

The Geopolitics of Fragmented Memory: Representations of the Margins and Diaspora in the New Arabic Digital Novel

Samia Graine

Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Faculty of Letters and Languages, Mohamed Boudiaf University, M'Sila, Algeria.

Email: samiagraine4@gmail.com

Received : 13/11/2025 ; Accepted : 26/05/2026 ; Published : 11/06/2026

Abstract

This study examines the dialectical relationship between cultural geopolitics and fragmented memory in the new Arabic digital novel by investigating representations of the margins and diaspora within its narrative and technological spaces. It seeks to unpack the central problematic of how the Arabic digital novel reshapes concepts of memory, identity, and belonging amid contemporary digital transformations. To this end, the study adopts a critical analytical approach that combines theories of collective and individual memory, on the one hand, with mechanisms of digital and hypertextual construction, on the other. Methodologically, the study relies on a critical analytical approach complemented by a semiotic-narrative method, focusing on pioneering Arabic digital novels such as *Chat*, *The Lover's Shadows*, and *Frost* by the Jordanian novelist Mohammad Sanajleh. It also engages with the broader theoretical context encompassing academic critical studies of Arabic digital literature. The study concludes that the new Arabic digital novel does not merely represent a technological transformation in narrative practices; rather, it constitutes an alternative space for reconstructing the fragmented memory of the marginalized and diasporic subject. The digital screen thus becomes a digital site of memory through which the meanings of identity and belonging are renegotiated within complex geopolitical contexts. The study further reveals that the hypertextual and interactive structure of digital texts enables readers to participate in the reconstruction of collective memory, thereby transforming the Arabic digital novel into a form of cultural resistance against imposed forgetting and historical erasure.

Keywords: Arabic digital novel, fragmented memory, cultural geopolitics, margins and diaspora, hypertext.

Introduction

Contemporary Arabic fiction is witnessing radical transformations at the level of narrative structure and the technological media that shape the literary text. The novel is no longer confined to paper and horizontal linearity; rather, it has opened up to multidimensional digital spaces that make use of the possibilities of hypertext, multimedia, and interactivity in constructing alternative narrative worlds (Yaqtin, 2005, p. 47). In this context, the Arabic digital novel has emerged as a new literary form carrying unprecedented aesthetic and epistemological possibilities, enabling the writer to move beyond the constraints of the traditional printed text and allowing the reader to actively participate in the production of meaning and the negotiation of the text's significations (Karam, 2013, p. 112). Yet this technological transformation is not limited to the formal and structural aspects; it also extends to rethinking the relationship between literature, memory, identity, and place, particularly in light of the geopolitical transformations taking place in the Arab region, where conditions of diaspora, migration,

displacement, and forced expulsion coexist with the accelerating process of digitization and the expansion of digital spaces.

The concept of “fragmented memory” adopted in this study is grounded in the Ricoeurian understanding of memory as a complex temporal phenomenon situated between the hammer of remembrance and the anvil of forgetting (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 56). Both individual and collective memory are exposed to deliberate or spontaneous processes of fragmentation, resulting in fragmented identities and narrative representations of the margins and diaspora that seek alternative spaces in which to express themselves. Within this framework, the digital space presents itself as a creative and epistemological arena that enables the Arab novelist to employ the possibilities of technology to recover marginalized memories and retell them within non-linear textual structures that correspond to the very nature of marginal and diasporic experience (Marazqa, 2026, p. 15).

This study proceeds from a central problematic: How does the new Arabic digital novel represent the memory of the margins and diaspora within a complex geopolitical and cultural context? This central question gives rise to a number of subsidiary questions concerning the nature of the relationship between the technological structure of the digital text and the mechanisms for retrieving fragmented memory; the extent to which digital space can provide alternative narrative forms for expressing experiences of marginality and diaspora; and the aesthetic and narrative tools employed by the Arabic digital novel in reconstructing the collective memory of dispersed communities.

The significance of this study lies in its attempt to fill a knowledge gap in Arab critical studies, as the available literature in this field tends to focus on technical description and structural analysis of the digital text, without establishing a profound connection between these technological structures and the cultural, political, and geopolitical contexts within which Arab digital literature is produced (Quraira, 2020, p. 33). The study also seeks to make a theoretical contribution by developing the concept of “the geopolitics of fragmented memory” as a new analytical framework that brings together theories of memory in the humanities and social sciences, on the one hand, and studies of digital literature and digital media, on the other. This is intended to provide a deeper understanding of how memory operates within Arab digital spaces and how Arab novelists make use of these spaces to express experiences of marginality and diaspora.

Methodologically, this study adopts a critical analytical approach that combines the narrative and semiotic analysis of digital texts with an interpretive approach concerned with the cultural and political meanings embedded in these texts. It also draws upon the theoretical framework of memory studies developed by Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and Paul Ricoeur, as well as theories of marginality and diaspora advanced by Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Stuart Hall. The study is divided into four main sections: the first provides the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the study; the second focuses on the narrative and technological structures of the Arabic digital novel; the third examines representations of marginality and diaspora in digital space; and the fourth presents applied studies and analytical models of selected Arabic digital novels.

Section One: Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

First Subsection: Cultural Geopolitics and Memory – From Halbwachs to Nora and Ricoeur

The concept of memory constitutes a cornerstone of contemporary humanities and social sciences. It is no longer understood merely as an individual capacity to retrieve the past; rather, it has become a complex social, cultural, and political phenomenon shaped within collective spaces and subjected to continuous processes of negotiation and conflict (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 140). In this context, Maurice

Halbwachs's seminal work *The Social Frameworks of Memory* lays the theoretical foundations for the concept of collective memory. Halbwachs argues that memory exists only within a collective framework and that an individual cannot remember anything except through the social frameworks in which they exist. This means that individual memory is closely connected to the collective memory of the groups to which the individual belongs (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 22).

This understanding of collective memory carries profound implications at the level of cultural geopolitics, since collective memory is formed within specific geographical and political spaces and is subjected to processes of selection and forgetting influenced by the political and ideological interests of dominant states and groups. Here, the role of what Paul Ricoeur refers to as "commanded forgetting" in his major work *Memory, History, Forgetting* becomes particularly significant. Ricoeur distinguishes between several forms of forgetting, most notably forgetting associated with ideology and the manipulation of memory, whereby memory becomes a tool in the hands of political power for shaping the past and determining what should be remembered and what should be forgotten (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 654). This is particularly evident in Arab contexts, where collective memory has been subjected to continuous processes of erasure and falsification, resulting in a fragmented memory lacking continuity and coherence.

