 271.
[194] Karina Korostelina, *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power: Self-Imagination in a Young Ukrainian Nation* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013): 18

national identity reflects the necessity for group solidarity.[195] Arguably modernity has bestowed upon governments the imperative to defend social conformity and cohesion. Thus governments seek to create the semblance of cultural sameness amongst people in order to legitimate their power.

Anthony Giddens speaks of the necessity for group solidarity in terms of administrative and territorially ordered unity whereby the processes of governance must move beyond the administrative 'because the very coordination of activities presumes elements of cultural homogeneity'.[196] By this logic the function of government is contingent upon maintaining semblances of limited difference and minimal conflict between social groups. This may be best achieved by emphasising solidarity through homogenisation and the projection of a dominant culture.

Cohesion within society is often emphasised in the face of perceived social fragmentation. Ariadne Vromen describes the use of 'community' to imbue shared proximity, remarking that 'politicians use the term when aspiring to closer social bonds, or harking back to the 'good old days' of how the world ought to be.'[197] A more sinister dimension also exists in which governments may use the process of nation-building to emphasise difference and in doing so emphasise Otherness.

The emphasis upon cultural homogeneity and/or difference is relevant to understanding the emergence of 'mainstream Australia' as a core or dominant culture. Likewise the relationship of core culture to the Other is also explained to a large extent by considering

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[195] Ibid.
[196] Giddens, *Class, Sovereignty and Citizenship*: 219.
[197] Ariadne Vromen. "Three political myths about young people", *Australian Review of Public Affairs*, (Sydney: Australia, 2004) accessed http://www.australianreview.net/digest/2004/03/vromen.html.

the necessity for social cohesion in the modern nation. These two concepts, specific to the Australian context, are elaborated upon further in Chapter Two of this thesis.

In concluding the link between the modern nation and its relationship with power, Giddens described the nation as the most 'preeminent bordered power-container in the modern era'.[198] To this end national identity is perhaps best explained as a response to the necessities of modern governance, which is to maintain the integrity of the nation and its borders.

1.3.2   Modernity And Nationalism

In response to modernity, namely the emergence of a mobile, industrialised society and the rise of capitalism; governments have looked to construct national identities as a mechanism for enhancing social cohesion and as a legitimisation of power. Anthony Smith describes this response as 'an overriding need to mask the radicalism of social change with a veil of tradition and continuity with an assumed past, usually a national one.'[199] There exists a long lineage of conscious government intervention in the creation of national identity in the modern era and governments have demonstrated an overt willingness to 'enter into the struggle over collective identity formation'.[200] Notable examples are the efforts in the nineteenth century by European empires such as the Hapsburg, Russian and Ottoman to 'categorise and hence better control the heterogeneous populations'.[201] Indeed nationalist governments in Europe have a history of fuelling social division along ethnic lines as a way of justifying conquest and dominance. In '*Caste, Class and Race*' Oliver Cromwell

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[198] Giddens, "Class, Sovereignty and Citizenship": 120.
[199] Anthony Smith, "The Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed?", *Millennium - Journal of International Studies,***20:** 3 (1991): 356.
[200] David Kertzer and Dominique Arel, eds., *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity and Language in National Censuses*, 1st ed. (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2002): ix.
[201] Ibid.

Cox makes the case that modernity has forged a resilient link between ethnic (racial) division and/or exploitation and capitalism. To elaborate this point further Cox asserts:

> Racial antagonism attained full maturity during the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the great nationalist powers of Europe began to justify their economic designs upon weaker European peoples with subtle theories of racial superiority and masterhood.[202]

This point supports the need for the modern nation to assert cultural dominance usually based on reference to the past. Ernest Gellner proposes that governments use historical reference as one mechanism in national identity building in the modern setting. Gellner explains how 'elites or people in general, have to return to tradition and ancestry to legitimate the new types of industrial-capitalist society and control the changes it must undergo.'[203] Thus cultural homogenisation can occur under the guise of national identity building. Anthony Giddens proposes the economic vitality of the modern nation has become dependent upon mechanisms that include the 'homogenisation of culture, mass literacy and a fairly monolithic education system'.[204] The connection between modernity, capitalism and identity is therefore forged by considering that national identity supports the function of the modern nation by maintaining well-organised, consistent and predictable labour.

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[202] Oliver Cromwell Cox, *Caste, Class, and Race: a study in social dynamics*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1959): 330.

[203] Anthony Smith, "Memory and modernity: reflections on Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism", *Nations and Nationalism,* **2:** 3(1996): 376.

[204] Giddens, "Class, Sovereignty and Citizenship": 214.

1.3.3   Globalisation And Its Impact On Nationalism And Identity

The necessity for governments' to maintain a national identity in the modern nation leads to discussion of the extent to which globalisation is reshaping our understanding of identity. Much has been made of the crisis of the nation-state, namely the death of territorial borders and the imposition of (Western) cultural homogeneity.[205] However the resilience of national identity in the era of globalisation is asserted by Manuel Castells who says 'the age of globalisation is also the age of nationalist resurgence, expressed both in the challenge to established nation-states and in the widespread (re)construction of identity on the basis of nationality, always affirmed against the alien.'[206]

The prevalence of national identities based on historical markers arguably has not diminished in the age of increased global interaction. For example in the United States national identity constructed around notions of Providentialism remains the cornerstone of nationalism.[207] Rather Castells affirms the view that national identity remains steadfast in the face of globalisation, in particular 'resistance identities usually constructed by using the materials inherited from history (god, nation, ethnicity, locality) have intensified their significance in the social conflicts and social organisations of our world.'[208] This is notwithstanding the fact that increased communication, access to almost limitless information and the greater movement of people has changed the form of social relations.

One way to account for the role of globalisation in reshaping our understanding of identity is to consider how the 'control of knowledge now occupies the role formally occupied by

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[205] See John Dunn, "Introduction: Crisis of the Nation State?" *Political Studies* 42 (1994), 3-15.
[206] Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*: 27.
[207] See the work of Nicholas Guyatt, *Providence and the Invention of the United States, 1607–1876* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[208] Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*: 8.

the control of the means of production.'[209] Earlier the relationship between class and

ethnicity was discussed, bringing globalisation into the fold builds upon this

conceptualisation. In particular the cultural categories of today, which both 'mainstream

Australian' and Arab-Australian may be counted, could be considered the contemporary

versions of the social classes of the past.

Nationalism's resolute importance in the face the 'deterritorialising force'[210]of

globalisation is accounted for by separating nationalism from the concept of the nation-

state. Rather Castells expresses the view that 'nations are, historically and analytically,

entities independent from the state.'[211] In a somewhat stronger assertion Tomlinson says

'globalisation actually proliferates rather than destroys identities.'[212] Modernity heralded

identity but it is globalisation that is aiding in distributing this modernity. To support this

point further Tomlinson argues; 'globalisation distributes the institutional features of

modernity across all cultures, globalisation produces 'identity' where none existed – where

before there were perhaps more particular, more inchoate, less socially policed

belongings.'[213]

One way nations have responded and in many ways resisted the pressures of globalisation

is through what Michael Billig describes as 'banal nationalism'.[214] This structured

opposition to globalisation is the everyday minute reinforcement and the continuous

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[209] John Rex, "Ethnic identity and the nation state: The political sociology of multi-cultural societies", *Social Identities,***1:**1 (1995): 22.
[210] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, eds. David Held and Anthony McGrew (London, UK: Sage Publications, 1995), 269-277: 270.
[211] Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Vol 2*: 30.
[212] Tomlinson, "Globalization and Cultural Identity": 271.
[213] Ibid., 273.
[214] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

routinised 'flagging' of national belonging. [215] This occurs across institutional platforms and in media discourse in particular. [216]

Thus the importance of identity has not been diminished by gloablisation, to the contrary, because 'identity is not in fact merely some fragile communal-psychic attachment, but a considerable dimension of institutionalised social life in modernity.'[217]

1.3.4 The Centrality Of Culture To National Identity Construction And Ethnic Boundaries

To emphasise the importance of culture in explaining identity labels like Arab-Australian Joane Nagel asserts that 'identity and culture are fundamental to the central projects of ethnicity: the construction of boundaries and the production of meaning.'[218] Nagel views culture in the same constructivist terms as Fredrik Barth who proposed that culture be considered a "vessel" in which symbols, meanings, historical items *etc*. are loaded.[219] In this sense culture is constructed and reconstructed and open to change in the same way that identity is. Culture often represents the substance around which identity labels like Arab-Australian are constructed. In Nagel's words 'culture provides the content and meaning of ethnicity; it animates and authenticates ethnic boundaries by providing a history, ideology, symbolic universe, and system of meaning.'[220]

Culture is relevant to this study because of the way it connects to advantage and disadvantage in social relations - conceptually this is twofold. Firstly the tendency of

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[215] Ibid., 270.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Tomlinson, "Globalization and Cultural Identity": 27.
[218] Joane Nagel, ""Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture"," *Social Problems* 41, no. 1 (1994), 152-176: 153.
[219] Ibid., 162.
[220] Ibid.

people to gravitate towards groups based upon the advantage or disadvantage associated with such groups is informed by the content and meaning derived from culture. In this way culture articulates and authenticates ethnic boundaries by providing the content for making social comparisons, this content is what Nagel identifies as the symbols, items of history, ideology and system of meaning.[221] This introduces the concept of Social Identity Theory which is both central to understanding how identities can be hierarchical and is particularly relevant to how Egyptian-Australian in this study responded to the Arab-Australian identity construct.

Social Identity Theory (SIT)[222] is the social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in group membership, group processes, and intergroup relations.'[223] Social Identity Theory explains how 'individuals seek to belong to groups which provide them with a positive social identity.'[224] Nagel employs SIT to argue that ethnic categories should be seen as part of a strategy to gain personal or collective political or economic advantage.[225]

Social Identity Theory is evidenced in the interviews conducted with members of the Egyptian-Australian community particularly in the way they internalise and respond to Arab-Australian identity. This study and previously outlined studies of a similar nature demonstrate that Arab-Australian identity is encumbered by negative stereotypes and

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[221] Ibid.

[222] SIT is considered one of the preeminent theoretical perspectives. First developed in Britain in the 1970's by Henri Tajfel it 'offered the possibility of addressing a classic social psychological problem of the relationship of the individual to the group and the emergence of collective phenomena from individual cognitions'. See Rupert Brown, "Social Identity Theory: Past Achievements, Current Problems and Future Challenges," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 30, no. 6 (2000), 745-778: 745.

[223] Michael A. Hogg, "Social Idenity Theory," in *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*, ed. Peter J. Burke, First ed. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006), 111-136: 111.

[224] Itesh Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials in Minority and Majority Group Relations," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 21, no. 1 (1991), 1-24: 3.

[225] Nagel, "Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture", 152-176: 159.

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social disadvantage. In response certain group members have sought to distance themselves from Arab-Australian identity arguably as a means of disassociating from the negative social position. This important point is explained in more detail the following chapters.

When evoked by governments, culture can be harnessed as a tool for legitimating unequal resource allocation. Nagel holds the view that increasingly ethnic categories are 'politically constructed' with governments shaping ethnic boundaries and influencing patterns of ethnic identification.[226] Similarly Dan Rabinowitz explains the process of *culturalism* which is 'the active, often conscious attempt by formal and informal state agencies to establish composite notions of 'culture' to implore its citizens to behave in one way or another.[227]

1.3.5 'Mainstream Australia' And The Origins Of Dominant Culture

This chapter has so far considered the constructivist nature of identity and in particular the structural conditions of modernity that necessitate the formation of nation identity. Culture plays a strategic role in the development of ethnic categories. The point that ethnic categories are 'politically constructed' informs the discussion of 'mainstream Australia' in particular how notions of 'mainstream Australia' have been fostered as the dominant culture in Australian society.

Raymond Williams holds the view that 'in any society, in any particular period, there is a central system of practices, meanings and values, which we can properly call dominant and

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[226] Ibid., 157.
[227] Rabinowitz, "Oriental Othering and National Identity": 306.

effective'.[228] Dominance may therefore be best considered in terms of pervasiveness. To be dominant a national identity must pervade the society in question to the extent that it must constitute reality for most people in the society.[229]

In any society the dominant culture sets the parameters for how cultural life is shaped and for who is allowed access to cultural spaces. Floya Anthias describes how within any nation the dominant ethnic group expresses these privileges 'in terms of cultural production and reproduction, which relates to issues of access in terms of exclusion and inclusion in various dimensions of social life'.[230]

The various aspects of social life in which cultural dominance can be manifest include cultural resources such as education, language and religious symbols. The mechanism for attaining dominance is described by Williams as the process of 'selective tradition'.[231] By selecting certain meanings and practices from an array of possible meanings, experiences and practices, the dominant culture becomes the national 'tradition'.[232] Over time the chosen emphasis on set symbols or events, past and present become accepted while 'certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded'.[233] At the national level this selection of meanings, events and symbols form the dominant narrative which is then carried through mediums such as the education syllabus, the national census and the mainstream media. Education and the census are discussed below while the media's role in perpetuating the dominance of notions of 'mainstream Australia' forms the basis for Chapter Three of this thesis.

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[228] Raymond Williams, *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 413.
[229] Ibid.
[230] Anthias, "The Concept of `Social Division' and Theorising Social Stratification": 845.
[231] Williams, *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*: 414.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid

The education system in Australia is not monolithic in the sense that it is regulated at the state and territory government level rather than nationally and that schools are represented by both public and private, religious and non-religious interests. However there exists national standards in terms of the administration of schools as well as a national school curriculum and national assessments process.[234] By virtue of the systematic nature and its access to the population, the education system is a means for perpetuating cultural dominance. Williams agrees with this point and describes the education system as the institutional means of supporting dominance.[235] In Australia, as elsewhere, the education system is an important means of projecting the chosen national narrative, in particular emphasising certain cultural symbols in the construction of historical events which tell the 'story' of Australia's national identity.[236]

The more sophisticated education systems of the modern nation further explain how cultural dominance is achieved. Ernest Gellner describes the necessity of a centralised education system to the modern nation in terms of 'exo-socialisation' which dictates that education be universally normalised.[237]Gellner goes on to describe the 'educational machine which alone is capable of providing the wide range of training required for the generic cultural base'.[238] To this end education, specifically the standardised mass schooling system is yet another response to the necessities of the modern nation. Principally the role of education in the view of Gellner is in the 'manufacture of viable and

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[234] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, eds. Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly, Second ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).
[235] Williams, *Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory*: 381.
[236] For a study of the invention of Australian history with a discussion of the role of school curricula see Michael Connor, *The Invention of Terra Nullius : Historical and Legal Fictions on the Foundation of Australia,* (Paddington: Macleay Press, 2005).
[237] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*: 36.
[238] Ibid., 37.

usable human beings'[239] to maintain a workforce capable of sustaining the modern

industrial machine. The material importance of education in the nation-building experience

is as an *explanandum* of nations and nationalism.[240]

Likewise, the national census has become one of the most visible and politically important

tools for governments to depict collective identity and for the projection of power.[241] David

Kertzer and Dominique Arel assert that 'the categorisation of identities became part and

parcel of the legitimating narratives of the national, colonial and 'new world' state'.[242]

Joane Nagel holds the opinion that designations constructed in the census reinforce or

reconstruct ethnic boundaries 'by providing incentives for ethnic group formation and

mobilisation or by designating particular ethnic subpopulations as targets for special

treatment.'[243] Benedict Anderson explains how the national census is a tool for depicting

and moulding national identity. Anderson describes the census' long history as a 'mode of

imagining' which has evolved 'as the colonised zones entered the age of mechanical

reproduction'.[244]

1.3.5.1   Do Identities Develop At The Individual Or Collective Level?

Central to understanding how identities are formed and the cultural dominance of notions

of 'mainstream Australia' is whether the construction of identity occurs at the level of the

individual or the group. Perspectives of identity which emphasise the construction process

as happening at the individual level are problematic to this thesis because they

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[239] Ibid.
[240] Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism: Alternative models of nation formation*, (London: Taylor and Francis, 2000): 2.
[241] See Kertzer and Arel, *Census and Identity: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity and Language in National Censuses*.
[242] Ibid., 3.
[243] Nagel, "Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture": 157.
[244] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: 167.

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inadequately account for the relational nature of identity. It is argued that identity labels such as Arab-Australian primarily narrate social relations which at their core are exclusionary or inclusionary in nature and which involve the construction of *collective* identity boundaries. It is therefore argued that identities develop at the group level. This better explains how notions of 'mainstream Australia' achieve dominance due to the significance held at the collective or group level rather than at the individual level.

Relevant to study of identity labels like Arab-Australian and 'mainstream Australia' are the many implied membership rules, content, and valuation of 'us' and 'them'. These are the products of collective human behaviours which occur in the process of identity construction at the collective level.[245] This is not to negate the role of the individual in the process which is of course the internalisation and manifestation of these identity labels. To highlight this point Barth[246] asserts the process of identity formation in relation to ethnic groups occurs through the presence of 'categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves'.[247] Likewise Castells[248] emphasises that meaning becomes real only once internalised 'for the actors themselves, and by themselves'.[249]

1.4   The Other In Relation To The Dominant Culture

In this chapter identity construction has been conceptualised and the link between power and identity has been defined. This chapter now outlines how the Other emerges through

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[245] Fearon and Laitin, "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity": 848.
[246] Bath speaks of the relational processes and stratification as a two-way process that takes place across the boundary between 'us' and 'them'. See Introduction in Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, 1st ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969).
[247] Ibid.,10
[248] See Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age Vol 2*: 7.
[249] Ibid.

identity labels such as 'Arab-Australian'. In particular how such labels are a form of social

categorisation in the broader process of national identity construction.

Edwin Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister argue that within any society the dominant cultural

hegemon, race or national identity is 'aethnic' or without ethnicity.[250] As such ethnicity is

a form differentiation or Othering from the mainstream. To define this point further Floya

Anthias views Othering as a construct of hierarchisation that entails 'ideas about normality

and pathology: one side of the binary divide is seen as the standard, as the norm, as

expressive also of the ideal, the other side is seen as deficient in some way and not merely

as different.[251]

The premise that ethnic groups express the binary divide in society, between mainstream

and Other is critical to understanding that identity categories such as Arab-Australian,

come about in response to constructed notions of 'mainstream' Australian culture.[252]

Ethnicity therefore is not only a form of 'imagined community'[253] but a manifestation of

power disparities in broader social relations. John Commaroff explains this idea further

when saying that 'identities are not things but relations, usually relations of inequality and

hierarchy'.[254] Therefore 'mainstream Australia', or any dominant national identity for that

matter, involves 'inevitably overstating commonalities within a group and exaggerating

differences'[255] with others outside its parameters.

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[250] Edwin Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister, *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996): 33.
[251] Anthias, "The Concept of `Social Division' and Theorising Social Stratification":845.
[252] The process of Othering has informed much of the thinking about ethnic categorisation in national identity construction. Manuel Castells, George Mead, Pierre Boudieu, Richard Jenkins and in the Australian context, Ghassan Hage and Geoffrey Stokes draw on class formation theory to explain the process of national identity construction and the treatment of the Other.
[253] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: xi.
[254] Wilmsen and McAllister, *The Politics of Difference*: 16.
[255] Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 9

Othering is the highlighting of perceived variance from the mainstream which can lead to exclusion. Geoffrey Stokes contends that in the most extreme cases 'a dominant group defines the identity of another (often subordinate) group in ways that are negative, and that preclude the possibility of redefinition'.[256] The extent to which overstating the commonalities of the mainstream is to the detriment of the Other is highlighted by Vromen who explains that the 'community can be coercive when a dominant set of values unites members and maintains group cohesion by excluding individuals or subgroups that challenge these dominant values.'[257]

The boundaries of ethnicity are predominantly about difference, not derived from pre-given ethnic traits or primordial tradition, but from the relations between dominant and subjugate groups. Aletta Norval highlights the point that ethnicities may be formed to contest dominant thinking, and therefore should be 'conceived of as a complex process of negotiation, the outcome of struggles and antagonisms with dominant traditions that open up spaces through which dominant designations of difference may be resisted and recast'.[258]

Turning briefly now to how difference and distinction between groups are defined within the social system. Bourdieu extensively critiques processes of categorisation based upon comparison of distinctive features and/or areas of perceived difference. Bourdieu contends that comparison is only possible in relation to an existing defined stratum and that distinction therefore becomes the 'difference, a gap, a distinctive feature, in short, a relational property existing only through its relationship to other properties'.[259] This

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[256] Ibid.,7
[257] Vromen, "Three political myths about young people".
[258] Norval, *The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity*: 313.
[259] Pierre Bourdieu, *Social Space and Symbolic Space*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008): 6.

demonstrates again the point that ethnicity is an identity construct made *in relation* to perceived features of difference with the dominant national culture. The mechanisms for identity construction are derived from outside imposition rather than innate internal subscription. As outlined earlier this premise rejects an emphasis upon internal group identification which happens at the individual level because it does not adequately account for external power, dominance and responses to these. The material effects of imposed categorisation as the Other in relation to the dominant culture are evident in the lived experiences and social identification of individuals and groups. Jenkins supports this point when stating:

> The effective categorisation of a group of people by more powerful others is not therefore 'just' a matter of classification (if, indeed, there is any such thing). It is necessarily an intervention in that group's social world which will, to an extent and in ways that are a function of the specifics of the situation, alter that world and the experience of living in it.[260]

Arab identity in Australia is therefore studied in the context of its relationship with the dominant national culture. Arab-Australian identity is situated in the power struggle between notions of 'mainstream Australia' and the experiences of those who exist outside it.

1.4.1   The Impact Of Othering On The Representation Of Arab-Australians

Othering has an impact on the lived experiences of those it affects. This study involves documenting the empirical effects of Othering through interviews with members of the

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[260] Richard Jenkins, "Rethinking ethnicity: Identity, categorization and power" ,*Ethnic and Racial Studies,***17:** 2, (1994): 218.

Arabic speaking community and through reviewing the media reporting of the Arab Spring. Prior to this it is useful to establish the theoretical level at which notions of Arab-Australians as the Other may affect representation and consciousness.

At the political level Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott have demonstrated that group-based social identity categories, like ethnicity 'have figured prominently in motivating and shaping political action.'[261] Collective identity constructs can change or affect the political landscape owing to the powerful tools of social identity construction which lie in the 'codes of information and in the images of representation around which societies organise their institutions, and people build their lives, and decide their behaviours'.[262]

There is a progression from purely identifying with a social category to this identification informing or shaping consciousness. This is explained through the recognition of disparities between the relative positions of the group to the non-group. Jenkins emphasises a Marxist understanding of alienation from the means of production to argue that a social category may define itself by 'becoming a social group, the members of which identify with one another in their collective misfortune and have the potential for collective action on the basis of that identification.'[263]

Arthur Miller further explains this as an ideological awareness that brings about the linear relationship between identification and consciousness of difference in the processes of social categorisation, stating:

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[261] Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott, *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*: 9.
[262] Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Vol 2*: 359.
[263] Jenkins, "Rethinking ethnicity": 201.

Group *identification* connotes a perceived self-location within a particular social stratum, along with a psychological feeling of belonging to that particular stratum. Group *consciousness*, on the other hand, involves identification with a group *and* a political awareness or ideology regarding the group's relative position in society.[264]

Group consciousness is explained in Miller's work as having four states: Firstly, *Group identification* which is the psychological feeling of belonging; secondly *Polar affect*, which is a preference for members of one's own group and a dislike for those outside it; thirdly, *Polar power* which is the expressed satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the group's current status, power or material resources in relation to that of the Other; and finally *individual vs. system blame* which is when a belief exists that the responsibility for a group's low status in society is attributable to individual failings or to inequities in the social system. [265]

These components help explain the material effects of social categorisation as the Other. In the case of subordinate groups or those outside the dominant identity group Miller explains group consciousness can cause 'a shift from a situation in which group members simply accept their status to one in which they express a sense of grievance as victims of injustice, perceive a lack of legitimacy in the social hierarchy, and eventually set about collectively to correct the injustices.'[266] This is important when considering the response of Egyptian-Australians in this study, namely the resistance to the homogenisation of Arab-Australian identity.

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[264] Arthur Miller et al., "Group Consciousness and Political Participation," *American Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 3 (1981), 494-511:495.
[265] Arthur Miller et al., "Group Consciousness and Political Participation": 479.
[266] Ibid.,497.

With regards to dominant identity, group perceptions of dominance are cemented through an ongoing process of legitimisation. Specifically Miller illustrates that 'among the dominant groups, the ideology justifies advantage, gives legitimacy to social status, and provokes action aimed at securing permanence for their position'.[267]

Miller has demonstrated the effects of social group dominance and subgroup subordination in the empirical study of electoral participation by minority groups in the United States. In this case Miller illustrated the link between power inequality and political representation. Miller observed 'that subordinate group members who were discontented with the relative power of their groups and who saw an unjust system as the explanation for their power disadvantage were motivated to bring about change by participating in traditional types of political activities'.[268]

The findings discussed in later chapters particularly relating to subgroup differentiation by Egyptian-Australians appear to stem from similar discontent with the power disadvantage afforded to the identity label Arab-Australian. Also responses to the representation of Arab Australians revealed by the empirical interviews are in line with Miller's assertion that an acceptance of the status quo makes way for the expression of a 'grievance as victims of injustice'.[269] Similarly there were also cases where Egyptian-Australians observed a lack of legitimacy in the social hierarchy'.[270] The responses to this are explained in greater detail in Chapters Six and Seven.

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[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid.,508.
[269] Ibid.,497.
[270] Ibid.,497.

Edwin Wilmsen and Patrick McAllister assert that Othering manifests as 'words, images, symbols, forms and institutions [which] are used by subordinated groups to accommodate, confront and or resist their domination'.[271] For example, it is not clear if identity politics is a result of a desire for greater disengagement from the dominant identity or if it is born of a desire for greater assimilation, however Patricia Gurin *et al* hold the view that power deprivation and subjugation are involved. Specifically Gurin *et al* argue the relationship between group consciousness and political consciousness is established after group identity 'has been politicised by feelings of power deprivation, attribution of blame for the group's position on structural determinants, and a belief that collective actions are the preferred means for solving social problems'.[272]

Whether identity categories like Arab-Australian emerge in contrast to the dominant identity or to better conform to the political and social system is a matter of conjecture. This has implications for the broader investigation of Arab-Australian identity in this thesis, specifically does the Othering of Arab-Australians provoke 'resistance' to the dominant culture or 'incorporation' into it and what does this resistance/incorporation look like?'[273]

1.5   Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the link between identity and power. Identities are considered socially constructed with identity labels like Arab-Australian viewed in terms

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[271] Wilmsen and McAllister, *The Politics of Difference*: 13.
[272] Arthur Miller et al., "Group Consciousness and Political Participation," American Journal of Political Science 25, no. 3 (1981), 494-511: 498.
[273] Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 10.

of broader social relations. The notion of dominant culture, in this case, 'mainstream Australia' informs the way identities are constructed in relation to this.

Governments recognise the necessity of a unified national identity. This is the power of a national narrative and clear sense of a collective national story. National identity should be viewed as a process of construction and social categorisation for the purposes of building social unity. Therefore the approach towards identity outlined in this chapter emphasises the importance of power and dominance in the process of identity formation.

Identity construction is a form of social categorisation resulting in collective social boundaries which reflect relations to/with the dominant national identity. Arab-Australian identity does not occur in a vacuum and should be examined in terms of broader social relations. Arab-Australian identity is informed by the relationship it has to notions of 'mainstream Australian' identity.

Chapter 2 - Constructing The Arab Other In Australia

2.1 Introduction

This chapter further defines the binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Arab-Australian Other by considering the historical factors that account for the construction of Arab-Australian identity. In particular what Edward Said describes as 'latent Orientalism'[274] is central to understanding depictions of Arabs in Australia. The conflation of the Arab and Muslim Other and the questioning of the Other's compatibility with Western values, largely defines the construction of Arab-Australian identity.

Disruptions to social relations caused by globalisation and neoliberalism have emphasised the importance of a coherent national identity. Specifically structural inequality and the changes to the city-suburb dichotomy are negatively impacting social relations. Multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism in Australia, while largely supported, underlie notions of 'us' and 'them' and are not without challenge. Lastly the enduring climate of moral panics[275] stemming from events such as September 11, the Cronulla riots, Bali bombings and more recent developments relating to Islamic State (ISIL) contextualise the current negative state of representation for Arab-Australians.

2.2 Depictions Of The 'Arab' In Australia

Arab-Australians are often represented in popular discourse in ways that deny them membership to the imagined Australian community.[276] The construction of Arab-

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[274] Said, *Latent and Manifest Orientalism*, 45-56: 45.
[275] Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, 3rd ed. (London ; New York: Routledge, 2002): 9.

[276] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*, 411-418: 412.

Australian identity draws upon matters of Australia's history and other global realities which when taken together account for how Arab-Australians are depicted in the cultural spaces of Australian society.

Institutional racialism is a characteristic of Australia's colonial past.[277] Ghassan Hage contends the legacy of European colonialisation in Australia is a national space which is overwhelmingly White in nature.[278] Likewise John Kane claims that a defining feature of Australia at its Federation in 1901 was a 'profound, if erroneous, belief in human inequality.'[279] Scott Poynting and Barbara Perry illustrate this point further when saying that 'degradation of the Other is on fertile ground in a culture with a history of -indeed with origins in – a worldview which saw non-whites as heathen savages.'[280]

The racial vilification of Arabs and Muslims has been documented as far back as the latter part of nineteenth century when both Afghan Muslim camel drivers and Syrian traders were the subject of major colonial campaigns accusing them of criminality and disease.[281] The immigration regulations of post-Federation Australia systematically reduced the Muslim population in Australia.[282] During the conflict with the Ottoman Turks in the first World War Australians with Lebanese and Syrian backgrounds were categorised as 'Turkish subjects' and thus vilified and in some cases interned as enemies.[283]

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[277] John Kane in Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 117.
[278] Ghassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, 1st ed. (Annandale, Sydney: Pluto Press Australia, 1998).: 18.
[279] John Kane in Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 119.
[280] Poynting and Perry, "Climates of Hate": 162.
[281] Mansouri, *Citizenship, Idenity and Belonging in Contemporary Australia*, 149-164: 150.
[282] Ibid.
[283] Ibid.

In contemporary Australia, Poynting *et al* assert 'we are witnessing the emergence of the 'Arab Other' as the pre-eminent 'folk devil' of our time.'[284] The construction of Arab-Australian identity as Other is located within broader Australian history and the development of Australia's national identity. The construction of the Arab as Other is shaped by the enduring role of Orientialism and notions of Australia's dominant national identity. This point is further exemplified by Poynting *et al* who note the 'Arab Other functions not only in terms of the specific concerns embedded in fear of crime; it also functions in the national imagery to prop up the project of national belonging.'[285]

2.3   Enduring Orientalist Discourse In Australia

Arab-Australian identity is constructed from historical prejudices denoted by Orientalism and compounded by recent global events. Orientalism in Australia has shaped Arab-Australian identity. The notion of latent Orientalism described in the work of Edward Said is informative to this study, in particular the entrenched Euro-American ideological perspective, rooted in a historical context of conquest and domination.[286] The pervasiveness of Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its' people in the media and political discourse of countries such as Australia establish the conditions under which Arabs and Muslim communities are typically conflated and Othered.[287]

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[284] Scott Poynting, *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*, 1st ed. (Sydney: Sydney Institute of Criminology, 2004): 2.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Edward Said, "Latent and Manifest Orientialism" in *Race and racialization : essential readings*, ed. Das Gupta et al. (Toronto : Canadian Scholars' Press, 2007): 4.
[287] Ibid.

Latent Orientalism underscores the representation of Arab-Australians and occurs across any number of different political and media sites.[288] In illustrating the omnipresence of Orientalism in the enduring discourse of Arabs and Muslims, Scott Poynting explains:

> Press releases and related sound bites, judicial decisions, parliamentary debates, commission hearings and certainly single issue and electoral political campaigns are laden with images and language, both implicit and explicit, representative of the dominant ideologies of race.[289]

Orientalist notions of the Middle East have been highly visible in popular discourse in the Western world.[290] The consequence of this is a normalisation and dominance of Orientalist conceptions that are largely created outside the Middle East region itself. Louis Cantori skilfully explains this point and provides context to these formative Western notions of the Middle East:

> The study of Middle Eastern politics is embedded in the historical attitude of American and European culture toward Islam and Arabism. Historically, Islam expanded at the expense of Christian Europe in the eighth century. This adversarial relation continued when European Christians mounted forays into the Moslem Near East in the Crusades of the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries; with the fall of Christian Constantinople to Moslem siege in the fifteenth century; and to the near defeat of Christian Vienna by Moslem attack in the seventeenth century. Modern echoes of ancient conflict include the hostage crisis in Iran in 1979- 81; the American

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[288] Poynting and Perry, "Climates of Hate": 162.
[289] Ibid.
[290] Maryam Khalid, "Gender, Orientalism and Representations of the 'Other' in the War on Terror," *Global Change, Peace & Security* 23, no. 1 (2011), 15-29: 15.

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failure in Beirut in 1983; and the insecurity of the American ally Israel. As a result, the West feels that its stereotypes constitute "knowledge" of the Middle East; consequently there is an unwillingness to pay attention to scholarly analysis or even significantly support Middle East political teaching and research at the university level.[291]

The enduring nature of Orientialism is both predictable and episodic. [292] Nabeel Abraham underscores how Orientialism's latent interest is awoken by 'events occurring in the Middle East, particularly violence against U.S. citizens, [which] often trigger jingoistic violence against Arabs and others who could conceivably be confused with them, such as Muslims, Iranians, or Palestinians.'[293] Discourse which questions the belonging of Arabs and Muslims in what are popularly described 'western or liberal' settings are by no means unique to Australia. In particular the questioning of the compatibility of Islam vis-à-vis 'western values' constitutes a popular revival of "clash of civilisations" type theories. [294]

Arguably in modern Australia the most visible manifestation of Orientialism is in the way complex issues relating to the Middle East are routinely conflated. The portrayal of the peoples and cultures of the region are typically 'lumped together' and habitually oversimplified.

The portrayal of the Arab Spring highlights this conflation and simplification of issues and events relating to the Middle East. In particular latent Orientialism underscores the persistent questioning of the compatibility of 'Eastern' values (typically referring to those

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[291] Louis J. Cantori, "Introduction," *PS: Political Science & Politics,* 27, no. 03 (1994): 507.
[292] Poynting and Perry, "Climates of Hate":154.
[293] Nabeel Abraham cited in Poynting and Perry, "Climates of Hate":154.
[294] Victoria Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country": Arab-Australians After September 11," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 1 (2004), 233-243: 238.

belonging to the Arab and Muslim Other) with Australia's accepted 'Western' values. For example, the compatibility of democracy in the Arab World was evident in the Arab Spring discourse, specifically the inference that Arabs do not grasp or appreciate democracy. This is in line with broader normalisation of the questioning of values, cultures and norms of the Other and their place in Australian society.

2.3.1   Conflating The Arab And Muslim Other

Conflating the identities of Arab and Muslim has been fundamental to establishing the binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other. Poynting refers to the common assumption that all Arabs are Muslim as a 'deep-seated and widespread ignorance in the West of the diversity of religious faiths in the Arab lands and their diaspora.'[295] Christina Ho adds that under conditions of resurgent patriotism in Australia the conflation of the Arab-Muslim Other has allowed for 'expressions of national identity and nationalism [that] increasingly rely on anti-Muslim sentiment.[296] In addition, Fethi Mansouri and Annelies Kamp studied the education and social experiences of Arab youth in recent times and have highlighted 'the conflation of Arab and Muslim communities into a singular homogeneous category, constructed as synonymous with threat and terrorism, and often identified through markers of difference.'[297]

This basic lack of understanding of the diversity of the Middle East and the conflation of the Arab/Muslim Other was also reflected in the responses of Egyptian-Australian

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[295] Poynting and Perry, "Climates of Hate": 152.
[296] Christina Ho, "Muslim Women's New Defenders: Women's Rights, Nationalism and Islamophobia in Contemporary Australia," *Women's Studies International Forum* 30, no. 4 (2007), 290-298: 296.
[297] Fethi Mansouri and Annelies and Kamp, "Structural Deficiency Or Cultural Racism: The Educational and Social Experiences of Arab-Australian Youth," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 42, no. 1 (2007), 87-102: 95.

participants in this study. In particular the term Arab being conflated with Islam was an objectionable generalisation often not in keeping with participants' own sense of identity.

The binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other is manifest in observed negative sentiment towards certain groups based on ethnic, racial, cultural and religious grounds. Public and media discourse often centres on emphasising identity boundaries and markers of difference.

