

# **Echoes and Overlaps in Arab and African Thought on Media and Culture**

#ICA25 Preconference

University of Colorado Boulder, CASE E390

June 11, 2025

**8:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Registration and Coffee**

**9:00 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Clovis Bergère, Northwestern University in Qatar

Marwan M. Kraidy, Northwestern University in Qatar

Nabil Echchaibi, University of Colorado Boulder

**9:30 – 10:45 a.m.**

**Panel 1**

**Nermine M. Aboulez, University of Oregon [Virtual]**

Cultural Appropriation or Reimagined Identity? The Social Media Firestorm Surrounding Netflix's Queen Cleopatra

**Chafic Tony Najem, Northwestern University in Qatar [Virtual]**

From Point Zero: Alienation and the Epistemology of Political Confrontation

**Abdallah Ounour Hassan Ounour, University of Urbino Carlo Bo & University of Bayreuth**

The Camera is on! Exploring Migration in a Digital Community of Practice

**Respondent: Clovis Bergère, Northwestern University in Qatar**

**10:45 – 11:15 a.m.**

**Break**

**11:15 – 12:45 p.m.**

**Panel 2**

**Naim Aburaddi, University of Colorado Boulder**

The Right to Look Up: Transforming Immersive Planetariums into Fugitive Spaces to Escape the “Iron Cage”

**Dahlia El Zein, Northwestern University in Qatar**

Senghor, Arabité, and the Lebanese in Senegal

**Marwan M. Kraidy, Northwestern University in Qatar**

Mapping Excess: The Arab-African Nexus

**Osman Osman, New York University**

From Shifta to Terrorist: The Client Media System and the Framing of Muslim Minorities in Postcolonial Kenya

**Respondent: Nabil Echchaibi, University of Colorado Boulder**



12:45 – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.	<div><div>Panel 3</div><div><div>Clovis Bergère, Northwestern University in Qatar</div><div>Williams Sassine and the Theorization of Youth as a Concept for Media Research</div></div><div><div>Safae Daoudi, Northwestern University in Qatar</div><div>The Tijaniyyah as a Transregional Intellectual Network: Disrupting Colonial Silos Between Africa and the Arab World</div></div><div><div>Saeed H. Dabbour, University of Oregon</div><div>From Souks to Screens: Arab Neo-Hybridity and the West’s Reality TV Takeover of Arab Narratives</div></div><div><div>Wunpini Fatimata Mohammed, Cornell University</div><div>Media, Culture, and Decolonization: Rerighting the Subaltern Histories of Ghana</div></div><div><div>Respondent: Marwan M. Kraidy, Northwestern University in Qatar</div></div></div>
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Discussion and Closing Remarks

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## Participant Bios

**Naim Aburaddi** is a PhD student in Media Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, where he also teaches in the Department of Media Studies. His research explores emerging technologies, media infrastructure, and social media, with a focus on how digital platforms shape communication and storytelling. He has worked professionally as a content editor and social media specialist for international media companies.

**Nermine Aboulez** is a PhD candidate in the Communication and Media Studies program at the University of Oregon, where she also works as a teaching and research assistant. She holds a BA in Mass Communication from Cairo University, an MA in Media Studies, and a graduate diploma in Public Policy from the American University in Cairo. She is a research associate at the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ), where she led the Arab region research for the UNESCO-ICFJ project on online violence against women journalists. She has also worked on the Journalism and the Pandemic Project and the Disarming Disinformation project. Her work has been presented at IAMCR and Connected Life at Oxford University, and she has completed network embeds with ABC in Australia and with AP and the Haitian Times in the U.S.

**Clovis Bergère** is the director of the Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South at Northwestern University in Qatar. His research explores youth as a contested political and social category in Guinea, West Africa, with a focus on digital media and urban life. He previously served as a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. He holds a PhD in Childhood Studies from Rutgers University and has taught at Rutgers University, the University of the Arts, and the University of Pennsylvania. His work has appeared in *Public Culture*, the *International Journal of Communication*, the *African Studies Review*, and the *Journal of Childhood Studies*.

**Saeed Dabbour** is a doctoral student at the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication. His research focuses on the adaptation of Western reality television formats in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), using critical, cultural, and rhetorical approaches. He has explored programs such as Qesma w Naseeb, an Arabic dating show influenced by Love Island, and Arab representation in video games such as Overwatch 2. His work has been presented at conferences, including the International Communication Association (ICA), National Communication Association (NCA), and Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS).

