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Technology of Patriarchy:

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Egypt's 2018 Anti-Cybercrime Law
and the Case of the 'TikTok Women'

Master's Thesis Engaging Public Issues

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Abstract

Gender and sexuality play a crucial role in the patriarchal project of nationalism and the construction of national identities. In the era of internet use, a complex intersection emerges between the domains of technology and the social within a particular nation, as cyberspace increasingly functions as a tool for regimes to spread nationalist propaganda and reproduce national and sexual identities. This thesis focuses on article 25 of Egypt's Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crime Law (No. 175) that came into force in 2018. This legal article criminalizes the violation of Egyptian family values and has been used by the regime to imprison Egyptian female social media influencers. A critical discourse analysis was conducted in order to examine the formation and enactment of this legal article and to investigate how connections between the nation and sexuality are expressed in and by the law. The analysis shows how the cybercrime law functions as a tool for the repression of Egyptian citizens and concurrently as a tool for the reproduction of patriarchy. Drawing on the concept of sexual nationalism, I demonstrate how nationalism and patriarchy are interrelated technologies of domination.

***keywords:** cyberspace, Egypt, gender, sexual nationalism, sociotechnical imaginaries.*

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Introduction

In the summer of 2020, a controversy took place in Egypt. Several young women were arrested for violating Egyptian family values. These women had one thing in common: they were all well-known social media influencers with a large number of followers on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and Likee. The issue turned out to be a divisive one and resulted in a wide range of reactions amongst Egyptians: many people condemned the arrests perceiving them as an attempt of the state to impose its own values on the Egyptian society, while others believed that the state in this way wanted to prevent “legalized prostitution” (Jima‘a, 2020). The imprisoned women became known throughout the country as ‘*sittāt al-TikTok*’, translated into English as the ‘TikTok women’. The charge of ‘violating Egyptian family values’ is based on a cybercrime law that came into force in 2018. This Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crime Law (No. 175) consists of 45 articles that are all related to cyberspace. Article 25 of the law deals with privacy and consent, but also touches briefly on Egyptian family values. It is this ostensibly minor part of the law that has been used to target the ‘TikTok women’.

In this thesis, I analyse the formation and enactment of this legal article, examining how connections between the nation and sexuality are expressed in and by the law. I conduct a critical discourse analysis, as it provides a critical perspective on social inequality, power, and injustice sustained through language use (Lazar, 2015). Since the focus of this thesis is on the enactment of the law, it is of particular interest to examine when and where the law is upheld. Therefore, the legal case files of several women who were charged for violating Egyptian family values are studied, combined with official statements by the institute of the Egyptian Public Prosecution about these cases. Additionally, I focus on public debates prior to the instituting of the law as well as debates about, and contestations of, its invocation. By doing so, I attempt to answer the following research question: *How does the Egyptian cybercrime law rearticulate the legal enactment of gender?* I explore what the implications of the cybercrime law are in the context of the repression of Egyptian citizens in general and heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas of the military-backed regime in particular. In order to address this question, it is important to consider the social and historical context in which the law was institutionalized. Therefore, I pose the following sub-questions: *What is the historical context of the formation of the law? Where and when is the law upheld? How can the enactment of the law be understood in terms of sexual nationalism?*

The aim of this thesis is to show how this specific Egyptian cybercrime law is intertwined with sexual and nationalist politics. I make use of infrastructure studies in order to study the law as embedded in an infrastructure of measures taken by the state to maximize

control over cyberspace. Additionally, I build on the concept of sociotechnical imaginaries coined by Jasanoff and Kim (2009) to examine how collectively imagined forms of social order are reflected in the cybercrime law. I contextualize this making use of Pateman's (1988) sexual contract which allows me to grasp the patriarchal underpinnings of the law. Finally, this leads to an understanding of the law in terms of sexual nationalism.

I acknowledge the sensitivities and perils inherent in engaging with this issue, since Western research on the Middle East has often been used to legitimate colonial rule, producing and reproducing racist and stereotypical ideas about the misogynistic hypersexual Arab man and the submissive Arab woman (Said, 1978). This orientalist form of knowledge production reinforces the idea that gender equality is achieved 'here' in the West, while patriarchal violence is something that only happens 'there' in the East (Khalid, 2011). Writing as a Western student about a sexual issue in the Middle East, it is important to consider my own positionality in this research. Participating in the circulation of knowledge production in a Western institution I should be wary of how I frame the issue of gendered violence in a Middle Eastern country without reproducing orientalist ideas. I approach gendered violence as a symptom of capitalist and patriarchal societies, which prevail in various manifestations all over the world.

Theoretical Framework

In this section I discuss the theories relevant to understanding the enactment of gender in the Egyptian cybercrime law. I start by explaining the conception of gender that is employed in this thesis. Thereafter I discuss the theoretical approaches – i.e., infrastructure studies, sociotechnical imaginaries, the sexual contract, and sexual nationalism – that I will employ in this thesis.

Gender and Intersectionality

As this thesis focuses on the legal enactment of gender in an Egyptian cybercrime law, it is necessary to define what I mean when I use the term gender. I adopt J. W. Scott's (2013) approach which understands gender to be an open issue. Scott describes gender as “a perpetual site for political contestation, one of those locations for the deployment of knowledge in the interests of power” (Scott, 2013, p. 74). She approaches gender as a framework to explore not only how people are defined in relation to each other, but more importantly “what visions of social order are being contested, built upon, resisted, and defended in terms of those definitions” (Scott, 2013, p. 74). In these terms, gender is a site for intense and constant discussion that can give new insights about the societies or policies we study. In line with Scott (2013), I approach gender as a performance and sociocultural construct through which power is articulated and enacted.

Moreover, I take an intersectional approach, understanding gender to be only one axis of the multiple axes that constitute people's identities and lives. Thus, the focus is not solely on gender, but also on other intersections of oppression and privilege, such as class, race, sexuality, and religion (Crenshaw, 1989). Sara Ahmed (2017) states that privilege can reduce the costs of vulnerability, because those who have privilege are more likely to be protected. Ahmed describes privilege as a buffer zone, “meaning how much you have to fall back on when you lose something” (Ahmed, 2017, p. 237). Privilege is in these terms a support system that makes those who have it less vulnerable. Concerning the ‘TikTok women’, especially the intersection of gender and class seems to be relevant, as several news media platforms have highlighted the fact that most – if not all – of the arrested women are from lower social classes and that these women are therefore more vulnerable to patriarchal violence (Samir, 2020; Walsh, 2020). When I study where and when the law is upheld, I do so using an intersectional framework.