2.3.2   Questioning The Compatibility Of The Other With Australian Values

Values and behaviours that are perceived to fall outside defined cultural parameters cause alarm and pose a threat. The conflated Arab/Muslim identity construct is one such cause of alarm with there being 'many examples of the cultural, social, and political strategies used to set Australian citizens of Muslim backgrounds outside the boundaries of the national community'.[298] One such example is the politicisation of Muslim women and the wearing of the hijab. In this scenario Islam is often portrayed as misogynist and oppressive for obliging women to cover their faces. Christina Ho describes further how the Arab/Muslim Other is presented as being incompatible and a threat to Australian values:

> This gendered discourse allows Muslim misogyny to be portrayed as a threat to national security, as lines of connection are drawn between the mistreatment of women and global terrorism. The success of this logic depends on the obscuring of misogynistic elements of mainstream Australian culture, enabling an essentialist bifurcation of 'egalitarian West' versus 'oppressive Islam'.[299]

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[298] Graeme Turner, "Shrinking the Borders: Globalization, Culture, and Belonging," *Cultural Politics* 3, no. 1 (March 01, 2007), 5-20: 12.
[299] Ho, "Muslim Women's New Defenders": 290.

Discourse regarding the wearing of the hijab often negates opposing views regarding the choices, rights and freedom of expression of women who choose to cover themselves. Rather the issue is framed in terms of Islam's incompatibility with Australian values. This point highlights the normalisation of questioning the place of Muslims and people of Arab background in Australia.

Further ramifications of such discourse has been the politicising of the immigration agenda by successive Australian governments. This has fermented tensions and allowed for the racial vilification of certain ethnic communities. Scott Poynting and Greg Noble describe such phenomena as 'dog whistle politics'.[300] The politicisation of immigration and the framing of the immigration agenda in terms of compatibility and compliance with Australian values extends beyond illegal immigrants from the Middle East ('boat people'[301]) but also to legal Australian, often second-generation, citizens with Middle Eastern and sometimes Muslim backgrounds.[302]

2.4   The Emergence Of 'Mainstream Australia' As Dominant National Identity

The concept of 'mainstream Australia' is central to understanding where Arab-Australian identity is located in Australian society. 'Mainstream Australia' may be best described as the term given to Australia's core culture. Graeme Turner illustrates the concept of core culture as a contested site which is the 'core location of what are commonly referred to as

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[300] Scott Poynting, "'Dog-Whistle' Journalism and Muslim Australians since 2001," *Media International Australia Incorporating Culture & Policy*, no. 109 (2003), 41-49: 41.
[301] The term "boat people" is a form of social categorisation popularised by media and politicians in Australia. It refers to asylum seekers arriving by boat, through often extends to encompass any form of illegal immigrants arriving in Australia.
[302] Turner, "Shrinking the Borders": 12.

'ordinary' Australian values. [303] Turner goes further to define these values in Australia as being 'conservative, nationalist, communitarian and egalitarian'.[304]

James Jupp argues that the contestation over Australia's core culture spans the length of Australia's history, stating 'conflict and contest over the preferred types of national character and citizenry and how best to promote them, has been at the core of Australian politics, whatever their form, since 1788.'[305] In considering the origins of Australia's core culture Ken Inglis notes that 'if non-English speaking migrants and their children are to be called 'ethnic', [then Anglo-Celtic is] the name given to the old host population'.[306]

Ghassan Hage invoked Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *field of power* in social space to define the origins of Australia's core culture. Hage described how various attributes of capital and power are endowed upon certain members of society giving them greater determining power over aspects of belonging and dominance within society itself.[307] Claims that Australia's core culture is 'Anglo' or 'white' are usually 'referring to cultural possessions which allow their holders to stake certain claims' to national belonging over and above others.[308] For example Hage described 'white skin', an 'Aussie accent' and 'blonde hair' as forms of national capital 'in the sense that their possession allows the person who owns them to claim certain forms of dominant national belonging'.[309] Importantly Hage argues that characteristics of national capital are not all equal in value for example 'having blonde hair is valuable, but if one has blond hair and an eastern

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[303] Graeme Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other: The Ethnicizing of the Australian Suburb," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 9, no. 4 (2008), 568-582: 575.
[304] Ibid.
[305] James Jupp in Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 132.
[306] Ien Ang and Jon Stratton, "Multiculturalism in Crisis: The New Politics of Race and National Identity in Australia," *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 2 (1998), 22-41:26.
[307] Hage, *White Nation*: 56.
[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid.

European accent, this does not make one more national than having brown hair and an Australian accent. Thus we can say that the Australian accent is more valuable than blonde hair as a national capital.'[310]

The space occupied by 'high culture'[311]is another important explainer of the development and dominance of notions of 'mainstream Australia' as the dominant national identity. High culture is a well-known concept in cultural studies predicated on what Paul DiMaggio calls 'a strong dichotomy between high culture – what goes on in museums, opera houses, symphony halls and theatres – and popular culture, of both the folk and commercial varieties'.[312] In a contemporary setting high culture is likely to be found in elite education institutions rather than opera houses. A concept such as high culture is relevant to interrogating the term Arab-Australian in explaining how resource availability and attempts at homogenisation by the state and dominant cultural elements occur within society. Social resources such as higher education, or membership to certain organisations of high culture provide insight into the functional elements of Othering, namely distinctions or areas of perceived collective difference from the dominant national identity.[313]

In essence the relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other is manifest in the concepts of core culture and national capital described above by Turner and Hage. By

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[310] Ibid.

[311] 'high culture' is contrasted to 'low culture' of the agro-literate societies of the past where 'rote learning at one's mother's knee or in the village school sufficed' Smith, A. D. (1996), Memory and modernity: reflections on Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism ,*Nations and Nationalism,***2:** , 3 p. 379

[312] DiMaggio. (1991),Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth-Century Boston, University of California Press, ,Berkeley p. 374

[313] This concept will be addressed in a later chapter with specific reference to Arab-Australians. Examples of Othering as well as methodology for measuring ethnic identity and the effects of Othering will be established. This will be paramount to explaining the impact of the experience of Arab- Australians on political consciousness.

assigning individuals or groups a score of national belonging based on the sum total of categories of national capital, 'mainstream Australia' is constructed as the dominant core culture. When combined, the features of national capital perceived to be most valuable become the archetypal form of 'Australian-ness' while the Other becomes a categorisation of those perceived as not possessing national capital or possessing features of national capital in lower values.

2.4.1   The Importance Of The Suburb In The Depiction Of 'Mainstream Australia'

The Australian suburb is considered central to the dominance of 'mainstream Australia' and is relevant to understanding how identities have been reshaped by major changes to social relations since the 1970's. The importance of the Australian suburb is underscored by the fact that 'cultural identity, social history and the collective memory are intertwined in the urban environment.'[314]

The Australian suburb has long represented the ideal of a generous quarter-acre block, virtuous family values and egalitarianism which have been a post-war hallmark of Australia's national identity.[315] Graeme Turner described how 'the suburb has been one of the means through which foundational versions of Australian national identity that mythologised the rural environment dealt with the fact that most of its citizens actually lived in the city'.[316]

Where in the past Australia's suburbs have tended to 'present a homogenous, singular narrative of white Australia's conquest of the land and struggle to found a nation'[317] more

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[314] Fiona Allon, "Translated spaces/translated Identities: The Production of Place, Culture and Memory in an Australian Suburb," *Journal of Australian Studies* 26, no. 72 (2002), 99-110: 102.
[315] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 569.
[316] Ibid.
[317] Allon, "Translated spaces/translated Identities": 102.

diversity has been embedded since the replacement of the White Australia Policy with Multiculturalism. Jock Collins asserts 'today a key feature of the Western Suburbs [of Sydney] is its social class diversity. The western and south-western suburbs of Sydney are the heart of Sydney's cultural diversity: where most of Sydney's immigrants live.'[318]

Thus prior to the 1970's Australian suburbs generally reflected relative physical and cultural homogeneity 'as if distinction and difference were in some way anti-democratic and un-Australian'.[319] However in recent times changes to the city-suburb dichotomy have taken place that demonstrate how identities are reshaped by the inequality and destabilisation attributed to globalisation and the restructuring of the relationship between capital and labour. For example the make-up of many of Sydney's west and south-west suburbs have changed dramatically over the past 40 years from largely white manufacturing and railway worker families to a diverse mix of people from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB).[320] These suburbs are now home to the majority of Australia's Arab-Australian communities.

2.4.2   City-Suburb Relations And 'Cosmopolitanism' In A Globalised Context

Since the 1970s, the fundamental changes to the relationship between the city and the suburb in Australia are reflective of the restructuring of labour and can be attributed to the inequality caused by globalisation. These changes represent disruptions to social relations and are relevant to explaining the way identities are shaped. The concept of 'cosmopolitanism' is often used to label globalisation's cultural impact. The term carries

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[318] Jock Collins and Scott and Poynting, eds., *The Other Sydney: Communities, Identities and Inequalities in Western Sydney*, 1st ed. (Melbourne: Common Ground Publishing, 2000): 20.
[319] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 570.
[320] Collins and Poynting, *The Other Sydney*: 58.

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with it positive connotations when used to describe the visible characterises of the global cultural exchange, such as new and sophisticated food and café culture.[321]

Traditionally inner-city suburbs represented the least desirable places to live as cities were the sites of criminality and violence.[322] Due to cheaper rents and smaller semi-detached, terrace housing and apartments, most new migrants to Australia settled in and around cities in the post-war years.[323] Inner-city suburbs were generally associated with higher levels of crime and lower average income levels. The outer-suburbs on the other hand represented the Anglo-centric Australian family dream: a big block of land, a freestanding home and a safe family environment.

However proximity to the city has now become most desirable and has led to the gentrification of inner-city suburbs. Once undesirable suburbs have become fashionable with high-income workers and families. Real estate prices have dramatically increased in response to demand for city living. The inner-city has become synonymous with the term 'cosmopolitan', reflecting the significant cultural shifts that have taken place.

At the same time the outer-suburb has been reshaped. In line with other developed economies the manufacturing sector in Australia has shrunk and jobs have moved into the service sector.[324] More and more the 'politically significant version of the middle or outer suburb [is] one often defined by minority ethnic or racial identities; that is increasingly represented as criminalised; and that runs against the grain of the traditional conception of the suburb in the Australian national imaginary.'[325] This shift towards a service-oriented

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[321] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 569.
[322] Ibid.,:577.
[323] Ibid.
[324] Robert J. Stimson, "Australia's Changing Economic Geography Revisited," *Australasian Journal of Regional Studies, the* 17, no. 1 (2011), 22-45: 23.
[325] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 569.

economy in Australia has disrupted the employment centres by moving them to the city. Graeme Turner demonstrates this disruption when saying, 'it is the middle-ring Sydney suburb such as Bankstown that is now seen as the home of the most social and cultural problems and which has borne the brunt of the decline in employment'.[326]

The changes to the city-suburb dichotomy symbolise the broader changes to social relations attributed to globalisation, in particular the restructure of the relationship between labour and capital. The nature of the suburb as the traditional site of 'mainstream Australia' has been altered with the cosmopolitan city coming to represent globalising inclusiveness.[327] While as Turner has observed the outer-suburbs have fragmented into communities defined by 'on the one hand, class-based or economic exclusivity or, on the other hand, an ethicised or radicalised and problematic specificity.[328] These changes in the city-suburb dichotomy have arguably been accelerated by increased migration to Australia under the policy of Multiculturalism.

2.4.3   Multiculturalism Shaping Identities

An additional area of change specific to the Australian context is Multiculturalism. This is of significance to how Arab-Australian identity has been shaped and is important to understanding the development of identity in Australia more broadly. The agenda of Multiculturalism should be investigated beyond its role in entrenching cultural diversity previously absent in Australian society. Rather Multiculturalism has been used to mobilise an 'us and them' discourse of exclusion. The discourse around Multiculturalism is a sign

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[326] Ibid., 574.
[327] Ibid., 570.
[328] Ibid.

of the disruptive and destabilising effects of changes to social relations brought about by globalisation and the restructuring of the relationship between labour and capital.

The statement "Australia is a multicultural country"[329] denotes both official government policy and popular conviction. Jon Stratton and Ien Ang describe how 'the mainstreaming of multiculturalism in Australia - in the sense that the idea of Australia as a cultural mosaic - has been commonly accepted.'[330] However just as 'identity is not as transparent and unproblematic as we think'[331] so too is the reality of multiculturalism.

Homi Bhabha argues multiculturalism represents 'an attempt both to respond to and control the dynamic process of the articulation of cultural difference [by] administering a *consensus* based on a norm that propagates cultural diversity'.[332] Geoffrey Levey describes the 'perception that multiculturalism threatens social cohesion and the political integrity of the state, challenges for which a robust national identity has long been believed the necessary answer'.[333] Turner describes Multiculturalism in Australia as a 'policy of national formation that had a particular national imaginary in mind: one that was (perhaps a little paradoxically) open, inclusive, trans-and-multicultural, vigorously embracing cultural difference'.[334]

Multiculturalism appeared in stark contrast with Australia's previous immigration platform, the White Australia policy and represented an historic and practical departure

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[329] Australia.gov.au "Our Country", http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/our-country:Accessed 03/06/2015.
[330] Jon Stratton and Ien Ang, "Multicultural Imagined Communities: Cultural Difference and National Identity in Australia and the USA," *Continuum* 8, no. 2 (1994), 124-158: 151.
[331] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 222-237: 222.
[332] Stratton and Ang, "Multicultural Imagined Communities": 153.
[333] Geoffrey Levey, "Multiculturalism and Australian National Identity," in *Political Theory and Australian Multiculturalism*, ed. Geoffrey B. Levey (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008): 254.
[334] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 568.

from Australia's somewhat shameful, racist past.[335] While sentiment towards

Multiculturalism has shifted in line with broader changes in prevailing ideologies,[336]

national governments since the 1970's have maintained commitment to multiculturalism as

a progressive immigration policy.

Multiculturalism is often applauded for the culturally visible changes it has brought to

Australian society in the form of 'the construction of a hybridized, multi-ethnic, national

population.'[337] For example multiculturalism is popularly coupled with the term

'cosmopolitan' to describe the development of Sydney's café culture or the vibrancy and

diversity of Melbourne's eateries. In this way multiculturalism is often imbued with

positive features in a somewhat simplified depiction of a sophisticated mélange of

tolerance and openness.

However as much as Multiculturalism denoted a new narrative Ang and Stratton describe

this as 'a public fiction'[338] of harmony and tolerance amidst diversity. Similarly Kevin

Dunn urges that multiculturalism be viewed both with skepticism and as a struggle to

influence the direction of cultural space in Australia.[339]

2.4.3.1 The Binary Of 'Us' And 'Them'

Multiculturalism shapes identities through normalising binary relationships between 'old'

and 'new' Australia and 'us' and 'them'. These binaries are the mechanisms for contrasting

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[335] Ang and Stratton, "Multiculturalism in Crisis": 25.
[336] Andrew Jakubowicz and Christina Ho, eds., *'for those Who'Ve Come Across the Seas...'*, (London: Anthem Press, 2014) :32.
[337] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 568.
[338] Ang and Stratton, "Multiculturalism in Crisis": 25.
[339] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 154.

the values and features of 'mainstream Australia' with those perceived to be different or not 'mainstream Australia'.

Ghassan Hage describes how citizenship is unevenly granted by the dominant culture, or those who are the 'spatial managers' in contrast to those who are the 'spatially managed'.[340] Under these conditions Hage argues that the 'mangers clearly enjoy a greater sense of belonging and citizenship than do the 'managed''.[341] The determination of who occupies the role of spatial manager and spatially managed is largely by virtue of the possession of cultural capital.[342] This relates back to the concept of 'mainstream Australia' which as Hage describes is based on dominant ideas of Australian-ness specifically 'markers such as accent, name, clothing and physical appearance'.[343]

The binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other is evidenced in the concept of tolerance. Hage argues that tolerance should be viewed as a foil for maintaining existing power structures because Anglo-Celtic Australians are placed in the position of power within the discourse of tolerance. Tolerance is used as a bargaining chip, granted by the more powerful and able to be revoked if certain implied criteria are not met. Under these conditions the dominant mainstream holds the power to decide what and who it will tolerate and to place limits on the tolerance being granted. Hage argues that while superficially representing the face of 'good', nationalism, cosmopolitanism and tolerance in fact serve as proxies for power dispersions and the maintenance of the 'White fantasy'.[344]

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[340] Ibid., 162.
[341] Ibid., 162.
[342] The concept of Cultural Capital has been previously explained.
[343] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 162.
[344] Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*: 18

To demonstrate how this binary is manifested in popular discourse Hage describes a state of 'paranoid nationalism'[345] which is symbolised by an Australia under threat. Under these conditions 'mainstream Australia' represents the old, traditional and true Australia which is threatened through excessive multiculturalism by the 'new' elements to Australian society. Former Australian Prime Minister John Howard examplified the notion that dominance is present in the language of tolerance when speaking about 'Muslim assimilation' in 2007, saying:

> Well there's every reason to try and assimilate, and I unapologetically use that word, a section of the community, a tiny minority of whose members have caused concern and after all once somebody's become a citizen of this country the best thing we can do is to absorb them into the mainstream.[346]

This quote clearly demonstrates the binary of 'Us' and 'Them' in the discourse of Multiculturalism. It also articulates the point that tolerance of the Other is a means of maintaining existing power structures when it is granted with the expectation of gratitude, assimilation and compliance with the parameters set by, and acceptable to, the 'mainstream'.

2.4.3.2   Backlash Against Multiculturalism In The Era Of Globalisation

A mobilisation of anti-multicultural sentiment has occurred over the past thirty years in line with a rise in nationalist ideology in Australia.[347] This has corresponded with the era of

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[345] This is the topic and title of Ghassan Hage's book, see Ghassan Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism : Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society* (Annandale, Vic: Pluto Press, 2003).

[346] Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet "Interview with Neil Mitchell Radio 3AW, Melbourne," accessed March, 2014. http://pmtranscripts.dpmc.gov.au/browse.php?did=15607.

[347] See Jerzyj Smolicz, "Nation states and Globalization from a Multicultural Perspective: Signposts from Australia," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 4, no. 4 (1998), 1-18 and Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*: 12.

globalisation occurring since the 1970s. Andrew Jakubowicz and Christina Ho highlight that changes in multicultural policy in the 1980s and 1990s occurred as neoliberalism led to a preoccupation with economic efficiency. Economic policy dictated social policy and Multiculturalism became couched in terms of productivity diversity and the provision of labour to support Australia's global outlook.[348] The pressures facing multicultural policy during this time came from advocates of 'giving Australian jobs to Australians'. The rise in anti-multicultural sentiment was evident in the prominence of political groups such as The One Nation Party and its' leader Pauline Hanson.[349] In examining the rise in 'Hansonism' (referring to Pauline Hanson) Ghassan Hage describes a particular type of anti-multicultural discourse that debated the appropriateness of various ethnicities being granted access to the 'national space'.[350] It should be noted that 'Hansonism' occurred a decade after the influential 'Fitzgerald Report into immigration policy'[351] which suggested immigration should focus on skilled, youthful labour stating 'selection methods need a sharper economic focus for the public to be convinced that the [immigration] program is in Australia's interests'.[352]

It is fair to assert that despite the global neoliberal shift coinciding with the Federal governments' of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating in the 1980's and 1990's, tension around immigration policy was most exaggerated during the conservative Government era of John Howard (1996-2007). Where under the guise of social cohesion the gulf between multiculturalism and Australia's core-culture was most visible.

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[348] Jakubowicz and Ho, *'for those Who'Ve Come Across the Seas...'*:32.
[349] Pauline Hanson's One Nation political party at its peak represented 9 per cent of the vote in the 1998 federal election.
[350] Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*: 16
[351] The 1988 report of the Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies was chaired by Dr Stephen Fitzgerald.
[352] Committee to Advise on Australia's Immigration Policies, *Immigration: A Commitment to Australia* ,(1988) Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service:1.

Upon election Prime Minister John Howard signalled a relegation of multiculturalism as a policy priority.[353] Funding for programs in the areas of ethnic advocacy was reduced and two government agencies responsible for multicultural affairs (The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research) were dismantled. By the close of the decade the Howard Government had deemphasised social justice from multiculturalism and placed national identity and social cohesion at the heart of immigration policy.[354] Specifically Jakubowicz and Ho observe that in the 1999 *New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* 'the discourse of obligation was strengthened, as opposed to that of rights'.[355] Brian Galligan argues that by the end of Howard's first term of government in 2001, multiculturalism had been reduced to a shell of its former policy self:

> By this time multiculturalism had been effectively gutted as a national policy. In cultural terms, it had been reduced to acknowledging diversity – not the diversity of a collection of separate cultures, but that of a more pluralistic national culture that was predominantly English-speaking and derived from earlier British and Irish migrants. In policy terms, multiculturalism had become an invocation of Australian liberal democratic values and political institutions.[356]

Australia's political and cultural narrative reflected this shift in the premise of multiculturalism during the Howard government years. Turner goes so far as to describe this as a 'highly specific political context' in which 'since 1996 we have seen the mainstreaming of the attack on multiculturalism, on cultural pluralism and the ethics of

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[353] Jakubowicz and Ho, *'for those Who'Ve Come Across the Seas...'*: 38.
[354] Ibid.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Brian Galligan and Winsome and Roberts, *Australian Citizenship* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Publishing, 2004): 94.

social justice.'[357] This shift has been underscored by a move from an anti-multiculturalism discourse that centred on anti-Asian rhetoric, popularised by the likes of Pauline Hanson in the latter half of the 1990's to the rise in racialised discourse centring on Islamaphobia and anti-Middle Eastern rhetoric that has persisted since 2001.

Multiculturalism in contemporary Australian society can be described as existing in a dual reality. At the intellectual and elite levels enthusiam for multiculturalism largely remains while at times 'popular support for it has been less than whole-hearted'.[358] Ho aptly describes how 'the optimistic rhetoric of Australian multiculturalism has always masked a more complex reality of ethnic tensions'.[359]

While there remains a strong level of support for multiculturalism in Australia[360] there exists an important policy challenge in the area of social cohesion. In particular in low socioeconomic areas with high cultural diversity, indicators of social cohesion are markedly low and this is reflected in 'lower levels of trust, sense of safety, political participation, involvement in volunteer work, and higher levels of discrimination.'[361] Ang and Stratton describe this reality as the 'gap between the neat official representation of 'multicultural Australia', on the one hand, and the contradictory everyday experiences and historical memories'[362] on the other.

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[357] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 414.
[358] Ang and Stratton, "Multiculturalism in Crisis": 26.
[359] Ho, "Muslim Women's New Defenders": 291.
[360] Markus, "Mapping Social Cohesion: The Scanlon Foundation Surveys 2014": 4.
[361] Australian Multicultural Council, "The Australian Community", *The Australian Multicultural Council's Report on Multiculturalism and Social Cohesion in Australian Neighbourhoods*: 3.
[362] Ang and Stratton, "Multiculturalism in Crisis": 26.

2.5   The Neoliberal Paradox: Compensating Globalisation's Losers Through

Normalised Othering

The repudiation of Multiculturalism, as seen in the Howard Government era for example, is a demonstration of the neoliberal paradox that has evolved between economic openness and cultural exclusivity. Governments have promoted both trade-liberalising policies and economic openness to the global marketplace, while at the same time have quelled the discomfort this openness brings by encouraging a sense of cultural exclusivity. This paradoxical relationship between economic openness and cultural exclusivity explains how national identity has been strictly defined and why membership to the imagined community of the Australian nation continues to be regulated.[363]

The relevance of globalisation in how identities such as Arab-Australian are shaped lies in the fact that globalisation is 'an ideology [used] to justify growing social inequalities, greater social polarisation and the increasing transfer of state resources to capital.'[364] The relationship between labour and capital has been transformed and the power of capital over labour has resulted in a massive reconcentration of wealth.[365] Access to the resources of globalisation is of course privileged. To illustrate this point Turner argues globalisation has 'most overwhelmingly benefited a cultural and economic elite that can afford the costs of participating in the global economy as well as in the cosmopolitan city, and whose class-based taste cultures are those most directly served'.[366]

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[363] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 412.
[364] James Petras, "Globalization: A Critical Analysis," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 29, no. 1 (1999), 3-37: 4.
[365] Ibid.
[366] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 573.

Globalisation remains a deeply contested concept and arguably without adequate definition. To illustrate this point Jan Aart Scholte asserts that most people are unable to comfortably describe their understanding of globalisation and that when asked 'most people reply with considerable vagueness, inconsistency and confusion'.[367] This is despite the plethora of publications on the subject. Scholte argues discussion of globalisation remains 'conceptually inexact, empirically thin, historically ill-informed, economically and/or culturally illiterate, normatively shallow, and potentially naïve.'[368] The extent to which the two concepts of globalisation and neoliberalism overlap is another area of contention. There is an obvious intersection with globalisation implying an understanding of neoliberalisim and vice-versa. Adam Tickell and Jamie Peck describe how conceptually globalisation and neoliberalism 'are typically ascribed a kind of ubiquitous causal agency by both celebrants and critics alike.'[369] John Quiggen argues that 'globalisation is simply the international manifestation of the swing towards neoliberal policies of market-oriented reform that has taken place throughout the world since 1970.'[370]

Pierre Bourdieu, Dennis Conway and Nik Heynen all highlight the structural inequality attributed to globalisation. Conway and Heynen offer a bleak portrayal of neoliberal doctrine as destructive, dehumanising and destabilising with people 'the disposable assets of today's uneven globalising world'.[371] The poorer, weaker and powerless in global society have suffered most disadvantage though this is routinely rationalised as an

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[367] Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction,* (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave, 2000): 1
[368] Ibid.
[369] Adam Tickell and Jamie Peck, "Making Global Rules: Globalization or Neoliberalization" in *Remaking the Global Economy: Economic-Geographical Perspectives,* ed. Jamie Peck and Henry Wai-Chung Yeung. (London: Sage, 2003):163.
[370] John Quiggin, "Globalisation, Neoliberalism and Inequality in Australia", *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, (December 1999) 10, 240-259: 240.
[371] Dennis Conway and Nik Heynen, eds., *Globalization's Contradictions: Geographies of Discipline, Destruction and Transformation*, 1st ed. (Oxon, United Kindom: Routledge, 2006): 17.

inevitable outcome in the quest for pure competition. Arguably inequality has been

accepted as one of the defining features of globalisation, with the losers blamed for their

'un-competitiveness'.[372] Over the past 20 years popular discourse has shaped globalisation

as a 'form of desire'.[373] This underscores the fact that 'most studies of globalisation have

come from a limited social base of urban-based, white professional, Judea-Christian,

middle-aged men.[374] Despite much been written about the subject, diversity in existing

literature is limited and 'does not adequately cover the many experiences of

globalisation.'[375] Pierre Bourdieu illustrates this point when describing globalisation as a

perceptual 'utopia':

> [the neoliberal utopia] evokes powerful belief - the free trade faith - not only among
> those who live off it, such as financiers, the owners and managers of large
> corporations, etc., but also among those, such as high-level government officials and
> politicians, who derive their justification for existing from it. For they sanctify the
> power of markets in the name of economic efficiency, which requires the elimination
> of administrative or political barriers capable of inconveniencing the owners of
> capital in their individual quest for the maximisation of individual profit, which has
> been turned into a model of rationality.[376]

The transnational free-flow of capital, goods and technology between markets is central to

globalisation.[377] Such commercial exchange places an onus on governments to promote

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[372] Ibid., 17.
[373] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 569.
[374] Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*: 15.
[375] Ibid.
[376] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Essence of Neoliberalism," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* last modified December 1998, accessed June/6, 2013, http://mondediplo.com/1998/12/08bourdieu: 6.
[377] Petras, *Globalization: A Critical Analysis*: 3.

economic openness. At the same time there is a need to mediate the destabilising effects of openness among some sections of society.

Disruptive aspects of labour market dislocation and changes to the dynamics of the relationship between the city and the suburb are felt most by those at the mid-to-lower end of the socio-economic spectrum.[378] The neoliberal paradox explains how, despite the obvious inequalities of globalisation, successive Australian governments since the 1970's have permitted the internationalisation of the economy in the name of globalisation.[379]

Inequality in Australia has been felt most in the areas of labour security and wages. Keith Norris and Ben Mclean studied the changes in earnings inequality from 1975 to 1998.[380] Their study confirmed that the income of the top 10 per cent of workers in Australia rose relative to the median each year since 1975, while the income of the bottom 25 per cent fell relative to the median, the bottom 10 per cent income level fell even more dramatically. In a broader context, David Brady cites a 2002 study of income inequality trends in 16 OECD countries conducted by Arthur Alderson and Francois Nielsen, which found that:

> Outward direct investment, manufacturing imports from developing countries, and immigration exert positive effects on income inequality. They [Alderson and Nielsen] conclude that globalisation contributed to the Great U-turn of increased inequality that nearly all the affluent democracies have experienced since the 1970s.[381]

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[378] Ibid., 11.
[379] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 570.
[380] Cited in John Quiggin, "Globalisation, Neoliberalism and Inequality in Australia," *The Economic and Labour Relations Review* 10, no. 2 (December 01, 1999), 240-259: 253.
[381] Brady, Beckfield and Zhao, "The Consequences of Economic Globalization for Affluent Democracies,"*Annual Review of Sociology* 33 (2007), 313-334: 322.

One contributing area of increased inequality has been the manufacturing sector in Australia which has decreased significantly in line with most developed economies where job creation has been in the service sector at the expense of manufacturing.[382] Throughout the 1990's in Australia the cosmopolitan city became the home of the booming service industries, whereas the manufacturing sector in the middle and outer suburbs –the traditional employment option for the working class and immigrant communities –shrunk dramatically.'[383]

Governments have appeared willing to recompense for the disruptions caused by outward-looking economic policies by invoking a form of cultural introspection which treats Australian identity as an exclusive club. To compensate globalisation's many losers a strong sense of cultural exclusivity has been offered as a way of masking the disruptive impacts to the capital/labour relationship. Turner describes how federal governments have embraced the tenets of globalisation as an 'article of faith for the brand of neo-liberal economics.[384] However governments have also been acutely aware of the impact felt by the losers in the neo-liberal equation and have sought to provide some level of symbolic compensation.

As a foil for harsher economic policies a sense of belonging exclusively to the culturally defined club of Australia has been encouraged. An illustration of this is the rhetoric of 'Team Australia' used by Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott. In 2014 Abbott's invocation of 'Team Australia' targeted migrants when saying 'everyone has got to put this country, its interests, its values and its people first, and you don't migrate to this country

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[382] Stimson, *Australia's Changing Economic Geography Revisited*: 33.
[383] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 573.
[384] Ibid., 570.

unless you want to join our team'.[385] The description of 'Team Australia' conceptualises the workings of the neoliberal paradox. This point is illustrated in the work of Turner, who says:

> We have the invocation of an Australian identity that is agreed, singular and established – against which influences from 'outside' are regarded as destructive and subversive. The usefulness of this for a Coalition that, in another context, is actually hell-bent on breaking down commercial barriers to the 'outside' is important. While it does one thing economically, it can do something else culturally. So at the same time as it trumpets the globalizing rhetoric of an open market, it consoles the victims of this market by reassuring them of the specificity and exclusivity of their Australian citizenship.[386]

Over the last two decades cultural exclusivity has been fostered by strictly defining and regulating 'membership to the imagined community of the Australian nation-state'.[387] Australia's 'national identity' has been reinforced along discrete cultural boundaries. Cultural belonging has been granted based on prescribed ideals of 'mainstream Australia',[388] with those perceived to fall outside these prescribed boundaries becoming the Other.

This restructuring of the relationship between capital and labour has arguably accelerated the processes of Othering. There has been a manipulation of the globalisation process by governments. In particular governments have built upon existing power relationships to

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[385] Jennifer Rajca, "Tony Abbott Says New Migrants must be on 'Team Australia' as He Steps Up War on Home-Grown Jihadists,"*News Corp Australia Network* August 18, 2014.
[386] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 414.
[387] Ibid., 413.
[388] Defined by the concept of 'core culture' see relevant section in Chapter One.

promote a form of cultural elitism. Craig Calhoun argues this elitism is 'constructed out of the concrete conditions of cosmopolitan mobility, education, and participation in certain versions of news and other media flows.'[389] Therefore the manifestation of the neoliberal paradox continues to be not only social inequality but an apparent resurgence in cultural belonging and a greater emphasis on exclusive national belonging.

In 2007 Turner described a 'regressive revival of an exclusivist model of cultural nationalism'[390] which has shaped the experiences of ethnic minorities. Turner has detailed in particular the 'highly provisionalised forms of national belonging now available to Australian citizens in certain immigrant communities, particularly to those from Middle Eastern backgrounds.'[391] Jock Collins argues the positive changes brought about by globalisation are often ascribed to cosmopolitanism while the negative aspects are 'simplified for popular consumption by government statements and media representations so that they appear to be the product of a single, ethnic cause'.[392]

The concept of 'paranoid nationalism' proposed by Ghassan Hage is also relevant to understanding how the Other has been constructed as a threat to commonly held notions of Australian values. [393] Hage argues that a surge in nationalism has led to cultural diversity being represented 'as a virus, introducing un-Australian values hitherto found only in foreign cultures.'[394]

The effects of globalisation in Australia have been to disrupt the traditional sites of manufacturing and the relationship between labour and capital. The groups most affected

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[389] Craig Calhoun, "Belonging'in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary," *Ethnicities* 3, no. 4 (2003), 531-553: 544.
[390] Turner, "Shrinking the Borders": 5.
[391] Ibid.
[392] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 574.
[393] Hage, *Against Paranoid Nationalism: Searching for Hope in a Shrinking Society*.
[394] Turner, "The Cosmopolitan City and its Other": 577.

by these changes have been working class and immigrant communities. The processes of globalisation have attributed to destabilisation and social inequality. The economic policies that have seen massive wealth reconcentration have also disrupted social relations. The destabilisation and insecurity attributed to globalisation necessitates exclusionary boundaries along cultural lines and the promotion of exclusivity in belonging to 'Team Australia'. The drawing of distinctions between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other and a backlash against multiculturalism highlights the disruptive effects of globalisation as people confront the reality of a less equitable social order. The shaping of Arab-Australian identity occurs amidst this broader context of social inequality and destabilisation. The threat of the Other is being harnessed along resurgent or latent Orientalist lines.

2.6   Reigniting Orientalism In The Post September 11 Climate Of 'Moral Panic'

In the problematique of the historical and economic conditions of the last 40 years there is little doubt that the September 11 (9/11) bombings in the United States is critical in the representation of Arab-Australians. This event heralded a new era of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment in the western world and signified an irrevocable change in popular sentiment towards immigration and multiculturalism. In Australia the post-9/11 context is compounded by moral panics about gang rapes in Sydney, the Bali bombings, the Cronulla riots and most recently fears over extremist foreign fighters abroad. These factors all highlight the ways in which 'paranoid nationalism'has been invoked in a resurgent Orientalist discourse in the portrayal of the Arab Other as a threat to Australian society.

