

Omar Sayfo
(January 2023)

Personal Information

Nationalities: Hungarian
Contact: O.A.Sayfo@uu.nl
Mobile: +36 20 564 8850

Education

2012-2016	Research Institute for History and Culture of the Faculty of Humanities at Utrecht University, PHD studies
2003-2008	Eotvos Lorant University, Budapest, Hungary, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political Sciences and International Studies (MA in political sciences)
2002-2006	Budapest College of Communication and Business, BA in Business Communication
2001-2006	Eotvos Lorant University, Budapest, Hungary, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Semitic Philology and Arabic Language (MA in Arabic studies)

Employment

2021-	Senior Researcher, Migration Research Institute
2020-	Researcher, Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies
2016-	Affiliated Researcher at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Utrecht University
2014	Visiting researcher at the HRH Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, University of Cambridge
2011- 2013	University of Debrecen, Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Humanities, – Lecturer of ‘Intercultural Communications’ and ‘Media Economics’

Selected Non-Academic Employment and Work Experience

2019-	External Research Fellow, <i>Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade</i> (Külügyi és Külgazdasági Intézet)
2018	Consultant for <i>Bukra fil Mish-Mish</i> a documentary on the early years of Egyptian animation (2019, Cassis Films)
2017	Cultural Consultant for <i>Robin Hood</i> (2018, Appian Way Productions)

2015, 2016	Cultural Consultant at the set of <i>Tyrant</i> , FX Channel's Middle East themed TV series (2014-2016)
2015-	Editor of foreign affairs, Magyar Demokrata
2010-2012	Advisor at the at the Hungarian Ministry of Economics's Arab Strategic Group
2006-2008	Editor at the Foreign Desk of Hungarian News Television (Hir TV)

Publications

Books

2023	<i>Allah's Spacious Earth</i> (novel), Syracuse University Press
2021	<i>Arab Animation: Images of Identity</i> , Edinburgh University Press.

Peer-reviewed Articles

2022	<i>Identity Matters: The Cultural Logics of Animation Production and Distribution in the Arab World</i> , 'International Journal of Communication', Vol.16, 1109–1126.
2021	<i>A Celebrity from the Sky: 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ 'Abd al-Ṣamad's Journey to National and International Fame in 'Abd al-Nāṣir's and al-Sādāt's Egypt</i> , 'Die Welt Des Islams', Vol.62, 53–77.
2020	<i>Set for Success: Hollywood Runaway Productions in Socialist and Post-Socialist Hungary</i> , 'Media Industries Journal', Vol.7, 43–63.
2020	Hollywood (Mis)representations of Arabs and the Middle East From a Production Perspective – The Case of FX Channel's <i>Tyrant</i> , 'Series', Vol.6, 43–55.
2018	<i>Mediating a Disney-style Islam: The Emergence of Egyptian Islamic Animated Cartoons</i> , 'Animation', Vol.13, 102–115
2017	<i>From Kurdish Sultan to Pan-Arab Champion and Muslim Hero: The Evolution of the Saladin Myth in Popular Arab Culture</i> , 'The Journal of Popular Culture', Vol. 50, 65–85
2016	<i>Why an anti-Islam campaign has taken root in Hungary, a country with few Muslims?</i> , 'V4revue'. Joint article with Zoltan Pall.

Book Chapters

2018	<i>Animation and Identity in the Gulf</i> , in 'Arab Identities images in film, (Special issue of The Media Majlis at Northwestern University in Qatar) 84–92.
2017	<i>Arab Animation: Between Business and Politics</i> , in 'Children's Television and Digital Media in the Arab World', eds. Naomi Sakr and Jeanette Steemers, (London: I.B.Tauris) 74–91.

- 2017 *Local Minds, Foreign Hands: Animation in Saudi Arabia and the Arab Gulf*, in 'Animation in the Middle East', ed. Stefanie Van de Peer, (London: I.B.Tauris) 69–83.
- 2015 *Arab Sitcom Animations as Platforms of Satire*, in: 'The Power of Satire', ed. Sonja De Leeuw, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins) 81–94.
- 2014 *The Emergence of Arab Children's Televisions and Animation Industry in the Gulf States*, in: 'State-society Relations in the Arab Gulf States', eds: Mazhar Al-Zo'oby and Birol Baskan, (Berlin: Gerlach Press), 77–101.

Book Reviews

- 2018 *Re-Imagining the Other: Culture, Media, and Western-Muslim Intersections*, Karim H. Karim and Mahmoud Eid (eds), 'Journal of Global Analysis'.

