



المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات
Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies

The Sixth Annual

International Winter School Program

Media in Wartime

11-16 January 2025



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About the International Winter School

International Winter School – Round 6: Media in Wartime

The International Winter School (IWS) is an annual program organized by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS). It offers an in-depth and critical exploration of selected topics, providing participants with opportunities to network with regional scholars and receive feedback from distinguished academics. The IWS brings together regional and international lecturers to encourage essential discussions and facilitate intellectual exchanges.

Since its inception in 2020, the IWS has attracted hundreds of applications from around the world, establishing itself as a hub for specialists to connect and collaborate. The program serves as a platform for fostering academic partnerships, knowledge exchange, and gaining insights into research conducted in the Arab world.

The theme of the 2025 International Winter School, Media in Wartime, draws inspiration from Israel's genocide in Gaza, during which Western mainstream media coverage have aligned with the perpetrators. This coverage reveals not only deep-seated biases favouring settler-colonial war criminals but also the alarming ease with which Palestinians are dehumanized and depersonalized. Despite efforts by Palestinian victims and their advocates to resist through social media platforms and provide counter-narratives, algorithmic censorship soon targeted these initiatives. To this day, content supporting Palestinians often faces removal on social media, while accounts critical of Israeli policies are frequently restricted, limiting their ability to share information.

This complicity in the media's portrayal of the Gaza genocide prompted the IWS6 to critically examine the evolving relationship between war and media. The program explores how these domains influence one another and how war coverage is shaped by ideological and cultural biases. Participants will present their research papers and receive feedback in dedicated sessions. Topics include the dual role of journalists and media outlets in wars – as both targets and instruments – subject to control, censorship, and violence, or employed as tools of military power.

This year's programme also equips participants with research methodologies to investigate how social media corporations have armed states and organizations with new tools for information dissemination, disinformation, deception, recruitment, and crowdsourcing. It highlights the increasingly blurred boundaries between propaganda and facts, as well as the convergence of diplomacy and militarized information operations into an ambiguous framework.

The IWS6 research projects draw on data from warzones across the Arab world, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Asia, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Latin America, and China. The diverse empirical research projects, combined with the theoretical focus of lectures, roundtable, and specialized workshop, provide a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding of the complex relationship between media and war.

Timetable

Day 1: Saturday, 11 January

10:00-11:15	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture</p> <p>Des Freedman: Embedded or Adversarial? Journalism, Imperialism and War</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Hani Awad</p>
11:15-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-13:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 1</p> <p>Baird Howland: A Genocide vs. a "War with Hamas": Documenting the Western Media Narrative on Palestine</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Fadi Zaraket</p> <p>Liliya Mantsevich: The Representation of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict in French Media: Patterns and Influence on Public Opinion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Zahera Harb</p>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 2</p> <p>Archil Sikharulidze: Kazakh Media Coverage of Ukrainian-Russian War</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Omar Ashour</p> <p>Kateryna Bystrytska: Branding the War: Using Social Media for Recruitment Campaigns by Ukrainian Brigades and Battalions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Omar Ashour</p>

Day 2: Sunday, 12 January

10:00-11:15	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture</p> <p>Zahera Harb: Covering Gaza: Rethinking Objectivity in Times of Human Tragedies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Azza El Hassan</p>
11:15-11:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Break</p>
11:30-13:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3</p> <p>Salsabil Abdalbaki: How Should an International Conflict be Framed? Divergence and Alignments between Local and International Media Coverage of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Walid Al-Saqaf</p> <p>Osman Osman: "It Feels Like We Are Expendable": Marginalization and Resilience in Kenyan Embedded Journalism</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Tiziano Bonini</p>
13:00-14:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Lunch</p>
14:00-15:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 4</p> <p>Elise Daniaud Oudeh (Online): Tourists at War: The Representations of Heritage and Culture as Instrumentalized by Russian War Reporters in Syria, 2015–2020</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Walid Al-Saqaf</p> <p>Awham Mohammed: The Representation of Ukraine-Russia Conflict on <i>Al Jazeera</i> and <i>Russia Today</i>: A Critical Discourse Analysis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Mohamad Hamas ElMasry</p>

Day 3: Monday, 13 January

<p>10:00-11:45</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Roundtable</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reporting War: Current Challenges and Prospects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Mohamad Hamas Elmasry</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Des Freedman, Zahera Harb, Tiziano Bonini, Mohammed Al-Nawaway, Aicha El Basri, Claudia Kozman</p>
<p>11:45-12:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Break</p>
<p>12:00-13:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sadia Zamir: Discursive Construction of Adversaries: Media Frames and Conflict Narratives in Television News in India and Pakistan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Harith Hasan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Syed Irfan Ashraf: Are Journalists Their Own Worst Enemies? News Labour and War in Pakistan's Pashtun Periphery with Afghanistan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Des Freedman</p>
<p>13:30-14:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lunch</p>
<p>14:30-16:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hayder Alkilabi: Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait and the Mediated Politics of Nation-Building: An Applied Thematic Analysis of al-Nida' Newspaper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Muhanad Seloom</p>

Day 4: Tuesday, 14 January

10:00-11:15	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Taziano Bonini: Algorithms of Resistance in Time of War</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Fadi Zaraqet</p>
11:15-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-13:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rachel Horvath: Eye on Palestine: A Case Study of News and Emotion on Instagram</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Zahera Harb</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Asma Jaghman (Online): The Fourth Estate Under Siege: Media Censorship in Modern Warfare Across Regime Types</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Ammar Shamaileh</p>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Luis Rodrigo Pesce Villagómez: Patterns of Peril: Analysing Violence Against Journalists in Mexico by Type of Aggression, Aggressor, and Coverage</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Abdelkarim Amengay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sabri Ege: Framing the State of Exception: Chinese Media Representations of the Uyghur Internment Camps</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Tiziano Bonini</p>

Day 5: Wednesday, 15 January

10:00-11:15	<p>Lecture</p> <p>Walid Al-Saqaf: Navigating the Future of Journalism in the Age of AI</p> <p>Moderator: Harith Hasan</p>
11:15-11:30	<p>Coffee Break</p>
11:30-14:00	<p>Closed Workshop</p> <p>Walid Al-Saqaf : Use Cases of AI in Journalism</p>
14:00-15:00	<p>Lunch</p>