In Australia 9/11 followed the prominent 'gang rape' debates. Between August 2000 and 2001 a number of women were targeted apparently on the basis of their Anglo-Australian

race by youths of Lebanese-Australian background.[395] Sydney newspaper *The Daily Telegraph* carried the emotive and inflammatory headline; 'Victim tells how rapists taunted her "You deserve it because you're Australian"'.[396] The resulting public outrage focused on the struggle between the values of Islam and Australia's 'more liberal democratic values'.[397]

The ethicising of the crimes was further emphasised when the sentences of three of the offenders were more than doubled on appeal.[398] Public opinion was appeased when the twenty-year old ringleader of four rape crimes received a fifty-five year goal term. Prime Minister at the time, John Howard applauded the sentence as 'reflecting deep community feeling'.[399] Kate Warner observes that for such an unprecedented sentence the critics were largely marginalised and were mainly from the legal community.[400] The 'gang rape' debates exemplify how race and ethnicity fit within an existing framework of ethicising crime, particularly in Sydney's Western Suburbs.[401]

Amidst the existing fear and tension, the 9/11 attacks caused a surge in anti-Arab, anti-Muslim sentiment. Global acts of terrorism post-9/11 have fueled the debate about the place of Arabs and Muslims in Australian society and provided grounds for a discourse which questioned the commitment and belonging of Arabs and Muslims in the wider community. Victoria Mason supports this point when saying that; 'September 11 heralded a discourse within Australia that legitimised the questioning of the compatibility of Arab

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[395] Kate Warner, "Gang Rape in Sydney: Crime, the Media, Politics, Race and Sentencing," *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 37, no. 3 (2004), 344-361: 345.
[396] Ibid., 346.
[397] Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country"": 235.
[398] Warner, "Gang Rape in Sydney": 348.
[399] Ibid., 350 .
[400] Ibid.
[401] Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country"": 235.

and Muslim Australians with the Australian social context.'[402] While Arab-Australians themselves noted that the events caused them to feel they had been "tarred with the same brush" as adherents to radical Islam and terrorist organisations such as Al Qaeda. [403]

9/11 and the subsequent 'war on terror' have reignited latent Orientalism in the discourse of the Middle East and its people.[404] Scott Poynting describes the perception that events leading up to and including 9/11 had in common the presence of people from what may be broadly identified as a 'Middle Eastern' ancestry. This provided the justification for a climate of fear and suspicion towards those of Arabic-speaking background and especially, but not exclusively Muslims.[405] Stanley Cohen's 1972 definition of the enduring state of 'moral panic' accurately describes the socio-political climate that has largely remained in place in Australia since the 9/11 attacks:

> [A state of 'moral panic' is] a period during which a particular social threat- whether it be a 'condition', a crime or a social group – is identified and made subject to public debate and sustained media coverage. A number of social actors - including politicians, journalists, experts and a range of 'moral entrepreneurs', articulate and evaluate the social threat and its consequences for moral and social order, and offer 'solutions' which may form the basis of governmental responses to the condition.[406]

In isolation 9/11 does not represent the beginning of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim sentiment in contemporary Australia. Rather 9/11 had a catalytic effect which compounded existing prejudice and legitimised underlying Orientalist ideas. For instance Mason argues that

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[402] Ibid., 240.
[403] Ibid., 234.
[404] Said, *Latent and Manifest Orientialism*, 45-56.
[405] Poynting, *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*: 11.
[406] Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* : 9.

post-9/11 discourse is not a new phenomenon and should be understood within the context of an 'established pattern of discrimination.'[407] Mason speaks of the increasing categorical conflation of the terms 'Arab', 'Muslim' and 'terrorist' following 9/11 but argues this was within an existing framework of prejudice. In Australia, as elsewhere, politicians and the media propagating a climate of fear and panic based on existing perceptions about the threat posed by terrorists. There are other examples of moral panics against Muslims in particular and discrimination against Arab-Australians has generally been most prominent during times of crisis, for example the Gulf War.[408]

To compound matters further discourse relating to Arab-Australians throughout the era of the 'war on terror' has been conflated with the ongoing issue of 'boat people'[409]. The treatment of asylum seekers and most notably the *Tampa* and "children overboard"[410] affairs iterates the threat represented by the Other. The conflation of asylum seekers with terrorists can be witnessed in the comments of successive Conservative governments. Prime Minister John Howard articulated this point when saying; 'you don't know who's coming and you don't know whether they [refugees] do have terrorist links or not'.[411] While Prime Minister Tony Abbott compared the government's immigration policy of stopping asylum seekers arriving by boat to that of stopping terrorism when saying 'we

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[407] Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country"":236.
[408] Ibid., 235.
[409] As earlier highlighted the term "boat people" is a form of social categorisation popularised by media and politicians in Australia. It refers to asylum seekers arriving by boat, though often extends to any form of migrants arriving in Australia deemed illegal.
[410] This occurred in the lead up to the 2001 general election when the Howard government alleged asylum seekers arriving by boat had thrown their children overboard as a means of securing rescue and entry to Australia. The Australian Senate Select Committee later found that no children had been thrown overboard and that the government had mislead the electorate on this matter.
[411] The Australian, "Terrorists on Boats Claim Dates Back to Howard," last modified 22 October 2009, http://blogs.theaustralian.news.com.au/samanthamaiden/index.php/theaustralian/comments/terrorists_on_boats_claim_dates_back_to_howard/.

need to bring the same drive, focus and clarity of purpose to countering terrorism that
resulted in stopping the boats under the policy known as Operation Sovereign Borders.'[412]

The 2002 Bali Bombings further exacerbated prejudice towards Arab-Australians. The
symbolic nature of the bombings being 'so close to home' and in bars that were popular
with Australian holidaymakers heightened the perception that Australians were the targets
of the bombings. In this case again there was little understanding of the diversity of the
Muslim world, with the conflation of all people of the Muslim faith. In the months
following there were a series of violent anti-Arab and anti-Muslim attacks in Sydney and
Melbourne accompanied by intensified questioning and suspicion of Arabs and
Muslims.[413] Popular discourse, in particular the media, questioned the compatibility of
Islam with Australian values and whether Muslim leaders were doing enough to condemn
terrorism.[414]

The riots that took place in 2005 in the Sydney beachside suburb of Cronulla were a
continued flashpoint in negative sentiment towards immigrant communities.[415] The riots
represented a graphic display of retribution by 'white Australians' against the behaviour of
'ethnic gangs' in one of Sydney's most homogenous suburbs. The episode evidenced the
fissures in multiculturalism with media and political populism fuelling the violence. Scott
Poynting describes the highly disturbing way events were conflated within the context of
existing anti-Arab sentiment, stating:

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[412] Latika Bourke, "Tony Abbott Says Stopping Terrorists Like Stopping the Boats," *Sydney Morning Herald*
May 25, 2015. Accessed online 12/11/2015.
[413] Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country"": 236.
[414] See the comments of Andrew Bolt in the Herald Sun and Richard Carlton of 60 Minutes cited in Mason,
Strangers within in the "Lucky Country": Arab-Australians After September 11, 233-243: 236.
[415] Scott Poynting, "What Caused the Cronulla Riot?" *Race & Class* 48, no. 1 (July 01, 2006), 85-92. 91.

In a moral panic about the purported bad behaviour of 'Lebs' at the beach, a bystander of Bangladeshi background was chased, mobbed and assaulted. The Arab the Other has morphed into the Muslim the Other. This process is not new – Indonesian women in hijabs had their veils torn off in Australia during the 1991 Gulf War – but it has been greatly exacerbated since September 11.[416]

The rise in prominence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Da'ish,[417] is a current and developing consideration in the dynamic of Arab-Australian identity and representation. In a strategic sense Da'ish has moved beyond a terrorist group to a militia capable of capturing terrain and seeking to govern over parts of Iraq and Syria.[418] It is difficult to analyse the long-term effect this issue is likely to have, at the time of writing the Australian government was considering sending military to conduct aerial operations to combat Da'esh.[419] However pertinent to the issue of representation of Arab-Australians has been the recruitment of foreign fighters to ISIL's cause. In June 2015 it was estimated that around 35 Australians had died while fighting for Da'esh in Syria and Iraq.[420]The issue raises fears about the threat posed to Australian security of returning fighters. Increasingly though the issue is being framed in terms of social cohesion and the compatibility of Islam with so-called Australian values. The response of the Australian government, which is

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[416] Poynting, *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other*: 88.
[417] The Arabic acronym for the group which is now the preferred term of many western leaders because of its depreciative nature.
[418] See Territorial Claims cited in *The Australian*, "Tony Abbott Says 35 Aussies have Died Fighting with Islamic State", (03 June 2015): 4
[419] Mark Kenny and David and Wroe, "Tony Abbott Pushed for US Request to Join Syria Air Strikes," *Sydney Morning Herald* 26 August 2015.
[420] AAP, "Tony Abbott Says 35 Aussies have Died Fighting with Islamic State", *The Australian,* 03 June 2015.

couched in counter-terrorism terms, may be serving to compound the stigmatisation of Muslims.[421]

These events globally and within Australia have heralded a rise in Islamophobia along Orientalist lines. The regular depiction of those of Middle Eastern background as being incompatible with 'mainstream Australia' allows a discourse to be constructed in which Arab-Australians are the Other.

2.7   Conclusion

This chapter has described in detail the binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Arab-Australian Other. Historical factors account for the construction of Arab-Australian identity, in particular what Edward Said describes as 'latent Orientalism'[422] is central to how Arab-Australians have historically been located outside the imagined community.

Globalisation has reshaped identities through the social and cultural disruptions brought about by the restructuring of the relationship between labour and capital. This situates Arab-Australian identity amidst broader social inequality attributed to globalisation. Changes in the dynamics of the city and the suburb have occurred and there have been shifts in the socioeconomic balance and the traditional make-up of these sites. Inequality in Australia has been felt most in the areas of labour security and wages. The neoliberal paradox explains how governments have promoted economic openness to the global marketplace, while at the same time have quelled the discomfort this openness brings by

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[421] Andrew Zammit, *The Lowy Institute - Australian Foreign Fighters: Risks and Responses* (Sydney: The Lowy Institute, 2015).
[422] Said, *Latent and Manifest Orientialism*: 45.

encouraging a sense of cultural exclusivity. National identity has been strictly defined and 'membership to the imagined community of the Australian nation-state'[423] remains highly regulated. It has been argued the destabilisation and insecurity attributed to globalisation necessitates exclusionary boundaries along cultural lines and the promotion of exclusivity in belonging to Australia. Cultural belonging to 'team Australia' is granted based on prescribed 'mainstream' ideals and values. Those perceived to fall outside these prescribed boundaries becoming the Other. The drawing of distinctions between 'mainstream Australia' and the Other and a backlash to multiculturalism highlights the disruptive effects of globalisation as people confront the reality of a less equitable social order.

Multiculturalism and the immigration agenda in Australia has shaped the way the Other has been constructed in Australian society. Arab-Australian representation as Other is manifest in the social and economic space. Arab-Australians suffer from lower employment and poor education and employment experiences when compared to the broader Australian community. Global and local events, such as 9/11, the Bali bombings and the Cronulla riots have compounded the stigmatisation and marginalisation of Arab-Australians. This has resulted in barriers to a more active participation in the community.[424] Moreover moral panics surrounding the rise of terrorism in particular has not been confined to the perpetrators or indeed encased within a rational fear of terrorism on Australian shores. Rather alongside earlier urban law-and order issues involving migrant communities, events such as 9/11 have given rise to the legitimisation of public discourse which questions the belonging and compatibility of the Arab-Australian community. It has been demonstrated that events both globally and within Australia have

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[423] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 413.
[424] Kenny et al., *Arabic Communities and Well-being:* 8.

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harnessed a resurgence in Islamophobia along Orientalist lines. Latent Orientalism in Australia underscores the conflation and representation of Arab-Australians. These events have further served to normalise the existing climate of anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment. There continues to be a legitimatisation of discourse that questions the basic rights and identity of Arab-Australians.[425] This can be witnessed in the normalisation of Othering across any number of different political and media sites.

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[425] Mason, "Strangers within in the "Lucky Country"": 236.

Chapter 3 - The Role Of The Media In Constructing The Other: Analysis Of Coverage Of The Arab Spring.

3.1   Introduction

The power of the media lies in its ability to influence belief systems by selecting, shaping and giving meaning to events.[426] The media exerts power over many aspects of political and social life and influences the decisions and actions of its audiences from politicians and policy makers through to individual citizens.

When deciphering how issues abroad, namely affecting the Middle East, may be contextulised for Australian audiences Alasuutari et al concludes that foreign news is domesticated via four modes. Firstly, the use of emotive appeal which brings events closer to home, secondly by linking events with local compatriots or personalising the story and thirdly by reporting on the statements and actions of domestic actors in relation to foreign news events and implicating these in the domestic setting.[427] These modes of domestication are substantiated by the coverage presented in this study.

The process for contextualising international news for an Australian audience relies on the often subtle but power effects of framing.[428] Stephen Reese *et al* articulate framing in

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[426] Chandana Hewege, "Understanding Media Constructions of Volunteering: An Australian Perspective," *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development* 23, no. 3 (2013), 155-167: 156.

[427] Pertti Alasuutari, Ali Qadir and Karin Creutz, "The Domestication of Foreign News: News Stories Related to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution in British, Finnish and Pakistani Newspapers," *Media, Culture & Society* 35, no. 6 (September, 2013), 692-707: 699.

[428] Reese, Gandy Jr and Grant, *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World*: 96.

terms of the cognitive dimensions where framing influences beliefs about objects as well as attitudes.[429]

This chapter populates the central research premise with empirical knowledge of media discourse. The Arab Spring is used as a prism through which to consider how Arab-Australian identity is a constructed identity largely defined by Orientialist ideas about the Middle East and its people. Secondly analysis of media coverage demonstrates the pervasive state of national paranoia that has normalised the Othering of Arab-Australians in the context of 'national security' concerns.

This chapter explores how Arab-Australians are Othered in the presentation of news events. Underscored by latent Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people, Arab-Australians are to a large extent conflated with conceptualisation of Muslims and Islam. Furthermore this chapter demonstrates how Othering has largely digressed from non-white racism to Islamophobia in recent times. In Chapter Two the binary relationship between 'mainstream Australia' and the Arab-Australian Other was established, this chapter supports this work with empirical evidence of these concepts in action.

The two main ideas that inform this media discourse analysis are; firstly how the media use framing to report the news and secondly how news is domesticated to appeal to an Australian audience and in many cases Westernised.

In line with much of the world, the Australian media tends to reflect and preserve existing power structures within political, economic and social systems.[430] To this end much of

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[429] Ibid
[430] David Paletz, *Media Power Politics*, ed. Robert M. Entman (New York: London: Free Press,Collier Macmillan, 1981): 251.

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Australia's mainstream media continues to reinforce the Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people.[431] Roberta Hackett asserts the media 'largely accepts and reinforces the definitions of issues which have prevailed in the political domain.'[432] Such is the case that events involving the Middle East and its people are typically represented in a Huntingtonesq 'clash of civilisation'[433] view of history which deals in pejorative ethno-cultural or evolutionary terms.

The opinions and thematic concepts presented in the media are often not reflective of the diversity of broader society and many Australians from non-English speaking backgrounds believe that the media does not 'represent their way of life'.[434] Kevin Dunn supports this point by saying 'the portrayal of cultural groups and their spaces is deeply politicised'.[435] Ruth Wodak calls it a fallacy that 'media institutions often purport to be neutral, in that they provide space for public discourse, reflect states of affairs disinterestedly, and give the perceptions and arguments of the newsmakers'.[436] Rather Wodak argues that the media has a 'mediating and constructing role'.[437] Media coverage is therefore a key means for observing and evaluating the representation of Arab-Australians. The role of the media as constructors of public narrative is an important concept for this study particularly because media texts are 'sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance.'[438]

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[431] See seminal works by Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* , *Orientalism Reconsidered* and *Orientalism Once More*.
[432] Roberta Hackett, "Decline of a Paradigm? Bias and Objectivity in News Media Studies," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 1, no.3 (1984), 229-259: 248.
[433] See Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations? ": *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer, 1993): 22-49.
[434] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 412.
[435] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 153.
[436] Wodak, *Critical Discourse Analysis*: 188.
[437] Ibid.
[438] Seale, *Qualitative Research Practice*: 187.

This chapter is based on analysis of 576 articles found in Australian newspapers over a three year period during the Arab Spring events in Egypt. The full methodological approach is detailed in the Introduction of this thesis.

3.2 'Framing' As A Means Of Analysing The Othering Of Arab-Australians In The Media

Framing is central to theorising the media, in particular when explaining how power is derived and the mechanisms of influence. Framing gives researchers the ability to theorise media content in the context of ideology and importantly for this study, the role of media in enabling hegemonic ideas.[439]

The power of framing therefore rests on its ability to define the issues and set the terms of a debate.[440] This is a subtle process which may involve culling a few elements of perceived reality to construct a narrative that highlights certain connections among concepts to promote a certain interpretation of events.[441] Not all frames can be considered equal in importance, there are some frames which are weighted with greater significance for impacting the overall perception or for altering the understanding of an issue for the receiver. According to Robert Entman, attention must be paid to establishing an adequate framing agenda in media content analysis because 'unguided by the framing paradigm, content analysis may often yield data that misrepresents the media messages that most audience members are actually picking up.'[442] As such the salience of frames lies in their

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[439] Stephen D Reese, Oscar H. Gandy Jr and August E. Grant, *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World* / LEA's Communication Series. Hoboken: Routledge, 2001: 96
[440] Ibid
[441] {{254 D'Angelo, Paul 2010}} pg. 336
[442] {{139 Entman, Robert M. 1993}} pg. 57

usefulness for evaluating the relationships between dominant messages and the influence these have on the audiences targeted.

A media content analysis provides a 'systematic tool for summarising words of a text into fewer content categories'.[443] This process is aided by 'framing' which has formed the basis for the content categories used in this study. Robert Entman describes media framing as a process of selection and salience in the reporting of news.[444] Entman explains the concept of framing in the following definition:

> To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make those more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.[445]

Roberta Hackett makes the point that framing is not a conscious process of journalists but rather 'the result of the unconscious absorption of assumptions about the social world in which the news must be embedded in order to be intelligible to its intended audience.'[446] The concept of media framing recognises the presence of power and ideology in how news events are reported. To support this point Hackett urges researchers to 'shift their focus from the study of objectivity and bias to the study of ideology in the news.'[447] Therefore framing is an important basis for media discourse analysis because 'it has the potential of getting beneath the surface of news coverage and exposing the hidden assumptions.'[448]

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[443] Hewege, *Understanding Media Constructions of Volunteering: An Australian Perspective*, 155-167: 158.
[444] Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." *Journal of Communication* 43, no.4 (1993), 51-58: 52.
[445] Ibid.
[446] Hackett, *Decline of a Paradigm?*: 248.
[447] Cited in Reese, Gandy Jr and Grant, *Framing Public Life :Perspectives on Media and our Understanding of the Social World*, ed by Stephen D. Reese et al. (Hoboken: Routledge, 2001): 96.
[448] Hackett, *Decline of a Paradigm?* 245.

Entman proposes that media framing functions in four ways: Firstly, media framing *defines problems*, using common cultural value measurements to determine what is happening; secondly media framing *diagnoses causes* and identifies the forces which are to blame; thirdly media framing *makes moral judgments,* which evaluate causal agents and their effects and; finally media framing *suggests remedies* to overcome the problems defined.[449] Frames may perform one or all of these functions in communicating an event or happening.[450] These functions are the basis for the analytical model employed by this study to evaluate the coverage of the Arab Spring[451] in Australia. Under the analytical framing model used, each article of news has the potential to perform one or more of these functions:

1. Define problems

2. Diagnose causes

3. Make moral judgments

4. Suggest remedies

Framing acknowledges how the media often preserves the dominant discourse and accepted norms when representing the Middle East and its people. To illustrate how this occurs Hackett argues that commentary or opinion which reflects a particular agenda or accepted norm achieves dominance when 'viewpoints which lie outside the consensus (as articulated by the established parties) seem irrational or illegitimate—if those viewpoints receive any attention at all.'[452]

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[449] Entman, *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*: 52.
[450] Ibid.
[451] The Arab Spring is a contested terminology. The term 'Egyptian revolution' more adequately describes events in Egypt. As such this term is used most frequently in this Chapter and or interchangeably with the Arab Spring in other parts of this study.
[452] Hackett, *Decline of a Paradigm?*: 248.

While in a single news event there are a number of possible interpretations, by assigning significance to one particular interpretation over another, the meaning of events are altered for the audience. Therefore the media frames issues based on their ability to 'favour a particular side without showing an explicit bias'.[453]

Media framing can 'eliminate voices and weaken arguments'[454] through its processes of selection and salience. Therefore power lies not in the media expressing explicit prejudice or overt opinion but rather in the ability it possesses to normalise the dominance of a particular discourse in the way issues are contextualised or framed. Hackett illustrates the power derived from framing when stating 'defining the terms of a debate takes one a long way towards winning it.'[455]

In this study the example of the Arab Spring events in Egypt are used to theorise the role and importance of the media in enabling constructs of Arab-Australian identity. The media framing agenda, along with an evaluation of the weighting of each of these frames, provides the means for analysis.

For example, present in the Arabic media are a number of value statements made about the political processes of Australia, specifically in regards to the replacement of Julia Gillard by Kevin Rudd in 2013. The political transition which occurred in a peaceful manner was contrasted against the political overthrow of Mubarak and then Morsi which were accompanied by violence and upheaval. This demonstrates how a media frame operated to make a value statement about the political differences between Australia and Egypt. To articulate this point further the media discourse gave salience to similarities to democratic

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[453] Ibid.
[454] Ibid.
[455] Reese, Gandy and Grant, *Framing Public Life* : 95.

and secular values perceived to be held by Israel and Turkey over the undesirable values perceived to belong to other Arab nations in the region, this is explained further in Section 3.6 relating to Framing Agenda Three 'Making moral Judgments'.

Australia's interests in Egypt mostly entailed its citizens' welfare, travel and tourism considerations as well as Australia's declared interest in seeing Egypt returned to stable democratic rule. Responses of members of the Australian Government to various events in Egypt centred on calls for the reinstatement of democratic rule following the army assuming power.

3.3   Orientalism In The Media Coverage Of The Middle East And Its People

There has been considerable attention given to the Australian media's role in 'stereotyping, homogenising, victimising and demonising people of Middle Eastern descent or of the Islamic faith.'[456] This study makes a further contribution to this field by considering how the Australian news media (mainstream and Arabic) have covered the events of the Arab Spring and the extent to which this has been in keeping with long-held Orientialist notions of the Middle East and its people.

There are two truths in media and cultural studies that are explored by this media content analysis. Firstly the media 'will generally reflect the perspectives and interest of established power'.[457] Established power in this case is represented by the concept of 'mainstream Australia' with its ideas of Western dominance and evidenced by Orientalist stereotypes of the Middle East. Secondly the reporting of foreign news events are

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[456] See Benjamin Isakhan, "Orientalism and the Australian News Media: Origins and Questions," in *Islam and the Australian News Media*, eds. Halim Rane, Jacqui Ewart and Mohamad Abdalla (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2010), 3-25: 3.

[457] Noam Chomsky, "Democracy and the Media", from *Necessary Illusions: Chapter One*. Last updated December 2014, http://genius.com/Noam-chomsky-democracy-and-the-media-section-three-annotated.

domesticated to appeal to local audiences.[458] In regards to this second truth Gurevitch et al describe how 'foreign news events are told in ways that render them more familiar, more comprehensible and more compatible for consumption by different national audiences'.[459]

In regards to the first truth Graeme Turner asserts that people and events involving the Middle East have long been 'coded as primitive or heathen'.[460] Similarly Benjamin Isakhan argues 'the construction of the Arab/Middle Eastern/Islamic 'other' in the news media has lineage tracing back as far as the modern media industry itself.'[461]

Using the example of the Iraq War, Isakhan argues that contemporary Australian news media reporting 'has provided the Australian populace with a limited discursive field that continues to engender the kind of myths and images that have long demarcated the divide between Oriental backwardness and Western civility.'[462]

Previous studies of the Australian news media such as those by Peter Manning, demonstrate that the media in Australia has 'a remarkably consistent view of Arab people and people of Muslim belief'[463] and which is typified by a 'portrait of deep and sustained fear.'[464]This view is supported by the findings of this content analysis where it is shown how the dominant cultural ideas of Australia, largely Western, inform the media reporting of the Arab Spring in Egypt. In order to enhance the salience and domestic appeal of

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[458] See Pertti Alasuutari, Ali Qadir and Karin Creutz, "The Domestication of Foreign News: News Stories Related to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution in British, Finnish and Pakistani Newspapers," *Media, Culture & Society* 35, no. 6 (September, 2013), 692-707: 693.
[459] Gurevitch, Levy and Roeh in Pertti Alasuutari, Ali Qadir and Karin Creutz, "The Domestication of Foreign News": 693.
[460] Turner, *After Hybridity: Muslim-Australians and the Imagined Community*: 412.
[461] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 21.
[462] Ibid., 4.
[463] Peter Manning, "Arabic and Muslim People in Sydney's Daily Newspapers, before and After September 11," *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy*, no. 109 (2003), 50-70. accessed at http://us-and-them.com.au/research/2012/7/21/arabic-and-muslim-people-in-sydneys-daily-newspapers-before-and-after-september-11.
[464] Ibid.

global news events, in this case in Egypt, events were Orientalised to be a 'story about people's fight for democracy, freedom of speech and other 'western values' in a repressive part of the Islamic world.'[465] To this end Manning argues that Australia has successfully normalised its own form of Orientalism 'transplanted and developed on Antipodean shores.'[466]

This study of the Australian print media follows work already undertaken on coverage of the Egyptian revolution in British, Finnish and Pakistani newspapers by Alasuutari, Qadir, and Creutz. Alasuutari *et al* highlighted why the Egyptian Revolution captured the attention of global newsrooms. Their findings concluded that while the story was not 'our' story in the sense that it did not relate to the domestic news agenda of the countries studied, by Orientalising the story the events were considered a 'good story' to Western audiences because they contained a clear story line with distinct heroes and villains with whom audiences could emotionally sympathise with and against.[467]

The coverage in this study demonstrates how news is Orientalised in the Australian context to appeal to local audiences. This occurs by westernising news and engendering it with established ideology and pervading stereotypes when reporting the non-Western world. Isakhan describes this as the invocation of 'a familiar catalogue of assumptions, images and motifs.'[468] This supports the point that the media reinforces existing representations of Arabs when reporting news events such as the Arab Spring.

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[465] Alasuutari, Qadir and Creutz, "The Domestication of Foreign News": 704.
[466] Manning, *Arabic and Muslim People in Sydney's Daily Newspapers*.
[467] Alasuutari, Qadir and Creutz, "The Domestication of Foreign News": 704.
[468] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 21.

The media analysis contained within this study demonstrates the point that coverage of the Arab Spring was largely framed by Orientalism which remains dominant in the mainstream pejorative views of Arab-Australian identity. This speaks to the pervasiveness of Orientialsm in the mainstream media's projection of issues relating to Arabs in Australia and in more recent times, the pervasive state of national paranoia that has normalised Othering under the guise of 'national security'.

The framing agenda for reporting the events of the Egyptian revolution was demonstrated to have a number of features. Through the themes articulated in this media analysis it has been highlighted that news reporting of the events in Egypt have largely held to norms which observe the notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' and which treat Arab-Australians in ways that locate them outside this imagined community.

As the following sections will detail, the mainstream Australian media predominantly framed events in Egypt in line with broader Western interests of democracy, the threat of Islamist takeover and the implications for the West's allies in the region, namely, Israel. The themes through which events were framed concede to mainstream interests and draw from a 'limited discursive field'[469] to make value statements. The dominant themes of democracy and the threat of an Islamist takeover in Egypt framed the reporting over the stated social justice objectives of the uprising in Egypt arguably because these themes are more digestible to Western audiences.

Contained within the coverage were both inferences and explicit statements that the Arab world remains 'backward' and this highlights how Orientalism remains enabled by the mainstream media. Through value statements such as 'The Arab encounter with

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[469] Ibid.

modernisation has been catastrophic'[470] the mainstream media is supporting notions that the Middle East and its people have not been enlightened by modernity and by extension of this point by Western modernity. This example from *The Australian* illustrates this point further:

> Normal meant western European. They wanted a normal economy, meaning capitalist, and a normal political system, meaning parliamentary democracy. While I'm sure the Middle East also aspires to European standards of living, and while many also aspire to democracy and free markets, the path to those political systems in this region is far less obvious.[471]

Value judgments such as this explicitly denote a backwardness present in the Arab World, drawing the inference that the only history of importance is that of Western history. As this example from *The Sydney Morning Herald* further highlights:

> The Arab world has been on holiday from history for four decades. As the number of democracies worldwide tripled and representative government flourished on every continent as never before, only one region has been in a state of suspended animation.[472]

Furthermore the language employed by this style of coverage explicates that only through embracing Western liberal democracy does 'the arrested development of the Arab world appear[s] to be approaching an end.'[473]

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[470] Greg Sheridan, 'Arab Awakening Or Dawn Of Dark Age?', The Australian, 3 February 2011: 14.
[471] Anne Applebaum, 'Arab world reaches the crossroads', The Australian, 5 February 2011, 17.
[472] Peter Hartcher, 'Temples of doomed democracy begin to stir from their coma', The Sydney Morning Herald, 1 February 2011: 11
[473] Ibid.

This point is supported by the desire of the United States to see democratic transition in the region and the need to return economic function to Egypt, two omnipresent features of the mainstream media coverage. An interesting aspect of the mainstream Australian media's coverage is the framing of events not in terms of the Egyptian people or Egyptian interests but in the context of maintaining regional stability and peace for Israel which is presented in the best interests of the wider international community.

In a further demonstration of how Orientalism informed media reporting of events. There was a tendency of the mainstream Australian media to frame events in Egypt in terms of their consequences for Israel not in terms of their ramifications for the people of Egypt. As this excerpt from *The Australian* newspaper illustrates:

> For Israel, which for decades has been able to rely on Egypt as the West's greatest ally in the Middle East, the uprising has deep strategic implications. A weakened Egypt, one prey to religious fundamentalism, threatens Israel's survival.[474]

The point that the mainstream media often represented events in the context of their ramifications for Israel is reflective of Australia's affinity with Israel and the perception that Israel's cultural values are more aligned to the West than the East and therefore are closer to Australia's core culture.[475] In contrast, the Arabic media in Australia tended to frame events in terms of the Egyptian peoples' demands and objectives.

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[474] Unknown, 'World waits to see next move in Cairo's moment', The Australian, 31 January 2011: 15
[475] For more analysis of this relationship see Rubenstein and Fleischer have explored this subject in , *A Distant Affinity:The Hisory of Australian-Israeli Relations*, 101-124.

Paradoxically, a feature of the coverage was to use historical attempts by the West, and the US in particular, to control the affairs of the Middle East to frame current predicaments. Particularly the lengthy negative and destabilising influences of supporting dictators such as Mubarak. However the mainstream Australian media gave overwhelming salience to the responses and actions of the West, and most often the United States and Israel. This was despite criticism of Western hegemony and interference in the affairs of the Middle East found in both the mainstream and Arabic media.

To this point there were inferences made in the mainstream media that the West has a right or obligation to control Egypt's path either for its own interests or in the interest of the Egyptian people. This further denotes outdated and Orientalist notions towards the Middle East. This excerpt from *The Australian* illustrates this point, stating that supporting the departure of Mubarak; 'may sound simple on paper. In reality, once Mr Mubarak has fled, Egypt's fate will be hard to control. Demonstrators may refuse to accept any former members of the regime -- as protesters in Tunis did.'[476] The readiness to accept or even condone meddling in the affairs of the revolution by the West was further demonstrated in examples such as this from *The Australian* newspaper; 'Frightening as it may be, the revolt on the Nile, if it can be controlled, could provide the key not only to democratising the Middle East but also to defeating Islamic terrorism.'[477]

Orientalism demonstrated in the mainstream media coverage of the events in Egypt is underpinned by the very definitive black and white view of critical events and issues in the Middle East. In support of this point is this assessment of the Muslim Brotherhood provided in *The Australian* newspaper:

[476] Richard Beeston, 'Envoy To Play Egyptian Endgame', The Australian, 3 February 2011: 11.
[477] Matthew Campbell, 'Egypt's tech-savvy young rattle old regimes', The Australian, 12 February 2011: 2.

Despite the treacly and often ridiculous press it is getting in the West at the moment, the Muslim Brotherhood is an extremist, Islamist organisation dedicated to sharia law, establishing an Islamic caliphate and opposing Israel.[478]

This assessment clearly negates the nuances of the political situation in Egypt at the time and reflects the mainstream media's default of simplifying issues of the Arab World and its people.

3.3.1   Recourse For Those Subjected To Othering In The Media

There is little recourse for minority groups negatively affected by representation and stereotyping in public discourse and particularly by the media. In the case of representation in the media self-regulation by media organisations has been shown to be largely ineffective.[479] The professional code of conduct for television and radio broadcast and the media complaints ombudsmen has largely failed prevent poor representation from occurring. Kevin Dunn finds that the industry-formed regulators have not been effective in encouraging good practice and responsible reporting nor have they seriously punished instances of misconduct.[480]

As such the system as it currently stands places the burden of policing media standards on the subjected groups themselves. Dunn notes that 'expecting vilified individuals, often poorly resourced, to mount cases in courts or tribunals against organised racist groups, media corporations, or systematic offenders, places a particularly unfair burden on those people.'[481]

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[478] Greg Sheridan, 'If Only Mubarak Resembled Suharto', The Australian, 17 February 2011:12.
[479] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 155.
[480] Ibid.
[481] Ibid.

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This point further highlights the importance of studies which question the underlying assumptions and stereotypes evidenced in the media reporting of groups subject to Othering.

3.3.2   The Arab-Australian Other In Media Coverage Of The Arab Spring

In this study media content was firstly classified by type before being analysed using the media frames model proposed by Robert Entman. This content analysis revealed a complex framing agenda with a number of important findings relevant to the representation of Arab-Australians as Other.

Reporting of the Egyptian revolution largely held to norms which observe the notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' and which treat Arab-Australians in ways that locate them outside the imagined community. The framing agenda highlighted by this study demonstrates the ways assumed cultural values, relatable to audiences in Australia, were invoked when explaining the events in Egypt. Specific statements which narrated Australian values and Australian interests typified the coverage of the events in Egypt in order to domesticate the story.

Persistent Orientalism is evidenced in the 'ideological uniformity'[482]of the contemporary Australian media in their coverage of the events in Egypt. The findings of this media study highlight how Australia's democratic values can be juxtaposed against the values of countries in the Middle East, which are portrayed to be both undemocratic and unfamiliar. To this end Australia's mainstream media, predicably, framed the events in Egypt through

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[482] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 4.

a Western prism, which is in line with broader Orientialist representations of Arabs as the Other.

Each of the 576 newspaper articles included in this content analysis were coded according to the predominant or reoccurring themes within their content. Central themes emerged from the content analysis which form the basis of the analysis discussed below. Content analysis applied the four functions of media framing model proposed by Robert Entman to examine these central themes.[483] The table below gives a summary of the location of the central themes of the newspaper coverage within the framing model. In-depth analysis of each of the frames follows in the body of this chapter:

Table 6. Coverage Theme Location Within Entman's Model Of Framing

Entman's Four Functions	Coverage Themes
1. Define Problems	People's demands and objectives
	Economy and Stability in Egypt
	Christian Persecution
	Stability in the Region (for Israel)
2. Diagnose Causes	Islamists Takeover
	Youth Movement
	Western Dominance of the Middle East
3. Make Moral Judgments	Democracy
	Israel
	Role of the Army
4. Suggest Remedies	Global and Australian support for Democracy in Egypt
	Comparisons to Alternate Revolutions/Models

3.3.2.1 Terminology Of The Arab Spring

It was noted that the terminology used to describe the events in Egypt changed throughout the coverage timeframe. The term 'Arab Spring' was largely confined to the mainstream media and not widely used in the Arabic media. The term 'revolution' was most widely

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[483] See the full explanation of Central Themes in Introduction.

used in the Arabic media while the term 'demonstration' and variants of this were also found. Interestingly the term 'revolution' spaned the entire duration of the coverage and applied to both the overthrow of Mubarak and then also the ousting of Morsi. However some Arabic commentators elaborated by using the terms 'first revolution' and 'second revolution' to distinguish between these two events. The mainstream Australian media tended to favour the term 'Arab Spring' in the coverage of the events throughout the study timeframe. This supports the idea that the Arab Spring is a term originating in Western commentary of the events, and thus is a term that resonates mostly with the English media, while within the Arabic press the term did not carry the same significance.

3.4 Framing Agenda One: Coverage That 'Defined Problems' In The Arab Spring Events

From the media coverage analysed, four central themes functioned to define the underlying problems either accounting for the uprising in Egypt or the events since. These themes showed how media framing was used to conceptualise the situation in Egypt for Australian audiences; Firstly the Egyptian people's demands and objectives; secondly, economy and stability in Egypt; thirdly, Christian persecution; and lastly stability in the region with a focus on Israel.

3.4.1 People's Demands And Objectives

Coverage of the Egyptian revolution framed problems in Egypt, particularly in the early stages of the uprising, using the theme 'people's demands and objectives'. This theme encapsulated the causes of social unrest in Egypt and allocated importance to the various demands that were perceived to be inspiring the uprising. For example, The Australian published the following in the early days of the uprising; 'The protesters are trying to end

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the Mubarak regime, not just his presidency. They want to ensure his son, Gamal, does not remain in a position of influence.'[484]

This theme was shared by both the Arabic and mainstream Australian media, though with nuanced differences in defining the uprising and the terms of the protestor's demands and objectives. The following two examples taken from the Arabic media illustrate these nuances in language; 'This revolution will reach to what the Egyptian people want, freedom, justice and dignity.'[485] And; 'We heard a lot of commentary from the friends of America and Israel that what is happening in Egypt is "bread and butter" revolution. The reality is that we are entering into a full revolution, a revolution by the poor, and a revolution by those who are after freedom."[486]

Applied against two examples from the mainstream Australian media; 'Ms Gillard (Prime Minister Julia Gillard) refused to be drawn on whether Mr Mubarak should step down, saying only that she understood the Egyptian peoples' desire for democracy, but it was not for her to determine how that should be attained.'[487] And; 'they want what Westerners have: democracy, prosperity, freedom and dignity.'[488] Here it is demonstrated how the mainstream media framed the objectives of the revolution in terms of democracy while the Arabic media presented the demands more in line with the stated objectives of the movement against social inequality - 'bread, freedom and justice' and 'bread, freedom and national dignity'.[489]

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[484] John Lyons, "Anger stoked in Egypt as leader off with the pharaohs" *The Australian*, 03 February 2011:33.
[485] Sheik Taj El Deen Hillaly, "Egypt and the Revolution" *El Telegraph*, 02 February 2011: 5.
[486] Unknown, "Nasrallah (Party of God): We will give all what we have", *El Telegraph*, 09 February 2011: 3.
[487] Jason Koutsoukis and Dan Oakes, "Evacuation as crackdown fears spread", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 2011: 1.
[488] Martin Fletcher, "Uprising not over religion", *The Australian*, 07 February 2011: 9.
[489] Jane Kinninmont, *'Bread, Dignity and Social Justice': The Political Economy of Egypt's Transition* Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House, 2012). accessed 17/11/2015.