**Safae Daoudi** is a graduate of Northwestern University in Qatar, where she majored in journalism and developed an academic interest in religion, politics, and state power across the Global South. She currently works in the Dean's Office at NU-Q, where she supports academic leadership while continuing to expand her research interests. Her work explores the intersections of Islamic reform, postcolonial statecraft, and soft power in North and West Africa. Her writing has appeared in the Afkar Undergraduate Journal and focuses on topics such as 19th-century Egyptian educational reform and Senegal-Morocco diplomatic ties through transnational religious practices.

**Nabil Echchaibi** is a professor of media studies and director of the Center for Media, Religion, and Culture at the University of Colorado Boulder. His research explores media, religion, and the politics and poetics of Muslim visibility. He is currently completing a book titled *Unmosquing Islam: Media and Muslim Fugitivity*, which draws on Black and Africana studies, Islamic studies, and decolonial theory to develop a framework of Muslim fugitivity as a mode of world-making. He is co-editor of the journal *Cultural Studies* and associate dean of research and creative work in the College of Media, Communication, and Information.



**Dahlia El-Zein** is an assistant professor of history at Northwestern University in Qatar. She holds a PhD in Middle Eastern and African History from the University of Pennsylvania, with a certificate in Africana Studies, and a master's in Arab Studies from Georgetown University. Her current book project, *African Soldiers, Arab Migrants: Race and Empire in French West Africa and the Levant (1920–1960)*, examines race-making from below through the perspectives of West African colonial soldiers and Lebanese Syrian migrants. Her work has been published in the *Journal of Middle Eastern and North African Migration Studies*, *Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, and *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*.

**Marwan M. Kraidy** is Dean and CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar, where he also holds the Anthony Shadid Chair in Global Media, Politics, and Culture and founded the Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South. A fellow of the International Communication Association, he previously served as founding director of the Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication and associate dean at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of thirteen books, including *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (Temple University Press, 2005), *Reality Television and Arab Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), and *The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World* (Harvard University Press, 2016). His current research focuses on digital sovereignty, Turkish television drama, political graffiti, and music video aesthetics in the Arab world. He serves on the boards of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Center for American Studies and Research at the American University of Beirut.

**Wunpini Fatimata Mohammed** is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at Cornell University. Her research centers on feminism, decolonization, and social movements. She is the author of *Media, Culture, and Decolonization: Re-righting the Subaltern Histories of Ghana* (Rutgers University Press, 2025) and co-editor of *African Women in Digital Spaces: Redefining Social Movements on the Continent and in the Diaspora* (2023). Her work has appeared in *Communication Theory*, *International Journal of Communication*, and *Howard Journal of Communications*.

**Chafic Tony Najem** is a Global Postdoctoral Scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Global South at Northwestern University in Qatar (#IAS\_NUQ). He holds a PhD in Media and Communication Studies from Stockholm University and a post-master's degree from the Royal Institute of Art, Sweden. His research focuses on media practices in carceral spaces, particularly the use and smuggling of digital media in Lebanese prisons. His work explores social movements, amateur witnessing, and visual culture, and has been published in *Communication, Culture and Critique*, *MERIP*, and *Media, Culture, and Society*.

**Osman Osman** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University. His research examines the intersection of media, political violence, and state power in postcolonial contexts, particularly in Kenya. Drawing on his reporting experience for Al Jazeera English, CNN, and Quartz, his work explores how media shapes public discourse and state narratives. His research has been published in *Journalism Studies*, *Media, War and Conflict*, and *African Journalism Studies*. He holds a master's degree from Indiana University and a bachelor's from United States International University-Africa.

**Abdallah Ounour** is an anthropologist and a double-degree doctoral candidate at the University of Urbino Carlo Bo (Italy) and the University of Bayreuth (Germany). His research examines international migration, with a focus on Sudan's role in assisted migration and human trafficking. He is also a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Gadarif in Sudan. His work explores human smuggling to and from Sudan, as well as within Europe and toward the UK, and includes research on refugee camps in Eastern Sudan, artisanal gold mining, and seasonal labor migration.