

A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of the Front Cover in Selected Arab Women Magazines

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines the front cover of selected Arab women magazines from a multimodal critical discourse analysis perspective. Tools of analysis found in Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) and Machine & Mayr (2012) are used to identify the thematic and semiotic aspects in 30 front covers from Zahrat Al Khaleej زهرة الخليج and Sayidaty سيدتي . It shows that these magazines are relatively similar in the number of headlines and the kinds of visual elements, but they are considerably different in headlines' content and themes. The magazines, ideologically, look for creating modality to convince readers and viewers with the covers' stories. Women are presented individually with headlines carrying their names and comments. Visuals, like colour, font, shot, distance and others are used relatively different to convey a particular discourse that is completely paradoxical to the social norms, the actual image of Arab women and their problems, needs and aspirations.

KEYWORDS: Arab Women Magazines, Front Cover, Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, Sayidaty, Zahrat Al Khaleej.

INTRODUCTION

The Iraqi society is different from other civilized societies anthropologically and ethnographically due to its unique sectarian mixture and well-known cultural heritage, but today there are tentative similarities recently derived from the increasing influence of digital technology and social media. Such issue has its own direct realization in the basic anthropological, psychological and sociological trends among Iraqis. No one can deny, even relatively, the literary and scientific influence of the Iraqi scholars, in the different perspectives, on the other Arab countries and the World. Despite the sequent wars involved in, Iraq still a place for reading and writing. The 1970s and the 1980s witnessed an increasing motivation towards reading and circulating local and Arab magazines. Among the most circulated and motivated ones are those related to women

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interests. On the other hand, the 1990s witnessed dramatic decline in circulating and obtaining such magazines due to the economical embargo imposed after Kuwait invasion (1990) and the low rates of incomes for the majority of Iraqi families, where such entertainment magazines were totally rejected as an accepted luxury.

The Iraq War 2003 has moved the country and its people into dramatic orientations; among these are the open and easily-accessed resources to new lifestyles, fashion, entertainment, digital technology, etc. Women interests have anthropologically and culturally motivated by printed and online media. Their interests towards accessories increased dramatically where new lifestyles are seen in home, school, malls, etc. Besides, returning to obtain women interest magazines has increased dramatically where old magazines re-entered the Iraqi life, and new ones find their place easily. The current study is a content visual analysis of the front covers of the most circulated women interest magazines among Iraqi women. The analysis will reveal these linguistic and semiotic aspects characterizing these magazines.

New Media and New Ideology

The relevant literature of Arab media simply confirms that it was under the control of state authorities, the most common ones are the Egyptian and Saud. Yushi (2012) studies this and confirms that

(u)ntil the 1990s, the media in Arab countries were regarded as the propaganda tools by which their authoritarian regimes maintained their power. However, after the appearance of satellite television in the 1990s, some believed strongly that this new media could nullify state control over the media and become a sweeping power for democracy, ... As a result, many scholars started to shed light on the media's role in Arab democratization and its impacts on Arab politics (p.47).

Such democratization of media has been a very influential tool implemented by the authoritarian regimes. It is still existent. But the new century has turned the propaganda from state to citizen. To coup with recent trends in digital technology (as satellite services) and social media (like facebook and instagram), every smart phone is the key to your own world. Such trends in media are accompanied, of course, by new ideological motivation. The Arab world has seen dramatic changes in all people's perspectives; these started by the decline of a number of dictators

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in the Arab Spring or Fall, new version of mess democracy, new ways of importing the Western lifestyles. Besides, the availability of technology has become cheaper and easier due to the increasing spread of the Chinese products in Iraq and many Arab countries.

These factors, and many others, have led people to be under the dramatic changes in their lives. These changes in turn become so solid in the youth personality than the elder since age is a very ethnographic variable in such sociological situations. Such issue is represented clearly in Mona Al-Mari statement, Chairperson of Dubai Press Club, who states that digital technology has led large sections of passive people, of course passive consumers, to be active creators of media content. This is the form of citizen journalism, represented partially by mobile internet and mobile television which allows the consumers to be in direct connection to their content anytime and anywhere. *Arab Media Outlook* 2008-2012, 2009-2013, 2011-2015 published by Dubai Press Club state this clearly. Besides, the findings of Arab Media Social Report (2015) prepared by TNS are similar. Such reports and many other state that the ideological media come to address the Arab family differently: sport channels for men, cartoon channels for children, cooking and fashions for women. Women proved to be much influenced than others, especially beauty, entertainment, cooking, celebrities news, and the like, are their everyday stories.

