

Cameran Ashraf, Ph.D.

cameran@cashraf.com | <https://cashraf.com>

Citizenship: United States of America

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles Doctor of Philosophy, Geography. 2015

Dissertation: *The Spatiality of Power in Internet Control and Cyberwar*

Universiteit van Amsterdam Certificate, Digital Methods. 2011

California State University, Fullerton Master of Arts, Geography. 2009

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona Bachelor of Science, Geography & Business Administration (Cum Laude). 2005

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Central European University, School of Public Policy – *Vienna, Austria & Budapest, Hungary*

Assistant Professor of New Media & Global Communications, 2016 – Present

Faculty Affiliate, Center for Media, Data, and Society

University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Geography

Lecturer, 2014 & 2016; Teaching Associate & Fellow, 2011-2015

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, Department of Geography and Anthropology

Lecturer, 2009-2010

California State University, Fullerton, Department of Geography

Research Assistant, 2007-2008

NON-ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Wikimedia Foundation

Human Rights Lead, Jan. 2021 – Present

- Coordinating with Legal and Public Policy teams to build and mature organizational expertise in identifying, mitigating, and addressing state-based human rights threats to Wikimedia's communities and affiliates.
- Building threat intelligence networks with global partner organizations.
- Identifying pathways to resilience for communities and working with them in adopting impactful, scalable approaches for quick recovery after human rights threats.
- Understanding and providing input to the strategic goals of the Foundation's public policy advocacy to ensure organizational alignment on best practices and clear communication on human rights challenges impacting the Foundation's mission.

Open Society Foundations

Deputy Director, OSF Internship for Rights & Governance, Aug. 2018 – Sept. 2019

- Developed global clinical human rights seminar and workshop with director.
- Led conceptualization and design of multiple seminar days.
- Reviewed and revised human rights education module for grantees.
- Facilitated all seminars and taught on human rights, technology, and digital security.

ICT for Human Rights

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Apr. 2013 – Jul. 2019

Software development, training, and tactics for human rights defenders

- Set organizational vision and managed experienced team of human rights technologists through multi-year projects.
- Secured multiple multi-year grants for development of innovative technologies to facilitate freedom of expression in authoritarian regimes.
- Led mobile, hardware, and software development focused on censorship circumvention, digital communications security, and online civic participation in closed societies.
- Conducted in-country research and project testing on anti-censorship technologies.
- Organized web development, security planning, and secured hosting for threatened groups.
- Developed digital security training for international organizations and NGOs.
- **Due to the sensitive nature of projects, details are available only on request.**

Independent Human Rights and Technology Consultant, Jun. 2011 – Apr. 2013

- Consult with American and international governmental and non-governmental organizations
- Managed small team of software developers through multiple projects.
- Procured grants for development of software tools to aid free expression.
- Advised NGOs on organizational security risks in authoritarian regimes.
- Trained human rights defenders and international NGOs in digital operational security.
- **Due to the sensitive nature of projects, details are available only on request.**

Expression Technologies

Co-Founder & Executive Director, Nov. 2010 – Sept. 2011

Providing technology solutions to human rights activists in closed societies

- **Secured \$2.1 million U.S. Department of State Internet Freedom subgrant.**
- Expanded security services to human rights defenders in authoritarian states in South America, North Africa, and Southeast Asia.
- Led the extension and development of secured hosting and communications infrastructure.

AccessNow

Co-Founder, President, & International Projects Director, Jun. 2009 – Nov. 2010

Defending and extending the digital rights of users at risk around the world

- **Finalist, 2010 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought** – In recognition of work in Iran, selected by the European Parliament as finalist for the 2010 Sakharov Prize, the European Union's highest human rights honor.
- Provided secure hosting to vital human rights and democracy groups around the world.
- Distributed secure communications tools for high-value individuals in authoritarian regimes.
- Facilitated more than 3 million video downloads from inside Iran from 2009-11.
- Developed national, international, and corporate policy recommendations to support the secure and free flow of information in closed societies.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Academic Articles

- Naseer, Shirin and **Cameran Ashraf** (2021) “Gender-based Violence in Pakistan’s Digital Spaces” *Feminist Legal Studies*.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2021) “Exploring the Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Freedom of Religion or Belief Online” *The International Journal of Human Rights*.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2021) “Defining Cyberwar: Towards a Definitional Framework” *Defense & Security Analysis*.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2020) “Artificial Intelligence and the Rights to Assembly and Association” *Journal of Cyber Policy*, 5 (2): 163–79.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2020) “Psychodynamics of the Technological Unconscious” *International Journal of Jungian Studies*, 1-23.