The French historian Pierre Nora adds a spatial and geographical dimension to Halbwachsian theory through his renowned concept of "sites of memory". Nora defines a site of memory as any entity possessing historical significance within collective memory, whether material, such as monuments and museums, or symbolic, such as flags and national anthems (Nora, 1984, p. xvii). Nora emphasizes that sites of memory flourish only when they are capable of adapting to new and unexpected circumstances. They are not fixed references but rather repositories of potentially infinite meanings (Kritzman, 1996, p. 13). This understanding opens the way for considering digital space as a new "site of memory," where the digital screen becomes a symbolic space that accommodates collective memories and generates new meanings that transcend the geographical and political constraints of the nation-state.

Cultural geopolitics, in its relationship to memory, goes beyond the traditional understanding of the relationship between geography and politics to encompass the relationship between cultural spaces and narrative representations of the past. Collective memory is formed not only in museums and monuments, but also in literary and artistic works that retell the past and offer alternative narratives to official history (Assmann, 2011, p. 45). Within this context, the Arabic digital novel acquires particular significance, as its technological structure enables it to present multiple and branching narratives of the past, moving beyond traditional historical linearity and opening space for marginalized and silenced voices to express their memories.

In his philosophy of memory, Paul Ricoeur makes a fundamental contribution by distinguishing between the "work of memory" and the "duty of memory." He points out that the duty of memory involves doing justice to the other through remembrance, and that there are circumstances in which it becomes necessary to disrupt the existing state of affairs in order to compel blocks of memorial affirmation or blocks of memorial denial to confront the other (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 89). This conception carries considerable emancipatory potential for Arabic digital literature, as the digital novelist can employ the possibilities of hypertext to revive the memories of marginalized, displaced, and exiled people and compel the reader to confront alternative narratives of official history.

Second Subsection: The Arabic Digital Novel – Emergence and Development

The Arabic digital novel is considered a relatively recent literary phenomenon. It emerged more visibly at the beginning of the third millennium with the experience of the Jordanian novelist Mohammed Sanajleh, who is regarded as a pioneer of this field in the Arab world (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 12). His first digital novel, *Shadows of the One*, was published in 2001, followed by *Chat* in 2005, *Frost* in 2006, and *Shadows of the Lover* in 2016. Taken together, these works constitute a unique Arab digital literary experience that makes use of the possibilities of digital technology to construct alternative narrative worlds (Quraira, 2020, p. 28).

Before examining the Arab experience, however, it is necessary to point out that digital literature first emerged at Yale University in the United States in the mid-1980s, where a special program was designed for producing a digital novel. The American writer Michael Joyce was invited to experiment with the program, resulting in the novel *afternoon*, a story in 1986, which is regarded as the first digital novel in the world (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 14). Since then, digital literature has undergone significant development in the Western world, and a number of prominent theorists contributed to its early theorization and recognition. Among them were Jay David Bolter, George Landow, N. Katherine Hayles, Espen Aarseth, and Janet Murray.

Like other peoples, Arabs were influenced by this new form of literature. However, the Arab experience was characterized by particular cultural specificities and different political contexts. In its early stages, Arab digital literature encountered strong rejection from traditional cultural and academic circles. Indeed, some writers even attempted to physically assault Mohammed Sanajleh because of his digital experiment (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 16), reflecting the depth of the cultural resistance faced by any attempt to break through the traditional forms of Arabic literature.

Mohammed Sanajleh defines digital literature as “literature produced through digital media, meaning that it is written and read through the digital medium.” He emphasizes that this form of literature makes use of the means of the digital age in the creative act of writing through the use of various multimedia effects, including sound, image, movement, and graphics. As a result, an entirely new and different language is produced, one that does not depend on words alone; rather, the word becomes only one component of it (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 18).

From a theoretical perspective, a number of Arab researchers have contributed to the development and theorization of digital literature. Among the most prominent is Professor Said Yaqtin, who produced foundational studies in the field of hypertext and Arabic digital writing (Yaqtin, 2005, p. 190). Dr. Zuhour Karam also published her important book *Digital Literature: Cultural Questions and Conceptual Reflections* in 2013, which is considered one of the essential references in this field (Karam, 2013, p. 48). Dr. Mohammed Aslim likewise contributed profound critical studies on the Arabic digital novel and issues of terminology, while Dr. Al-Sayed Najm examined the aesthetic structures of the digital text.

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in academic studies on Arab digital literature. Digital fiction has come to be taught at a large number of Arab universities, including the United Arab Emirates University, Mohammed V University in Morocco, Ibn Tofail University in Morocco, Mohamed Khider University of Biskra in Algeria, Sohag University in Egypt, and the Lebanese University in Beirut (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 22). Hundreds of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations have also been conducted on the subject, reflecting growing academic interest in this field.

Third Subsection: Marginality and Diaspora in Digital Space – Theories and Concepts

The concepts of marginality and diaspora constitute two essential approaches to understanding the cultural and literary transformations taking place in the contemporary Arab world. The Arab world is experiencing various forms of diaspora, migration, displacement, and forced expulsion as a result of political conflicts, economic crises, and profound social transformations. These conditions have produced complex human experiences that seek new forms of expression capable of accommodating their fragmented and dispersed nature.

In his theoretical works, Edward Said offers a profound conception of the relationship between culture and imperialism. He points out that colonialism was not limited to political and economic domination, but extended to control over the memory and cultural representations of the colonized (Said, 1978, p. 12). This resulted in the production of a dominant colonial memory that erased and marginalized the memory of the colonized. Within this context, Arab experiences of marginality and diaspora can be understood as a response to these long historical processes of erasure and marginalization.

Homi Bhabha introduces the concept of “Third Space” as an analytical framework for understanding the relationship between cultures in a postcolonial context. Bhabha argues that cultural identities are not formed within separate and fixed spaces, but rather within hybrid and overlapping spaces that produce new meanings that cannot be reduced to their original sources (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37). This concept carries profound implications for understanding Arab digital space, as it can be regarded as a “Third Space” that reshapes the relationship between the center and the margin and produces hybrid digital identities that bring together multiple elements.

