Transliteration

For the convenience of the non-specialist, I have omitted Arabic diacritical marks, except for the ‘ayn (‘) and the hamza (‘). I have transliterated Arabic according to convention and in line with the system used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 
Dissertation Aims and Scope

The main aim of this interdisciplinary project is to examine attempts to codify sexual knowledge in Egypt between 1830 and 1928. Through surveying medical, religious, legal and moral writings on sexuality, this study aims to examine the underlying politics of sexual knowledge and the structures of permissions and prohibitions within which sexual knowledge was articulated in the period under study. The research recognizes that there are several sources that informed people about sexual behaviour in the period under study. However, the study is concerned only with a number of writings that imparted teachings about sex directly or indirectly to the growing literate middle class, and proceeds to discuss their authors and contexts.

The study's main focus is the influence of medical and scientific conceptualization of sex differences on the understandings of gender and sexuality. In nineteenth-century Egypt, the study argues, professional medical authorities promoted medical theories that suggested men's innate active sexuality and inability to control their sexual urges. At the same time, professional Egyptian doctors increasingly projected women as mentally and physically fragile because of their reproductive cycle. Women were increasingly viewed as incapable of being sexually spontaneous. To remain healthy, women were advised to suppress their sexual desires to be satisfied only through marital sex.

Through examining the interconnections between medical, legal, religious and moral discursive literature on sexual behaviour, this study brings into light the associations between sex, sexuality and the creation and
recreation of gender. The study demonstrates that medical perceptions of
male and female sexualities were at the core of moral and intellectual
discourses on gender equality as well as religious opinions on sex-related
issues. Since there was a multiplicity of ideological and activist stands on
questions about sexuality and gender in the period under study, the study
explores the variety of ways in which nationalists, feminists and religious
scholars adopted, borrowed or negotiated with scientific and medical ideas on
female sexuality to support their different views on contemporary
controversial issues such as gender equality, polygamy etc. Medical and
scientific ideas of male and female sexuality had a complex impact on
discursive literature on gender and sexuality. On the one hand, they were
employed to justify the continuity of patriarchy and the increasing male
regulation of female sexuality. On the other hand, they strengthened
arguments in support of the participation of women in public life.
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