This theme largely centered on reporting the calls for the removal of Hosni Mubarak, for example; 'This attitude represents a message to Mubarak to establish a new constitution followed by his own departure.' [490] Hosni Mubarak and what he represented was the problem defined by invoking this frame. Mubarak's failure to recognise and address issues of economic disparity, his political corruption and nepotism are defined as reasons for the uprising of the people, for instance; 'The Egyptian Government should address the demands by the Egyptian population for serious change. Words are not enough.'[491]

The peoples' demands continued as a theme throughout the coverage of the parliamentary elections held in 2011/2012. In particular questions about the purpose of the uprising and the subsequent events were raised when Mohammad Morsi was elected President and again when Morsi was deposed in a coup. Demands to listen to the people feature heavily in the coverage, illustrated in coverage such as; 'The Youth movement is after demolishing both, the old regime represented by the army and the new regime represented by the Brothers.'[492]

Sustained over the timeframe of the coverage in reporting and opinion editorials, were questions about the rationale for the social and economic disruption resulting from the overthrow of the long standing status quo in Egypt. This was encountered in both the Arabic and mainstream media. Statements such as 'who's paying the price? We all are paying… Youth, Old, Christians, Muslims '[493] and 'societies where the fabric is torn apart will not achieve change to the better unless a social truce is achieved. This is what Egypt

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[490] Unknown, "The Army will not accept a civilian president", *El Telegraph*, 02 February 2011: 8.
[491] Unknown, "Mubarak requests an investigation", *Al Mustaqbal*, 09 February 2011: 1.
[492] Jihad Al Zain, "Youth Movements in Egypt facing the current and future regimes", *Al Mustaqbal*, 30 November 2011: 8.
[493] Mohammad Hadi, "Egyptians are paying the price", *Al Mustaqbal*, 30 November 2011: 28.

needs today'[494] denoted a clear sense of foreboding at the future of the country and a questioning of the true cost of the uprising.

3.4.2   Economy And Stability In Egypt

Consequences of the revolution, namely disruption to the economy and political instability were problems defined by the framing used in the coverage. Interestingly, the mainstream Australian media tended to view the economy as a driver of the uprising, therefore attributing it causal status, while the Arabic media focused on the economic suffering and disruption which was *caused* in the aftermath of the uprising, as illustrated in this example; 'The worst was done by people who made a great revolution, then revolted against the very revolution which was shared by all citizens, Muslims and Christians, Young and Old, Men and Women. We all should look in the mirror.[495]

Comparisons made between Egypt and other countries in the region and further afield were shared features of both the Arabic and mainstream media. From the earliest days of the uprising comparisons to the fall of Communism were used to explain the events unfolding in Egypt, for instance; 'For them, this could be the long-awaited version of the 1989 revolutions, which brought freedom and democracy to millions in central and Eastern Europe.'[496] And also; 'yet what some are already calling the region's "Berlin Wall moment" presents enormous and multiple challenges for the world.'[497] An insightful comment found in later reporting highlights the erroneous nature of the comparison of the

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[494] Ibrahim Abu Mohammad, "The change is demanded but we must agree as to where the change is heading", *El Telegraph*, 17 June 2014: 5.
[495] Mohamed El Hadi, "Although Egypt became Free we are still unable to change", *Al Mustaqbal*, 26 October 2011: 25.
[496] Richard Beeston, "Israelis divided on new order in the Middle East", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 18.
[497] Unknown, "World waits to see next move in Cairo's moment", *The Australian*, 31 January 2011: 15.

Arab Spring to a 'Berlin Wall moment', saying; 'the West has never understood the Arab Spring, wrongly equating it with the fall of communism two decades ago as a yearning for freedom and democracy.'[498]

Conjecture and reasoned commentary invoked comparisons between Egypt and problematic countries in the region, in particular many comparisons were drawn with the path of Iran, as illustrated in this excerpt:

> The presidential palaces and royal enclaves of the Middle East are in a state of alarm, awaiting the outcome in Egypt. So are governments around the globe as they remember what happened in 1979 after another Western bulwark, the shah of Iran, was overthrown and power was seized by the virulently anti-Western Islamists who still reign in Tehran.[499]

The security situation in Egypt and the threat of deterioration along the same lines as Syria or Iraq was routinely presented as a problem. The mainstream Australian media tended to make more references to Egypt being at an historical crossroads than did the Arabic. In both the mainstream and Arabic, comparisons were drawn between the Egyptian uprising and historical uprisings in Lebanon and Iran. There were even a number of references made to the 'angry revolution in Egypt and the similarity with the French Revolution'. [500] This was done to illustrate the fact that large societal change is often protracted in nature,

[498] Barney Zwartz, "West fails to grasp that Arab Spring was never about democracy", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 July 2013: 14.
[499] Matthew Campbell, "Egypt's tech-savvy young rattle old regimes", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 2.
[500] Yohana Bidaweed, "The angry revolution in Egypt and "the similarity" with the French Revolution", *El Telegraph*, 04 February 2011: 15.

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as encapsulated by this statement; 'Uprisings have commonly led to disaster. The French Revolution took a long detour through the Terror before it led to liberal democracy.'[501]

3.4.3   Christian Persecution

The persecution facing minority groups, particularly Christians in Egypt, was framed as a significant problem in both the Arabic and mainstream media. The large number of articles about discrimination and attacks on Christians reflects the demographic makeup of Australia's Egyptian community where approximately 70 per cent of Egyptians in Australia are Christian (Coptic predominantly).

The long historical tenure of persecution of Christians in the Middle East was emphasised in the media framing. The history of Coptic Christianity in Egypt is most often noted as one of oppression and struggle. Arabic media coverage highlighted that persecution of Christians increased after the Alexandria church bombing in February 2011, as depicted in this coverage; 'As to the threats directed at the Coptic churches by Extreme Muslims, this is not new as we know that they threaten the Christians who do not agree with them. Not only Christians but also the Muslims who interpret the Quran differently to them.'[502]

Upon the election of the Muslim Brotherhood, references were made to the need for Christians to embrace a partnership however there was a noted fear that the Brotherhood was unwilling to be a legitimate partner with Christians, as shown by this coverage; 'Churches are being burnt – People are being killed – It is clear the regime does not want a partner, does not want women nor Christians or political parties in Egypt.'[503]

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[501] Peter Hartcher, "Democracy hopes teetering at the top of a pyramid", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 08 February 2011: 11.

[502] Abbas Ali Murad, "This is Australia Mr Sheehan" *Al Mustaqbal*, 09 February 2011: 14.

[503] Antony Wilson, "Where are you heading now Brothers?", *Al Mustaqbal*, 15 December 2012: 24.

Interesting to note is how the mainstream Australian media tended to narrate the persecution of Christians in terms of the prospects of an Islamist takeover in Egypt. A fairly extreme example of this framing is the following example taken from a Letter to the Editor featured in *The Australian* newspaper which highlighted the threat posed to Christians and other minorities of the Muslim Brotherhood:

> The reality is that if the Arab states held free elections tomorrow, most -- if not all -- would elect anti-Christian, homophobic, racist, misogynistic and Jew-hating parties with terrorist sympathies such as the Muslim Brotherhood. We all saw who the Palestinians in Gaza voted for as soon as they got the chance: a murderous terrorist government in the form of Hamas.[504]

Headlines such as; 'Christians in fear in Egypt'[505] taken from *El Telegraph* highlight how the prospects of an Islamist government in Egypt undoubtedly raised grave concerns for Christians. The finding that the mainstream media and the Arabic media readily commented on the prospects of Muslim Brotherhood government persecuting Christians and other minorities, may be a further reflection of the mostly Christian Egyptian audience across the publications analysed.

3.4.4 Stability In The Region With A Focus On Israel

Regional stability was a frame through which events in Egypt were presented to Australian audiences. This frame illustrated the conflicting interests between support for democratic change and the fear that Islamist parties would rise to power. This was conceptualised by the framing of events in terms of regional stability and in particular the implications for

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[504] Benjamin Burns, "Letters to the editor", *The Australian*, 01 February 2011: 13.
[505] Ahmad El Gamrawy, "Christians in fear in Egypt", *El Telegraph*, 19 August 2013: 8.

Israel of the uprising in Egypt. The following excerpt highlights this point by articulating Hosni Mubarak as a stabilising force in Egypt against the rise of Islamism; 'The Muslim Brotherhood is the great bogeyman invoked by Hosni Mubarak's supporters. Dump him, they tell the West, and the Brotherhood will turn Egypt into another Islamic fundamentalist state like Iran.'[506] The removal of Mubarak was discussed in the mainstream media in terms of how it would likely impact political stability in Egypt and the region. Mubarak was described as; 'America's ally in the Arab world, a bulwark against extremism and a guarantor of peace with Israel.'[507]

Regional stability was most often referred to in the context of the potential threat to neighbouring countries, in particular, Israel. The mainstream Australian media emphasised that for all Mubarak's faults he was a force for stability in Egypt. The following excerpt presents one protestor's frustration at supporting stability in the region for Israel while seemingly barracking for democratic change:

> So why do we hear your leaders coming out all the time expressing support for this corrupt dictator? On your side of the fence it's all about democracy, liberty, respect for human rights. But when it comes to our side of the fence, you say: 'No, only dictators for the Arabs'. What I want is the same thing you have. I want a safe, prosperous, liberal and open democracy like Australia.[508]

The maintenance of the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace accord is spoken of at great length in the media content analysed. President Hosni Mubarak, in keeping the Camp David accord

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[506] Martin Fletcher, "Uprising not over religion", *The Australian*, 7 February 2011: 9.
[507] Matthew Campbell, "Egypt's tech-savvy young rattle old regimes", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 2.
[508] Egyptian protestor, Abu Bakr Makhlouf, aged 34, quoted in Jason Koutsoukis, "Pleas for democracy met with American bullets", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 February 2011: 8.

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intact was long seen as a pillar of regional stability. It was emphasised that 30 years of his rule had given great comfort to Israel and the United States, as illustrated by this statement; 'Mubarak has resisted democracy but he has done so with the tacit approval of the Western powers who have seen his stable regime as a bulwark against the radical Arab world.'[509]

Mubarak's removal was closely narrated with the potential of the Muslim Brotherhood to seize power in Egypt. Concerns were raised over the prospects for stability in the region under an Islamist regime in Egypt and 'the potential for radical elements to take power in Egypt and eventually annul the peace pact [with Israel].'[510] As such the future consequences for Israel of an unstable Egypt were readily queried, for example; 'for Israel, which for decades has been able to rely on Egypt as the West's greatest ally in the Middle East, the uprising has deep strategic implications. A weakened Egypt, one prey to religious fundamentalism, threatens Israel's survival.'[511]

3.5 Framing Agenda Two: Diagnosing The Causes Of Events In Egypt

A framing agenda which diagnosed the causes or made judgments about Egypt's problems emerged from the content analysis. Three themes used to diagnose the causes for the uprising in Egypt were: the threat of an Islamist takeover in Egypt; the grievances and influence of the youth movement and; lastly the problem of Western interference and dominance in the Middle East.

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[509] Unknown, "World waits to see next move in Cairo's moment", *The Australian*, 31 January 2011: 15.
[510] Agence France-Presse, "Israeli accord with Cairo `safe'", *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 12.
[511] Ibid.

3.5.1 Islamist Takeover In Egypt And Beyond

Analysis and discussion of an Islamist takeover in Egypt pervaded the coverage of events in Egypt in the mainstream Australian media. The narrative largely concerned the vacuum created by the fall of Mubarak and the potential for Islamists to seize power either by force or through democratic means, this point is illustrated by the following coverage; 'but the risk still remains that the canny Muslim Brotherhood will bide their time before pouncing and coming to power in Egypt, which would of course furnish another major threat for the free world.'[512] The danger posed to Egypt and its citizens by the rise of an Islamist agenda was regularly invoked as perilous, for example; 'with the ouster of Hosni Mubarak -- a committed shepherd of the agreement and a Washington ally in the global fight against extremists -- concern has surged over the potential for radical elements to take power in Egypt.'[513]

Discourse centred on the likely form an Islamist government in Egypt would take and the extent to which it would embrace democratic (secular) reform or seek to make a 'creeping advance towards Islamic sharia law'.[514] There is a triangular relationship between this theme and the themes 'democracy' and 'stability for Israel'. An Islamist takeover of government was framed both in terms of a threat to stability in Egypt and as inhibition to the freedom of the Egyptian people, this example highlights the framing of an Islamist takeover in Egypt by invoking comparison with the Iranian revolution; 'The deposed Shah of Iran was replaced by another dictatorship in the form of Islamic extremists, who

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[512] Melanie Phillips, "On Egypt, unlike Iraq, the left are all neo-cons now" *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 14.
[513] Agence France-Presse, "Israeli accord with Cairo `safe'", *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 12.
[514] Australian Associated Press, "Fresh protests in Egypt over constitution", *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 December 2012: accessed dailytelegraph.com.au.

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introduced a theocracy and placed even tighter restrictions on the liberty and freedoms of the Iranian people.'[515]

Mainstream Australian coverage illustrated the problems associated with a rise in political Islamism and this coverage was greatest around the time of Mubarak's removal. Most often this was framed in terms of a vacuum of power left by the fall of Mubarak and the prospect that democratic elections might bring an Islamist party to power by legitimate means. This excerpt illustrates this framing agenda of the threat posed to Israel from an Islamist takeover:

> Egypt is the US's most important ally in the Arab world, assisting in its battle against terrorism and providing it with a major political platform in the Middle East. The peace treaty Egypt signed with Israel has created regional stability that has lasted more than three decades, with minor exceptions in Lebanon and Gaza. This stability would be endangered by a victory of the Muslim Brotherhood, or even of many of the secular opposition parties, which are opposed to normalised relations with Israel.[516]

It is important to note that in the Arabic media coverage references to an Islamist takeover in Egypt are not encountered in a similar fashion. This may be explained by the fact that there exists no exact translation into Arabic of the term 'Islamist'.[517] More likely though this may reflect an understanding of the complexity of the political situation in Egypt by the Australian Arabic media. Specifically as political actors the Muslim Brotherhood may

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[515] Con Vaitsas, "Letters to the editor", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.
[516] Abraham Rabinovich, "The risks of free and fair elections", *The Australian*, 01 February 2011: 10.
[517] To translate the word 'Islamist' into Arabic one would have to use the term 'The Muslim religion' or refer to a person as being 'a Muslim'. In Arabic, this term does not suggest a takeover or seizing power. Arabic media tended to use the more particular term 'Al Ikhwan Al Muslimeen' the exact translation being 'The Muslim Brothers' for the prospects of an Islamic political force being in power.

not be as radical as people in the West may believe. This point is illustrated by this *El Telegraph* excerpt which said; 'Internationally and locally, talk about the elevated importance of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Yemen, Tunis, Libya and Syria is an exaggeration.'[518]

Coverage of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arabic media centred on its collapse and failure to capitalise on its opportunity in Government. Recurring questioning of the Muslim Brotherhood's capacity to rule Egypt were prevalent along with discussion about the Muslim Brotherhood's motives and whether they held legitimate intentions to maintain democracy in Egypt, as suggested in this excerpt; 'they (the Muslim Brotherhood) work diligently to benefit from the opportunities created by the youth and the crowd. They plan ahead in order to receive the West's cooperation and trust until they take power.'[519] The overthrow of the government of Mohammad Morsi was largely attributed in the Arabic coverage to the failure of the Muslim Brotherhood to unite the factitious elements of Egyptian society. 'Extreme Division in Egypt'[520] was witnessed in the ill-fated constitutional referendum process, as illustrated by the statement; 'the gap between supporters and those who oppose the draft constitution is widening.'[521]

Interestingly there is little questioning in the Arabic coverage of the legitimacy of the democratic election which brought the Brotherhood to power in the first place. In contrast to those staged by the Mubarak regime, the process which brought Morsi to presidency is referred to as being legitimate, as demonstrated in this quote; 'Islamic Parties were voted

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[518] Raghda Dorgam, "The 'talk' about the 'second spring' is an exaggeration", *El Telegraph*, 24 October 2011: 6.
[519] Ibid.
[520] Unknown, "Extreme division in Egypt", *Al Mustaqbal*, 15 December 2012: 7.
[521] Ibid.

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in and the world respected this because the Islamic Parties proved that their democracy is not fake.'[522]

In the Arabic media demands for the deposition of Mohammad Morsi were not framed as a failure to adhere to the democratic process but rather more in terms of a second revolution in Egypt, facilitated by the army, as shown here; 'The army clearly announced on Monday that they support the millions who demonstrated in Egyptian cities demanding the removal Mohammad Mursi.'[523] The view narrated by the Arabic media was that Morsi failed the Egyptian people and therefore needed to be overthrown, particularly after forcing unpopular changes to the Constitution and granting himself greater powers in 2012.

This is in contrast to the mainstream Australian media which tended to question the deposing of Morsi in terms of what it represented for democratic due process and democratic legitimacy in the country. This point is explained further in this excerpt; 'Where was the democracy in all this? How many people wanted Morsi to remain? Morsi's supporters are correct when they say he was legitimately elected and only a year into a four-year term.'[524]

3.5.2   The Youth Movement And The Role Of Young People

The youth movement in Egypt was a theme that emerged from the media coverage. The framing of this engendered social inequality as the binding force in the Egyptian uprising. The 'youth movement' drove the agenda about social inequality and this was reflected in both the Arabic and mainstream media; 'If this revolution is to continue, Egypt will reach,

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[522] Unknown, "Kevin Rudd challenged Julia Gillard democratically in Australia", *Al Mustaqbal*, 06 July 2013: 23.

[523] Unknown, "Agreement within 48 hours or the army will support the People's Demands against Mursi", *Al Mustaqbal*, 03 July 2013: 1.

[524] John Lyon, "Arab Spring: from hope to despair", The Australian, 6 July 2013: 13.

this revolution will reach to what the Egyptian people want, freedom, justice and dignity.'[525]

In diagnosing the causes of the uprising, factors included the increasing numbers of young people who were highly educated, but who faced limited opportunities for employment. The youth movement were shown to lament Mubarak's economic reforms that had vastly redistributed the wealth of the country and had led to poverty with the 'vast majority of Egypt's 80 million people liv[ing] amid terrible overcrowding without even the most basic services such as electricity and running water.'[526]

The success of youth movements such as 'April 6' in effectively bringing down Mubarak was described in the mainstream media as 'a stunning accomplishment'.[527] It is not surprising therefore that the youth movement received mostly supportive coverage in the mainstream Australian media.

The stated goals of the youth movement encapsulated political, economic and moral grievances that were united under the slogans of 'bread, freedom and justice' and 'bread, freedom and national dignity.'[528] It is significant to note however that these slogans were not featured in any of the mainstream media coverage of the uprising. This illustrates a disconnect between the stated social justice objectives of the youth movement in Egypt and how events were reported in the mainstream media. Specifically that events were framed in ideological terms of 'freedom' and 'democracy' arguably because these themes resonate more with Western audiences. This point is demonstrated by this excerpt taken from the

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[525] Sheik Taj El Deen Hillaly, "Egypt and the Revolution", *El Telegraph,* 02 February 2011: 5.
[526] Jason Koutsoukis, "Friday prayers likely to be next flashpoint", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 January 2011: 8.
[527] New York Times, "Press on for change", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 9.
[528] Kinninmont, "*'Bread, Dignity and Social Justice': The Political Economy of Egypt's Transition"*. accessed 17/11/2015.

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early stages of the uprising; 'the story is primarily and obviously a political one: pro-democracy forces rose up against dictatorship'.[529] The following quote illustrates further not only how the youth movement objectives were represented in terms of democracy but how the youth uprising was simplified and positioned as preferential to religious extremism – implying there to be only two options for youth to pursue:

> It is far from certain the Facebook revolutionaries will achieve their goal of democracy. But they deserve support, for if they succeed they will have demonstrated that for young Arabs there is, in their frustration, an alternative to al-Qa'ida's message of violence and hate.[530]

This is an example of how the Egyptian uprising was Orientalised by the mainstream media. Events were framed in terms of youth verses the old order, where the youth movement represented the fair and just moral actors against the corrupt and oppressive Mubarak regime. The youth of Egypt were portrayed as being enlightened by social media and the ideals of democratic freedoms and change. This point is demonstrated in descriptions of protestors as 'courageous'[531] and 'revolutionary'[532] and in headlines such as 'Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy'[533] which denote the overt support for democratic transition within the Australian media. As such there was minimal recognition of the competing views of what caused the revolution in the mainstream Australian media. In one article headlined 'West fails to grasp that Arab Spring was never

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[529] Peggy Noonan, "Pharaoh's people go, but where to?" *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 14.
[530] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.
[531] New York Times, "Press on for change", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 9.
[532] Unknown, "Egyptians braced for new violence", *The Australian*, 26 November 2012: 10 and Australian Associated Press, "ElBaradei warns of Egypt turmoil", The Daily Telegraph, 25 November 2012: dailytelegraph.com.au.
[533] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.

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about democracy'[534] Peter Mandaville argued 'those who thronged Tahrir Square [in Cairo] in 2011 were not after democracy but a government that would be accountable and get things done.'[535]

In the main the coverage demonstrated that concepts of democracy and freedom resonate powerfully with Australian audiences. It is perhaps unremarkable that the mainstream media would be sympathetic towards the youth movement's fight when it is represented as one for freedom and democracy. One statement taken from the analysis encapsulates this point; 'When we watch idealistic young people on the streets of Cairo calling for freedom, braving batons, rifle fire and teargas, our natural instinct is to cheer them on.'[536]

3.5.3   Western Dominance In Middle East Affairs

Coverage of the events in Egypt frequently referenced the idea that the West has long sought to control the affairs of the Middle East and that over time this has had a negative impact on countries such as Egypt. Both the Arabic and mainstream media highlighted the West's hypocrisy in sanctioning dictatorships, such as Mubarak's, while at the same time championing democracy, as illustrated in the statement; 'Despite professing support for democracy, freedom and human rights, the US, Britain and France continue to prop up corrupt, repressive and dictatorial regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere.'[537]

The Arabic media reflected the view that the West places its own interests and the interests of stability for Israel, ahead of human rights considerations in the region, as indicated in this excerpt; 'The elections were fake. Suddenly the US Defence Minister, Robert Gates is

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[534] Barney Zwartz, "West fails to grasp that Arab Spring was never about democracy", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 05 July 2013: 14.
[535] Ibid.
[536] Martin Ivens, "Beware repeat of Iranian Revolution", *The Australian*, 31 January 2011: 10
[537] Steven Katsineris, "Letters to the Editor", *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 15.

a supporter of reform in the Arab world. This is rude when one considers the hundreds of agreements he signed to enforce the Israeli military and security.'[538]

Likewise the mainstream Australian media acknowledged that regional security had long been sought by any means, including sanctioning dictators such as Mubarak. Referencing the views of one secular protester in Tahrir Square one article in *The Australian* reported; 'What really plays into the Brotherhood's hands, he added, was the perception that the West puts its own interests before those of the Egyptian people - just as it did when it backed the Shah before the Iranian revolution.'[539]

Hosni Mubarak had long been portrayed as a reliable ally in a hot bed of insecurity. As the uprising became more complex and the outcome less certain some discussion in the mainstream media reflected on the effectiveness, even the need, for strongmen like Mubarak, to keep religious and ethnic factionalism at bay. One argument expressed both the Arabic and the mainstream Australian media was that government by an iron fist may be the only effective means for curtailing the volatility of the Middle East. This excerpt from *The Australian* newspaper in the aftermath of Mubarak's overthrow illustrates this point; 'According to the argument long popular in Washington, only these medal-encrusted strongmen have the cunning, ruthlessness and firepower to police the world's most dangerous corner. An example, until a fortnight ago, was Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak.'[540]

In both categories of media intervention aimed at forcing democratic change in the Middle East was noted as having been unsuccessful. The following excerpt highlights how ill-fated

[538] Zuhair Ksibati, "Egypt's Revolution", *El Telegraph*, 11 February 2011: 6.
[539] Martin Fletcher, "Uprising not over religion", *The Australian*, 07 February 2011: 9.
[540] Matthew Campbell, "Egypt's tech-savvy young rattle old regimes", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 2.

intervention to force democracy was cited regularly in the coverage; 'Washington pulled the rug from under the Shah and ended up with something far worse. It forced elections in Gaza and ended up with Hamas.'[541] Coverage featured notes of caution to the West against supporting rapid democratic change for fear of an Islamist takeover, as illustrated by this excerpt; 'to permit free elections, most observers agree, is to run the risk of an Islamic victory that Western analysts see as a strategic catastrophe. To fix elections, as the powerbrokers in Cairo have always done, is to provide stability.'[542]

Articles in the mainstream Australian media often speculated about the extent to which the United States was caught off-guard by the political groundswell for change across the Middle East. With regards to Egypt the initial discussions often eluded to how unprepared the US seemed for the possibility that Mubarak would be overthrown by popular protest. This report taken from *The Australian* supports this point:

> What is clear, however, is that the Obama administration has been caught intellectually unprepared for this crisis. The administration's predicament is strategically complicated: since President Hosni Mubarak may fall, it cannot afford to alienate the protesters, but since the protesters may fail, it cannot afford to alienate Mubarak.[543]

As events progressed in Egypt and it appeared protesters would be successful in forcing Mubarak from office there emerged a perception that the United States was seeking to affect change, or at the very least striving to appear on the right side of history. Articles in both the Arabic and English newspapers detailed the pressure being exerted by the US and

[541] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.
[542] Abraham Rabinovich, "The risks of free and fair elections", *The Australian*, 01 February 2011: 10.
[543] Leon Wieseltier, "U.S. caught out by Egypt's fight for democracy", *The Australian*, 01 February 2011: 8.

other Western countries on Hosni Mubarak to step aside in the dying days of his presidency, as illustrated in the following excerpt; 'Obama has admonished Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for failing to provide a "credible" path towards genuine democracy, in the clearest sign of White House impatience with the ageing leader.'[544]

This was tempered by published official statements in which the US argued that they were not seeking to interfere with the process or direction of Egypt, rather it was up to the people to determine the course of Egypt's future. The coverage highlighted that Western allies turned a blind eye to Mubarak's failings because he was capable of maintaining stability in Egypt and the region. Military funding and aid given to the Egyptian regime by the US was often cited to support the notion of Western intervention in the name of stability. For example this reporting from the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

> After Israel, it [Egypt] is the second-biggest recipient of US aid. Washington gives Cairo $2 billion a year, about half of which goes to its military. With America's Egyptian surrogate, Mubarak, in trouble, the US is now trying to edge nervously away from him lest it antagonise the newly active sovereign in Egypt - public opinion.[545]

In terms of the causal relationship between Western efforts at dominance in the Middle East and the events in Egypt, the coverage highlighted that the Mubarak regime: failed to implement meaningful social reforms; engaged in rampant corruption and nepotism; and oppressed the Egyptian people in full view and sanction of Western allies. This is a view demonstrated in this article published in *El Telegraph*:

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[544] Brad Norington, "Obama vents anger as Mubarak digs in", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 19.
[545] Peter Hartcher, "Temples of doomed democracy begin to stir from their coma", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 01 February 2011 11.

Egypt is suffering as the other Arab countries have suffered. It governed militarily and with police force. It became an extension of the American project resulting in social disasters and political failures as well as other problems such as youth and economic problems. We became a failing crowd and a crowd of failures.[546]

3.6   Framing Agenda Three: Making Moral Judgments About The Events In Egypt

There was evidence of a framing agenda which sought to evaluate the actions and effects of causal agents and to make moral judgments about the events in Egypt.[547] The themes where this agenda were evident in how democracy - a cornerstone of the mainstream media coverage of events - was framed; secondly the frame of Israel, which was closely linked to the 'stability' frame already discussed. The role of the army in the events in Egypt was the final theme in which moral judgments were framed in the coverage.

3.6.1   Democracy

Democracy is a critical frame through which moral judgements about the events in Egypt were made. The theme of democracy dominated the coverage in the mainstream Australian media. This theme framed how events in Egypt were explained, rationalised and domesticated. In particular this framing agenda demonstrates the power of frame building or frame setting for influencing public perception of events.

Conventional wisdom in the West often dictates that democracy is the most desirable form of governance. This was supported in the mainstream coverage by the invocation of

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[546] Taj El Deen Hillaly, "Egypt and the Revolution", El Telegraph 02 February 2011: 5.
[547] Entman, *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm* : 52.

culturally familiar symbols of Western values, namely peace and democracy. For example, in this headline; 'Democracy struggle the key to peace'.[548] This intrinsic conventional wisdom often led to Egypt's problems being depicted mostly in terms of the need for democratic reform in a region known for its democratic scarcity. As is exemplified in the following statement:

> Democratisation in this part of the world is fraught with dangers. Mubarak's supporters in Egypt and beyond fear the "one man, one vote, one time" election scenario under which the Muslim Brotherhood, the best-organised opposition movement in Egypt, may simply be waiting for the state to fall into its hands before democracy is snuffed out again.[549]

The theme of democracy presented a contrast between the Arabic and mainstream Australian media coverage and further highlighted how Western media fixated on reporting the events single-mindedly as a protest for democratic reform. This point is reflected in the fact that stated goals of the revolution, namely 'bread, freedom and justice'[550] were significantly overshadowed by the notion that democracy was at the heart of the uprising. *The Australian* remarked that; 'Only the churlish would do other than join in celebrating the downfall of an autocrat who failed to change with the times, and wish them success in their quest for freedom and genuine democracy.'[551]

The mainstream Australian media coverage of democracy was sustained from the earliest days of the uprising. In fact much of the mainstream coverage over the duration of the

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[548] Daniel Finkelstein, "Democracy struggle the key to peace", *The Australian*, 03 February 2011: 11.
[549] Matthew Campbell, "Egypt's tech-savvy young rattle old regimes", *The Australian*, 12 February 2011: 2.
[550] Kinninmont, 'Bread, Dignity and Social Justice': accessed 17/11/2015.
[551] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.

study was framed entirely through the prism of democracy and democratic transition for Egypt and the pathway to democratic reform, as illustrated in this headline; 'Pride and protest as Egyptians haggle over democracy'[552]. In contrast Arabic coverage of the theme democracy was most prominent during the deposition of Mohamad Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood, where the overthrowing of Morsi was questioned on the basis the Muslim Brotherhood had won legitimate 'free and fair' elections. In the mainstream media coverage predominantly centred on the significance of this moment in Egypt's history and defined the events as shaping the country's political future, for instance in this headline; 'Arab world reaches the crossroads'.[553] Commentary relating to democracy in Egypt often speculating about how the protests would be resolved and the extent to which reforms would be achieved. This is encapsulated by this excerpt; 'while I'm sure the Middle East also aspires to European standards of living, and while many also aspire to democracy and free markets, the path to those political systems in this region is far less obvious.'[554]

Deeper analysis reveals a complex framing agenda in which inherent requests for support for democratic reform in Egypt ran alongside questions about Islam's compatibility with democracy and comparisons to previous revolutions, both successful and unsuccessful. There was a sub-theme present in the coverage that questioned whether democracy can indeed succeed in the Arab world. This is articulated by statements such as; 'Democracy, unfortunately, does not have a great track record in the region'.[555] In the discussion of the potential return from political exile of the Muslim Brotherhood and the likelihood of the election of an Islamist president, the social ramifications were often framed in terms of

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[552] Ruth Pollard, "Pride and protest as Egyptians haggle over democracy", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 November 2011: 10.
[553] Murray, Roberts, Walt et al., "Arab world reaches the crossroads", *The Australian*, 05 February 2011: 17.
[554] Ibid.
[555] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.

Islam's compatibility with democracy. Inherent in much of the discussion was a discourse highlighting failed attempts at democratic reform in predominantly Muslim countries. To demonstrate this point one commentator remarked that 'pessimists believe that calling for liberal democracy in the Middle East, especially among Arab states, is like frying snowballs.'[556]

To this end the mainstream media in Australia followed much of the broader Western media in applying comparisons to the events in Egypt with other historical milestones. As previously discussed drawing comparisons was a feature which ran throughout the coverage analysis. The theatre and spectacle of the protests in Tahir Square were most often compared to the fall of Communism in 1989, for example the reference of Egypt's "Berlin Wall moment".[557] However as Mubarak clung to power and the success of the protest looked less certain coverage questioned whether Egypt was more resemblant of 1979 Iran. This excerpt published from a Letter to the Editor in *The Australian* highlights the historical examples of errors of judgment by Western governments in regards to the forced instatement of democracy:

> A similarly myopic cheer squad, including Australia, hailed the overthrow of the Shah of Iran as a meaningful moment in democracy. They similarly rushed, with indecent haste, to support Robert Mugabe as the great messiah of democracy in Zimbabwe. In the world of realpolitik there is a high probability that Egypt's elation will be short-lived.[558]

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[556] Martin Ivens, "Beware repeat of Iranian revolution", *The Australian*, 31 January 2011: 10.
[557] Unknown, "World waits to see next move in Cairo's moment", *The Australian*, 15 January 2011: 15 and Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.
[558] R. K. Barnes, "Letters to the editor", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.

3.6.2 Israel

Israel is a theme that featured prominently throughout the Arabic and mainstream coverage. Earlier discussion of the framing agenda presented the problem of stability in the region, specifically in reference to Israel. Likewise the theme of Israel functioned to make moral judgments about the events in Egypt. There was a triangular relationship between narrating the theme of Israel and the themes of 'democracy' and 'Islamist takeover'.

Media coverage in the mainstream reflected the strong relationship shared by Australia and Israel. [559] Beyond democratic norms Australia and Israel share similarities such as a sense of the dominant culture being derived from Europe and a strong binary culture of 'mainstream' and Other. Both Australia and Israel share common political and economic interests stemming from a strong United States' alliance/allegiance. Colin Rubenstein and Tzvi Fleischer say of Australia's relations with Israel that 'only by including certain affinities of national personalities and values can the ongoing vigour of the relationship be fully explained'.[560]

Two features which emerged from the analysis illustrate how the mainstream Australian media support, either tacitly or explicitly, the affinity between Australia and Israel. Firstly, public statements of Israeli leaders about events in Egypt held particularly high salience compared to statements from leaders from other countries. Secondly, events in Egypt were frequently framed in terms of their consequences for Israel not in terms of their ramifications for the people of Egypt, for example:

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[559] Rubenstein and Fleischer have explored in depth the relationship between Israel and Australia in Colin Rubenstein and Tzvi and Fleischer, "A Distant Affinity: The Hisory of Australian-Israeli Relations," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 19, no. 3/4 (2007), 101-124.
[560] Ibid., 101.

Whatever way Egypt goes, it is almost certain to be more hostile to Israel than it has been these past 30 years, with a consequent rise in regional instability. The Egyptian public has been fed such a diet of anti-Semitic hatred and paranoia for so long that a polity which reflects the society will inevitably be more anti-Israel.[561]

There was frequent commentary about Israel's position in relation to the outcomes of potential political scenarios in Egypt, for example; 'the next-worst outcome is that the current regime survives by returning to its Nasserist roots as a secular but reactionary regime -- populist in its economic policies, hostile to the US and Israel, potentially a client of China and in the market for a nuclear arsenal.'[562] This point is further illustrated by this quote from Amos Harel reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which said; 'the collapse of the old regime in Cairo, if it takes place, will have a massive effect, mainly negative, on Israel's position in the region. In the long run it could put the peace treaties in danger, the largest strategic assets [Israel has] after the support of the US.'[563]

Entman argues that the power of framing to alter the perceptions of audiences is strongest when repetition and association with culturally familiar symbols are invoked.[564] In Australia, media discourse which frames events in Egypt in terms of their implications for Israel is reflective of the public perception of strong cultural and strategic relations between Australia and Israel. It must be noted that similar framing was not present in the Arabic media coverage where Israel was referenced in relation to the military offensive, most often referred to as 'war' or 'aggression' in Gaza which occurred in November 2012.

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[561] Greg Sheridan, "Balance of power at risk in region", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 12.
[562] Bret Stephens, "U.S. must untangle its Mubarak muddle", *The Australian*, 11 February 2011: 8.
[563] Paul McGeough, "People's gain is US and Israel's loss as Arab allies falter", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 February 2011: 10.
[564] Entman, *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*: 53.

Mentions were made to the role played by Mohammad Morsi in securing a truce between Israel and Hamas at that time.

3.6.3 The Role Of The Army

The role played by Egypt's army featured both in Arabic and mainstream media coverage. From the earliest days of the uprising through to the increase in violence following the removal of Mohammad Morsi the nature of the army's role was questioned and applauded in equal measure. This is demonstrated in these contrasting statements; 'The army under these circumstances must be in control. The demonstrators themselves have welcomed the army and the tanks.'[565]And; 'But even as voting began, some Egyptians expressed doubt the army would step back from politics and return to barracks.'[566]

Moral judgments appear in terms of the actions of the army in response to the events. Initially the extent to which the army should or would intervene in the revolution dominated coverage. Speculation that the army would hold an allegiance to the demonstrators ran alongside questions about the measures taken to retain emergency rule. In subsequent events, the actions of the army, particularly the ousting of the democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood, caused debate as to whether the army was in charge of affairs in Egypt and to what extent this was detrimental to the democratic prospects of the country.