METHODOLOGY

During the last twenty years, the issue of representing Muslim women as uneducated, veiled, and many other negative stereotypes, is heavily repeated and represented in the Western media (see Marranci, 2008). On the contrary, Arab women magazines try to depict a totally different image of Arab women and they try to identify this particular discourse through different multimodal techniques. The most contradicting point here is that the majority of these famous and dominating magazines are published by Saudi authorities; and all of us know their Wahhabi doctrines and principles of treating women (see Varisco, 2005). Therefore, studying these magazines will reflect their contradictory ideology in presenting Arab women and their discourse.

The starting point for the present study began with our female students at the university level, where a questionnaire was piloted on issues related to the influence of internet and new media on their lifestyle; they mentioned that the most searched magazines are زهرة الخليج (Zahrat Al Khaleej/ The Flower of the gulf), and سيدتي (Sayidaty/ My Lady). Reasons

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of entertainment, celebrities, beauty, fashion, and makeup were more dominating than those of health, self-development, family affairs, and cooking. They have also confirmed that the front cover is the most attractive page in these magazines. 15 covers for each magazine from Google images are selected to be the data of the analysis.

Tools used in Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA), particularly those cited in Machin&Mayr (2012) and Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) are used to “*explore the way that individual elements in images, such as objects and settings, are able to signify discourses in ways that might not be obvious at an initial viewing*” (Machin&Mayr 2012,p.31). Machin (2016, p.323) explains the reasons behind the need of such tool of analysis. His main argument is the increasing research in visual communication. His point of view is that:

...it (visual communication) also represents a growing awareness of the fragmentation of approaches to the visual, that there is need to share knowledge of visual communication, to engage in cross-disciplinary dialogue.

Such shared knowledge leads scholars to hold linguistic perspectives, social semiotic perspectives, and others like the sociological ones together, of course with ideological purposes. This has already confirmed by Kress (201, p.104) who states that modes of communication are “*of equal significance in representation and communication, as all modes have potential for meaning*”.

Machin&Mayr (p.49-56) mention a sequence of specific questions related to the visual semiotic choices “*at the way the images contribute to meaning making*” (p,49). These questions are related to iconography, attributes, setting, and salience. For iconography, based on Roland Barthes’ (1973) semiotic theory but with reverse switching, images connate and denote. That is, questions related to images’ connotation overweigh their ones of denotation. Thus, Machin&Mayr(p.50) cite the following questions for images’ connotation:

What ideas and values are communicated through what is represented, and through the way in which it is represented? Or, from the point of view of the image maker: How do I get general or abstract ideas across? How do I get across what events, places, things mean (italic is origin)? What concrete signifier can I use to get a particular abstract idea across?

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These questions, of course supporting the authors' conclusion, state that "there is no neutral denotation, and that all images connote something for us"(p.50).

The second group of questions are related to "the ideas and values communicated by objects and how they are represented"(p.51). The basic question is "(w)hat discourses do they communicate?"(ibid.). For setting, the questions are related to these settings used in communicating ideas, in connoting discourses, identities and actions. For achieving salience, a number of principles are mentioned, namely, postal cultural symbols, size, colour, tone, focus, foregrounding, and overlapping. These principles are of relative importance, i.e., they are used to "create hierarchies of salience"(p.54).

The present study is behind two questions: what is the content analysis of these covers' headlines? And what is the visual and semiotic resources of these covers, and how they are implemented to stereotype the Arab women? The selected front covers are numbered for the benefit of reference (see Appendix). ZK and SA are used as abbreviations for these magazines.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSTION

The headlines of these 30 front covers revealed different categories which can be summed up in the following table.

Table: Categories of Front Cover Headline

Categories	ZK		SA		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Celebrities	53	40.4	44	34.1	97	37.7
Social issues	18	14.1	28	21.7	46	17.9
Conjugal affairs	17	13.3	7	5.4	24	9.6
Health	12	9.3	7	5.4	19	7.6
Advertisements	6	4.4	7	5.4	13	5.2
Activists, writers and politicians	6	4.4	6	4.8	12	4.7
Fashion (accessories/ makeup/ beauty)	5	3.6	6	4.8	11	4.3
TV and cinema	2	1.5	6	4.8	8	3.1
Men affairs	2	1.5	4	3.1	6	2.3
Contests	2	1.5	3	2.3	5	1.9
Fitness and diet	1	1.2	3	2.3	4	1.5
Relationship	1	1.2	2	1.5	3	1.1
Cooking	1	1.2	1	0.7	2	0.7
Horoscope	1	1.2	1	0.7	2	0.7
Human development	1	1.2	3	2.3	4	1.5
Polls	---	---	1	0.7	1	0.3
Total	128	25.9	129	26.1	257	

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This simplified quantitative analysis shows that ZK and SA are similar in headline numbers; and the highest rate of cover headlines are those of celebrities, social issues, activists/ writers/ politicians, advertisements and TV/cinema. Less instances are reported in polls, motherhood, human development, horoscope and cooking. For the number of categories, 15 are reported in ZK and 16 in SA. The theme of 'celebrities' is found the most repeated one, where 97 instances in the two magazines. Some other content categories that are supposed to be equally, if no more, interesting and useful to the target audience (like fashion, diet and fitness, beauty, makeup, health, cooking and children) have strikingly much lower or even rare occurrences. Rather than trying to make an exhaustive analysis to all the covers one by one, it is better, for the sake of limitation, to pinpoint the most common themes and how they are linguistically and visually conveyed.

