

# EDITOR'S NOTE

*Al-Muntaqa*'s content is usually selected for translation from the various Arabic journals of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, not pre-arranged to tackle specific topics or themes. In light of ongoing events in the Arab region however, we have sought to enclose relevant works. This volume contains six contributions that collectively provide insight into various dimensions of the state of affairs across the Arab region today, whether regarding wars, human rights, academia, or cities.

Our feature essay by John Keane, "The Beautification of War: Digital Communications, Public Indifference, Rebel Journalism, and Civilian Resistance in the Age of Meta Wars", argues that we have entered the age of destructive *meta wars*, enabled by unprecedented digital communications technologies that are producing frightening transformations of the modes and weapons of warfare but also, media representations of war that "gamify" war. The essay nevertheless sheds light on a counter-trend represented by rebel journalism digitally exposing the terrible realities of these wars.

Bilal Shalash's "Emergency Telephone: The June 1967 War and Its Impact on Nablus in the Correspondence Between Hamdi Kanaan and Akram Zuaytir" examines the correspondence between Hamdi Kanaan and Akram Zuaytir in the aftermath of the June 1967 War. Shalash argues that while the war disrupted traditional means of communication such as visits and telephone calls, it provided for an alternative form of communication based on personal relationships that helps shed light on unknown events and political positions under the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Hani Mousa's "Tribalism, Regionalism, and the Stalled Building of the Modern State in Libya" explores the underlying causes of the stalled state-building process in Libya, identifying tribalism and regionalism as the primary obstacles. It examines how different modes of governance and external interventions have aggravated and perpetuated the detrimental impacts of these obstacles, which have been intractable because state-building did not evolve organically over time.

Abdelwahab El-Affendi's "Political Science in the Arab World" assesses the state of political science within Arab academic institutions, pointing to a multifaceted crisis affecting education and research in this field, preventing it from achieving its broader objectives. It focuses on the pedagogical experience at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, as well as the studies and seminars organized by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, in order to counter this trend and bolster Arab contribution to the discipline.

Moataz El Fegjery's "The Arab Charter on Human Rights and International Human Rights Standards: The Practices and Approaches of the Arab Human Rights Committee" examines the Arab Human Rights Committee (AHRC)'s interpretation of the rights enshrined in the Arab Charter on Human Rights. It concludes that the AHRC has positioned its work not as contradictory to the international human rights system, but as supportive of and complementary to it, adopting an interpretative approach consistent with international human rights interpretations.

Farah Aridi's "Mapping the Literary: A Spatial Reading of Hilal Chouman's *Kāna Ghadan*" highlights the significance of space as a narrational component, treating the text as a critical roadmap capable of producing meaning and knowledge. It offers a spatial reading of Hilal Chouman's *Kāna Ghadan*, presenting a literary geography of Beirut, shaped by how the protagonists understand and experience the city. This practice and the way they converse about Beirut reflect a socio-spatial imaginary that challenges dominant narratives about the city.

Majd Abuamer's "What Do Arabs Think About When They Think About Migration? Insights from the Arab Opinion Index (2011-2022)" relies on data on migration based on eight Arab Opinion Index surveys. The study reveals that around a quarter of Arab citizens have consistently expressed a desire to migrate over the past 12 years, with higher interest recorded among the youth, men, and those with at least a secondary school education. It also shows that half of those wishing to migrate select Europe and the Arab Gulf countries as their preferred destinations.

This volume includes one book review, whereby Khalid Alkhaldi reviews Madoukh Ajmi Al-Otaibi's *The Horn of Africa: A Strategic Depth for Gulf States*.