



Symposium

Sports, Politics, Society

1-2 October 2022



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About the Symposium

The sports industry around the world has seen an astonishing pace of development in recent decades. Today, figures illustrate that the sports industry accounts for 2 per cent of the global economy. Global revenues on sport merchandise were worth close to \$47 billion in 2018 and are expected to reach around \$627 billion by 2023. In Qatar, some \$200 billion was spent on infrastructure and preparations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The direct economic revenue of the championship is expected to reach \$2 billion, with long-term returns estimated at more than \$9 billion.

Despite that these figures underscore the magnitude of the industry, sports, however, evidence to be a complex, multidimensional phenomenon with cultural, social, and political implications at the collective and individual levels. These implications provide the motivation for the study of sports using the tools and methods of Humanities and Social Sciences, particularly during sports mega-events that expose the relationship of sports to money, media, and politics, as well as to social and cultural activities.

Siyasat Arabiya and *Omran*, two ACRPS published journals, are organising an academic symposium titled “Sports, Politics, Society” that seeks to critically address the theme of sports and interrelated topics, especially in the Arab world, using the disciplinary lenses of political science, international relations, sociology, and anthropology. The symposium will be held on 1–2 October 2022 at the ACRPS main office in Doha and will be attended by Arab researchers and experts in the field.

The symposium will include 8 sessions during which researchers will present their papers and engage in Q&A sessions about their thoughts on the topic. The first session explores “The Contribution of the Social Sciences to Studying Sport” and situates the study of sports within the framework of Social Sciences and highlights the contemporary relevance of sports studies to the Arab region. The second session addresses “Sports and Social, Cultural and Political Development: Qatar 2022” by looking over Qatar’s bid to host the 2022 World Cup and its potential for building soft power and advancing cultural and societal development, and the role of media in branding a distinct Qatari nationalism. The third session, “Sport, Governance, and International Relations” focuses on the intersections of sports and politics by debating populism, ideology, and political conflict in sports, the development of sports as a tool for soft power, football and national identity, and authoritarian regimes’ exploitation of sporting achievements. The fourth session is concerned with “Sport as a Space for Resistance: The Case of Palestine” and investigates sport as an arena where resistance against occupation and apartheid plays out.

The second day hosts the fifth and sixth panels that deal with “Sports and Social Movements: The Ultras in the Arab Maghreb”, examining the junctions of sports, politics and religion in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco by analysing the discourse of ultras groups through graffiti and slogans, as well as their role in protest movements, particularly in Algeria. The seventh session discusses “Sports and Governance: Local Government Approaches”, tracing the relationship between sport and governance in the Arab world today, and the contribution of sport policies to economic and social integration. Finally, the eighth session, “Sports and Women: Gender Approaches”, detects the social and cultural engineering of the athletic body and the women’s gender identity in sports.

Timetable

Day One

Saturday 1 October 2022

9:00-9:30	Registration
9:30-9:45	Opening Remarks
9:45-11:00	<p>Session 1</p> <p>The Contribution of the Social Sciences to Studying Sports</p> <p>Chair: Amal Ghazal</p> <p>Haider Saeed: The Social Sciences and Sport</p> <p>Mahfoud Amara: Global and Local Trends in Sports Studies in the Arab Region</p>
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15-12:45	<p>Session 2</p> <p>Sports and Social, Cultural and Political Development: Qatar 2022</p> <p>Chair: Fahed al-Marri</p> <p>Senaid Salem Almarri & Saad Al Shammari: The Cultural Impact of Qatar Hosting the World Cup</p> <p>Wadih Ishac: Evaluating the Emotional and Psychological Impact of Hosting International Sports Events on Youth Residents: A Case Study of Qatar</p> <p>Kamal Hamidou: The Media and Sports as Instruments to Construct and Promote National Symbols: The Qatari Strategy as a Model</p>
12:45-13:45	Lunch Break

<p>13:45-15:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports, Governance, and International Relations</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Marwan Kabalan</p> <p>Abdelkarim Amengay & Ammar Shamaileh: Authoritarianism and Olympic Medals: Does Regime Personalization Matter?</p> <p>Ahmed Qasem Hussein: Sports and International Relations: How Positivist Theories Have Dealt with Sports</p> <p>Nadim Nassif: Measuring Countries' Capacities to use Sport as an Instrument of Soft Power: The World Sport Power Index</p>
<p>15:15-15:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Break</p>
<p>15:30-16:45</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports as a Space for Resistance: The Case of Palestine</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Ayat Hamdan</p> <p>Ihab Maharmeh: The Evolution and Impact of the Sporting Boycott of Israel</p> <p>Ibrahim S. Rabaia: The Sports Establishment in Occupied Palestine (1967-1995)</p>

- Timing of sessions based on Doha local time (GMT +3).

