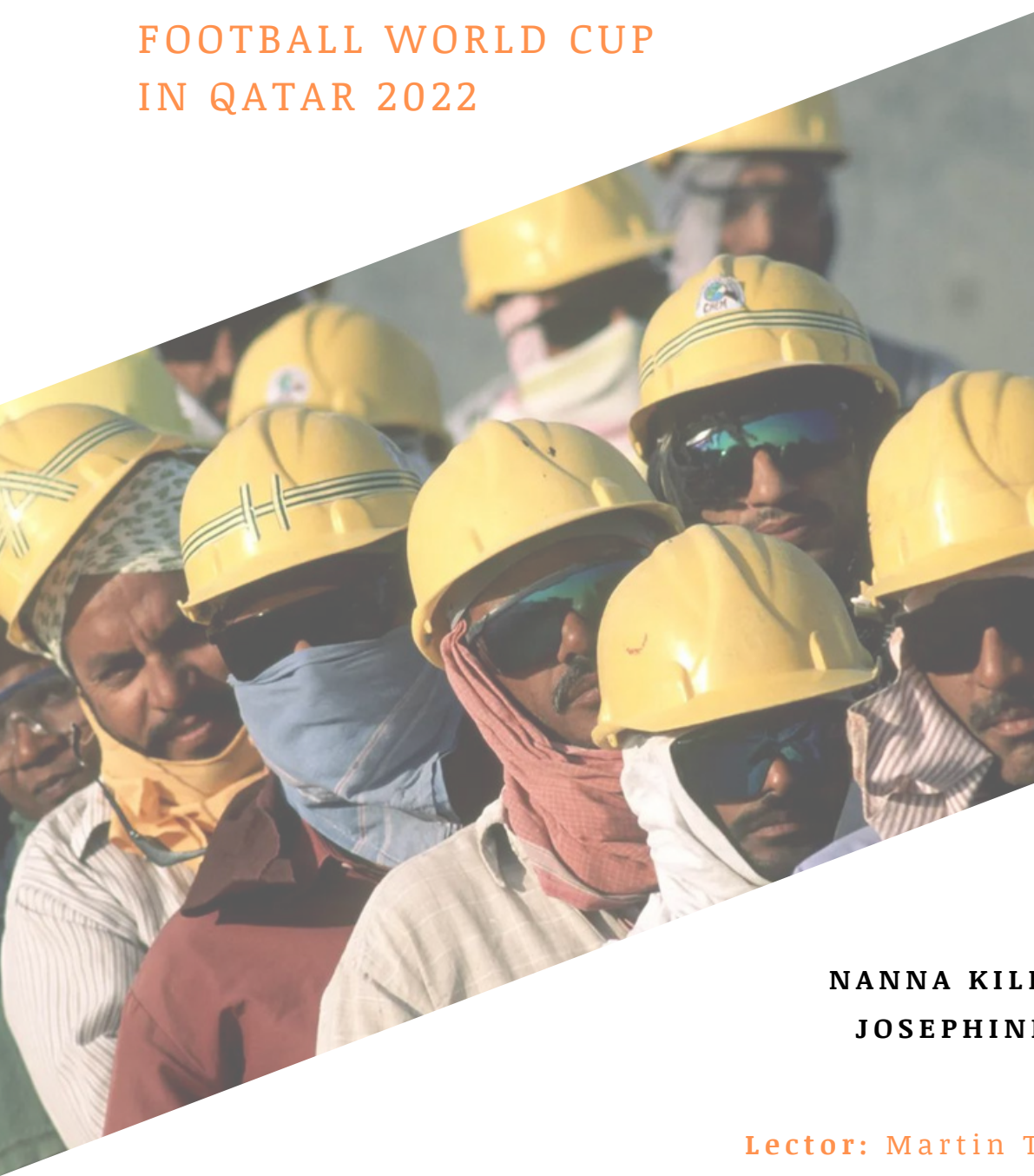




AALBORG
UNIVERSITY
STUDENT REPORT

MASTER THESIS

NARRATIVES OF THE
FOOTBALL WORLD CUP
IN QATAR 2022



AUTHORS

NANNA KILDEMOSE NIELSEN

JOSEPHINE AMELIA OLEJAS

Lector: Martin Trandberg Jensen

Characters: 317.602

Date: 31.05.2023

Abstract

This thesis examines the narratives presented in global media in relation to the Football World Cup 2022 in Qatar. Moreover, it investigates how these narratives help shape Qatar's image from a tourism perspective and how a mega-event like the World Cup can possibly change the hosting country's geopolitical position globally. This has been investigated due to mega-events hosted by emerging economies and the media's impact on the host nation not having been fully investigated within the literature. The project is based on a qualitative content analysis of global media as well as a qualitative content analysis and semiotic analysis of VisitQatar's social media videos which subscribes to the social-constructivist approach. The social-constructivist approach has proven to not only be the philosophy of science but is also portrayed in the results.

The findings show that six narratives have proved to be more present than others which are *LGBTQ+ problems*, *World Cup as a facilitator for change*, *Bad conditions for migrant workers*, *Environmental problems*, *Human rights problems*, and *World Cup is highly political*. Furthermore, Qatar has capitalized on hosting the event to further the global awareness of Qatar as a tourism destination and moreover to change the traditional image the world might have had of Qatar. These findings indicate that mega-events as a tourism tool can facilitate change in politics and power dynamics within the host country and its global relations and position.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction	3
1.1 Research question	7
1.2 Setting the Scene	7
1.3 Structure of the project	10
1.4 Delimitations	10
2.0 Literature review & theory	11
2.1 Research field	11
2.2 Theories	11
2.2.1 Mega-events	11
2.2.2 Market communication	14
2.2.3 Narratives & tourism imaginaries	19
2.2.4 Semiotics	21
2.2.5 Soft Power	23
2.2.6 Geopolitics	27
2.3 Summing up	29
3.0 Methodology	30
3.1 Philosophy of Science	30
3.1.1 Ontology	30
3.1.2 Epistemology	31
3.1.3 Social constructivism	33
3.2 Research Methods	34
3.2.1 Data collection	35
3.2.2 Content Analysis	39
3.2.3 Selection of news articles	43
3.2.4 Selection of VisitQatar's Social Media Content	47
3.3 Quality criteria	50
3.3.1 Credibility	51
3.3.2 Transferability	52
3.3.3 Dependability and Confirmability	53
4.0 Presentation and Analysis of data set	54
4.1 Qualitative content analysis of Global Media	54
4.1.1 Denmark	54
4.1.2 United States of America	58
4.1.3 France	59
4.1.4 The United Kingdom	62
4.1.5 India	63
4.1.6 Australia	64
4.1.7 Germany	65
4.1.8 The Middle East	66
4.1.9 North Africa	69
4.1.10 Canada	69
4.1.11 Belgium	70

4.1.12 International media	71
4.2 Summing up	73
4.3 VisitQatar's Social Media content and its Portrayal of Qatar.....	74
4.3.1 Symbols	75
4.3.2 Summing up.....	88
5.0 Analysis of the narratives presented in the media landscape.....	90
5.1 Narrative 1: LGBTQ+ problems	91
5.2 Narrative 2: World Cup as a Facilitator for change	96
5.3 Narrative 3: Bad Conditions for Migrant workers	102
5.4 Narrative 4: World Cup in Qatar is highly political	108
5.5 Narrative 5: Environmental problems	111
5.6 Summing up	116
6.0 Discussion	119
6.1 Temporality and Dynamics of Communication.....	119
6.2 The Politics of Communication	128
6.3 Mega-events as more than a marketing tool	138
6.3.1 Soft power	140
6.4 Tourism and tourism literature in the 21 st century	143
7.0 Conclusion	147
8.0 Bibliography	149

List of Figures

Figure 1: The world divided into the Global North and Global South countries (RGS, n.d.)	12
Figure 2: 'Us vs. Them' mentality illustrated in article extracts (Appendix A)	31
Figure 3: Countries from which articles are included in the analysis (AMCHARTS.COM, n.d.)	37
Figure 4: Coding of article extracts from the UK (Appendix A)	40
Figure 5: Examples of deduced categories from the UK coding (Appendix B)	41
Figure 6: Keywords used in the search for articles	44
Figure 7: Percentage of articles per country (Appendix A)	46
Figure 8: Overview of posts published by VisitQatar prior to the World Cup (Appendix C)	47
Figure 9: Sample of the identification of symbols and meanings from VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	48
Figure 10: Illustration of the coding and categorization of symbols (Appendix C)	49
Figure 11: Illustration of the coding and categorization of themes in caption (Appendix C)	49
Figure 12: Excluded categories from Danish article extracts (Appendix B)	52
Figure 13: The most prominent narratives presented in Danish media (Appendix B)	54
Figure 14: Example of codes and the deduced categories in Danish media (Appendix B)	55
Figure 15: The most prominent narratives presented in American media (Appendix B)	58
Figure 16: The most prominent narratives presented in French media (Appendix B)	60
Figure 17: Codes within the category Environmental Problems in French media (Appendix B)	60
Figure 18: The most prominent narratives presented in English media (Appendix B)	62
Figure 19: The most prominent narratives presented in Indian media (Appendix B)	63
Figure 20: The most prominent narratives presented in Australian media (Appendix B)	64
Figure 21: Codes within the category Attractive working in Qatar for migrant workers after new rules in Australian media (Appendix B)	65
Figure 22: The most prominent narratives presented in German media (Appendix B)	65
Figure 23: The most prominent narratives presented in Middle Eastern media (Appendix B)	67
Figure 24: The most prominent narratives presented in North African media (Appendix B)	69
Figure 25: The most prominent narratives presented in Canadian media (Appendix B)	69
Figure 26: The most prominent narratives presented in Belgian media (Appendix B)	70
Figure 27: The most prominent narratives presented in International media (Appendix B)	71
Figure 28: Codes within the category World Cup in Qatar is highly political in Danish and International media (Appendix B)	72
Figure 29: Most prominent narratives across all included countries, based on the number of article extracts (Appendix B)	73
Figure 30: Most frequently occurring symbols in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	75
Figure 31: List of the most frequently occurring symbols in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	76
Figure 32: Examples of Beach / Ocean occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022a; VisitQatar, 2022b; VisitQatar, 2022c)	77
Figure 33: Examples of Riverside occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022d; VisitQatar, 2022e; VisitQatar, 2022f)	77
Figure 34: Examples of People occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022g; VisitQatar, 2022h)	78
Figure 35: Examples of Religious markers occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022i; VisitQatar, 2022j; VisitQatar, 2022k)	79
Figure 36: Examples of Futuristic buildings occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022a; VisitQatar, 2022e; VisitQatar, 2022l)	80
Figure 37: Examples of Sand dunes occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022m; VisitQatar, 2022n; VisitQatar, 2022g; VisitQatar, 2022o)	81
Figure 38: Examples of Football occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022p)	83
Figure 39: List of the deduced categories along with the number symbols each category covers (Appendix C)	83
Figure 40: Overview of which types of text occur the most in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	85
Figure 41: Example of codes and the deduced categories of the text in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	85
Figure 42: Examples of text occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022m)	86
Figure 43: Deduced categories of the text in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)	88
Figure 44: Overview of biggest categories (narratives) based on article extracts (Appendix B)	90

<i>Figure 45: Codes making up the category Human rights problems in the UK, North Africa, and Denmark</i>	91
<i>Figure 46: Global map of digital division (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 269)</i>	95
<i>Figure 47: Illustration of Iconic person marked in VisiQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)</i>	100
<i>Figure 48: Timeline of the occurrence of narratives in the global media (Appendix D)</i>	119
<i>Figure 49: Reciprocal influence of mega-events</i>	146

List of Appendixes

Appendix A: Article extracts, codes, and categories

Appendix B: Overview of codes and categories

Appendix C: VisitQatar's social media videos, codes, and categories

Appendix D: Timeline

1.0 Introduction

In November and December 2022, Qatar hosted the Football World Cup which contributed to media coverage all over the world. A lot of the Danish press was concerned not only with the games but with Qatar and its tourism, ethics, and human rights (Secher, 2022). Qatar was being highly criticized for exploiting migrant workers as cheap labor but also for the working conditions, lack of paid salary, and forced labor on projects regarding the World Cup as well as projects with no relation to the World Cup (Secher, 2022). Moreover, one of the highly discussed debates, especially in Denmark and Northern Europe, was the ban on wearing the One Love armband, which symbolizes supporting the LGBTQ+ community (Wivel, 2022a). This debate got the interest of international media like Reuters (Tétrault-Farber, 2022), The Daily Mail (Newman, 2022), and Sportsnet.ca which is the official Canadian NHL national multimedia rights holder (Sportsnet.ca, n.d.). However, Denmark was not alone in the desire to wear the One Love armband as European countries like Belgium, The United Kingdom, Germany, and Switzerland also planned on supporting the LGBTQ+ community (Tétrault-Farber, 2022). Despite the massive critique of the One Love armband, it is interesting to reflect on the fact that it was only Western countries from the *Global North*¹, that attempted to take a stand, despite the World Cup being a global mega-event with participating countries across all continents. It should be noted that most of the critique in the media about Qatar and the World Cup in general both prior to and during the event, has originated from countries or media channels from the Western countries (Al-Saai, 2022).