One noteworthy contrast between the mainstream and Arabic media was questioning of the integral connection of the army with the larger Egyptian political system. This was absent from the Arabic coverage which appeared to be inherently accepting of the fact that the

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[565] Ghassan Cherbel, "The hour of change", *Al Mustaqbal*, 02 February 2011: 2.
[566] Ruth Pollard, "Egyptians revel in power of the ballot", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 May 2012: 8.

military wields such powerful influence over Egyptian life and politics. This is illustrated by this reporting from *El Telegraph* after the deposition of Morsi; 'It is not surprising that the Egyptian army did interfere. Their position was not easy, on the one hand, they could not allow the Brothers to be in control and on the other hand they should appear impartial.'[567] This arguably reflects the status quo in Egypt where the army has long-held the rule and respect of the Egyptian people since the days of Gamal Abdel Nasser: With almost half-a-million men, Egypt's military is the 10th biggest in the world. It has also provided all four presidents since the 1952 coup.[568]

Conversely the mainstream Australian media appeared much more questioning of the intrinsic role of the army in daily Egyptian affairs and the implications for the principle of the 'separation of powers' in government. This quote from Ellis Goldberg featured in *The Australian* illustrates this point:

> Today, the army presents itself as a force of order and a neutral arbiter between contending opponents, but it has significant interests of its own to defend, and it is not, in fact, neutral. The basic structure of the Egyptian state as it now exists has benefited the military.[569]

3.7   Framing Agenda Four: Suggesting Remedies In Egypt And Beyond

The final framing agenda occurred in coverage that suggested remedies and likely outcomes in Egypt. This framing was demonstrated in themes relating to global and

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[567] Sarkis Naoum, "Egyptian army acted on desire or duty?" *El Telegraph*, 27 August 2013: 6.
[568] Paul McGeough, "Destroy dinosaur or demonstrators: respected military faces tough choice", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 2011: 7.
[569] Unknown, "Egypt's slow-motion coup", *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 10.

Australian support for democracy in Egypt and through comparisons with the Turkish model for government.

3.7.1   Global And Australian Support For Democracy In Egypt

Contained within much of the mainstream Australian media coverage were tacit requests for support for democratic reforms in Egypt. This reflected the propensity of the Australian media to Westernise events in Egypt and to present concepts in terms of the necessity for democratic reform.

In this framing agenda democracy is framed as the preferred remedy for correcting the problems in Egypt, notably its economic problems, lack of social equality, lack of media freedoms and finally to counter the potential rise of Islamists. The enthusiastic and optimistic view of Australian mainstream media was presented with some level of satire by *The Australian*:

> The Western Left has known one thing for certain from the very start of the protests: that the tyrannical dictator Mubarak had to go, that the protesters in Tahrir Square were all on the side of freedom and that the convulsions presaged a joyous new dawn of democracy and human rights.[570]

Global and particularly Australian support for democratic transition in Egypt emerged as a journalistic cheer squad of both news and opinion writers who applauded Mubarak's overthrow and urged support for the Egyptian people 'in their quest for freedom and genuine democracy.'[571] More overt calls were also found for Australia to support Egypt in

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[570] Melanie Phillips, "On Egypt, unlike Iraq, the left are all neo-cons now", *The Australian*, 15 February 2011: 14.
[571] Unknown, "Egypt deserves support on a rocky road to democracy", *The Australian*, 14 February 2011: 15.

transitioning to democracy, as demonstrated in this excerpt from the early days of the uprising; 'As a minor Western power, Australia can be bolder in our statements on the popular uprising in Egypt. We fought a war in Iraq, and many thousands of people died, in a bid to bring democracy to that country. Surely we can utter a few words in favour of democracy in Egypt.'[572]

A feature of the mainstream media were references to 'hope' and 'support' in the context of Egypt's democratic fate hanging in the balance. Optimism was expressed in commentary that sought 'positive signs' that Egypt would make a peaceful transition to democracy. A reoccurring inference of the coverage was that Egypt's transition to democracy was in the global interest both in terms of regional stability and because Egypt often leads the Arab world.

Statements of support from global leaders from the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan as well as omnipresent commentary from the United States and Israel implied that a global consensus existed, that Egypt should pursue a path to democracy. This is demonstrated in the following excerpt from the *Sydney Morning Herald*; 'this was a moment in history, Obama acknowledged, before reaching out to a generation of young Egyptians to whom the US would happily "extend the hand of partnership and friendship".'[573]

There was a relationship between 'global support for democratic change' and the theme 'Islamist power' in the coverage. Global support for democratic change in Egypt was often framed not in terms of Egypt's own interest but rather in terms of countering Islamists coming to power. This is illustrated in the following statement; 'After having suffered

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[572] Evan Coumbe, "Letters to the editor", *The Australian*, 01 February 2011: 13.
[573] Simon Mann, "US seeks change it can believe in", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 03 February 2011: 9.

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dictatorship for so long, Egypt's democratic hopes deserve better than this shoddy grab for power by the country's Islamists.'[574] The inherent discourse, particularly of the mainstream Australian media, expressed aversion to the prospect of an Islamist government in Egypt, or any country for that matter. Democratic reform in Egypt was presented as ultimately being in the interests of the winder international community.

3.7.2   Comparisons To The Turkish Model

In addition to comparisons between the events in Egypt and other historical milestones such as the fall of Communism and the Iranian Revolution, a framework for suggesting what a democracy in Egypt would look like centred on comparisons to the so-called 'Turkish model'.

Many commentators featured in the mainstream media coverage put forward Turkey as a comparable model for Egypt to emulate. Turkey was highlighted as being both a secular Islamic state and a democratic one. The similarities to Egypt – though hardly extending beyond religious orientation – were emphasised in the coverage. Reports that made comparisons with Turkey often did so using the image of a spectrum, Turkey, the so-called liberal, secular model and the favoured option of many commentators, was at one-end, while at the other was Iran, the Islamist pariah state. Interestingly absent from this regional binary is any discussion of Saudi Arabia, which is both Islamic and undemocratic. Value judgments which use democratic and Western frames of reference to explain events in Egypt articulate a desire to see a 'favourable' government model for Egypt. As far as what a favourable model should look like, Turkey became the widely recognised example.

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[574] Unknown, "Mr Morsi's grab for power", *The Australian*, 26 November 2012: 13.

The laudable portrayal of the Turkish model is demonstrated in the following excerpt from the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

> If the Egyptian people can break the shackles that Arab Islam, and the threats from the minority of violent Muslim fundamentalists, have directly or indirectly placed on democracy and individual freedom, especially for women, they will have gone where no Arab society has gone before. While the army remains strong, and protects the democrats, Egypt can follow the Turkish model, and avoid the Iranian disaster.[575]

Entman suggests that popular notions, such as the idea of the Turkish model, take hold by becoming self-reinforcing because 'once a term is widely accepted, to use another is to risk that the target audiences will perceive the communicator as lacking credibility - or will even fail to understand what the communicator is talking about.'[576] The resonance of Turkey in the mainstream media may be explained by this logic. In one article then Foreign Affairs Minister, Kevin Rudd is quoted as saying; "Turkey is a model for the protesters in Cairo, because it's a successful Muslim country with a vibrant political system and an increasingly successful economy."[577] Interestingly, Indonesia which is the largest Muslim democracy and Australia's closest and largest neighbour is scarcely mentioned as a model for emulation in the Australian media.

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[575] Paul Sheehan, "We don't need another pharaoh after Mubarak's 30-year reign", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 07 February 2011: 11.

[576] Entman, *Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*: 55.

[577] Peter Hartcher, "Democracy hopes teetering at the top of a pyramid", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 February 2011: 11.

3.8   Conclusion

It is argued 'media discourse tends to influence belief systems'.[578] Through processes which select and give salience to certain aspects of news events over others the media shapes the understanding of an event for the receiver. The empirical study of newspaper content presented in this chapter supports the notion that the mainstream media 'will generally reflect the perspectives and interest of established power'.[579] In particular that the media reinforces Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people.[580] This coverage largely perpetuates what Isakhan describes as 'the kind of myths and images that have long demarcated the divide between Oriental backwardness and Western civility.'[581]

This media content analysis provides new empirical findings about how issues relating to the Middle East and its people are framed in the media in Australia. There were differences between the Arabic and mainstream Australian media in the way events in Egypt were reported with the Arabic media framing reflective Egyptian peoples' demands and objectives. The framing employed by the mainstream Australian media was more focused on the themes 'democracy' and 'Islamist takeover' and the relationship of these to Western interests. This demonstrates the media's propensity to hold to its own normalised form of Australian Orientalism with its ideas of Western dominance and evidenced by stereotypes of the Middle East and its people.[582] This framework gives preference to United States' and Israeli interests and is reflective of the close cultural proximity Australia has with the

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[578] Hewege, *Understanding Media Constructions of Volunteering:* 156.
[579] Chomsky, "Democracy and the Media": accessed http://genius.com/Noam-chomsky-democracy-and-the-media-section-three-annotated.
[580] See seminal works by Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, *Orientalism Reconsidered*, 89-107 and *Orientalism Once More*, 869-879.
[581] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 4.
[582] Manning, *Arabic and Muslim People in Sydney's Daily Newspapers:* accessed at http://us-and-them.com.au/research/2012/7/21/arabic-and-muslim-people-in-sydneys-daily-newspapers-before-and-after-september-11.

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broader Western community. This study has also highlighted the propensity to view issues relating to the Arab world with fear and scepticism.

The coverage analysed in this chapter supports the existence of a binary relationship between 'mainstream' and the Other in the presentation of events in the Middle East. In the case of the Arab Spring 'western values' of democracy and freedom are mainstreamed and the threat posed to them by the rise of Islamist governments is the Other. This is in keeping with established norms of 'stereotyping, homogenising, victimising and demonising people of Middle Eastern descent or of the Islamic faith'.[583] In this way the media coverage of the events in Egypt are a further demonstration of the construction and maintenance of the Arab Other in Australian society.

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[583] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 3.

Chapter 4 –Depicting Arab-Australian Identity Through Interviews With Egyptian-Australians

4.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces the personal interviews conducted with members of the Egyptian-Australian community over a ten month period. This chapter garners an understanding of how Arab-Australian identity is viewed by those it is meant to represent. Participant responses support the depiction of Arab-Australian identity presented in Chapters One and Two, namely the existence of negative representation of Arab-Australians and a pattern of Othering. The views expressed by Egyptian-Australians, especially relating to the role of media discourse, are shown to be consistent with the concepts discussed in the preceding media content analysis.

In the course of the interviews, participants were asked how they felt Arabs were represented in Australia. The personal views of Egyptian-Australians populate the study of Arab-Australian identity with accounts of the lived experiences of those it affects. The table located at Appendix 1 shows the participants of the study along with relevant demographic information.

4.2   Current Problematic Notions Of Arab-Australian Identity

The responses of Egyptian-Australian participants in this study spoke to the core of the problematic state of Arab identity in Australia. Respondents detailed the stereotypes associated with Arab-Australian identity and described the ways that Arabs are negatively represented in the Australian media, political arenas and popular discourse. Participant 14 encapsulated this problematic state when saying; 'I know that the word Arab in Australia is

almost a stigma because of the many [incidents], you know if there is a shooting, obviously it's an Arab, if there is a rape, it's an Arab.'

Participants displayed an acute awareness of what they perceived to be the view of 'mainstream Australia' with regards to Arabs. Participant 13 shared their ideas about commonly held mainstream beliefs of Arabs in Australia, saying; 'the community are viewing Arabs as a bunch of no-hopers, they fight at the drop of a hat, they kill each other, and if they are Muslims it must be ingrained in their religion.' This common conflation of the terms Arab with Muslim and the inferences drawn between terrorism and Islam was illustrated in the responses of participants. This finding is consistent with the dominance of Orientalist ideas that tend to homogenise the Middle East and its people. Frustration at how little understanding exists of the diversity in the Middle East region was often demonstrated. Participant 9 illustrated this point by saying; 'it's all about these generalisations, I think sometimes people mix between Arabs and Muslims, they don't understand the difference.' Participant 7 expressed how easily the conflation between Arab, Muslim and terrorist can occur and how this leads to a sense of being collectively scrutinised:

> Unfortunately they tend to assume all Arabs are Muslim and I guess one of the frustrating things I find is that you've got good and bad in every culture so where, when there is an issue about so-called terrorism and straight away the Muslims are on trial, the Arabs are on trial.

Participant 10 described the current situation as being; 'this negative stereotype where Arabs equals dramas and just bad behaviour, it equals terrorism and wars and revolutions.' This was echoed in the sentiments of Participant 8 who described how; 'there's some unfairness and they [Arabs] are made out to be all 'crazy Arabs''.

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One consequence of the stereotyping and categorisation of Arab-Australian was shown to be pejorative social interactions with others, as Participant 21 explained:

> They are stereotyped as one category, and the category is the terrorists that they see. Whether they understand you to be a Christian or a Muslim or an atheist or whatever it is, a Buddhist, if you have Arabic looking features, they automatically create a stereotype of you and you can see them asking questions but you can also see the caution in their eyes.

Participant 17 further detailed how conflation and generalisations have had a detrimental effect on their personal interactions with others, saying:

> A lot of Australians don't know the difference, I think they're starting to know the difference between a Muslim Arab and a Christian Arab and they're starting to identify people on that basis but having said that, most people are interested when they ask me, they're not interested in my religion they're interested in where I come from because of my looks.

Similarly, Participant 22 described an ongoing personal experience with stereotyping in daily life and highlighted the problem with the homogenisation of all Arabs into one religious group, saying:

> Two things, as soon as they ask you 'where are you from? 'Egypt' I feel like they get scared, right and then the second thing, as soon as I say I'm Egyptian they associate that I'm Muslim straightaway. So that's two stereotypes that I face on a daily basis.

Egyptian-Australian participants often expressed a sense of being collectively under attack for the isolated actions of people sharing the same religion. In this example Participant 7

spoke about the 2014 Lindt café siege in Sydney to argue that criminal motive was swept aside in favour of negative stereotypes about Islam in the media:

> There seems to be this very very wide line of anything a Muslim does the whole group of people who are Muslim have to answer for that and we have to apologise for that and we can't possibly have mental health issues, you know the Lindt cafe massacre or siege, you know why was he out on parole?[584],

The interviews further documented instances where participants experienced racism based on negative stereotypes of Arab-Australians. Participant 3 described incredible anger at experiencing racism at a sporting event:

> I was watching something, a soccer match, football match and the guy called me Lebanese and I, my reaction, I was really angry, I am not Lebanese but my reaction was very angry, more than usual and the guy apologised to me actually, he told me 'I'm sorry I'm using', he said the term 'Lebbo' I don't like it, he told me, 'it's not a slur I thought you look like the Lebanese or we call them Lebo' I don't like it so I told him no I'm not 'Lebo' and what's wrong with 'Lebos' what's wrong them?' but I was screaming and shouting and the people tried to calm me down, even my friends, they are Middle Eastern like me and they tried to calm me down, I was very angry, my reaction was massive actually.

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[584] The perpetrator of the siege, Man Haron Monis, had been granted conditional bail between 2009 and 2014 despite being charged during that time with being an accessory to murder and 40 sexual assault offences. Following the siege and subsequent deaths of three people including the gunman himself, the granting of bail became a matter of strong public outcry. For example see Paul Bibby, "Granting of Bail to Man Haron Monis should Not be Investigated by Lindt Cafe Siege Inquest, DPP Claims", *Sydney morning Herald*, 8 February 2011, available http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/granting-of-bail-to-man-haron-monis-should-not-be-investigated-by-lindt-cafe-siege-inquest-dpp-claims-20150604-ghgu1v.html#ixzz3fjLY6xMZ.

4.2.1 Othering In Political Discourse In Australia

Participants highlighted the ways in which Arabs are represented negatively at the political level, specifically the sense that politicians have a responsibility not to inflame or induce negative representation in the community. Participant 15 reflected upon this point to stress that in the current climate of anti-Muslim sentiment politicians have an even greater responsibility not to inflame identity-based tensions, saying:

> I do think that as our politicians and our leaders they should know better and they should understand that this is a very loud minority that do not represent the how many billion Muslims in the world? 1.5billion, they should represent the 1.5billion Muslims in the world particularly the ones in Australia.

There were instances where participants drew attention to the names of prominent Arab figures in Australian political life as a means of demonstrating positive representation at the political level. This denoted a tension between refuting negative aspects of Arab-Australian identity and expressing affiliation and attachment to positive examples of Arabs in the wider community. Examples of positive role models included the Governor of NSW Marie Bashir and Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey (both now retired) who were of Lebanese and Palestinian-Armenian heritage respectively.

Participants also highlighted instances where representation at the political level has been less than positive, as Participant 13 indicated; 'I think there is a little bit of representation,

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unfortunately like Mr Obeid (Eddie Obeid)[585] it's not a very good example, so although

there was the Premier of Victoria was half Lebanese[586].'

It was documented that some prominent so-called representatives of Arab-Australians have

had a divisive effect. This was illustrated by Participant 16, who stated; 'I mean there is a

guy representing you know Islam, Keysar Trad in NSW or whatever, I mean you know this

guy doesn't represent me!'[587]

An interesting observation was noted amongst the participants about the lack of positive

representation of Arabs at the political level. Amongst participants some attributed the

blame for negative representation at Arab-Australians themselves. Participant 6 illustrated

this point when saying; 'politically I think there should be more representation but I don't

blame the system here probably I blame the Arabs themselves for not taking more active

steps into that.' Similar findings are explained in Chapter Five where approximately half

the participants interviewed described how they believed Arabs contributed to their own

negative representation.

4.2.2   Othering In Media Discourse In Australia

The media content analysis informing Chapter Three demonstrates how the presentation of

news in Australia is largely underscored by Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its

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[585] Eddie Obeid was a former New South Wales Minister and member of the Labor Party. In 2014 Obeid was found by an Independent Commission Against Corruption Inquiry (ICAC) to have acted in a corrupt manner in relation to commercial leases in Sydney and that he misused his position as a Member of Parliament to benefit his family's financial interests. See Kate McClymont and Michaela Whitbourn, "ICAC: The Verdict on Eddie Obeid", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5June 2014, available, http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/icac-the-verdict-on-eddie-obeid-20140604-39k20#ixzz33kSU1wnZ.

[586] Referring to Steve Bracks who was the Premier of Victoria (1999-2007) and who is of Lebanese descent.

[587] Keysar Trad is a high-profile commentator of Lebanese origin, often featured in the media, he is the founder of the Islamic Friendship Association of Australia. He has been subject to controversy over a long defamation case against a Sydney radio station and for a number of media comments relating to terrorism, Islam and multiculturalism in Australia.

people. Analysis of the Arab Spring media coverage emphasised the important role of media discourse in enabling constructed notions of Arab-Australian identity to pervade society. This is indicative of how the mainstream media 'will generally reflect the perspectives and interest of established power'.[588] In keeping with established norms of 'stereotyping, homogenising, victimising and demonising people of Middle Eastern descent or of the Islamic faith',[589] the media coverage of the events in Egypt demonstrated the construction and maintenance of the Arab Other in Australian society. To a large extent the perspectives of the Egyptian-Australians interviewed supported this point by articulating the ways they believed Arab-Australians to be Othered in media discourse.

The second area in which participants felt Arab-Australians to be Othered is in Australia's media discourse. Participants spoke of how the media consistently portrayed Arabs in negative ways, further cementing existing negative stereotypes and representations. Participant 5 lamented this point by saying; 'I hope, I wish, there was more contribution of Arabs in mainstream media.' These findings are consistent with those discussed in the media content analysis in Chapter Three.[590] In particular that the media reinforces Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people.

Participant responses illustrated the point that negative representations of Arabs are frequently consistent, both by their use of stereotypes and by the homogenisation of people and events in the presentation of news. This consistency reflects the Western dominated view of global events. Further to this participants spoke directly to how Arab-Australian identity has been affected by media discourse. In particular the binary relationship between

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[588] Chomsky, "Democracy and the Media": accessed http://genius.com/Noam-chomsky-democracy-and-the-media-section-three-annotated.

[589] Isakhan, *Orientalism and the Australian News Media*: 3.

[590] The comparative media analysis conducted in Chapter Three of Arabic and mainstream media coverage of the Egyptian revolution.

core culture and the perceived threat posed by the Other. This was especially encountered in interviews with Muslim participants who attested to feeling increasingly stigmatised by media coverage in Australia. Participant 20 illustrates this point by saying:

> I'm finding it at the moment I have to walk around justifying myself as a Muslim, the majority of other Muslims, the 99.9999 per cent of Muslims that are law abiding citizens because there is a very, with any race or religion there is always going to be people who will attract attention for doing the wrong thing and will reflect badly on others, because of 9/11 because of Al Qaeda, because of ISIS and because of the state of the Arab world at the moment there just seems to be a saturation in the media of news coverage, current affairs coverage on you know Muslims, if it's not Muslims being violent or murders, it's Muslims being sexist or beating up women or raping women, there's just one thing after the other, it seems disproportionate to the actual problem.

Participants supported the point that the media is dominated by a western view of global events, illustrating how during the revolution in Egypt the reporting was notably underscored by the close cultural proximity Australia has with the broader Western community and the propensity to view issues relating to the Arab world with fear and scepticism. Participant 8 argued in particular the close bilateral relationship with the United States was exemplified in the media coverage, saying; 'I felt that the mainstream media was very much tainted by whatever information was being fed to them by the American sources.'

To demonstrate this point further Participant 2 observed that the Australian media does not act in isolation but rather follows a wider political consensus geared towards maintaining close relations with the US, saying:

I understand that because Australia is almost totally dependent on the United States for protection, they just left the mother country the United Kingdom for protection and now they are totally dependent on protection on the United States so they toe the line with the United States regardless of anything, regardless of the special interest of Australia, for them the protection of America is paramount.

Participant 23 described in further detail how the propensity of the media to frame events through a Western prism leads to a double standard when reporting events, for example the issue of foreign fighters abroad, saying:

Sometimes you feel like there's some double standards, like yesterday I was reading there was some kids, students fighting with the Israeli army, they got injured in Israel and there's no mention but if others go to fight with like Syria or Palestinian or go to Iraq there's big problems 'why you go there? And we're going to take the passport from you'. They're not treating the same, nothing mentioned about these Israelis you know fighting overseas.

This view speaks to the Orientalist tendencies of the media and the dichotomy often presented between Western values and the Other. The Australian mainstream media has the propensity to view events in the Arab world through a Western prism. In support of this, Erin Steuter and Deborah Wills have argued the rhetorical framing of news events are indicative of 'long-standing binaries'[591] between East and West, in particular:

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[591] Erin Steuter and Deborah Wills, "Discourses of Dehumanization: Enemy Construction and Canadian Media Complicity in the Framing of the War on Terror," *Global Media Journal : Canadian Edition*, (2009) no. 2:7: 9.

The West defines the East as alien to its norm; the barbaric East is seen, through its essential nature, as fundamentally opposed to the civilized West, locking the two into a relationship so innately hostile that it precludes any solution other than a bifurcated crusade-or-cleanse model in which, as in the historical crusades, difference is eliminated through either conversion or destruction.[592]

This is consistent with the analysis presented in Chapter Three which highlights the existence of a binary relationship between 'western values' and the threat posed to them by the rise of Islamist governments. This is in keeping with norms which observe notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' and which treat Arab-Australians in ways that locate them outside the imagined community.

Participants often expressed their belief that the Australian mainstream media is at best limited and simplistic and at worst biased in their coverage of events involving members of the Arabic speaking community. To illustrate this point Participant 14 laments; 'when the media in Australia talk about how 'the Arabs' are in the media for example all the robberies and shooting and rape are all Arabs, they are all Arabs.' Participant 12 concurred with this point, by saying; 'the crimes committed by people from Middle Eastern background are highlighted more than anything else, more than crimes made by other communities in Australia.'

In the post 9/11 climate Steuter and Wills argue that an increased atmosphere of fear and patriotism has 'not only permitted, but encouraged journalists to set aside their traditional appearance of objectivity.'[593] Participant responses supported this point and in particular

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[592] Ibid.
[593] Ibid., 10

referenced to the role of commercially owned television networks in exercising an anti-Arab agenda. Participants expressed a marked distrust of the commercial television networks. The notion that commercial media have an agenda of influencing public opinion towards particular political interests was observed. This point is illustrated by Participant 5, who said:

> I recognise that most people watch and believe what is being said on Channel Nine and Seven and Ten[594] and on vitriolic programs like Today Tonight and A Current Affair and so I realise and recognise that they probably do wield an influence on public opinion. And Australia is not without racial tensions, I think it's not the very worst it could be but I know it's there. I wish that we were more realistic, just more realistic, we are a very multicultural country and you do not see that on those channels.

The role played of the mainstream media and the substantial power it holds over the news agenda was further highlighted in the response of Participant 12, who said:

> To be honest I reckon the media plays a huge part in the political debate, more than it should do and why I say more than it should do is because it's mainly controlled and navigated by the capitalist if I may say so. For example as an ordinary person living in Australia all that we get on the television is say Channel Seven, Nine and ten and they are all navigated towards certain views.

Muslim participants in particular expressed the view that the media has played a primary role in negatively representing Islam. The media in Australia has a propensity to

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[594] These are the major commercial networks on Australian free-to-air television.

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consistently represent issues relating to the Middle East in ways that are both homogenising and pejorative. This denotes the underlying Orientalism of the mainstream media and supports the point that Islam's image in the Western media features 'not only patent inaccuracy but also expressions of unrestrained ethnocentrism, cultural and even racial hatred.'[595] This point is illustrated by Participant 23, who said; 'the media is biased you know, when anything happened and the participant doing it is Muslim they mention the religion, if he's not Muslim they don't mention the religion, it's one sided and controlled by I don't know who, but they want to show all the Middle East as terrorists or things like that.' Similarly, Participant 20 reflected upon the ways the media disproportionately represented Muslims in favour of sensationalising events:

> It's just becoming almost suffocating, because every time I turn on the TV there's an article about a Muslim doing something, or there's a rally against Muslims or it's just, it makes for great news and I know that the media is just simply tapping into that but I think they should have more of a responsibility when they're reporting or covering certain stories to not sensationalise things which they seem to love to do.

The media therefore has the ability to further cement negative perceptions by applying undue scrutiny to whole sections of the community. The ramifications of this are described by Participant 1, who said:

> I think that's where we are at, we are a small minority in Australia and a lot of minorities in Australia and minorities in general all around the world always get discriminated against regardless whether it's a belief that they get discriminated for,

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[595] Cited in Karim H. Karim, "Islamic, Islamist, Moderate, Extremist: Imaging the Muslim Self and the Muslim Other," in *Re-Imagining the Other: Culture, Media, and Western-Muslim Intersections*, ed. Mahmoud Eid, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 153-175: 155.

a look, or a culture or whatever it is, and I think because we are a minority and because of the things that are happening overseas, we are bullied, we are put under the spotlight, we are scrutinised constantly.

4.3   Conclusion

Interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community provide empirical evidence of the current problematic state of Arab-Australian identity. A belief that negative representation of Arab-Australians exists in Australian society as well as the patterns of Othering have been demonstrated by these interviews. Arab-Australian identity was described by participants as lacking in adequate representation at the political level. At the media level participants described the conflation of the terms Arab/Muslim/Terrorist-reflecting the lack of understanding of the diversity of the Middle East and its people. At the same time the powerful mainstream media in Australia has been highlighted as perpetuating negative views towards Arab-Australians and particularly issues relating to Muslims and Islam.

The participant findings support the existence of a binary between West and East in the representation of Arab-Australian identity. This is in keeping with Orientalist thinking in Australia which continues to underpin the political and media discourse of the Middle East and its people. The propensity of the media to frame events through a Western prism has been highlighted and most importantly the effects of Othering have been illustrated at a personal level in the lived experiences of Egyptian-Australians.

Chapter 5 - The Gap Between Arab-Australian Representation And Identity: The Experience of Egyptian-Australians

5.1 Introduction

An emergent theme of this study is the gap or disparity between how Arab-Australians are represented in media, political and popular discourse and the way Arab-Australians represent themselves. This chapter again draws on interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community to demonstrate how the construction of identity has occurred within the Arab-Australian community and to highlight the gaps between how Arab-Australian identity is represented and how Arab-Australians represent their own identity. This chapter begins with the finding that Egyptian-Australians hold both strong opinions of and an aversion to the identity construct Arab-Australian. The reasons for this are explored in relation to external factors such as media and political discourse and their role in informing participants' views. The ways participants in this study validated the notion that Arab-Australians are Othered is examined.

The framework for self-identification of participants highlights disparities and inconsistencies with existing notions of Arab-Australian identity. Studying the experiences of Egyptian-Australians, as one group within the broader Arabic speaking community, enhances existing understanding and goes some way towards addressing the lack of diversity in the representation of Arab-Australians in the broader ongoing debate about identity, nationalism and belonging in Australia.

5.2 Contesting Arab-Australian Identity: The Emergence Of Egyptian-Australian Aversion To The Identity Construct

There was significant aversion to the identity label Arab-Australian demonstrated by Egyptian-Australian participants in this study. Of the twenty-five participants interviewed none described themselves using the term Arab-Australian, in fact only three participants even used the word 'Arab' as part of their identity description. While the term Arab-Australian has become commonplace for collectively describing people of Arabic speaking background both in scholarly literature and popular discourse, the term was notable by its absence from the language of participants when describing themselves.

The most common forms of self-identification were other hybrid labels such as Egyptian-Australian and Australian-Egyptian which were often coupled with religious identifiers such as 'Coptic Egyptian' or 'Australian Egyptian Muslim'. While on the face of it the revelation that participants did not describe themselves using the term Arab-Australian or even Arab may appear to challenge the very premise of this study, after all the study's aim is to examine *Arab-Australian* identity. To the contrary, the revelation marked a critical line of inquiry into the experiences of different groups within the Arabic speaking population. Most significantly the finding that Egyptian-Australians relate negatively to the Arab-Australian identity construct highlights the lack of diversity in the way Arab-Australians are currently represented. To examine this situation more deeply two questions are critical; firstly was the term Arab-Australian meaningful to Egyptian-Australian participants and in what ways? Secondly, was the term Arab-Australian being *explicitly avoided* and *why*? This chapter addresses these two areas.

5.2.1 'Arab': An Emotive And Contentious Label

The interviews reinforced that the term 'Arab' is both powerful and emotive. For the participants interviewed 'Arab' carried with it significant meaning. Participant 17 described how for them 'the word Arab, it's a loaded term', while participant 10 said, 'I find it more of a political or ignorant word, like many things come with it, like a whole stereotype and it's not very positive.' In an extreme case Participant 2 declined to engage at all with the aspect of the study that considered the representation of Arab-Australians. Rather this participant attested to it being a contentious and undesirable issue, saying; 'well in a recorded interview I don't want to get involved in this because this is a very thorny issue, about the Arab, let us say, no I will not deal with that on a recorded interview.'

5.2.2 United By The Language Arabic, Not The Term Arab

Upon further analysis objection to the term 'Arab' contained a number of components. Firstly, there were objections against generalisations based on conflating the language identifier of Arabic with the word Arab. In many instances participants were keen to promote an understanding that the language of Arabic should be considered exclusive from the term Arab. As Participant 6 protested, 'Arabic speaking, not Arabs, which is a big difference between the two words'. This finding illustrates how the language of Arabic[596] may be a uniting feature amongst participants, rather than the term Arab. The following statement of Participant 10 further explains this point; 'I feel that 'Arabs' is a very generalised word, like we all speak Arabic, but the area that is, even the history of the people living in the area there is very different, the races are very different.'

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[596] The 2011 census showed Arabic was spoken by more non-English speaking people born in Australia than any other language. This has implications for assessing the level of cultural entrenchment and connection for Arabic speaking groups verses other migrant groups.

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5.2.3   Arab/Muslim Conflation And Religious Tensions

Secondly, objection to the term Arab was made on the grounds of the term being conflated with Islam. Such religious foundations were particularly refuted by Christian participants. As highlighted in the following statement from Participant 11; 'I personally never consider myself an Arab because of my Christian status because the word Arab has a lot of Islamic connotations to it'. This view was further echoed in a later response from Participant 11, who said; 'I don't associate myself as being Arab, because, when I do turn the tellie on and when I do read the newspaper, Arabs are always Muslims they're never Christians or they're never given the option to be either, it's just always Muslims.' Objection to the term Arab-Australian being used to describe Egyptian-Australians, in particular Christian Egyptians, demonstrates the Arab/Middle Eastern/Islam conflation in the representation of the Middle East and its people. In the Egyptian context this finding is also a reflection of the tension between religious groups and the rising importance of religious identity in Egypt and the Middle East. The history and rise of religious identity in Egypt is informative to explaining the framework of self-identification and as such is allocated a separate section below.

5.2.4   Orientalism Internalised

It was apparent that amongst the participant group interviewed the term Arab-Australian was objectionable on the grounds that it carried with it generalisations and connotations not in keeping with participants' own sense of identity. Egyptian-Australians contested Arab-Australian identity by distancing themselves from associated identity labels. This was noticeable in the ways participants expressed their understanding of what and *who* the term Arab-Australian applied to. In doing so participants often reinforced negative views

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of Arab-Australians by engaging existing stereotypes in their responses. This is an example of how Orientalism may become internalised even by those subjectified by it.

In distancing oneself from the identity construct Arab-Australian, roughly half the participants interviewed described how they believed Arabs contributed to their own negative representation. For example the views of Participant 8 reflects this point; 'I think Middle Eastern men, people are represented badly, there's a lot of decent people but there is an undercurrent of thinking amongst the Middle Eastern population that's quite backwards and I think that some of the negative connotations are justified.' Statements such as this reveal how participants often spoke about Arabs in terms of existing stereotypes and in turn may justify negative representation. Conversely it was clear that participants viewed themselves as separate to these negative representations. For instance by expressing a sense that collectively Arabs may be to blame for the negative representation participants were clearly excluding themselves from this group. The statement made by Participant 15 illustrates this point; 'In all honesty I don't blame Australians, you know lay Australians because the people, the loud minority of Arabs and Muslims are quite terrible and they do terrible things and they're representing us in a horrible way, so I don't blame the lay Australian.'

The inference that Arabs themselves may be to blame for negative representation may further document how Arab-Australian identity is Othered. By seeking to highlight the negative (often stereotypical) aspects of Arab identity participants created distance between themselves and the identity construct of Arab-Australian. This is argued to be in response to the negative social position of Arab-Australian identity as the Other.

5.3   The Framework Of Self-Identification By Egyptian-Australians

Egyptian-Australians interviewed in this study tended to frame their identity in ways that located them outside of, or exceptional to, notions of Arab-Australian identity. By invoking a sense of Egyptian exceptionalism participants shed light on both the existence of Arab-Australian identity as Other and the processes by which Egyptian-Australians seek to differentiate themselves from this identity construct. The notion of Egyptian exceptionalism therefore is a formative and critical finding of this study and contests current notions of Arab-Australian identity.

Prior to presenting analysis of Egyptian exceptionalism, the framework for how participants identified themselves needs to be conceptualised. Egyptian-Australian participants were asked to respond to the question 'how do you describe yourself in terms of your cultural identity?'[597] This was one means for assessing self-identification amongst Arab-Australians. Further analysis of the ways participants related to the identity label Arab-Australian was conducted through a number of other open-ended questions.

Participants used various labels to describe their own identity. No single identity description was dominant amongst the 25 participants however there were a number of trends observed. Namely, hybrid identity constructs such as 'Egyptian-Australian', 'Australian-Egyptian' or variations were the most widely used. Descriptions which conveyed a sense of mixed or 'caught between' identities were also commonly encountered. Describing one's identity using a religious label, for example 'Egyptian, Muslim' or 'Coptic Egyptian ' were also popular responses. The term Arab-Australian was noted by its absence amongst the participants, with no participants choosing to self-identify in this way. In

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[597] For a full description of the interview questions asked in this study see Appendix 1.

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addition very few participants (only three) chose to use the term Arab to describe their identity. A table representing each of the responses of the participants in the study is below[598]:

Table 7. Responses: 'How Do You Describe Yourself In Terms Of Your Cultural Identity?'

Participant	Response
Participant 1	Well cultural identity, I would consider myself an Australian-Egyptian, basically the best way to describe it is I'm Australian by birth, so my nationality is Australian, my background is Egyptian and my religion is Islam.
Participant 2	I am of Egyptian descent and I am Coptic Catholic by religion.
Participant 3	Middle Eastern, Muslim, Egyptian, Arab, yeah and the most important of all I'm Leftist.
Participant 4	I am from Alexandria one of the countries of Egypt it's actually the second capital of Egypt and it's on the Mediterranean sea and I love my culture and being an Egyptian and that's it.
Participant 5	I think it really depends on the context, if I'm being asked, and really by circumstance really. If I'm being asked by other Egyptians, you know what is your ethnicity? then I would say I'm Egyptian, and if I'm, umm, if I was overseas for example, then I would say I'm Australian or Egyptian-Australian, or indeed just an Australian.

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[598] In some cases the responses shown above form excerpts of longer responses provided to the question "How do you describe your cultural identity?"