Academic Book Chapters

- Ashraf, Cameran and Andrés Moles (2019) “Surviving the Fight for Academic Freedom: The Case of CEU” In *Promoting Core Higher Education Values: Perspectives from the Field*, edited by Stefaan Smis, Aurelie Duchateau, and Alexandra Duarte, Brussels: Academic Refuge Project.
- Ashraf, Cameran, and Luis Felipe Alvarez León (2016) “The Logics and Territorialities of Geoblocking.” In *Geoblocking and Global Video Culture*, edited by Ramon Lobato and James Meese. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

Other Publications

- Panait, Cezara and **Cameran Ashraf** (2021) “AI Algorithms – (Re)shaping Public Opinions Through Interfering with Access to Information in the Online Environment?” *Europuls Policy Journal on EU Affairs* Vol 1. Issue 1.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2018) “The Historical Geopolitics of the Chinese AI Initiative” *China Policy Institute: Analysis*, University of Nottingham.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2017) "I Want to Know Everything!" exhibition catalogue. *57th Venice Biennale*, Venice, Italy. Hungarian National Pavilion, Curator: Zsolt Petrányi.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2015) “Who Do We Lose with Internet Censorship and Control?” *Global Voices*.
- Ashraf, Cameran (2013) “The Heavy Psychological Toll of a Digital Activist's Work” *Slate*.

INVITED TALKS

- “Human Rights Challenges & Big Tech” Czernin Security Forum, Institute of International Relations, Prague. November 2021.
- “AI algorithms – (re)shaping public opinions through interfering with access to information in the online environment?” with Cezara Panait. EUROSFAT Forum, Europuls Centre of European Expertise, Bucharest, Romania. October 2021.
- “AI and Non-Charismatic Human Rights” Digital Technologies and Human Rights - Opportunities and Challenges: Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting III, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE – ODIHR). July 2021.

“Trends in Spatialities of Power and Cyberwar” Czernin Security Forum, Institute of International Relations, Prague. October 2020.

Invited Discussant, “Border Control and Invisible Threats. Does the Closure of Borders in Europe Stop Covid-19?” Czernin Security Forum, Institute of International Relations, Prague. October 2020.

“Strategies and Techniques for Online Human Rights Advocacy” Konrad Adenauer Foundation. October 2020.

“The Rights to Assembly & Association and Artificial Intelligence” Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine and Internews Ukraine. June 2020.

Invited Expert, The Kofi Annan Commission on Elections and Democracy in the Digital Age. Vienna, Austria. July 2019.

“Human Rights and the Age of Artificial Intelligence” Lviv Media Forum. Lviv, Ukraine. June 2019.

“Disruptive Tech: The Impact of the Rise of Technology on Individual Rights” Panel, European Public Policy Conference, Hertie School of Governance & IE School of Global and Public Affairs. Madrid, Spain. March 2019.

“Targeted Emails and Digital Security in Public Policy” Global Public Policy Institute. Berlin, Germany. January 2019.

“State-based Actors and Security Challenges for Documentation” Symposium on Refugee Rights in Records, Vera & Donald Blinken Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary. January 2018.

“Ethical Dilemmas in Communicating Sensitive Issues” Human Rights Communication 2.0, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, December 2017.

“The Spatiality of Power in Cyberspace” Center for Long Term Cybersecurity, University of California, Berkeley, November 2016.

“International Cybersecurity and the Legal-Territorial Paradox” York Symposium, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, November 2013.

“The Future of Protest Movements: The Case of Iran's Green Movement” InternetBeta Conference. Rzeszow, Poland. September 2013.

“Technology and the Places of Everyday Life” University of California, San Diego, March 2013.

“Celestial Landscapes: The Art and Science of Astrophotography.” All Points of the Compass Conference at California State University Fullerton, February 2011.

“Civics in Difficult Places.” MIT Communications Forum at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 2010.

“#iranelection: The Digital Media Response to the 2009 Iranian Election.” Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, November 2009.