Zahrat Al Khaleej (ZK)

The logo of ZK has a fixed position on the top right side of each cover page. It takes the form of the Arabic word (زهرة Flower) printed with red font that has white slim edges; the whole word is inside a light grey rectangular frame. The dots of the Arabic letters(ز and ة) exceed the upper side of the frame and the word (الخليج the gulf) is printed with slim black font inside the circle of the letter (ة). The English transliteration of the title, ZAH RAT AL KHA LEEJ, is printed with a small black font above the grey frame. The issue number and date are printed in Arabic and English with small black font within the lower side of the frame. On each cover we find an image of the model(s) and one or two secondary small size pictures that have different frame and settings. On each cover there is only one main female model, except ZK4 (a group of two actresses and one actor), ZK13 (a group of two actresses and two actors) and ZK14 (a female singer and her baby boy). The main models are famous celebrities from different Arab countries: (five female Lebanese singers and TV show hosts, five Egyptians actresses, one Iraqi singer, one Tunisian singer, one Yemeni singer, one Kuwaiti actress, one Algerian actress and two Syrian actors) as well as from Turkey (two actresses and one actor). The main models are often aligned to the left of the pages. They are positioned at medium distances; except on ZK4 and ZK13 on which the models are positioned at far distances so that the whole of the groups be fully included inside the pages. The secondary pictures are all situated below the logo at a

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middle height or near the lower edge of the page. They are always accompanied by an anchorage headline, and they seem more naturalistic than the digitally edited images of the main models who take the poses specially for the magazine's photo session. The models in the secondary pictures are also celebrities from different Arab countries and we find heavy presence of male celebrities in these picture. The models in the secondary pictures are positioned at close and medium distances from the viewers, yet not all of them are looking directly to the camera. As for the headlines, most of them are arranged in a column on the right side of the page, the few others are either on the left side or printed over the main models' images. The colours used with the headlines are variant, yet, we find the black, red and blue colour present at most of the pages.

ZK thematic and visual analysis

The readers are thirsty to gossips and scandals

It is noticeable that most of the headlines of celebrities focus on the conflicts and tensed relationships inside the show business medium. The headlines are presented as celebrities' opinions, secrets revelation, gossips and scandals. This style illustrates the writers' and the designers' assumption that this type and style of headlines sell best. The high circulation of ZK also reflects the readers' interests in this side of their roll models' lives. Most of these headlines often take the form of direct statements made by the celebrities themselves who take defensive stances against some of their colleagues, as in the following examples:

ميس حمدان: كاظم الساهر و أصالة لن يورطاني

MeisHamdan: KadumAlsaher and Asala will not involve me (ZK3)

منى أبو حمزة: هكذا أصبحت "حديث البلد"

Muna Abu Hamza: this is how I became the "downtown talk" (ZK1)

"وصلة رده" بين كلام أصالة و رده رغبة

"An intermezzo of verbal clashes" between the speech of Asala and the answer of Raghda (ZK12)

The word (رده) is an Egyptian slang expression that refers to the indecent verbal quarrels usually between vulgar women in poor and heavily popular areas. The word is also used in Iraqi slang to refer to a type of tumultuous dancing performed by Iraqi gypsy women especially in depraved orgies. In this example, the writer employs these connotations of (وصلة رده) to ridicule the uncivilized behaviour of two female Arab Syrian celebrities: Asala (a Syrian singer) and Raghda (a Syrian actress). These two

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women are known for their different political stances that make the former offend the Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad, and the later defend and praise him in occasional public verbal clashes on the media. The headline is printed in pink under one of the two secondary small-sized pictures in which Asala is shown in a close up, confrontational and proud pose. The choice of the wording of this headline, its girlish colour and the small font size which make it less prominent than other headlines on the cover connote the absurdity of the situation. Even the choice of Asala rather than her rival to appear in the picture signifies the designer's intention to ridicule political opinions over the Syrian regime whose ideology is disapproved by the UAE government to which the publisher of ZK stands up.

Glamorous and sexy appearance is a point of strength

The following headlines ZK5, 6 and 11 accompany the pictures of the main models on three covers. They reflect the tone of power and confidence with which the three celebrities are speaking.

