

## DiSCourse Seminar

The Digital Science Center and the Department of Information Systems, Production and Logistics Management would like to invite you to the following talk:

**Khalid Durani**  
University of Innsbruck

From Simulation to Hyperreality: The Role of Simulacra in Visual Formats in the News  
Production and Consumption Process by Citizen Journalists

Social media empowers ordinary citizens to act as citizen journalists, thereby challenging the traditional role of the institutional press. Despite its empowering potential, citizen journalism can also engender adverse consequences, such as the proliferation of misinformation. Drawing on Baudrillard, we argue that news production and consumption by citizen journalists foster hyperreality. From this theoretical perspective, social media simulates reality through simulacra (e.g., digital images) that are perceived as more authentic than physical reality itself. Baudrillard delineates this phenomenon by distinguishing four phases of simulacra. Using this taxonomy, we conducted a semiotic analysis of simulacra shared on Reddit during the Israel–Hamas War. Based on our findings, we introduce a theoretical framework that explains the distinct yet interrelated roles of simulacra within this news ecosystem and their influence on citizen journalists' engagement. In the first phase, citizen journalists demonstrate reactive engagement, whereby simulacra magnify specific aspects of physical reality. In the second phase, citizen journalists interrogate simulacra to uncover perceived injustices and validate ideological beliefs, thereby reframing reality. At the third phase, citizen journalists help conjure hyperreal representations—simulacra that superimpose on physical reality—effectively creating new realities.

About the speaker

[Khalid Durani](#) is a postdoctoral researcher, who integrates theories from philosophy and psychology to explore the ethical and political dimensions of digitalization. His research focuses on two core areas: the use of digital technologies and their design and development.

### **Date, Time, Place:**

Friday, 7 November 2025, 12:00 (CET), hybrid

Participants are invited to join the event at the Digital Science Center, Innrain 15,  
Open Space Area (1st floor) *or* online via [Big Blue Button](#).