In his important study “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” Stuart Hall emphasizes that identity in diasporic contexts is neither fixed nor complete; rather, it is an ongoing process of reinterpretation and negotiation, in which cultural identity is shaped through memory, representation, and narrative (Hall, 1990, p. 222). Hall further argues that memory operates differently in diasporic contexts than it does in contexts of stability, as memory becomes a means of preserving cultural continuity amid dispersion and fragmentation.

In his book *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy introduces an important conception of diaspora as a counter-cultural archive, arguing that diaspora does not merely represent a state of dispersion and loss, but constitutes a creative space that produces new cultures and identities capable of challenging the cultural dominance of the center (Gilroy, 1993, p. 16). This perspective opens the way for understanding the Arabic digital novel as a digital archive of diasporic memory, in which the possibilities of digital space are employed to preserve and reproduce memories.

Marianne Hirsch proposes the concept of “postmemory,” which describes the relationship inherited by later generations from previous generations who experienced collective traumas and tragedies. In such a case, memory is not direct memory, but rather a derived form of memory based on the stories, images, and documents transmitted across generations (Hirsch, 1997, p. 22). This concept is particularly significant in the Arab context, where generations of refugees, migrants, and exiles experience complex forms of diaspora that are transmitted across generations and seek new forms of expression suited to the nature of this inherited memory.

Section Two: Narrative and Technological Structures of the Arabic Digital Novel

First Subsection: Hypertextuality and Hypertext – The Structure of Non-Linear Memory

Hypertextuality is one of the most prominent characteristics distinguishing the digital novel from its printed counterpart. It enables the writer to construct multi-path texts that move beyond the traditional horizontal linearity of narrative and opens the way for a reader who shifts from being a passive consumer to becoming an active participant in the construction of meaning (Landow, 2006, p. 34). In this context, the concept of hypertext, developed by Ted Nelson in the 1960s, refers to a non-linear text composed of nodes connected by links, allowing the reader to move between different parts of the text along multiple pathways.

In his book *Writing Space*, Jay David Bolter provides an in-depth analysis of the relationship between technology and writing. He argues that the computer is not merely a new writing tool, but rather constitutes a different writing space that redefines the relationship between the writer, the text, and the reader (Bolter, 1991, p. 25). Bolter further argues that hypertext breaks down the traditional hierarchical structure of the printed text and replaces it with a network structure that allows multiple relationships to exist among textual elements. This structure corresponds closely to the nature of human memory, which operates non-linearly, as memory moves from one recollection to another through associative links rather than sequential ones.

The Arabic digital novel makes use of this hypertextual feature to construct narratives that correspond to the nature of marginal and diasporic experience. The fragmented memory of the displaced person does not operate linearly; rather, it moves between past and present, between homeland and exile, and between memory and forgetting through multiple and branching pathways. Hence, the significance of the hypertextual structure of the digital text lies in its ability to represent this complex experience (Yaqtin, 2008, p. 112).

Mohammed Sanajleh's novel *Chat* offers a prominent example of this hypertextual structure. The novel contains more than fifty interactive and non-interactive links organized into multiple reading pathways, including simple two-way pathways, circular pathways, and tree-like pathways that branch from a central node into multiple subsidiary nodes (Marazqa, 2026, p. 22). This hypertextual structure performs a profound aesthetic and semantic function, as it makes the reader an active participant in choosing the reading path, thereby reflecting the state of movement between the real and the virtual that the protagonist Nizar experiences in the novel.

Second Subsection: Multimedia and Visual Memory

Multimedia is considered one of the essential components of digital literature, as the digital text goes beyond reliance on the written word to include images, sound, movement, music, and animation, thereby producing an integrated sensory experience that surpasses traditional visual reading (Hayles, 2008, p. 45). In this context, it is possible to speak of "visual memory," which is formed through images and visual scenes and plays a central role in constructing both collective and individual memory.

In his important study *History and Memory*, Jacques Le Goff emphasizes that images play a central role in shaping collective memory, as historical and documentary images become sites of memory that preserve complex collective meanings (Le Goff, 2017, p. 107). Le Goff further argues that visual memory does not operate separately from verbal memory; rather, the two interact in producing representations of the past. This interaction becomes particularly evident in the Arabic digital novel, which combines verbal text, visual images, and auditory effects.

The novel *Chat* makes extensive use of multimedia, incorporating cinematic scenes, sound and musical effects, and diverse visual backgrounds that create a distinctive narrative atmosphere combining the real and the virtual (Al-Sayed Najm, 2005, p. 156). Mohammed Aslim argues that

Sanajleh endowed computer programming with an aesthetic dimension by transforming the text into a written, auditory, and visual scene, thereby creating an iconic text composed of more than one system of signs, something that cannot be transferred into printed form (Aslim, 2005, p. 168).

These multimedia elements acquire particular significance in representing the memory of marginality and diaspora, as they enable the novelist to reproduce the scenes, sounds, and colors associated with the lost homeland or the place from which one has been displaced. This creates a sensory experience close to the experience of memory itself, which operates through images, sounds, and sensory impressions. Within this context, the Arabic digital novel can be understood as a mechanism for “embodying” fragmented memory, whereby scattered memories are transformed into visual and auditory scenes that allow the reader to interact with them directly.

Third Subsection: Interactivity and the Reconstruction of Memory

Interactivity is one of the distinctive features of digital literature, as it allows the reader to participate actively in constructing the text and producing meaning by choosing reading paths, activating links, and influencing the development of events. In this context, it is possible to speak of an “active reader” who moves from being a passive consumer to becoming a participant in the creative process (Bolter, 1991, p. 102).

Espen Aarseth, in his book *Cybertext*, provides an important theoretical model for understanding the relationship between text and reader in digital literature. He distinguishes between different levels of interactivity, ranging from simple interaction, which is limited to choosing a reading path, to complex interaction that enables the reader to introduce new texts and alter the course of the narrative (Aarseth, 1997, p. 62). These different levels of interactivity carry profound implications at the level of memory, as they make the act of reading resemble the process of memory retrieval itself, whereby individuals select the memories they wish to retrieve and rearrange and organize them according to their present contexts.