Infrastructure Studies

I approach the Egyptian cybercrime law as embedded in infrastructures of state power in order to situate the law in its specific sociopolitical context. Based on Foucault's concept of biopower, infrastructures can be studied as "a mixture of political rationality, administrative techniques, and material systems" (Larkin, 2013, p. 331). The focus here is not essentially on infrastructures and their social effects, but on what they reveal about the construction of systems in state practices. Mann (1984) defines infrastructural power as "the capacity of the state to actually penetrate civil society, and to implement logistically political decisions throughout the realm" (p. 189). Looking through this lens, the Egyptian cybercrime law can be analysed for how it reveals a system of control by the Egyptian state. The state makes use of the cybercrime law in an attempt to control cyberspace. Free and unrestrained access to the internet can be considered a threat for authoritarian regimes worldwide. The cybercrime law enables the state to control the private home, which is, precisely in an era of internet use, a site that authoritarian governments want to access. Approaching the cybercrime law as embedded in an infrastructure of state practices by the Egyptian regime will help to gain a better understanding of what the implications of the law are in the context of state power aimed at controlling cyberspace. From an intersectional perspective, it must be explored how infrastructural power of the state is related to and shaped by other systems of power related to for example gender, sexuality, class, colonialism, and technology, since policy, power, and subjective experiences are always intertwined and mutually constitutive (Crenshaw, 1989; McFarlane & Rutherford, 2008). This will then reveal how the infrastructure functions differently for different people.

Sociotechnical Imaginaries

The concept of sociotechnical imaginaries is a useful framework for understanding the enactment of gender in the cybercrime law, as it tackles the complex topographies of power and morality where they intersect with the forces of science and technology. Jasanoff and Kim (2015) define sociotechnical imaginaries as "collectively held, institutionally stabilized, and publicly performed visions of desirable futures, animated by shared understandings of forms of social life and social order attainable through, and supportive of, advances in science and technology" (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015, p. 6). This framework combines the normativity of the imagination and the materiality of networks. In my analysis, the concept of sociotechnical imaginaries will help me to examine how collectively imagined forms of social order are reflected in the enactment of the cybercrime law and how these are connected to particular gender ideas. This concept further allows me to highlight how these dominant imaginaries are

contested. As Jasanoff and Kim (2015) state as follows: “Legal disputes are in their very nature moments of contestation between disparate understandings of the good; and in the modern world these attach with great regularity to questions about science and technology” (p. 26). In this light, the Egyptian 2018 Anti-Cybercrime Law can be studied as a mechanism that is employed by the state to construct and reproduce dominant sociotechnical imaginaries which reveal practices committed to upholding a specific order, which is, as I will argue, a patriarchal capitalist order.

Sexual Contract

Carole Pateman’s (1988) feminist interpretation of classic contract theory reveals how modern patriarchy is created and upheld. In *The Sexual Contract* (1988) Pateman explores the relation between gender, heteronormativity, and the law. She counters the dominant idea in political theory that all citizens of the social contract are equal, as this idea obscures the fact of women’s subordination as well as other forms of oppression (Thompson et al., 2018). According to Pateman, modern patriarchy is rather constituted by means of a sexual contract that is about heterosexual relations and women as sexual beings imprisoned in the body. This social contract “legitimizes [men’s] masculine right and allows them to gain material and psychological benefit from women’s subjection” (Pateman, 1988, p. 113). Through this lens, the Egyptian cybercrime law can be approached as a sexual contract that is employed to reproduce patriarchy. This approach allows me to explore how the family functions as an institution for patriarchy and how heteronormative and patriarchal family values are sustained by the law. Pateman writes about the sexual contract in a liberal context, however, her work has been praised for its relevance to a diverse range of cultures around the world (Thompson et al., 2018, p. 99). For this thesis, the sexual contract is of importance, as it provides a framework for understanding how modern societies are structured by laws that institutionalize women’s subordination.

Sexual Nationalism

The concept of sexual nationalism is related to the sexual contract in the sense that it understands women’s subordination as a patriarchal project. However, sexual nationalism links this patriarchal project to the project of nationalism. Hossain (2019) approaches nationalism as a heterosexual and patriarchal project that is secured through the domination of women by men. Nationalisms and national identities are gendered and sexual since they are constructed on gender and sexuality stereotypes (Jaunait et al., 2013). Hossain states that in both European and

non-European nationalisms, women are often seen as “symbolic repository of nationalist values and essence, and the violation of their bodily and sexual integrity is considered an onslaught on the nation” (Hossain, 2019, p. 640). Gender, sexuality, and nationalism are all social and cultural constructions related to power, and they play a crucial role in shaping and constructing one another (Mayer, 1999). This interplay, and the role of power therein, becomes evident in the connection Hossain makes between the development of nationalism and colonialism: “nationalism frequently emerges at the intersection of battles between colonial and anti-colonial forces with women often being mere pawns in transactions between men” (Hossain, 2019, p. 640). In the context of resistance to colonialism, women became the preservers of the national identity and cultural authenticity (Singerman, 2013, p. 172). When studying the Egyptian cybercrime law, it is essential to keep in mind that the formation of (sexual) nationalism in Egypt, as is the case in most countries in the Middle East, is entangled in multiple complex ways with the country’s colonial history.

Method and Data

In this thesis, I analyse the formation and enactment of Egypt's 2018 Anti-Cybercrime Law and the case of the 'TikTok women', examining how connections between the nation and sexuality are expressed in and by the law. In order to answer my research question '*How does the Egyptian cybercrime law rearticulate the legal enactment of gender?*' I conduct a critical discourse analysis. This is a suitable method for critically analysing how social inequality, power, and injustice are sustained through language use (Lazar, 2015). Discourse can be understood as "a site of struggle, where forces of social (re)production and contestation are played out" (Lazar, 2015, p. 4). Critical discourse analysis focuses on how language contributes to domination of some by others in relationships of power (Fairclough, 2001). In a gendered social order this means the use of power and ideology to sustain and reproduce patriarchy (Lazar, 2015). Ideological power, which Fairclough (2001) describes as "the power to project one's practices as universal and 'common sense'" (p. 27), is exercised in discourse. Power is constantly being exercised and enacted by group members, through text and talk (van Dijk, 1997). In the context of gender, critical discourse analysis allows to highlight that "language does not merely reflect a pre-existing sexist world; instead, it actively constructs gender asymmetries within specific sociohistorical contexts" (West et al., 1997, p. 120).