Day 6: Thursday, 16 January

10:00-11:15	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture</p> <p>Dina Matar (Online): Covering Genocide; Challenges to War and Media Theories</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Rania Elmalky</p>
11:15-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-13:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 9</p> <p>Sebastien Palla: Death, Political Violence, and Peace Processes in the Xinhua News French Edition Coverage of the Israeli War on Gaza</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Imed ben libidi</p> <p>Mostafa Bostani: The Politics of "Terrorism": Contested Media Narratives in the Israeli War on Gaza</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Des Freedman</p>
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 10</p> <p>Tamari Taralashvili: Disinformation in the Digital Age: Nationalism, Conflicts, and Fear in the South Caucasus</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Mohammed Al Nawawy</p> <p>Emir Hambo: Framing Conflict: A Comparative Agenda Setting Analysis of Media Coverage in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Srebrenica Genocide Resolution</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussant: Mohammed Al Nawawy</p>

Participants



Archil Sikharulidze

Co-Founder of the Tbilisi-based research institute SIKHA foundation. His research interests are Russian and Islamic Studies, South Caucasus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. He is a PhD candidate in Political Science at Tbilisi State University (TSU), where he also earned a Master of Arts in International Relations. His most recent publication is a collaborative book chapter "Colored versus Velvet: Revolutions in Georgia and Armenia" in ed. *The 'New' Geopolitics in the Caucasus* published by Ibidem/Columbia Press, 2024.

Kazakh Media Coverage of Ukrainian-Russian War

The Russian-Ukrainian war incited a full-scale information war; Media turned into a Cold War era tool of propaganda. Political regimes and governments worldwide are trying hard to tighten control over information to spread and maintain the approved views and ideas. Both the West and Russia are working to keep their respective mainstream media establishments pushing particular approaches and analyses. This topic is especially interesting to observe in the supposedly neutral states like Kazakhstan, which is part of the Russian-dominated political sphere while maintaining a general political, economic and information neutrality. The paper explores the media coverage of the Ukrainian-Russian war in Kazakhstan. Being mainly controlled by the government, local mainstream media agencies are either neutral or moderately critical of Moscow, reflecting the state's grand geopolitical standpoint and, at the same time, existing fears among Kazakh political elites and the general public about Russia's revisionist and aggressive rhetoric. Despite being a close ally of Moscow, Almaty is dubious about the Russia's future attitudes and intentions; concerns persist regarding current Russian foreign and domestic narratives.



Asma Ali Jaghman

Lecturer at Qatar University's Department of Mass Communication and PhD candidate in Media Studies at Rutgers University's School of Communication and Information. Her research is focused on Journalism and Media Studies, with a particular concentration on journalist safety in conflict zones and the influence of international pressure on press freedom. Her research critically examines the increasing violence against journalists in conflict zones, analysing the power structures and systemic forces that enable this alarming trend. She also explores censorship strategies employed by democratic and authoritarian regimes alike, especially in wartime, to control media narratives and suppress independent coverage.

Censorship during War: Media Censorship in Modern Warfare across Regime Types

This paper examines how democratic and autocratic regimes engage in censorship during wartime by using reductions in press freedom as a proxy for state censorship. Employing a mixed-methods approach, I combine quantitative analysis of war's impact on press freedom with qualitative exploration of censorship strategies, including justifications, methods, and targets. By focusing on both democracies and autocracies, the research provides insights into whether these regime types converge in their censorship behaviours during conflict. The findings reveal that while both regime types restrict press freedom, the magnitude and visibility of censorship vary. Democracies, despite their institutional safeguards, may impose significant wartime restrictions, while in autocracies censorship remains more normalized and embedded in daily governance. The paper deepens our understanding of how different regimes manage media during crises and the broader implications for press freedom and state control.



Awham Rashid Mohammed

Instructor in the English Department at the University of Anbar, Iraq, and PhD Candidate at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM): Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Her research interests centre on discourse analysis. Her publications include "Unveiling Discursive Strategies and Ideologies: A Critical Analysis of Migration Discourse in Turkish Newspapers", in the *Journal of Intercultural Communication*.

The Representation of Ukraine-Russia Conflict on *Al Jazeera* and *Russia Today*: A Critical Discourse Analysis

This paper examines the representation of the Ukraine-Russia conflict in international broadcast media, uncovering the underlying ideologies, beliefs, and biases that shape public perception. It analyses the discursive strategies, linguistic choices and framing techniques used by *Al Jazeera* and *Russia Today* to influence audience understandings of the conflict. By employing Fairclough's (1989) Three-Dimensional Approach of Discourse Analysis and Scheufele and Tewksbury's (2007) Framing Theory, the study examines the construction and dissemination of narratives by these two news channels, considering their distinct editorial perspectives. The paper conducts a systematic analysis of news segments and broadcasts from both channels since the onset of the conflict. *Al Jazeera*, known for its humanitarian focus, frames the conflict around civilian suffering and Ukraine's sovereignty, fostering empathy and support for Ukraine. *Russia Today*, in contrast, frames the conflict through a geopolitical lens, emphasizing Western interference and presenting Russia as defending its interests. Findings reveal stark differences in representation, shaped by each channel's editorial bias. The paper highlights the significance of media literacy to mitigate the influence of these biases and to foster a more nuanced understanding of international conflicts.



Baird Howland

PhD candidate at the Annenberg School for Communications at University of Pennsylvania, focusing on political media. In the past he studied physics and has also worked as a data scientist.

A Genocide Vs a "War with Hamas": Documenting the Western Media Narrative on Palestine

This paper implements a novel computational approach to analyse western media narratives around the 2023 Israeli war on Gaza, paying special attention to charges of media bias that have been levelled at the US news media. Media narratives are understood here as interpretive frameworks – related to schemas and scripts – that are created by the repetitive use of charged phrases, or "motifs", that prompt particular interpretations of events. I analyse the narratives constructed around the conflict from a dataset of 89 online news websites based mostly in the US, but also the UK, Iran, India, Ireland, Qatar, and other countries from 10 October 2023 to 20 February 2024. The results show that while US outlets were quick to cover controversial pro-Palestinian activities domestically, acknowledgement of the Palestinian experience outside of Hamas was much less frequent. Consistent with critics' charges, we see that the US and British media predominately emphasized Hamas and Hamas's attack while the widespread killing of civilians was unfolding in Gaza. US outlets are much less likely than foreign outlets to inject historical context into their narratives.