Mega-events have over the years grown bigger and bigger which according to Horne (2007) is caused by three reasons, being the development of mass media through technology, revenue caused by the event for sponsors and others involved, and finally growth in sales of merchandise due to the consumption at the mega-event (p. 83). This has to some extent, therefore, amplified the need for research into mega-events. However, according to Connell (2018), most previous research has focused on the impacts on the host country's economy and environmental situation caused by mega-events, rather than studying how the potential political scene might change due to the event (p. 93). This is seconded by Jones & Ponzini (2018) who argue that most literature has investigated the

¹ The *Global North* and the *Global South* are terms without tourism, that divides the world into two areas depending on their accessibility to resources and their economy (Britton 1982 cited in .

potential economic benefits and ramifications caused by mega-events (p. 435). Though Getz & Page (2006, cited in Jones & Ponzini, 2018) formulate a need for more research into a non-economical aspect of mega-events (p. 436). Considering the above it could be reasoned that there is a lack of research into the political sphere of mega-events and as Connell (2018) states, there is a lack of research into the political sphere of especially mega-sports-events: *“Various contexts shape the intersections of geography, politics and sport, but sport remains a largely neglected aspect of geopolitics”* (Connell, 2018, p. 92). The Football World Cup can according to Müller & Steyart (2013, cited in Arnegger & Herz, 2016) be categorized as a mega-event (p. 76) which Arnegger & Hertz (2016) argue can help enhance tourist numbers and countries’ image (pp. 76-77). It can be speculated whether this has been a main driver for the state of Qatar, especially as Varga (2013 cited in Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020) states that previous research has considered soft power as motivation for nations hosting mega-events, which can contribute to destination branding and image (p. 111).

Arnegger & Hertz (2016) state that back in the day it was mostly the Global North that was chosen as host nations for mega-events (p. 76), however, that has changed and is still changing as Qatar was the first country in the Middle East to host a mega-event (Trade Arabica, 2022). Considering the research that has been done regarding mega-sports-events in the Middle East, it appears that the research field is very limited. This might be due to the fact that the Middle East has not in the past had the opportunity to host global mega-sports-events, hence forward called MSE, for the whole world (Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016, p. 181). Moreover, there has not been any particular research on emerging economies² and countries of the Global South, like Qatar, in relation to mega-events, which results in a lack of theory (Hemmonsbey & Tichaawa, 2018, p. 213).

During the past year, it has been possible to follow the media and news exposure which has seemed somewhat controversial and filled with narratives about politics, and it can be discussed how the World Cup as an MSE has contributed to the portrayal of Qatar’s image as a tourist destination and their political standing in the global world. Projecting the proper image to potential visitors is of great importance as the image of the destination otherwise ultimately might be damaged because

² Emerging economies can be defined as developing countries, that as they develop become increasingly engaged in the international market .

of it being unrealistic. However, it is not only from a tourism perspective the nation's image may be damaged but also from a political perspective, as MSEs globally portray the nation in a certain way towards other countries. So, how does a nation like Qatar take advantage of hosting an MSE like the Football World Cup 2022 to further the tourism industry and the nation's global destination image as a tool for political diplomacy?

1.1 Research question

With this in mind, we would like to pose the following research question:

What are the narratives of Qatar presented by the media in relation to the Football World Cup 2022, and how has the World Cup been used to possibly change Qatar's tourism image and its geopolitical position in a global context?

1.2 Setting the Scene

Qatar cannot be said to be one of the countries with many tourist arrivals, according to statistics by The World Bank (The World Bank, n.d.) provided by World Tourism Organizations. Even in 2019, which was the biggest year according to tourist arrival numbers, Qatar as part of the Middle East only accounted for 73 million tourist arrivals whereas Europe and Asia accounted for 744,5 million and 360,1 million (Statista Research Department, 2023). Qatar's choice to bid to become the host nation for the 2022 Football World Cup can assumably be linked to its wish for better exposure for its country as a tourism destination. Though Horne (2015) discusses whether the outcome of mega-events, might be more related to the political image of a destination and the global power relations, than the hosting countries' economy or the potential exposure the event can create for the destination as a tourism destination (p. 470).

Mega-events are not a new phenomenon and have been researched by several authors over the years (Arnegger & Herz, 2016, p. 76). As previously mentioned, it has primarily been countries from the Global North that has hosted mega-events, such as the Football World Cup. Fortunately, this seems to be changing, giving countries from the Global South the chance to host the Football World Cup like Japan and South Korea in 2002, South Africa in 2014, and now Qatar (Ataman, 2022) but

also other MSEs like the Olympics in China in 2008 and the Olympics in Brazil in 2016 (Horne, 2015, p. 469). The phenomena of mega-events and MSEs are as previously stated filled with politics, which is seconded by Horne (2015) as he states that when countries not belonging to the Global North were approved for hosting the events it started out by only being the *BRICS*³ countries, like for example Brazil and China (p. 469).

According to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010), challenges automatically follow when hosting mega-events, like a World Cup, and one of them is perceptions related to the image of the destination (p. 221). Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) furthermore state that for a country to be able to successfully capitalize upon being a host nation to further its image or shift the image the world has of them, existing good stories and narratives about the place that can be communicated are essential (p. 229). When doing a Google search on *Qatar* with a search criterion of the last year it's interesting to see how the second option that pops up after an ad from Qatar Airways is an article from one of the biggest news channels in Denmark with the title of "*Qatar Exposes World's Inequality*" (Google, n.d., Own translation). This arguably does not advocate for the most positive image of the country, seen from a Danish perspective.

Several authors cited by Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) furthermore describe mega-events as potential development facilitators for destinations relating to tourism (p. 220). Tourism is an economic and social phenomenon of great importance in today's society (Crick, 1996 cited in Lichrou, O'Malley, & Patterson, 2008, p. 27). Tourism destinations are being promoted by national governments or regional and local organizations with the determination of obtaining economic growth and employment in the destination (Hall, 1997, p. 63). Due to the intense competition amongst destinations in attracting tourists, marketing places has become a professionalized industry (Gotham, 2002, p. 1735) in which MSEs have become a great tool, however, it also comes with political agendas. This could for example be seen as many humanitarian organizations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, capitalized on the world's eyes on Qatar to further

³ *BRICS nations is a common term for the countries of Brazil, China, South Africa, Russia and India. Those countries are grouped and known as the BRICS nations because they are developing countries, where it is believed that they by 2050 will be the main suppliers of manufactured goods (Majaski, 2022).*

push their message of Qatar not living up to several ethical rights and standards (Amnesty International, n.d.; Human Rights Watch, n.d.).

Furthermore, according to Lenskyj (2015), research into the field of mega-events has historically not considered sports events, but only other types of mega-events (p. 503). Though that has changed in the last couple of decades, and sports events are now closely linked to mega-events (Lenskyj, 2015, p. 501). Because of that Jones & Ponzini (2018) state that a lot of articles about the field of MSE focus on research prior to the hosting of the event and not necessarily after (p. 436). Hemmonsbey & Tichaawa (2018) furthermore state, that only a few studies have explored the effects of MSEs on destination branding and from a tourism perspective (p. 213).

Some researchers like Amara (2005, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) has though conducted some research into the political sphere of MSEs concerning the discourses that are being communicated (p. 175). However, that has only been with a focus on the mega-event hosted in Asia in 2006 (Amara 2005, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) and otherwise not countries from the Global South (p. 175). Haghirian and Robles-Gil (2021) furthermore state that research into MSEs in emerging countries of the Global South took its point of departure in 2008 when China hosted the Olympics (p. 173). However, Makarychev & Yatsyk (2020) argue that not much research has been conducted into how mega-events help represent the host country's policies, social, cultural, and political preferences which possibly readdress people's understandings of spaces, geographies, and its attached identity and history (p. 113).

Some research has previously been done into Qatar as the host of the Football World Cup 2022, however, all of it has been prior to the hosting of the event, which emphasizes the need for research now that the MSE has been held. Brannagan & Guilianotti (2014a, 2014b, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) have for example researched Qatar's sports strategy and how they have used soft power as a tool before the event (p. 175). Dorsey (2014, 2015, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) has furthermore researched the Football World Cup 2022 in Qatar and its impact on local and national politics but also only prior to the event being held (p. 175). However, from a communication angle, it has not been possible to find any research into the narratives produced by the media during the World Cup alongside with how Qatar has used geopolitics through soft power during the event.

1.3 Structure of the project

The thesis is from this point on structured with a descriptive beginning consisting of an exploration of the existing literature in a literature review focusing on the relevancy of this project. Next, the methodology of the thesis will be clarified along with the considerations of the methods and concrete examples of how they have been used for analysis. The methodology section begins with an explanation of the chosen philosophy of science which this research subscribes to as this defines in which perspective the data has been collected and analyzed. Hereafter, an analysis of the data is presented followed by a discussion of the results and how they contribute to answering the research question. Lastly, a conclusion will sum up what has been examined in the project and how it can contribute to the identified gap in the literature and what we can conclude from that.

1.4 Delimitations

When examining the literature on mega-events, it is evident that several studies researching the destination image and how people's perceptions of it change from two perspectives (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007). One is prior to the event being held, whereas the other one is after (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007). This project will however not investigate the consumer perspective, as the Football World Cup 2022 in Qatar has already been held and it is therefore not possible to create one's own data about perceptions prior to the event, but only after. This project will therefore only focus on data through Qatar's own communication outward and the global media's coverage both leading up to and during the event.

2.0 Literature review & theory

In the following section relevant literature and theory will be explored in order to outline the academic field of the project.

2.1 Research field

The main theories that will be outlined and underpinning the exploration of the research question are mega-events and how they can be used as a tool for soft power and in geopolitics. Furthermore, the theory of destination image and place branding are outlined as mega-events like the Football World Cup can affect the host nation's image in a global context and thereby be used as a way to create or contribute to the place branding of the host country. The theory of semiotics is furthermore outlined as it entails different perspectives on image representations and how to analyze them when exploring symbols and tourism narratives and imaginaries in images as well as texts. All of this can contribute to exploring the way that Qatar may use the World Cup as part of its market communication and to change its geopolitical position globally.

2.2 Theories

2.2.1 Mega-events

Mega-events are according to Bramwell (1997) defined as global events like the World Cup, The Olympics, and other major international events (p. 167) that according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) are categorized into either sport, cultural, or political events (p. 222). Roche (2006, cited in Maiello & Pasquinelli, 2015) defines mega-events as events that despite being short, they can have long-term effects on the places that host them (p. 116). Bramwell (1997) furthermore underlines how mega-events typically are regarded as tourist-enhancing for the destination in question (p. 168). Arnegger & Herz (2016) seconds that as they state that mega-events have the power to attract visitors, which potentially leads to the enhancement of tourist numbers, while also contributing to an increase in publicity for the destination (p. 76). Müller & Steyaert (2013, cited in Arnegger & Herz, 2016) define the Football World Cup as a mega-event (p. 76). Mega-events can be divided into several subcategories (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 2021) with MSEs being one of them (Kenyon & Bodet, 2017, p. 233).

Due to MSEs' potential to facilitate growth in tourist numbers and exposure, many governments and organizations worldwide according to Kenyon & Bodet (2017) opt to become hosts for mega-events (p. 233). This is to increase their destination's capability to attract tourists but also in order to capitalize on the event to market a specific image of the destination to the world stage (Florek, Breitbarth & Conejo, 2008, cited in Kenyon & Bodet, 2017, p. 233). Another reason according to Cf.Andreff & Szymanski (2006, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) for why governments compete to host MSEs is the goal of obtaining soft power through the event (p. 174). The concept of soft power will be elaborated upon further down.

As mega-events are not a new phenomenon and are an area that has been researched, Hiller (2000, cited in Arnegger & Herz, 2016, p. 76) nevertheless, states that mega-events typically were hosted by the Global North and because of that Arnegger & Herz (2016) argue that there is a lack of research and studies focused on mega-events in emerging economies (p. 77), like Qatar is categorized to be (MSCI, 2023). The Global North and the Global South are terms used to divide the world into two parts depending on their economy and access to resources (Williams & Lew, 2015). According to a rapport by the Royal Geographical Society the divide between the North and the South also relates to how developed a country is (RGS, n.d.). According to them the Global North and the Global South can be divided based on the *Brandt Line*, which was defined in the 1980s, which to a high extent divides the world into the southern and the northern hemisphere, see Figure 1, making the northern hemisphere primarily the Global North and the southern hemisphere the Global South (RGS, n.d.)



Figure 1: The world divided into the Global North and Global South countries (RGS, n.d.)

Merwe (2007) furthermore believes that mega-events hosted by emerging countries can create a lot of debate and disputes both in relation to their economy and concerning destination image as an intangible asset (p. 68). Merwe (2007) also believes that emerging economies' pursuit to host mega-events is a strategic move solely in order to further their marketing efforts (p. 69). According to Grix & Lee (2013), it is possible to see an increase in the number of countries that have not previously hosted a mega-event and bid to host events such as the Olympics or the Football World Cup (p. 522). Grix and Lee (2013) furthermore emphasize how it can be viewed as interesting that recent and future events, from the standpoint of 2013 reveal that most of the countries chosen to host MSEs are emerging countries (p. 523).

According to Black & Van der Westhuizen and Horne & Manzenreiter (2004, 2006, cited in Black, 2010), MSEs are increasingly also used to position a country or destination as a new player on the global map, in the efforts of enabling the possibility of hosting other mega-events in the future (p. 270). This was for example the case when South Africa hosted the Football World Cup, where the mega-event was used to put the entire African continent on the world map (Black, 2010, p. 271). Moreover, De Almeida et al. (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) argues that when emerging economies and developing countries opt to host a mega-event it is due to the idea of *peripheral mega-events* (p. 175). De Almeida et al. (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) defines peripheral mega-events as what possibly offers emerging countries the option to, in a symbolic sense, contest the global order of things and position themselves as upcoming places and cultures (p. 175). According to De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014), the perspective of repositioning oneself as a nation can also be used by developed nations, however, they argue that it is only developing countries that can use mega-events to contest the global order (p. 272). However, Grix & Kramareva (cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) believe that when emerging countries host MSEs one of two things usually tends to happen (p. 177). One of them is the country emerging on the world stage as a cultivated place, whereas the other is considered as more of a last step in the rehabilitation of a country that has historically not lived up to standards and norms by the already developed countries (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177).

What is interesting is that according to Maiello & Pasquinelli (2015), there has been a decrease in European destinations' willingness to compete to host mega-events due to the cost of hosting the events not necessarily outweighing the benefits (p. 116).

Mega-events automatically ensure a certain degree of worldwide media coverage, however, that might not always have a positive outcome (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 230). Ahmed and Blanco (1991, 1993, cited in Custódio & Gouveia, 2007) believe that mega-events if used and managed right can help turn a destination's previous negative image (p. 285). This is seconded by Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) who view hosting mega-events such as the Football World Cup as a possibility of: *"reposition themselves in the "eyes of the world" with the expectation that international media coverage of the event will convey this message"* (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 229).