شذى حسون: كسبت القضية و أطمح في نجومية أحلام

ShathaHasson: I won the case and I am looking towards Ahlam's stardom (ZK5)

The headline of ShathaHasson is not the most prominent one in terms of its colour and font size on ZK5, yet its layout is designed in a way that attracts the readers' eyes immediately. It is positioned where the model's hip is and printed in white that contrasts with the deep blue shades on her dress which are made by the way she stands and the side source of light which seems to be focused from above her. The model herself appears with long wavy dark brown hair, wearing a tight sleeveless bright and fully saturated blue dress. She stands giving her right side to the viewer while twisting her slim torso slightly to the white background and turning her head 90 degrees to the right to gaze directly towards the viewer from above her right shoulder without smiling. Her bare right arm and the left thigh are slightly pushed forwards, and her hip protrudes in an exaggerated pose backwards. This sexy posture and outfit that reveals the details of her body also reinforce the theme of her strength and ambitions that could be reached by having sexy appearance.

أمل العوضي: عريسان سعودياني في انتظاري و هذا هو شرطي

AmalAlawadhy: two Saudi suitors are waiting for me and this is my condition (ZK6)

The idea of Saudi suitors asking for a beautiful celebrity hand connote their wealth and the charm that deserves this wealth. Several famous Arab

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female celebrities who have been known for their tempting beauty have married rich Saudi businessmen and princes. Here in this example, the model shows off her glamour by publicly stating that she is desired by two Saudi men, and further, that she has her own condition to accept. This example appears on the cover of an issue that celebrates the Valentine's day. The theme of love is conveyed through the attractive bright red colour of the model's dress, lipstick, manicure, the stone of her ring and the flowers bouquet. The headline is printed in white where the hypogastric area of her body is. This positioning is deliberately chosen to attract the readers' eyes to a very sexy area in women's body. Alawadhy does not look at the viewer but instead, she delicately lowers her sight to look at the small bouquet that she holds in her right hand while her left hand softly touches the side tress of her black hair.

Women make an atmosphere of menace in the society

The majority of the cover headlines belonging to the category of social issues are visually and linguistically designed to present a broad spectrum of women in an undesirable image, as in ZK3, 10, 13 and 14:

زواج العازب بالمطلقة أو الأرملة لم لا؟

A single man marries a divorcee or a widow. Why not? (ZK3)

المطلقات المتمردات قنابل موقوتة

Rebellious divorced women are time bombs.(ZK10)

In ZK3, the writer puts in his mind the customary social scene when a young Arab single man decides to get married, he is socially and traditionally obliged to look for a younger single bride who has not experienced marriage before. The writer in this headline ironically tries to justify the widows and divorced women in an afterthought rhetorical question which is not intended to seek any solution but to highlight the undesirability of these women as unfamiliar or even unaccepted option to a man who is marrying for the first time. This meaning is also visually communicated by the font size and the colour of the words "why not?" which are written in a separate line, slightly bigger than the other words of the headline and in a red colour which connotes a socially unfavourable idea that is dangerous to be considered. Likewise, the red colour is also employed to give a similar connotation in other headlines. In ZK10, "time bombs" is used as a metaphor to portray women who got divorced because of their "rebellious" attitude against the domestic life or the social traditions that abide them to blindly obey their husbands. The headline shows them as malevolent vengeful individuals in the society who are ready to destroy

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everything. This meaning is also conveyed visually by the red colour of the words "time bomb" which connote danger.

Wives should be submissive to their husbands

It is natural in a male-dominated culture as in the Arab societies that we find the concept of the superiority of men over women in all aspects of life. It is noticeable that most of ZK articles concerning marital life highlight the problems and suffering of Arab wives without suggesting really practical solutions. The headlines in ZK1, 3, 2, 9, 12 and 14 present the conjugal issues in the form of rhetorical questions which presuppose the submissiveness of wives or depict them as the troublesome partner.

المرأة العربية هل هي صانعة قرار في بيتها ؟

Is the Arab woman a decision maker in her home? (ZK1)

ZK1 example is the headline of an article revealing the results of a poll conducted by ZK April, 2010. The poll asked 100 Arab women of different backgrounds and occupations questions about their leverage on decision making inside their homes. The results illustrate that women are still marginalized despite all the great achievements and the high statuses many female figures occupy in the executive and legislative fields, politics, and some other posts which have for long times been confined to men like aviation and judiciary. A considerable ration of women is still suffering from being considered unqualified to make many crucial decisions relating to their homes, families and even their personal lives. This situation of Arab women is conveyed visually in the headline by the use of the blue colour with the phrase "the Arab woman". The colour depicts the Arab woman as reserved, quiet and a peaceful person who does not draw attention to herself. Yet, the colour positively describes her as a reliable and a responsible person who can take control and make the right decision in difficult times.