Elise Daniaud Oudeh

PhD candidate in Politics and a Teaching Assistant at LUISS University, Rome, as well as Associate Researcher at the Mediterranean platform of the same institution and an associate fellow at EUME (Berlin). She graduated in Slavic Studies (Bordeaux III University) and Political Science (USJ Beirut), working on discourse and strategic narratives analysis, Russian and Arabic political thought, focusing on the post-2015 Russian presence in Syria. Her latest publications include "From Syria with love, the Assad regime's co-opted strategic narratives on Instagram" (*al-Jumhuriya*) and "Soft power in Russia's strategy: lessons from the Syrian intervention" (*LUISS Mediterranean Platform*).

Tourists at War: The Visual Representations of Cultural and Heritage Sites as Instrumentalized by Russian War Reporters in Syria, 2015-2020-

Using a semi-automated analysis of 8174 pictures posted in 5448 social media posts written by 9 Russian war reporters covering the operations of the Russian and Syrian armies, from October 2015 to March 2020, this article examines the role played by visuals dedicated to heritage and culture in social media narratives focused on the Syrian war. In a context of compromised media outlets' autonomy in Russia, it constitutes an important case study of manipulation of public consciousness and soft-power towards Russian-speaking audiences, highlighting narrative strategies to justify the military intervention in Syria (September 2015). The unexpected presence of a significant amount of visuals showing cultural sites, sometimes damaged by the war, constitutes an entry point to communication strategies implemented by war reporters. This blurs the lines between professional work and other practices related to amateurism and tourism, triggering emotions in order to justify the Russian military presence.



Emir Hambo

Assistant Professor in Visual and Media Communication and currently Program Coordinator in the departments of Visual Arts and Visual Communication Design and Media and Communication at the International University of Sarajevo. He holds a PhD in Media and Communication from Istanbul Commerce University from the first institute for Internet and Communication Studies in Turkey. His most recent publication is "Digital Skills and Competences across Educational Levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina".

Framing Conflict: A Comparative Agenda Setting Analysis of Media Coverage in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Srebrenica Genocide Resolution

The Srebrenica genocide resolution was influenced by the tone and war related connotations used by four media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By analysing 760 headlines from Klix and Dnevni Avaz (from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), RTRS and Nezavisne Novine (from the Republic of Srpska) this paper demonstrates how diverse editorial approaches reflect broader sociopolitical divides. The newspapers from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina tend to feature headlines focusing on justice and reconciliation while subtly alluding to wartime experiences, through storytelling techniques. Media channels in the Republic of Srpska adopted a disparaging and disapproving tone while incorporating headlines to challenge the resolution at hand. This highlights the significant involvement of media in influencing perspectives shaping national identity and constructing a divided historical narrative. The research sheds light on how media representation influences shared remembrance and harmony among communities residing in post conflict regions, emphasizing the importance of impartial reporting, for fostering long term peacebuilding efforts.



Hayder Alkilabi

PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton University, Canada, where he transferred from studying Political Sociology and Deviance at McGill University. He holds an MA in Sociology from Brock University and a BA in Criminology from Wilfrid Laurier University. His work examines how governments use state-led media to frame crises, focusing on the production of narratives in various geopolitical contexts. Alkilabi's professional experience includes analytical roles that complement his research in governance, media, and crisis communication. His research has been published in *Social Science Research* and *Kufa Review*.

Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait and the Mediated Politics of Nation-Building: An Applied Thematic Analysis of *al-Nida'* Newspaper

After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, *al-Nida'* newspaper was established to communicate with Kuwaiti citizens. For this paper, I conducted archival research, analysing 104 issues of the newspaper to understand the mediated policies employed by Iraq during the invasion. This paper is framed within the theoretical context of nation-building, which identifies three key policies: assimilationist, accommodation, and exclusion. The research systematically analyses *al-Nida'* to explore how the former Baathist state in Iraq applied these policies through media to shape public perception and integrate Kuwaiti citizens into the broader Iraqi nation-building effort. Using Applied Thematic Analysis (ATA), I identify six major themes: historical claims, exclusion of the Kuwaiti ruling elite, sociopolitical claims, imposing law and order and resuming public services, economic integration, and territorial claims. The paper concludes by discussing the role of media in nation-building efforts.



Kateryna Bystrytska

PhD student at the School of Communication and Information, Rutgers University. She obtained her master's degree in Public and Organizational Relations from Montclair State University as a Fulbright student from Ukraine. Her doctoral research focuses on political communication and information warfare, specifically the role of emerging media and new technologies in wartime, war news framing in emerging platforms, and the role of AI in the mediatization of contemporary warfare. She has a professional background in and communication in Ukraine, having worked in governmental and international environmental protection organizations.

Branding the War: Using Social Media for Recruitment Campaigns by Ukrainian Brigades and Battalions

Using narrative analysis, this paper examines how Ukrainian brigades and battalions successfully employ social media in wartime to recruit military forces. The paper explores the specificity of military personnel's use of social media during the war and compares it to existing practices of other armies around the world pursuing recruitment in digitalized societies. The research corpus for this paper comprises a comprehensive narrative analysis of 130 YouTube videos published by the Ukrainian Third Assault Brigade (with an impressive 1.2 million subscribers) between July 2022 and June 2024. Additionally, it includes a multimodal analysis of the videos from the same brigade's TikTok account (181K followers) and the visual posts from the Instagram account (106K followers). The paper is grounded in the concept of YouTube war (Christensen, 2008), the framework of digital militarism (Kuntsman & Stein, 2015), and employs the dialogic theory of public relations (Kent & Taylor, 2002) to explore how brigades build a two-way symmetrical communication with future recruiters.



Liliya Mantsevich

Postdoctoral researcher at the Centre d'Études et de Recherche Moyen-Orient, Méditerranée, CERMOM (INALCO). She holds a PhD in International Relations and Foreign Policy History from Belarusian State University. Her main area of interest lies in French foreign policy in the Middle East, with her current research focusing on France's approach to the Palestinian question during Emmanuel Macron's presidency. Her most recent publication is "The Influence of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on France's Socio-Political Landscape in the Early 2000s," in *Časopis: Tsaytshrift far yiddisher geschichte, demografie, ekonomik, literatur-forschung, schprachwissenschaft un etnografie*, 2023.