However, mega-events as mentioned automatically entail media involvement, which can come with challenges as it all of a sudden is not solely stories about the destination in relation to the event, that are portrayed by the media, but also stories about the destination in general (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 229). According to Custódio & Gouveia (2007), mega-events are considered image forming and a media to market the destination (p. 294). Though destinations should be careful when opting to become hosts for mega-events as Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) argue that certain positive stories need to already be present at the destination for the media to communicate to the world, as the probability is that they will also find something that can portray the destination in a negative light (p. 229). Destinations are in some way dependent on positive stories to market a positive image (Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007, p. 355), and according to Echter & Richie (1991, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007) both the creation and maintaining of positive destination perceptions are crucial (p. 355).

Black's (2010) research into hosting MSEs globally indicates that the stakes for emerging countries and economies are higher than for the traditional Global North countries, which have historically been primarily the ones to host mega-events (p. 274). Black (2010) argues that emerging economies' only option is to succeed when hosting mega-events, as failure will have too high ramifications (p. 274). Grix & Brannagan (2016) argue that sport is not just a domestic cultural phenomenon but something that can be used globally as a political tool (p. 255).

2.2.2 Market communication

Today, digital technologies are of significant impact on marketing and communication within the tourism industry (Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 22). Tourism is an integral part of the growing Information

and Communications Technologies, henceforward called ICT, economy, which is expanding rapidly and is of global reach (Gössling, 2021, p. 734). The Internet and the convergence among informatics, communication, and multimedia have provided destinations with new channels through which they are able to empower their communication process (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Buhalis 2003, cited in Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 267). Digital marketing as a term has evolved over time from only describing the marketing of products and services by using digital channels to now, describing the process of digital technologies being used to gain customers and obtain customer preferences, retain customers, promote brands, and increase sales (Financial Times, lexicon.ft.com, cited in Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 23). Social networks have emerged due to ICT, and these are platforms on which people share information, also referred to as electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) (Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 27). Thus, it is not only the official DMO⁴ that can form the image of a destination, but everyone through user-generated-content (Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 27) and assumably also other forms of digital media like news articles as well, that are quickly distributed online compared to traditional printed media. Photographic representations by several authors are argued to be of high importance in tourism as they are the means by which a destination is promoted and conveyed by potential tourists (Hunter, 2008, p. 354; Jenkins, 2003; Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Photographic representations are by Hunter (2008) described to be mechanisms of tourism discourses which makes them relevant when discussing tourism destination image due to their potential influence on the perceived image (2008, p. 354).

2.2.2.1 Destination image

Large events can be used to promote the image of cities, or countries, that not yet are rich in tourists and kickstart a tourism industry that might not otherwise have become established (Law, 2002, cited in Williams & Lew, 2015, p. 193). This is supported by Bob et al. and Van der Merwe, (2007, 2007, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007) who state, that even though mega-events are time-limited they can have a huge impact on the host city, or country, beyond just the event (p. 368).

The general definition of image is according to Bennett (1995, cited in Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000): *“consumer perception of a product, institution, brand, company or person which may or may*

⁴ A DMO is the official destination management organization of a destination. (UNWTO, n.d.)

not correspond to the reality" (p. 49). However, this definition does not include place or destination which are at the heart of tourism products (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015).

Before the image was a widely recognized concept in tourism research, it had been studied in disciplines such as social and environmental psychology, consumer behavior, and marketing which has been outlined by Stepchenkova & Mills (2010, p. 577). Hunt was among the first to highlight the importance of a destination having a positive image in terms of attracting tourists (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010, p. 577), as he mentions the term *state image* and defines it as "*the impressions that a person or persons hold about a state in which they do not reside*" (Hunt, 1971, p. 6). This definition is similar to the one written by Crompton (1979): "*An image may be defined as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination*" (1979, p. 18) which speaks into Hunt's (1975, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007) beliefs about how the image that individuals have of a specific nation or country plays an essential role in a destinations marketing success (p. 369). This is due to decision-makers acting upon their perceptions and beliefs of the country as a destination, and not an objective reality of it (Hunt, 1975, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007, p. 369).

Hunt (1971) further states that these impressions can be derived from multiple sources (p. 6) which is supported by several scholars (Beerli & Martin, 2004, p. 66; Lian & Yu, 2017, p. 1064; Lichrou, O'Malley, & Patterson, 2008, p. 33). Depending on the information source, the goals of communication may vary, and this can provide diverging representations of the destination (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015, p. 1837). As mentioned, impressions about a destination can derive from multiple places, one of them being from celebrities. Celebrity endorsement is known as a promotional tool (Marković, Radosavljević, & Borisavljević, 2009, p. 66) and according to Shang and Luo (2021, cited in Marković, Radosavljević, & Borisavljević, 2009) celebrities and especially influencers nowadays have the power to sway their viewers' opinions on a destination, and therefore becomes image forming (p. 67). Zhang et al. (2020, cited in Marković, Radosavljević, & Borisavljević, 2009) also believe that using influencers as a promotional tool in destination marketing can contribute to enhancing trust depending on the influencer or celebrity in question. Destination image is therefore highly formed by inputs from many places and different information sources.

Martin (2000, cited in Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017) argues that the media can work as a mediator and as some kind of communicator for the debates and understandings of the public (p. 73). This is also seconded by several authors (cited in Morris, 2014) who likewise believe that newspapers and other media outlets usually communicate debates and subjects which are sought out by potential readers (p. 47), which implies that newspapers need to be aware of its readers and also the inhabitants' beliefs. Lee, Maguire, and Muller (2009, 2013 cited Morris, 2014) also believe that when newspapers narrate stories in the news it stems from a local or national perspective.

A strong destination image occurs when the projected image aligns with the perceived image, which may be constructed by other information sources (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015, p. 1837). Destination images can be divided into, and analyzed from, two different points of view: the projected image and the perceived image. The projected image can be described as a “pull” factor in selecting the destination (Ashworth, 1991, cited in Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000, p. 50) due to it being communicated by DMOs, tour operators, or travel agencies (Kotler et al., 1993, cited in Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000, p. 50) as well as through news and other information sources (Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000, p. 51). The perceived image, however, is based on previous knowledge, the tourist's experience while visiting the destination (Hu & Ritchie, 1993, p. 26), and word of mouth (Kotler et al., 1993, cited in Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000, p. 51) which makes it a more dynamic concept. Nevertheless, the perceived image may also be identified or analyzed based on secondary sources (Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000, p. 52).

By exercising soft power through sports diplomacy, which will be elaborated on further down, a country can succeed in projecting a positive image which can further a more positive place branding of the nation (Guthrie-Shimizu, 2013, cited in Connell, 2018, p. 94). According to Buarque (2015, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) there exists such a thing as an identity-image gap which entails a divergence between identity and image referring to perceptions (p. 176). Having a country with an identity-image gap can have dire consequences (Buarque, 2015, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 176), however, Ohnsorge (cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) believes that MSEs if used properly, can offer the country a chance of reducing that gap as hosting mega-events can put a country on the world map but also enables for image creation of development (p. 176).

2.2.2.2 Place branding

Place branding as an academic field originates from research on place image and marketing (Hanna & Rowley, 2008, p. 61). As a result of greater global competition among countries and markets branding techniques have been used more frequently than previously (Hanna & Rowley, 2008, p. 61). This is supported by Oliveira (2015) who outlines that places work towards developing their communities and gaining a competitive advantage in the global competition (p. 18). The competition is about not only attracting tourists and consumers but also investors, and entrepreneurs (Kotler et al., 1999 and Florida, 2002, cited in Oliveira, 2015, p. 18; Anholt, 2007), and large events within culture or sport that may contribute to international recognition of media and governments (Anholt, 2007).

Nevertheless, much of the literature on place branding is within the field of tourism and destination marketing (Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020, p. 1). Anholt (2004, cited in Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020) defines place branding as *“the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques to the economic, socio-political and cultural developments of cities, regions and countries”* (p. 1). Destination branding, however, is by multiple scholars argued to be defined as an aspect of place branding where the place is viewed in terms of the tourism industry (Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020, p. 1). It is by Hanna & Rowley (2008) argued that there are associated terms of place branding, other than destination branding, some of which, are city branding and nation branding. Avraham & Ketter (2013) outlines different strategies that can be used to alter prolonged negative perceptions of a country to promote the destination (p. 146). These strategies they divide into respectively strategic and cosmetic depending on the level of change in the destinations' characteristics. Various authors argue that a negative image is a big problem in attracting tourists in a global era (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 146). Although, it is by Baker (2007, cited in Avraham & Ketter, 2013) stated that the destination needs to take care of not only the image but also the reality in order to create a greater and lasting change (p. 151). The first strategy within the strategic approach is to host spotlight events (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 157), like the World Cup which relates to the outlined literature on mega-events. One of the cosmetic strategies is to deliver a counter-message to the negative stereotype that aims at battling the negative perceptions of the destination (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 154). A similar, but more drastic, and strategic approach is to brand contrary to the stereotypes whereas destination branding takes a more holistic approach

that also requires a greater extent of change, in reality (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 159). These two strategies relate to the concept of counter-narratives that will be outlined in the following section.

2.2.3 Narratives & tourism imaginaries

Tourism imaginaries is a quite new discipline, but the ideas behind it have existed for as long as people can remember. The notions behind imaginaries have been discussed in several fields within the literature, but it was not until 1999 that social imaginaries emerged as a discipline of its own (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 4). Social imaginaries are understood by several authors (cited in Gaonkar, 2002) as a mechanism that takes part in influencing the way people create meaning (p. 4). Moreover, social imaginaries facilitate individuals understanding of things but also contribute to individuals developing their own imaginary of the subject or things in question (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 4). Social imaginaries are therefore highly subjective and according to Taylor (cited in Gaonkar, 2002) they continue to develop due to continuous inputs from the everyday (p. 10). Gravari-Barbar & Graburn (2016) seconds that as they argue that imaginaries are everchanging due to the everyday and historical happening over time (p. 1).

Gravari-Barbar & Graburn (2016) define tourism imaginaries as the perceptions individuals have of for example places before going there (p. 1). According to Salazar (2012) tourism imaginaries are intangible, however, they become visible through visual images and dialogs (p. 866). As Salazar (2012) puts it *“tourism imaginaries do not exist in a vacuum but have to contend with other circulating images and ideas. Global media streams overwhelm people with thousands of impressions of the world, in real time”* (p. 872). Hence emphasizing the important influence news and media have on people’s imaginaries.

Tourism imaginaries also contribute to the formation of a destination's image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999, cited in Gravari-Barbas & Graburn, 2016, p. 21) and according to Brokaw (1990, cited in Baloglu & McCleary, 1999) it is vital to understand what elements influence the image creation before being able to understand a destination's image (p. 869). The image creation of places that Till (2003, cited in Chronis, 2012) suggests can arguably be considered as the result of both reality and the narratives (p. 1798).

Wise & Kohe (2020) states that place narratives of sport are widely prepared and shaped via media processes and platforms (p. 3). Sports have become an extension of place narratives that influence peoples' associations with places due to the high frequency of publications that are linked to specific sports (Wise & Kohe, 2020, p. 3). Countries are places imagined and reimagined through different cultural elements, economic bases, or political situations, which is why Wise & Kohe (2020) argue for sports to become synonymous with places that connect people (p. 3). Moreover, they highlight the importance of geographical imaginations as they are created and reinforced due to how we as people associate and challenge the meaning of places (Wise & Kohe, 2020, p. 3). However, McGillivray (2017) argues that the associations towards and narratives about specific places and our willingness to contest prevail over them are being influenced by the mass availability of social platforms (p. 1888). He further outlines the argument that these social platforms can be subject to hijacking by conflicting interests which further can impact and change the prevailing place or event narrative (McGillivray, 2017, p. 1888). He further refers to this as *digital disruption* (McGillivray, 2017). Bleiker (2001, as cited in Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020) relates to the aforementioned, as he state: "*the inevitable difference between the represented and its representation is the very location of politics*" (p. 111). It could therefore be argued to support the need for investigating the political representations that emerge along with affective visuals (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 114) on media platforms.

Furthermore, Zhang & Zhao (2009, cited in Maiello & Pasquinelli, 2015) state that mega-events to some extent, and especially the case for emerging countries, can be viewed as a case of a master narrative (p. 118). This master narrative has the purpose of communicating the transformation of the place that hosts the event (Maiello & Pasquinelli, 2015, p. 118). According to Mauro (2020), the media and mega-events go hand in hand and sports narratives have greatly contributed to symbolic value and a representation of both the hosting and competing countries (p. 933). Partly due to the increase of mass media's influence (Mauro, 2020, p. 933) MSEs have become a tool to promote certain imaginaries like imaged communities (Andersen, 2016, cited in Mauro, 2020, p. 934). Imaginaries and narratives can be powerful and according to Marjoribanks (2012, cited in Mauro, 2020) MSEs, despite facilitating countries' possibility to create wished-upon narratives, also allows for *counter-narratives* to materialize (p. 935). Robertson (2018) defines counter-narratives as being

the narratives opposite of what the hosting country or mainstream media portrays (p. 3210). She states: *“As such, narratives that dispute official messaging or mainstream media content can be considered “alternative narratives” or “counternarratives.””* (Robertson, 2018, p. 3210). Robertson (2018) furthermore argues that counternarratives clash with the hosting country's own marketing and narratives of the event but it can also dispute the purpose and motivation behind the event (p. 3222).

The Opening and Closing Ceremonies are of high global significance and in the context of global mediatized political performances, as Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021) states (p. 177). Countries that host MSEs have a great opportunity to showcase the culture of the nation and project its power, particularly through the Opening and Closing Ceremonies as these often are considered the most important parts of MSEs (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177). Burchell et al. (cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) state: *“the narrative of a nation, is spelled out through representations of shared experiences”* and *“sets of stories, historical events, national symbols and rituals”* (p. 177), which is why these Ceremonies can be argued to be full of, as well as extensions of, representations of rituals, symbols, and events of the host country (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177). Thus, the Ceremonies can be seen as a part of the nation's public diplomacy as it is a way for the nation to present itself in a positive manner and thereby contribute to the projected image of the destination and the narrative of the country.