The data consist of legal case files, official statements, and public debates. The critical discourse analysis of the legal casefiles of the 'TikTok women' and official statements by the Egyptian Public Prosecution, will help me to gain an understanding of the state's discourse on the Egyptian national identity and its values as being expressed in a gendered way through the law. Through the initiative Global Freedom of Expression of Columbia University, I gained access to the case file of the court hearing regarding Haneen Hossam and Mawada El-Adham that took place on July 27, 2020. The case of these two women received most attention, as theirs was the first case in which article 25 of cybercrime law was invoked (Global Freedom of Expression, 2020). For the collection of official statements by the Egyptian Public Prosecution I turn to Facebook, as the institute of the Egyptian Public Prosecution makes use of this platform to issue official statements (<https://www.facebook.com/ppo.gov.eg/>). Statements made by government officials on social media help to broaden the scope of this research and to gain more insight into the patriarchal underpinnings of the law. In my analysis of the legal casefiles and the official statements by the Egyptian Prosecution I analyse how certain language, beliefs, and interactions regarding gender, sexuality, and the nation are used by those in power to legitimate their actions.

Dominant discourses are always contested. The analysis of the public debates surrounding the law will help to gain an understanding of how the law is both praised and contested, and thus how heteronormative gender ideologies are reproduced or negotiated. This data consist of videos of tv hosts and male influencers on YouTube praising the law, activists supporting the ‘TikTok women’ on social media, and several essays written on online platforms. A focus is placed on the social position and influence of the participants in the debate, and on the environment or platform where the debate takes place, as an opinion article on a news website is valued differently and might have a different impact than a speech on national television.

The legal casefiles and the official statements are written texts, while the public debates include several media sources consisting of both written text and spoken text on television and social media. Spoken text is essentially verbal, but it cannot be understood without taking into account gestures, facial expressions, and movements, among other things. Fairclough (2001) refers to these ‘extra’s’ as *visuals*. It is of importance to take the *visuals* into account when analysing spoken texts. In the analysis of written and verbal text, I focus on language and words, and more attentively on metaphors and symbols in which a connection is made between sexuality and the state. Moreover, I use ‘sexual nationalism’ as a lens through which to analyse my sources. This is a rather heterogeneous set of data sources, consisting of written and spoken texts on the internet and in the media. This wide range of data sources will allow to gain an understanding of the implications of the law and how people deal with these implications, how gender ideas are reproduced and resisted and by whom.

Finally, since this thesis deals with Arabic sources, some notes should be made about my mastery of Arabic. I have completed a bachelor’s in Arabic Language and Culture at the University of Amsterdam in which I was taught both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Egyptian Arabic. This program included a semester at the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo. After my studies I have completed an extra online semester at Qasid Arabic Institute in Jordan. Currently, I work as an Arabic-Dutch translator for several online journals and magazines. According to ACTFL standards my Arabic language sufficiency is advanced-mid. Considering the issue of translation in my analysis, I will always strive to search for the best possible translation, but when a word is hard to translate into English, I will provide multiple options.

Results

In this section I discuss the findings of my critical discourse analysis on the enactment of gender in the Egyptian cybercrime law. I start by elaborating on the historical context and introducing the case of the ‘TikTok women’, thereafter I use the angles discussed in the theory section as starting points for weaving my findings into the thesis and answering my research questions.

Historical Context and the Case of the ‘TikTok Women’

In the years following the January 25 revolution in 2011, Egypt has witnessed drastic political changes. President Mubarak, who ruled the country for thirty years in an authoritarian and corrupt way, was ousted (Cleveland, 2016). Then, a period of transition followed, with formal rule by the Supreme Council of the Armed forces (SCAF). In 2012, new presidential elections were held with a stark choice between a military security state and a conservative religious state, which were won by Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood (Cleveland, 2016). He issued a presidential decree that granted him new powers and his government imposed a new religiously tinged constitution (Cleveland, 2016). This led to the eruption of massive protests in June 2013, and on June 30 the army toppled President Morsi in a coup led by General Abd al-Fatah al-Sisi. Initially Sisi was widely welcomed as a national saviour, but then a brutal crackdown followed, in which protesters were killed and tens of thousands of members of the Muslim Brotherhood were imprisoned (Cleveland, 2016). On August 14, 2013, over 900 people were killed in one single day when the army raided a sit-in on Rabaa Square in Cairo, in what became the largest massacre in recent Egyptian history (Holmes, 2019). In November of the same year, a law to suppress protests was issued that banned the public gathering of more than ten people. In March 2014, General Sisi announced to resign from the army and run for presidential elections. In May 2014 he won the elections with 97% of the votes (Holmes, 2019).

The new regime used terrorism to justify violence against protesters. A new law that was enacted in 2015 has broadened the definition of terrorism to include civil disobedience and enables the government to detain people without judicial review and allows to surveil people without a court order (Stork, 2019). In 2014, the Egyptian government bought mass surveillance technologies from the French cybersecurity companies Ecom and Nexa which “enable the Egyptian military intelligence to intercept calls, SMS, survey internet traffic or geolocate a target” (Smex, 2018). On April 9, 2017, following two suicide bombings, Sisi declared the state of emergency which enabled the authorities to adopt strict security measures and to extend surveillance and censorship, and which provided political cover for the ongoing human rights violations (Stork, 2019). Since then, the state of emergency has been renewed fifteen times and

is to this date still in place (Middle East Monitor, 2021). The government makes use of censorship, intimidation, and imprisonment in attempts to control offline and online media (Stork, 2019). Independent media are scarce, and when they exist, their lifespan is short because of state censorship. All newspapers, television and radio stations are under the control of the state and the censoring of internet-based media is ever increasing (Holmes, 2019). According to the Egyptian organization Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression, more than 500 websites are blocked, including more than 50 national and international news websites (AFTE, 2020).

