

## On Performing Arab New Media

I am interested in the cultural production and want to contextualize the debates that happen on web platforms and that will not appear on the pages of *Al-Ahram*, such as As'ad AbuKhalil's blog, "The Angry Arab News Service," and poet Mohja Kahf's "Sex and the Umma." How do these public forums relate to social movements like the Kifaya party in Egypt or the March 14th coalition in Lebanon? Despite the numerous sourcing and citations of them in academic papers, advertisements, casual conversation, journalism, and the workplace, online platforms and digital media are often seen as quotidian, and therefore, are under-examined and overlooked.

Working within a framework for web applications as 1) digital; 2) reframing; and 3) (dis)embodying, how do we understand the formation of subjectivity in Middle Eastern societies through the creative process of object production, specifically on issues like borders, urban architecture, and space? And how does what emerges from that formation relate to social movements in the Middle East like the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt or the March 14th Coalition in Lebanon?

This investigation will unpack what it means for web applications and art to disembody, reframe, and perform digitally. And then we will consider how these acts affect the formation and proliferation of (inter)subjectivity.

The examination will then locate the discussion around subjectivity in the context of the Middle East. What are the conversations and interventions around conflict in the Middle East over land, borders, and the relationship between person and her physical space in social constructs?

Compiling research on the body of scholarship and artwork that engage with these issues, this research aims to question the relationship between newly formed subjectivity and any change in agency. Could one consider newly emerging social movements and grassroots organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood, or the March 14<sup>th</sup> Coalition in Lebanon or even the International Solidarity Organization as a product of this sort of agency.

Ultimately, this paper hopes to understand how the framework of a creative act informs the creation of agency among Arabs in new ways that allows for new social networking and movements to occur in the region and in diaspora.

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