Selected Popular Articles

- 2019 *La televisión infantil en el mundo árabe*, Afkar ideas, No.59.
- 2016 *Clash of Syrian Clans: How an Online Game Reflects the Syrian Conflict*, The Huffington Post, 7 January.
- 2014 *Drawing Politics: Arab Animated Cartoons, Then and Now*, The Middle East in London, Vol 11, No.1, December.
- 2013 *Syria's Music Wars*, al-Monitor, 6 May.
- 2012 *Another Casualty of War: Soap Operas*, The New York Times, 16 August.
- 2012 *Mock Homs at Your Own Risk*, Foreign Policy, 17 February.

Hungarian

- 2003-2021 More than 600 analytical newspaper articles and opinion pieces on Middle-Eastern culture and politics in leading Hungarian newspapers. (HVG, Mandiner, Demokrata, Magyar Nemzet, etc)
- 2019 'Az iszlámenesség mint új politikai korrektség' Kommentár, 2019/2.
- 2018 Allah tágas földje (Budapest: KMTG)
- 2009 'A tájékoztatás Szíriában és a szír közvéleményt döntően befolyásoló fórumok' Kul-Vilag, March 2009.
- 2009 *Allah vendégei*, (Budapest: Geopen)
- 2008 *Közeli Kelet*, (Budapest: Magyar Haz)

Selected Conference Presentations and Seminars

- 2022 *Napoleon on Egyptian Screens*, Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Iceland, September 2022.
- 2022 *Notions of Whiteness in Egyptian Film: The Case of the Khawaga*, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, University of St Andrews, July 2022.
- 2021 *Transnational networks of media production and distribution in the Arab and Muslim world*, Transnational religious flows between the Middle East,

- Southeast Asia and Europe, The Austrian Academy of Sciences, October 2021.
- 2020 *Online Revolutionary Animation of the Arab Uprisings and Its Impact on the Arab Mediascape*, Media Infrastructures in the Middle East, American University of Beirut, January 2020.
- 2019 *Trajectories of Online Revolutionary Animation Production Since the Arab Uprisings*, Politics and Popular Culture in the Middle East: Power and Resistance Post-2011, University of Warwick, April 2019.
- 2016 *From Friends and Neutral Others to Foes: Shifting Hungarian Attitudes Towards Arabs and Muslims*, Talking about Arabs, Oriental Institute-Czech Academy of Science, May 2016.
- 2016 *What do animated cartoons tell us about Egypt's politics?*, The University of Cambridge, FAMES, February 2016.
- 2015 *The Jewish and Christian Roots of Egyptian Animation Production*, Minorities and Popular Culture in Modern Middle East: Representation and Participation, Woolf Institute and SOAS, June 2015.
- 2014 *Web Animation as a Liberal Space for Political Criticism: the Case of 'Captain Khobza*, Media in Political Transition: Focus on Tunisia, University of Cambridge, UK, July 2014.
- 2014 *Arab Animated Cartoons as Vehicles for Nationalist and Religious Nostalgia*, The Future of Nostalgia in the Middle East, University of Copenhagen, June 2014.
- 2014 *The Evolution of the Saladin Myth in Arab Popular Culture*, Mediated Pasts: Visual Cultures and Collective Memory, Leicester, UK, June 2014.
- 2014 *Mediating the Arab Uprisings in Animated Cartoons – The Case of Kharabeesh*, Arab Documentaries - Recording Whose 'Reality' Conference, Westminster University, April 2014.
- 2013 *Religious identity in Arab Animated Cartoons*, Netherlands Interuniversity School for Islamic Studies (NISIS) Autumn School, Utrecht, The Netherlands, October 2013.
- 2013 *Religious Education in Arab Children's Channels and Animated Cartoons*, NISIS Tunisia Spring School, Tunisia, Hammamet, March 2013.
- 2013 *Arab Sitcom Animations as Tools of Social and Political Criticism*, International Conference Satire Across Borders, Utrecht, The Netherlands, January 2013.
- 2012 *Transnational Networks in Arab Animation Industries*, NISIS Autumn School, Leiden, The Netherlands, October 2012.
- 2012 *The Emergence of Arab Children's Televisions and Animation Industry in the Gulf States*, Cambridge Gulf Research Council, Cambridge, UK, July 2012.
- 2011 *The Rise of Muslim Superhero Comics and Cartoons*, Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, Washington DC, USA, December 2011.

Language Skills

English: fluent, Arabic: native, Hungarian: native, German: reading, French: reading

Fields of Research

Arab Media and Politics, Arab Media Industries, Arab Television, Arab Cinema, Arab Identity Politics, Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Popular Culture in the Arab World