“The Night Sky as Cultural Landscape.” International Dark Sky Association Annual Conference, November 2009.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “The Spatiality of Power in Internet Control and Cyberwar.” American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, April 2018.
- “Authoritarian political geographical contexts and the infrastructural equivocality of neogeography.” California Geographical Society Annual Conference, April 2013.
- “Intentional and unintentional crowdsourced geographic information: the case of the geoweb in authoritarian regimes.” American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, April 2013.
- “The Internet and Authoritarian States: Ethical Issues in Transnational Digital Activism.” International Symposium on Digital Ethics, Center for Digital Ethics and Policy, Loyola University Chicago, October 2012.
- “Technological Mediation and the Experience of Place.” Symposium on Faith and Culture: Technology and Human Flourishing, Baylor University, October 2012.
- “Bytes and borders: Understanding software-mediated political geographies.” California Geographical Society Annual Conference, April 2012.
- Resistance and Technology Roundtable Part 1: Regulation, Structure, and Resistance. Association of Internet Researchers Annual Conference, October 2011.
- “World Wide Web? Visualizing Spaces of Internet Censorship.” American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, April 2011.
- “#Iranelection: Geographies of Digital Media in Post-Election Iran” Association of Pacific Coast Geographers Annual Meeting, October 2009.
- “River of Water, River of Stars: The Separation of Earth and Sky in Cultural Landscapes” Los Angeles Geographical Society, May 2009.
- “River of Water, River of Stars: The Separation of Earth and Sky in Cultural Landscapes” California Geographical Society Annual Conference, March 2009.
- “The Night Sky as Cultural Landscape” American Association of Geographers Annual Conference, May 2009.
- “The Impact of Policy on Light Pollution” Association of Pacific Coast Geographers Annual Conference, October 2007.
- “The Impact of Policy on Light Pollution: A Comparison of Palm Springs and Flagstaff” California Geographical Society Annual Conference, March 2007.
- “The Impact of Policy on Light Pollution: A Comparison of Palm Springs and Flagstaff” Los Angeles Geographical Society, 2007.
- “Iran: Earthquakes 400 B.C. - Present, Magnitude 6.0 and Above” map presented at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona GIS Expo, May 2004.
- “Iran: Earthquakes 400 B.C. - Present, Magnitude 6.0 and Above” map presented at California Geographical Society Annual Conference, May 2004.

POLICY ADVISEMENT

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – Online Hate Speech and Social Media Advisement, September – December 2021.

International Criminal Court, Office of the Prosecutor - Digital Security Advisement, 2017.

Office of United States Senator Lindsay Graham – Expert Advisement on the Victims of Iranian Censorship (VOICE) Act, 2009.

Office of United States Senator John McCain – Expert Advisement on the Victims of Iranian Censorship (VOICE) Act, 2009.

AWARDS AND HONORS

First Place, Google Global Voices Advocacy Essay Competition, 2015 for “Who do we lose with Internet censorship and control?”

University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, Herbert F. York Global Security Dissertation Fellowship, 2013-2014.

University of Oxford, Selected Participant to Summer Doctoral Programme at Oxford Internet Institute, 2013

University of Toronto, Full Scholarship, Connaught Summer Institute on Monitoring Internet Openness and Rights, 2013

University of Toronto, Selected Participant to Connaught Summer Institute on Monitoring Internet Openness and Rights, 2013

University of Amsterdam, Selected Participant to Digital Methods Program, 2011

University of Pennsylvania, Digital Methods Initiative Full Scholarship, 2011

UCLA International Institute Fellowship, 2010-2012.

Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, European Parliament, shortlisted and finalist as co-founder of AccessNow, 2010.

Third Place, Graduate Paper Competition, California Geographical Society Annual Conference, 2007.

Third Place, Innovative Application of GIS, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona GIS Expo, 2004.

Academic Honor Societies

Phi Kappa Phi, Honor Society, 2009; Pi Gamma Mu, International Social Science Honor Society, 2004; Beta Gamma Sigma, Business Honor Society, 2004; Mu Kappa Tau, Marketing Honor Society, 2004; Golden Key International Honor Society, 2004

TEACHING & GUEST LECTURES

Central European University 2016 - Present

SOPP 5244: Introduction to Cyberconflict

SOPP 5245: Geopolitics of the Internet

SOPP 5268: Internet & Human Rights (cross-listed International Relations & Human Rights)

SOPP 5311: Skills for Impact: Digital Security & Human Rights

Open Society Foundations Internship for Rights & Governance Clinical Seminar 2018-19
The Internet & Human Rights
Digital Security: A Workshop

University of California, Los Angeles (Lecturer) 2014 & 2016
GEOG 138: Place, Identity, and the Networked World

University of California, Los Angeles (Teaching Associate & Fellow) 2011 - 2015
GEOG 140: Political Geography
GEOG 7: Introduction to GIS
GEOG 2: Biodiversity

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Lecturer) 2009 - 2010
GEO 351: Geography of California
GEO 101: Physical Geography

Invited Guest Lectures

Careers in Human Rights panel, CEU Career Services, Central European University, February 2021
Academic Practice Workshop, Panel with Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy and International Relations, Central European University, January 2019.