Day Two

Sunday 2 October 2022

<p>9:30-11:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Social Movements: The Ultras in the Arab Maghreb (1)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Mouldi Lahmar</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mohamed Naimi: Understanding the Ultras Movement in Morocco Kais Triaa: Ultras Groups in Tunisia: The Intersections of Sports, Politics, and Religion Rekad Djilali: Sports Stadiums as a Spaces for Mobilizing Political Consciousness in the 22 February Movement: The Algiers Ultras</p>
<p>11:00-11:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Break</p>
<p>11:15-12:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Social Movements: The Ultras in the Arab Maghreb (2)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Youssef Bouandal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ali Semmouk & Hichem Saouli: The Structure of Violence in Algeria's Socio-Athletic Sphere: A Socio-Archaeological Approach to Football Wadia Jehouani & Aissa El Ghayyati: Ultras' Graffiti and Constructing Fan Identity: A Sociological Study of Symbolic Ownership in Tetouan</p>
<p>12:30-13:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lunch Break</p>

<p>13:30-14:45</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Local Governance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Hani Awad</p> <p>Abderrahim Rharib, Youssef Siame & Mohamed Boukhalkhal: Provincial Sports Policy in Morocco as a Means for Socioeconomic Integration: The Case of Casablanca-Settat</p> <p>Tayeb Rehal: Public Funds and Algerian Football Clubs: AS Khroub in Constantine as an Example</p>
<p>14:45-15:00</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Break</p>
<p>15:00-16:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Session 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Women: Gender Approaches</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: Raouda Al-Kadri</p> <p>Hicham Kamouny: The Social and Cultural Engineering of the Athlete’s Body in Morocco</p> <p>Chaimae El Ghazi: Women Athletes in Morocco: Of What Gender Identity May We Speak?</p>
<p>16:15-16:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mouldi Lahmar: Closing Remarks</p>

- Timing of sessions based on Doha local time (GMT +3).

Participants

Abstracts



Mahfoud Amara

Associate Professor in Sport Management and Social Sciences, Physical Education Department, College of Education at Qatar University. He formerly served as Director of the Sports Sciences Program at the College of Arts and Sciences at Qatar University from 2017-2021, and before that he held the position of Associate Professor in Sport Social Sciences and Management and Deputy Director of the Centre for Olympic Studies and Research in the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University from 2004-2015. He has published extensively on Arab sports in the colonial and post-colonial context, the sports industry and marketing, sports and media, and sports and (post-)modernity, most notably his book *Sport, Politics and Society in the Arab World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Global and Local Trends in Sports Studies in the Arab Region

This paper examines perceptions of the sports research agenda, with an emphasis on constructivist theory. Constructivism provides a range of insights into the study of sport as a complex social phenomenon. It discusses how modernist narratives have come to dominate sports studies, which are usually defined as a product of the West, and so the West defines the region and history of sport. Despite acknowledging the Western role in modernization, this paper looks at the influence of other cultures and civilizations in building towards modernity in terms of knowledge, science, and innovation. It also examines Western differences in conceptualizing body and soul in a spiritual and religious sense, and how Scandinavian, British, and southern Mediterranean sports traditions each conceptualize productivity. Carrying out a survey of sports culture and practice in Western Europe is no easy task, as drawing the exact boundary between Eastern and Western Europe is equally difficult. The paper evaluates the richness and challenges of constructivist epistemology in an Arab context through sports studies. Accordingly, it examines the concept of variation and change in sports studies, the application of discourse analysis to the study of sport in various cultural and linguistic traditions, and criticism regarding its potential relativity.



Abdelkarim Amengay

Assistant Professor on the International Relations and Political Science Program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. His research interests centre on political behaviour, populism, youth representation and trust in elites. He has previously published articles in a number of international tribunals, including the *Political Studies Review*, the *Journal of Common Market Studies*, and *Revue Française de science politique*.

Authoritarianism and Olympic Medals: Does Regime Personalization Matter?

Since the emergence of the modern Summer Olympics at the end of the nineteenth century, authoritarian regimes have taken proactive steps to procure titles and medals in this global sporting event, especially the fascist regimes of Germany and Italy before World War II and the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and East Germany during the Cold War era. These events provide an unparalleled opportunity to heighten national sentiment, further the regime's legitimacy, and even highlight its ideological superiority in front of its internal and external opponents. But not all authoritarian regimes have enjoyed the same level of Olympic success. This research investigates the causes of these disparities, by focusing on the role of the authoritarian regime's personalization as an explanatory factor. An analysis of data covering the period from 1948 to 2008, reveals that the ability of any country ruled by an authoritarian regime to win Olympic medals is affected by the level of regime personalization. The higher the level of regime personalization, the fewer Olympic medals of the country, regardless of the nature of this regime (party, monarchy, military, personalist), accounting for the centrality of the structural factors that traditionally control the brilliance of any country in international sports competitions, foremost of which are economic growth and population.



Mohamed Boukhalkhal

Researcher at the LRPFG within the ENCG at Université Hassan II, Casablanca. His research interests include sports in Africa. He has published several studies including the 2022 article “Conceptions of Physical and Sports Education among Students” in the journal *Revue de Chercheur* and “Sports in the School Environment: Between Reality and Curriculum” in *Réflexions Sportives* (2021).