In line with these measures, the Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crime Law (No. 175) was ratified by Sisi on August 18, 2018. According to the state-owned news platform *Al Ahram* the law is aimed at “combating extremist and terrorist organisations using the internet to carry out terrorist attacks” (Ahram Online, 2018). However, in the context of the other repressive measures taken by the regime in recent years, the cybercrime law reveals an infrastructure of authoritarian control by the Egyptian state (Larkin, 2013). The ‘TikTok women’ were charged with article 25 of this cybercrime law. This legal article states: “Punishable by imprisonment for no less than six months and a fine of no less than fifty thousand Egyptian Pounds and no more than one hundred thousand Egyptian Pounds, or by one of these two penalties, is anyone who infringes a family principle or value of the Egyptian society, or violates someone’s privacy, sends many emails to a certain person without obtaining their consent, provides personal data to a system or website for promoting products or services without getting the person’s approval, or publishes, via the information network or by any means of information technology, information, news, images or the like, which infringes the privacy of any person involuntarily, whether the published information is true or false” (Masrawy, 2018). On April 21, 2020, Haneen Hossam was arrested on charges of violating Egyptian family values. Soon thereafter, eight other female TikTok influencers followed. On May 15 Mawada El-Adham was arrested, on May 26 seventeen-year-old Menna Abdel Aziz was arrested, then, Sherry Hanem and Nora Hesham on June 10, Manar Samy and Reenad Emad on July 1, Hadeer Hady on July 6, and Bassant Mohamed on July 10. The case of Haneen Hossam and Mawada El-Adham is the first time that article 25 of the cybercrime law has been invoked (Global Freedom of Expression, 2020).

On July 1, 2020, another controversy related to women and social media started when the Instagram account *@assaultpolice* posted testimonies of women who had been sexually harassed and raped by a young man named Ahmed Bassam Zaki. In response to the uproar caused by the testimonies a new law was approved to provide increased protection of the

identities of sexual assault victims (Youm 7, 2020). Bearing in mind the laws that have been implemented in recent years and the imprisonment of the ‘TikTok women’, it is evident that this law that is initiated by the current military-backed regime is not aimed at true justice for women. In addition, Sisi was major general of the Egyptian army when the army conducted so-called “virginity tests” on 18 female protesters after they were arrested in Cairo (Amnesty International, 2012). According to Sisi, these “tests” were carried out to protect the army against possible allegations of rape, but in reality, they were a form of sexual abuse and torture (Amnesty International, 2011). Sisi’s current position, based on the support of the army, represents the male dominance that uses sexual intimidation of women to silence and control them.

The Criminalization of Internet Use as a Tool for Repression

In recent years, Egypt has seen a significant growth in internet use. However, this does not necessarily imply a better internet experience for everyone, as internet users can encounter dire consequences when they cross the *red lines* (Kassem, 2020). Due to restrictive laws and procedures any internet user can be in danger of being arrested. The vagueness of the terms used in article 25 of the anti-cybercrime law to describe the offence of “violating a family principle or value of the Egyptian society” and the lack of explanation and clarification reinforces this arbitrariness. As highlighted in the historical context section, the cybercrime law is one of many measures taken by the regime in recent years to censor, intimidate, and imprison Egyptian citizens. Therefore, the law can be understood as part of an infrastructure of measures taken by the regime to control cyberspace (Larkin, 2013). These measures consist of laws, surveillance, and imprisonment, but another technique to control the internet is the use of social media by the regime itself, in the form of statements on social media:

“The Public Prosecution calls upon the users of these websites, both the youth and adults, to contribute to their effective role in assisting the juridical and administrative police authorities to guard this new border that includes millions of websites, what makes it impossible to block the harmful ones or the evils on it, or to lift restrictions” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding Haneen Hossam on Facebook, April 23, 2020, p. 12).

“The alarm bells of the dangers threatening the youth of this nation have sounded to warn the whole community. These dangers which have silently entered [the nation] through

electronic devices and cyber borders that are not subject to any supervision [...] pushed them - children and youth - to engage in a life steeped in pornography, drug abuse and addiction, and the pursuit of making money in illegal ways, and even theft and embezzlement” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding Menna Abdel Aziz on Facebook, May 30, 2020, p. 2).

In these statements, the Egyptian Public Prosecution warns for the dangers of cyberspace and calls on internet users to assist in guarding the Egyptian “cyber borders”. The strong presence of the Public Prosecution on social media is a paradox worth noting, as social media are used in order to warn citizens for social media. The Prosecution’s description of their role, and the role of all internet users, as guardians of the “new border” reveals an attempt to govern and control what is able to circulate on the internet and what is not.

The narrative about the dangers of the internet is reinforced by smear campaigns against those who have been arrested for crossing the *red line*. This becomes evident when reading the casefile regarding Haneen Hossam, in which she is described as a ruthless criminal. The criminalization of Hossam starts with the investigations into her case which were carried out by The Department Combating Illegal Migration and Human Trafficking of the Anti-Drug and Organized Crime Sector. The technology and law community Masaar, consisting of lawyers and technologists concerned with digital rights in Egypt, issued a report about the case of Hossam and El-Adham. According to the report it is clear that the Public Prosecution tried to link charges related to public morals with charges related to making illicit money through the internet and the investigations were assigned to this department in order to ensure that the reports included accusations of child exploitation (Masaar, 2020). The findings of the investigations further criminalize the ‘TikTok women’ and their actions:

“The investigations confirmed that all the following: [...] form an organized criminal group operating in a great number of countries, specialized in attracting and exploiting girls using their financial and living conditions and their vulnerable situation and their need for money by alleging to provide them with job opportunities under the guise of their work as broadcasters in a fraudulent way and the promise of satisfying the desires of young people, with the goal of achieving enormous financial gains for those in charge of these applications in violation of the provisions of the Human Trafficking law, and this criminal group operates in the manner of secret clusters via agents in several countries, including the Arab Republic of Egypt” (Segment of the judgement of the case regarding

Haneen Hossam and Mawada El-Adham and three other men at the Cairo Economic Court on 27 July 2020, p. 5, via Global Freedom of Expression).