Participant 6	Probably Australian-Egyptian with very strong links to my roots and origins, Egypt.
Participant 7	I say I'm an Australian-Egyptian Muslim.
Participant 8	Well I'd call myself Australian with Egyptian heritage, Egyptian heritage Australian.
Participant 9	Depends what you mean by cultural identity, like yeah I'm Egyptian, Muslim, Sunni, if that helps you.
Participant 10	I just say I'm Egyptian-Lebanese.
Participant 11	I probably say that I am always Egyptian at heart.
Participant 12	I'm a Coptic Orthodox Christian from Egypt.
Participant 13	Well it depends on which country I'm in, if I'm abroad I say I'm Australian if I'm here in Australia I say I'm Egyptian.
Participant 14	I am really half Egyptian-Half Australian, more than half Australian.
Participant 15	I'm Egyptian-Australian.
Participant 16	An Egyptian born-Australian.
Participant 17	It's a hard question to answer because sometimes I actually wonder exactly what category do I fit in?
Participant 18	Okay well I usually tell people that I am Australian-Egyptian.
Participant 19	I consider myself an Australian-Egyptian.
Participant 20	I firstly describe myself as Australian, then as an Australian Muslim and then when people as my background I explain that my mother's Egyptian and my

	dad is originally of Polish background but was born in England and raised in Australia.
Participant 21	I'm Australian...I would identify as being Australian even though I have an Egyptian background.
Participant 22	I say 'I'm from Australia' but my nationality or my identity is Egyptian.
Participant 23	I describe myself as an Australian-Arabic-Muslim, and if you want and Egyptian as well.
Participant 24	Well Australian with Egyptian background.
Participant 25	If somebody asks me over there, or here or everywhere I'm Egyptian first and I'm Coptic Orthodox, I'm Christian.

5.3.1   Identity Contextualisation

An emergent theme from the interviews was the tendency of participants to contextualise

identity based upon location and questioner. Participants described how they may alter the

way they describe themselves based on the background of the questioner and the context in

which they were being asked to identify themselves. For instance there were a number of

participants who indicated they would change their responses based on whether they were

in Australia or abroad as Participant 13 described; 'well it depends on which country I'm

in, if I'm abroad I say I'm Australian if I'm here in Australia I say I'm Egyptian.'

This supports the notion that collective identity expression is dependent on the audience

and the setting.[599] Participants indicated they would be more likely to emphasise their

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[599] Saskia Witteborn, "The Situated Expression of Arab Collective Identities in the United States," *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 3 (2007), 556-575: 572.

Australian identity when abroad, while in Australia they would be more likely to emphasise their Egyptianality as a primary defining feature of their identity. Participant 22 highlights this by saying; 'If I was to go to Egypt, you know they ask me 'where are you from?' and I say 'I'm from Australia' but my nationality or my identity is Egyptian.' Explaining further the tendency of participants to contextualise their identity, Participant 5 articulates the process and rationalisation for modifying identity based upon the setting, saying:

> I think it really depends on the context, if I'm being asked, and really by circumstance really. If I'm being asked by other Egyptians, you know 'what is your ethnicity?' Then I would say I'm Egyptian, and if I'm, if I was overseas for example, then I would say I'm Australian or Egyptian-Australian, or indeed just an Australian.

This is not a unique observation in studies of this nature. In a study of the expression of collective identity amongst Arab-Americans, respondents demonstrated how they understood identity to be situated and dependent upon context. Saskia Witteborn noted there were specific reasons for using particular labels in social interactions amongst Arab-American participants. Witteborn observed the ways participants 'regarded collective identification as a strategic accomplishment, such as making a political statement or increasing credibility.'[600]

The fluidity of identity is therefore illustrated by the respondents in this study and reinforces the fact that identities are open to change depending on social settings.[601] The argument that identity constructs are fluid and open to reconfiguration is reflected in the

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[600] Ibid.
[601] Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity": 147.

experience of other ethnic groups in Australia, for instance the Asian-Australian population.

The experience of Asian-Australians embodies both the powerful social privilege/disadvantage carried by certain identity labels at any given point in time. The history of Asian ethnicity in Australia is a fragile one. While migrants and subsequent generations of Australians from Asian backgrounds are now generally considered an integral part of Australian society they are 'still collectively racialised whenever a wave of moral panic about Asian immigration flares up'.[602] Conversely the Australian government 'shamelessly flirts'[603] the idea of Australia's interconnectedness with Asia mostly for economic purposes. The experience of Asian-Australians demonstrates that identity constructs are subject to changes in cultural valuation based on the social setting and political climate.

This speaks to the powerful social privilege, or disadvantage carried by certain identity labels which informs how identities are contested. To illustrate this point Leone Huddy says in a critique of the study of social and political identities:

> Postmodern theorists in the humanities have challenged the traditional conceptions of identity by arguing that the fixed subject of liberal humanistic thinking is an anachronism that should be replaced by a more flexible individual whose identity is fluid, contingent, and socially constructed. [604]

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[602] Stratton and Ang, "Multicultural Imagined Communities": 155.
[603] Ibid.
[604] Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity": 127.

Thus it is worthwhile to note the fluidity of identity constructs. A point which has been illustrated in how Othering has digressed/morphed in more recent years from earlier patterns of non-white racialism towards Islamophobia.

5.3.2 Importance Of Religious Identity To Egyptian-Australians

Religion emerged as integral to the way Egyptian-Australians expressed and related to the concept of identity. Correspondingly there were differences in both self-identification and the emphasis placed on religion, depending on the length of time participants had been in Australia.

Religious identity was found to play a significant role in shaping identity amongst participants, especially for those who left Egypt relatively recently. With the exception of two participants all participants living in Australia for less than 10 years used religious identity markers as part of their identity description, commonly 'Muslim' or 'Coptic'. Examples of the ways participants expressed their identity featuring religious markers included the responses from Participant 9; 'I'm Egyptian, Muslim, Sunni' and Participant 25; 'I'm Egyptian first and I'm Coptic Orthodox, I'm Christian'. The tendency to use religious identity markers was not encountered to such an extent amongst those living in Australia for more than 10 years and amongst those born in Australia. Just five out of 19 participants in these groups used religious labels in their identity descriptions. To explain this finding it is necessary to consider the nature and importance of religion in modern Egyptian society and the bearing this has on how participants understand their identity in the Australian context.

Historical studies have demonstrated the convergence of political and religious identity in modern Egypt.[605] Drawing on these studies, in particular the political and religious convergence encountered in the respective eras of Anwar Sadat and Hosni Mubarak, provides context for explaining the role played by religion in the responses of the participants.

Religious identity has been steadily growing in influence in Egypt. David Zeidan described an 'intensifying religiosity at all levels of Egyptian society.[606] In particular the rise and influence of Islam in modern Egyptian society has been highlighted.[607] Since the 1970's successive governments in Egypt have used religion 'to consolidate power and mobilise society.'[608] This point supports the earlier discussion of the connection between power and identity and the necessity of national identity to maintaining 'the integrity of the nation and its borders'.[609] The structural conditions of modernity, and particularly globalisation have necessitated the formation of nation identity. To locate the role of religion in this requires asserting the relationship between culture and religion. If culture is the "vessel" in which the symbols, meanings, historical items *etc*. of national identity are loaded,[610] then religion forms the content of the "vessel". The mutual interaction of religion and culture are at

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[605] For a comprehensive work on the transformation of Egypt during the regimes of Nasser and Sadat, in particular the upheaval of the social class system in Egypt and the responses to pressures at the political level from the industrialised West, see the work of John Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat: The Political Economy of Two Regimes,* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1983). Or for a ethnographic critique of the national policies of modernisation in Egypt, particularly during the Anwar Sadat regime see Farha Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern - Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo,* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2002).
[606] David Zeidan, "The Copts- equal, Protected Or Persecuted? The Impact of Islamization on Muslim-Christian Relations in Modern Egypt," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 10, no. 1 (1999), 53-67: 54.
[607] See works by Geneive Abdo, *No God but God : Egypt and the Triumph of Islam.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) and Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
[608] Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern*: 119.
[609] Korostelina, *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power*: 18.
[610] Nagel, "Constructing Ethnicity": 162.

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work everywhere.[611] In particular Christopher Dawson argues that religion is intrinsically linked to culture through the organised way of life and common traditions of societies.[612]

Religion has been a means for supporting the rule of multiple Egyptian presidents, including Anwar Sadat who presented himself as al-Ra'is al-Mu'min, "the Believing President".[613] Zeidan described the political manifestation of religious identity in modern politics when stating that 'government and party leaders compete with each other in expressions of Islamic zeal that mask their manipulation of religion to consolidate power'.[614] The comprehensive work of Farha Ghannam highlights that appealing to popular religious belief has been a strategic means for weakening radical elements within Egyptian society such as the Nasserists, Marxists and the student movement.[615] More recently religion has been used in attempts to counter the growing influence of Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood.[616]

It is this context that explains the importance placed upon religion by participants when describing their identity and the way religion functions as a means of social comparison. Participant 25 conceptualised both the complexities of religion and its importance to identity when saying 'religious life in Egypt or religious concepts affect the personal behaviour over there in Egypt, it's very involved.' In response to the question *'how do you describe your cultural identity?'* Participant 11 illustrated the relevance of religion in

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[611] Christopher Dawson, "The Relation between Religion and Culture," in *Religion and Culture*, ed. Christopher Dawson, Second ed. (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 35-48: 46.

[612] Ibid., 35.

[613] Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern*: 119.

[614] David Zeidan, "The Copts—equal, Protected Or Persecuted? The Impact of Islamization on Muslim-Christian Relations in Modern Egypt." *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 10, no. 1 (1999): 53-67: 54.

[615] Ideologically, the regime of Gamal Abdul Nasser de-emphasised the role of religion by proclaiming to unite Egyptians through a secular rather than religious based approach. The economic and social programs of Nasser were aimed at satisfying Egyptians through establishing a state based on socialist principles.

[616] Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern*: 119.

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informing their identity, saying; 'very much my opinion is shaped around my religion... I probably answer that, my answer will be shaped very much by my religious status, so I am Coptic Orthodox and that's considered a minority in Egypt and Christianity is considered a minority in the Middle East in general.'

Corresponding with the rise in importance of religion has been the conflict between Christian minority Copts and the majority Sunni Muslims in Egypt. The Middle East region as a whole has 'faced an intensification of the ethnic and religious consciousness of their constituent groups'.[617] Despite long held secular tendencies that have generally seen Egyptian society united by common national interests, Hamied Ansari argues that 'religious fervour has invaded all groups and associations in Egypt, inflaming communal feelings while weakening national bonds'.[618] Ghannam argues that religion strongly competes with nationalism in Egypt and that 'although people strongly identify themselves as Egyptians, the state's definition of "modern Egyptians" is exclusive, [and] different groups are not seen as contributing positively to the construction of the country'.[619] Furthermore Ghannam describes how Egyptian society is becoming increasingly dominated by religious identity, specifically in the cultural space. 'Rather than being "Egyptian", traditions are being redefined in terms of their relationship to Islam'.[620] This illustrates how religion functions as a means of social comparison in the same sense that culture does so in 'the construction of boundaries and the production of meaning.'[621]

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[617] Zeidan, "The Copts—equal, Protected Or Persecuted?": 53.
[618] Hamied Ansari, "Sectarian Conflict in Egypt and the Political Expediency of Religion," *Middle East Journal* 38, no. 3 (1984), 397-418: 397.
[619] Ghannam, *Remaking the Modern*: 119.
[620] Ibid., 125.
[621] Nagel, "Constructing Ethnicity": 153.

In accounting for the increased opposition between Muslims and Christians in Egypt witnessed in the last century Zeidan points to the increasing politicisation of religious difference and in particular 'the tendency of unscrupulous politicians to manipulate the religious divide in an effort to strengthen their own position'.[622] Participants in this study supported this point by attesting to rising religious consciousness and the ongoing conflict between Copts and Muslims in Egypt. Christian participants highlighted a sense of persecution, for example Participant 11 who has lived in Australia for more than 10 years said; 'currently we're considered second class citizens of Egypt because we're Christians under Islamic law.' While Participant 13 also living in Australia for over 10 years wished to emphasise the view that it was important to remain moderate amidst the increasing religious conflict; 'I like to moderate them sometimes, there are extremes on both sides, the Copts on one side the Muslims on the other, I'd like to say that some of the Muslims are extreme in their views, some of the Copts are, most of the Copts are extreme in their views.' Encapsulated here in the view of Participant 25, who has lived in Australia for less than ten years, is the fundamental role that persecution has played in shaping the experiences of Christian Egyptians:

> Christian people are fear [frightened] people, so they feel they are less than the Muslims, so they feel persecuted or discriminated and this is true, we are really discriminated and persecuted over there, persecuted in jobs, persecuted in live style in everything, we have internal fear or panics or we are afraid about our future and afraid about our kids.

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[622] Zeidan, "The Copts—equal, Protected Or Persecuted?": 54.

By understanding the context in which the salience of religious identity has increased in Egypt helps to locate participants' self-identification within a broader identity construction framework. It is reasonable to think the expression of identity by Egyptians living in Australia would be influenced by their lived experiences in Egypt. Participants expressed their identity as a reflection of their experiences of existing identity constructs present in Egypt at the time of their departure or in some cases the departure of their parents.

Identity therefore should be understood as a concept that continues to be experienced through participants' ongoing connection with Egyptian society. Religion is now an important feature of the way modern Egyptians express their identity and this is reflected in the way Egyptian-Australians express their identity. It must be noted that this works against some dominant perceptions of the Middle East that treat religious identity as historically stable and unchanging.[623]

5.3.3   Caught Between Two Cultures: Ongoing Connections With Egypt

This brings forth a discussion of how Egyptian-Australians, either born in Egypt or born in Australia, understand and communicate their connection to Egypt. This has a bearing on the way participants express their identity and how they relate their identity to the Australian context.

Emerging from the interviews was an apparent friction between a deep connection with Egyptian heritage and the new lived experiences, which have shaped participants' identity

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[623] For in-depth analysis of the extent that identity has been historically stable in the Middle East see Shibley Telhami and Michael N. Barnett, *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East* (Ithaca: Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2002).

since leaving Egypt. Participant 16 who left Egypt more than 20 years ago encapsulated simultaneous feelings of connection and distance to Egyptian identity, saying:

> I'm a different human being to the run of the mill Egyptian, because I left them a long time ago, not because I want to lose my Egyptianality, I haven't, when I talk to Egyptians in Cairo, when I go to Cairo, it sounds and feels as if you left Cairo only yesterday, you know, so I am very very very Egyptian.

The concept of transnational connectedness is informative to exploring the extent to which migrant identities and the identities of their children in Australia are shaped by events in Egypt. Steven Vertovec refers to transnational connection as being relevant to the 'practices of constructing, maintaining and negotiating collective identities'.[624] Also vital to this study was the existence of transnational cultural connections beyond the first generation of migrants. Such enduring transnational connections have 'significant bearing on the culture and identity of the so-called second generation, or children born to migrants.'[625] This point is illustrated by the response of participant 15, who said; 'Australia is home in that I don't know how to live in Egypt but I am, I have a strong connection to Egypt culturally, I grew up here but when I go there I feel like I belong. I have two children and I hope to pass on that connection to their heritage to them as well.'

Participants expressed 'belonging' as the manifestation of this cultural connection. This was demonstrated by Participant 22 who explained how identity was shaped by a sense of belonging culturally to Egypt:

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[624] Steven Vertovec, "Transnationalism and Identity," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001), 573-582: 575.
[625] Ibid.

I associate myself to be Egyptian also my roots are there, also I find that a lot of my day-to-day dealings or the way I carry myself, the way I think, that's very influenced by Egyptian culture, the fact that, you know that we've always got Arabic music playing through, the TV shows, all of that kind of stuff, it definitely influences the way you perceive things, the way you think about particular situations, the way you carry yourself.

For many participants the uncertainty of belonging was expressed as sense of being caught between two cultures. In some cases participants expressed their identity as being a balancing act between 'Egyptianilty' and 'Australianness'. The need or desire to reconcile these two discreet components of their identity emerged particularly amongst those born in Egypt. Participant 14 highlighted this sentiment in the statement; 'Well I was born in Egypt, I came here (to Australia) at the age of 26, I've been here over 40 years so I am really half Egyptian-Half Australian, more than half Australian.' Participant 17 highlighted the point that amongst those born in Egypt but who left more than ten years ago, cultural belonging was a contested concept, when saying; 'I think that's kind of felt with a lot of people who have left half way through in their lifespan. A little bit older I would say a lot of Egyptian, I would mostly say I'm Egyptian fully, a little bit younger and I would say I'm Australian fully, but where I am is caught right in the middle.'

To this end the length of time spent in Australia appeared to influence the way participants' expressed their sense of belonging. Participants in Australia for less than 10 years did not describe their identity using the term 'Australian'. Rather identity descriptions which featured the term 'Egyptian' were preferred. This underscores the deep sense of connection with Egyptian identity maintained amongst participants in Australia for less than 10 years. Participant 4 articulated a strong sense of Egyptian identity despite living in

Australian long enough to qualify for citizenship (7 years) and having children in Australia, saying; 'I love to describe myself as an Egyptian, I love my identity very much and even my kids, we still keep both nationalities, and actually I still didn't take the Australian nationality.'

Participants living in Australia for more than 10 years but born in Egypt were more likely to express a sense of conflicted or contested identity than those in other groups. Often participants born in Egypt took longer to respond and used more words to describe their identity. This highlights a more nuanced or complex framework of identity amongst those born in Egypt. Participants in this group often referred to Egypt as their birth place, emphasising the connection they felt to their homeland, together with a strong desire to express their Australian identity. This point is reflected in the views of Participant 11, who said; 'I probably say that I am always Egyptian at heart, I was born in Egypt so Egypt will always live in my heart but my allegiance lies with Australia because Australia has given me more than any country can give someone that hasn't had real democracy before in their life.'

The desire of participants to weigh up or justify the components of their identity and the difficulty faced by this task was evident in statements like 'it's hard to say if I'm more one than the other, I think I'm more equally Egyptian as I am Australian' made by Participant 15; and 'I can't really describe myself as purely Egyptian or purely Australian or purely British, I'm not really sure', which was the statement made by Participant 13. This sentiment extended to expressing a sense of obligation or allegiance to either Egypt or Australia. Participant 16 who has lived in Australia for 30 years articulated a sense of frustration at an example of what they believed to be ill-placed allegiance:

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During the Olympics someone got in touch with me and said 'look mate, there's a volleyball match between Egypt and Australia, we're going with drums and all that to support Egypt'. I said 'are you kidding?' I said 'Are you bloody kidding? Haven't we left Egypt and came to Australia, we left Egypt dissatisfied and we came to a country which gave us really everything we like?

In the group of participants living in Australia for less than ten years a clearer and stronger sense of Egyptian identity was evident. As Participant 4 stated; 'I love my culture and being an Egyptian and that's it.' This finding suggests, perhaps unsurprisingly, that a stronger sense of Egyptian identity is apparent in the responses of participants who recently left Egypt than participants in Australia for an extended period.

Interestingly, the most complex identity framework was found amongst second-generation Egyptian-Australians - participants born in Australia of migrant parents. Amongst this group there appeared a clearer self-prescribed definition of mixed identity. This participant group mostly described themselves as Australian with Egyptian heritage or used similar language to emphasise their Egyptian background within the context of their Australian identity. In some cases participants' hybrid identity was expressed as a sense of being 'a mix' of Australian and Egyptian but often with an emphasis on the cultural impact Egypt had on their identity. Participant 18 illustrated this point when saying; 'I feel that I am somewhat of a mix of, you know I grew up with very traditional Egyptian parents so I have that and I was born and raised here so I have a bit of Australian culture as well, so I feel like I'm a bit of a mix.' While the following statement from Participant 8 highlights the way participants born in Australia expressed a clear sense of enduring cultural affinity with Egypt; 'I think that probably in my life, there's two distinct phases in my life, my younger years and my, up until the end of my first marriage, the Egyptian influence was very strong

and then since my second marriage it's been less so but it's still an important part of my identity.'

The extent to which a sense of cultural affinity was awoken by the events in Egyptian revolution was demonstrated in the responses of some participants. For example, Participant 5, born in Australia, illustrates an inspired sense of cultural pride when describing Egypt as 'my country' in the following statement; 'I think my willingness to claim my ethnic heritage, to really claim it in an informed way, in a way where I offered opinion, really only happened after I was convinced that there was action, you know in my country, in Egypt.'

These excerpts taken from participants in this study reflects how a deep and ongoing connection to Egypt is expressed in a number of ways. There were variations in the way participants' expressed their sense of belonging based on the length of time spent in Australia. Overall, participant responses indicated a nuanced or complex framework that often involved weighing-up and reconciling the components of their identity. A struggle between 'Egyptianality' and 'Australianness' was expressed by participants regardless of the length of time spent in Australia. This finding is in keeping with concepts of transnational connection which relate to practices of constructing, maintaining and negotiating collective identities.[626]

5.4   Conclusion

This chapter has presented a framework for how Egyptian-Australians, one group within the Arabic speaking community, conceptualise their own identity in relation to the Arab-

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[626] Ibid.

Australian identity construct. A number of important findings have emerged. Firstly the term 'Arab' has been found to be highly emotive to the extent that Egyptian-Australians have sought to distance themselves from it. Participants demonstrated the negative social position attributed to Arab-Australian identity and the illustrated the effects of Othering. Furthermore participants reinforced existing negative stereotypes of Arab-Australians and this shows how Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people can become internalised, even by those they subjectify.

The framework presented by the respondents in this study contest current notions of the representation of Arab-Australian identity. While the term Arab-Australian has become commonplace, both in scholarly literature and popular discourse, for collectively describing people of Arabic speaking background, the term was not used by participants to describe themselves. This highlights a gap between the way Arab-Australians are represented and how they represent themselves. In particular these findings reveal how one group within the Arabic speaking community are resisting the homogenisation of Arabs which is forced upon them by mainstream representations of Arab-Australian identity.

Chapter 6 - Pharaohs Among Arabs: Resistance To The Forced Homogenisation Of Arab-Australian Identity Amongst Egyptian-Australians

6.1   Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the specific ways Egyptian-Australian are resisting Arab-Australian identity construct. Constructed around the notion that Egyptian-Australian identity is defined by a sense of exceptionalism to the Arab-Australian identity construct. Through Social Identity Theory (SIT) this chapter seeks to explain Egyptian exceptionalism as a means of distancing Egyptian-Australians from the Arab-Australian identity construct. As such Egyptian exceptionalism is understood to be a response to the negative social position attributed to the Arab-Australian identity construct, specifically its' location as Other.

6.2   Egyptian Exceptionalism To Arab World Events

Emerging from the interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community was the tendency of Egyptian-Australians not identify themselves as Arabs. This was demonstrated in setting the Egyptian revolution apart from broader instability in the region. While it was acknowledged by participants that events in Egypt occurred amidst broader turmoil in the surrounding Middle East region, often participants sought to highlight the uniquely Egyptian aspects of the revolution. In doing so making the point that events in Syria and Libya and the worsening state of Iraq did not provide apt comparison to the Egyptian revolution. The perspectives of Egyptian-Australians regarding Egypt's place in the broader context of the Middle East is illustrated by statements such as this from

Participant 14, who said; 'Egypt is different from the other Arab countries. I mean Egypt is different to the Arab world'. To support this further Participant 11 explains how the revolution has shifted the perception of Arabs from 'follows' to 'leaders of their own destiny', this applies only to Egypt as described in the following:

> I won't consider Afghanistan or Syria or Iraq as part of that because that's a whole other story but I definitely think Egypt stands out of all the Middle Eastern countries of people of a country who want to push for a better life and they will do anything they need to do to do that and not fall in the same state as Iraq or Afghanistan or Syria so I think it has changed our status instead of just blind sheep following some random power person to real Egyptians who are leaders of their own life.

The expression of Egypt's exceptionality to the rest of the Arab world was notwithstanding the fears amongst participants that Egypt may meet the same fate as countries in the surrounding areas. Specifically that instability in the region could encircle Egypt. However as Participant 14 explains there is optimism that Egypt can withstand such regional instability:

> The revolution in Egypt didn't happen alone, there was an Australian or international focus on it but it's happening within a mess in the whole Arab world, Iraq is a mess, Syria is a mess, Libya, Tunisia, Sudan, surrounding Gaza, they whole thing, the whole region is collapsing, Egypt is surrounded by problems, it has never been like that, it's all over, Iraq Syria, Gaza, Libya, Tunisia, Sudan its surrounded. And the only Arab country that managed to remain united and in one piece is Egypt.

It was noted that the notion of Egyptian exceptionalism with regards to the revolution and its future prospects appeared to be in contrast with historical notions of Pan-Arabism

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which had been considered the dominant world view of the 1970s and which was a hallmark of Gamal Abdel Nasser's presidency.[627] Participant 1 explains the retreat of the notion of 'pan-Arabia' experienced after the recent events:

> I felt like, you know, ever since world war one and the unity of the Arab world and Arabia in general got spilt up and sliced and diced by the victors of the world war we've kind of been under the sort of the yolk of Western civilization, you know with all the monarchies that were put in place whether it was in the kingdom of Egypt, or the kingdom or Jordan or Saudi Arabia they were actually given lands and actually named their countries after their last names and I think that for a long time we've sort of lost our way with that unification, everyone sort of had their own nationality rather than their own cultural identity, so with nations in place rather than Arabia in general and being an Arab in general.

The trend in participants differentiating Egypt from the broader Arab world signalled the origins of a particularly significant line of inquiry. Participant responses which illustrated Egyptian exceptionalism gave rise to the question: *Is such exceptionalism restricted only to conceptualising the events of the Arab Spring or does it extend to how Egyptian-Australians conceptualise their identity within the context of the Australian community?* The following analysis considers an appropriate answer to these questions.

6.3 Egyptian Exceptionalism From The Other In Australia

The relationship Egyptian-Australians have with the identity category Arab-Australian is critical to the broader study of Arab-Australian identity. The crux of how Egyptian-

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[627] This was considered in greater detail in the previous chapter.

Australians appeared to relate to the concept of Arab-Australian identity is illustrated in the statement of Participant 14, who said; 'I don't describe myself as Arab, I describe myself as Egyptian'.

The divergence of Egyptian-Australian identity from constructed Arab-Australian identity was demonstrated in two findings in particular. On the one hand participants often pointed to the Othering of Arabs in Australia. This was articulated through the negative stereotypes presented in the media, the social scepticism encountered in personal experiences and the prevalent conflation of the term Arab with Muslims/Islam and terrorism. On the other hand Egyptian-Australian participants tended to locate themselves as separate from the category of Arab-Australian. This was illustrated by the self-identity framework outlined in Chapter Five. In addition to this framework a process of classification was also encountered. This classification process involved locating Egyptian-Australians as exceptional to the Arab-Australian identity construct and is considered further below.

Participants often explicitly refuted the association of their identity as Arab or Arab-Australian. This point is demonstrated in the statement of Participant 16, who said; 'I don't consider myself an Arab, I consider myself an Egyptian-born Australian'. Participant 16 eluded to the problematic nature of the Arab-Australian identity label when saying; 'It's a bit difficult when you said the word Arabs, it's a bit difficult'. While Participant 19 was much more descriptive with the why the term was not acceptable especially on religious grounds:

> When you call me Arab some Christian people hate it, because like if you go say Austria, Austria is Austrian and they speak German, you cannot call him German. Okay the same situation with Egyptian, some Egyptians don't like to be called Arabs

because we are speaking the language Arabic but our roots are not from Arabs, and maybe you have been confronted like this from some people.

This reinforces the point Arab identity is often considered problematic to those with whom it is associated. To explain this further Saskia Witteborn encountered similar refutation of unwanted 'other-ascribed identities'[628] in a study of how Arab collective identity was expressed in the United States. Refutation of this nature is argued to be a 'communicative act that is central to identification processes as people align themselves with a particular image or group of people and distance themselves from others.'[629] In the case of Witteborn's study it was Arab-Americans who explicitly refuted the term 'Arab' because 'they felt the label marginalised Arabs'[630] or 'because they did not feel affirmed in their American identity by the general public'.[631] Witteborn asserted that the label was problematic for participants because it contributed to othering and concluded that ascription of Arab-American identity fostered marginalisation.[632] There are few corresponding studies of this nature amongst Arabic speaking migrant communities in Australia[633] and it is hoped this study goes some way to addressing the gap in empirical understanding of Arab-Australian identity.

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[628] Witteborn, "The Situated Expression of Arab Collective Identities in the United States": 556.
[629] Ibid., 572.
[630] Ibid.
[631] Ibid.
[632] Ibid., 564.
[633] Mansouri and Wood have looked at identity in the education setting amongst Arab and Muslim youth in Fethi Mansouri and Sally Percival Wood, *Identity, Education and Belonging: Arab and Muslim Youth in Contemporary Australia* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2008): 148.

6.4   Locating Egyptian Exceptionalism As An Historical Response

Egyptian-Australians demonstrated resistance to commonly held notions of the term 'Arab' by invoking an exclusive historical narrative that speaks to the constructed nature of identities. Participant 6 demonstrated this concept in the following statement:

> The Egyptians who came from the descendants or the pharaohs are Arabs? No we're not Arabs. We have some more different roots so we cannot be described as Arabs, we are Arabic speaking but we are not Arabs. I mean especially Egyptians, some Egyptians, most of the Egyptians, because when the Islamic invasion came to Egypt hundreds of years ago, the Egyptians living there were not Arabs.

Likewise Participant 10, a Coptic Christian, described ancestral and spiritual linkages to the pharaohs, which underscored the basis for asserting Egyptian exceptionalism, saying:

> We say in Egypt that Arabs are the people that came from the Peninsula like the Arabian Peninsula while Egyptians, the original, the pharaohs, the last development of the language gave the Coptic language today. So this is why Christians count themselves as the original Egyptians you know. We feel a connection going back all the way to the pharaohs.

Similarly Participant 12 expressed a notion that Egyptians should be considered separate to Arabs along Christian biological lines, when saying; 'with the Egyptians we are not Arabs we are Egyptians and being a Coptic that means that my blood lines have never been mixed with Arabs because if it's been done I wouldn't be Christian.'

Lisa Wynn has studied this phenomenon as 'Pharaonic nationalism', which describes the invocation of a 'version of Egyptian history in which Egyptians are descendants of the

pharaohs and, in contrast to the rest of the Arab world, have been part of a great civilisation for millennia.[634] Wynn demonstrated that 'evidence of the legacy of this pharaonic construction of history is found in the popular use of the word *al-Arab*-Arabs- in Egypt today. [635] The work of Wynn compliments the findings of this study. Namely the extent to which Egyptians in Australia mirror notions of Egyptian identity as constructed in Egypt. Wynn demonstrates this point by saying, 'there is ironic significance in the fact that when Egyptians say al-'Arab, they are usually not referring to themselves, but to people from the other Arab countries.'[636]

The notion of Egyptian exceptionalism can be dated back to the late 1800s, however Pharaonic nationalism experienced an upsurge following Nasser's failed pan-Arab project and the defeat of the Arabs in the 1967 war.[637] Therefore an historical precedent exists for Egyptians expressing an identity separate from the broader Arab community.

6.4.1   Explaining Egyptian Exceptionalism Through Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Egyptian-Australians in this study recognised the pejorative representation of Arab-Australian identity and often sought to distance themselves from the term. This finding is encapsulated in the response of Participant 12, who said; 'when I see someone that is less tolerant and hates the Arabs and hates Muslims and all of that sort of thing then I would try to distance myself to avoid confrontation because honestly if I needed confrontation I would have stayed in Egypt.' To explain the finding that Egyptian-Australians seek to distance themselves from Arab-Australian identity draws on Social Identity Theory (SIT).

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[634] LisaWynn, *Pyramids & Nightclubs : A Travel Ethnography of Arab and Western Imaginations of Egypt, from King Tut and a Colony of Atlantis to Rumors of Sex Orgies, Urban Legends about a Marauding Prince, and Blonde Belly Dancers,* (Austin, TX : University of Texas Press, 2007): 166.
[635] Ibid.
[636] Ibid.
[637] Ibid., 80.

Specifically the proposition that 'individuals seek to belong to groups which provide them with a positive social identity.'[638]

Social Identity Theory is the social psychological analysis of the role of self-conception in group membership, group processes, and intergroup relations.'[639] It is considered one of the preeminent theoretical perspectives in the social-anthropological fields.[640] First developed in Britain in the 1970's by Henri Tajfel SIT 'offered the possibility of addressing a classic social psychological problem of the relationship of the individual to the group and the emergence of collective phenomena from individual cognitions'.[641]

Social Identity Theory was identified in Chapter One as a means of understanding how identities such as Arab-Australian are a form of social categorisation. Within this theoretical premise collective social boundaries reflect relations to/with the dominant national identity. This is where the binary of 'core culture' and the Other has its theoretical origins. Social categorisation can influence behaviour for those inside and outside these social boundaries. Specifically social categories 'render one's own and others' behaviour predictable and thus allows one to avoid harm and plan effective action. It also allows one to know how one should feel and behave'.[642]

Michael Hogg has demonstrated that groups strive to be both better than and distinct from other groups through the two processes of self-enhancement and uncertainty reduction.[643] These processes form the motivators of Social Identity and in the case of uncertainty

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[638] Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 3.
[639] Hogg, *Social Identity Theory*: 111.
[640] Brown, "Social Identity Theory: Past Achievements": 745.
[641] Ibid., 746.
[642] Hogg, *Social Idenity Theory*: 121.
[643] Ibid., 120.

reduction provide the 'epistemic motive directly associated with social categorisation'.[644] The participant interviews in this study validate social categorisation and fit within the framework of identity construction detailed in Chapter One. In particular social categories, such as ethnicity, are understood to involve the ongoing 'struggle, negotiation and use of ethnic resources for the countering of disadvantages or perpetuation of advantages'.[645] The participant interviews also support notions of social identity theory, namely that Egyptian-Australians differentiated themselves from broader concepts of Arab-Australian identity along various parameters of group status. Tajfel and Turner defined group status as 'the relative position of groups on valued dimensions of comparison such as educational achievement, occupational status, wealth, speech styles etc.'[646] Participant 16 exemplified this point by stressing the importance placed on being well-spoken and well-presented as a means of asserting relative group position:

> The only time there is an Arab, whatever, representing Islam, representing the Arabs, representing Christianity, the Copts or whatever, all I pray to god for is that he has a good English accent, it's very very important and he is beautifully presented, well presented, I mean we don't want a guy looking like Tom Cruise representing the bloody Arabs (laughs) but the thing is you want someone who's presentable and speaks good English, that's extremely important.

The desire to assert group status along recognised societal indicators such as education, wealth and speech styles also have underlying class implications. As explored in Chapter Two, power disparities exist along socio-economic lines within Australian society. These

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[644] Ibid., 120.
[645] Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "Contextualizing Feminism": 66.
[646] Cited in Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 3.

relate to access to social capital and as already highlighted Arab-Australians suffer from lower employment and poorer education and employment experiences when compared to the broader Australian community.[647] Impediments are linked to assumed traits and stereotyping and perceived negative attitudes within the wider-community. A critical finding of this study was that rather than refute such pejorative assumed traits and stereotypes of Arab-Australians, Egyptian-Australians often legitimised these through their processes of social categorisation and distinctiveness. This demonstrates the pervasiveness of the dominant discourse relating to Arab-Australians. This critical finding also speaks to how Othering and the cultural and political outcomes it represents can provoke 'incorporation' into to the oppressive culture.[648]

6.5   Who Are Arab-Australians? Differentiating The Egyptian Community From The Lebanese Community

One way participants created distance from Arab-Australian identity was by attributing negative stereotypes to members of different Arabic speaking communities, particularly the Lebanese community. There emerged from the study the tendency of Egyptian-Australians to view themselves as exceptional to the Arab-Australian identity construct while at the same time reinforcing the pervasiveness of dominant negative views of Arab-Australians. Participants expressed distinctiveness from what they believed to be the stereotypical features of the group Arab-Australians by assigning these features to other groups of the Arabic speaking community. This illustrates one response to the pejorative nature of the Arab-Australian identity construct as Other.

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[647] Sue Kenny et al. *Arabic Communities and Well-Being*: 8.
[648] Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 10.

It was observed that Egyptian-Australian participants often imbued outgroup status to other Arabic speaking communities by expressing strong views about who truly represents the identity construct 'Arab'. Further investigation was warranted after participants repeatedly made particular reference to the Lebanese community as being more representative of the Arab-Australian identity construct. To demonstrate this point in the statement below Participant 14 addresses the negative stereotypes regarding Arabs and criminal behaviour and contrasts these to the social position of Egyptians:

> When the media in Australia talk about how 'the Arabs' are in the media for example, all the robberies and shooting and rape are all Arabs, they are all Arabs, they are not Egyptians, they are not Egyptians, Egyptians are the elite of Australia you see, so Egyptians in Australia, Egypt shed its best people to Australia and other countries through immigration.

Lebanese identity occupies a greater share of discourse than Egyptian identity, this point was articulated by Participant 10, who said:

> Egyptians for example, they're not that clear to the culture, because there's not many and they tend to just fade into the culture they go, they're not that loud like Lebanese, they're not that proud about their culture, like Lebanese people, they just tend to blend with everyone.

The Lebanese community in Australia is the largest migrant community of Arabic speaking background.[649] Australia's long history of settlement by Lebanese migrants has

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[649] Australian Bureau of Statistics, "2011 Census: Ancestry by Place of Usual Residence", accessed https://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/webapi/jsf/tableView/customiseTable.xhtml?pageForm:_idcl=pageForm:clearButton&pageForm_SUBMIT=1&javax.faces.ViewState=yAvltF%2BD0FN%2BQVmI707Fi%2F1NfN82uxddqbhA55XdgN1F8sL6Ei8rjCxMQaZXnub5KNWsxaH8GoVFKb%2BZ3cuzTjLtUxPET%2BERZfY3iloiztOfirnJyZoXLjT4ds9DObv5.