Provincial Sports Policy in Morocco as a Means for Socioeconomic Integration: The Case of Casablanca-Settat

Morocco is considered a unique model in the region on account of its provincial policies that, by developing and strengthening an advanced regionalisation, grant each of its twelve provinces the freedom to design its own sectoral development policies as well as autonomy in decision-making and developing its own management practises. Further, the development of regional public policy – as a dynamic, interactive process – depends on several factors, including the state’s public policy, the needs of citizens, regional particularities, and the means and resources employed. Designing a regional policy to achieve socioeconomic integration of citizens requires that actors, whether on the provincial, regional, or local level, intensify efforts to meet residents’ expectations; thus, provincial sports policy is regarded as one that officials ought to develop, given the hard work and methodology that reinforce the central role sports can play as a vehicle for development and socioeconomic integration for the residents, especially the youth, of every province. Thus, the paper is concerned with how local and regional actors may enact provincial sports policy to achieve social and economic integration in the Casablanca-Settat province. It interrogates this policy using a process that extends from design to implementation, through an academic subfield rooted in a revised positivist methodology and a twofold approach with a qualitative dimension based on semi-guided interviews with provincial officials, and a quantitative dimension based on a survey addressed to residents of the area.



Rekad Djilali

Researcher at the Center for Research in Amazigh Language and Culture in Bejaia, Algeria. He worked as a visiting professor in the Department of Law at Ahmed Bin Yahya Al-Wancharissi University from 2018-2019, and he also worked as visiting professor for the Institute of Physical Education and Sports at the same university from 2017-2018. He has published several studies in international journals, in addition to contributing to a number of collective books. He has a forthcoming book titled *Salafis and the Crisis of Social Integration: A Study on Identity Profiling and Identity Formation* published by the Center for Arab Unity Studies.

Sports Stadiums as a Spaces for Mobilizing Political Consciousness in the 22 February Movement: The Algiers Ultras

This paper argues that there is a clear paradox in the connection of political awareness to sports among football fans, who created many of the slogans and chants of the Algerian popular movement. They sketched out the popular movement's characteristics over many years from inside the stadiums, relying on mostly peaceful, but sometimes violent methods. But with the formation of the first ultras in 2007, these fan groups became more organized. The Algiers ultras' chants came to serve as the backbone of the popular movement's weekly demonstrations from 22 February 2019. This paper explains the contribution of the Algerian ultras associations, by calling out corruption, to turning the stadium into a safe space to escape censorship. These groups. Their songs and slogans, defied sporting regulations to feed a growing awareness of political and social problems among football fans Algiers. This subject is important because it addresses the intersection of sports and politics, which cannot be separated, and the role of football fans in spreading political messages and content. Such a topic can also provide an opportunity to identify the reasons behind the rise of political awareness among sports fans.



Aissa El Ghayyati

Researcher of Sociology at the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Abdelmalek Essaâdi University. He received a master's degree from the same department. His research interests concern the sociology of sports fanship and protest movements among spectators.

Ultras' Graffiti and Constructing Fan Identity: A Sociological Study of Symbolic Ownership in Tetouan

Ultras, by nature, push the football team off the field and into the public sphere. This study focuses on the ultras' activities outside the stadium, using an ethnographic approach to understand the meanings behind ultras' graffiti. It undertakes a case study of the "Los Matadores" ultras, active in western Tetouan and the "Siempre Paloma" ultras, active in the East, who both support the same team. The study finds that these Tetouan ultras' graffiti expresses symbolic ownership of the public sphere, where the ultras enter into two-dimensional symbolic conflicts with other groups. The first dimension of this conflict relates to the struggle with non-local groups from other cities, whereby the ultras invest in spatial imaginary and place memory, to distinguish themselves from outsiders. The second dimension of this conflict involves local groups from the same city who support the same team fighting over leadership of the city through a war of symbols.



Chaimae El Ghazi

Doctoral Researcher on the Research Team for Political and Constitutional Performance at Université Mohammed V in Morocco. She earned her master's in constitutional law and political science. Her research interests include the study of constitutional regimes, issues of democratic transition, and social protest movements.

Women Athletes in Morocco: Of What Gender Identity May We Speak?

This study examines the relationship between the woman athlete's body and gender identity with focus on the case of Moroccan woman athletes. The research begins from the hypothesis that women athletes' experience of the body is different from that of men; whereas athletic performance for men relates to engaging in physical feats associated with an assumed gender identity, women's athletics, by way of the body, constitute a kind of 'incorrect' human performance of 'natural' gender, implying that it is based on a conflict around the relationship between women's sports and gender identity. By subjecting the female body to a particular cultural construction that forms the contours of how that body perceived, departing from this perception by way of a physique contrary to extant prescriptions has become the object of unsettling interpretations of the man/woman gender dichotomy. The study seeks to understand the societal manifestations that characterise women athletes' bodies in Morocco by paying attention to the social performances reified within the family and the media establishment, and to the assumptions about woman athletes and their social roles.



