MAHITAB EZZ EL DIN is a researcher in Media and Communication Studies at Örebro University.

Cultural identities are relevant to our interconnected globalized world. The so-called 'identity crisis' around who we are in this global world, and within the global transformation, is a dominant characteristic of late modernity. In this context, the 'crisis' revolves around a binary opposition and a tension between "essentialist" and "non-essentialist" forms of cultural identity, which appear to be in conflict. One can say that media reporting contributes to the creation of essentialist identities when reproducing stereotypical representations and constructing the Other as a homogenous group.

The author's main ambition with this study is to contribute to existing literature on 'us' and 'them' dichotomies in relation to Eastern/Western identities. The project contributes theoretically to postcolonial theories by deconstructing the conventional understanding of the Oriental and Occidental dichotomy in which the Other is mainly constructed in terms of differences in geography, gender or values. Mahitab Ezz El Din revisits the theories and identifies different types of Others in Arab and Western media discourse. She sees that the idea of two monolithic 'opposite' Others clashing with each other is not a suitable approach to studying the Other in a globalized world. An exclusive focus on the 'opposite' Other only enhances Huntington's arguments about the "Clash of Civilizations." Instead, it is important in the current global world to deconstruct this binary opposition and to examine the whole spectrum of identity constructions that appear in discourses. Doing so offers a more fluid perspective for analysing mediated intercultural conflicts.

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