



diplomatische
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Vienna School of International Studies
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The American Austrian Foundation



Annenberg
SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

MILTON WOLF SEMINAR
VIENNA, AUSTRIA
MARCH 26-28, 2012

**TRANSITIONS TRANSFORMED: IDEAS OF INFORMATION AND
DEMOCRACY POST-2011**



British Embassy
Vienna

Federal Ministry for
European and International Affairs



U.S. Embassy Vienna

SEMINAR OVERVIEW

Launched in 2001, the Milton Wolf Seminar Series aims to deal with developing issues in diplomacy and journalism – both broadly defined. The 2012 seminar is jointly organized by the Center for Global Communication Studies (CGCS) at the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg School for Communication, The American Austrian Foundation (AAF), and the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna (DA). Guests include those working for state and multi-lateral organizations, journalists, media development practitioners, academics, and a select group of highly engaged graduate students interested in the seminar themes.

The organizers envision the Milton Wolf Seminar as a meeting place for media practitioners, diplomats, academics, and students to share their perspectives, formulate new ideas, and identify areas where further research is needed. While the seminar will incorporate various speakers and panels, it is designed as a two-day continuing conversation in which all participants are encouraged to openly engage in dialogue and explore potential synergies and future collaborations. In order to encourage an open exchange of ideas, seminar attendance is limited only to invited participants and students.

THEMATIC OVERVIEW

This year’s Milton Wolf Seminar, *Transitions Transformed: Ideas of Information and Democracy Post-2011*, explores competing interpretations of the relationship between information and democratization and of the role of diplomats, journalists, and activists in facilitating that relationship.

Increasingly, governments and multilateral institutions around the world have articulated foreign policy doctrines about the role of the media and communications in society. Calls for “information rights” proliferate. Diplomats, journalists, academics, and pundits describe both old and new media as fundamental to contemporary international relations – as the primary transmission belts between governments and foreign publics and between foreign publics and domestic ones. Governments such as Iran, Libya, and Syria who have attempted to restrict information rights have been decried as pariahs. Journalism and press freedom organizations have been particularly pronounced in their condemnations of government attempts to restrict information rights and have made open calls for other international actors to intervene to protect those rights. For example, in a recent open letter to the fledgling Tunisian government, Reporters without Borders cautioned, “...freedom of expression should be the subject of a consensus and should be protected by everyone as one of the revolution’s first gains. Everyone is concerned by it. It is the starting point for freedom. And it could be the point of return to dictatorship.”

Much attention has focused on the role of the internet and social networks. In a 2010 policy address, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced a new pillar of American diplomacy: that the right of all global citizens “to connect” via internet and mobile networks is a human right on par with the freedom of assembly offline. Governments

across the political spectrum have professed similar sentiments and committed millions of dollars to media and internet freedom campaigns and to the development of software designed to avoid internet filtering and censorship. Social media's visible role in the Arab Spring only intensified discussions about the power of relationships formed via online networks to promote cross-cultural collaboration and dialogue and affect political and social change. Yet these discussions are not limited to internet and mobile technologies or to the global south. In October 2011, the European Union launched a Media Task Force to investigate increasing restrictions on the press in member states, particularly Italy and Hungary.

As countries such as Tunisia and Egypt move towards democratic transition and countries such as Hungary adopt new laws and policies that threaten to undermine democratic practices, considerable debate abounds about the future structure of democratic institutions and the role of the media in facilitating positive outcomes. Using case studies such as Hungary, Iran, Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia, the 2012 Milton Wolf Seminar will investigate the evolving relationship between media and democratic transition in light of rapid technological change and the shifting structure and dynamics of the international communication system.

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING

We have included a list of potential further reading materials that evaluate these issues that we hope you might review in advance of the Seminar.

- Brouillette, Amy et al. (2012) [Hungarian Media Laws in Europe: An Assessment of the Consistency of Hungary's Media Laws with European Practices and Norms](#) Budapest: Center for Media and Communication Studies, Central European University.
- Clinton, Hillary (2011) [Remarks at the Conference on Internet Freedom](#). Fokker Terminal, The Hague: Netherlands.
- Davin, Eric et al. (2010) [Afghan Media in 2010](#). Paris: Altai Consulting.
- Faris, Rob, Hal Roberts, et. al. (2011) [Online Security in the Middle East and North Africa: A Survey of Perceptions, Knowledge, and Practice](#). August. Boston: Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University.
- Kathuria, Karl (2011) ["Casting a Wider Net: Lessons Learned in Delivering BBC Content on the Censored Internet."](#) Canada Centre for Global Security Studies and Citizen Lab at Munk School of Global Affairs. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Hungarian National Media and Infocommunications Authority (2011) ["Hungary's New Media Regulation."](#) November.
- Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2010) ["The Internet in China."](#)
- Open Net Initiative (2009) ["Internet Filtering in Iran."](#)
- OSCE (2012) ["Internet Freedom: Why it Matters."](#) Vienna: The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

- Price, Monroe (forthcoming) Chapter 8: Strategies of System Architecture. In *Anxiety of Loss*.*
- Roberts, Hal, Ethan Zuckerman, Robert Faris, et al. (2011) [“The Evolving Landscape of Internet Control.”](#) Boston: Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University.
- Valeriani, Augusto (2011) [Bridges of the Revolution Linking People, Sharing Information, and Remixing Practices.](#) *SocioLogica*. 3.
- Wojcieszak, Magdalena E., Briar Smith & Mahmood Enayat. (forthcoming). “Will Politics be tweeted? New Media Use by Iranian Youth in 2011.”*

* Please email lsh@asc.upenn.edu for a copy of any publication that is not hyperlinked.