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been well documented.[650] It is not surprising given the population size that the Lebanese community is the most high-profile of all Arabic speaking communities and often assumes the most prominent role in public discourse. To this end the Lebanese community has been afforded the largest share of attention when it comes to scholarly and popular discourse of Arab migration to Australia.[651] In support of this point Participant 10 described the visibility of the Lebanese community in Australia's largest city, saying; 'In Sydney for example you feel they speak a lot about Lebanese, where it's kind of less vague, it's a big population and people know the Lebanese culture a little bit more you know - there's a lot of negative stuff.'

In contrast Egyptian identity has been given far less attention. This point was noted by Participant 24, who said; 'Egyptians are still not very well represented but as you know our numbers compared to the Lebanese are small.' In the 2011 national census over 203,000 people claimed Lebanese ancestry, compared to 39,300 who claimed Egyptian.[652] The Lebanese community represents about 61 per cent of the total Arabic speaking community.[653] As with other migrant groups of non-English speaking background the Lebanese community is diverse 'along the lines of region, religion, politics and social class'.[654]

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[650] See Trevor Batrouney, "A History of the Lebanese in Australia," *Agora* 41, no. 4 (2006), 32-34., Garry Chapman, *The Lebanese in Australia,* (South Yarra, Vic: Macmillan Education Australia, 2007) and Jock Collins, "From Beirut to Bankstown" in *Lebanese Diaspora: History, Racism and Belonging*, ed. Paul Tabar (Beirut: Lebanese American University, 2005), 187-211.

[651] See works by Hage, *Arab-Australians Today: Citizenship and Belonging* and Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society* and Paul Tabar and Jennifer Skulte-Ouaiss, *Politics, Culture and the Lebanese Diaspora* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010).

[652] Department of Social Services, "Community Information Summary: Lebanon-Born," accessed https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/02_2014/lebanon.pdf.

[653] In the 2011 Australian Census Arabic was spoken by 1.3 per cent of the total population see "Census Explorer," available http://www.sbs.com.au/censusexplorer/.

[654] Collins, "From Beirut to Bankstown": 190.

The history of Lebanese migration to Australia has been detailed by the likes of Trevor Batrouney, Garry Chapman and Jock Collins.[655] In this study Egyptian-Australian participants mostly referenced Lebanese migration in relation to the wave of Lebanese migrants of the 1970s who were displaced by the Lebanese Civil War. After 1975 Lebanese migrants came from both sides of the conflict - Christian and Muslim and between 1976 and 1981, the Muslim Lebanon-born population grew from just under 7000 to around 15,600.[656] Participants in this study often expressed the view that Lebanese migrants of this era were from the rural mountain areas of Lebanon and were poorer and less educated than Lebanese of previous migratory waves. The employment problems experienced among members of the Lebanese community have been noted to have had 'profound negative effects on the settlement of this group'.[657] Thus to illustrate the distinctiveness of the Egyptian community from the Lebanese community in Australia participants often invoked the use of key markers of difference such as education, spoken accents, wealth and work ethos. In the following statement Participant 3 illustrates the distinctiveness of the Lebanese community in Australia along various parameters of group status:

> I met Lebanese everywhere in Europe, in America and Canada and Egypt, the Lebanese here in Australia they came from the remote areas and when they came in the 1970s and 80s to escape the Civil War in Lebanon, they are the majority here especially in Sydney, especially in Sydney, in the Western Suburbs, in Lakemba and Bankstown and they have distinct accent, I know the Lebanese, Sydney Lebanese

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[655] For such studies see Batrouney, *A History of the Lebanese in Australia*, 32-34 and Chapman, *The Lebanese in Australia* and Collins, *From Beirut to Bankstown:* 187-211.
[656] Katharine Betts and Ernest Healy, "Lebanese Muslims in Australia and Social Disadvantage," *People and Place* 14, no. 1 (2006), 24-42: 24.
[657] Batrouney, *A History of the Lebanese in Australia*: 32.

from their accent, but what I can say is that the Lebanese came from the remote areas so they were poor, uneducated a little bit, that's not the Lebanese that you see in Canada because Lebanese in Brazil and Latin America or North America or in Europe, in the Middle East the Lebanese are rich and highly educated people unlike the Lebanese people here. Which the majority they have problems.

Distinctions made in the excerpt above harken to the existence of power differentials between groups. Itesh Sachdev and Richard Bourhis have defined group status 'as the relative position of groups on valued dimensions of comparison such as educational achievement, occupational status, wealth [and] speech styles.'[658] A further example of the way Egyptian-Australians asserted distinctiveness was through highlighting the occupations, and social standing, commonly held by Egyptians. This form of difference is demonstrated in the response of Participant 14, who said:

Egypt is different from the other Arab countries where for example, Lebanese, most of the Lebanese, most of them, of course there are some great Lebanese, but most of them came from the mountains and almost 80 per cent illiterate and they all work in the construction business and their children follow, so I don't think we can compare the two.

Similarly education emerged as a highly valued attribute amongst study participants. There was strong emphasis placed on education as a means of asserting distinction from other Arabic speaking communities. This was documented in the education levels of the study participants along with frequent references to the importance of education amongst participants. With the exception of one participant who was currently completing tertiary

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[658] Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 3.

studies, all participants had completed at least one university degree - a number indicated they had also studied at a post-graduate level. The statement of Participant 14 highlights how education is a defining feature of the Egyptian community and leads to a discussion about how Egyptian-Australians conceptualised their exceptional status from the identity construct by legitimising the dominant negative discourse of Arab-Australians:

> The Egyptian migrants are unlike any other migrants in the world. From Egypt. You say why? It's because there's no country that really shed its best brains like Egypt. And that is because most of the immigration happened at a time when, you know, 'if you think, its better you leave' because as I mentioned it's not safe for you. And you find that 50 per cent would be a very modest estimate, maybe 70-80 per cent of the Egyptian immigrants not only with degrees but with post-graduate degrees and they came here and they want to continue their studies and they believe in education and they want, even the second generation of Egyptians you find them all university graduates.

6.5.1 Legitimising The Dominant Discourse Of Arab-Australians

Participants often legitimised the categorisation Arab-Australian as Other by engaging with commonly held stereotypes about Arab Australians. Participants frequently acknowledged and in some cases reinforced mainstream representation and stereotyping of Arab-Australians. In doing so participants arguably strengthened dominant negative ideas of Arab-Australians represented in the mainstream media and public discourse – as is explained below.

In order to differentiate Egyptian-Australians from the Arab-Australian identity construct, participants often engaged in a classification process of locating one's own subgroup aside

from an undesirable subgroup. In this case the distinctive features of the Lebanese community were called upon as markers for Arab-Australian identity. This was frequently achieved by stereotyping. Commonly held stereotypes prevalent in media and public discourse were encountered in the responses of Egyptian-Australian participants. These specifically related to welfare dependency and crime amongst other Arabic speaking groups. Participant 13 expressed the opinion that other members of the Arab community may be inclined to expect government assistance in the form of welfare, saying:

> Unfortunately every migrant with no exception brings baggage from his country, so those people who came in when they were in their 30s, they were already used to the government giving them everything and they're expecting it here. And that's not the right way, you have to earn your own keep and if you want to do something, organise it, get other people to join you, do it.

Dominant discourses surrounding Arab-Australian identity were further legitimised in the cases where Egyptian-Australians used negative stereotypes and assumed traits to describe the Lebanese community. This statement from Participant 14 demonstrates the perception that Egyptian-Australians generally contribute to the workforce in Australia while Lebanese-Australians may not:

> I don't know any Egyptian who gets the dole and if he does it would be a couple of weeks and he'll look for a job, while for example other Arab communities they have this so-called 'Lebanese back' ..."ah my back" and you spend your whole life getting compensation and so on.

Most interestingly Egyptian-Australian participants often did not recognise there to be distinctions within the Lebanese community, thereby subjecting it to the same stereotypes

that many participants lamented were levelled at their identity by non-Egyptian-Australians. The homogenisation of all Arabs regardless of background is described in the statement of Participant 22, who said:

> I think that's probably just the way we're perceived at the moment also I don't think half of Australians know what's going on in Egypt so to them, you know, we're just 'Arabs', we're just, you know they associate us straightaway with things going on in Iraq, in Palestine and Syria and things like that, they just assume you know that we're part of that or assume that we kind of helped with terrorism, they don't, there's not that much for them to know other than that, half of them I don't think know where Egypt is located.

This point highlights the propensity for migrant communities to be defined by stereotypes and articulated by dominant discourses. In this case the pervasiveness of mainstream negative depictions of Arab-Australians were documented in the views expressed by Egyptian-Australian participants.

The dominant discourse of Arab-Australian identity is legitimised when Egyptian-Australians reinforce negative stereotypes and assumed traits in their description of the Lebanese community. This point is complimentary to the finding that Arab-Australian identity was objectionable to participants on the grounds that it carried with it generalisations and connotations not in keeping with Egyptian-Australians' own sense of identity. Despite this, participants reinforced existing negative stereotypes of Arab-Australians when expressing their understanding of what and *who* the term Arab-Australian represents. This demonstrates that dominant discourses, however pejorative, can be internalised even by those such discourse subjectifies. This also highlights that

resistance to Arab-Australian identity by Egyptian-Australian can manifest in further Othering of people with whom Egyptian-Australians have a mainstream association.

6.5.2   Invoking Prototypes And Outgroups To Explain Differentiation

Social Identity Theory provides the motivation for creating prototypes and outgroups. SIT is useful for understanding Egyptian exceptionalism especially participants' expressions of distinctiveness from the broader Arabic speaking community and the Lebanese community.

Subgroups and prototypes explain the tendency of members to view other subgroups as alike, to homogenise, and to apply stereotypes while viewing one's own subgroup as distinctive. [659] The importance of group prototypes and outgroups in self-identification was asserted by Leonie Huddy as the key to understanding 'the existing basis of similarity [or difference] that drives group identity and the kinds of people who are most and least likely to adopt group identity'.[660] Furthermore outgroups 'shed light on the origins of stereotyping and are thought to predict group members more accurately that a single group stereotype.'[661]

In accounting for the motivations for differentiation between subgroups, Social Identity Theory returns us to the concept of *positive distinctiveness*, whereby 'in-group members will be motivated to distinguish their sub-group from others, especially if sub-group membership endows them with a higher objective status, but will not be driven to

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[659] Leonie Huddy and Simo Virtanen, "Subgroup Differentiation and Subgroup Bias among Latinos as a Function of Familiarity and Positive Distinctiveness," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68, no. 1 (1995), 97-108: 97.

[660] Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity": 144.

[661] Huddy and Virtanen, "Subgroup Differentiation": 97.

differentiate between subgroups to which they do not belong'.[662] Importantly, Tajfel described this as the tendency of minority communities to contest each other and exert levels of discrimination as a means of helping 'compensate for their insecure position within the majority setting.'[663]

Leonie Huddy and Simo Virtanen argue outgroups not only function in setting group boundaries, rather outgroups 'also communicate information about what the group is not'.[664] Huddy and Virtanen asserts the *out-group homogeneity effect* which is a 'tendency to perceive more diversity among fellow group members than among outsiders'.[665] Huddy and Virtanen's work on subgroup differentiation and subgroup bias further explain this point by asserting; 'If subgroup differentiation is motivated by a desire for positive distinctiveness, in-group members will be driven to see distinctions between themselves and other sub-groups but will not be motivated to distinguish further between subgroups to which they do not belong.'[666] This point informs the tendency of Egyptian-Australians in this study to express distinctiveness between themselves and other Arabic-speaking groups, in particular the Lebanese community. Similarly this helps explain how further distinctions between these other sub-groups were not evident. Through applying existing negative stereotypes and homogenising other subgroups, Egyptian-Australians appear to be communicating information about what their group is not.[667]

Similar findings have been demonstrated by Huddy and Virtanen in the study of subgroup differentiation and subgroup bias amongst Latinos in the United States. In particular it was

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[662] Ibid., 98.
[663] Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 5.
[664] Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity": 145.
[665] Huddy and Virtanen, "Subgroup Differentiation and Subgroup Bias": 97.
[666] Ibid., 98.
[667] Huddy, "From Social to Political Identity": 145.

found that Latinos were much more likely than Anglo-Americans to distinguish members of their own subgroups from others but were just as likely to see few distinctions between members of other Latino subgroups.[668] Of most similarity to the findings encountered in this study was that amongst the Latino subgroups 'Cubans distinguished Cubans from Mexicans and Puerto Ricans because, in part, they perceived Cubans as having a substantially higher status than other subgroups'.[669] Thus the assertion of distinctiveness by the Egyptian-Australian community from other Arabic speaking communities, particularly the Lebanese, may be in part explained by the perception that by doing so affords a higher social status. This further supporting Tajfel's positive distinctiveness principle that suggests that individuals seek to belong to groups that provide them with positive social identity.[670]

6.6   Conclusion

Egyptian-Australians in this study have articulated a complex and nuanced process of identity construction. The identity label Arab-Australian is an emotive and contentious one amongst Egyptian-Australians. The way Egyptian-Australians identify themselves is informed by a sense of Egyptian exceptionalism. By differentiating Egyptian-Australians as a subgroup from the broader Arabic speaking community Egyptian-Australians are seeking to distance themselves from the Arab-Australian identity construct. This demonstrates a resistance to the Arab-Australian identity label which participants believed to be pejorative and the Other.

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[668] Huddy and Virtanen, "Subgroup Differentiation and Subgroup Bias": 106.
[669] Ibid.
[670] Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 3.

Egyptian-Australian in this study demonstrated a marked aversion to the Arab-Australian identity construct and distinguished themselves by features of *positive distinctiveness* that included high levels of education, strong work ethos and historical and ethno-genetic links to the pharaohs rather than to the Arabs. With regards to who constituted the Arab-Australian 'in-group', this study revealed that Egyptian-Australians believed the Lebanese community in Australia to be more representative of the Arab-Australian identity construct. Participants engaged in a classification process of locating one's own subgroup aside from what they viewed as an undesirable subgroup. In this case the distinctive features of the Lebanese community were called upon as markers for Arab-Australian identity. This supports the point that 'individuals seek to belong to groups which provide them with a positive social identity'.[671]

Through the use of stereotypes, often in line with mainstream pejorative images of Arab-Australians, the Egyptian-Australian community illustrated their distinctiveness from the Lebanese community in Australia. Participants often did not recognise there to be further distinctions within the Lebanese community, thereby subjecting it to the same homogenisation that many participants lamented was levelled at them. This evidences both how Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people have become internalised, even by those Orientalism subjectifies and how resistance to the negative social status afforded to Arab-Australian identity manifests as an incorporation into the dominant oppressive discourse. [672]

These findings are disruptive to the assumptions and conventional thinking that treat Arab-Australian identity a homogenous construct. Conditions have been set for recasting Arab-

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[671] Ibid.
[672] Stokes, *The Politics of Identity in Australia*: 10.

Australian identity away from that which has arguably privileged Lebanese identity in the representation of Arab-Australians.

Chapter 7 - The Australian Context And Its Influence On Egyptian-Australians' Attitudes Towards The Arab Spring

7.1   Introduction

This chapter concludes the empirical analysis and continues to challenge commonly held assumptions about the Arab-Australian community by demonstrating how context has influenced the attitudes of Egyptian-Australians towards the events of the Arab Spring. Specifically, context refers to the media and public discourse of the Arab Spring as well as the broader setting of Arab-Australian identity which this thesis has so far described.

This chapter continues to draw from qualitative analysis of 25 long-form interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community to consider how the events of the Arab Spring have been conceptualised and engaged with and what, if any, changes have occurred. This chapter demonstrates resistance to Orientalist ideas in the mainstream discourse of the Arab Spring, specifically those that questioned the Arab world's appreciation and capacity for democracy. The findings of this chapter show how the perspectives of Egyptian-Australians towards the events in Egypt are shaped by their proximity and regard for the Australian political system. This is illustrated by an expressed belief in the merits of the Australian democratic system and in the way participants tended to view the events in Egypt. It is argued that the lived experiences of Egyptian-Australians and their engagement in the Australian political system hold strong influence over participants' views towards the situation in Egypt.

This finding contradicts the assertion raised in the mainstream media about the Arab world's capacity and readiness for democracy.[673] Rather the attitudes of Egyptian-Australians described in this chapter highlight an appreciation for 'well-functioning democracy' and a regard for Australia's political system. High levels of frustration at the outcomes of the Egyptian uprisings, specifically the return to the undemocratic status quo in Egypt, appear to correspond with strong positive attitudes towards the Australian democratic system. This demonstrates how, for Egyptians in Australia, events in Egypt are shaped by their exposure and experience of the Australian context.[674]

7.2 Contextualising The Events In Egypt By Egyptian-Australians

It was found that the perspectives of the participants' studied were very much influenced by their proximity and regard for the Australian political system. This was demonstrated firstly by an expressed belief in the merits of the Australian democratic system and secondly by the influence engagement in the Australian political system had on the way participants viewed the events in Egypt. In summary the lived experiences and engagement in the Australian political system appeared to define participants' views towards the situation in Egypt. This aspect of study shows the intersection of existing political consciousness with identity to explain how Egyptian-Australians conceptualised and engaged with the social and political upheaval in Egypt.

Noted amongst the recurring themes of the interviews was the tendency of participants to employ a linear spectrum to describe the events in Egypt. For example many participants

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[673] As was evidenced in the media content analysis in Chapter Three.

[674] It should be noted that the terms 'revolution' and 'uprising' are used primarily by respondents in this Chapter. Both the media discourse analysis and the interviews conducted support the point that global events are often portrayed through a Western prism. As described in this thesis' Introduction, the terminology of the Arab Spring is a Western imposition. Other terms, primarily, 'the revolution' and/or 'uprising' appear to hold greater salience for audiences to whom the events directly affect.

described a sense of joy at the outset of the revolution closely followed by a sense of hopelessness and finally disillusionment and frustration at how the country appeared to be returning to a military dictatorship status quo. There were high levels of frustration about the current situation in Egypt which is in contrast to the promise represented at the beginning of the revolution.

Some participants validated the need for dictatorship amidst their frustration. This is a further example of how Orientalist discourse of the Middle East and its' people can become internalised by the very people it subjectifies. This point is reflected in the deep sense of disappointment expressed by Participant 7 and the statement that perhaps Egypt needed dictatorship to function:

> It's very disappointing what's happened there compared to the revolution, where the revolution was such an exciting, inspirational time where I expected that Egypt to go, like it would develop further, whereas what's happened since then I just sort of think 'oh never going to change, you just need to be in a dictatorship because that's what you're comfortable with.

Egyptian-Australians described feelings of being removed from the situation in Egypt, often expressing a sense of not being entitled to judge or cast opinion over the situation because they considered their place to be in Australian society rather than Egyptian. This was in contrast to, or perhaps despite deep feelings of connection to Egypt and solidarity with the Egyptian people. This presented an interesting point of inquiry. On the one hand participants often felt deeply connected to the events in Egypt through their heritage and cultural linkages while on the other hand participants felt isolated or removed from events because of their location and connection to Australia. To illustrate this point Participant 15

said; 'I can't sit here in Australia, comfortable on my little sofa and say 'how dare you guys do what you did!' they're living and breathing it.'

To examine this observation further a number of questions were applied. Firstly, what were the dominant influences on participant views towards the revolution? Secondly, how did participants express connection, engagement and isolation from both the Australian and Egyptian context? Lastly, what is the link between the feelings of frustration expressed by the participants and existing political consciousness shaped by their experience of the Australian political system?

7.2.1 Participant Views Of The Events in Egypt

As explained above almost all participants interviewed expressed their opinion of the events in Egypt in terms of a lineal progression. This represented the time from the initial uprising which overthrew Hosni Mubarak through until the current situation of military rule by President el-Sisi and included the overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood government of Mohammad Morsi.

Participants' initial reactions were often ones of excitement with the belief that an uprising was long overdue. There were demographic differences noted amongst the participant cohort. Excitement at the initial uprising was subdued amongst participants aged 60 and above who expressed greater reservation about the possible outcomes of Mubarak's departure. While participants aged in the 18-25 and 26-40 age groups expressed high levels of enthusiasm at the outset of the revolution. Most often participants described initial feelings of hope, enthusiasm, joy and pride at the popular uprising. Participant 11 described these feelings:

The essence of the revolution to me was quiet hopeful in that it would be a new Egypt for all Egyptians regardless of your religious status. I think the youth behind the revolution in the beginning had the same ideals, they wanted, the essence of the revolution you know was justice, freedom, bread, you know the basic human rights for everyone regardless of what you believed in.

Similarly, Participant 12 demonstrated a sense of pride in how the uprising was carried out in the streets of Egypt and particularly the conduct of the protestors:

When it happened I felt that finally the people of Egypt are victorious they're finally worth something, finally there will be a change in the way that people do things and in the aftermath of the revolution, after the 18 days, people went around and cleaned up their streets and refused to pay bribes and that sort of thing and you had a bit of grunt and had a bit of momentum.

However this optimism was often tempered by a critique of how the situation failed to live up to participants' expectations. A schism became evident between those who believed in the merits of a 'second revolution' to overthrow the government of Mohammad Morsi, elected president in June 2012, and those who felt such an overthrow to be yet another military coup, akin to maintaining Egypt's historical status quo. Differences in opinion were found to be congruent with religious status. Coptic Christian participants were broadly more in favour of the removal of Morsi and replacement by the government of President Sisi, Muslim participants were more likely to hold the opinion that the overthrow was akin to a coup. However the responses themselves indicated a far more nuanced reality. In fact many participants expressed a sense of annoyance at how the debate around the removal of the Muslim Brotherhood government and the Presidency of Mohammad Morsi was too often reduced to terms of 'are you with Morsi or are you with Sisi?' In this

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overly simplistic representation of the issue many participants lamented the fact that such discourse had turned friends and families against each other, this was demonstrated in the statement of Participant 18, who said:

> Seeing how people are so divided with either, they ask you straight away 'are you Morsi or are you Sisi supporter?' and you have to be one or the other and it's like if you're not like I've seen family members cut other people out of the family and it's so unbelievably ridiculous that I've thought my goodness I've been fighting for you people for so long and you've taken this ridiculous, I don't know it's frustrating actually that's how I feel about Egypt right now, I'm very frustrated and I've lost a lot of hope, so it's sad.

The deeply emotive views illustrated by the linear progression of events in Egypt often informed participants choice of label for the events themselves. Often participants sought to correct, clarify and distinguish between the terms 'revolution' and 'uprising' in the case of the overthrow of Mubarak in 2011 while in the case of the overthrow of Morsi the terms 'second revolution' and 'coup' were vigorously deliberated. This issue is encapsulated by Participant 19 who said; 'you'll find that some Muslim friends he will say that 25 January was a revolution while the 30 of June it was a coup, while some others will say 'no this is rubbish'. Muslim participants were more likely to explicitly dispute the use of the word 'revolution' in describing the events in Egypt than Coptic Christian participants.

The extent to which participants felt positive towards the current situation and future prospects for Egypt also appeared to be impacted by their religious status. Coptic Christian participants were more likely to support the government of President Sisi and to be in favour of the second revolution to overthrow the government of Mohammad Morsi. The government of the Muslim Brotherhood presented an unfavourable outcome in the views

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of many Christians, as Participant 14 explains 'So in the short-term the revolution did not produce a solution to anything, and then of course the revolution was practically stolen by the Muslim Brotherhood, you see, which is worse, so it did not produce anything, so economically it became just ruined.'

The views expressed by Coptic Christian participants were reflective of their experiences of persecution and minority status in Egypt and the belief that while military rule did not represent greater democratic freedoms it represented a return to economic and political stability and a far less fearful prospect for most Christians than the government of the Muslim Brotherhood. This sentiment was summed up by Participant 11, who said; 'Even though Mubarak is no religious fighter or no human rights defender of Christians in Egypt he's what we've been used to for 30 years and he's somewhat controlled the sectarian and religious violence between Christians and Muslims in Egypt.' This view highlights how dominant Western ideas about the stability of Mubarak and the extent to which Egypt needs the strong arm of a dictator have been internalised by Egyptian-Australians.

Equally, participants who identified themselves as Muslim were less supportive of the overthrow of the government of the Muslim Brotherhood because they felt it to be a backward step and an affront to the democratic processes. Amongst this particular group of participants the term 'coup' was often employed to describe the overthrowing of President Mohamed Morsi. While a consensus of support for the Muslim Brotherhood and particularly Morsi's presidency was absent amongst Muslim participants, there was greater dissatisfaction at the fact the democratic processes which instated Morsi were not respected. Participant 13 highlights this point by explaining how the process which removed Morsi from the presidency sat uncomfortably:

The subsequent events I'm afraid to me, 'the coup', as I describe it, as far as coups go, was very bloody and it should not have happened that way.' Participant 24 echoed dissatisfaction with the 'coup', when saying; 'the events followed after that [the overthrow of Morsi by the military] were a bit disappointing as far as the old guard tried to seize the revolution.

In some cases a more nuanced view of democracy emerged. Taking to the streets to remove Morsi, while not democracy in the text book form, represented the true meaning of the word because the people affected change en masse and corrected what many saw was a failed government. This view is articulated by Muslim Participant 15:

I went to Egypt end of October last year just to take my kids there and while I was there I observed and listened to what was said and my opinion has changed a little bit. While it's ridiculous to think that if you have democratic elections and then you overthrow the elected party for the sake of a second revolution, to think that amount of people went out onto the streets and unified. In that this elected party, yes they were elected but then they made a lot of promises and they set out to rule the country in a particular way and then when they were in power they broke a lot of promises, they broke a lot of hearts. And a lot of people were saying that they felt like allowing them to continue would be to allow the first revolution and all those deaths to be in vain. And it kind of made sense to me in that while it's not democracy in the clinical terms it is in the spirit of democracy. If you have half of, more than half of the population come out and say they don't want these people to rule the country and break the promises that they've broken, it's in the spirit of democracy, it's not democracy in terms of ballot boxes, that kind of way.

While religious status was undoubtedly influential on beliefs so too were ideological concerns about democratic reform of the political system in Egypt. Participants often spoke of their apprehension at the tenets of the revolution, namely freedom from corruption and reform in the social and political space, not being upheld. This was evident in the participant views about the future prospects for Egypt. In many cases participants' expectations of the presidency of Morsi were low, with the view that Morsi's election did not represent the democratic transition promised by the uprising. This was further antagonised by the overreach of Morsi in the divisive changes to the Egyptian constitution enacted in 2012. The forced removal of Morsi by the Egyptian military in June 2013 was also in conflict with the democratic reform agenda for some participants.

However the return to military rule represented the ultimate return to the status quo in Egypt and was often seen as the largest affront to the revolution itself. Ideological opposition to the pattern of events in Egypt and the failure to enact reform was expressed by participants and provided the basis of a critical line of inquiry for this study. Namely, that such ideological expression speaks to a participants' political consciousness within the Australian context and to some extent represents an incorporation into the dominant culture by Egyptian-Australians.

7.2.2 Participant Frustration At The Outcomes Of 'The Revolution'

Strong feelings of frustration were a theme emerging from the interviews. Participants often described their frustration that despite multiple mass uprisings in which many protestors were killed and injured and despite a democratic election process Egypt was once again ruled by an unelected military general and Egyptians once again live under the

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conditions prescribed by 'emergency law'[675]. This view was expressed regardless of whether one supported Mohamed Morsi or Abdul el-Sisi, the frustration appears to lie in the fact that Egypt has arguably returned to the status quo. As Participant 3 describes, many similarities exist between Egypt pre-uprising and the current governance, so to many participants little has changed:

> I don't call it revolution because revolution means regime change which is a certain class in society replaces another class in taking power, until now in Egypt we have businessmen, replacing businessmen, then came businessmen replacing another businessmen, so just it was businessmen of Mubarak replaced by businessmen of the Muslim Brotherhood then it was businessmen of the military council replacing the Muslim Brotherhood businessmen. So until now it's all about businessmen, so I don't call it revolution.

Likewise, Participant 15 explained the cyclical turn of events that a return of military government in Egypt represented:

> The notion of a second revolution to overthrow the Muslim Brotherhood and put Sisi into his position, and Sisi is also part of the military. It was a ridiculous notion to me that they overthrow military rule in the initial revolution and then instil, you know a democracy, and democratic elections and have a president stand up and then after that bring in a military ruler again.

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[675] Egypt has more or less been subject to a state of 'emergency law' since the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981. 'Emergency law' is recognised as a tool for the consolidation and maintenance of political power. For further analysis of permanent governance by 'emergency law' in Egypt and other mechanisms of exceptional legislation see Sadiq Reza, "Endless Emergency: The Case of Egypt," *New Criminal Law Review: An International and Interdisciplinary Journal* 10, no. 4 (Fall, 2007), 532-553.

Perspectives such as these correlated with feelings of reluctance and exacerbation when discussing the political situation in Egypt with others. Participants often expressed that they had 'shut down' or refused to engage any longer with friends and family because in their view it was too frustrating to engage in discussion. This sentiment was described by Participant 1, when saying; 'I think, at the moment not with Egypt, I'm feeling more disheartened with what's happened there, so I tend to keep my distance with what's there and even when people try and mention things happening there, it's almost I don't, like I feel very, I just don't want to hear about it.'

Frustration expressed by participants tended to stem from the perception that family and friends in Egypt, and in some cases here in Australia, did not appreciate the fact the promise of democratic reform had been lost to the reinstatement of military rule. In some cases participants expressed bewilderment at how even the 'highly educated' Egyptians they knew were, in their opinion, failing to recognise how a democracy works. Participant 7 summarised the feeling that overthrowing the elected president was a regressive moment for Egypt:

> It's been a very frustrating time since then, we've got family overseas and the way they feel there, especially the educated people, compared to us of the outside who understand what a democracy is supposed to be and the fact that they really didn't give the elected president a chance and that they're back where they were with Mubarak but just under a different name it's just really frustrating, and it's just very disappointing.

In reference to the overthrowing of the democratically elected president Mohammad Morsi, some participants illustrated how their perspectives about the workings of

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democracy have been shaped by spending time in a functioning democratic state, as Participant 7 further explained:

> The people who live outside Egypt and live in democratic countries they can see it differently, so we now get a lot of comments of 'you don't live here, you don't know what it's like, you don't understand' and you try to sort of explain it to them but they don't want to listen at all so it's very frustrating…. I think for my own sanity I've actually had to stay away and I don't talk to my family and friends anymore because it really is so frustrating how brainwashed they seem to be.

The excerpts above illustrate the nexus between overall dissatisfaction with the situation in Egypt and the sense of being outside the process, specifically being in Australia that was expressed by Egyptian-Australians. It is apparent that being both external to the events and in Australia added to the levels of frustration expressed by participants. The perceptions and attitudes towards the Australian political system appeared to play a considerable role in accounting for participant frustration and can be considered in the context of transnational political diffusion.

7.2.3 'Well-Functioning Democracy': Participants Views Of The Australian Political System

Support for democratic principles was readily expressed in the context of attitudes towards the Australian political system and in contrast to the Egyptian political situation. In discussing their attitudes towards the Australian political system participants often provided a critique of democracy in the Australian setting as compared to the Egyptian. This extended to rationalising their disappointment at the lack of democratic reform since the revolution in Egypt.

Participants generally expressed positive views towards the Australian political system. Although participants often expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the mechanisms of the Australian political landscape, for example the Prime Minister[676], the absence of inspiring parties, the media/politics dynamic, however the system itself was highly regarded by participants.

Participants generally held positive views towards the Australian political system regardless of the length of time they had spent in Australia. Most participants conveyed the belief that the system and basic principles of government in Australia are fair, as Participant 25 articulated:

> Very fair, people choosing the leaders, people choosing the parties who look after the political stuff in the country, and makes contribution about the rules to be discussed in the Parliament, that's fine, as long as people choose it that's fine, fair enough, no body enforces anyone here, this is the main concept, you're free to do whatever as long as you don't harm others, that's it.

There was wide support for the function of Australia's political system and established democratic rule of law. Participants often cited the Westminster system and the principles of freedom of speech, the right to vote and majority rule to support the notion that the Australian political system is generally fair. Participants expressed a favourable view of the Australian system in comparison to other countries, as Participant 6 explains; 'It's very highly respected and regarded system and it's been there for hundreds of years and it follows the British which is quite established and long running system so there is a lot of

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[676] Tony Abbott was the Prime Minister of Australia throughout the time period of the interviews.

respect for the system here, yes definitely it's democratic, fair. Is fair and amongst the best in the world.'

Notwithstanding this generally positive view of the Australian political system on many occasions participants expressed dissatisfaction with elements of the Australian political system, such as the similarity between the political agendas of the two major political parties, Labor and Liberal, the absence of inspiring leadership and ideas, and a dislike of the current Prime Minister. It can be argued that in the minds of participants the political system itself is held separate to the policies, parties and personalities within it. The functioning of the political system, that is the processes and procedures of governance were perceived to be generally fair and favourable to those of other countries.

7.2.4   Democracy Diffusion As A Means Of Explaining High Levels Of Frustration

It was evident in the participant responses that high levels of frustration at the apparent lack of reform in Egypt were accompanied by a generally positive regard for the Australian political system. This is in keeping with theories of transnational political diffusion which hold that migrants tend to adopt the values, skills and commitments to democratic citizenship through socialising and participating in a well-functioning democracy.[677] Furthermore participants' attempts to share their beliefs and attitudes about democratic norms in the form of 'social remittances' to Egypt. [678] This is central to understanding the high levels of frustration expressed by Egyptian-Australians evident in this study.

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[677] Clarisa Peréz-Armendáriz and David Crow, "Do Migrants Remit Democracy? International Migration, Political Beliefs, and Behavior in Mexico," *Comparative Political Studies* (February 27, 2009). 122.
[678] Peggy Levitt, "Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local- Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion," *The International Migration Review* 32, no. 4 (1998), 926: 927.

Participants' opinion of the situation in Egypt was shaped by their lived experience of a functioning democracy. In some cases participants projected their perspectives from the Australian setting to the political system in Egypt. In particular democratic principles such as freedom of speech and freedom to express differences of opinion were cited as points of contrast between the Australian and Egyptian political contexts. One example of this is the response of Participant 22, who said:

> I understand that we have a democratic government. I like the fact that in Egypt whereas, if we were comparing it to Egypt. It's very, very hard if one person believes in something to get your voice across because you'll get bribed or something or you'll get threatened or something and you've got to shut up, whereas here everyone's equal and if you have an opinion, it will probably, sooner or later get heard or get covered, or someone is going to do something about it.

The separation of powers between the legal system, the church and state were also mentioned as points of difference between Australia and Egypt. The practice of idolising political leaders was described by Participant 1 as the main systemic problem with Egypt's approach to exercising democracy, saying:

> I think that the biggest failures at the moment that I see with Egypt compared to what we see here in Australia, when people here come to vote they vote for a system, in Egypt they don't vote for a system they vote for a person, they idolise someone, they want that person to be the hero that can save them from their hardships.

A number of participants expressed a negative view of democracy's compatibility with Egyptian society. This is a further example of how Orientalist discourse of the Middle East and its' people can become internalised by the very people it subjectifies. Participant 1

demonstrates this point when asserting that; 'Egypt isn't ready for democracy in my opinion, I don't think they understand how to accept a different perspective and different person's opinion.' While Participant 10 deliberated on whether Egypt requires the strong arm of a dictator to maintain stability; 'The dictators, as much as I hate dictation, dictatorship and that, I don't know, maybe it's something that is needed because, it just goes out of control otherwise, you know, you need people who are very assertive and that always comes with a negative. I am not saying that I'm pro-dictators.'

It is beyond the scope of this study to critique the theoretical landscape of "transnational communities" and associated theories of transnationalism.[679] However relevant to this study are the particular aspects of transnational theory that support the idea that citizens with differing non-democratic histories observe and practice the rights and responsibilities of the democratic country in which they live. Further these citizens then go on to share these experiences with family and friends abroad. The concept that first and second generation migrants living within a functioning democracy garner ideas about governance systems and seek to repatriate such ideas helps to contextualise the feelings of frustration expressed by participants in this study. Peggy Levitt described the diffusion of ideas, behaviours, identities, and social capital that flow between receiving and sending-country communities as 'social remittances'.[680] The flows of such ideas and attitudes have been aided by the technological advances in communication which have strengthened and made more widespread the connections between sending and receiving countries.[681] Participants in this study often pointed to their highly connected relationships with their family and

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[679] These are areas well-covered by scholars of migration, see Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Christina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 1994) and Peggy. Levitt, *Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local- Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion*, 926- 948.

[680] Levitt, *Social Remittances*: 927.

[681] Ibid., 928.

friends in Egypt, in particular the use of social media such as Facebook and internet telephone replacements such as Skype. To illustrate the widespread use of social media to exchange ideas and information are comments such as Participant 4, who said; 'I depended upon most of it between discussion between friends and different youth on Facebook'; And Participant 23, who described; 'lots of discussion on Facebook with friends, old friends still in Egypt and overseas'.