2.2.4 Semiotics

According to Bal & Bryson (1991), semiotics is not a new subject as signs and symbols have been present in people's daily lives for as long as they can be remembered (p. 174). They believe that signs are used to communicate or frame a message and that visual images can be perceived as symbols that help narrate meaning to which it is eminent to reflect on that meaning (Bal & Bryson, 1991, pp. 174, 176). Despite semiotics being part of everyday life and part of research for many years the same cannot be said for semiotics within tourism. While tourism semiotics have been studied by authors for years, it remains less studied than other fields of research (Robinson, Heitmann, & Dieke, 2011, p. 59). Robinson, Heitmann, & Dieke (2011) believe that semiotics consists of symbols and visuals that function as methods to which something or someplace can get attached extra or implicit

meaning (p. 59). If following the belief that symbols and visuals used in marketing add extra meaning to for example destinations, it becomes interesting to consider the importance Morgan & Pritchard (2001) attach to semiotics as they believe that people purely purchase things or services based on the attached value (p. 10). Furthermore Dann (cited in Morgan & Pritchard, 2001) believes that using semiotics as a method to analyze advertising within tourism is by far a suitable technique (pp. 59-60).

Semiotic analysis consists of two perspectives called the *signifiers* and the *signified* (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 112). The signifiers are the images, whereas the signified are the concepts (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 112) we assign to the images due to the mental concepts that are created by the signifiers (Lacey, 2009). Thus, the signified is what is represented and performed (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 114). In addition to the signifier and the signified concept, it is moreover important to consider the level of denotation and connotation when engaging in semiotic analysis (Lacey, 2009). The level of denotation contributes to the total understanding of both the signifier and the signified and is always neutral as this is the basic meaning (Lacey, 2009). This is opposed to the connotations that refer to a psychological association created by the denotation (Lacey, 2009). These can be positively or negatively loaded implications of the denotation (Analyseskolen.dk, n.d.).

Another framework used for semiotic analysis is Peirce's Semiotic Model of Representation, which has three central elements (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, p. 35). First is the semiotic process which consists of an object, a sign, and an interpretant (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, p. 35). For representation to occur, all three must be present, according to Pennington & Thomsen (2010, p. 35). The second central element is the relationship between sign and object which he divides into icon, index, and symbol (2010, p. 35). Thirdly, the role that *collateral experience* plays in the interpretation of representations is emphasized in the model, which means that in order to recognize a sign as a particular object, we must have had some previous experience that has provided us with knowledge of this object (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, pp. 35-36). According to Pennington & Thomsen (2010), objects, signs, interpretants, and collateral experience, all together can be used as a framework to analyze destination representations in images (p. 36).

Mega-events are by Makarychev & Yatsyk (2020) considered semiotic spaces that generate messages, images, and symbols that might originate from the representational and performative politics' interrelated perspectives (p. 111). They, therefore, find it important to explore that these cultural images represent and perform as they are produced and distributed by, or on behalf of, the host of the mega-event (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 111), which supports the aim and chosen methods of this project. According to Roche, Delanty & Kumar (2006, cited in Maiello & Pasquinelli, 2015) MSEs like the Football World Cup and the Olympics possess strong and symbolic political power (p. 116). Maiello & Pasquinelli (2015) believe that symbolism and semiotics are typically planned very carefully and strategically for mega-events to further nation or country branding (p. 117).

2.2.5 Soft Power

Apart from mega-events' influence on a destination's image, its brand, the narrative, and the imaginaries floating around about the destination, it also has the potential to influence politics through soft power. According to Grix & Brannagan (2016), especially MSEs have been used to further countries' soft power (p. 252). Nye (2004, cited in Grix & Lee, 2013) believes soft power to be *"the ability to 'attract and co-opt them to want what you want'"* (p. 526) although the concept can be traced back to ancient China, where soft power was understood as referent and grounded in both identification and attraction (Fan, 2007, p. 149). Considering soft power like this means the ability in shaping other people's preferences in order to make them match your own (Grix & Lee, 2013, p. 526) and this through making something attractive to people instead of through coercive behavior according to Nye (2004, cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 705). According to Grix & Houlihan and Manzenreiter (2013, 2010 cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 706) MSEs offer countries an opportunity to either increase or create soft power through the way that the event is portrayed in global media and tourists become attracted to the destination. Utilizing soft power to increase the attractiveness of one's country is perceived as smart, however, according to Grix & Brannagan (2016) one should not simply forget about *hard power* (p. 253). They argue that utilizing soft power to attract should preferably be compared with some of the features of hard power, consisting of for example inducement, thus creating the concept of *smart power* (Grix & Brannagan, 2016, p. 253). Hard power can be defined as the opposite of soft power as it is a country's ability to

influence others through its military force (Cambridge Dictionary, u.d.). According to Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021), hard power cannot be utilized as much in today's society as back in times as economic threats to some extent are worth more than military threats as they state:

"Today, however, states "must consider new dimensions of security," as threats have shifted from the military, to the economic and ecological. Today's great powers are not able to project and utilize their traditional power resources to achieve their goals, most important and visible of which is their military might." (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 174).

Some authors also criticize Nye's concept of soft power as they believe that soft power can be viewed as an alternative term for the conceptualization of place branding and marketing (Grix & Brannagan, 2016, p. 256). Others like Joffe (2006, cited in Fan, 2007) view soft power as something unclear and not very well defined, leading to misunderstandings about the nature of the concept (p. 152). Furthermore, other authors also believe that soft power is intangible and not possible to predict, hence making soft power difficult to control (Fan, 2007, p. 147). Fan (2007) also argues that it in some ways can be impossible to define if a country has or does not have soft power, as Fan states: *"It is unclear how attraction or attractiveness leads to power or influence in the context of a nation"* (p. 148). Another critique of the concept of soft power defined by Nye is the fact that it originates from an American perspective and not a global one (Fan, 2007, p. 153). This means that what Nye defines as values or perceptions to be obtained might only fit with countries originating in the Global North and that the concept does not take into account that other countries might view attractive perceptions as something else according to Hunter (2006, cited in (Fan, 2007, pp. 253-254). Blanchard & Lu (2012) agree as they argue that what one individual thinks of as attractive or purely subjective (p. 569), makes it somewhat impossible for nations or states to yield soft power in broad terms. They state that: *"In other words, attraction is not a static phenomenon. Beyond this, what is attractive depends upon what third parties say about the state attempting to project soft power (Machida 2010)"* (Blanchard & Lu, 2012, p. 569). Furthermore, Stuenkel (2016, cited in Petrone, 2019) believes that soft power is primarily being utilized and directed by the Western world in the Global North (p. 20). According to Petrone (2019), the BRICS countries belonging to the Global South in general struggle concerning soft power, when it comes to being viewed as countries that others

can look up to (p. 22) thus emphasizing that others' perceptions of a country especially in the Global South are important in relation to obtaining power.

According to Grix and Brannagan (2016), Nye's definition of soft power is more about diplomacy as they state that *"we concur with Nye that soft power aligns itself more to public diplomacy than nation building and/or place marketing"* (p. 256). However, if considering the idea that soft power is about attraction as a means of persuasion, then despite Nye putting a definition to it, the idea behind it according to Blanchard & Lu (2012) originates from ancient China where philosophers believed that: *"all recognized that power can be derived through morality and benevolence, good governance, and the winning of hearts and"* (Blanchard & Lu, 2012, p. 567). Though some authors within the literature also believe that soft power should not be what countries opt to achieve through the hosting of MSEs, because it is so intangible (Giglio & Proni, 2020, p. 196).

Haynes (cited in Ogunnubi & Amao, 2016) argues that culture, ideas, and values, also are attributes of soft power resources (p. 303). Nye is being criticized to have failed to create a portrayal of how foreign policies, culture, and political values influence behavior as this is argued by Haynes (cited in Ogunnubi & Amao, 2016, p. 303) to be the case. Ogunnubi & Amao (2016) is considering the soft power term from a South African perspective and states that Nye's three instruments of soft power are criticized for being somewhat vaguely described and overlapping each other (p. 303). Li (cited in Ogunnubi & Amao, 2016) therefore, argues that the concept of soft power has not been notoriously theorized and that this leads to confusion in the current literature as well as in practical discussions on international affairs (p. 303). Li's (cited in Ogunnubi & Amao, 2016) main argument is that the nature of power is largely contingent on how an actor chooses to exercise its capability, and therefore power is neither soft nor hard (p. 303). Another South African perspective on the soft power concept is *Ubuntu* which is argued to appear as a foreign policy domestication of the idea of soft power diplomacy (Ogunnubi, 2022, p. 250). *Ubuntu* is an African philosophical worldview that *"places emphasis on the world's common humanity and its consequent interdependence"* (Madise & Isike, 2020, p. 1). Madise & Isike (2020) argue for there to be a distinction between Nye's conceptualization of soft power from an American perspective, and the one originating from the philosophy of *Ubuntu* and South Africa's humanist foreign policy (p. 1).

Hailey (2008, cited in Madise & Isike, 2020) states that writers on Ubuntu in general agree that it represents an alternative voice to the North American and European philosophies and theological discourses (p. 4), which is why it is also considered relevant to outline this perspective on soft power. Ubuntu acknowledges the concept of power within communities and because of this, children in South African villages are socialized and taught to value the needs and interests of a group more than their own individual values (Madise & Isike, 2020, p. 4). According to Mangena (2016, cited in Madise & Isike, 2020), Ubuntu is distinct from the Western worldview because it is defined by not only the living but also the living dead and all members actively contribute to its definition, which makes this African perspective distinctive from the Global North perspective (p. 4). Madise & Isike (2020) outlines the importance of every nation adopting a concept of soft power that is rooted in the specific and original values and culture of the nation so that the soft power is a unique variant suited for the nation's reality and benefits the continent (p. 4).

Despite the potential of soft power and the critique thereof, a less desirable concept called *soft disempowerment* also exists (Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 706). According to Brannagan & Giulianotti (2015), soft disempowerment can be defined as a case in which a country does not manage to attract others but rather disappointment of others, thus creating a setback for themselves as it causes a decrease in the country's ability to attract (p. 706). This was for example seen when China hosted the Olympics in 2008 where they were not prepared for the media's focus on everything else happening in China than the Olympics, which led to a negative focus on minorities and their involvement in Tibet (Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 706). An example of this can be seen in the case of Qatar but in this case, before hosting the World Cup 2022. According to Brannagan & Giulianotti (2015), several issues related to the MSE and country were identified with the potential to damage Qatar's soft power, thus potentially making it soft disempowerment (p. 714). As mentioned earlier, one of the things Qatar got criticism regarding, was neglecting human rights and bad working conditions for the migrant workers preparing Qatar for the World Cup (Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016, p. 174). This, however, seems to be a common risk for nations hosting MSEs, according to Chalip (2005, cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 706).

Soft disempowerment often occurs when the host nation is not prepared for the high level of attention from the media and other countries that accompanies events of this size (Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 706). Likewise, Blanchard & Lu (2012) argues that when researching soft power, the image of the country trying to obtain soft power from a global perspective or a specific countries perspective needs to be taken into consideration, in order to fully evaluate the undertaking of soft power (p. 569). Based on the above it could therefore be discussed that the destination image and soft power might be codependent and one should consider both when examining a country's soft power, especially within tourism. Thussu (2014) also believes that destination or country image is important when considering soft power as he states that:

“The capacity of nations to make themselves attractive in a globalizing marketplace of ideas and images has become an important aspect of contemporary international relations, as has been the primacy of communicating a favorable image of a country in an era of digital global flows, involving both state and non-state actors and networks.”
(Thussu, 2014, p. 5).

2.2.6 Geopolitics

According to Richter (1989), tourism is an extremely political phenomenon (p. 2). Tourist experiences and tourism encounters are regularly mediated by geopolitical discourse and practices and are therefore fundamentally related (Huang & Suliman, 2020, p. 3). When a destination is to host a mega-event, like for example the World Cup, it is not without political agendas. In the past, multiple countries have used and taken advantage of hosting a mega-event to further a political agenda of for example self-promotion like Japan during the Summer Olympics in Tokyo in 1964 (Miller, 2022, pp. 276-278) or Germany during the 2006 World Cup (Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 705). It is very common that emerging powers host mega-events and according to Cornelissen (2010), they all seem to share a common agenda which is to showcase economic accomplishments, signal diplomatic status, or project soft power (p. 3008), for example through a patriotic narrative of the country and nation like New Zealand did with the 2011 Rugby World Cup (Connell, 2018, p. 93). All three purposes can be argued as geopolitical as they may play a key role in creating the political Imagineering of the country and the type of society and state that are crafted (Cornelissen, 2010, p. 3008). Moreover, mega-events also help position the country in the international hierarchy and

general moving (Cornelissen, 2010, p. 3008; Connell, 2018, p. 92). Sport is able to further informal and formal diplomacy due to its symbolic power as well as its ability to promote a nation's political values, culture, and foreign policies (Nye, 1990, cited in Connell, 2018, p. 98). De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) agree that bidding to host and the hosting of mega-events is essentially a political move and usually a part of a broader policy for the country in question foreign policy (p. 272). Cornelissen (2009, cited in De Almeida, Júnior, & Pike, 2014) also advocates for the fact that mega-events inhibit symbolic meaning which apart from being a tool for destination branding and image, highly relates to politics (p. 273), thus making events such as the Football World Cup enmeshed in geopolitics and soft power.