Kamal Hamidou

Associate Professor in the Department of Mass Communication at Qatar University, where he served as Department Chair (2019-2022). He worked as assistant professor at Université de Lorraine Metz in France from 2007 to 2011, as well as professor at United Arab Emirates University from 2007 to 2014. He has authored many academic articles and publications in Arabic, English, and French, including a book published in French entitled *Télévision, Intégration et Changement Socioculturel en Algérie* (Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, Paris, 2003), as well as several studies in peer-reviewed journals in all three languages, the latest of which is titled “Media as a New Academic Field: Epistemological and Ontological Determinants Shaping the Theoretical Frameworks and Methodological Approaches to the Field of Communication” (2022).

The Media and Sports as Instruments to Construct and Promote National Symbols: The Qatari Strategy as a Model

Drawing from the approach set forth by Simon Anholt based on evaluating processes of constructing national brands in relation to the presence or absence of three necessary factors – a clearly-defined strategy, an essence on which it is based, and accompanying symbolic measures – the author of this paper examines Qatar’s strategy based on employing the media and sports as instruments of public diplomacy to create a positive mental image internationally of a newly-formed country which is geographically small but has become a major, influential actor on the world stage. The paper examines the particularities of the Qatari strategy, which has combined organising massive athletic events with participating therein and constructing world-renowned sports facilities with media investment in those events. Its importance lies in that it examines the construction of a national brand using the Anhollian approach. The study uses this research to identify the particularities of Qatar’s policy on employing information and athletics to construct its national brand and a positive mental image at home, in the region, and abroad while determining the most important stages and steps that the State of Qatar has taken to accomplish the objectives of that strategy.



Ahmed Qasem Hussein

Researcher at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, managing editor of the periodical journal *Siyasat Arabiya*, and managing editor of the annual future studies journal *Istishraf*. He has worked as an assistant teacher in the College of Political Science at Damascus University and earned his PhD in political science at the University of Florence in Italy. He has published research and several scientific studies in international relations. He edited the books *Boycott as a Strategy against Israeli Occupation and Apartheid: Present-day Realities and Aspirations* (2018) and *The June 1967 War: Paths and Implications* (2019), both published by the ACRPS.

Sports and International Relations: How Positivist Theories Have Dealt with Sports

In a match between two national teams or football clubs at a local or regional tournament, FIFA can keep pace with the political parties of the Great Powers that wield international political influence in terms of the capacity to mobilise: to manage and organise championships attended by tens of thousands of people, divided into leagues and associations related to national teams and football clubs known as ‘ultras’, according to a set of rules as well as security and safety measures imposed by international sports organisations. States have become subject to the rules and regulations FIFA sets in relation to stadium capacity, compliance with safety and security requirements for fans, and even regulating the rights to broadcast highly competitive sports matches viewed by millions across the world, as well as the associated commercial activities undertaken by transnational corporations during those matches. Hence, this paper seeks to shed light on the impact of the sports phenomenon on international politics through the lens of positivist theoretical approaches in international relations, especially because sports in today’s world is no longer a hobby but a globalised phenomenon infused with an international, institutional character. It is a phenomenon that calls for careful consideration of the impact it will have upon the theorisation movement in the field of international relations, given the ways in which it affects all audiences across the world – no longer the small village globalisation promised it would be. Instead, given the technological revolution and the profound impact of media in its various ‘social’ forms, our world more closely resembles a large residential high-rise inhabited by all of creation.



Wadih Ishac

Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Education, College of Education, Qatar University. His research focuses on the social and political effects of mega sporting events and foreign investment in the sports industry. He has published extensive research and book chapters on sports topics, including: “Social Impact Projections for Qatar Youth Residents from 2022: The Case of the *IAAF, 2022*”; “Sport and Development in Emerging Nations”; and “Arab Countries’ Strategies to Bid for and Host Major Sport Events.”

Evaluating the Emotional and Psychological Impact of Hosting International Sports Events on Youth Residents: A Case Study of Qatar

Residents’ awareness of the social impact of hosting international sporting events is essential to gaining broad social support. The Arab Gulf region has invested in hosting major or international sporting events for many reasons, including to attract tourists and improve their image abroad, and to develop international relations. This study focuses on the effect of hosting sporting events on the host community. It consequently compares the psychic income generated by two international sporting events hosted by Qatar in two different time periods, to measure the resulting effect. The paper relies on the Mann-Whitney U test, comparing two independent groups, after collecting data from two different samples of university students residing in Qatar, one in 2015 following the World Handball Championships, and the other in 2019 after the IAAF World Championships. The results demonstrate an increase in social influence. This study provides decision-makers and organizers with a better understanding of the results of hosting international or major events, as well as providing countries in the region with insight into the importance of hosting sporting events for community development.



Wadia Jehouani

Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Tetouan, Morocco. He holds a PhD in Sociology from the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences at Cadi Ayyad University in Marrakech. His research interests concern the study of demographic fragility in Morocco, industrial and organizational sociology, and digital society. His recent publications are the book *Pioneers of Organizational and Industrial Sociology* (2017), and the chapter “Environmental Issues at the Core of Sociology: Towards Contemporary Sociological Trends” in *Environment and Sustainable Development: New Roles and Promising Prospects for Social Sciences* (Fikr Foundation for Development, Culture, and Science, 2020).

