



Introduction

Recently, there has been a surge of active literary communities presenting their creative work in both English and Arabic, attracting a variety of audiences and fans in Doha. For instance, young authors such as **Kummam Al Maadeed**, **Eissa Abdullah**, **Buthaina Al-Janahi** and **Abdullah Fakhro** not only have a huge online following, but they also have a significant fan base attending their readings throughout the city. Our project examines these literary circles and regards them as 'communities of practice.' Our contention is that these ever-growing communities provide a performative space in which poets, singers, authors and artists can experiment with the fluidity of their assigned identities, cultures and traditions. Examples of organizations which we consider as communities of practice are:

- Qalam Hibr – قلم حبر
- Qatari Authors' Forum – الملتقى القطري للمؤلفين
- Words & Strings
- Outspoken

«الكتابة مسؤولة وليست فقط هواية»
كمام المعاضيد

Theoretical Framework

What are communities of practice?

According to the theorist Etienne Wenger, communities of practice are "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." Moreover, such communities are seen as promoting innovation, developing social capital, facilitating and spreading new knowledge within a group, and spreading existing knowledge.

How do these communities promote learning?

Our aim is to explore a variety of issues surrounding these young, creative and celebrated artists such as the importance of Qatari identity, experimentation with language, and peer support and endorsement. Indeed, the "intensification of cultural exchange [...] with other nations" (Qatar National Vision 23) is a fundamental goal under the social development of Qatar's vision by 2030, and undertaking research on Qatari literary circles or 'communities' in the English speaking world is a way to actualize this national and cultural objective.



«اعترف بأنك كاتب، تعلم و تدرب... كي تظل
كاتب»
بثينة الجناحي

Conclusion and Further Considerations

As we continue our research, and as we further explore the theory of community of practice, we also aim to conduct interviews with members from Qalam Hebr and Qatari Forum for Authors. We have also scheduled meeting many of the young authors who have greatly contributed to the artistic scene in Doha as well as the Arab literary scene at large. We will also be conducting interviews with Dar Roza, Lusail publishing, Katara publishing as well as representatives from the Ministry of Culture and Sports. These organizations have been instrumental in supporting the local talents and in endorsing their artistic and creative works. Some questions for our subjects' consideration are:

- What inspires you to write?
- How does your Qatari identity influence the subject of your texts?
- How has your community been supportive of your work and instrumental in your progress?

Our study not only aims to contribute to the timely topic of artistic innovation and the rapidly growing cultural movement in Doha, but we also hope that our findings shed new light on issues such as creative communities, fluid identities and performativity.

References:

- Qatar National Vision 2030. General Secretariat for Development Planning. July 2008.
Wenger, Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner. *Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction*. April 15, 2015.