The scope of this study limits assessment of social diffusion and its bearing on the political landscape in Egypt, specifically the impact felt in Egypt from Egyptian-Australians remitting democracy. Notwithstanding this social diffusion does help to explain the frustration participants living in Australia expressed in relation to their dealings with friends and relatives in Egypt. To further justify this point, Egyptian-Australian participants stated they were likely to express positive attitudes about democratic norms to friends and family in Egypt. This supports the notion that migrants tend to adopt democratic citizenship through socialising and participating in a well-functioning democracy.[682]

Clarisa Perez-Armendariz and David Crow provide further empirical evidence of the social diffusion of democratic norms in their study of the Mexican-American community. [683] Perez-Armendariz and Crow argue that migrant groups 'absorb attributes of democracy'[684] in a process affecting their political attitudes, in particular towards tolerance, satisfaction with democracy and evaluations of government respect for citizen's rights.[685] In turn migrant groups remit democracy in the form of the political beliefs and behaviour which

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[682] Peréz-Armendáriz and Crow, "Do Migrants Remit Democracy?" 122.
[683] Ibid., 120.
[684] Ibid.
[685] Ibid.

they express to others. The detailed response of Participant 5 demonstrates where democratic norms have been socially diffused:

> My opinion is that it's the ideal, I mean I know that people say, you know, democracy is an inherited government system, it doesn't work abroad necessarily, and whether or not that is practically true I still really appreciate and respect and admire the ideals of democracy; freedom of expression and equality before the law and the separation of the court and the government and the church and state. I find these to be hugely important. And I have tried to be enthusiastic in my promotion of those things where my Egyptian family are involved, I see that in order for that to take off in Egypt we'll have to emulate some of these values we have in western democracies and certainly from the Australian system.

Despite social diffusion many participants expressed clearly defined boundaries between the events in Egypt and their own lives in Australia. Notwithstanding their concern for loved ones and concern for the future of the country, participants noted feelings of being disconnected from events in Egypt. This was expressed either by way of physical or philosophical distance from their family and friends. Illustrating how participants felt Australia to be isolated from global events, Participant 10 said 'politics, media and when it comes to international affairs we're just not connected, we're just living in our own bubble', while Participant 1 stated 'I guess nowadays especially in Australia we're very far away from what's happening over there.' Being removed from the events in Egypt either by distance or philosophical difference appeared to influence participants' feelings towards their place and participation in the revolution. Participants' spoke of not being entitled to judge the events or those participating in them because of their sense of being an outsider, this point was encapsulated by Participant 15 who said:

Personally I felt like it wasn't my place to kind of stand up and have the arguments and that sort of thing, I live here, they live there and I think it's the people who live and breathe Egyptian politics they're the ones that have the right to say whether they like the governing of the country or not.

In summarising, participants' attitudes towards the events of Egypt were typified by a frustration at the level of upheaval caused by the revolution, which had failed to live up to their expectations. Specifically, the revolution had promised to reform Egypt but in many estimates Egypt has been returned to the military-ruled status quo. Egyptian-Australian participants expressed their frustration that often family and friends in Egypt failed to understand that the reinstatement of military rule was an affront to the reforms they believed were the tenets of the revolution itself. Such frustration can be explained through by the notion of social diffusion whereby people from differing non-democratic histories observe and practice the rights and responsibilities of the democratic country in which they live and then go on to share these experiences with family and friends abroad. This was evidenced by the values and commitment to democratic norms expressed by participants and the fact they typically held positive attitudes towards the Australian political system.

7.3   Political Activity And Changes Post The Arab-Spring

Participants were asked about their participation in the Egyptian revolution as well as their previous political activity both in Egypt and Australia. Participants tended to describe their involvement in three ways: an active participation, a passive participation or a clear statement of non-participation.

7.3.1 Active Participation In The Revolution

Of the participants interviewed, 13 described an active participation in the Egyptian revolution. This took the form of organising or attending protests, actively participating in public debates either online or in the media, participating in local Egyptian community organisations and/or through participating in political organisations in Australia.

7.3.1.1 Participation In The Egyptian Election Process

This study did not seek specifically to canvass participants' attitudes towards voting in Egypt. However a number of participants communicated their engagement in the revolution in terms of the electoral process in Egypt. It became evident that attitudes and behaviours towards voting in the Egyptian elections was a means of active political participation. Participant 17 described the strong desire to participate in the electoral process; 'It was the first time in my life as an adult that I felt that I should really go and vote, so there was that sense of wanting to pool in with the Egyptian people, to get them out, you know get them across that stage.'

Upon further analysis some interesting anomalies arose with regards to participant involvement in Egypt's electoral process. From the interviews it was apparent that expatriates found the processes for voting in Egypt convoluted and inconsistent. Participants' noted the lack of understanding of their rights in regards to participating in elections. Of those who expressed a desire to vote most were born in Australia, making them second generation Egyptian, and many did not have the appropriate paperwork. Thus the desire to vote was often expressed in hypothetical terms and was strongest among non-Egyptian born participants. The desire to participate in the Egyptian elections appears to be born of a desire to express solidarity as demonstrated by second-generation Egyptian-

Australian participant 18; 'I actually couldn't vote because my ID expired a month before and I couldn't renew it in time, so it's just you know an active voice. [Do you think you would have voted had your paperwork been in order?] Yeah I would have, I wanted to be part of history as well I just felt like it was a really defining moment.'

In a display of the strength of connectedness with Egypt, of the participants who voted in the various Egyptian parliamentary and presidential elections all had been in Australia for less than ten years. Conversely participants who had been in Australia for more than ten years did not appear to express the same level of desire to participate in the election process in Egypt. This perhaps speaks to a stronger connection to the Australian political system than to the Egyptian in those who have spent over ten years in Australia. For example Participant 13 has lived in Australia for almost forty years [with 15 abroad before that] and still retains the right to vote in Egypt however portrays strong views against participating in the elections:

> As far as Egyptian politics, I'm not involved in it, I don't vote although I have the right to vote I have all the papers for it, but I do not vote, I find that it is a sham. I'm here in Australia and I'm supposed to vote for a place I was in 55 years ago, I should be represented from Australia not represented from the little city that I was in.

7.3.1.2 Participation In Protests In Egypt And Australia

Turning now to other forms of political participation demonstrated in the study. Amongst the participants who indicated that they had partaken in protests in Australia it was noted that participants who had lived in Australia for less than ten years were more likely to attend protests than those who had lived in Australia for more than ten years. This corresponds with stronger expressed connection with Egypt in those recently left Egypt.

The enduring sense of strong Egyptian identity is illustrated by Participant 4, who said; 'I love to describe myself as an Egyptian I love my identity very much and even my kids we still keep both nationalities, actually I still didn't take the Australian nationality. My kids at school they usually say that we are, have double nationality than Australian.'

It was noted also that Muslim participants indicated more involvement in protests in Australia than Coptic participants. This is in correlation to stronger dissatisfaction with events in Egypt expressed by Muslim participants than Christian. This point further attests to the significance of religion in modern Egyptian political discourse. Specifically, the extent to which participants felt positive towards the current situation and future prospects of Egypt appeared to be influenced by their religious status. Muslim participants expressed greater dissatisfaction with the second revolution which overthrew the government of Mohammad Morsi. Conversely Coptic Christian participants were more likely to support the government of President Sisi and to be in favour of the removal of the Morsi government. This may explain the larger proportion of Muslim participation in local protests attended across Australia's capital cities. Participant 3 described coordinating community support for a protest in Perth, saying; 'we also organised here for the first time, because the revolution united us here as Egyptians, here in Perth we organised the Egyptian Community of Western Australia.' Similarly Participant 18 described the experience of attending a protest outside the Egyptian consulate in Sydney; 'I remember cause I was holding up a cartoon picture of the women, the scarved women who was beaten up and her scarf had gone up and showed her underwear and stuff, so in front of the Consulate [in Sydney].'

Of the participants interviewed two indicated that they had taken part in protests in Egypt. Of note one participant described travelling specifically to join the revolution while the

other, Participant 22 did not travel to Egypt specifically to join the protests but rather described being inspired to take to the streets while on holiday visiting family, saying; 'seeing everyone, they were so passionate about what kind of government was there and what kind, who was ruling Egypt, it gives you a sense that you want to help them out, you want to participate in this, you want to have that.'

7.3.1.3 Participation With Local Community Organisations

Engagement with local community organisations was another area of active participation highlighted by the interviews. Participants described organising and attending events through local community organisations during the period of the uprising and in the following two year period. Organisations included the Egyptian-Australian Council Forum which held lectures from visiting Egyptian scholars and journalists, the Islamic Egyptian Society which organised fundraising and social events in support of Egypt and the Australian Coptic Movement which did likewise. Some of this involvement built upon existing long-standing involvement in community organisations as Participant 6 highlighted:

> I just consider myself as an Egyptian with love and passion and caring for the destiny of his homeland. I have been nearly over 30 in Australia, nearly 35, since the first day I landed here I was making contacts and been active in any social events, any events that seems important to the community here, whether it happens here or incidents or actions overseas in Egypt and it has reflections for us here, so I've been here in many community organisations.

However other community involvement appeared to be a direct result of the revolution. For example Participant 11 described becoming involved through the local Coptic Church in

seeking to influence public policy on the issue of Christian refugees fleeing Egypt after the revolution:

> I've also been part of a group, it's an official group with my diocese in church that has responded to a DFAT report from the government about future immigration from Egypt about what you can consider a refugee and persecution, I've been heavily involved in that, responding to that report because that report is going to have some serious negative effects on Christians in Egypt trying to immigrate to Australia as refugees, so I've been involved in that with a few lawyers.

7.3.1.4 Involvement In Social Media

Social media was described by many participants as a means of engaging in the events of the revolution. The pervasive growth of social media platforms in recent years and particularly the role of social media in the uprisings in the Arab world has received much attention.[686]

In this study participants often used social media as a means of getting involved in debates and sharing information. The use of online forums to engage in discussion and to garner differing perspectives was noted by many participants. Primarily Facebook and twitter were used to express individual opinions about the revolution and was a means of gathering information from friends and family in Egypt. To illustrate this point Participant 17 described how Facebook was a vehicle for displaying support for the revolution and the overthrow of Mubarak, saying; 'I remember putting, you know the Egyptian flag on my Facebook page and getting the opportunity to speak about it'.

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[686] See Kate Bussmann, ed., *A Twitter Year: 365 Days in 140 Charaters*, 1st ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2011) and Ahdaf Soueif, *Cairo: My City, our Revolution*, 1st ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

7.3.2　Passive Participation Or Non-Participation In The Revolution

Five of the participants interviewed described a passive involvement in the events. Passive participation encompassed; monitoring developments in the news or on social media and discussing events and expressing personal views about the events with friends and family. Participants often described their participation in terms of a passive or supportive role rather than an active or functioning involvement in the revolution, as Participant 6 explained:

> I mean I haven't had any physical contribution. But it was more emotional and it's more support, I've not been in any group or any political party or picking any sides, I just watching and analysis and listening and making my own opinion and discussing with friends and groups but nothing in any way affecting or contributing physically or ideologically in any way.

The remaining seven participants articulated non-participation in the events. Participants explained why they sought to remain uninvolved in the events on various grounds. These included work situations which were conditional upon remaining objective about political issues, this was the case for three participants, one a translator, one a university professor and one a high-profile director of an organisation which dealt with both the Egyptian and Australian governments. Other participants objected to participation on the grounds that being in Australia disqualified them from participation, as illustrated in the statement of Participant 20, who said; 'I'm not, I guess that's the short answer, being here it's really, I feel very connected to the Australian political scene but being so distant, such a distance away from Egypt I don't really feel that I'm in anyway able to participate.'

In summary, over half of the Egyptian-Australians participants in this study described having an active involvement in the Egyptian revolution. This took the form of participating in Egyptian elections, attending protests in Egypt and/or Australia, engaging in community organisations in support of the Egyptian people or an active involvement through social media platforms. Five of the participants described a passive or supportive role which included keeping abreast of news and discussing events with family or friends. While the remaining participants specifically noted that they had sought not to be involved in the revolution either for professional reasons or because they felt unqualified to participate.

7.4   The Influence (Or Not) Of The Arab Spring On The Attitudes And Political Involvement Of Egyptian-Australians

Turning now to exploring any changes to political involvement by Egyptian-Australians as a result of events in Egypt. The hypothesis initially proposed that the Arab Spring would have an inspiring effect on Egyptian-Australians, to the extent that they would be sufficiently motivated to alter attitudes towards political participation and that changes in political attitudes would be sufficiently visible in the participants studied. This hypothesis was particularly interested in gauging any changes to attitudes and behaviour in the Australian political context.

Of greatest note was that no definitive trend towards changed political participation was observed in the study. Essentially the initial hypothesis was proved to be at best inconclusive and at worst incorrect. It is clear that the hypothesis represented an overly simplistic proposition. Rather this study has actually exposed a far more nuanced, and arguably useful, picture of political consciousness and broader political identity amongst Egyptian-Australians.

There emerged no consensus amongst participants that the events had an inspiring effect upon their attitudes and behaviours with regards to political involvement. Nine participants noted they felt some change in their political consciousness after the revolution. Changes were largely contained at the attitudinal level not at the behavioural. Participants described feeling inspired by events, particularly the initial overthrowing of President Mubarak by popular protest. To illustrate this Participant 10 said; 'I definitely believe now in the power of the people and social media and stuff'. In some cases the events in Egypt may have given cause to reflect more deeply on the Australian political landscape, as Participant 20 demonstrates:

> I guess what it sort of made me realise was how much we take our own system for granted, although people might have views on whether they're Liberal or Labor or they might have a gripe about the political scene I really feel like and maybe I don't know if it's just me, or just a general feeling I get from people, that people really don't care, people are like 'oh it's such a hassle to go and vote' and we always complain when we have to go and vote, and then you look at something like what happened in Egypt, they just want the right to vote, they wanted a democracy.

7.4.1   Evidence Of Changed Behaviours Amongst Participants

In assessing whether the inspiration felt by Egyptian-Australians at the events in Egypt translated into changed behaviours, few patterns emerged from the interviews. Where changes were demonstrated these included taking a more active approach to the voting process in Australia and a more active involvement in social media as a means of political activism, however these changes were noted in only 12 per cent of participants. So while events in Egypt appeared to have an inspiring effect this was largely kept at the attitudinal level rather than the behavioural, as Participant 6 illustrates; 'No, it's made me definitely

more keen, more interested, more alert in what's happening back home but I don't think I will take more practical steps, like joining a party or getting myself into one political view here or there, still I am modest and I am neutral.'

Tangible changes in behaviour were restricted to just three participants. Participant 5 described taking a more active approach to the voting process in Australia since the Egyptian revolution, saying; 'I'm a little bit more involved, researching the parties I'm going to vote for and talking to friends about it'. While Participant 1 explained further how the revolution had inspired a more active role within the Egyptian community in Australia, saying; 'the uprising made me like I want to be part of that so I wanted to be part of the community here in this country, help them out in any way that I can and raise awareness with people here in Australia as well as helping.'

Stated changes in behaviour with regards to using social media to express political views were observed, in the words of Participant 3; 'it's like you can be a journalist without being, without working at a newspaper.' While Participant 11 described how social media had become a forum for publicly expressing political views, stating; 'any social network I can get on to voice my opinion I do, my Facebook page is pretty much solely about Egypt and the revolution and the Middle East in general with Syria and Iraq.' Participant 1 also explained how they had become more involved in social media since the revolution, in particular starting a blog which has been used to express opinions about both the political situation in Egypt and current issues facing the community in the Australia, saying; 'That's when the blogging for me started from there, I mean I blogged here and wrote an article here and there, but I was more passionate after that and I think there was that sense of unity.'

7.4.2   Accounting For Minimal Behavioural Change

In accounting for why changed behaviour in Egyptian-Australians appeared negligible despite obvious feelings of inspiration it is necessary to look at the role historical context plays in shaping attitudes towards political participation in Australia.

It was noted that despite having a stated interest in participation some participants pointed to Egypt's historical legacy of political persecution and curtails to freedom of speech as factors which discouraged them from engaging in political action in Australia. This illustrates how historical context can influence the views of migrants and their families towards engaging in the political system. Likewise, Egypt's historical context may have defined how participants engage in broader political involvement in Australia.

Specific expression of Egypt's history of political repression spanned across age groups and was not determined by the length of time spent in Australia. Participant 9 described how within their own family there had been political arrests. When asked whether participating politically in either the Egyptian or Australian political scene in Egypt was desirable they responded by saying, 'in Egypt, no, not even in Egypt. My dad was in a political party, he's been into jail a few times.'

Negative aspects of Egyptian heritage, particularly political repression, appeared to permeate the current attitudes of some participants towards political involvement. This was regardless of the length of time spent in Australia. It was clear from participant responses that despite leaving Egypt many years earlier 'strong links to my roots and origins'[687] and in particular the political and social climate still held a profound influence over

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[687] This view was expressed by study Participant 6.

participants' current attitudes towards political engagement. This point is demonstrated in the response of Participant 12, who said:

> I've always been looking to participate in the political life here in Australia but there's been, I don't know could be a cultural stigma, as in I've left Egypt in order to seek a better life here in Australia and because we got used to people who are politically active being pursued by the government back in Egypt so we had this stigma along with us when we came to Australia. So before acquiring citizenship that was something that I would never look at because fearing that if you have any sort of political view that might be taken, I know that there is no law that would say that because of your political views that you would prosecuted or anything but it's just the stigma that we had all the way from Egypt to here and that's the way that things for us work out.

For others aged 60 and above who have been in Australia for more than ten years their previous life experience, and particularly freedom of speech in Nasser's Egypt[688] have shaped irrevocably their attitudes towards political participation. Participant 14 articulates a learned fear which they believed may explain why they do not participate politically despite having an interest:

> I'm not sure whether that is for a number of things, maybe one is my background, I learned not to burn my fingers, I know Australia is different of course, here you can just say whatever you like about the Prime Minister, you can't open your mouth like that in Egypt, even today. Although there is much more freedom, people don't

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[688] For a comprehensive analysis of political and social life in Egypt under the regimes of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat seethe work of John Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat : The Political Economy of Two Regimes,* 435-463.

disappear like that anymore in Egypt and there are newspapers, opposition etc. which never existed before, Australia is different, Australia, you say whatever you like, there is freedom of speech etc. but maybe I learned not really to say what shouldn't be said.

Direct personal experience and fear of authority in Australia was also highlighted as a deterrent to political participation. Participant 3 described feeling intimidated by organisations like the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), saying; 'Maybe because we're coming from the Middle East, from countries with oppression and dictatorship so when one policeman or one from the secret agencies are calling you or asking you for information, you are intimidated and feel fear.'

Deterrents sometimes moved beyond describing a psychological fear or learned behaviour to point to the real danger posed to their families in Egypt as a result of political involvement. For some participants this was despite living in Australia. Participant 3 claims to have received intimidating correspondence from the Egyptian government in regards to social media activities undertaken:

I participated very positively electronically and I received a threatening from the Ministry of Interior in Egypt, they said 'we know you are outside and it is shameful that you are participating in this conspiracy against Egypt' so I changed my Twitter account at that time because I was afraid for the safety of my family in Cairo.

Contrary to the initial hypothesis proposed, the Arab Spring, while having an inspiring effect on Egyptian-Australians has not demonstrated significant changes in political involvement in either Egypt or Australia. It is argued that despite the length of time spent

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in Australia previous life experiences in Egypt have shaped attitudes towards political participation of Egyptian-Australians and may act as deterrent to participation. There appears to be little consensus amongst participants that the events of the Egyptian revolution have changed their attitudes and behaviours with regards to political involvement in Australia.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated a number of supportive findings to this thesis. The conceptualisation of the Arab Spring by Egyptian-Australians has been shaped by exposure to and experience with the Australian political system. The Egyptian-Australian response to the events in Egypt is marked by a deep frustration at the return of the military-run status quo and the lack of democratic reform. It appeared that strong feelings of frustration correlated with a generally high regard for the Australian political system. Thus it is argued that high levels of frustration are a manifestation of living in a 'well-functioning democracy'. This is supported by the notion of transnational social diffusion as articulated by Leggitt, Perez-Armendariz and Crow.

Additionally this chapter has examined that while the Arab Spring had an inspiring effect on Egyptian-Australians it did not represent significant changes to the political involvement of Egyptian-Australians in Egypt or Australia. This is a further demonstration of how events in Egypt are heavily refracted through the Australian context, specifically exposure to and experience with the Australian political system.

CONCLUSION

This thesis challenges the assumptions that underlie Arab-Australian identity and contests conventional thinking which largely homogenises Arab-Australian identity. Through the perspectives of the Egyptian-Australian community the fluidity of Arab-Australian identity has been demonstrated. This study has shown the engagement with the Arab-Australian identity construct by one group within it. In doing so the gaps between how Arab-Australians are represented and how they represent themselves have been highlighted.

The Arab Spring beginning in 2011 brought global attention to Arab identity. Popular discourse of the events highlighted underlying Orientalist ideas about the Middle East and its people, in particular questions about whether Arab identity was prohibitive to democratic change and the compatibility of Arab/Muslims with so-called western values. The discourse surrounding the Arab Spring has given much needed space for new articulations of Arab identity. In Australia the events provide a significant opportunity to question some of the assumptions that underlie Arab identity.

The concept of 'latent Orientalism'[689] is central to how Arab-Australian identity has been represented and underscores the conflation and homogenisation of Arab-Australians. Specifically it has been demonstrated that events both globally and within Australia have harnessed a resurgence in Islamophobia along Orientalist lines. These events have normalised an existing climate of anti-Arab, and anti-Muslim sentiment – witnessed across a number of different political and media sites.

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[689] Said, *Latent and Manifest Orientialism*: 45.

Interviews with members of the Egyptian-Australian community provide empirical evidence of the current problematic state of Arab-Australian identity. In particular the negative representation of Arab-Australians and a pattern of Othering has been demonstrated. Arab-Australian identity is described by participants as lacking in adequate representation at the political level. At the media level participants describe the conflation of the terms Arab/Muslim/Terrorist, reflecting a lack of understanding of the diversity of the Middle East and its people. At the same time, the powerful mainstream media in Australia has been shown to perpetuate negative views towards Arab-Australians and particularly issues relating to Muslims and Islam.

This study has explored the dynamic between the dominant identity construct, 'mainstream Australia' and the Other. The relationship and in many the ways resistance of Egyptian-Australians to the conflated/homogenising identity construct of Arab-Australian has been demonstrated. This calls into question the relative stability of identity categories such as Arab-Australian.

The construction of identity has been shown to be a process occurring against the backdrop of broader social relations in Australia. Identity is firmly grounded in power relations and 'identities are political, gendered, economic and religious' expressions.[690] The empirical work of this study shows that identities should be considered an ongoing redefinition amidst political and social power struggles.[691] Egyptian-Australians illustrated this by identifying themselves differently based on the social context and by expressing a complex and nuanced framework for distinguishing themselves from Arab-Australian identity.

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[690] Luke and Luke, "Theorizing interracial families and hybrid identity": 230.
[691] Hall, *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*: 222.

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Identity constructs have been shown to be a form of social categorisation resulting in collective social boundaries which reflect relations to/with the dominant national identity. The manifestation of this is demonstrated in Othering which is a consciousness of perceived power inequalities between the dominant national identity and those outside it.

Arab-Australians continue to experience Othering in relation to the dominant 'mainstream Australian' identity. This is evidenced in the struggle over access to social resources. This struggle occurs between constructed identities where 'the politics of identity involves a political contest over content, boundaries and practical implications of the group identity, as well as dispute over who has authority to define this identity'.[692] By examining notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' it has been argued that Arab-Australians have historically been located outside this imagined community.

Factors that account for this include globalisation which has led to both the dislocation of labour and neoliberal economic structural changes that have disrupted the social and cultural makeup of Australia. Governments have promoted economic openness to the global marketplace, while at the same time the discomfort this openness brings has been quelled by encouraging a sense of cultural exclusivity. In Australia, as with many state-products of colonialism, importance has been placed on forming a 'national identity' separate to the motherland. Often this acclaims cultural commonality and shared history as a means of emphasising social cohesion. National identity has therefore been strictly defined and regulated.

The perception exists that a strong 'national identity' may overcome the challenges to social cohesion posed by different nationalities existing together in a multicultural context.

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[692] Ibid.

Cultural belonging has been granted based on prescribed ideals of 'mainstream Australia', those perceived to fall outside these prescribed boundaries becoming the Other. Multiculturalism and the immigration agenda in Australia has shaped the way the Other has been constructed in Australian society. This study makes a contribution to the work of those such as Hage and Dunn who urge that multiculturalism be viewed as a struggle to influence the direction of cultural space.[693] The notion that multiculturalism should be understood as a means of *permitting* and *controlling* cultural difference resonates with the findings, because it places the power to define identity constructs in the hands of the dominant culture.

Arab-Australian representation as the Other is manifest in the social and economic space. Arab-Australians overall have lower employment and poorer education and employment experiences when compared to the broader Australian community.[694] Impediments linked to assumed traits, stereotyping and negative attitudes within the wider-community have led to Arab-Australians expressing a sense of isolation, despite a desire for closer interaction. Global and local events, such as 9/11, the Bali bombings, the Cronulla riots and more recently the issue of global terrorism, have led to the stigmatisation and marginalisation of Arab-Australians, the result of which is a barrier to a more active participation in the community.[695]

Major Findings Of This Study

New empirical information is provided by this study. Firstly, a media content analysis of coverage of the Arab Spring affirms the fact that dominant mainstream pejorative views of

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[693] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 154.
[694] Kenny et al., *Arabic Communities and Well-being*: 8.
[695] Ibid.

Arab-Australian identity are often legitimised in the mainstream media. To this extent the mainstream media's coverage of Arab-Australian identity has been defined by Orientialsm and in more recent times, the pervasive state of national paranoia that has normalised Othering under the guise of 'national security'. Interviews with Egyptian-Australians supports this finding by demonstrating that the media fails to represent the diversity of the population and does not represent equally the interests of non-dominant cultural groups. The construction and maintenance of the Arab Other in Australian society is therefore enabled by the current media coverage of the Middle East and its people. The perspectives of the Egyptian-Australians interviewed supported this point by articulating the many ways they believed Arab-Australians to be Othered in media discourse.

Secondly, this study reinforces that identity labels, such as Arab-Australian, are both emotive and contentious. Through the perspectives of Egyptian-Australians, identity construction has been shown to be a complex and nuanced response to the pejorative nature of Arab identity in Australia. Egyptian-Australian participants in this study demonstrated a marked aversion to the Arab-Australian identity construct. Egyptian exceptionalism was identified as a means of categorically distancing Egyptian-Australians from broader Arab identity. The reasons for Egyptian-Australians differentiating themselves from broader Arab-Australian identity, arguably acknowledges the negative representation of Arabs in Australia and is a response to Othering. This is on account of 'individuals seek[ing] to belong to groups which provide them with a positive social identity.'[696] These findings are disruptive to assumptions and conventional thinking which treat Arab-Australian identity as a homogenous construct.

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[696] Sachdev et al., "Power and Status Differentials": 3.

Thirdly, this study showed how Egyptian-Australians distinguished themselves from other Arabic speaking communities by features of *positive distinctiveness* that included high levels of education, strong work ethos and historical and ethno-genetic links to the pharaohs rather than to the Arabs. This occurred alongside Egyptian-Australians expressing the view that the Lebanese community was more representative of the Arab-Australian identity construct. The use of stereotypes, often in line with mainstream pejorative images of Arab-Australians, were called upon to illustrate the distinctiveness of the Egyptian community from the Lebanese community in Australia. Often distinctions within the Lebanese community were not recognised by Egyptian-Australians, thereby subjecting the Lebanese community to the same stereotypes that many participants lamented were levelled at them. This highlights the pervasiveness of mainstream negative depictions of the Lebanese community and revealed the propensity for migrant communities to be defined by stereotypes and articulated by dominant discourses. This also demonstrates how through reinforcing existing negative stereotypes of Arab-Australians, Orientalist notions of the Middle East and its people can become internalised, even by those Orientalism subjectifies. This finding also highlights that Arab-Australian identity may have been constructed largely around the Lebanese community. The ramifications of this are that scholars and policy makers should remain mindful of the conflating and homogenising effect of the term Arab-Australian.

Supportive Findings

Events in the Arab world, such as the Arab Spring provide windows of opportunity to study the representation and lived experiences of Arabic speaking communities in Australia.

Through the media content analysis conducted it was shown how the mainstream Australian media predominantly framed events in Egypt in line with broader Western interests of democracy, threat of Islamist takeover of government and implications for Israel. These themes pertained to the core culture's interests, with events presented in a way that related them to Australia's so-called 'mainstream' and which were in line with broader representations of Arabs as Other. More often than not coverage in the mainstream media gave consideration to United States' and Israeli interests. This is reflective of the close cultural proximity Australia has with broader Western community and the propensity to view issues relating to the Arab world with fear and scepticism. A binary relationship was demonstrated between so-called 'western values' and the threat posed to them by the rise of Islamist governments. This is in keeping with norms which observe notions of core culture and 'mainstream Australia' and which treat Arab-Australians in ways that locate them outside this imagined community.

The conceptualisation of the Arab Spring by Egyptian-Australians was shaped by the Australian context. In particular it was demonstrated that the lived experiences of the Australian political system affected the perceptions of Egyptian-Australians towards the events in Egypt. Marked by a deep frustration at the return of the military-run status quo and the lack of democratic reform, it emerged that strong feelings of frustration correlated with a generally high regard for the Australian political system. High levels of frustration may be a manifestation of living in a 'well-functioning democracy', a point supported by the notion of transnational social diffusion.

Additionally, this study showed that while the Arab Spring had an inspiring effect on Egyptian-Australians it did not represent significant changes in political involvement of Egyptian-Australians in Egypt or Australia. Rather the response to the Arab Spring by

Egyptian-Australians has exposed how participant's conceptualised events in Egypt as 'exceptional'. This nuanced conceptualisation sits alongside earlier findings about how Egyptian-Australians relate themselves as exceptional to Arab-Australian identity and highlights how events abroad are heavily refracted through the Australian context by migrant communities.

Consequences Of This Study

This study has shown how one particular group within the Arabic speaking community has both engaged with and contested the Arab-Australian identity construct. The refutation of identity constructs by those associated with them should be seen in the context of the 'struggle, negotiation and use of ethnic resources for the countering of disadvantages or perpetuation of advantages'.[697] It has been demonstrated that Egyptian-Australians may seek to position themselves outside Arab-Australian identity as a response to Othering and as recognition of the pejorative status of Arab identity itself.

Identities are grounded in power relations and the struggle for definition over cultural spaces.[698] Identities are materially exercised across all levels of discourse and this has serious consequences for the people they represent and the places they inhabit.[699]

The consequences of this study lie in justifying caution in asserting identity labels such as Arab-Australian. Rather the prospects for enhancing more adequate representation at all levels of discourse centre on acknowledging that identity constructs, such as Arab-

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[697] Anthias and Yuval-Davis, "Contextualizing Feminism": 66.
[698] Dunn, "Using Cultural Geography": 154.
[699] Ibid.

Australian, are not homogeneous monoliths nor are they exempt from resistance from those within them.

Previously, divisions amongst the Arabic speaking communities of Australia have been considered mainly religious, between Christian and Muslim and more recently considerations of the division between Sunni and Shi'a communities. However this study has demonstrated that further divisions exist along national and ethno-geographic lines. Thus attempts to engage the Arabic speaking community through discourse and rhetoric which treat the community as a homogeneous monolithic entity may be at best ineffective and at worst detrimental. In particular any treatment of Arabic speaking communities that emphasise or appeal to perceived commonalities, especially constructed around the Lebanese community, may in fact further cement Othering of non-Lebanese Arabic speaking communities.

There is scope to explore the issue of identity in future studies of non-Lebanese Arabic speaking communities in Australia. Further analysis of how the non-Lebanese Arabic speaking community relate to the identity construct would be beneficial to broadening the conceptualisation of Arab-Australian identity and could enhance public policy approaches to issues relating to the representation of Arabs in Australia.

It is hoped that this study has created space for a discourse that challenges the common assumptions about certain identity constructs, in this case, Arab-Australian identity. By considering the ways in which groups relate to and in many ways resist such constructions provides an opportunity to further advance the thinking about the complexities and nuances which occur at the group identity level. By expanding the understanding that groups such as Arab-Australians contain within them multiple layers of identity and in-group/outgroup categorisations, such as been identified with the Egyptian-Australian community, increases

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the possibility that future discourse relating to such groups may reflect this more dynamic

reality.

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Appendix 1 Participant Classification Sheet

Participant	Age Group	Citizenship	Education	Gender	Length of time in Australia	Occupation	Religion
Participant 1	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	All my life (born in Australia)	Software developer	Muslim
Participant 2	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	10 years +	Librarian	Christian Coptic
Participant 3	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	Less than 10 years	Pharmacist	Muslim
Participant 4	25-40	Egyptian	Post-Graduate	Female	Less than 10 years	Medical Doctor	Muslim
Participant 5	18-25	Australian	Tertiary	Male	All my life (born in Australia)	Journalist/English tutor	Christian Coptic
Participant 6	40-60	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	10 years +	Medical Doctor	Christian Coptic
Participant 7	40-60	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Female	10 years +	Finance Manager	Muslim
Participant 8	40-60	Australian	Tertiary	Male	All my life (born in Australia)	Medical Doctor	Christian Coptic
Participant 9	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	Less than 10 years	Pharmacist	Muslim
Participant 10	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Female	Less than 10 years	Filmmaker	Christian Coptic
Participant 11	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Female	10 years +	High school teacher	Christian Coptic

Participant 12	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	Less than 10 years	Pharmacist	Christian Coptic
Participant 13	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	10 years +	Company director	Muslim
Participant 14	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	10 years +	University Professor	Christian
Participant 15	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Female	10 years +	Marketing manager	Muslim
Participant 16	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Male	10 years +	Pharmacist	Christian Coptic
Participant 17	40-60	Australian	Post-Graduate	Female	10 years +	Student	Christian Coptic
Participant 18	25-40	Egyptian/Australian	Tertiary	Female	All my life (born in Australia)	Marketing manager	Muslim
Participant 19	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	10 years +	Medical Doctor	Christian Coptic
Participant 20	25-40	Australian	Tertiary	Female	All my life (born in Australia)	Lawyer	Muslim
Participant 21	25-40	Australian	Tertiary	Female	All my life (born in Australia)	Journalist	Christian Coptic
Participant 22	18-25	Egyptian/New Zealand	High School	Female	10 years +	Student	Christian Coptic
Participant 23	40-60	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	10 years +	Firefighter	Muslim
Participant 24	60+	Egyptian/Australian	Post-Graduate	Male	10 years +	Medical Doctor	Muslim
Participant 25	40-60	Egyptian/Australian	High School	Male	Less than 10 years	Student	Christian Coptic

Appendix 2 Interview Questions

Name of respondent:_____

Age: _____

Suburb:_____

Occupation: _____

Religion:_____

Education level:_____

How long have you lived in Australia?

1 – All my life (born in Australia)

2 – 10 years +

3 – Less than 10 years

What citizenship do you hold?

_____

How do you describe yourself in terms of your cultural identity?

_____

How do you feel about the Egyptian Revolution and the events in the Arab world?

_____

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How did you react to the revolution?

_____

Where did you turn for information?

_____

Did you then or do you generally read, listen or watch any Australian Arabic media? If so what publications?

_____

How are you participating in the revolution?

_____

Generally speaking, have you been politically active in the past? What are the issues, platforms and types of political involvement you tend to engage with?

_____

Has anything changed since the Egyptian revolution that makes you want to change your political participation?

_____

What is your opinion of the Australian political system?

_____

How do you feel about how Arabs are represented in Australia?

_____

Do you think that the revolution has changed the way Arabs are viewed or represented in Australia?

_____

In your opinion, has the revolution been positive or negative for your experience as an Arab-Australian person?

_____

[ENDS]

Appendix 3 Final Ethics Clearance To Conduct Research

Ethics Application Ref: 5201300407 - Final Approval

Dear Dr Bassil,

Re: 'The impact of the 'Arab Spring' on the political consciousness of Arab-Australians'

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Faculty of Arts Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval of the above application has been granted, effective 9/07/2013. This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

 http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72.pdf.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Noah Bassil
Mrs Carla Maree Nolan

NB. STUDENTS: IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP A COPY OF THIS APPROVAL EMAIL TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR THESIS.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1.   The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).

2.   Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports.

Progress Report 1 Due: 09/07/14
Progress Report 2 Due: 09/07/15
Progress Report 3 Due: 09/07/16
Progress Report 4 Due: 09/07/17
Final Report Due: 09/07/18

NB: If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/
human_research_ethics/forms

3.   If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4.   All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/ human_research_ethics/forms

5.   Please notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6.   At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/ human_research_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

If you need to provide a hard copy letter of approval to an external organisation as evidence that you have approval, please do not hesitate to contact the Faculty of Arts Research Office at ArtsRO@mq.edu.au

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of ethics approval.

Yours sincerely

Dr Mianna Lotz
Chair, Faculty of Arts Human Research Ethics Committee
Level 7, W6A Building
Macquarie University
Balaclava Rd
NSW 2109 Australia
Mianna.Lotz@mq.edu.au