

# Representations of War in the Middle East: The Struggle over Political and Ideological Identities

## Guest editors

Ali Basarati

*VIZJA University, Poland*

Somaye Shokati Moqarab

*University of Shiraz, Iran*

## Overview and Rationale

This proposed special issue invites contributions from scholars working in the field of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) to investigate the complex discursive constructions of war in the Middle East. Armed conflicts in the region—whether ongoing or historical—are not only military encounters but also sites of ideological struggle and discursive contestation. The way war is framed, narrated, and interpreted by various actors plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion, legitimizing political agendas, and constructing collective identities.

This special issue seeks to bring together critical discourse analyses that examine how ideological affiliations and identity positions influence the representation of war across a variety of discursive contexts. In particular, it aims to explore how such representations operate within and across political rhetoric, mainstream and alternative media, social media platforms, and cultural or literary texts, with a view to understanding how they reproduce, challenge, or reconfigure hegemonic narratives and power structures.

## Aims and Scope

The special issue will explore the discursive dynamics of war representation in the Middle East, bringing together diverse analyses that address the intersection of language, identity, and ideology. Contributions may engage with, but are not limited to, the following thematic areas:

- Legitimation and delegitimation of war in official discourse, media narratives, and international rhetoric
- Construction of political and religious identities through conflict-related discourse
- Narratives of victimhood, resistance, and heroism, and how these shape group identities
- Hegemonic vs. counter-hegemonic discourses in state-controlled vs. independent or transnational media
- Discursive strategies of inclusion/exclusion, 'us vs. them' polarisation, and enemy construction
- The role of memory and historical discourse in framing contemporary conflicts
- Multimodal representations of war across visual, textual, and digital platforms
- Cultural and literary representations of war and their ideological functions
- Social media as a site of discursive contestation, activism, and narrative disruption
- The gendered discourse of war, including representations of masculinity, femininity, and civilian suffering
- The articulation of discursive semiotic systems and formulating identity-based discourses
- Cognitive strategies in discourse-making, cognitive construal tools as a method of discourse-makings

- Corpus-based discourse analysis, decoding the articulated discourse from the lens of computational linguistics
- The future study of the discursive systems in the Middle East, exploring the plausible, probable, possible and preferred scenarios.

Submissions may draw on a range of theoretical frameworks (e.g., proximation theory, socio-cognitive approaches, discourse-historical method, postcolonial CDA, discourse theory, combinational methods such as corpus-based discourse analysis & cognitive discourse analysis) and should critically reflect on the ways in which discourse constructs, reproduces, or resists dominant political ideologies and structures of power within the context of Middle Eastern conflict. The studies can focus on the Israel-Palestine & Israel-Iran conflicts, the issues of Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon etc.

#### Submission Guidelines and Timeline:

- **Abstract submission deadline:** *10 September 2025*
- **Notification on the acceptance of abstracts:** *15 September 2025*
- **Full paper submission deadline:** *15 March 2026*
- **Expected publication:** *30 June 2026*
- Abstracts (max 500 words) and a short bio should be electronically sent via the following link:  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeCBvPzgpWKYY8IzWRj2mh\\_CnIS5Qu8pg1N6Iwg9ERU6OnHzg/viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeCBvPzgpWKYY8IzWRj2mh_CnIS5Qu8pg1N6Iwg9ERU6OnHzg/viewform?usp=header)

For further inquiries, please feel free to contact: [discourses.conflict@gmail.com](mailto:discourses.conflict@gmail.com)