

## Paper Title

When speaking the same language doesn't work: Translation and gender in the Arab world

## Abstract

In July 2017, after three years of (IS) Islamic State's abuse, abductions and atrocities; the Iraqi city of Mosul was finally liberated. Ready for retribution, the new local authorities soon rounded up everyone they thought to be past IS's collaborators. It was during this setting that journalist Paulo Moura tried to interview a group of detained women believed to be the wives of the fallen IS' fighters. After asking his translator for help, the latter, however, refused for fear of the army's retaliation. Despite Moura's resolve and insistence, his translator declined, and, shortly afterwards, the opportunity was lost when the guards took the women to a rehabilitation camp, only to kill them off one by one on their way there.

Moura's "lost in translation" in the Arab World is not new and indeed there are several other Portuguese reporters with similar stories of misconstrued communication and translation inadequacy, such as: Cáceres Monteiro in Kuwait in 1991, Carlos Fino in Iraq in 2003, Tiago Carrasco in Palestine in 2012, and Paulo Dentinho in Syria in 2016; to name a few. While these journalists often use interpreters and translators interchangeably, their efforts and attempts to report in the Arab World are still noteworthy and they seem to be shared by other reporters.

The book *Our Women on the Ground* (2019), however, seems to question this assertion by analyzing the story of nineteen Arab women journalists and their remarkable efforts to break the barriers of gender and language. By focusing on the aspect of translation and journalistic communication in the Arab world, this study will consider the struggle of getting your message through, even when both sides seem to speak the same language. This study will also focus on the importance of gender and how this overlooked aspect as deeply affected reporting in the Arab world.

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