The Representation of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict in French Media: Patterns and Influence on Public Opinion

This paper examines the representation of the Palestinian question in French media, focusing on how media narratives both reflect and shape public opinion and political consensus. The Palestinian question has long been a sensitive and polarizing issue in French society, governed by France's historical involvement in the Middle East and the sociopolitical dynamics stemming from the significant Jewish and Arab-Muslim diasporas. The patterns of French media coverage have been contingent on the intensity of the conflict and the evolving degree of French political engagement with the Palestinian question. Through a comparative analysis of media reporting during the Second Intifada (2000–2005) and the 7 October Hamas offensive, the paper identifies a reorientation toward a pro-Israel narrative. This shift is contextualized within a broader decline in the prioritization of the Palestinian question in the discourse of the French political leadership. Furthermore, the paper highlights a predominantly presentist and asymmetric framing in recent media coverage of the war on Gaza, limiting deeper historical and contextual engagement. The findings underscore the complex interplay between media representations and the construction of political and societal narratives, illustrating the media's role as both the mirror and the architect of public discourse on this enduringly contentious issue.



Luis Rodrigo Pesce Villagómez

Doctoral researcher affiliated with the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences of Heidelberg University with a CONACYT fellowship funded by the Mexican government. He is a member of the HCIAS "Communication and Society in Ibero-America" research group and a collaborator with the Article 19 NGO's Mexico and Central America office. His doctoral research focuses on violence against journalists and communicators in Mexico with a focus on its impact on freedom of speech, right to information, and self-censorship. As journalist, translator, and copywriter, he has experience in various aspects of print and digital media.

Patterns of Peril: Analysing Violence against Journalists in Mexico by Type of Aggression, Aggressor, and Coverage

Mexico has become one of the deadliest places to practice journalism, with 168 journalists murdered between 2000 and November 2024, hundreds of aggressions against journalists registered every year, and a staggering impunity rate in crimes against journalists. Using a dataset comprising all aggressions registered by Article 19 between 2018 and October 2024, I detail a series of trends in anti-press violence with a particular focus on its evolution in Mexico, the geographical distribution of aggressions, the unique characteristics of the violence that each type of aggressor employs and the most common types of victim of each aggressor. I use descriptive statistics to identify patterns and suspected determinants of that violence to develop new hypotheses. Moreover, I part from a rational choice theory framework applied to aggressors' decision-making process to engage in violence against journalists. I conceptualize aggressors as rational beings who perpetrate aggressions in pursuit of specific interests after conducting a cost-benefit analysis to conclude that the projected results of perpetrating some form of anti-press violence outweigh its potential costs.



Mostafa Bostani

PhD researcher in International Politics and Conflict Research at the Bundeswehr University of Munich, Germany, focusing on EU-Middle East relations. His research interests include the intersection of law and politics and the comparative study of normative discourses and ideologies in Islamic and Western traditions. He has served as a senior researcher at the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research. His latest publication "Exceptionalism and nationalism in contemporary Iranian thought: a study of Javad Tabatabai's scholarship" appeared in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, (2024).

The Politics of "Terrorism": Contested Media Narratives in the Israeli War on Gaza

This paper investigates the contested nature of the discourse on "terrorism" in international politics and its influence on media narratives during the ongoing Israeli war on Gaza (2023-). The absence of a universally accepted legal definition of terrorism renders it a battleground for competing political narratives. Drawing on genealogical analyses of terrorism as a mechanism of exclusion and disidentification, as well as insights from the Copenhagen School of security studies, the paper examines how power relations shape the discourse of "terrorism" in international politics while simultaneously creating space for discursive contestation of such practices. These dynamics have led to divergent media portrayals of the war. The paper compares the first week of coverage by *Al Jazeera English* and *DW English* following the 7 October Hamas offensive. The findings reveal how divergent views on terrorism reflect each media outlet's distinct normative and political frameworks at national, regional, and global levels, accounting for conflicting practices of securitization on the one hand and discursive contestation on the other. Finally, the paper offers fresh insights into how the political dynamics of contestation over global order(s) shape conflicting narratives of conflict through the lens of terrorism.



Osman Osman

A scholar focused on how African states, particularly Kenya, leverage news media to construct narratives around terrorism and political violence. He earned a master's degree in Media Arts and Sciences from Indiana University and a bachelor's in Journalism from United States International University, Africa. Drawing on his extensive journalism experience for international outlets like *Al Jazeera English*, *CNN*, and *Quartz*, Osman explores the relationship between media and political power. His research has been published in journals such as *Journalism Studies* and *Media, War & Conflict*.

"It Feels Like We Are Expendable": Marginalization and Resilience in Kenyan Embedded Journalism

This paper investigates the experiences of Kenyan journalists embedded with the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) during military operations in Somalia from 2011 to 2021. It employs field and postcolonial theories to analyse the psychological, ethical, and safety challenges encountered by these journalists, as well as the ramifications of such challenges on their personal lives. Based on in-depth interviews with 25 journalists, it finds that Kenyan-embedded journalists occupy a marginal and vulnerable position within global journalism, lacking the symbolic capital and institutional support afforded to Western counterparts. This marginalization, rooted in enduring colonial legacies, exacerbates psychological trauma, restricts autonomy, and reinforces inequities that privilege Western journalists while devaluing local African reporters. Moreover, censorship and self-censorship pressures from both military authorities and media organizations further complicate their roles, placing journalists in ethical conflicts as they navigate competing demands from state and media institutions. These conditions entrench hardships and reproduce Kenyan state narratives in the Somali conflict, as embedded journalists' lived experiences and structural limitations channel their reporting in ways that align with state agendas. The paper argues that the conditions of Kenyan journalists in conflict zones actively contribute to sustaining state narratives, thereby embedding local journalism within a complex web of colonial hierarchies, institutional control, and military influence.



Rachel Horvath

PhD Candidate in Political Science at Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA. Her research focuses on social media as a venue for online activism as well as a salient and influential news source.