With tourism being the largest industry in the world, it has evolved into one of the most far-reaching geopolitical practices in modern times (Mostafanezhad, 2018, p. 343). Moreover, it is intertwined with broader issues on the geopolitical scale like migration and inequality (Hannam, Butler, & Paris, 2014), which are two issues that Qatar has been accused of by the Global North during their preparations for hosting the Football World Cup in 2022. Hollinshead, Ateljevic, and Ali (2009, cited in Huang & Suliman, 2020) outline how tourism as a force, can be used to (re)shape or (re)produce politics, cultures, and places, and thereby be referred to as a 'world-making agency' (p. 16). Hence, tourism as an agency can further the development of more tourist attractions and products and with these turn geopolitical places into touristic places (Huang & Suliman, 2020, p. 16). With Qatar being an emerging power, and emerging tourist destination (MSCI, 2023), the former may be a geopolitical reason for the country to host mega-events like the Football World Cup, due to the potential or assumably need of developing Qatar as a tourist destination. Connell (2018) supports this as he outlines that *"hosting mega-events is a useful means of developing civic. And national pride and symbolically and visible demonstrating political and diplomatic power to others"* (Grix et al., 2015; Dickinson, 2017; Rocha, 2017, cited in Connell, 2018, p. 93). Furthermore, Connell (2018) argues that many countries have used MSEs to promote the destination's image (p. 93). Sport can therefore be used to project a country's image to the rest of the world while also providing an opportunity for a country to change its image or assert an existing national image (Connell, 2018, p. 93).

2.3 Summing up

The above-outlined literature presents the theoretical framework that is deemed relevant for this project. Mega-events can be considered from different angles and fields within literature making it a highly interdisciplinary research area. According to several authors, the information available online affects people's expectations of a destination (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015, p. 1836; Lian & Yu, 2017, p. 1063), and it can therefore be considered relevant to reflect on the narratives produced by the destination itself based on the mega-event, but also on the narratives communicated by other countries. This is because the tourism destination image can be divided into the projected image and the perceived image depending on whether the image is seen from the supply or demand side (Andreu, Bigné, & Cooper, 2000; Duan, Marafa, Chan, Xu, & Cheung, 2020). However, considering the literature it becomes evident that most literature about mega-events concerns itself with either branding or with the potential economic benefits following the event. As stated previously by both Oliveira (2015) and Anholt (2007), mega-events are not just about the attraction of tourists but also about the attraction of entrepreneurs and the pursuit of recognition globally. Mega-events are therefore highly political as they through geopolitics and soft power can help reposition a country and its position in the global world of things. However, the literature about soft power and geopolitics in relation to mega-events has been found to primarily focus on already developed countries. Likewise, the few studies that have been done concerning emerging economies, seem to mostly focus on the economic aspect and not as much soft power and geopolitics.

Thus, this project seeks to further investigate and thereby expand the field of mega-events within emerging economies like Qatar, however with a focus on soft power and geopolitics and how the event can contribute to changing Qatar's geopolitical position globally and its global image. This is through the political sphere but also based on narratives produced and communicated, which also take part in shaping the destination image and Qatar's position.

3.0 Methodology

This section outlines the research design of the project, the philosophy of science and clarifies which methods have been chosen to collect and analyze data. In addition, it will be demonstrated how the different methods have been used in practice.

The project sets out by gathering international online articles about Qatar and the controversies surrounding the Football World Cup 2022. This in order to conduct a content analysis, the aim of which is to try to understand what narratives the global media landscape is trying to communicate about Qatar due to the event. Second, the project gathers and analyses content from VisitQatar in order to understand the narratives they project themselves. Findings from both analyses were used to analyze the dissonance within the destination's image and its relation to geopolitics hereby relating to the potential controversies and conflicts between what Qatar is intending to communicate and what other countries' media are trying to communicate. These findings will furthermore be discussed and potentially contrasted with relevant literature.

3.1 Philosophy of Science

Being a branch of philosophy, the philosophy of science is concerned with the methods, foundations, and implications of the science (Schmidt & Løgstrup, 2022). There are multiple disciplines within science but common for all is that they are characterized by different Ontological and epistemological understandings (Schmidt & Løgstrup, 2022). Due to the aim of this project being the investigation of the projected and perceived image of a destination in terms of media perceptions, this project subscribes to both natural scientific and humanistic disciplines. The humanistic discipline is concerned with the understanding and interpretation of human opinions, intentions, and motives, deemed relevant to the research question (Schmidt & Løgstrup, 2022).

3.1.1 Ontology

Ontology is the study of 'being' and 'what is', hence "*... the nature of existence and the structure of reality...*" (Crotty, 1998, cited in Al-Saadi, 2014, p. 1). Richard (2003, cited in Al-Saadi, 2014) defines Ontology as "*the assumptions we make about the kind and nature of reality and what exists*" (p. 1). Nevertheless, Ontology can be divided into two parts, whereas the first is to say what exists and

what things reality is made of, and the second is to say what the most general features of these things are as well as the relation between them (Hofweber, 2017). In this project, it is important to reflect upon the premise of how the social world and the controversies are continually constructed by the interactions and counter replies between the nations and their media engaging in the global debate about the Football World Cup 2022. The reality and ‘what is’ can therefore be very different for each country and their media as culture can be argued to play a huge role in how we perceive others and whether it is with a positive or a negative perspective (Gaonkar, 2002, p. 4).

This can be related to the ‘Us vs Them’ mentality which we tend to create towards others who are different from ourselves, whether it is because of race, ethics, politics, religion, or something else (Handel, n.d.). In Figure 2 below, examples from the analyzed articles demonstrating the ‘Us vs Them’ mentality leading up to and during the World Cup can be seen.

<i>" Can we have a debate about World Cup in Qatar that is not shaped as a threatening gun: You are either with us or against us. Can we avoid all the stereotypes about brutal oil sheiks and less developed desert states that are supposed to make ourselves appear superior, progressive, and flawless" (Own translation)</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>" At best, the Western criticism of World Cup in Qatar is based on a lack of ability to distinguish between very repulsive regime and those who are defective. At worst, the criticism is based on ignorant prejudices. Many of the worst critics sounds as they simply don't like Muslims and rich people," writes The Economist in its leading article. (Own translation)</i>	<i>DK</i>
<i>"Abdel Aziz had noticed a strong cultural bias in some of the criticism, which focused on the difference between Western and Middle Eastern cultures."</i>	<i>Germany</i>

Figure 2: ‘Us vs. Them’ mentality illustrated in article extracts (Appendix A)

3.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the study of knowledge in the sense of its limits, nature, sources, and forms (Dretske, 2008). Epistemology is concerned with the study of different assumptions of the world which influences the way knowledge is produced (Schmidt & Løgstrup, 2022). According to Baumberger, Beisbart, & Brun (2017), we can know something without understanding it, and epistemology is therefore not restricted to knowledge but does also take understanding into account (pp. 3-4). Dretske (2008) states:

“Since perception is an important source of knowledge, memory a common way of storing and retrieving knowledge, and reasoning and interference effective methods for extending knowledge, epistemology embraces many of the topics comprised in cognitive science” (p. 29)

which supports the need of considering the epistemological approach in research. Moreover, due to this project investigating a projected and communicated image of Qatar, it is noteworthy to outline that the communication channel between the sender, receiver, and the source (Dretske, 2008, p. 32). It can be assumed that a gap between the projected and the perceived image may be created due to the amount of transmitted information that ends up in the mind of a person, which is an epistemological question, according to Dretske (2008, p. 34).

3.1.2.1 Positionality

This project aims at investigating the narratives constructed in the media landscape leading up to and during the Football World Cup 2022. As mentioned, the World Cup was the center of a lot of criticism, especially from certain countries' media. We as researchers are Danes and our perspective and world view is therefore influenced by our upbringing and everyday life in Denmark. This positionality pays attention to the context that creates our identity as researchers and this will affect the way we see and understand the social world (Bukamal, 2022, p. 328) and therefore also the examined topic. As we are located in Denmark, that may to some extent have influenced our collection of global articles due to our Danish IP address. However, we have tried to remedy this by using a global database for news articles, ProQuest, to ensure a broader and less biased search than by only using Google's Search Engine. The act of examining these media-constructed narratives of Qatar can be argued to be partially reflexive due to our own positionality (Bourke, 2014, p. 1).

In qualitative research, it is of high importance for the researchers to be aware of their own role in collecting data and analyzing and interpreting it (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 122). Moreover, the researchers must acknowledge potential pre-conceived assumptions of the issue or topic of study as these may be brought into the research. Our reflexivity hence includes a self-conscious awareness of our Western worldview and therefore our potential preconceived assumptions of Qatar narratives as well as a self-scrutiny of us as the researchers. This project subscribes to an inductive approach,

and we have therefore been aware of not letting any of our own assumptions or opinions of Qatar influence or contribute to the research. Due to our positionality in the project, we had a certain expectation of what the articles would be about when using each keyword when retrieving the articles. For example, when searching for *Kritik af Qatar* we expected a lot of articles criticizing Qatar due to its poor human rights, ban on homosexuality, poor women's rights, and exploitation of migrant workers. However, articles including other critiques like criticism of Western media also appeared. By including all relevant articles despite our expectations of what has been published, we try to let the data speak for itself.

3.1.3 Social constructivism

The research done for this project subscribes to the social constructivist epistemology which is based on the principle that knowledge is changeable, due to it always being influenced by time and place (Egholm, 2014, p. 148). Hence, knowledge is argued to be an imprint of a context and within this context, one wishes to comprehend how phenomena are given meaning and explain how this ascription of meaning takes place (Egholm, 2014, p. 148). Within the social constructivist approach, it is possible to obtain knowledge about how the world is developed together by individuals, since meaning and understanding are developed in a social context in coordination with other people (Amineh & Asl, 2015, p. 13). The human being is considered to be influenced by discourses and therefore subjective (Schmidt, 2022). Because human is influenced by discourses, their identity is never settled but is always changing due to new and changing discourses (Winther Jørgensen & Philips, 1999, cited in Schmidt, 2022). Schmidt (2017, cited in Schmidt, 2022) argues that societal discourses, therefore, set the framework for how humans think, talk, and act while rejecting other ways of thinking, talking, and acting. This project is therefore concerned with how a selected group of countries' media reflect a certain topic, being the societal debates and narratives of Qatar.

When adopting a social constructivist approach an inductively understanding of how phenomena are given meaning follows, along with how this ascription of meaning takes place (Egholm, 2014, p. 237). This project, therefore, subscribes to an inductive approach which starts with a research question that is answered through analysis (Veal, 2017, p. 49; Al-Saadi, 2014, p. 4). Hence, it is the concrete data that will further the answer to the research question as well as the understanding of the answer.

3.1.3.1 Inductive Approach

Within the philosophy of science, there are being distinguished three forms of inference which are *deduction*, *induction*, and *abduction* (Woo, O'Boyle, & Spector, 2017, p. 256). As mentioned above, an inductive approach has been chosen for this research project, as it “...concerns *generalizing results beyond the observations at hand*” (Woo, O'Boyle, & Spector, 2017, p. 257). Murphy, Klotz, & Kreiner (2017) mention a few research methodologies subscribing to the inductive approach here amongst discourse and content analysis (p. 296) that are used for this project. They further state that these qualitative methods share the capacity for an insightful exploration of social phenomena, that are not yet fully or right understood (Murphy, Klotz, & Kreiner, 2017, p. 296). Furthermore, Murphy, Klotz, & Kreiner (2017) note that both discourse and content analysis can be used in combination with grounded theory (p. 296). Woo, O'Boyle, & Spector (2017) argue that within science and research, all three forms of inference should be represented in a good balance (p. 257).

According to Woo, O'Boyle, & Spector (2017), good inductive research should begin with a clear purpose and research statement, which the study is designed to answer (p. 259). Moreover, they state that due to inductive research being data-driven the first role of inductive research is to identify new phenomena of significance (Woo, O'Boyle, & Spector, 2017, p. 259). After studying the literature, the aim of it as well as the methodological strategies and direction of the project have changed due to obtaining of new knowledge.

3.2 Research Methods

As mentioned, this project subscribes to a constructivist approach. Qualitative research by Golafshani (2003) is argued to be a paradigm in qualitative research (pp. 603-604) which supports the choice of methods. Johnson (1995, cited in Golafshani, 2003) states that the aim of qualitative research is to gain a deeper understanding of the topic of study by engaging in research that constructivism can facilitate, rather than “...*examining surface features.*” (pp. 603-604). The constructivist notion being concerned with how reality can change whether the researcher wants it to or not (Hipps, 1993, cited in Golafshani, 2003), furthers the idea of “...*multiple or possibly diverse constructions of reality.*” (pp. 603-604). It is therefore important to acknowledge that in case of the

same analysis being done by another researcher, the results may be different from the ones presented in this analysis, due to the above-mentioned viewpoint.

3.2.1 Data collection

The data collection for this project consists of secondary data which have undergone a qualitative analysis. Even though secondary data often is made with another purpose, it has been prioritized in this project due to the research question being concerned with global media coverage as well as VisitQatar's own marketing material. However, Primary Internet research also referred to as *Internet-mediated research* (IMR), has been used for this project. IMR is by Hewson, Yule, Laurent & Vogel, (2003 as cited in (Hewson, 2007) characterized as original data gathered via the Internet with the purpose of furthering the analysis and providing new evidence to answering a specific research question (p. 1). The Internet is by many researchers acknowledged as an important and valuable source and tool for data collection as it can enhance the research possibilities in social science (Hewson, 2007, p. 2). The secondary data are also facilitated by the Internet and are amongst others official social media accounts and academic articles. The different methods will be elaborated on in the following.

To identify relevant online articles Google's Search Engine, the Danish database Infomedia, as well as ProQuest's global database, has been used. Within all three databases, different keywords have been used, along with a date criterion ranging from the 1st of November 2021 to the 1st of March 2023. Google's Search Engine was used to identify both Danish and international media, while ProQuest's database was used only for international media and Infomedia only for Danish media. By using more than one search engine or database we try to further the reliability as well as the validity of the project as we try to remedy any bias that the database may have. Common for all three databases was that a list of articles was where every article was screened to delimitate the nature of the articles in order to only collect the ones relevant to the project. Due to the high profile of the Football World Cup 2022, a wide range of articles were generated.

It should be noted that what is meant by articles from the global media landscape is that it is not from all over the world. This project primarily concerns itself with articles from countries belonging to the Global North, due to those being the ones who have primarily been criticizing the Football

World Cup in Qatar 2022. However, articles from other countries, some of which being from the Global South were also identified, why some of which have been included in the analysis as well, depending on their relevancy and the certain country's role in contributing to and shaping the global media landscape.