Ultras’ Graffiti and Constructing Fan Identity: A Sociological Study of Symbolic Ownership in Tetouan

Ultras, by nature, push the football team off the field and into the public sphere. This study focuses on the ultras’ activities outside the stadium, using an ethnographic approach to understand the meanings behind ultras’ graffiti. It undertakes a case study of the “Los Matadores” ultras, active in western Tetouan and the “Siempre Paloma” ultras, active in the East, who both support the same team. The study finds that these Tetouan ultras’ graffiti expresses symbolic ownership of the public sphere, where the ultras enter into two-dimensional symbolic conflicts with other groups. The first dimension of this conflict relates to the struggle with non-local groups from other cities, whereby the ultras invest in spatial imaginary and place memory, to distinguish themselves from outsiders. The second dimension of this conflict involves local groups from the same city who support the same team fighting over leadership of the city through a war of symbols.



Hicham Kamouny

Doctoral Researcher in Sociology and Anthropology at the Psychological, Sociological, and Cultural Studies Laboratory at Université Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah in Fes, Morocco. He earned his master's in Moroccan languages and cultures and development strategy from the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines at Université Mohammed Premier. His research interests include the study of the imaginary, social manifestations, the anthropology of the body, and social symbols and rituals. His latest publications include a chapter entitled 'Religion and Religiosity as a Horizon of Thought for Abderrahim El Atri: From Shrine Corpus to Suitable Text' in the 2022 book *Religion and Religiosity: Intersecting Perspectives*.

Sports and Culture: The Social and Cultural Engineering of the Athlete's Body in Morocco

By way of a case study on the city of Rabat, this paper examines the embodiments, mechanisms, and stakes by which the process of constructing and manufacturing the athlete's body in Morocco takes place. In this context, the paper discusses the sociocultural meanings and connotations generated in relation to athletes and others involved in sports based on social recognition and the broader significance of sports within that same society. It demonstrates that the motive for the practise of this social activity no longer relates solely to its health and physical advantages in disease prevention and relaxation, but has extended to social texts related to spatial, hierarchical, and social particularities. As well, this practise relates to strategies of social posturing and pridefulness via wardrobe discourse, physical and symbolic violence, and methods of discrimination. In this context, the paper examines these meanings and connotations from a socio-anthropological perspective.



Ihab Maharmeh

Assistant Researcher at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, and Editorial Secretary of the *Siyasat Arabiya* journal. He worked at Birzeit University in Palestine during the period 2010-2015. He has published several research papers, most recently, “Forced Displacement in Area C and the (Palestinian) Jordan Valley under Israeli Settler Colonialism” in *Siyasat Arabiya*, and “The Rights of Palestinian Workers in Israel and Its Settlements: Towards a Protective Policy” in the *Hikama* Journal, 2021.

The Evolution and Impact of the Sporting Boycott of Israel

This paper examines the roots and evolution of the sporting boycott of Israel and evaluates its impact on the Israeli apartheid regime. This paper discusses the development of the sporting boycott of Israel in major international sports tournaments in the last decade, and how the outbreak of the Arab revolutions in late 2010s gave additional impetus to Arab youth to adhere to the boycott of Israel, particularly in sports, parallel to their demands to overturn authoritarianism, and gave Arab athletes an opportunity to transform major international sports tournaments into a space for political action. The involvement of many Arab athletes in the revolutions facilitated and honed the boycott of Israel in major international sporting events and the emergence of new tactics in contrast to those of the 1970s and 80s after the Arab countries expelled Israel from the Asian Federation. Thus, the sporting boycott of Israel has emerged in the last decade as a tool of international politics that reflects the impact of the interaction taking place between local protest movements and cross-border advocacy networks and on diplomatic efforts by Israel to promote sports entrepreneurship.



Senaid Salem Almarri

Assistant Professor of Sports Administration in the Department of Physical Education at Qatar University. He previously worked as a physical education supervisor in the Qatari Ministry of Education from 2009 to 2011 and as assistant director of student affairs at a science and education institute from 2011 to 2013. His research interests include strengthening Qatari culture during the 2022 World Cup and the role of athlete-leaders. He has published many studies including a 2022 article entitled ‘The Reality of Strategic Planning in Sports Federations in Qatar’ in the sports journal *SUCCESS*.

The Cultural Impact of Qatar Hosting the World Cup

This paper covers the cultural impacts experienced by states that host major international championships such as the World Cup, examining those pertaining to the State of Qatar’s hosting the 2022 World Cup. It discusses this topic in reference to previous championships ranging from Japan 2002 until the most recent iteration, Russia 2018, and offers suggestions and solutions as to the optimal use and employment of this effect to the advantage of Qatari society and the Arab-Islamic world, with Qatar being the first Arab or Islamic state to host this important event. The paper seeks to raise awareness of this ‘golden opportunity’ for Qatar and the Arab states to combat stereotypes about the region. One of the important results of the World Cup appears to be the cultural transformation that arises from interactions between individuals from various countries, given that millions of people usually travel to the host country to take part in the some of the greatest events in the sports industry. In this context, the paper examines connections between sports and culture as well as the effect that hosting such a significant sporting event has had on previous host countries. Because the distinction between social and cultural effects is often unclear, the paper promotes examining the social impacts of hosting significant athletic events: they directly affect the quality of people’s lives.