Eye on Palestine: A Case Study of News and Emotion on Instagram

Political science has long studied the impact of emotions on political behaviour. However, the advent of social media has transformed political participation in the digital space. One of the most common ways of engaging in politics online is the sharing of political posts within your social network. How do emotions affect our decision to share political media on Instagram? To explore this question, I conduct a case study on the Instagram news and activism account "Eye on Palestine". Through a negative sentiment analysis of 661 Instagram Reels and multiple quasipoisson regressions, I find that disgust, fear, anger, and sadness are related to shares in context-specific ways.



Sabri Ege

PhD candidate in Media Studies at the University of Westminster, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). He holds an MSc in Media and Communications from the London School of Economics (LSE) and has previously worked as a researcher and consultant across various media institutions. His academic interests include media anthropology, audience research, social theory, and media representations.

Framing the State of Exception: Chinese Media Representations of the Uyghur Internment Camps

Since 2014, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has opened mass internment camps in Xinjiang in which Uyghur ethnic minorities are held without charges, in accordance with their war on terror measures. This paper critically analyses the discursive representation of the Uyghur internment camps in English language Chinese Media, drawing upon the concept of the state of exception and critical studies of the war on terrorism. Through critical discourse analysis (CDA), the paper explores how a state of exception is invoked and normalized within the context of the war on terror, particularly the role of media discourses in this process. Despite controversies and discussions regarding the internment camps, relatively little academic literature has endeavoured to understand the matter. The analytical findings of the paper illustrate how the war on terror discourse enables the state to naturalize the logic of exception on the basis of security, moral, and economic discourses. The paper thus makes a theoretical intervention and provides original empirical evidence in arguing that the normalization of the state of exception in Xinjiang internment camps, amidst the war on terror, is not solely based on sovereign state power, but is also entangled within deeper ethnic, racial, colonial, and Islamophobic tensions. This problematizes and enriches both theoretical analysis and empirical understanding of the Uyghur camps and modern sovereignties.



Sadia Zamir

PhD candidate in Media and Communication Studies at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, with a background in media representation, democracy, linguistics, and critical discourse analysis. With over two decades of academic experience, she has held teaching and research positions in Prague, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. Her research focuses on media framing, political discourse, and democracy, employing interdisciplinary approaches. She has published in peer-reviewed journals. She has also presented her research at prominent academic forums, including IAMCR, ICA, ECREA, DECA and Prague Media Point.

Discursive Construction of Adversaries: Media Frames and Conflict Narratives in Television News in India and Pakistan

This paper examines how television news media constructs democracy in Pakistan, portraying it as a contested space shaped by internal and external media narratives. The research focuses on the process of "othering," particularly the framing of India as Pakistan's principal adversary. Rooted in the historical, territorial, and religious conflicts that have shaped their relationship, especially since the *Partition of 1947*, the paper explores how both Pakistani media and Indian media frame political entities, events, and processes as (un)democratic. The paper examines how Pakistani media portrays democracy through a lens of legitimacy, often delegitimizing political opponents to consolidate support for preferred factions, while Indian media frames Pakistan as a threat to regional security, reinforcing the image of Pakistan as a democracy in crisis. By analysing how both domestic and foreign media construct narratives of democracy, the paper highlights contradictions, tensions, and struggles in the portrayal of democratic legitimacy. The central research question investigates how the process of othering influences political discourse, shaping public perceptions of democracy and reinforcing ideological divides. Situated within a social constructionist framework, the paper reveals how media discourse is strategically leveraged to influence political identities and regional dynamics, thereby sustaining a polarized and antagonistic political landscape.



Salsabil Abdalbaki

PhD Candidate in Complex Systems and Computational Social Sciences, University College Dublin (UCD), Ireland. She is also an assistant lecturer in socio computing at Cairo University (on study leave). She utilizes topic modelling and large language models in the context of media framing in the water conflict surrounding the construction of Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam as a case study. Her paper, "Keyword-Assisted Topic Models Reveal the Dynamics in the Main Media Frames of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (2011-2022)" has been published in the *Media, War & Conflict* journal. Her PhD is funded by a scholarship from Cairo University and the Irish Research Council.

How Should an International Conflict Be Framed? Divergence and Alignments between Local and International Media Coverage of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam

This paper explores why and to what extent there is a frame alignment and/or diversity between the national and international media coverage on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The paper contributes empirically to the literature of computational framing in conflict studies by considering the GERD's conflict as a case study to investigate how and why these two groups of countries (basin and non-basin) portray this conflict in the top reported English national newspapers. The paper starts by collecting the English articles from the LexisNexis Database that are the most widely reported on GERD from basin and non-basin media outlets from 2019-2024. Second, it implements a Large Language Model (LLM) with a zero-shot explainable prompt to automatically detect the relevant explanatory conflict factor from the conflict literature, that describes each news article. Third, it measures Jensen-Shannon distance and the relative change in framing the dispute on the output of implementing the LLM to discern to what extent frame alignment and frame diversity exist between basin and non-basin countries. Fourth, it analyses the results using the concept of interest in international relations.



Sébastien Palla

PhD Candidate at Paris-Panthéon-Assas University working on media coverage of wars in Francophone Chinese international media outlets. His latest publication on *CGTN Français*, the Chinese international TV channel, as a tool for "political warfare" can be found in *Revue Réseaux* 245.

Death, Political Violence, and Peace Processes in the *Xinhua News* French Edition Coverage of the Israeli War on Gaza

This paper examines how *Xinhua News'* French edition frames death, political violence, and peace processes in a year its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 7 October 2023. Combining Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research explores how these frames align with China's international policy and the Global South's narratives. Through the analysis of 2,753 news items, the paper identifies *Xinhua's* reliance on actors like Hamas, the IDF, and international organizations, highlighting power dynamics within its editorial decisions. This work contributes to understanding how state-controlled media construct conflict narratives and try to influence global perceptions of international crises. The theoretical framework draws on Robert Ned Lebow's concept of frames of reference and Frédéric Lordon's axiomachy to analyse the competing narratives shaping journalistic discourse. Findings show that *Xinhua* tends to support Hamas narratives while still dehumanizing conflict victims. It also uses terms like "surprise attacks" instead of "terrorist attacks" central to Israel's narratives and helping to build a south focused frame of reference of political violence. *Xinhua* prioritizes perspectives from the Global South and regional actors, marginalizing Western narratives. Its framing reflects selective editorial choices that subtly advance the geopolitical interests of the Chinese Communist Party.