An example of the criticism was the previously mentioned debate about the One Love armband (Wivel, 2022a) which was driven by countries like Denmark, Belgium, The United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, and Canada among others (Tétrault-Farber, 2022). Because of the above-mentioned countries and countries belonging to the Global North have primarily been the ones affiliated with the critique of the mega-event and Qatar as the host nation (Al-Saai, 2022), articles from those countries are the ones deemed most relevant. Despite this, it has moreover been considered to be of high importance to try to obtain a more nuanced image, thus articles from France, the US, India, Australia, Northern Africa, and the Middle East have also been included. Even though both France and the US belong to the Global North, both countries are commonly known for having strong ties to Qatar, through business engagements and it can therefore be expected that the narratives communicated by their media and press might have another point of view than the previously mentioned countries within in the Global North.

Several Danish articles like *Tipsbladet* (Thøgersen, 2022a), *Politiken* (Malmvig, 2022), *Pov.International* (Abdel-Hak, 2022), and *Weekendavisen* (Wivel, 2022b), all mention how France and Qatar following the selection of Qatar as host for the Football World Cup began trading more and Qatar now has ownership in many French companies. This is supported by a French article that describes the close ties between Qatar and France (TSA-Algerie.com, 2022). The same can be said for the US, who about a year ago declared Qatar as its closest ally outside of the NATO member countries which was communicated by the national Qatari media Al Jazeera (Al Jazeera, 2022).

As shortly mentioned above, the countries from which the chosen articles originate are all countries that are deemed able to contribute to the global media landscape as well as shape social discourses in the world. They are therefore considered large and relevant enough to contribute to and shape the media debate about the Football World Cup 2022. It has already been mentioned that most of the chosen countries are part of the Global North, but by including articles from North Africa, the

Middle East, and India, we are also able to gain some perspectives from the Global South. In Figure 3 below the countries from which articles have been included are marked as green. The Global North and Global South division can be seen in Figure 3 in the literature review.

Moreover, India is part of BRICS and one of the biggest economies and has one of the biggest

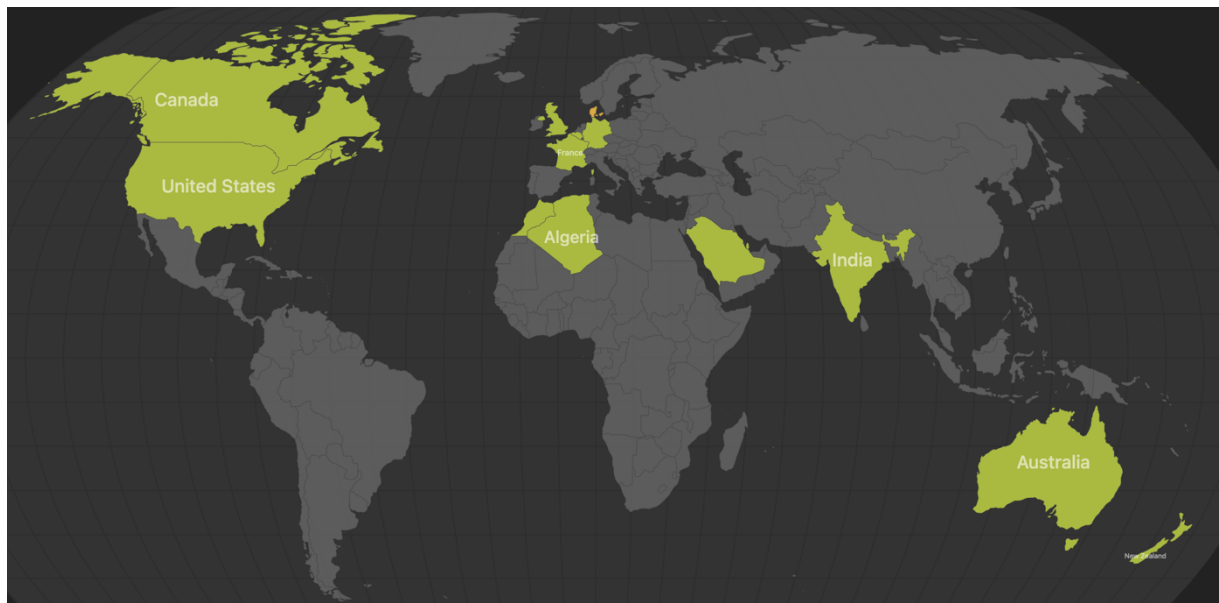


Figure 3: Countries from which articles are included in the analysis (AMCHARTS.COM, n.d.)

populations outside the West (Arrouas, 2020). India is therefore argued to be a relevant and global player when it comes to political debates. Including nations outside the Global North makes it possible for us to investigate more widely whether it is only the Nordic countries' media that are very critical of Qatar due to the Football World Cup 2022.

The content produced by VisitQatar has been gathered from their Instagram. The Instagram content has furthermore been screened to ensure that the content only dated back to approximately a year before hosting the World Cup. A year has been chosen, as it was assessed that Qatar began to market its destination in relation to the Football World Cup approximately a year before it began.

3.2.1.1 Language barrier

Some of the content which has been selected to analyze how the global media landscape portrays Qatar is not in English, but in Danish and in French, meaning that we have had to translate them for the purpose of this project. When translating documents or other written text into another

language, Venuti (2012) argues that some of the meanings are lost due to the text being translated to fit with the local jargon and culture (p. 14). He states:

“Any communication through translating, then, will involve the release of a domestic remainder, especially in the case of literature. The source text is rewritten in domestic dialects and discourses, registers, and styles, which produce textual effects that signify only in the history of the translating language and culture.” (Venuti, 2012, p. 14).

When translating the articles in other languages than English, the text has therefore not been translated directly, but have been translated with the purpose of keeping the original meaning. This has been done to limit the potential loss of meaning. However, it can still be expected that some degree of meaning might have been lost, despite us as researchers having Danish and French as our native language, thus having a complete understanding of the language and the cultural meanings of certain words. The translation, therefore, relies heavily on our interpretation and cultural understanding of the different media's articles.

An example can be seen in both a Danish and a French article. In the Danish article from Pov.International the following is written: *“Faktum er også, at aben først og fremmest ligger hos verdensforbundet FIFA, der i årtier har været gennemsyret af råddenskab og korruption.”* (Lassen, 2022) which when translated directly into English would be ‘the fact is also that the monkey first and foremost lies with the world organization FIFA...’. However, when translated directly, without consideration for the cultural signification of the language and the way in which the words and metaphors are understood locally ‘the monkey’ does not make sense. In Denmark, it is an old way of saying and means that the responsibilities first and foremost lie with the world organization FIFA, which then makes more sense.

Another example is from a French media called LesEchos, where the following is written in French: *“Mais lorsque la Première ministre Elisabeth Borne a affirmé tout de go, la semaine dernière, qu'elle ne prévoyait pas de faire le déplacement pour soutenir les Bleus...”* (Gaveriaux, 2022). ‘Qu'elle ne prévoyait pas de faire le déplacement’ would directly translated mean she did not plan to make the movement or the displacement. However, the real meaning behind the sentences is that she did not plan to travel to support the blue, hence meaning the French National Team.

Several translations have therefore been made during the selection, screening, and analysis of the data.

3.2.2 Content Analysis

To analyze VisitQatar's content and the global media's content a content analysis is used. According to Schreier (2012, p. 2), an appropriate method to analyze qualitative material such as online articles and social media posts, that require some level of interpretation is a content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is according to Downe-Wamboldt (1992, cited in Elo et al., 2010) suitable as it allows the researcher to take qualitative data and analyze it through objective and organized methods. Lacy, Watson, Riffe, & Lovejoy (2015) agree as they believe that content analysis is an essential method in researching communication (p. 791). Riffe, Lacy & Fico (2014) define content analysis as:

"The systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption" (p. 19)

which captures this type of analysis' central elements (Lacy, Watson, Riffe, & Lovejoy, 2015, p. 792). The data is not analyzed and coded until all the data for the specific analysis has been gathered. This is to ensure an inductive approach all the way through as Egholm (2014) argues that the data should be able to speak for itself instead of trying to analyze some of the data from potentially already defined codes from prior data (p. 148).

Kyngäs, Mikkonen, & Kääriäinen (2020) furthermore argue that content analysis with an inductive approach can be used to investigate people's perceptions and how they understand certain things (p. 9), like, in this case, VisitQatar's own marketing and how the global media is portraying Qatar in the news. What should be noted is that the content analysis according to Kyngäs, Mikkonen, & Kääriäinen (2020) does not provide an analysis of the data but rather an understanding of for example people's understanding of a subject or an understanding of for example what the media is portraying (p. 13). According to Schreier (2012) data does not inhibit meaning, before we construct it: *"Data never 'speaks for itself', it does not 'have' a specific meaning"* (p. 2). The content analysis

should therefore be paired with a way of interpreting the data or a specific kind of content analysis that allows for interpretation should be chosen, like the qualitative content analysis.

The qualitative content analysis, henceforward called QCA is however a version of the content analysis, that allows for the interpretation of the chosen data (Schreier, 2012, p. 2). It should be noted that for the QCA to allow for an interpretation of the data it draws upon the chosen direction for the overall project (Schreier, 2012, p. 4). It furthermore allows for both the analysis and interpretation of written data but according to Krippendorff and Shapiro & Markoff (2004; 1997, cited in Schreier, 2012) the QCA can also be used on visual data (p. 3). The process of the QCA sets out by reviewing all the data, after which all the relevant parts are chosen and assigned a code (Schreier, 2012, p. 5). Meaning that not all assembled data is deemed relevant (Schreier, 2012, p. 7). Examples of the coding of quotes extracted from articles from the UK can be seen in Figure 4.

Article extract	Code
Homosexuality is illegal in Qatar because it is considered immoral under Islamic Sharia law.	Homosexuality is forbidden
Anyone found participating in same-sex sexual activity in Qatar can be punished by up to seven years in prison	Homosexuality is forbidden
There are also concerns over the thousands of migrant workers who have died in Qatar since the country controversially won the rights to host the 2022 World Cup 12 years ago.	Dead migrant workers due to world cup
Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer has said he and his frontbench will boycott the tournament over concerns for LGBT rights, the rights of women and for the workers who have lost their lives.	Boycotting the world cup due to poor human rights
He said that he had visited the country in the lead-up to the tournament and had told Qatari officials how important it was to the UK "that they should respect gay fans"	Qatar should respect gay fans
Qatar says all fans will be welcomed to the World Cup "without discrimination", but the UK government has been urged to change its travel advice for the country to warn LGBT fans about the risks.	Qatar welcomes all
Current Foreign Office advice notes "any intimacy between persons in public can be considered offensive, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or intent" but guidance does not include specific safety warnings on the legal status of homosexuality in Qatar.	Local rules and laws
"I don't think the World Cup should even have been given to Qatar because workers have been killed in building the buildings, migrants have been treated appallingly and gay men are regularly entrapped by police officers and then sent to prison - particularly if you're a Muslim in Qatar you can face the death penalty," he told the committee. -Labour MP Christ Bryant	Criticism of Qatar as host nation due to poor human rights and working conditions

Figure 4: Coding of article extracts from the UK (Appendix A)

After having reviewed all the material and assigned it a code, the codes are divided into categories to deduce further meaning. This has been done for all countries separately in order to be able to differentiate between the nations' media and potentially different narratives. Examples of this can be seen in Figure 5, where codes such as *Criticism of poor human rights in Qatar* and *Poor womens rights in Qatar* is categorized as *Human rights problems*.

1	Human rights problems
	Criticism of poor human rights in Qatar but also at BBC programme
	Criticism of Qatar as host nation due to poor human rights and working conditions
	Poor women's rights in Qatar
	Britain criticizes Qatar as host nation due to poor human rights
	Criticism of poor human rights in Qatar
2	World cup a facilitator for change
	Improved working conditions due to world cup
	World cup can push for political change in Qatar
	Qatar needs to improve more
	Improved conditions due to world cup
3	LGBTQ+ problems
	Qatar is not safe for gays
	Disrespect of homosexuals
	Homosexuality is criminalized
	Homosexuality is forbidden
	LGBTQ+ symbols at the world cup banned by FIFA
	Qatar should respect gay fans
	LGBTQ+ people not welcome in Qatar
	LGBTQ+ is illegal in Qatar
	Homosexuality is illegal
	Laws against homosexuality

Figure 5: Examples of deduced categories from the UK coding (Appendix B)

Specific examples of how the QCA has been used to analyze VisitQatar's social media content are presented later in this chapter.

The QCA is preferable when having to analyze a big amount of content (Schreier, 2012, p. 53), hence making it relevant in this case as the content analysis of the global media's portrayal of Qatar consists of 130 articles and the content analysis of VisitQatar's own content consists of a big variety of data such as visual and written material. As previously mentioned, the inductive approach has been used throughout this project, and an example of this can be seen upon gathering the articles for the QCA. The articles gathered for the analysis were screened from the previously defined criteria, however, they were not thoroughly read through before having gathered all articles. This was to ensure that articles were not opted-out due to the quality of others when comparing.

Graneheim & Lundman (2004, cited in Elo et al., 2010) argue that it is important to consider the reliability of the findings from a QCA because it includes a certain amount of interpretation from the researcher (p. 5). In order to further the reliability of the QCA Burla et al. and Schreier (2008; 2012, cited in Elo et al., 2010) suggest that a single person should not conduct the analysis, but that it should be executed by several people (p. 5), and for this project, both researchers have participated

in conducting the QCA. Elo et al. (2010) agree as they believe it to be beneficial for the project that one person conducts the analysis, while others go through the process and the categorization of the codes (p. 5). Once again, this has been prioritized for this project in order to further its reliability. Content analysis can according to Cavanagh (1997, cited in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) also analyze visual data (p. 1277).