“Academic Freedom in the Digital Age” Panel with School of Public Policy and Department of Political Science, Central European University, January 2019.

“Case Selection and Case Events” in Research Design and Qualitative Methods. Professor Thilo Bodenstern, Central European University, January 2018.

“Orality, Literacy, and Technology” in Sound Studies: Listening & Creating Between the Material, Medium, and Metaphor. Instructor Ian Cook, Central European University, Nov. 2017-18.

SPP Faculty Practitioner Career Talk - Brown Bag Lunch Series. Central European University, February 2017.

“The Internet and Human Rights” in the undergraduate class Human Geography. Instructor Aline Gregorio, Department of Geography, California State University, Fullerton, March 2011.

“New Communications Technologies and Iran’s Green Movement” in Place, Identity, and the Networked World. Professor Michael Curry, Department of Geography, University of California, Los Angeles, November 2010.

“Strong Ties, Weak Ties, and Iran’s Green Movement: A Response to Gladwell” in The Cultural, Ontological, and Digital – Global Perspectives. Professor Ramesh Srinivasan, Department of Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, October 2010.

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION

Central European University, Master of Arts in Public Policy, Primary Supervisor
Altergot, Mariia “Visual Manifestations of Populism on Political Party Websites” Completed 2018.

Bilyk, Joseph “Giving and Governance in American Cities: The Philanthropic Sector and Collaborative Urban Governance” Completed 2019.

Budak, Beste “The New World Order: Exploring AI Policies Through Power Transition Theory” Completed 2020.

Dubey, Nikhil "Roadblocks to Application of Blockchain in Indian Agriculture - A Study on Madhya Pradesh" Completed 2018.

Ferrari, Veronica “Addressing Online Violence Against Women in Argentina: A Human Rights Approach to Nonconsensual Pornography” Completed 2017.

Jordan, William Yates "The Internet, The Oppressor: Human Security in Cyberspace" Completed 2018.

Klochkova, Elizaveta “The Public Zone: Crowdfunded Human Rights Journalism in Post-2014 Russia” Completed 2019.

Loudon, Hope “From Silence to Solidarity: A Case Study Exploring Policy Lessons and Implications of Three Public Art Efforts Acknowledging Sexual Violence and Promoting Women’s Empowerment in Post-Conflict Kosovo” Completed 2018.

Murphy, Therese "Predictive Policing and the Carceral State: A Comparative Case Analysis of Palantir in New Orleans and the Strategic Subject List in Chicago" Completed 2018.

Norton, Emily Kathleen “Gendered Terrorism in the Digital Age: Global Attempts to Combat Technology Facilitated Violence Against Women” Completed 2018.

Páli, Kata “Discourse, Human Rights and Efficiency: How changes in the development discourse could help the effectiveness of international development projects?” Completed 2019.

Rocha, Rebeca Marques “More than just a party: youth nightlife movements as key agents in the promotion of harm reduction programs” Completed 2020.

Rohman, Wahida “Child Rape in India: The Role of Indian Print Media in Influencing Public Policy and Shaping Public Opinion in the Country” Completed 2019.

Sjökvist, Emma “The Re-Imagined Geopolitics of Swedish Military Conscription” Completed 2017.

Upadhyay, Setu “Innovative Technologies to Address the Resource Curse: A Case Study of Illegal Sand Mining in Madhya Pradesh India” Completed 2019.

Zangl, Maximilian “Internet Governance and the Freedom of Speech: Analysis of Current Frameworks on Disinformation in the US and EU” Completed 2021.

Zens, Svetlana "Civil Engagement Platforms for Better Public Policy: European Union and China Case Study" Completed 2018.

Central European University, Master of Arts in Human Rights, Primary Supervisor

Alic, Dalia “The Role of Data Protection and Cybersecurity Regulations in Artificial Intelligence Global Governance: A Comparative Analysis of the European Union, the United States, and China Regulatory Framework” Completed 2021.