Mohamed Naimi

Professor of Organisational Sociology at the Institute for Social Development in Rabat, Morocco. He earned his PhD in political science from Université Mohammed V. He is a researcher at the Centre d'Études et de Recherches en Sciences Sociales and a member of the Marsad America Latina working group. His research interests revolve around social movements in Morocco and their role in democratic transition in the Arab world and Latin America. His most recent publications include a January 2020 study titled “The Limitations of Rational Choice Theory in the Sociology of Social Movements: The Cases of the February 20 and Hirak Rif Movements.”

Understanding the Ultras Movement in Morocco

This study addresses sports from a sociological perspective, particularly football and how it relates to society, by examining the ultras movement in Morocco. Football has begun to elicit astonishing popular enthusiasm all over the world, and it derives its appeal from the simplicity of its rules and the fact that to play it requires no more than a ball and a space to play, for which a street corner or empty area can easily suffice. In another regard, the celebratory scenes that ultras movements create in the stadiums are no less enjoyable than watching football itself, which has made them a complex phenomenon worthy of research. This study seeks to understand the complexities of football, where several factors intersect. As a public space, the same supervision and political exploitation that applies to all public spaces applies to it as well. At the same time, football can become a space for communal social strata to express grievances or political demands in the same way as the streets. The study demonstrates that the forms of violence and disturbances that affect the activities of ultras are at times the product of misunderstanding on part of the authorities and the process of interaction that emerges between security forces and these ultras.



Nadim Nassif

Associate Professor in Sports and Physical Education at Notre Dame University – Louaize, Lebanon. He worked as Director of the Sports Management Program from 2013-2017 at the same university. His research interests lie in coaching and the history and management of sport, particularly sport governance. He has published several studies, most recently contributing the chapter “Using Sport as a National Soft Power Strategy: The Case of Mixed Martial Arts in Bahrain” to the *Routledge Guide to Sports in the Middle East* (2002).

Measuring State Capacities to Use Sport as an Instrument of Soft Power: The World Sport Power Index

This paper proposes an index to measure countries’ success in using sport as a soft power tool. When implementing sports policies at the national level, one of the main government objectives is investing in measures to boost international status. Although sports policy goals have generally been set at the national level by many prominent researchers in sports governance, research measuring the success or failure of such policies is still scarce. In fact, much of the literature assesses whether countries have achieved international status through sport with reference to the Olympic medal table. This is due to the fact that the newly created soft power indices, particularly the Soft Power 30, the Soft Power Index and the Global Soft Power Index, cannot use the relevant sports rankings to measure the ability of countries to use sports as a soft power tool. In this context, this paper aims to propose a new ranking that will assess whether the national sports policies implemented by governments have met their soft power objectives.



Ibrahim S. Rabaia

Director of Research and Policy at the Palestinian Research Center and Editor-in-Chief of the periodical *Palestinian Affairs*. He earned his PhD in political economy at Universiti Malaya in Malaysia. He is a visiting professor in the Department of Political Science at Birzeit University in Palestine, where he is also an instructor in the field of strategic sports communication at the Joint Executive Programme for Sports Management, run by FIFA's International Centre for Sports Studies (CIES) and Birzeit's Centre for Continuing Education. He has worked as planning coordinator in the fields of international relations, media, and local governance at the Ministry of Planning. His research interests include contemporary social and political history in Palestine, political economy, and Southeast Asian issues.

The Sports Establishment in Occupied Palestine (1967-1995)

The 1967 Naksa was a shock to the structures and regulations of Palestinian social action in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and it exerted a significant impact upon the Palestinian sports establishment. Until the Naksa dismantled these structures, the sports establishment in the West Bank belonged to Jordan and its counterpart in Gaza was under Egyptian control. Palestinian athletes began searching for forms of self-organisation based on the principles of anti-occupation sports conditioning and a refusal to take part in the colonialist administrative and technical system that Israel has attempted to impose. This paper explores the position of the collective sports establishment as embodied by clubs in occupied territory after 1967, and it examines the evolution of these formations; their structure that gradually progressed toward adaptation to, and confrontation of, the colonialist system of domination and authority; and the development of their instruments and socio-political presence prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in 1993. The paper primarily relies on focused interviews with actors in the Palestinian sports movement in occupied territory before 1995, drawing upon the archive of the confederation of clubs in the West Bank according to an analytical reading of the roles of individuals and institutions, their interactions, and their presence in the context of the internal nationalist movement at large.