إذا ضربك زوجك هل تسكتين؟

If your husband beats you, would you submit? (ZK2)

In the Arab male-dominated culture, it is believed that husbands have the right to beat their wives to rectify their behavior. In return, the favourable social image of a must-be servile and grateful wife is communicated through the choice of the blue colour of the font which has the meaning of peace, loyalty and submissiveness.

Arab women have negative personality traits

Like the headlines of celebrities, social and conjugal issues which focus on negative experiences or social aspects, it is also noticeable that all

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headlines belonging to the category of personality traits highlight certain negative characteristics in general such as blabbing, believing in misfortune, stinginess, exaggerated fear of envy, obsession with buying expensive brands and depression.

الرجال أيضا يثرثرون مع الحلاق

Men also blab with barbers.(ZK1)

نساء يرفضن العمل تحت قيادة امرأة .. لماذا؟

Some women refuse to work under the leadership of a woman .. Why?

(ZK11)

ذاكرة المرأة في دائرة الاتهام : انتقائية بامتياز

Women's memory is under accusation: distinctively selective. (ZK13)

Although the headline on ZK1 refers to men, the word (أيضاً/also) implicitly attributes this bad habit to women and presupposes it as a genuine trait in their personality. It is printed in light violet on the white background and with a relatively similar font size to the other headlines, so it is not made so prominent on the cover. However it is the only violet element within the whole frame of the page.

غيرة النساء: هل تعرف عمرا؟

Women jealousy: is it limited to a specific age?

On the cover page of ZK8, five of the eight headlines are printed in both magenta and black. The magenta colour is chosen to fulfil a textual function that is to link – and thus equally highlight- certain words which are printed in this colour with the magenta dress of the model who occupies the centre of the page, directly facing and gazing at the viewers. The words (غيرة النساء/women jealousy) are made equally eye catching as other attractive words in other headlines by being part of this (magenta) network. The colour itself gives the meaning of passion, power and energy of its main component.

Sayidaty (Sa)

SA front cover design is different from ZK in the positioning and the colour of the logo. Five of the selected covers have the logo centered on the top of the page, while the others are aligned slightly to the right. The logo is printed in an italicized bold Arabic font with the two dots of the Arabic letter (ت T) taking the shape of two hearts. The phrase (مجلة المرأة العربية / the magazine of the Arab woman) is printed in black or white inside the bold large font of the logo inside the thick edge of the letter (س —), while

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the Arabic transliterated word (Sayidaty) is printed inside the thick edge of the letter (Y ي). The colour of the logo and the issue number bar (which is aligned vertically to the right bottom edge of the page) changes in every issue to match the outfit of the female model (SA2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 12) or her lipstick (SA1, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 15). The headlines are arranged vertically on both sides of the page and they often overlap the figure of the model. The colours of the headlines are white and/or black in addition to a third colour that changes from one issue to another to match the variable colour of the logo. The celebrities on the covers are famous Lebanese (4 singers and one actress), Egyptian (five actresses), Tunisian (one actor and one actresses), Turkish (two actresses), Syrian (one actresses) and Kuwaiti (one actresses). The models are shown at medium and close distances from the viewer. SA designers do not use secondary photos inside the frame of the page except in SA10 and SA13. The backgrounds of the selected covers are plain and without details, and they tend to be white (SA2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 14, and 15) or of a light colour (SA1, 7, 13), or a transparent reflection of the same image of the model (SA9). The others have gradient shades of blue (SA5), violet (SA6) and brown (SA10 and12).

SA thematic and visual analysis

According to the types of categories of SA headlines, it is noticeable that SA and ZK readers have almost common interests. It is clear that the headlines of celebrities in SA also concentrate on their confessions, gossips, secrets, scandals and the negative relationships between them. This category in SA is characterized by a distinctive presence of Turkish celebrities headlines on ten covers (SA2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, and 15), five of which under a heading that says (Turk سىدنى التركىة My Turkish lady Turk). As for the social issues, 17 of the 28 headlines of this group deal with issues of Saudi society and Saudi women in particular, whereas the others address issues in Arab societies in general.

SA seems to be addressing Saudi women (in particular) positively

In spite of that SA is supposed to be directed to Arab women in general as its logo indicates (مجلة المرأة العربية the magazine of the Arab woman), it is noticeable that on every front cover there is at least one reference to Saudis, Saudi women or a social issue occurring somewhere in Saudi Arabia. By a simple calculation, it appears that 17 out of 29 headlines of social issues and 3 out of 7 ones of conjugal affairs literally contain words such as: Saudis, Saudi, Riyadh, Jeddah and the Eastern Region. A secondary picture of a Saudi male celebrity as in SA13 also could be there

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instead – as Saudi women do not usually appear on magazines' covers of any media platform without the black niqab. This reduction of the image of Arab women into the stereotyped image of the Saudi women has some ideological meaning that may reflect part of the Saudi desire to dominate and take over the leadership of the Islamic and Arab countries.