THANK YOU

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AGENDA

DAY ONE – MONDAY, MARCH 26, 2012

6:00 – 8:00 PM Welcome Reception and Registration at the Diplomatic Academy

DAY TWO: TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2012

9:00 – 9:45 Introduction and Overview

- **Katharine Eltz-Aulitzky**, Executive Director, The American Austrian Foundation
- **Monroe Price**, Director, Center for Global Communications Studies, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania
- **Ambassador Hans Winkler**, Director, Diplomatic Academy Vienna

9:45-10:00 Tea Break

10:00 – 12:00 Session 1: From Soft Power to Soft War: Information Rights and National Sovereignty

This session will examine competing ideologies of the internet as a communicative space for international relations. Some actors argue that the internet should and does represent a global public sphere open to all, equating the right to virtual assembly and the right to connect with human rights. Others argue that new internet filtering tools are allowing different states to reassert control. Panelists will discuss the evolving roles of diplomats, media actors, citizen hacktivists, and others in dictating the present and future of the internet.

Moderator: Ambassador Hans Winkler

Panelists:

- **Ženet Mujić**, Senior Advisor, OSCE Freedom of the Media
- **Monroe Price**, Annenberg School for Communication
- **Babak Rahimi**, Assistant Professor of Iranian and Islamic Studies, UC San Diego
- **Alexander Schallenberg**, Spokesman for the Austrian Minister for European and International Affairs

12:00 – 1:30 Meet the Panelists Lunch

1:30 - 3:30 Session 2: The International Political Economy of the Internet: Technologies of Freedom and Technologies of Control

This panel will discuss the complex role of corporations such as Cisco, Yahoo, and Google in providing the technological infrastructure for furthering state control over the internet and for opening up new communicative spaces.

Moderator: Monroe Price

Panelists:

- **Rob Faris**, Research Director of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society
- **Sarah Labowitz**, Policy Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. State Department
- **Leshuo Dong**, PhD Candidate, Tsinghua University

3:30 - 5:30 Session 3: Acting from Knowledge: Polling, Evaluation and Evidence-based Action

Diplomats, pundits, and activists often treat the relationship between access to information and democratization as axiomatic: restrictive environments inhibit citizen voices, knowledge and engagement. In this panel, experts from leading polling and media development organizations involved in mapping media and information consumption patterns in closed and transitioning societies will offer their insights into the contemporary relationship between access to media and other information sources and citizen empowerment and democratization.

Moderator: Amelia Arsenault, Center for Global Communications Studies, Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania; Assistant Professor, Georgia State University

Panelists:

- **Ali Karimzadeh Bangi**, Researcher, Open Net Initiative, University of Toronto
- **Eric Davin**, Founding Partner, Altai Consulting
- **George Weiss**, Founder & CEO, Radio La Benevolencija
- **Briar Smith**, Iran Media Project

6:15 *Bus departs for evening event (pick up in front of Diplomatic Academy)*

7:00 *Walking Dinner - U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission, Christopher Hoh's Residence*

9:00 – 12:15 Session 4: Slouching to and from Democracy: The Case of Hungary

Critics claim that a set of media laws implemented in Hungary in 2011 are inconsistent with democratic free-press principles and European practices and norms. Hungarian officials disagree, arguing that the legislation conforms to EU standards and actually draws from existing regulations in other European and EU member states. Hungary and its politically radical transformation are causing great strain within the European Union, instigating a re-examination of multilateral and national governance practices and the role of the media. This session, featuring panelists from both sides of the debate, will seek to place transformations within the long debate over constitutionalism, representation and the role of media institutions.

Moderator: **Ambassador Ferdinand Mayrhofer-Grünbühel**, former Austrian Ambassador to Hungary

Panelists:

- **Zoltán Kovács**, Hungary's State Secretary for Government Communications
- **Attila Mesterhazy**, Chairman of the Hungarian Socialist Party
- **Amy Brouillette**, CMCS, Central European University
- **Peter Bajomi-Lazar**, Senior Research Fellow, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford
- **Katharine Sarikakis**, PhD, Professor of Media Governance, Department of Communication, University of Vienna

10:30 – 11:00 Tea Break (we will also take a **group photo** during this break)

11:00 – 12:15 Session 4 Continues

12:15 – 1:45 Lunch

2:00 – 3:45 Session 5: The Revolution was Televised: New Media and the Arab Spring One Year Later

As protestors across the Arab world took to the streets with their smartphones in hand, techno-optimists characterized the Arab Spring as the ultimate evidence of the democratizing influence of new communication technologies. Techno-pessimists remained uncertain, citing the critical role of Al Jazeera and of old fashioned person-to-person communication in facilitating protests. Drawing upon the events of the past year and a half, this panel discusses the role of new and old media in the Arab Spring and its aftermath.

Moderator: Augusto Valeriani, University of Bologna

Panelists:

- **Laurence Hargreaves**, Social Researcher, Altai Consulting, Libya
- **Nasir Yousafzai Khan**, Al Jazeera English
- **Kevin Anderson**, Freelance Journalist and Digital Strategist

3:45 – 4:00 Tea Break

4:00 – 5:00 Session 6: New Issues, New Directions

During this closing session, panelists and participants will participate in an open discussion about the major issues raised and conclusions formed out of the different sessions and case studies.

7:00 *Bus departs for evening event (pick up in front of Diplomatic Academy)*

7:30 Heurigen

The word *Heurigen* means both new wines (*heuer* meaning "this year"), and the establishment in which it is served. *Heurigen*s have become a synonym for what is best in Vienna: hospitality, *gemütlichkeit*, *joie de vivre* mingled with a little melancholy, good solid food and refreshing dry wine.