Tayeb Rehal

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Public Funds and Algerian Football Clubs: AS Khroub in Constantine as an Example

This study discusses the relationship between football club presidents and public money, as well as their social interactions with various actors in El Khroub, in Constantine, Algeria, using an anthropological approach based on field observations and semi-directed interviews. The study aims to examine the extent to which public money contributes to building a kind of prestige among the presidents of football clubs. It also illustrates the process of transferring economic capital into symbolic capital and vice versa. The paper thus addresses the following research questions: How can the presidents of football sports clubs accumulate different types of symbolic capital? And do the team’s sporting victories improve the brand image of club presidents? Do they earn them respect and prestige in the sports community and society as a whole?



Abderrahim Rharib

Professor and Researcher at the Laboratoire de Recherche Prospective en Finance et Gestion (LRPFG) within the École Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion (ENCG) at Université Hassan II, Casablanca. His research interests include sports in Africa. He has published several studies including a chapter in a 2018 Routledge volume on sports in Africa, titled *Football and Politics in Morocco*.

Provincial Sports Policy in Morocco as a Means for Socioeconomic Integration: The Case of Casablanca-Settat

Morocco is considered a unique model in the region on account of its provincial policies that, by developing and strengthening an advanced regionalisation, grant each of its twelve provinces the freedom to design its own sectoral development policies as well as autonomy in decision-making and developing its own management practises. Further, the development of regional public policy – as a dynamic, interactive process – depends on several factors, including the state’s public policy, the needs of citizens, regional particularities, and the means and resources employed. Designing a regional policy to achieve socioeconomic integration of citizens requires that actors, whether on the provincial, regional, or local level, intensify efforts to meet residents’ expectations; thus, provincial sports policy is regarded as one that officials ought to develop, given the hard work and methodology that reinforce the central role sports can play as a vehicle for development and socioeconomic integration for the residents, especially the youth, of every province. Thus, the paper is concerned with how local and regional actors may enact provincial sports policy to achieve social and economic integration in the Casablanca-Settat province. It interrogates this policy using a process that extends from design to implementation, through an academic subfield rooted in a revised positivist methodology and a twofold approach with a qualitative dimension based on semi-guided interviews with provincial officials, and a quantitative dimension based on a survey addressed to residents of the area.



Haider Saeed

Head of Research at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies and Editor-in-Chief of *Siyasat Arabiya* journal. He supervised a study on the status of social sciences in Iraqi universities in 2008 and led a research team on Islamic civil society in Iraq in 2010. He also contributed to a national report on human development in Iraq for the years 2009 and 2014. He edited *Arab Shia: Identity and Citizenship* (ACRPS, 2019), and wrote *The Politics of the Symbol: On the End of the Culture of the Nation-State in Iraq* (2009). Most recently, he contributed to a collective book *The Islamic State organization: "Daesh", Vol. 2* (2018).

The Social Sciences and Sport

This paper traces the development of sports studies in Western, particularly European, social sciences since the 1960s and presents the main trends in this field. It investigates the works of two sociologists that have written widely on the development of sport in European societies, Norbert Elias (1897-1990) and Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), whose work provides the “founding texts” of the sociology of sports, arguing that these texts set the normative precedent for social studies on sport. As a result, sport has only been studied as an empirical field, in which social theorists do not test their theoretical assumptions, but instead use sport as a model to prove hypotheses. The social sciences thus did not deal with sports as one of the major phenomena that shape human society, such as identity, religion, and power. Rather, it is a phenomenon that oscillates between social structures and social actors, who use and give meaning to it. The paper explores the scholarly current based on Bourdieu, which examines sport under the lens of critical sociology, situating it in the context of class formation in European societies. But the argument goes further, to demonstrate that sport can reveal distinctions embedded in Western societies according to ethnicity, race, gender, and so on. Moreover, the paper explores the possibility of studying sports as a subject within the cultural studies discipline, arguing that sport occupies an important place in the shift from a primitive to capitalist society, as one of the most important cultural features of contemporary societies.



Hichem Saouli

PhD researcher in Sociology at Akli Mohand Oulhadj University of Bouira, Algeria. He holds a master's degree in Sociology from Badji Mokhtar University. His research interests concern the study of violence in Algerian society. Among his latest publications is a joint study titled, "The Phenomenon of Tax Evasion as a Sociological Problem: Towards a Critical Approach," in the *Journal of Social Affairs* (2021).

The Structure of Violence in Algeria's Socio-Athletic Sphere: A Socio-Archaeological Approach to Football

Violence in Algeria is intricately linked to the imbalances and paradoxes inherent in the social, economic and political structure of society and is a direct result of social fragility. In this context, this study adopts a socio-archaeological approach to study violence in sports in Algeria. It argues that this violence, transcends the stadium, seeping into the wider social, political, and economic system, directly related to Ibn Khaldoun's concept of 'asabiyya. Violence in Algerian sports is the logical conclusion of the Algerian political and economic environment, which pushed football out of the world of pure entertainment and transformed it into a vehicle to drive the interests of a limited group that dominates the sporting sector, including fans.