انجاز تاريخي لـ 21 امرأة سعودية سيدتي تتفرد بلقاءات خاصة مع فائزات المجالس البلدية

Historic achievement of 21 Saudi women: Sayidaty exclusive interviews with winners of municipal councils (SA1)

Describing the winning of 21 Saudi women in municipal councils as a historic achievement reveals the enormity of the almost unprecedented event in the Saudi society in which women rights to occupy administrative, judicial and political positions are prohibited. At the first glance, it seems that the designer wants to make part of this headline appear as the second most prominent element after the image of the model on the cover. The 6-line headline is positioned on a relatively wide and empty area of the background, with three of its lines overlapping the image of the model at the level of her left arm and breast. The first two lines (Historic achievement of 21 Saudi women) are printed in white, so there is no sharp contrast between the words and the light grey background. The remaining four lines, starting from the word (Sayidaty) are made more prominent than the first two lines by being printed in fully saturated burgundy that matches the colour of the logo and the shiny lipstick of the model and contrasts clearly with the background. The font type and size of the whole headline is different and bigger than the other headlines on the same page. However, only the phrase (Saudi woman) is printed in a font size remarkably smaller than the rest of the headline! This pattern of font size and colour variation in the headline, which puts the 21 women and their achievement out of the instant visual focus, indicates the designer's conscious or unconscious tendency to foreground only the magazine's positive attitude towards this event, without giving an equal focus to the verbal reference to these women. The image of the model does not reflect the image of the Saudi women at all. The appearance of the pregnant model is considered as indecent in a conservative and religious society that imposes on women to wear long loose dark capes and full niqab in public and in front of non-close relatives.

سعودية تبحث عن هويتها منذ 25 سنة

Saudi woman looking for her identity for 25 years

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فضيحة السيليكون تصيب السعوديات سيدتي تكشف عدد الحالات و أطباء و مسؤولون
يوضحون الحقائق

Silicon scandal hits Saudi (women): Sayidaty reveals number of cases, doctors and officials explain truth (SA7)

The colour of the headline in SA6 has a textual function that links it to two other highlighted headlines: one is the anchorage to the model's image, and the other gives beauty advice, printed in white and black inside a mustard yellow circle with the word (جمال beauty) being written in Arabic and English. The connection between these three headlines suggests the designer's wish to undermine the significance of this story by linking the identity and the ultimate interests of women to trivial celebrities' news and the obsession with the external beauty.

Knowing the context of the example on SA7 cover, we can say that the word (فضيحة Scandal) must be attributed to whoever manufactured, imported and marketed the product. It also seems that using this word has something with the magazine's intention to attract readership. The magazine here pretends to be addressing Saudi woman urgently by designing the headline to be the most prominent one in terms of its relatively huge font size and the red colour that matches the logo, the model's outfit and the flower she holds. The colour itself connotes danger, aggression and dominance that causes fear. The eye catching font size and colour are used only with the first part of the headline including the phrase "Saudi (women)", while the second part is printed in black and a font equal in size to other headlines on the page. The reference to Saudi women here is in the prominent part of the headline; unlike the previous example in which these words are dwarfed in spite of the positivity of the headline's context!

Readers should be more aware of outstanding critical social and health problems

It is noticeable that on each SA cover there is a particular headline that is printed in a bigger and thicker font than the other headlines and in a distinctive colour similar to that of the model's outfit as well as the logo. These headlines are written in an awareness raising and truth revealing tone without embedded presuppositions. The topics of these headlines are taboos to be dealt with so explicitly in conservative society that is ruled by strictly- religious and authoritarian laws.

نتائج زواج السعودي و الخليجية: أبناء بلا هوية

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Results of marriage between Saudi man and gulf woman: children without identity (SA2)