3.2.2.1 Semiotic analysis

Apart from using the QCA to analyze the data set, the analysis will be combined with a semiotic analysis, in order to use what Schreier (2012) defined as the strengths of the QCA, being its ability to handle a larger amount of data and the semiotic analysis that can be used to go more in-depth with what it deemed relevant (pp. 52-53). Combining a version of content analysis with a semiotic analysis is not a new research method. It has for example been done by Hunter (2016) in his study of an online destination image, where he, like for this project, used a constructivist philosophy of science approach and used both the content and semiotics analysis (p. 224).

Among scholars, Saussure & Peirce (cited in Schreier, 2012) are considered among the scholars who studied signs and symbols the most within the literature, though in quite different ways (p. 51). The literature concerning semiotics within tourism has been elaborated upon in the literature and this part will therefore only focus on semiotics as an analysis method.

Semiotics can therefore be defined as the study of all signs and symbols (Schreier, 2012, p. 51). Saussure (cited in Yakina & Totu, 2014) believed that everything can be a sign, but only if it's given meaning by someone (p. 7). Peirce (cited in Yakina & Totu, 2014) also understood signs this way, however, he furthermore believed that a sign could still be a sign despite the sender not attaching a message to the sign, as long as the receiver by chance perceived it as having meaning (p. 7). According to Robinson, Heitmann, & Dieke (2011), signs and symbols can be considered a method within tourism marketing to make an experience visible to the potential viewer before visiting the place (p. 59).

The semiotic analysis will in this project be used when scanning and coding the material as described in the QCA. When going through VisitQatar's marketing material, consisting of videos on the social media platform, Instagram, a spreadsheet was created to mark down all the symbols but also the characteristics of each video. After having looked through all the videos the symbols were interpreted to be able to assign the characteristics a code depending on what they were portraying. The QCA has therefore been used as the overall framework for analyzing VisitQatar's marketing material, however, the semiotic analysis has been used in order to consider the details and consider the different kinds of messages that the symbols and characteristics might try to portray. Examples of how exactly the codes and categories were created will be elaborated upon further down in the part describing the analysis of VisitQatar's content.

3.2.3 Selection of news articles

The first step in this QCA is to select the content to be analyzed (Luo, 2022). To do this, specific selection criteria have been chosen due to medium and genre, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and date range (Luo, 2022). The chosen news articles and opinion pieces have been retrieved ranging from the 1st of November 2021 till the 1st of March 2023. It is considered relevant to include articles published up until a year before the settlement of the Football World Cup as there assumably had been published a great number of articles prior to the World Cup due to Qatar being chosen as the host nation back in 2010 (Secher, 2022). As mentioned in the literature review, the media does not only pay attention to the country during the event but also prior to it. As Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010) highlight, the media does not only write about the event but also about the destination in general (p. 229) and mega-events can therefore be considered image forming (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007, p. 294), which is why Qatar arguably should have had certain positive stories already present for the media to communicate (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 229). This supports the need for including content published by VisitQatar a year prior to the Football World Cup 2022 and not just the need for content created during and after.

3.2.3.1 Presentation of keywords

Different keywords were used for data collection. Figure 6 shows which keywords have been used and in what language. Keywords are both in Danish, English, and French to obtain articles from

multiple countries in order to provide a more nuanced portrait of Qatar and the debate. Moreover, it was expected that a lot of articles would be focusing only on football rather than Qatar as a nation and the critical debate surrounding the World Cup. A broader search would therefore contribute to higher credibility of the analysis (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121).

Google		
Danish	English	French
Rejs til Qatar	Travel to Qatar British newspaper	Voyage a Qatar & Critique sur Qatar
Turist i Qatar	Critique of Qatar	Critique sur Qatar .be
Ferie i Qatar	Critique of qatar .dr	Voyage a Qatar
Oplevelser i Qatar	English media world cup in qatar critique	Critique sur Qatar
Turisme i Qatar	Daily mail world cup in qatar critique	Qatar hôte de la coupe du monde 2022
VM i Qatar	Canadian media world cup in qatar critique	
Qatar VM Vært 2022	International media world cup in qatar critique	
Kritik af Qatar		

Infomedia	ProQuest
Danish	English
VM i Qatar	Critique of Qatar
Qatar VM vært 2022	World Cup in Qatar
Kritik af Qatar	Qatar criticism

Figure 6: Keywords used in the search for articles

In Figure 6, the keywords are assigned to each database in which they were used and in a certain language. As Figure 6 shows, not all the same keywords have been used in the different search engines. When screening the articles in detail a lot of the articles from the keywords *Rejs til Qatar*, *Turist i Qatar*, *Ferie i Qatar*, and *Tourism in Qatar* were not deemed relevant as they were not concerned with the critical debate leading up to the World Cup. Moreover, the aim of the project was reconsidered during the days of the search for articles and the previous consumer perspective was excluded, which also resulted in these keywords becoming irrelevant. The reason for choosing keywords such as *VM in Qatar*, *Qatar VM Vært 2022*, and *Kritik af Qatar* was to identify articles concerning the criticism and debate that has been centered around Qatar because of it hosting the World Cup and their preparations leading up to it.

The relevant keywords were also translated into English in order for us to identify foreign articles from countries like the US, Canada, and The United Kingdom, enlightening the same topic from a similar or different perspective. The US is a superpower and has great political influence worldwide

and therefore also in the global media landscape (BBC, n.d.) and is therefore deemed relevant to include. The latter are both nations that engaged in the criticism of Qatar and e.g., the ban on LGBTQ+ symbols at the World Cup (Newman, 2022; Sportsnet.ca, n.d.). Therefore, keywords such as *Daily mail world cup in Qatar critique* and *Canadian media world cup in Qatar critique* was found relevant and hence used. By using English keywords, we had the ability to also retrieve articles from other countries which led to a few articles from India, Australia, the Middle East, and Germany. Furthermore, some articles where the news channel does not belong to a specific country were also found and included in the analysis. The keywords were also translated into French to identify news articles from France and Belgium but also from countries in North Africa that belong to the Global South. The intention of including these countries was to try and investigate whether the discourses differentiated between countries due to the aim of the project being the investigation of the media-constructed narratives in relation to the controversial and critical debate.

Using the keywords presented earlier a total of 130 articles have been retrieved. 44% of these are in Danish, however, 66% of the articles are in either English or French. As mentioned, articles only concerned about football or travel to Qatar have been excluded due to them not being relevant to the project. Figure 7 provides an overview of how many articles are used from the different countries' media.

Percentage of articles per country

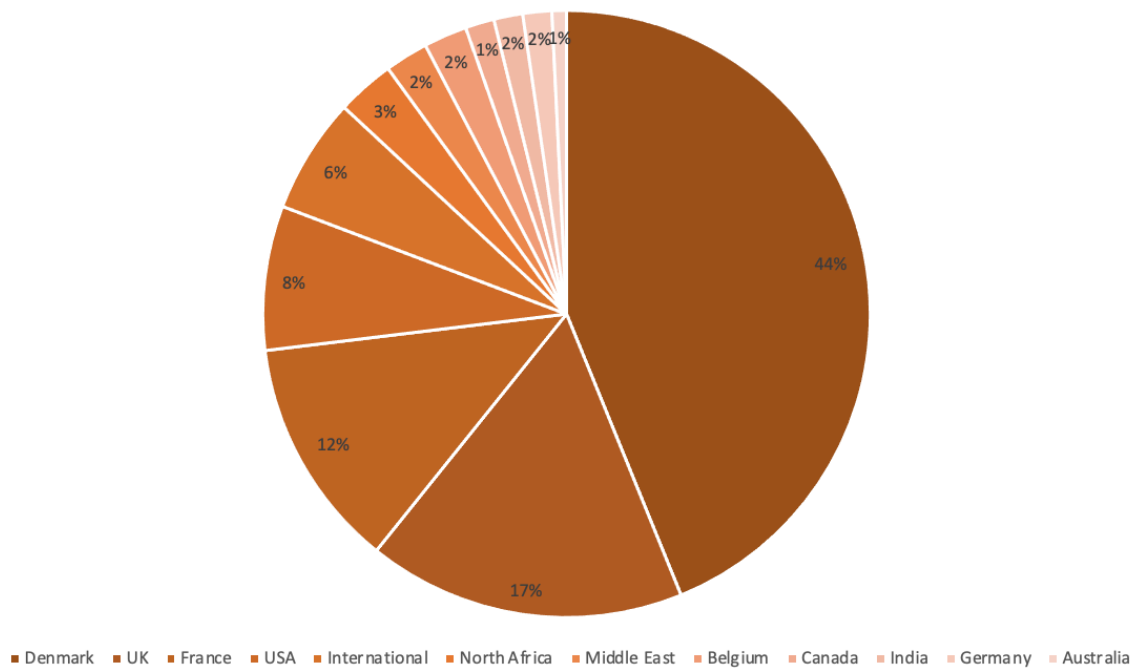


Figure 7: Percentage of articles per country (Appendix A)

It becomes clear that most articles originate from Danish media, which can be expected as we are situated with a Danish IP address. Despite the vast amount being from Denmark, the second most used articles stem from France, which as previously explained has close ties to Qatar, thus possibly making it possible for a more nuanced analysis. What follows is an elaboration of the selected material.

3.2.3.2 Delimitations of articles

Some articles have been excluded from the QCA due to several reasons, some of which have already been mentioned further up. However, articles from travel sites, specific unions, scientific or educational institutions, as well as travel blogs have been excluded as they arguably could be of a specific opinion due to their professional position in the media landscape. However, we are aware that regular media outlets also to some extent communicate their general or the writers' opinions, but if having to exclude those the dataset would have been vastly diminished. Furthermore, articles citing travel restrictions or recommendations have been excluded as it is not the focus of this project.

3.2.4 Selection of VisitQatar's Social Media Content

The content published by the national DMO of Qatar has like the selection of the global content been chosen from the 1st of November 2021 until the 1st of March 2023. Upon choosing this period we screened several posts prior to the above-mentioned and no posts were related to the upcoming Football World Cup in Qatar, however approximately one year before the event, posts relating to the event or football started to appear. Qatar's own materials have been divided into two parts. One part is the material predating the event, as the screening and selection process focus showed a relation to football or the event. The second part was during and after the event, where the focus was on the event but also on how Qatar advertised the country, sights, and things to explore for the tourists who were about to arrive. 16 posts predating the event were identified which can be seen in Figure 8 below, and 57 posts' during the event.

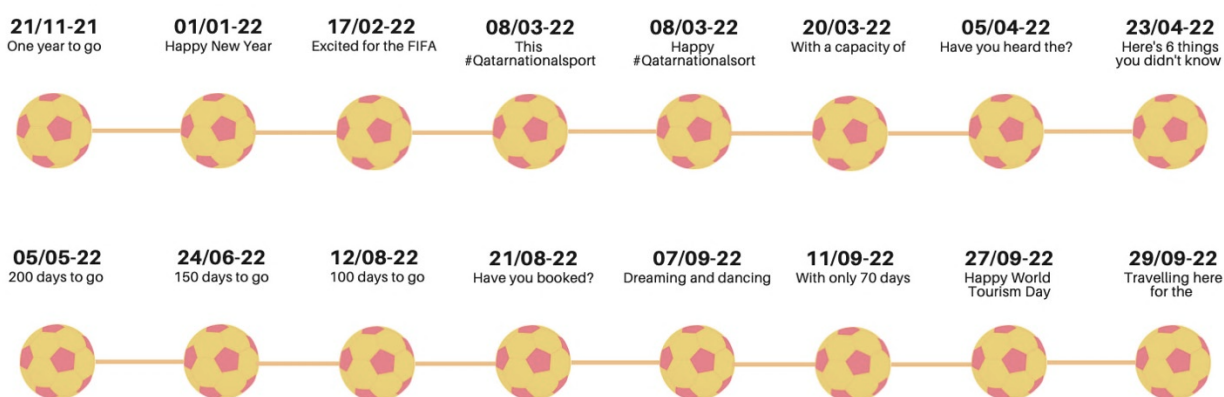


Figure 8: Overview of posts published by VisitQatar prior to the World Cup (Appendix C)

3.2.4.1 Analysis of VisitQatar's Social Media Videos

To explore the destination image and narrative projected by the national DMO of Qatar, VisitQatar, a content analysis of their Instagram profile has been conducted. When analyzing the Instagram content of VisitQatar a systematic sampling of symbols and text has been done. Thereafter, the different kinds of content have like the global articles been coded and divided into categories (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 94). In Figure 9 below a sample of the identified symbols and meanings from the dataset can be seen. Due to all content being video material, a lot of different symbols occur in each of them.

Date range:	01.nov.21 - 31.sep.22	Symbol in the video																
Date	Post/title	Fireworks	Stadium	Skyscrapers	Sanddunes	Temples/ Mosque	Camels	Statue	Beach/ Ocean	Canals	Riverside	Futuristic buildings	Nature	Palms	Airplane	Logo	Football	Iconic person
21.11.2021	ONE YEAR TO GO!	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
01.jan.22	Happy New Year		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		
17.jan.22	Excited for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022....		X		X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X
08.feb.22	#QatarNationalSportDay				X									X		X	X	
08.02.2022	Happy #QatarNationalSportDay	X	X														X	
20.mar.22	With a capacity of 40,000 seats...		X														X	
05.apr.22	Have you heard the first single from the FIFA...			X	X				X			X					X	
23.apr.22	Here's 6 things you didn't know about #Qatar		X	X	X				X		X	X						
05.05.2022	200 days to go for FIFA...		X													X		
24.jun.22	150 DAYS TO GO!...	X	X	X			X	X				X					X	
12.aug.22	100 DAYS TO GO!	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	X				X	X	
21.aug.22	Have you booked your tickets for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022?...	X	X		X				X		X						X	
07.09.2022	Dancing and dreaming through Qatar....		X				X					X	X				X	
11.sep.22	With only 70 days to go for FIFA...					X				X	X	X	X					
27.sep.22	Happy World Tourism Day ...				X		X			X		X						
29.sep.22	Travelling here for FIFA world cup?	X	X	X					X					X				
Total		6	12	7	9	3	5	3	7	4	7	10	3	4	1	5	9	1

Figure 9: Sample of the identification of symbols and meanings from VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

The content on Instagram consists of video material, text in the video, and the video's caption. As mentioned, the material has been analyzed through a QCA and semiotic analysis. The latter has been used to identify symbols portrayed in the material as seen in Figure 9 above. Many videos also included text, which was analyzed separately by identifying the overall theme of the text.