Syed Irfan Ashraf

Assistant Professor at the Department of Journalism & Mass Communication at the University of Peshawar, Pakistan. Former journalist, columnist and author of *The Dark Side of News Fixing: The Culture and Political Economy of Global Media in Pakistan and Afghanistan*. He holds a PhD in Mass Communication and Media Arts from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, United States. After four years of field reporting on militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan border, he pursued his doctorate in the United States. In 2014, he received the Mirror Award for his outstanding criticism of legacy media from Syracuse University. Ashraf co-produced an award-winning documentary titled "Class Dismissed" on Malala Yousafzai.

Are Journalists Their Own Worst Enemies? War on News Labour in Pakistan's Pashtun Periphery with Afghanistan

Following the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2021, the Afghan Taliban seized power in Kabul, leading to an increase in threats and killings of local Pashtun journalists in Pakistan's seven districts along the Afghan border. While the Pakistani Taliban and Pakistan military have long been fighting each other in this cross-border region, the coverage of this fresh phase of the "war on terror" is particularly threatening. Eight journalists have been killed in Pakistan in 2024. The plight of the local media landscape thus better illustrates the extent of the deadly working situation as these journalists not only cover Taliban terrorism but also reside near the border where the Taliban control local life. Drawing from extensive interviews with Pashtun journalists, the paper investigates how local news reporters in the seven tribal districts along Pakistan's Afghan border describe their predicament in the aftermath of the US regional pullout. I contend that the violence against these journalists is not a consequence of the conflict. Rather, it is part of the state's geopolitical strategy to influence Afghanistan. This understanding not only draws attention to the threats to free speech, and public safety that the militaristic status quo poses to the region, but it also urges a change in the way these journalists perceive resistance to violence against them.



Tamari Taralashvili

PhD candidate in European Studies at the Technical University of Chemnitz and Zittau/Görlitz University of Applied Sciences in Germany. She holds an MA in Political Science from Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia. She is an alumna of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and currently a freelance researcher and lecturer at Ilia State University. Her research interests include International Politics, Youth Studies, Memory Studies, Post-Colonialism, and Post-Soviet Studies. She participates in international and local research projects, conferences, and workshops, publishing in academic journals and blogs.

Disinformation in the Digital Age: Nationalism, Conflicts, and Fear in the South Caucasus

The South Caucasus region, including Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, is historically and geopolitically complex. The digital age has brought new dynamics to the region's ongoing challenges, particularly through the spread of disinformation. During the Russian-Ukrainian war, disinformation significantly influenced public perceptions and intensified nationalist sentiments. This research investigates the impact of disinformation on nationalism, conflicts, and fear in the South Caucasus, focusing on recent geopolitical developments. It is important to note that three frozen conflicts exist in the region – Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh – which host diverse ethnicities, adding complexity to the disinformation landscape. The spread of false information in the digital age significantly threatens societal cohesion and peace, especially in regions with a history of conflict like the South Caucasus. This research will explore the connections between nationalism, conflicts, and fear, providing valuable insights into the challenges and solutions related to digital disinformation. The findings will have broader implications for policy and practice in conflict resolution and media regulation. The paper provides practical recommendations to reduce the harmful effects of disinformation, thus contributing to a better-informed and more resilient society in the South Caucasus.

Lecturers



Des Freedman

Professor of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is the author of several titles including *The Politics of Media Policy* (2008) and *The Contradictions of Media Power* (2014) as well as the forthcoming *Capitalism and the Media*. His edited collections include *War and the Media* (2003) and *Media and Terrorism* (2012) (both with Daya Thussu) and he writes for *Declassified UK*. He led the 2016 Inquiry into the Future of Public Service Television and is a founding member of the UK Media Reform Coalition.

Embedded or Adversarial? Journalism, Imperialism, and War

This lecture focuses on contrasting narratives of the relationship between mainstream journalism and the communication of war and conflict. It considers different models of journalism's performance: as a 'fourth estate' that holds power to account and challenges the secrecy of states as they conduct military operations; as the battleground on which wars are increasingly fought; and as propagandists for state-sanctioned military activities. It provides a brief account of journalism's role in relation to earlier conflicts but focuses on western media's coverage of Israel's assault on Gaza. The talk considers whether journalists are able to shrug off political, organizational and ideological restrictions to provide independent accounts of conflict or whether, instead, mainstream journalism is more likely to reproduce established perspectives that amplify current geopolitical and imperial structures of power. The lecture draws on my research on the language, framing and agenda-setting practices that have dominated news coverage of the decimation of Gaza and reflects on the extent to which journalism is complicit with, rather than critical of, western foreign policy interests.



Dina Matar

Professor of political communication and Arab Media at the Centre for Global Media and Communication at SOAS. Matar is a well-known scholar working on media and war; de-colonizing political communication; Palestinian cultural production; social movements and digital activism; memory cultures; and narrative. She has published widely and is the Co-Founding Editor of the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*; former editor at the *Media, War & Conflict* Journal and currently serves as editor with *Communication, Culture and Critique* journal. Her most recent research is the co-edited volume with Helga Tawil-Souri, *Producing Palestine*, and she is sole editor of the forthcoming *Problematizing Political Communication in the Middle East and North Africa: Towards De-Colonization*.

Covering Genocide; Challenges to War and Media Theories

This lecture addresses the contradictions and limitations in legacy media's role as purveyors of true facts and their relationship to news elites. These contradictions have been exacerbated by the excessive mediation of Israel's war against Gaza that began in October 2023, the explosion in user-generated content, the weaponization of journalistic objectivity, the "newsification" of social media platforms and the strategic use of artificial intelligence and propaganda warfare by Israel to justify its actions. The lecture addresses the contradictions of Western legacy media's coverage of the conflict through highlighting two interlocking news practices – the "first framing" of events and the elite news sources that produce these frames. In making the argument, the research involves a comparative analysis of the main news coverage by the *BBC* and the Qatari-funded *Al Jazeera English* during the first week of the war. The comparative analysis juxtaposing two bulwarks of Western legacy news media and Global South media is necessary to underline how the dynamics between first framing and news elites uttering them sets the agenda for news coverage and reorients the intended audiences to think about issues in a particular way that reinforces the narrative of the news elite.