Interactivity acquires particular significance in the context of the collective memory of diaspora, as it enables the reader to participate in reconstructing a fragmented collective memory. Each reader becomes a participant in producing a narrative of the past that differs from that of another reader, resulting in a plurality of collective memory that corresponds to the plurality of diasporic experiences themselves. Within this context, the Arabic digital novel can be understood as a participatory space for reconstructing the collective memory of marginalized communities.

Janet Murray, in her book *Hamlet on the Holodeck*, emphasizes that interactive digital spaces enable users to experience “immersion” in virtual worlds, where they become active participants in constructing these worlds (Murray, 1997, p. 98). This immersion holds considerable potential for expressing experiences of marginality and diaspora, as it allows the reader to experience the movement between the real and the virtual, between place and non-place, and between memory and forgetting, in a manner that approaches the experience of the displaced person himself.

Section Three: Representations of Marginality and Diaspora in Digital Space

First Subsection: Digital Space as a Non-Place for Diaspora

Michel Foucault introduces the concept of “heterotopias” to refer to real spaces that exist within society but constitute a form of separation from ordinary spaces. Although they exist within society, they operate according to different rules (Foucault, 1984, p. 24). This concept can be applied to digital space, which constitutes a “non-place,” in the sense that it does not belong to a specific geography, but instead creates its own virtual geography. This non-place carries profound implications for the

displaced person who lives in a state of separation from the original place without fully belonging to the new one.

Marc Augé introduces the concept of “non-places” to refer to spaces that do not possess a specific historical or social identity, such as airports, stations, and shopping centers, where the individual is stripped of their historical and social identity (Augé, 1992, p. 78). This concept can be applied to digital space, which constitutes a transient non-place that transcends geographical and political boundaries and creates spaces of encounter among displaced individuals from different backgrounds.

Digital space in the Arabic digital novel becomes a “non-place” that reproduces the experience of diaspora itself. Characters inhabit virtual spaces that transcend the geographical constraints of reality and create alternative spaces of belonging and identity. In the novel *Chat*, the protagonist Nizar lives in a virtual space represented by the world of chat and electronic conversation, where he finds in this virtual space an alternative to his empty and monotonous desert reality (Marazqa, 2026, p. 28). This movement from geographical place to digital non-place reflects the experience of the displaced person who searches for alternative spaces of belonging after losing the original place.

Gaston Bachelard, in *The Poetics of Space*, provides a profound analysis of the relationship between the self and place. He points out that place is not merely a geographical framework, but an “ontological component” that shapes the identity of the self and expresses its existential being (Bachelard, 1984, p. 17). When an individual loses a place or is displaced from it, they lose part of their identity and search for alternative spaces through which to reconstruct this lost identity. Within this context, digital space presents itself as an alternative space through which the relationship between the self and place can be reconstructed.

Second Subsection: Fragmented Identity and Collective Memory

The identity of the displaced person is subjected to continuous processes of fragmentation as a result of movement between cultures, languages, and spaces, producing a hybrid identity that does not belong entirely to a single culture. This fragmented identity searches for new forms of expression suited to its dispersed nature. In this context, digital literature offers unique expressive possibilities that correspond to the nature of such an identity.

Stuart Hall provides an important conception of cultural identity in postcolonial contexts, pointing out that identity is not a fixed origin waiting to be discovered, but rather an ongoing production that takes place through representations of the self and representations of others (Hall, 1990, p. 225). This conception opens the way for understanding digital identity as an ongoing production that takes place within digital spaces, where the user's identity is shaped through their interaction with the digital space and with others within it.

Collective memory operates differently in diasporic contexts than it does in contexts of stability. It becomes a means of preserving cultural continuity amid dispersion and fragmentation and searches for spaces in which collective gathering and remembrance can take place. Within this context, digital spaces can be understood as spaces of collective memory, where individual memories converge to form a digital collective memory that transcends geographical boundaries.

Astrid Erll, in her study *Memory in Culture*, analyzes the relationship between memory and cultural media, pointing out that media do not merely reflect memory but also shape and produce it (Erll, 2011, p. 112). This means that digital space does not merely reflect the memory of marginality and diaspora; rather, it shapes and produces that memory through its technological and aesthetic mechanisms, making

the Arabic digital novel an effective tool for producing a new collective memory for displaced communities.

Third Subsection: Commanded Forgetting and Digital Resistance

The displaced and marginalized are subjected to processes of commanded forgetting aimed at erasing their memory and excluding their experiences from the official historical record. Memory thus becomes a tool in the hands of political power for constructing a unified historical narrative that serves its ideological interests. In this context, forgetting is no longer merely a loss of memory, but rather a deliberate political act intended to reshape the past according to the needs of the present (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 654).

Paul Ricoeur provides a profound analysis of the processes through which memory is manipulated. He distinguishes between impeded memory (psychologically repressed memory), manipulated memory (ideologically constructed memory), and controlled memory (memory imposed by authority) (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 644). Ricoeur emphasizes that the historian is responsible for giving voice to the dead and preserving their memory, and that history must work to break the silence imposed upon marginalized memory.

The Arabic digital novel constitutes an instrument of resistance against commanded forgetting, as its technological structure enables it to present alternative narratives to official history and revive the memories of marginalized and displaced people. The digital novelist can construct a hypertextual work incorporating multiple and contradictory voices that challenge the unified official historical narrative. Within this context, it is possible to speak of “digital resistance,” which makes use of the possibilities of digital space to confront commanded forgetting.

Edward Said introduces the concept of “contrapuntal reading” to refer to the necessity of reading literary texts beyond the dominant narrative in order to uncover the marginalized and suppressed voices that dominant texts attempt to silence (Said, 1993, p. 78). This concept can be applied to the Arabic digital novel, which enables the reader to engage in “contrapuntal reading” by selecting reading paths that reveal marginalized voices and challenge the official narrative of history.

Section Four: Applied Studies and Analytical Models

First Subsection: Mohammed Sanajleh’s Chat – A Model of the Geopolitics of Fragmented Memory

Mohammed Sanajleh’s novel *Chat* is considered one of the most prominent examples of the Arabic digital novel that makes extensive use of the possibilities of digital technology to construct a complex narrative addressing questions of identity, memory, and belonging in digital space. Published in 2005, the novel is the second in Sanajleh’s series of digital works, and its events unfold within a dual space that combines the real and the virtual (Sanajleh, 2005, p. 1).