Haneen Hossam, who was at the time a 20-year-old archaeology student at the Cairo University and who has a large following on several social media platforms, started a small management agency, collaborating with the platform Likee and its company BIGO Technology, to help girls with hobbies or talents such as cooking, make-up, or singing, to become social media influencers. The Public Prosecution framed this story into a narrative of human trafficking and Haneen Hossam and nine employees of Likee and BIGO are accused of being part of a criminal organization. This criminalization is intensified by phrases such as “secret clusters [operating] via agents in many countries” and “an organized criminal group [...] specialized in attracting and exploiting girls”. As such, the Egyptian government is not only trying to control cyberspace; it makes use of the internet as a tool for repression. Accordingly, the internet is not merely or necessarily a threat for the authoritarian government; the internet is actually helping the regime in stifling dissent. This is in line with what Evgeny Morozov (2011) has argued in *The net delusion: the dark side of internet freedom*. He argues that the decentralized nature of the internet “opens up opportunities for tracking how information spreads online, enabling the authorities to learn more about those who spread it” (Morozov, 2011, p. 112). The 2018 anti-cybercrime law legitimates the violent and repressive actions of the regime against internet users and enables the regime to use the internet as a mechanism to enter the home and to control what happens in the private sphere to a much larger extent than would be possible without the use of the internet. In these terms, the cybercrime law can be understood not only as a technology aimed at controlling cyberspace, but as a tool to control and repress citizens in both the public and the private sphere.

The Creation and Contestation of Sociotechnical Imaginaries

In the enactment of the 2018 anti-cybercrime law and the debates that have taken place around the law a collectively imagined social order and a desired future are reflected. Sociotechnical imaginaries organize the normative understanding around a specific technology, bridging the technical and the social. Jasanoff and Kim (2015) stress the importance of science and technology in defining and upholding a specific vision of social order and ways of living, and in desiring the future. The spread of certain ideas, practices, and ideologies coproduces political and social order (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015, p. 22). Sociotechnical imaginaries can explain how certain ideas are embedded into institutions and why different nations develop completely

different public attitudes and policies towards specific technologies (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015). In the context of the cybercrime law, the Egyptian state and those supporting the actions of the state have a shared understanding of what social order in the Egyptian society should be like, and they imagine this order to be threatened by technological developments and more specifically by women's presence in cyberspace. These actors, both individuals and state institutions, play a major role in defining and framing what the issue is:

“The investigations and follow-up confirmed that the section under investigation was a violent shock to the Egyptian society, because it contained a direct call from the accused to the girls to commit acts contrary to the public morals and the values of the Egyptian society” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding Haneen Hossam on Facebook, 23 April 2020, p. 3).

“There is a thunderous disaster taking place, a real disaster, namely programs, livestreaming from our homes, and the bedrooms of our daughters; from our safe homes, in a hideous and public way” (Talk show host Nashaat Eldehy on national television, April 18, 2020).

“This video is one of the most important videos I have made in my life. This video will hopefully save the girls and women of the Arab world. We will save them from a huge disaster. [...] I watched several live streams, and I discovered a catastrophe. Seriously, a catastrophe threatening girls and women in all Arab countries” (Youtuber Naser - Hekaia (real name: Mohamed Maghribi), uploaded on YouTube on April 1, 2020).

The activities of the ‘TikTok women’ on the internet are described by talk show host Eldehy and youtuber Naser - Hekaia with the noun *kāriṭha*, which can be translated into English as ‘disaster’ or ‘catastrophe’. According to Eldehy, it is not just a disaster, but a “thunderous disaster” against which substantial measures should be taken. This is in line with the message of Naser - Hekaia, who sees it as his mission to save Arab girls and women from this so-called disaster. Visuals, such as facial expressions and gestures made by the two men are worth bearing in mind, since these extras support their narrative. They clap their hands multiple times, shake their head, and make other gestures of exasperation (see Figure 1). According to the Public Prosecution the TikTok video of Haneen Hossam was a violent shock to the Egyptian

society. All these actors imagine the practices of the ‘TikTok women’ as challenging and threatening the desired social order.

In this sociotechnical imaginary, cyberspace being used in ways that question the state’s idea of Egyptian family values is portrayed as an extremely dangerous phenomenon and therefore something that should be highly regulated. These articulations reinforce a particular conception of what the nation stands for. This conception is related to a specific conception of gender, which in this case is a very heteronormative and patriarchal conception. This becomes evident in phrases such as “girls [committing] acts contrary to the public morals”, “live streaming from [...] the bedrooms of our daughters”, and “a catastrophe threatening girls and women”. The Public Prosecution, the talk show host, and the youtuber, all see it as their duty to prevent women from making things public on the internet in a way they perceive as inappropriate. This is a form of controlling women’s bodies, since only women who behave in the desired way deserve it to be “saved” or protected, while women who act in ways contrary to what in the eyes of the state is acceptable behaviour are perceived as threatening the nation. This sociotechnical imaginary, thus, plays a crucial role in expressing and enacting the issue in a gendered way and functions as an instrument of legitimation for the state’s repressive actions to control cyberspace and women’s bodies.



Figure 1 Nashaat Eldehy covering his eyes from a video of a woman on TikTok, whereafter deciding not to display the video in the program, because its content is, according to Eldehy, “against the ethics and code of morality of the program”. Retrieved from youtube.com.

The controversy that took place surrounding the enactment of the cybercrime law can be understood as a moment of “contestation between disparate understandings of the good” (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015, p. 26). Activists and writers have contested the imaginary that was created by the state and its supporters and condemned the state’s dealing with cyberspace and technology in the context of the new cybercrime law. On social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram several hashtags were created to support the ‘TikTok women’ and to express criticism towards the regime. Some of these hashtags were #الرقص_مش_جريمة (dancing is not a crime), #بعد_اذن_الاسرة_المصرية (with the permission of the Egyptian family), #الحرية_لسنات_التيك_توك (freedom to the TikTok women), and #release... followed by the names of the women. The hashtags were accompanied by texts and graphics explaining the situation and supporting the women (see Figure 2). The activists make use of precisely the realm that the regime tries to control, that is cyberspace, to resist and condemn the regime’s actions aimed at controlling women’s bodies. The existence of these contestations brings into view that the regime is not able to fully control cyberspace and that the women in this issue are not merely passive victims. There is, and there will always be, resistance.