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The Structure of Violence in Algeria’s Socio-Athletic Sphere: A Socio-Archaeological Approach to Football

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Ammar Shamaileh

Assistant Professor on the International Relations and Political Science Program at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. His research interests include the intersection of comparative political behavior and political economy. He has published widely in international peer-reviewed journals such as *Comparative Politics*, *International Interactions*, and *Political Research Quarterly*. He contributed “Regime Elite Turnover in the Waning Syrian Civil War (2016-2021): A Socio-Economic Approach” to the *Omran* journal, 2022.

Authoritarianism and Olympic Medals: Does Regime Personalization Matter?

Since the emergence of the modern Summer Olympics at the end of the nineteenth century, authoritarian regimes have taken proactive steps to procure titles and medals in this global sporting event, especially the fascist regimes of Germany and Italy before World War II and the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and East Germany during the Cold War era. These events provide an unparalleled opportunity to heighten national sentiment, further the regime’s legitimacy, and even highlight its ideological superiority in front of its internal and external opponents. But not all authoritarian regimes have enjoyed the same level of Olympic success. This research investigates the causes of these disparities, by focusing on the role of the authoritarian regime’s personalization as an explanatory factor. An analysis of data covering the period from 1948 to 2008, reveals that the ability of any country ruled by an authoritarian regime to win Olympic medals is affected by the level of regime personalization. The higher the level of regime personalization, the fewer Olympic medals of the country, regardless of the nature of this regime (party, monarchy, military, personalist), accounting for the centrality of the structural factors that traditionally control the brilliance of any country in international sports competitions, foremost of which are economic growth and population.



Saad Al Shammari

PhD student at the University of South Carolina in the US. He formerly worked as a lecturer in the Sports Management Program at Qatar University, and at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. He also served as a research assistant in the College of Health and Human Performance at the University of Florida, where he earned his master's degree in Sports Management, and as an associate coordinator at the University of Florida Athletic Association. He holds a UEFA Diploma in refereeing from Nylon, Switzerland, and subsequently worked for the Asian Football Confederation and FIFA as an international referee. His research interests lie in management, marketing, consumer behaviour and the impact of hosting major sporting events on society.

The Cultural Impact of Qatar Hosting the World Cup

This paper covers the cultural impacts experienced by states that host major international championships such as the World Cup, examining those pertaining to the State of Qatar's hosting the 2022 World Cup. It discusses this topic in reference to previous championships ranging from Japan 2002 until the most recent iteration, Russia 2018, and offers suggestions and solutions as to the optimal use and employment of this effect to the advantage of Qatari society and the Arab-Islamic world, with Qatar being the first Arab or Islamic state to host this important event. The paper seeks to raise awareness of this 'golden opportunity' for Qatar and the Arab states to combat stereotypes about the region. One of the important results of the World Cup appears to be the cultural transformation that arises from interactions between individuals from various countries, given that millions of people usually travel to the host country to take part in some of the greatest events in the sports industry. In this context, the paper examines connections between sports and culture as well as the effect that hosting such a significant sporting event has had on previous host countries. Because the distinction between social and cultural effects is often unclear, the paper promotes examining the social impacts of hosting significant athletic events: they directly affect the quality of people's lives.



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Provincial Sports Policy in Morocco as a Means for Socioeconomic Integration: The Case of Casablanca-Settat

Morocco is considered a unique model in the region on account of its provincial policies that, by developing and strengthening an advanced regionalisation, grant each of its twelve provinces the freedom to design its own sectoral development policies as well as autonomy in decision-making and developing its own management practises. Further, the development of regional public policy – as a dynamic, interactive process – depends on several factors, including the state’s public policy, the needs of citizens, regional particularities, and the means and resources employed. Designing a regional policy to achieve socioeconomic integration of citizens requires that actors, whether on the provincial, regional, or local level, intensify efforts to meet residents’ expectations; thus, provincial sports policy is regarded as one that officials ought to develop, given the hard work and methodology that reinforce the central role sports can play as a vehicle for development and socioeconomic integration for the residents, especially the youth, of every province. Thus, the paper is concerned with how local and regional actors may enact provincial sports policy to achieve social and economic integration in the Casablanca-Settat province. It interrogates this policy using a process that extends from design to implementation, through an academic subfield rooted in a revised positivist methodology and a twofold approach with a qualitative dimension based on semi-guided interviews with provincial officials, and a quantitative dimension based on a survey addressed to residents of the area.



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Ultras Groups in Tunisia: The Intersections of Sports, Politics, and Religion

This study explores ultras activity in Tunisia by tracing its sociological significance across sports, politics, and religion, and exploring their identities and mutual social influences. The paper relies on a semiotic-sociological reading of the Ultras creative catalogue of chants, slogans and practices, seeking to understand the symbols and impact of the ultras in multiple social spaces. The intersections of sport, politics, and religion produced new forms of dissent that the ultras took from their daily neighbourhood life to the football field and from there to the political arena, with religious connotations given new dimensions by the context of the revolution, which allowed the free formation of parties and civic organizations.

Session Chairs

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Fahad Al-Marri

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