

**"NEW MEDIA CONFIGURATIONS - CHANGING SOCIETIES? CURRENT RESEARCH
PERSPECTIVES ON SOUTH ASIA, SOUTHEAST ASIA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA"**

Panel 5: Converging Media – Changing Practices: What is new about New Media?

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„Egyptian Comics on Facebook as a New Type of Citizen Media and Political Activism“

Abstract

Egyptians are well known in the Arab region with their sense of humor. They are fond of making fun of their crises and problems. They are experts in creating jokes about everything in life especially their problems. Their jokes are influenced by new media and technology. They create comics using Photoshop and different computers' programs. Then, they publish the comics on Facebook. In these last years especially after Egyptian revolution in 25 January 2011, citizens are creating pages on facebook to post and share comics created by any facebook user who sends comics to the admin of the page. These pages and comics have a great popularity and success among Egyptians besides their impact on citizen media and political awareness and participation. The comics come from citizens to citizens. The researcher analyzed 100 comics from "asa7be" which is the most popular comics' page on facebook among Egyptians. The page has created a main character to appear in all the comics. Also, the research study conducted a survey. The sample contains 100 Egyptian university students. The results show that most of the comics are about the government policies, president speeches, Muslim brotherhood leaders 'views and activities, political events, besides economic, social and political crises. The majority of the comics use Egyptian slang. All of them are colored and mainly use black, white, red and blue colors. When problems and crises increase in the Egyptian society, the comics increase on facebook. Most of the university students prefer these comics more than the ones that are created by professionals and published in newspapers and magazines. Interactivity with all its types and forms are found with these comics and pages. Through facebook comics, university students know the latest news and events even before knowing them from traditional media. The comics help the young generations to understand the impact of the government policies on their daily lives and on Egypt future. Asa7be page form students' opinions about political events. Moreover, comics encourage the young generations to talk about politics and express their political views in public and with friends. Furthermore, the comics are ways to express their anger and release their tension from political crises and situations in Egypt these days. Facebook comics urge the youth to participate in protests and demonstrations.