AiS/BCGE-Training

Digital Repression Across Borders: Methods, Risks and Responses

Online training 14.-15. September 2023, 9:00-13:00

Digital technologies have given authoritarian governments new tools to control, silence and punish dissidents in other countries. These governments use surveillance, malware attacks, online harassment, and defamation campaigns to threaten political exiles and diaspora communities. International scholars can also fall into the surveillance practices of authoritarian governments even though not being explicit political exiles. Digital threats are now a key method of cross-border repression – and they are often intertwined with other, more direct tactics such as pressure on home-country families, threats from embassy staff and even physical assaults. Digital transnational repression can spread uncertainty, stress and social isolation among exiles and academics abroad, and it clearly affects their personal security and basic human rights. The two-day workshop introduces prevalent methods of digital transnational repression and highlights some of the security risks that scholars originating from repressive contexts may be exposed to while working in Germany and other countries. The workshop aims to help participants assess potential threats to their personal safety and information security, and develop strategies to mitigate those risks. Through a series of exercises and group discussions, participants will gain a better understanding of what security means to them, brainstorm potential threats to their personal safety and information security, and map out their information ecosystem to identify vulnerabilities and develop strategies to protect their data.

Workshop objectives:
- Build knowledge on digital threats, their connection to physical security and wellbeing
- Stimulate reflections on risk perception and risk mitigation in daily routines
- Find practical solutions for improving digital hygiene and information security

Target group: International, displaced and at-risk scholars of the AiS-network as well as international scholars who are members of the Berlin University Alliance (FU Berlin, TU Berlin, HU Berlin, Charité) and researchers affiliated in research projects at BUA (postdoc and PhDs)

Trainers:

Marcus Michaelsen, PhD, is a researcher studying digital technologies, human rights activism and authoritarian politics. He currently works for the Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto in a project on digital transnational repression. Previously, he was a researcher in the Law, Science, Technology and Society (LSTS) research group at Vrije Universiteit Brussel as well as in the Political Science Department of the University of Amsterdam.

Damian Paderta is a digital consultant and web geographer working on the topics of Open Knowledge, Civic Technology and Smart City. As the founder of the OK.NRW Institute, he is committed to open government and works with clients in government, non-profit organizations, and the private sector to help them use technology to promote transparency, open access to information and privacy protection. He is a private lecturer at the Studieninstitut Ruhr.

The training is organized by AiS in collaboration with BCGE. **To register**, please send to AiS your intent to join and a brief description of your interests, motivation, and institutional affiliation. Applications should be sent to ais@fu-berlin.de with the subject line: Application - Training "Digital Repression" until **18 August 2023**.

Berlin University Alliance

Gefördert im Rahmen der Exzellenzstrategie von Bund und Ländern