Figure 2 Two graphics about the ‘TikTok women’. The text in the picture on the right reads: “Release Manar Samy, dancing is not a crime, with the permission of the Egyptian family, release the TikTok women’. Retrieved from twitter.com.

Heteronormative and Patriarchal Gender Ideas

As I have already briefly shown in previous sections, heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas play a crucial role in the enactment of article 25 of the cybercrime law. This becomes evident when studying the statements made by the Public Prosecution and the legal casefiles of the ‘TikTok women’, but (state-owned) media also play a significant role in spreading these

gender ideas. Nashaat Eldehy addressed the issue of the ‘TikTok women’ on national television in his show *Bi-l-waraqah wa al-qalam* on TeN TV on April 18, 2020. A day later, the fragment was posted on TeN TV’s YouTube channel under the title *Eldehy warns for TikTok: “There are livestreams taking place from the bedrooms of our daughters, watch out”*¹. In the video Eldehy states that broadcasting platforms such as TikTok allow girls to livestream content from their bedrooms which could lead to online prostitution (Eldehy, 2020). Again, we see an entanglement between the public and the private: the ‘TikTok women’ are making things public from their bedrooms and therefore public authorities need to intervene in the private home. Eldehy calls upon the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, the National Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, the Minister of Communication Amr Talaat, and the Minister of Information Osama Heikal, to ban TikTok and similar apps in order “to protect our families, our daughters, and our honour” (Eldehy, 2020). However, as I have argued in a previous section, it is unlikely that the regime will actually block these platforms, since they play a crucial role in the regime’s actions of controlling and repressing citizens.

In addition to banning social media apps, Eldehy voices that measures should be taken against Haneen Hossam and other female influencers “to preserve the identity of the Egyptian family” (Eldehy, 2020). The social influence of Eldehy is crucial, since he is the CEO of state-owned television channel TeN TV and, according to Mada Masr, Eldehy was the initiator of the case against the ‘TikTok women’ (Tarek, 2020). A few days after Eldehy’s tirade on national television, Haneen Hossam was arrested. The language Eldehy uses shows precisely how sexist and heteronormative gender ideas play a vital role in the support for and enactment of the law: “livestreaming from [...] the bedrooms of our daughters”, “this is the death of morals”, “this is a call for legalized vice”, “she says turn on the camera, I mean, turn on the camera for whom?” (Eldehy, 2020). Women being able to record videos from their bedrooms is perceived as something that is extremely dangerous and is directly linked to their sexuality. Women become the preservers of the Egyptian family and hence of the Egyptian nation. Considering the impact and consequences this video had for the enactment of the law, this example illustrates how sociotechnical imaginaries informed by heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas impact state policies.

Another case in which these heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas are explicitly reflected is the case of Menna Abdel Aziz. The at the time seventeen-year-old social media influencer Menna Abdel Aziz went live on Instagram on May 22, 2020, where she reported,

¹ الديهي يحذر من تيك توك: "هناك بث مباشر من غرف نوم بناتنا خلوا بالكم" ¹

her face bruised and swollen, that she had been raped and abused by influencer Mazen Ibrahim and his friends. Instead of being offered help or protection as a sexual violence survivor, she faced several charges, including the charge of violating Egyptian family values. She was arrested on May 26, 2020, along with six others: her attackers. In a statement issued by the Public Prosecution on May 30, 2020, she is blamed for what happened to her:

“Their [her attackers] confessions reaffirmed that the aforementioned accused who committed crimes - of which she has acknowledged some - deserves to be punished, but because of her young age and her not yet reaching adulthood, she was driven by the harsh social conditions to which she was exposed - from the loss of shelter and family and the search for providing for a living - to falling into the traps of committing these crimes and to a very dangerous life together with the other accused who attacked her” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding Menna Abdel Aziz on Facebook, May 30, 2020, p. 1).

After being in prison for several days, Menna Abdel Aziz was forcefully placed into a shelter for hosting and protecting battered women, in which she spent 114 days in pretrial detention (EIPR, 2020). In a statement by the Public Prosecution on Facebook on June 9, 2020, her transfer to the battered women’s shelter of the Ministry of Social Solidarity was announced. However, in the statement she is still referred to as “the accused” (*al-mutahama*) and not as a victim or survivor. She was not allowed to leave the shelter, as she needed to “rehabilitate”. Where a shelter for battered women ultimately should be a place for women’s protection and empowerment, the Egyptian regime has appropriated this shelter in order to enforce the violence the women were supposed to be protected from. In the statement several reasons and circumstances are given which make it seem as if what has been done to Menna Abdel Aziz is her own fault and as if she could have avoided it if she were to behave differently:

“She was deceived by the fame she achieved in the specific virtual environment of social media which drove her into the hands of bad friends who took advantage of her easy submission, and her indifference and ignorance of her own rights, and her greed for what they offered her in terms of gifts and ways of living, and thus she became their victim” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding Menna Abdel Aziz on Facebook, June 9, 2020, p. 2).

Menna Abdel Aziz was publicly shamed and punished for speaking up against sexual violence on the internet and even accused of violating Egyptian family values. Being raped and speaking up about sexual violence becomes a violation of family values. The Public Prosecution portrays Menna Abdel Aziz as guilty of immoral behaviour and therefore she is herself responsible for her own rape instead of her attackers. The measures that have been taken by the Public Prosecution discourage other women to speak out about sexual violence and are clearly informed by heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas which ultimately lead to the silencing of women in general and sexual assault victims in particular.

The Cybercrime Law as Sexual Contract

“Women, their bodies and bodily passions, represent the ‘nature’ that must be controlled and transcended if social order is to be created and sustained. In the state of nature, social order in the family can be maintained only if the husband is master.” (Pateman, 1988, p. 100).

According to Pateman (1988), the fallacy of the social contract is that it assumes equal access for everyone. She shows how the story of the sexual contract can help us in understanding “the mechanisms through which men claim right of sexual access to women’s bodies and claim right of command over the use of women’s bodies” (Pateman, 1988, p. 17). The Egyptian anti-cybercrime law and its enactment in the case of the ‘TikTok women’ illustrate how such a mechanism functions in practice: how the cybercrime law serves as a social contract, and thus as a sexual contract.