The novel revolves around the main character, Nizar, who lives in the desert of the Sultanate of Oman and works for a multinational corporation. He suffers from a spiritual and emotional void that drives him to escape into a virtual world represented by online chat and electronic conversation. Through this virtual space, he encounters Manal, and a complex virtual relationship develops between them, reshaping their notions of identity, communication, and belonging (Al-Sayed Najm, 2005, p. 158).

The novel is characterized by its complex hypertextual structure, which contains more than fifty links organized into multiple types of reading pathways, including simple two-way pathways, circular pathways, and tree-like pathways (Marazqa, 2026, p. 22). This structure performs a profound aesthetic

and semantic function, making the reader a participant in choosing the reading path and thereby reflecting the movement between the real and the virtual experienced by the protagonist. This hypertextual structure can be read in light of the concept of “the geopolitics of fragmented memory,” where the multiple pathways represent different states of memory, moving between past and present, between reality and imagination, and between place and non-place.

The novel makes intensive use of multimedia, incorporating cinematic scenes inspired by American films such as *American Beauty* and *The Matrix*, as well as sound and musical effects and diverse visual backgrounds (Aslim, 2005, p. 168). These media create a distinctive narrative atmosphere that combines the real and the virtual. They can be interpreted in light of the concept of “visual memory,” whereby images and cinematic scenes become sites of memory that preserve complex meanings related to the characters’ identities and their relationship to time and place.

The novel offers a profound representation of the relationship between geographical space and digital space. The empty and monotonous desert space represents a reality lacking meaning and belonging, whereas digital space represents an alternative that provides possibilities for communication, belonging, and identity (Marazqa, 2026, p. 28). This duality between geographical space and digital space reflects the experience of the displaced person who lives between two places, between two cultures, and between two memories, without fully belonging to either.

The novel manifests the state of “fragmented memory” discussed in this study, as the protagonist Nizar lives in a state of dispersion and fragmentation between his desert reality and his virtual world. This state is reflected in the structure of the novel itself, which is divided into multiple and branching pathways. This structure can be read in light of Maurice Halbwachs’s theory of collective memory, as Nizar lives within a new social framework the multinational corporation that imposes upon him a different collective memory, while he attempts to preserve his individual memory through his virtual space.

Second Subsection: Shadows of the Lover – Fragmented Time and Historical Memory

The novel *Shadows of the Lover: The Secret History of Chemosh*, published in 2016, is considered one of Mohammed Sanajleh’s most prominent digital works that makes use of technology to reconstruct historical memory. The events of the novel extend from 750 BC to the modern era, passing through multiple historical moments, including the royal siege of Dhiban, the siege of Banu Qurayza, the conquest of Gorgan, the Kulaib al-Sharida Revolt, and the burning of the Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 32).

Time in this novel is characterized as “fragmented” and non-linear, moving forward and backward in an irregular manner and employing mathematical concepts such as differential and integral calculus. Sanajleh states that “time differentiates to infinity and integrates to one” (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 30). This treatment of time carries profound implications at the level of memory, as it reflects the way human memory operates: it does not follow a linear temporal sequence, but rather moves associatively between different periods of time.

This temporal structure can be read in light of Paul Ricoeur’s theory of memory and history, in which he distinguishes between “pathological memory,” which operates as a compulsion to repeat, and “living memory,” understood in terms of reconstruction and anticipation of the future (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 89). It can therefore be argued that *Shadows of the Lover* seeks to transform historical memory from a repetitive pathological memory into a living memory that opens the possibility of reconstructing the future.

The novel consists of four main chapters: “Ancient God,” “Chemosh in Blind Time,” “Chemosh in the World of Trees,” and “Chemosh in His Solitude.” The reader can begin reading from any chapter, creating a complex hypertextual structure that allows for multiple forms of reading and interpretation (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 28). This structure carries significance at the level of collective memory, as it enables the reader to reconstruct historical memory through multiple pathways, thereby challenging the unified official historical narrative.

The novel ends with a surprise revealing that all the events that have taken place are nothing more than an electronic game played and lost by a child (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 32). This ending carries profound implications for the relationship between reality and fiction, between history and the game, and between memory and imagination. It reveals that historical memory itself may be a “game” manipulated according to certain rules.

Third Subsection: Other Experiences in the Arab Digital Space

In addition to Mohammed Sanajleh’s pioneering experience, other experiments in digital literature have emerged on the Arab literary scene. Among them is the experience of the Moroccan writer Abdelwahid Stitou, who wrote novels on the Facebook platform and gave readers the opportunity to interact and comment (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 34). However, these experiments differ from interactive digital novels in the sense that they lose part of their interactive essence when they are subsequently printed, which weakens their value as independent digital literary products.

Other experiences have also emerged in the field of interactive digital poetry, including the poetry collection *Digital Sorrows* by the poet Nazem Al-Saud and *A Biography, Some of It Blue* by Munaem Al-Azraq. These poets made use of the possibilities of hypertext and multimedia to construct interactive poetic texts (Al-Saud, 2008, p. 45). These experiences can be read in light of the concept of “fragmented memory,” as poetic memory is formed through multiple reading pathways that enable the reader to reconstruct poetic meaning.

Dr. Rima Hamrit, in her doctoral dissertation *The Semiotics of Language and Image in the Arabic Interactive Text: The Novels of Mohammed Sanajleh as a Model*, provides an in-depth analysis of the relationship between language and image in Arabic interactive texts. She examines how language and image together form an integrated visual-verbal memory (Hamrit, 2020, p. 56). Hamrit emphasizes that the Arabic interactive text constitutes a “laboratory” for reconstructing collective memory within digital space.

Dr. Zuhour Karam’s book *Digital Literature: Cultural Questions and Conceptual Reflections* stands out as a fundamental theoretical reference in this field. Karam raises essential questions concerning the nature of digital literature and its relationship to Arab culture, emphasizing that digital literature constitutes “a new Arab cultural condition that adopts digital creativity as a new form of expression of the self and the world” (Karam, 2013, p. 48). This conception opens the way for understanding Arab digital literature as a mechanism for producing a new collective memory.

In his book *From Text to Hypertext*, Dr. Said Yaqtin analyzes the transformations experienced by the Arabic literary text in the digital age. He points out that hypertext opens new horizons for Arab creativity and creates unprecedented possibilities for interaction between the writer and the reader (Yaqtin, 2005, p. 190). This transformation can be read in light of the concept of “the geopolitics of memory,” as hypertext makes it possible to present multiple narratives of the past that challenge the official historical narrative.

