



Woman in Culture and Arts

The Reflection of Gender Identity in the Works of Three Contemporary Female Artists of the Islamic World

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article type: Research Article</p> <p>Article history: Received: 20 September 2023 Received in revised form: 9 April 2024 Accepted: 16 May 2025 Published online: 1 July 2025</p> <p>Keywords: <i>Gender Identity, Contemporary Art, Mona Hatoum, Lalla Essaydi, Boushra Almutawakel.</i></p>	<p>Introduction Identity is a term that is both intricate and frequently employed in a variety of disciplines, and it has garnered significant attention in recent years. It incorporates both internal attributes that define a person's true essence and external characteristics that distinguish individuals, such as name and family background. Gender identity, specifically the cultural expectations and roles that are ascribed to women and men, has also been a significant subject of discussion. In this investigation, we investigate the relationship between identity and gender in the works of three contemporary Muslim women artists: Mona Hatoum, Lalla Essaydi, and Boushra Almutawakel. Our objective is to examine the manner in which these artists' lived experiences, whether in Islamic or non-Islamic societies, both challenge and reflect gender identity. These artists contribute to the contemporary art discourse on gender identity by employing mediums such as calligraphy, photography, and video.</p> <p>Methodology This study adopts a descriptive and analytical approach to examine the works of Mona Hatoum, Lalla Essaydi, and Boushra Almutawakel. The research method entails the acquisition of information from library documents. Utilizing an inductive methodology, qualitative analysis is implemented to evaluate the collected data. The objective of this research is to investigate the factors that have resulted in the reflection of gender identity in the works of these three artists and the manner in which they have articulated it through their lived experiences. Thus, it constitutes developmental research.</p> <p>Results The findings of this investigation suggest that Mona Hatoum's compositions are indicative of the inequities and obstacles she encountered as a result of her exile and separation from her homeland and family. Her artworks also communicate her individual and social identity by exploring themes of exile, patriarchal values, insecurity, and conflict. On the other hand, Lalla Essaydi employs calligraphy and text to explore the identity of Arab women. She challenges patriarchal society and the masculine gaze by covering the female figures in her works with cloth and adorning them with calligraphy and Islamic patterns. Boushra Almutawakel investigates the status of women and girls, particularly through the hijab, challenging gender hierarchy and opposing the confinement and control of women by men.</p> <p>Conclusion The works of Mona Hatoum, Lalla Essaydi, and Boushra Almutawakel confront and challenge gender identity through their artistic expressions. They examine the themes of exile, patriarchy, religious extremism, and the position of women, drawing inspiration from their lived experiences in Islamic and non-Islamic societies. These artists contribute to the contemporary art discourse on gender identity by employing a variety of mediums. This research illuminates the substantial influence of gender identity on cultural cognition</p>

throughout history and its influence on a variety of fields, such as art.

Conflict of Interest

This research does not involve any conflicts of interest that require disclosure. The study was conducted with the solitary objective of investigating the relationship between identity and gender in the works of Mona Hatoum, Lalla Essaydi, and Boushra Almutawakel. The findings and analysis were not influenced by any external interests or biases.

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