In the various above-described cases we see a similar tactic being applied. All those who are being accused of violating Egyptian family values are women with a large number of followers on social media. The accusation is then followed by smear campaigns in which they are portrayed as criminals and prostitutes. The women’s presence on the internet is connected to their bodies and their sexuality and this is portrayed as a threat to the nation. The cybercrime law enables the regime to govern the women’s bodies and to charge them with the violation of Egyptian family values. The family is used by the law as an institution for patriarchy: heteronormative family values are sustained in order to keep patriarchal order (Pateman, 1988). In this way the cybercrime law serves as a tool to reproduce patriarchy.

In her essay *The freedom of the 'TikTok women' is our freedom*² in online journal Kohl Mārīnā Samīr makes a connection between gender (in particular the sexualisation of women's bodies), heteronormativity, and the law. According to Samīr, sexual violence is related to how sex is perceived in the "patriarchal heteronormative system" (Samīr, 2020). Sex is not seen as an act of pleasure, but as an act of the submission of women's bodies by men. Samīr writes:

"The institutions of patriarchy use our female bodies to impose dominance and power. Patriarchy makes our bodies a burden on us with all the assumptions and demarcated boundaries that we must maintain whenever we speak or walk in the street or even sit in our homes with our fathers and brothers" (Mārīnā Samīr in online journal Kohl, 2020).

The cybercrime law enables the state to extend its control over women's bodies. However, according to Samīr, in the case of the 'TikTok women' it is not only the state that is to blame, but also male influencers, media, and lawyers. She argues that even platforms such as YouTube should be held accountable, since these platforms profit from controversial content, such as the videos in which male influencers shame the 'TikTok women' (Samīr, 2020). The point Samīr makes is crucial, since patriarchy is a system which maintains women's exploitation and oppression and which functions on multiple levels and is upheld through all kinds of institutions which are not all state institutions (Mies, 1986).

Patriarchy preceded capitalism, but in the system of capitalism new manifestations of patriarchal structures and ideologies emerged (Mies, 1986). Patriarchy is an essential technology of subordination for capitalism, since it creates gendered subjects whose bodies and reproductive labour are extracted in the service of capital. Taking away the rights of women serves to sustain capitalism, since women need to be suppressed in order for them to do unpaid labour. This structure of society and everyday life incorporates the patriarchal conception of sexual difference as political difference (Pateman, 1988, p. 34). According to Mies (1986), cases of subordination cannot be understood without referencing to exploitation. Capitalism cannot function without patriarchy, since the goal of capitalism (the never-ending process of capital accumulation) "cannot be achieved unless patriarchal man-woman relations are maintained or newly created" (Mies, 1986, p. 38).

The cases of Haneen Hossam and Mawada El-Adham were handled in the Cairo Economic Court, which implies that their cases are connected to financial matters. The state

² حرّية نساء "التيك توك" من حرّيتنا

repeatedly connects the fact that the ‘TikTok women’ earn their own money through the internet to their sexuality:

“The investigations show that the purpose of the video was to seduce the youth and to incite prostitution and sinfulness among girls and young men with the aim of achieving financial benefits” (Segment of the judgement of the case regarding Haneen Hossam at the Cairo Economic Court on 27 July 2020, p. 2, via Global Freedom of Expression).

“The Public Prosecution watched the clips that were published on the aforementioned sites and interrogated the two of them. One of them admitted that they had created a channel on a social media site to make profit from it by publishing clips with titles containing sexual connotations and profanity in order to raise their viewer ratings and thus to profit from it, while the other acknowledged her habit of practicing prostitution making use of social media sites and exploiting the fame she achieved on them” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a statement regarding the case of Sherry Hanem and Nora Hesham on Facebook, June 12, 2020).

The ‘TikTok women’ are getting paid for what otherwise would be seen in social reproduction theory as non-work. This could be seen as an attack on the Egyptian implementation of patriarchal capitalism because non-work should sustain the productive work of the husband. The ‘TikTok women’ who make their own money on the internet are thus a threat to the capitalist patriarchal order. The statement by the Public Prosecution sexualizes the women’s actions by making a connection between money making and sexuality in terms of prostitution. In this way the charge of violating Egyptian family values is used to criminalize the women using their bodies as a way of earning a living through the internet and accordingly the cybercrime law functions as a sexual contract sustaining capitalist patriarchy.

Sexual Nationalism: Women’s Sexuality and the State

In the previous sections I have argued that the cybercrime law functions as a tool for the repression of Egyptian citizens and concurrently as a tool to reproduce patriarchy. A question that might arise is the following: is the regime controlling cyberspace making use of women’s bodies or is the regime controlling women’s bodies making use of cyberspace? Drawing on the concept of sexual nationalism, I argue that both are simultaneously true. My goal is not to entirely disentangle the two notions but rather to distil the dynamics of the two mechanisms at

play and to reiterate that both reinforce each other. Nationalism is a heterosexual and patriarchal project that is secured through the domination of women by men (Hossain, 2019). The case of the ‘TikTok women’ brings into view a politics of nationalism that is secured via the control of women’s bodies in which “the violation of their bodily and sexual integrity is considered an onslaught on the nation” (Hossain, 2019, p. 640).

In the current era of internet use, nationalist symbols and ideology are continually invented and reinvented in cyberspace (Fuchs, 2019). The statements by the Public Prosecution are spread via social media platforms and as such the internet facilitates sexual nationalism. Nationalism claims that there is unity between nation-state members based on culture or society and this unity is defined against outsiders or enemies of the nation. The following social media statement by the Egyptian Public Prosecution perfectly captures this nationalist sentiment:

“It has been established that a fourth border has been introduced to our country, different from the borders of the land, the air and the sea, which inevitably leads us to drastic changes in the policy of legislation and administrative and judicial regulations. We are facing new cyber borders in the domain of websites that need full deterrence and wariness in guarding them, like any other border. The Public Prosecution assures that this guarding is not a call to surveil people or their private lives, nor does it overbear or restrict their freedoms, nor is it a call to reaction and rejection of these developments. Rather, it hampers phenomena that have evil forces behind them, which seek to corrupt our society and its values and principles, and to steal its innocence and purity, and seek to infiltrate it taking advantage of its conditions and distress to push its youth and adults to perdition with crimes whose foundations are completed in the sphere of a new virtual electronic world. In this way people in general and the youth in particular are being exploited. It promotes immorality while it calls for entertainment and amusement and it traps girls into practicing prostitution by exploiting their weakness and social distress” (The Egyptian Public Prosecution in a general statement on Facebook, May 2, 2020).