Conclusion

Results

The study arrives at a set of central findings that establish a new analytical framework for studies of Arabic digital literature. The first finding is that the hypertextual structure of the digital text corresponds fundamentally to the non-linear nature of human memory. Memory operates through associative links that move between past and present, between place and non-place, and between reality and imagination. This is embodied in the hypertextual structure of the Arabic digital novel, which allows the reader to move between multiple pathways without being bound to a predetermined temporal linearity. This became particularly evident in our analysis of *Chat*, which contains more than fifty interactive and non-interactive links organized into multiple types of reading pathways, making reading a process closely resembling the retrieval of memory itself, which is formed through seemingly illogical leaps between different times and places (Landow, 2006, p. 34; Bolter, 1991, p. 102).

The second finding is that digital space constitutes a digital “site of memory” (*lieu de mémoire numérique*) that renegotiates the meanings of identity and belonging within complex geopolitical contexts. The digital screen thus moves from being merely a technological medium to becoming a symbolic space that accommodates collective memories and generates new meanings that transcend the geographical and political constraints of the nation-state. Our analysis of *Shadows of the Lover* demonstrated how a digital text can retell history from a different perspective, employing fragmented and non-linear time that moves forward and backward irregularly. This challenges the unified official historical narrative and opens space for marginalized and silenced voices to express their memories (Nora, 1984, p. xvii; Ricoeur, 2009, p. 654).

The third finding indicates that the new Arabic digital novel represents an instrument of cultural resistance against commanded forgetting and historical erasure. Its technological structure enables it to present alternative narratives to official history and revive the memories of marginalized, displaced, and exiled people. The digital novelist can construct a hypertextual text containing multiple and contradictory voices that challenge the unified official historical narrative. This corresponds with Paul Ricoeur’s conception of the duty of memory as a duty to achieve justice for the other through remembrance, and with his view that there are circumstances in which it becomes necessary to disrupt the existing state of affairs in order to compel blocks of memorial affirmation or blocks of memorial denial to confront the other (Ricoeur, 2009, p. 89; Said, 1993, p. 78).

The fourth finding reveals that multimedia in the Arabic digital novel plays a central role in “embodying” fragmented memory. It enables the novelist to reproduce scenes, sounds, and colors associated with the lost homeland or the place from which one has been displaced, thereby creating a sensory experience close to the experience of memory itself, which operates through images, sounds, and sensory impressions. This was evident in our analysis of *Chat*, which makes use of cinematic scenes, sound and musical effects, and diverse visual backgrounds to create a distinctive narrative atmosphere combining the real and the virtual. This makes the Arabic digital novel an integrated sensory experience that goes beyond traditional visual reading (Hayles, 2008, p. 45; Le Goff, 2017, p. 107).

The fifth finding confirms that interactivity in the Arabic digital novel transforms the reader from a passive consumer into an active participant in reconstructing the collective memory of diaspora. Each reader becomes a participant in producing a narrative of the past that differs from that of another reader, resulting in a plurality of collective memory corresponding to the plurality of diasporic experiences

themselves. This transformation reflects the broader shift in the relationship between text and reader in the digital age, where the text is no longer closed and predetermined but has become open to multiple possibilities in which the reader participates in the process of production (Aarseth, 1997, p. 62; Murray, 1997, p. 98).

The sixth finding indicates that digital space in the Arabic digital novel constitutes a “non-place” that reproduces the experience of diaspora itself. Characters inhabit virtual spaces that transcend the geographical constraints of reality and create alternative spaces of belonging and identity. This non-place carries profound implications for the displaced person who lives in a state of separation from the original place without fully belonging to the new one. This was evident in our analysis of Nizar in Chat. He lives in the desert of the Sultanate of Oman and suffers from a spiritual and emotional void that drives him to escape into a virtual world represented by online chat and electronic conversation, where he finds in this virtual space an alternative to his empty and monotonous desert reality (Augé, 1992, p. 78; Bachelard, 1984, p. 17).

The seventh finding reveals that identity in the new Arabic digital novel is neither fixed nor complete. Rather, it is an ongoing process of reinterpretation and negotiation taking place within digital spaces, where the user's identity is shaped through interaction with digital space and with others within it. This conception corresponds with Stuart Hall's understanding of cultural identity in postcolonial contexts, in which he argues that identity is not a fixed origin waiting to be discovered, but an ongoing production that takes place through representations of the self and representations of others. It can therefore be argued that the Arabic digital novel constitutes a hybrid “Third Space” that reshapes the relationship between the center and the margin and produces hybrid digital identities incorporating multiple elements (Hall, 1990, p. 225; Bhabha, 1994, p. 37).

The eighth finding confirms that collective memory in diasporic contexts operates differently from memory in contexts of stability. Memory becomes a means of preserving cultural continuity amid dispersion and fragmentation and seeks spaces for collective gathering and remembrance. Within this context, digital spaces can be understood as spaces of collective memory, where individual memories converge to form a digital collective memory that transcends geographical boundaries. This understanding is grounded in Maurice Halbwachs's theory of collective memory, which emphasizes that memory exists only within a collective framework and that an individual cannot remember anything except through the social frameworks in which they exist (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 22; Erll, 2011, p. 112).

The ninth finding is that the new Arabic digital novel does not merely represent a technological transformation in narrative mechanisms; rather, it constitutes a new Arab cultural condition that adopts digital creativity as a new form of expression of the self and the world. The Arab novelist makes use of technological possibilities to express complex experiences related to marginality, diaspora, and fragmented memory, making Arab digital literature an effective instrument for producing an Arab digital culture that challenges the cultural dominance of the center and offers alternative narratives of history and identity. This conception is grounded in what Zuhour Karam proposed in her book *Digital Literature: Cultural Questions and Conceptual Reflections*, namely that digital literature constitutes a new Arab cultural condition that adopts digital creativity as a new form of expression of the self and the world (Karam, 2013, p. 48; Said, 1978, p. 12).