The headline on SA2 addresses a serious social problem that is of prohibiting the marriage of a Saudi citizen with a non-Saudi. Socially, such cases of marriage are inevitable since Saudi people is usually in a close contact with foreigners, and this is because of two main reasons. Firstly, Saudi Arabia opens its doors to foreign labour from different nationalities and grant them temporary and permanent residence. Secondly, Saudi Arabia has an active program of scholarships and it sends a considerable number of students abroad for several years; many of these students return with foreign spouses. Very few people can meet the imposed rigid conditions on such marriages and get official approval after long years of appealing, and the majority of the applications are rejected. In such cases, the foreign parents will be expelled and the children will not be given Saudi citizenship. As a result, those children will be deprived from their rights in education, healthcare and employment in the future. Furthermore, severe restrictions will be imposed on their travelling and movement even inside the country. A significant proportion of Saudi parents suffer from the dilemma of abandoning their children and wives by leaving them in another country, being obliged to leave their home country or degrading their children by keeping them live miserably in a country and a society that scorn stateless people. This headline is made the most foregrounded on SA2 cover by the bold and very huge font size of the words(children without identity). The headline is printed in white on the turquoise dress of the model as a background. The particular use of (Saudi man) and (Gulf woman) conveys a strong connotation that the Saudi women in similar cases are completely ignored and they must give up hope to get their children's rights, at least in the near future unless the government decides to amend its personal status and marriage laws. Choosing (Gulf woman) in particular communicates the idea that even women of any of the privileged rich Gulf countries, which are the closest to the Saudi society and culture, are unwelcome as Saudi citizens' wives. This message shuts the door on other Arab and even non-Arab women so they would not think of claiming their children's rights in case they marry a Saudi man. Visually, it is noticed that there is contradiction between the content of the headline and the model who is sitting almost cross-legged at a middle distance putting her right hand under her chin and cheek and gazing directly at the viewer in a calm and a gentle way without any trace of a smile on her face. Most of the readers who are interested in this kind of magazines, which bring them the

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latest news and pictures of celebrities know that the model, Abdulraziq has a daughter (Rotana) from her first husband who is a Saudi wealthy business man and her daughter is known to the public through her pictures and news on the social media. Rotana appears to be living a high life with her father and her Egyptian husband. In many interviews, Abdulrazeq has confirmed that her daughter has the Saudi citizenship. This contradiction between the headline and the personal life of the celebrity reflects the paradoxical situation and the biased policy the Saudi authorities adopt in dealing with the children of a non-Saudi parent. It is clear that the law does not apply equally to all such cases of marriage, and that there are particular individuals of the wealthy and ruling class who are above the law.

المغتصابات و القوانين الجائرة كيف تتعامل المجتمعات العربية مع فكرة تزويجهن

Raped women and unjust laws how do Arab societies address the idea of marrying them off (SA3)

الطالبة و الأستاذ جامعيات من 5 بلدان عربية يكشفن قصص الابتزاز و التحرش

(Female) student and (male) professor: university students from 5 Arab countries tell stories of blackmail and harassment

On SA3 and SA10, the designers intend to emphasize cases of rape and harassment as public opinion issues by maximizing the headlines size to appear as the biggest among the others and by using different colours and font types and sizes within each headline. The headline on SA3 consists of four lines and, as a technique to attract the readers, the first line is made of one word (المغتصابات Raped women) which is a good start to capture the eyes of those who look for scandals. This word is written in bold extra huge green font that matches the colour of the logo and the model's (Najawa Karam) dress as well as a green circle that surrounds another headline of beauty and fashion that is positioned at the level of the model's belly. The second line is written in black, smaller and slimmer font size and it consists of only three words (القوانين الجائرة and unjust laws). The third and fourth lines contain what really addresses the core of the problem but they are written in grey and in an even smaller font size that hardly shows any salience in relation to other elements of the whole picture. In order to attract the viewer's attention to the model's slim and fit body, the whole headline is situated close to and at the same level of the model's jutting hip. Karam herself appears in front of a white background at a middle distance holding her arms on her chest, leaning with her hips on the arm of a white sofa and looking directly toward the viewer with a mild smile on her face.

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The green colour of the word (المغتصابات raped women) which is a positive, peaceful and optimistic colour that gives the sense of well-being contradicts with the complex situation of those victims and the negative societal perception to them.

Turkish drama is increasingly compelling and effective in Arab societies

It is undoubtedly that Turkish drama, which has recently devastated main Arab satellite channels, has now a significant impact on the semblances of daily social life (see Mazahera 2016). Its high watching ration could be attributed to high-budget production, pretty and stylish actors and actresses, beautiful locations, luxurious houses and furniture. The stories are filled with love scenes as well as ideal and romantic heroes and heroines. The rapprochement between the Arabic and the Turkish cultures also increases the popularity of this drama in the Arab countries as it provides approximately similar, yet, more modernized and liberal life style. Moreover, it presents sensitive and bold issues that are avoided by Arabic drama producers such as gender equality, rape, adultery and illegal children.

This prevalent phenomenon in the Arab countries has its great social, economic and behavioural effects on women in particular in terms of their lifestyle and relationships. This influence can be clearly seen reflected in the printed and socialmedia which addresses women. It is noticed that on nine of the selected SA covers, there are references to Turkish drama and celebrities, some of them under a heading that says (Turk /سيدتي My Turkish lady Turk). There is also presence of Turkish actresses as models on two covers. Most of the headlines refer to the Turkish celebrities by using the Arabized names of famous characters they have played. This way of referencemakes Arab viewers/readers more engaged and familiar with the actors and actresses who became well-known to the Arab audience through long episodes of appealing TV series and by the use of the voices of famous Arab stars.

