

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

**Keynote lecture**

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***"Media-Capitalism: A Historical Perspective on Media and Society in Early Twentieth Century Egypt"***

**Abstract**

Twentieth Century Egypt.

The popular culture of early twentieth century Egypt did more than entertain—it created a nation. Songs, jokes, and satire, comedic sketches, plays, and poetry, all provided an opportunity for discussion and debate about national identity and an outlet for resistance to British and elite authority. This presentation will examine how, popular media and culture provided ordinary Egyptians with a framework to construct and negotiate a modern national identity.

My presentation will shift the typical focus of study away from the intellectual elite to understand the rapid politicization of the growing literate middle classes while bringing the semi-literate and illiterate urban masses more fully into the historical narrative. I will introduce the concept of “media-capitalism,” which expands the analysis of nationalism beyond print alone to incorporate sound, audiovisual and performance media. It was through these various media that a collective camaraderie crossing class lines was formed and, as this presentation will uncover, an Egyptian national identity emerged.