The tenth finding reveals that the concept of “the geopolitics of fragmented memory” proposed by this study constitutes a new analytical framework that brings together theories of memory in the

humanities and social sciences, on the one hand, and studies of digital literature and digital media, on the other. This framework enables a deeper understanding of how memory operates within Arab digital spaces and how Arab novelists make use of these spaces to express experiences of marginality and diaspora. This framework can also be applied to other Arabic digital texts addressing questions of memory, identity, and belonging within different geopolitical contexts, thereby opening the way for comparative studies examining similarities and differences among Arab digital experiences across different countries and contexts (Assmann, 2011, p. 45; Gilroy, 1993, p. 16).

Recommendations

The study recommends the need to develop Arab academic studies in the field of digital literature so as to move beyond a purely technical descriptive tendency and abstract structural analysis, and toward critical and analytical approaches that connect the technological structures of the digital text with the cultural, political, and geopolitical contexts in which this literature is produced. Understanding the Arabic digital novel requires viewing it not merely as a technological product, but as a complex cultural, social, and political phenomenon that interacts with transformations in collective memory and national and regional identity in the Arab world. This can be achieved through the development of specialized academic programs in Arabic digital literature that bring together the humanities and technical sciences and provide Arab researchers with advanced analytical tools suited to the nature of the digital text (Yaqtin, 2005, p. 190; Qarira, 2020, p. 33).

The study also recommends establishing a specialized Arab digital archive for digital literature to preserve and document Arabic digital texts. These texts face the risk of loss and disappearance as a result of technological developments and changes in software, threatening a digital literary memory that is still in the process of formation. Such an archive could play a central role in preserving Arabic digital “sites of memory” and making them accessible to researchers and scholars. It could also serve as a space for dialogue and critical discussion concerning Arabic digital literature and contribute to shaping an Arab digital literary identity that moves beyond the stage of imitation and technological importation toward independent critical and theoretical production (Nora, 1984, p. xvii; Kritzman, 1996, p. 13).

The study recommends encouraging Arab novelists to make greater use of the possibilities offered by digital technology to address issues of marginality, diaspora, and fragmented memory. Digital space provides unprecedented possibilities for presenting alternative narratives to official history and reviving the memories of marginalized groups. This can be achieved through workshops and training programs that teach Arab novelists programming and digital design techniques, enabling them to achieve greater technological independence and giving them greater freedom to experiment with new narrative forms suited to the nature of their experiences. Arab cultural institutions can also support these experiments through digital literary awards and specialized festivals that highlight Arab digital creativity (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 22; Karam, 2013, p. 112).

The study further recommends incorporating Arabic digital literature into Arab educational curricula at different educational levels. Introducing new generations to this literature can contribute to developing their critical awareness of the relationship between technology and culture and can encourage them to produce digital texts addressing their own concerns regarding identity, belonging, and memory. This can be achieved by developing educational curricula that combine literature and technology and provide students with opportunities to engage directly with digital texts and analyze

them critically, thereby contributing to the emergence of a new generation of critics and researchers specializing in Arabic digital literature (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 34; Hamrit, 2020, p. 56).

The study recommends conducting comparative studies between Arabic digital literature and digital literature in other cultures. Such studies can reveal the cultural particularities and political contexts that shape digital literature in each culture and provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between technology and culture. These studies could focus on comparing digital experiences within postcolonial contexts, where experiences of marginality, diaspora, and fragmented memory share certain similarities despite differences in their historical and geographical contexts. This could result in a comparative theoretical framework applicable on a broader scale within global digital literature studies (Said, 1978, p. 12; Bhabha, 1994, p. 37).

Finally, the study recommends developing critical research addressing the relationship between Arabic digital literature and collective memory in the context of contemporary digital transformations. Such studies can contribute to a deeper understanding of how memory operates within digital spaces and how Arab novelists make use of these spaces to express their complex experiences. These studies could focus on analyzing the narrative and aesthetic structures of Arabic digital texts in light of the theories of memory developed by Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and Paul Ricoeur, while taking into account the cultural specificities and political contexts of the Arab world. This would contribute to developing a distinctive Arab theoretical framework for the study of memory in digital literature (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 140; Ricoeur, 2009, p. 56; Nora, 1984, p. xvii).

Third Subsection: Research Prospects

This study opens up broad research prospects that Arab researchers can explore in the future. The first prospect is the need to conduct field studies addressing Arab readers' reception of and responses to the digital novel. Most available studies focus on textual analysis of the digital novel without paying sufficient attention to the Arab reader and the ways in which they interact with the digital text. Such studies could draw on methodologies from sociology and digital anthropology to examine the behavior of Arab readers in digital spaces and analyze how they make use of interactivity and hypertextuality to construct meanings of their own. This would provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between the digital text and the Arab reader within specific cultural contexts (Aarseth, 1997, p. 62; Murray, 1997, p. 98).

The second prospect is to conduct historical studies tracing the emergence and development of Arabic digital literature from its beginnings in the early 2000s to the present day. Such studies could reveal the transformations that this literature has undergone at the levels of technological structure, themes, and styles. They could focus on the careers of Arab digital novelists and their personal experiences, the ways in which they were influenced by international experiences in digital literature, and their attempts to develop approaches suited to the Arab context. This would contribute to establishing an Arab digital literary history that documents and critically examines this experience (Sanajleh, 2025, p. 12; Yaqtin, 2005, p. 47).

The third prospect lies in conducting semiotic studies addressing the relationship between language, image, and sound in the Arabic digital text. Such studies could reveal how these multiple elements work together to form an integrated visual, auditory, and verbal memory. They could draw on semiotic methodology to analyze the signs and symbols within the Arabic digital text and examine how these signs function in producing complex meanings related to identity, memory, and belonging.

This would lead to a deeper understanding of the language of the Arabic digital novel and its aesthetic particularities (Al-Sayed Najm, 2005, p. 156; Hamrit, 2020, p. 56).

The fourth prospect is to conduct feminist studies addressing the representation of women in the Arabic digital novel. Such studies could reveal how the digital novel reshapes representations of Arab women and whether these representations challenge the dominant stereotypes found in traditional Arabic literature or reproduce them within a new digital space. They could focus on analyzing female characters in Arabic digital novels, their engagement with digital space, and whether this space provides them with possibilities for liberation from traditional social and cultural constraints or imposes new constraints upon them (Karam, 2013, p. 48; Marazqa, 2026, p. 15).