القبض على سليم رشدان و قصة فاطمة تنشر في كتاب يمنح الأمل لضحايا الاغتصاب

سيدتي التركية TURK

Turkish Sayidaty TURK SaleemRashdan arrested, Fatima's story published in book that gives hope to victims of rape (SA3)

Fatima Gul is one of the Turkish series that stirred a fuss in the Arab countries and even in Turkey mainly due to its humanitarian and social theme. It presents the story of a poor girl whose life has been damaged after

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she was collectively raped. The series presents the issue as a social problem not only in Turkey but in the Arab countries as well. It criticizes the unfair criminal laws that vindicate rapists in case they marry their victims. It also illustrates the cruel perception and attitude of the society towards raped women. Therefore, many viewers had feelings of sympathy with the heroine whose story is considered as a hope for all of those women who experience the same suffering. The first part of the headline is a direct declaration of happy news that many readers have been longing for. (SaleemRashdan) is the name of one of the rapists in the series who is viewed not just as merely a dramatic villain character, but also represents all rapist who have long evaded justice and enjoyed impunity. The cover's model, Raniya Yusuf who is an Egyptian actress, appears wearing a royal blue tight long sleeved dress, sitting on a black sofa without directly facing the viewers. The model's upright posture and the direct unsmiling gaze shows a lot of confidence and attractiveness as the pose outlines the detailed natural curves of her fit body. On this cover, there are two headlines foregrounded in the same way in terms of their colour, background colour and positioning, one of them is the example above and the second is about the announcement of the current Saudi king (Salman bin Abdulaziz) the crown prince of Saudi Arabia (الأمير سلمان ولياً للعهد / prince Salman crown prince). Both headlines are white with blue backgrounding, while the others are black against the white background. The headline of Fatima extends over five lines and it is positioned over the image of the model where her right thigh is. This position and the contrast between the white letters and the fully saturated blue dress increases the attractiveness of the headline, the hips and the slim waste of the model. The other most foregrounded headline has the word (سلمان / Salman) larger than the three other words. It is situated inside a blue square on the top left side of the page near the blue logo. The similar visual foregrounding pattern of these two particular headlines indicates the magazine's campaign to rally an early popular favourability and appeasement for the next king who is claimed by pro-Saudi government pens and media to be known for his relatively enlightened ideas and flexible policy in dealing with critical political and social issues.

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CONCLUSIONS

1. Despite the luxurious printing material and the high quality vivid pictures, ZK and SA could not overcome the triviality and superficiality of the content they present. The two magazines failed in addressing the real nagging issues of Arab women, and even in presenting some applicable tips and life hacks. Instead, they impose a distorted image that looks like the western women in appearance and does not conform to the majority of the target audience. The magazines manipulate language and visual signs to present women as extremely shallow-minded individuals with no intellectual depth, whose main concerns are focused on the trivial stories of celebrities and on how to look like them physically in order to satisfy men. The image of women as submissive victims of the opposite gender and the traditions of society is also strongly imposed.
2. The cover design of ZK and SA in some occasions cannot hide glimpses of the political ideology to which the publishers stand for.
3. The manipulation with the connotative meaning of words to present the celebrities as the victims of scandals and offensive rumours is a strategy that is predominantly used in forming the headlines of ZK to attract the readers who are all ears to such gossips.
4. In SA covers, it is evident that the designers deliberately distinguish and maximize certain attractive words at the expense of other downplayed phrases that penetrate the circumstances of the addressed issues.
5. Both magazines used similar visual blocks inside their covers decorated sometimes by sexual poses of famous actresses and singers. The designers proved to be aware of the positive and negative connotations of colours in the Arabic culture. Besides, the implementation of other visual tools like font, shot, distance, etc., confirms the semiotic richness of these covers. This in turn is used to consolidate the multimodal modality to call Arab women or fans to blindly follow these actresses or singers.

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APPENDIX

ZK Front Cover Pages

<p>ZK1</p>	<p>ZK2</p>	<p>ZK3</p>
<p>ZK4</p>	<p>ZK5</p>	<p>ZK6</p>
<p>ZK7</p>	<p>ZK8</p>	<p>ZK9</p>
<p>ZK10</p>	<p>ZK11</p>	<p>ZK12</p>
<p>ZK13</p>	<p>ZK14</p>	<p>ZK15</p>

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SA Front Cover Pages

SA1	SA2	SA3
SA4	SA5	SA6
SA7	SA8	SA9
SA10	SA11	SA12
SA13	SA14	SA15