Azad, Ananya “Digital Security Act in Bangladesh: The Death of Dissent and of Freedom of Expression” Completed 2021.

Central European University, Master of Arts in Public Policy, Secondary Supervisor

Naseer, Shirin “Gendered Violence in Pakistan's Digital Spaces” Completed 2020.

University of California, Los Angeles, Ph.D. committee member

Walker, James “Grounding the View from Nowhere: The Role of Remote Sensing Technology in Human Rights Advocacy” Completed 2021.

SERVICE

Institute for Advanced Study Review Committee, CEU. 2016 - Present
Academic Thesis Proposal Evaluation Committee, CEU. 2016 - Present
6th Lemkin Reunion, Session Chair, Security Implications of Transactional Foreign Policy. School of Public Policy & Shattuck Center for Conflict, Negotiation and Recovery, CEU. 2020.
Open Society Foundations Internship for Rights and Governance, Faculty Member. 2018-19.
Microsoft Policy Hackathon, CEU Mentor, 2019
Open Society Foundations Internship for Rights and Governance Review Committee, CEU. 2017 - 2019
Planning Committee, Citizenship in the Digital Age Project, CEU. 2018
Consulting Committee, Building Conscious Communities, European Economic Area/Norway Grants, CEU. 2018
Search Committee, Tenure-Track Assistant Professor in Public Administration, CEU. 2018
Project Manager, Intellectual Themes Initiative: Sound Relations, CEU. 2016 - 2018
Research Symposium organizer. CEU. Winter 2017
Faculty Representative, CEU School of Public Policy, Surveying Iran: The Future of Social Research After the Nuclear Thaw Conference at CEU. September 2016.
Lead Teaching Fellow, Introduction to GIS. UCLA. Winter - Spring 2013.
Colloquium Representative, UCLA. 2011-2012.
Session Chair, (G)local Connections of Corporatism, Culture, and Citizenship. Association of Pacific Coast Geographers Annual Conference. 2009.
Student Board Member, Geography of Religions & Belief Systems Specialty Group. Association of American Geographers. 2009-2011.
Webmaster – Geography of Religions & Belief Systems Specialty Group. Association of American Geographers. 2009-2011.
Administrator – Facebook, Geography of Religions & Belief Systems Specialty Group. Association of American Geographers. 2009-2011.
Session Chair, Cultural Landscapes. Association of American Geographers Annual Conference. 2009.

Manuscript Peer Reviewer

Contemporary Politics, The International Journal of Human Rights, Journal of Cyber Policy

Book Proposal Peer Reviewer

Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, Cambridge University Press

Professional Affiliations

Association of American Geographers; Human Rights Researchers' Network; International Studies Association; Society for Philosophy and Technology

MEDIA

Emerging Europe: "Does Huawei still have a part to play in developing emerging Europe's 5G networks?" July 2020

Forbidden Stories: "Censored Stories on Covid-19: A Worldwide Media Blackout Threat" April 2020

Le Temps (Switzerland): "Du bug de l'an 2000 au risque de cyberguerre" March 2018

The Defense Post: “Smart killer robots: China’s military future could rest on artificial intelligence” January 2018

Columbia Journalism Review: “5 tips for securing your work online” May/June 2015

Columbia Journalism Review: “Beware of keylogging” April 2015

New Internationalist Magazine: “Beyond Burnout” May 2014

SiriusXM Radio – The Agenda: “2013 Iran Election Panel” June 2013

Austin-American Statesman “U.S. backs ‘garage-type’ Web rebels” September 2012

The Global Mail: “Iran: Not Tweeting, Hacking” April 2012

PCWorld Magazine: “In Iran, New Attack Escalates Ongoing Cyberconflict” March 2011

Wired Magazine: “Digital Weapons Help Dissidents Punch Holes in China's Great Firewall” November 2010

National Public Radio: “1 Year Later Iran's Opposition Still Relies on Internet” June 2010

The Zimbabwean: “New Media Used to Fight Dictatorships” April 2010

TechPresident: “Getting Past Digital Censors Becoming 'Part of Youth Culture'” March 2010

New York Times: “Supporting Dissent with Technology” February 2010.

Businessweek: “Iran 'Cyber Army' Hits Radio in Latest Crackdown” February 2010

PC World Magazine: “Clinton Praised for Internet Freedom Speech” January 2010

New York Times: “Clinton Urges Global Response to Internet Attacks” January 2010