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Arab World Embraces Israeli's YouTube Spoof of Qaddafi Rant

By ISABEL KERSHNER

JERUSALEM — A satirical YouTube clip mocking Col. [Muammar el-Qaddafi's](#) megalomania is fast becoming a popular token of the [Libya](#) uprising across Middle East. And in an added affront to Colonel Qaddafi, it was created by an Israeli living in Tel Aviv.

Noy Alooshe, 31, an Israeli journalist, musician and Internet buff, said he saw Colonel Qaddafi's televised speech last Tuesday in which the Libyan leader vowed to hunt down protesters "inch by inch, house by house, home by home, alleyway by alleyway," and immediately identified it as a "classic hit."

"He was dressed strangely, and he raised his arms" like at a trance party, Mr. Alooshe said in a telephone interview on Sunday. Then there were Colonel Qaddafi's words with their natural beat.

Mr. Alooshe spent a few hours at the computer, using Auto-Tune pitch corrector technology to set the speech to the music of "Hey Baby," a 2010 electro hip-hop song by American rapper Pitbull, featuring another artist, T-Pain. He titled it "Zenga-Zenga," echoing Col. Qaddafi's repetition of the word zanqa, Arabic for alleyway.

By the early hours of Wednesday morning Mr. Alooshe had uploaded the remix to YouTube, and began promoting it on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), sending the link to the pages of young Arab revolutionaries. By Sunday, the original clip had more than 400,000 hits and had gone viral.

Mr. Alooshe, who at first did not identify himself on the clip as an Israeli, started receiving enthusiastic messages from all around the Arab world. Surfers soon discovered that he was a Jewish Israeli from his Facebook profile — Mr. Alooshe plays in a band called Hovevey Zion, or the Lovers of Zion — and some of the accolades turned to curses. A few also found the video distasteful.

But the reactions have largely been positive, including a personal message Mr. Alooshe said he received from someone he assumed to be a Libyan saying that if and when the Qaddafi regime falls, the liberated Libyans would dance to Zenga-Zenga.

The original clip features mirror images of a scantily clad woman dancing along to Colonel Qaddafi's rant. Mr. Alooshe said he got many requests from surfers who asked him to provide a version without the dancer so that they could show it to their parents, which he did. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GcUtnU2gk>).

Mr. Alooshe speaks no Arabic though his grandparents came from Tunisia. He said he uses [Google Translate](#) every few hours to check messages and remove any offensive remarks.

Israelis have been watching the events in Libya unfold with the same rapt attention as they have to the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, with news of the bloodshed dominating the front pages of the major newspapers this weekend.

In the past, Colonel Qaddafi has proposed that [Palestinian](#) refugees should return en masse by ship to [Israel's](#) shores, and that Israel and the Palestinian territories should be combined into one state called Isratine.

Mr. Alooshe said he was a little worried that if the Libyan leader survived, he could send one of his sons after him. But he said it was "also very exciting to be making waves in the Arab world as an Israeli."

As one surfer wrote in an Arabic talkback early Sunday, "What's the problem if he's an Israeli? The video is still funny." He signed off with the international cyber-laugh, "Hahaha."