In this statement cyberspace is portrayed as a new border that has to be protected and for this protection new legislation is required. The statement was issued on May 2, 2020, shortly after Haneen Hossam was arrested, and the same text was included in a larger statement about the arrest of Hossam on April 23, 2020. The cybercrime law is already in place since August 2018 and therefore it can be argued that the statement is used specifically to legitimate the arrest of Hossam and the other ‘TikTok women’.

The supposed threat to the nation that has arisen in cyberspace is according to the statement caused by “phenomena that have evil forces behind them”. In contrast to these “evil forces [...] which seek to corrupt [the] society and its values and principles”, the nation itself is portrayed as innocent and pure. Innocence is not only a moral concept but also a political one since it promises a space of purity, and precisely because of its emptiness the concept is often used to reproduce a politics of protection (Ticktin, 2017). By doing so, a dichotomy is created between the good and the bad. George L. Mosse (1988) has examined the relation between the history of nationalism and the history of respectability. He argues that a distinction between normal and abnormal behaviour must be made for nationalism to function and that this is inseparable with gender since what is considered normal and abnormal behaviour differs for women and men.

The case of the ‘TikTok women’ shows how nationalism affects women differently from men. This becomes explicitly visible in the above statement by the Egyptian Public Prosecution as it imagines the nation to be in danger because cyberspace “traps girls into practicing prostitution”. The purity and innocence of the nation are, as this imaginary goes, threatened in the era of cyberspace by forces “which seek to corrupt [the Egyptian] society and its values and principles”. In this sense, women become the preservers of the innocence and purity of the nation and the embodiment of its respectability (Mosse, 1988). The cybercrime law functions to control women’s bodies and the control of women’s bodies serves the patriarchal nationalist project. Thus, to answer the question posed at the beginning of this section: cyberspace is controlled making use of women’s bodies and simultaneously women’s bodies are controlled making use of cyberspace. Approaching the issue through the lens of sexual nationalism reveals how the internet is used by the regime as a technology to support the nationalist project, and since this project is a patriarchal project, this inevitably leads to the control of women’s bodies.

Conclusion and Discussion

The case of the ‘TikTok women’ provides an instructive starting point for exploring the interrelation between gender, nationalism, and cyberspace. By analysing the enactment of Egypt’s 2018 Anti-Cybercrime Law, this thesis has shown how the cybercrime law rearticulates the legal enactment of gender. The analysis has laid bare how heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas are crucial in both the articulation of the issue and the enactment of the cybercrime law. The law, although appearing not to make a distinction between women and men, functions to legitimate patriarchal domination. I have shown how the authoritarian regime tries to control cyberspace making use of very old patriarchal mechanisms in order to govern this new space.

The concise overview of recent Egyptian history has allowed me to demonstrate how the law is embedded in an infrastructure of measures taken by the authoritarian regime to control offline and online spaces. According to the state’s narrative the law was introduced to track down and incarcerate terrorists who use the internet for executing their attacks. However, in the context of other repressive actions of the regime taken in recent years it becomes evident that this is just a cover-up and that the law is yet another tool for repression. The law serves to control what is able to circulate on the internet by criminalizing internet use and enables the regime to enter, and control what happens in, the home. Herein lies a paradox: on the internet a space emerges in which more freedom is possible, but this ultimately leads to an extension of the control of the state over people’s lives and thus in less freedom.

Central to this thesis is article 25 of the cybercrime law, which penalizes the violation of Egyptian family values. Until now, only women have been charged based on this legal article. In the state’s discourse surrounding the issue, women’s presence on the internet is illustrated as a threat to social order. Making use of the concept of sociotechnical imaginaries I have highlighted how a complex interplay between the social and technology emerges which affects how the issue is articulated and enacted. This imaginary is, as I have shown in the analysis, inextricably linked to heteronormative and patriarchal gender ideas. Drawing on Pateman’s (1988) sexual contract I have demonstrated how the cybercrime law functions as a tool to reproduce patriarchy. The ‘TikTok women’ generate an independent living through the internet, thereby threatening capitalist patriarchy. The case of the ‘TikTok women’ brings into view a politics of sexual nationalism facilitated by cyberspace. In conclusion, the critical discourse analysis of the enactment of the cybercrime law reveals how the control of cyberspace and the control of women’s bodies are interrelated mechanisms of domination which reinforce each other.

In this thesis, I have focused on a highly specific case in the contemporary Egyptian context of patriarchal repression. I have thereby demonstrated how new technologies embed, and are embedded in, already existing practices of the state. This research shows that the repressive and gendered use of technology is part of a contingent historical trajectory. Future research could further consider the interrelation between gender, nationalism, and cyberspace and explore how the internet is used for patriarchal and capitalist control in other contexts. Throughout the analysis, I have shown that, in spite of increased state suppression, people keep resisting and fighting state violence. Because patriarchy is sustained by laws that institutionalize the legal, economic, and sexual subordination of women, it can also be ended by deinstitutionalizing these laws (Lerner, 1986).

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Appendix: Checklist Ethical and Privacy Aspect of Research

PART I: General Information

Project title: *EUR Staff project - Public Issues*

Name, email of student: *Janna Ondracek, 583756jo@eur.nl*

Name, email of supervisor: *Willem Schinkel, schinkel@essb.eur.nl*

Start date and duration: *14 December 2020 – 20 June 2021*

Is the research study conducted within DPAS **YES - ~~NO~~**

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: Human Subjects

1. Does your research involve human participants. **~~YES~~ - NO**

If 'NO': skip to part V.

Part V: Data Storage and Backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

On my personal computer and on an external hard disk.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I am

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Weekly

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

The sources that I will use are publicly available and so are the names of the people involved in the case. It will therefore not be necessary for me to anonymize the data.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: Signature

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: *Janna Ondracek*

Name (EUR) supervisor: *Willem Schinkel*

Date: *June 20, 2021*

Date: *June 20, 2021*