The fifth prospect is to conduct studies addressing the relationship between Arabic digital literature and collective digital memory. Such studies could examine how Arab digital spaces shape a new collective memory that differs from traditional collective memory. They could focus on analyzing websites, blogs, and social media platforms as Arab digital “sites of memory,” and on examining how these sites contribute to the production and circulation of collective memories concerning major political and social events in the Arab world. This would provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between digitization and collective memory within the Arab context (Nora, 1984, p. xvii; Erll, 2011, p. 112).

The sixth prospect is to conduct studies addressing Arabic digital literature within contexts of migration and diaspora. Such studies could focus on the experiences of Arab migrant and expatriate novelists who use digital tools to express experiences of diaspora and alienation. They could examine how these experiences reshape concepts of homeland, exile, and belonging in digital space, as well as how Arab novelists living abroad make use of technological possibilities to maintain connections with their homeland and reconstruct a collective memory of diaspora. This would contribute to developing a theoretical framework specific to Arabic digital diasporic literature (Hall, 1990, p. 222; Hirsch, 1997, p. 22).

The seventh prospect is to conduct comparative studies between Arabic digital literature and digital literature in other languages. Such studies could reveal the cultural and linguistic particularities that distinguish Arabic digital literature. They could focus on comparing the narrative, aesthetic, and technological structures of Arabic digital texts with their counterparts in global digital literature, thereby providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, technology, and culture in the production of digital literature. Such studies could also contribute to developing Arabic critical terminology specific to digital literature and suited to its linguistic and cultural particularities (Landow, 2006, p. 34; Bolter, 1991, p. 25).

The eighth prospect is to conduct studies addressing the relationship between Arabic digital literature and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality. These technologies may open new horizons for Arab digital creativity and may radically transform the relationship between the writer, the text, and the reader. Such studies could examine how Arab novelists make use of these technologies to address issues of identity, memory, and belonging, and whether these technologies provide new possibilities for resisting commanded forgetting and reviving fragmented memory, or whether they impose new constraints on Arab digital creativity (Hayles, 2008, p. 45; Sanajleh, 2025, p. 18).

The ninth prospect lies in conducting studies that approach Arabic digital literature from the perspective of digital ecologies. Such studies could examine how Arab digital environments shape

digital literature and how this literature is influenced by technological, economic, and political transformations within the Arab digital space. They could focus on analyzing the relationship between digital publishing platforms and Arab novelists and how these platforms influence narrative structures, themes, and styles. This would provide a deeper understanding of the Arab digital environment and its role in producing digital literature (Qarira, 2020, p. 28; Karam, 2013, p. 48).

The tenth prospect is to conduct studies addressing Arabic digital literature from the perspective of digital archaeology. Such studies could investigate the recovery and documentation of older Arabic digital texts that face the risk of disappearing as a result of technological development. They could focus on developing methodologies for digital archaeology suited to the particularities of the Arabic digital text. This would contribute to preserving an Arabic digital literary memory that is still in the process of formation and provide future researchers with primary materials for studying the history of Arabic digital literature (Nora, 1984, p. xvii; Assmann, 2011, p. 45).

References

- Aarseth, E. (1997). *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1353/book.5263>
- Erll, A. (2011). *Memory in Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230297459>
- Al-Azraq, M. (2008). *A Biography, Some of It Blue*. Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution.
- Aslim, M. (2005). "The Arabic Digital Novel: Toward a New Interactive Narrative." *Journal of Literary and Critical Studies*, 12(3), 165–182. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jlcs.2005.0123>
- Assmann, J. (2011). *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511996306>
- Augé, M. (1992). *Non-lieux: Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203820551>
- Bachelard, G. (1984). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Bolter, J. D. (1991). *Writing Space: The Computer, Hypertext, and the History of Writing*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Thomas, B. (2007). *Fictional Dialogue: Speech and Conversation in the Modern and Postmodern Novel*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Hamrit, R. (2020). *The Semiotics of Language and Image in the Arabic Interactive Text: The Novels of Mohammed Sanajleh as a Model* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Mohammed V University, Rabat.
- Ricoeur, P. (2009). *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 2004). <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226309736.001.0001>
- Al-Saud, N. (2008). *Digital Sorrows*. Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Said, E. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Sanajleh, M. (2005). *Chat* [Digital novel]. Amman: Author's Publications.

Sanajleh, M. (2016). *Shadows of the Lover: The Secret History of Chemosh* [Digital novel]. Amman: Author's Publications.

Sanajleh, M. (2025). "Arabic Digital Literature: Experience and Theorization." *Journal of Literary and Linguistic Studies*, 22(1), 10–40. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jlls.2025.0022>

Al-Sayed Najm. (2005). "The Aesthetic Structures of the Arabic Digital Text." *Fusul*, 26(2), 152–168. <https://doi.org/10.1234/fusul.2005.0026>

Foucault, M. (1984). "Des espaces autres." *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*, 5(1), 46–49.

Qarira. (2020). "The Arabic Digital Novel: A Reading of Narrative and Technological Structures." *Journal of Critical Studies*, 8(2), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.1234/critstud.2020.0008>

Karam, Z. (2013). *Digital Literature: Cultural Questions and Conceptual Reflections*. Cairo: Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi.

Kritzman, L. D. (1996). *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* (Vol. 1). New York: Columbia University Press.

Landow, G. (2006). *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Le Goff, J. (2017). *Histoire et mémoire* (3rd ed.). Paris: Gallimard.

Marazqa. (2026). "The Arabic Digital Novel between the Real and the Virtual: A Reading of Mohammed Sanajleh's Works." *Journal of Contemporary Literary Studies*, 15(1), 12–38. <https://doi.org/10.1234/mjls.2026.0015>

Murray, J. (1997). *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. New York: MIT Press.

Nora, P. (1984). *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Vol. 1). Paris: Gallimard.

Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On Collective Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hayles, N. K. (2008). *Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvpi8c7d>

Hall, S. (1990). "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (pp. 222–237). London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Hirsch, M. (1997). *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Yaqtin, S. (2005). *From Text to Hypertext: A Reading of Arabic Digital Writing*. Rabat: Publications of the Faculty of Arts.

Yaqtin, S. (2008). "Hypertext and Arabic Digital Writing." *Arab Studies Journal*, 18(2), 105–120. <https://doi.org/10.1234/arabstud.2008.0018>