

New Media in the Muslim World *The Emerging Public Sphere*

Edited by Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson

How today's newest media are reshaping Muslim societies.

"It is difficult to imagine a more thoughtful, balanced, or comprehensive treatment of this extremely elusive and difficult subject." —Digest of Middle East Studies

"The entire volume is replete with fresh perspectives and wide-ranging analysis—with ample references—of the new media's impact on the Muslim world, a far-reaching, diverse community that Western media often sensationalize in a narrow, one-dimensional frame." —Al jadid

". . . an original and stimulating collection, which covers everything from Egyptian films to Turkish web pages, from African-American Muslim pamphlets to Bangladeshi 'Muslim' bodice-rippers. . . . This volume speaks beyond the Middle East or Islamic studies field to those interested in journalism and electronic forms of communication." —Juan R. I. Cole

How are today's newest media—fax machines, satellite television, and the Internet—and new uses of older media—audio and video cassettes, cinema, pulp fiction, the telephone, and the press—reshaping belief, authority, and community in the Muslim world?

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Anti-Semitism is widespread throughout the Arab and Muslim world, manifested in every segment of society. The following report is a compilation of select anti-Semitic expressions and other related trends in the Arab and Muslim world in February and March 2004.

As in recent months, newspapers continued to feature anti-Semitic caricatures on themes such as Israel's security fence, Jewish/Israeli control of U.S. foreign policy and the upcoming American presidential elections. Other common themes that are pervasive in the media include demonic images of Jews/Israel as snakes, conspiracy theories of Jews plotting to control the world, anti-Semitic blood libels and depictions of the stereotypical Jew (big nose, black coat and hat, skull cap etc.) along with Jewish symbols such as the Star of David and the menorah.

Material in this compilation was translated by ADL from the original Arabic or from English language sources in the Middle East.

10 ways you can support Muslim Media

1. Subscribe

What is one of the major killers of Muslim media?

It's those free copies we so easily pick up from the local mosque. While a number of publications are given out for free for the purpose of promotion, avoid taking this easy way out. Make a point to subscribe. This way, you will lend your support in a systematic way and you don't have to go hunting on the Masjid shelves for the latest copy of the newspaper or magazine. You'll get it right at home.

2. Share a subscription

What if a newspaper or magazine's subscription rate is far beyond your means?

Then get two, three or more interested others and subscribe as a group, with everyone pooling their money. Then a system could be worked out where each subscriber gets to check out the latest copy for one week. The advantage of such a system, apart from saving money, could also be that the publication is more likely to be read, instead of stacked with older, unread copies, since there is a limited time each person has to read the latest issue.

3. Give feedback

What is the first reaction of many of us when we see something we dislike or like in our communities?

Usually, if we like it, nothing is said about it. If it's something we dislike, we tend to express our dislikes in a harsh, intolerant manner and distance ourselves from the person or project in question.

If we want to see Muslim media thrive, we cannot take this approach. The Islamic way is to give wise, gentle *Nasiha* (advice). In the case of a publication, there should be letters to the editor section. Write a simple letter and express your concerns (for tips on letter writing, please see <http://www.soundvision.com>).

4. Give out extra copies

How can you promote Muslim media if people have not been able to read or check them out themselves?

There are two ways you can do this. One is by giving out free, extra copies. Simply call the publication's office and ask if they have extra copies of old issues that they are willing to give away for promotional purposes. Then you can give these out to people who you feel would take an interest in reading and subscribing to the publication.

5. Use your mouth

What is one positive way of using your mouth (which tends to get most of us in trouble more often than not)?

It's by promoting the good. Spread the word about a publication to friends and family and encourage them to subscribe and donate.

6. Donate to this Muslim cause

When you think *Sadaqa* (charity), you think Masjid, right?

Well, why not give to more than your local Masjid? Why not devote a small amount, like even five dollars a week, to your favorite Halal publication? This way, you can support a good cause beyond just subscribing.

7. Encourage libraries and institutions to subscribe

Shouldn't Muslim institutions support Muslim publications?

While Muslims as individuals or families may not understand the importance of media, any mosque or Muslim institution with a library should include a range of Muslim publications. Encourage them to subscribe and give an extra donation if the publication does not already have a specific subscription rate for institutions.

8. Encourage Muslim businesses to advertise in them

How can Muslim businesses do Muslim publications' a favor and get something in return?

By advertising in Muslim newspapers and magazines. Advertising is one major way publications generate revenue. Encourage Muslims to help Muslims by having Muslim businesses pay for ads in Muslim publications.

9. Get non-Muslims on board

What's another you can help clear away stereotypes about Islam amongst non-Muslims and support Muslim media while you're at it?

By encouraging the Religious Studies departments of universities to subscribe, as well as institutions where interfaith dialogues take place. By encouraging their subscription to Muslim publications, you will add to their current literature on Islam, which is usually filled with Orientalist, mostly anti-Muslim material.

10. Write for them

Want to help Muslim media but don't have the money?

Then consider writing for them. There is still a lack of Muslims willing to write for the Muslim media, but the need for writers is still great. If you've got writing talent or are considering a career in journalism and communications, take advantage of this forum while benefiting a Muslim publication.