Tiziano Bonini

Associate Professor in Sociology of Culture and Communication in the Department of Social, Political, and Cognitive Sciences at the University of Siena in Italy. He co-authored with Emiliano Treré *Algorithms of Resistance* (MIT Press 2024).

Algorithms of Resistance in Time of War

How do political activists, social movements, global workers, and influencers develop tactics of algorithmic resistance by appropriating and repurposing the same algorithms that control our lives? Algorithms are all around us, permeating more and more aspects of our daily lives. While accounts of platform power tend to come across as bleak and monolithic, *Algorithms of Resistance* shows how people can resist algorithms across a variety of domains. Drawing from rich ethnographic materials and perspectives from both the Global North and South, our book explores how people appropriate and reconfigure algorithms to pursue their objectives in three domains of everyday life: gig work, cultural industries, and politics. Our book reveals how forms of algorithmic agency and resistance are endemic and mundane and how the platform society is a contested battleground of contrasting forces. For the purpose of this lecture, I will begin by outlining our key theoretical framework of platform and users' moral economies and algorithmic agency and resistance. From here, I will focus on the various inventive ways that political activists in times of cultural and dramatically real wars can work to achieve agency and resist the ubiquitous power of algorithms. Casting a wide net with a diverse range of case studies, I will try to reveal the moral imperative for all of us to resist algorithms.



Walid Al-Saqaf

Associate Professor of Journalism at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, specializing in the intersection of journalism and technology. With experience as Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of *The Yemen Times*, his work focuses on how innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, and social media shape modern journalism. He has developed tools like Mecodify and Alkasir and engages in research on digital ethics and news dissemination. His expertise directly aligns with the role of AI in journalism, emphasizing responsible innovation and the ethical challenges posed by emerging technologies.

Navigating The Future of Journalism in the Age of AI

This lecture explores the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on journalism. It highlights how AI is disrupting traditional media practices while also offering new opportunities for innovation and adaptation. The presentation outlines AI's growing role in journalistic processes, from trend spotting, content creation, and investigative reporting to real-time audience engagement. Through examples like Reuters' automated news detection and ChatGPT-4's ability to analyse data, it demonstrates the practical uses of AI in the newsroom. However, the lecture also delves into the challenges posed by AI, including the rise of deepfakes, disinformation, and potential job displacement. Emphasis is placed on the need for the journalistic field to adapt through education, reflection, and responsible innovation. The lecture advocates for a balanced approach where human judgment remains central, complemented by AI tools, to ensure accuracy, trustworthiness, and ethical reporting in an era increasingly influenced by technology.



Zahera Harb

Zahera Harb is Director of Postgraduate Studies and International Journalism Studies Cluster Lead at City, University of London. She has published widely on Journalism and Politics in the Arab countries. Her publications include an edited collection titled *Reporting the Middle East: The Practice of News in the 21st Century* (IB Tauris 2017), She is Co-Editor of *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* and former Associate Editor of *Journalism Practice*. She is currently Chair of Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) Board Of Directors, board member trustee of Marie Colvin Journalists' Network. She also sits on the board of the UK Press Recognition Panel (PRP). Harb previously served as board member/trustee of the Ethical Journalism Network and of Dart Centre Europe for Journalism and Trauma and worked as a broadcast Journalist in her native country Lebanon.

Covering Gaza: Rethinking Objectivity in Times of Human Tragedies

When journalists witness the same horrors inflicted on their people by a powerful military, anxieties around the concepts of objectivity, impartiality, balance, and neutrality in journalism become paramount. Amid military campaigns described as war crimes, journalistic values, including truthfulness, accuracy, and accountability, gain greater significance. Journalists are vital in bearing witness to these atrocities, uncovering the truth and holding perpetrators accountable, even in the most perilous conditions. In the context of the war on Gaza, as well as the conflicts in southern Lebanon and Ukraine, traditional objectivity, I suggest, is unattainable and needs to be challenged. The only semblance of truth emerges within a positioned or contextual framework. This perspective is evident in the coverage by Palestinian journalists in Gaza during the Israeli military atrocities, reflecting the broader challenges of war journalis

Rountable Speakers



Aicha El Basri

Researcher at the ACRPS. She earned a PhD in French literature from Savoy University in France. A former UN expert, she has held several media positions at the UN Department of Global Communications in New York, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Sudan, the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), then as a media consultant at the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) for the Arab states in Cairo. She has published several peer-reviewed articles on UN work.



Claudia Kozman

Assistant professor in residence in the Journalism and Strategic Communication Program at Northwestern University in Qatar. She earned her PhD from Indiana University. As a journalism scholar, she studies the news and public perceptions of the news from a comparative perspective. Integrating communication theories within a broader media systems approach, she focuses on the contexts of conflict and sports to analyse news content as a product of the intersection of journalistic norms and external influences. Kozman's research explores public opinion during conflict to uncover patterns in media dependency, news consumption, and information dissemination.



Mohamad Hamas Elmasry

Professor on the Media Studies program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. He earned his PhD in Mass Communication from the University of Iowa, where he was a Presidential Fellow. Elmasry's research focuses on Arab media systems, news coverage of race, and the media and terrorism. His work has been published in respected peer-reviewed journals and he has authored numerous political and media analyses and conducted hundreds of interviews on major television networks. Elmasry has been an invited speaker at Georgetown University's Al-Waleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, DePaul University, the University of Toronto, the University of Illinois-Chicago, the University of Denver, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and the World Social Forum.



Mohamed Elnawawy

Professor on the Media Studies Program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies with extensive expertise on the new media, particularly satellite channels and the Internet, and their impact on the global public sphere in general and the Arab public sphere. He received his doctorate in Journalism from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale and his master's and bachelor's degrees in Journalism and Mass Communication from the American University in Cairo. His published works include: *Revolutionary Egypt in the Eyes of the Muslim Brotherhood: A Framing Analysis of Ikhwanweb* (2018); *Egyptian Revolution 2.0: Political Blogging, Civic Engagement and Citizen Journalism* (co-author, 2013). He has published in several scholarly, peer-reviewed international journals and is the Founding and Senior Editor of the peer-reviewed *Journal of Middle East Media* and serves on the editorial boards of *Media, War & Conflict Journal*, *Journalism Education Journal* and *Global Media Journal*. He is also the former president of the Arab-U.S. Association for Communication Educators.

Discussants and Moderators



Abdelkarim Amengay

Assistant Professor in the Politics and International Relations program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, where he teaches Comparative Politics, Democratic Governance and Democratization Theories, and readings in Politics. He holds a PhD in political science from Sciences Po Paris and the University of Ottawa. His research interests include political behaviour, party politics, and populism in Western countries and the MENA region. He collaborates with Team Populism, an international research network that brings together scholars from several universities to study the causes and consequences of populism. He has published peer-reviewed articles in the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, *Political Studies Review*, and *Revue Française de science politique*.



Ammar Shamaileh

Associate and Head Professor of Politics and International Relations Program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. He earned his PhD from Florida State University and previously held positions at the University of Louisville and Franklin & Marshall College. His research interests primarily reside at the intersection of comparative political behaviour and political economy and his current research focuses primarily on the effects of autocratic instability on economic policy. He is the author of *Trust and Terror: Social Capital and the Use of Terrorism as a Tool of Resistance* (Routledge), and he is the coauthor of a second book that is currently under contract with Indiana University Press. His academic work has appeared in journals such as *International Interactions*, *Political Research Quarterly* and the *Journal of Information Technology*.



Azza El Hassan

Visiting Professor of Practice at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. She is a filmmaker and winner of various international film awards such as, the Grierson British Award, Luchino Visconti Award, Alaf and Arab Screen Film Awards. Her work includes *The Unbearable Presence of Asmahan*, *Kings & Extras* and *News Time*. Her academic research explores how Arab modern visual narratives are effected and formed following past and present encounters with colonial structures. Her book *The Afterlife of Palestinian Images: Visual Remains and the Archive of Disappearance*, uniquely addresses how plundered cultures relate to the actual remains of their archives after looting and destruction. She received her PhD from Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and she is the founder of "The Void Project", an artistic and research exploration into Palestinian visual archives that have survived colonial plunder.



Fadi Zaraket

Associate Professor at the Doha institute for Graduate Studies and Founder of the Digital Arabic Social Spaces Research Unit at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. He received a PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering from University of Texas, Austin. His research focuses on automated reasoning and its applications to language 97 understanding and information extraction, in particular for Arabic texts. He has published in peer reviewed journals and participated in conferences in the field.



Hani Awad

Researcher in the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies and a lecturer in the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. Awad holds a Doctorate in International Development from the University of Oxford. He is the author of *The Dilemma of Authoritarian Local Governance in Egypt* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022), and *Transformations of the Concept of Arab Nationalism* (Arab Network for Research & Publishing, 2012) [in Arabic]. He is published in the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* and *Middle East Critique*, among other academic journals. His research interests include local governance, politics of authoritarianism, sociopolitical mobilization, informality, local politics, Islamic movements, and social movements in the Middle East with special focus on Egypt and Palestine.



Harith Hasan

Associate Researcher at the Arab Center. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Sant'Anna School for Advanced Studies in Pisa, Italy and an MA in Political Communication from the University of Leeds . He previously worked as a non-resident researcher at the Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, and a resident researcher at both the Central European University and Harvard University. He has published widely in Arabic and English academic journals. His interests centre on state issues and their relationship to society, identity, and development.



Imed Ben Labidi

Associate Professor on the Media Studies program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. He previously taught several courses across disciplines in global studies, cultural studies, and comparative media studies with a focus on US media and third cinema. His interdisciplinary expertise combines different areas of Humanities: language and identity, cultural hegemony and politics, Orientalism, and media representation of race and ethnicity. He established a student exchange program between the University of Minnesota and Qatar University. For four years, he led several study-abroad classes from the United States that focused on studying and learning about the diversity of social and civic movements, the Arab revolutions, and media culture in the Middle East and Qatar in particular.



Mehran Kamrava

Professor of Government at Georgetown University in Qatar and Director of the Iranian Studies Unit at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. Kamrava has authored numerous journal articles and books, including, most recently, *Righteous Politics: Power and Resilience in Iran* (Cambridge University Press, 2023); *A Dynastic History of Iran: From the Qajars to the Pahlavis* (Cambridge University Press, 2022); *Triumph and Despair: In Search of Iran's Islamic Republic* (Oxford University Press, 2022); and *A Concise History of Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).



Muhanad Seloom

Assistant Professor in Critical Security Studies at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies and researcher at the Strategic Studies Unit in the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies. He is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter (UK). His main specialization involves national security, intelligence studies, military and strategic studies, and counterterrorism. He is an associate editor at *the Strategic Studies and Political Research* journal, published by the University of Tlemcen. His research focuses on state and non-state armed actors, national security, and intelligence studies. He is currently working on a research project titled, "Covert Currents of the Cradle: A History of Iraq's Intelligence". In addition to his academic publications, Seloom has published and recorded numerous op-eds and interviews in policy journals, media outlets, and academic blogs targeting a broader audience, including for *Al-Araby TV*, *BBC*, *The Economist*, *Al-Jazeera*, *TRT*, among others.



Omar Ashour

Professor of Security and Military Studies and the Founder of the Critical Security Studies Programme at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. He is the author of *The De-Radicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements* (Routledge, 2009) and *How ISIS Fights: Military Tactics in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Egypt* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021) and the editor of *Bullets to Ballots: Collective De-Radicalisation of Armed Movements* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021). His current research project is titled "Hybrid Defence for Smaller States: Assessing the Combat Effectiveness of Ukraine's Armed Forces".



Rania Elmalky

Professor of Practice on the Journalism Program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. She holds an MFA in Documentary Production and Studies from the University of North Texas, where she taught from 2018-2020, was recognized with the Media Arts department's Academic Excellence Award and successfully completed a one-year teaching certification. Elmalky also holds an MA in Journalism from Westminster University, which she attended as a Chevening scholar, as well as an MA in English and Comparative Literature from the American University in Cairo. Her transition to documentary followed a long editing and reporting career in Cairo-based *Daily News Egypt*. In 2011, she was shortlisted for the Anna Lindh Journalism Award in Monaco and, in 2019, she won the Best Denton Documentary Award at the Thin Line Festival for her animated documentary "489 Days", which was also among the official selection of Berlin's Factual Animation Festival and selected for broadcast by *KERA*, a *PBS* affiliate in North Texas.



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