After the semiotic analysis has been conducted, the QCA is used to interpret the meaning of the symbols and texts. The identified themes have then been assigned a code and hereafter a categorization. An example of how the symbols in the video material as well as the captions have been coded and categorized can be seen in the Figure 10 and 11 below.

Symbols	Code	Category
Fireworks	Celebration	Football World Cup
Stadium	Football World Cup	Football World Cup
Skyscrapers	Buildings	Metropolitan destination
Sanddunes	Desert	Nature sights
Temples/Mosque	Religion	Qatar destination markers
Camels	Animals	Qatar destination markers
Statue	City	Cultural sights
Beach/Ocean	Nature	Nature sights
Canals	City	Cultural sights
Riverside	City	Cultural sights
Futuristic buildings	Buildings	Metropolitan destination
Nature	Nature	Nature sights
Palms	Summer	Dreaming about travelling
Airplane	Travel	Dreaming about travelling

Figure 10: Illustration of the coding and categorization of symbols (Appendix C)

In Figure 10 a section from the semiotic analysis as well as the QCA is demonstrated. In the first column, the symbols can be seen whereafter they have been coded. For example, *Fireworks* is coded as *Celebration* and *Stadium* is coded as *FIFA World Cup*, but both codes are afterward categorized as *Football World Cup* as we as researchers interpret both being in relation to the World Cup. Another example is *Palms* which is coded *Summer* as it is a common interpretation to relate palms with summer, and thereafter it has been categorized as *Dreaming about travelling*. By using both semiotics and the QCA we can identify and interpret the meaning of the videos and the image of Qatar they are trying to portray.

Caption	Code	Category
Countdown	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
FIFA World CUP	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
Looking forward? Excitement?	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
Football	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
Fun Fact	Information about Qatar	Visit Qatar
CTA	Travel to Qatar	Visit Qatar
Events	Activities in Qatar	Portrayal of activity
Activities	Things to do in Qatar	Portrayal of activity
Destination guide	Information about Qatar	Exemplifying places to visit for tourists
Emojis	Information about Qatar	Exemplifying places to visit for tourists

Figure 11: Illustration of the coding and categorization of themes in caption (Appendix C)

When conducting the QCA on the caption the themes of the captions were coded and categorized just as the symbols and the text in the video were, as mentioned earlier. Examples can be seen in Figure 11 above.

3.3 Quality criteria

As the main part of this thesis depends on qualitative research and analysis, it is deemed relevant to evaluate the methods used to both gather and analyze the data set. Within research, the commonly known terms of reliability and validity are not relevant as they set out to examine quantitative research according to Golafshani (2003, p. 601). Stenbacka (2001, cited in Golafshani, 2003) furthermore states that reliability within qualitative research can lead to misunderstandings, thus lowering the trustworthiness of the methodology used in the research (p. 601). Patton (2001, cited in Golafshani, 2003) on the contrary believes that both the concept of reliability and validity should be something any researcher considers, no matter the type of research (p. 601). This has led to Healy and Perry (2000, cited in Golafshani, 2003) stating that means tailored to assessing the quality criteria for qualitative research should be developed (p. 601). Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Golafshani, 2003) have defined several criteria like *credibility*, *transferability*, *neutrality*, *dependability*, *confirmability*, *consistency*, and *applicability*, that should be used to access qualitative research (p. 601).

Despite the terms of reliability and validity not being relevant for qualitative research, Schreier (2012) argues that reliability can however still be used in order to assess the coding of the QCA as it can be perceived as an instrument (p. 166). Bryman and Cresswell (2008, 2009, cited in Schreier, 2012) both believe that in order to assess an instrument's reliability several approaches can be used (p. 167). However, according to Schreier (2012), only two of these approaches can be deemed relevant to assess the coding part of the qualitative content analysis (p. 167). One of them is *intersubjectivity*, which is when more than one person codes the dataset in the QCA, without conferring with each other beforehand (Schreier, 2012, p. 167). Using intersubjectivity and being two people to conduct the coding frame for the QCA, without conferring with each other allows the data to speak for itself without influences from others. In this project we were able to use this method, which uncovered the same interpretation of the material from both of us, thus according

to Schreier (2012) strengthening the reliability since several people independent of each other interpreted subjective data in the same way (p. 169). This was done in the marking of symbols appearing in the social media videos posted on Instagram by VisitQatar. Separately we each went through all videos marking them with the symbols we identified and deemed relevant to the project. It is the same quality criteria that apply to all qualitative research designs of which the best-known are the ones defined by Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Korstjens & Moser, 2018), as mentioned earlier. These, and how they have been tried to be obtained in this project, will be further outlined in the following.

3.3.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the degree of the research findings' representation of plausible information drawn from the data collected by the researchers and whether the interpretation of the data is correct (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). To ensure high credibility, strategies such as triangulation, persistent observation, and prolonged engagement can be used (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). Golfshani (2003) seconds as she states that triangulation can be used to involve multiple researchers' interpretation of the data set at different times or locations (p. 604).

For this project, two types of triangulations have been used. *Data triangulation* has been prioritized when collecting data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121) due to us using articles published over 16 months, both prior to and during the Football World Cup 2022. It would have improved the credibility further if the date range was broader, however, we decided to limit the data collection by only focusing on these 16 months as there was a high frequency of articles in this period, but also due to the time frame and scope of the project. Furthermore, the articles are published in different media, both large media networks as well as smaller and more local media and newspapers. Moreover, the articles used for analysis were retrieved using three different databases, which are previously described. This help increases the credibility of the project as it provides us with a more nuanced picture of the projected image of Qatar.

Furthermore, the analysis of the data can be argued to subscribe to *investigator triangulation* as we are two persons who have made decisions regarding coding, analysis, and interpretation (Korstjens

& Moser, 2018, p. 121). We coded the article extract separately but discussed them if there were any doubts or disagreements regarding the code, category, or interpretation until we found the most suitable. Some article extracts were therefore re-coded, some codes were also recategorized, and some article extracts were excluded due to them after consideration and reevaluation were deemed irrelevant which also speaks to what Kortsjens & Moser (2018) call persistent observation (p. 121). We have aimed at identifying the elements and characteristics most significant to the issue being studied, on which we will focus in detail. In Figure 12 below it is shown that some categories were excluded prior to the analysis, due to them being irrelevant to the topic of the project.

Excluded categories	Amount of codes
European colonial history	2
Danish team stays at a hotel with good working conditions	1
Different stories about the atmosphere in Qatar	1
FIFA, UEFA and IOC has a lot of political influence	2
Saudi Arabia which also have poor human rights could become host nation in 2030	1
Close ties between FIFAs president and Qatar	2
Migrant workers prepared Qatar for the world cup	1
Due to the existinig stories about Denmark, the criticism from Qatar is considered trustworthy	1
The Middle Eastern countries are jealous of Qatar	2
Majority of migrant workers in Qatar	1
World cup has resulted in bad PR for Qatar	2
Football parties are a counter reply to the negative media coverage in the west	1

Figure 12: Excluded categories from Danish article extracts (Appendix B)

3.3.2 Transferability

Transferability is concerned with to what extent the results of the research can be transferred to settings or contexts with other data sources (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). This can be achieved with thick descriptions of the data and how it was collected, for example by outlining inclusion and exclusion criteria, time frame, and publisher (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). This provides the reader with the ability to assess whether they can transfer the data to their own specific setting (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). In Appendix C it can be seen how the social media videos posted

by VisitQatar have been divided into time frames, as already elaborated on previously. Moreover, inclusion and exclusion criteria have been outlined for example how only videos from the Instagram profile were used. It has furthermore been described how the global articles were selected due to the chosen keywords which have been outlined earlier in this chapter, but also what criteria were considered like database, genre, and language.

3.3.3 Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability and confirmability refer to the stability of findings over time, and the degree to which the findings can be confirmed by other researchers (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). Confirmability covers the establishment of data and interpretation is derived from the data itself, and not from the researcher's imagination, and is thereby concerned with neutrality (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, pp. 121-122). An audit trail can be used to ensure these two quality criteria, which should transparently describe the steps taken in the research process from the beginning to the end (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). The research of this project is arguably possible for others to duplicate thus possibly confirming the findings. This is because the qualitative secondary data for this project is online articles, where the keywords and timeframe have carefully been noted down, to be able to reproduce the research method. Furthermore, it should also be possible to identify the same marketing material on VisitQatar's social media platform, Instagram. However, if the research of this project was to be repeated, it cannot be guaranteed that others would arrive at the same results as the project relies on interpretation and therefore subjectivity.

4.0 Presentation and Analysis of data set

4.1 Qualitative content analysis of Global Media

This section presents the findings made from the QCA of global news media's coverage of the World Cup in Qatar. The results will start by presenting the overall categories that were deduced from every article extract divided by country, hence what stories, and narratives their respective media is trying to put forward of Qatar and the World Cup. Hereafter a brief comparison between the countries' narratives, to obtain a broader picture of the difference, leading to a deeper analysis of a few chosen categories and narratives in chapter 5.

4.1.1 Denmark

The data from Denmark reveals 38 categories. A consequence of the many extracts and categories shows that the Danish media is communicating various narratives about Qatar and the World Cup. In total, five categories are the most prominent within the Danish media's portrayal of Qatar which can be seen in Figure 13.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Bad conditions for migrant workers	52	9,5
World cup a facilitator for change	47	8,6
Bribery and corruption in selection process	45	8,2
World Cup in Qatar is highly political	39	7,1
Migrant death due to World Cup	39	7,1
Total	222	40,6

Figure 13: The most prominent narratives presented in Danish media (Appendix B)

The biggest category that has been deduced from the Danish article extracts is *Bad conditions for migrant workers*, some of the codes being *Exploitation of migrant workers prior to the world cup*, *Migrant workers have poor human rights and working conditions*, and *Qatar lured migrant worker to Doha under false pretences* (Appendix B). This category is concerned with the bad conditions Qatar offers migrant workers. The newspaper Berlingske states: "The salary is ridiculously low compared to Qatar's exorbitant wealth" (Kamil, 2022, Own translation) while Tipsbladet describes: "...many migrant workers in the country work under humiliating, harsh and sometimes so dangerous

circumstances that they get seriously injured in work-related accidents or die” (Thøgersen, 2022b, p. 16, Own translation). When opting to host a mega-event like the Football World Cup, media involvement is automatically entailed according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010, p. 229). The destination should be prepared for the media not only to communicate stories about the World Cup but also the destination in general (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 229). Due to mega-events being image forming (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007) certain positive stories need to already be present at the destination for the media to communicate to the world, as the probability is that they will also find something that can portray the destination in a negative light (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster, 2010, p. 229), like for example the bad conditions for migrant workers.

Three other categories revealed to be more present across the Danish articles than others, which were *Bribery and corruption in selection process*, *World cup a facilitator for change* and *World Cup is highly political*. It can be argued that two of those categories to a certain degree are about politics and ethics when looking at a sample of the codes the categories are made from in Figure 14 below.

Bribery and corruption in selection process	World Cup in Qatar is highly political
Bribery in relation to choosing the host nation	Abuse of World Cup for political gain
Corruption in relation to the world cup	Dictators uses sports events to strengthen the regime
Potential corruption in FIFA in selecting the host nation	Due to the World Cup, pressure from human rights organizations have made Qatar make political changes
Qatar has bribed the FIFA selection committee	FIFA and Qatar want more focus on football rather than politics
Qatar getting accused of bribery to win the world cup	Politics makes it impossible to boycott the world cup
Football leaders exposed as corrupt	Qatar's put on the world map
Qatar accused of buying the world cup	Qatar's ultimate goal concern soft power
Lack of will to investigate suspicion of corruption	Using the world cup for geopolitical gain
	Using the world cup for security, global reach, and soft power
	Qatar wishes to strengthen its relations and network
	Qatar wishes to strengthen their position in the Middle East
	Qatar wishes to strengthen their relations to the west
	Sport as soft power

Figure 14: Example of codes and the deduced categories in Danish media (Appendix B)

The category of bribery and corruption concerns the choice of Qatar as host nation. There has in the Danish media coverage been a lot of debates pertaining this choice and according to news articles bribery has taken place:

“A lot points towards the fact that the oil-rich gulf state has bought itself votes in FIFA’s executive comity. Only a few of the 22 FIFA members, who voted about the World Cup host for 2022 have not been linked to corruption” (Secher, 2022, Own translation).

Considering the codes that make up this category it can be argued that one of the narratives the Danish media is trying to convey does not seem entirely positive of Qatar as most extracts within this category are negatively charged and discuss the problem and ethics related to the alleged bribery and corruption. An article from the Danish media Politiken states: *“Already before the election, stories about conditions and not following the rules echoed – a forbidden trade with votes and mistakes on hidden cameras among other things.”* (Brock, 2022, Own translation). This category is quite nuanced as it can be argued that despite most extracts by Danish media being about blaming Qatar for “buying” the World Cup, some amount of blame is also put on FIFA’s election committee.

Another dominant category is *World Cup is highly political*. This category concerns itself with the political aspect of Qatar hosting the World Cup and the complexity that follows. As stated in the literature review many authors (Cf. Andreff & Szymanski, 2006, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) argue that putting yourself forward as a nation to host a mega-event is inevitably about obtaining a better position politically, improving global relationships and obtaining soft power (p. 174). These points have also been made clear by Danish media as this category when briefly considering the example of some of the codes this category consists of in Figure 14 above. Through this narrative, the Danish media seems to be trying to communicate all the different aspects of why it is favorable for Qatar to host this mega-event arguably from Qatar's point of view. This is to obtain a better relationship, secure their position both in the world, but especially in the Middle East, and for the world to start considering them as a political player that should be reckoned with. An example of this is stated by the Danish media Politiken:

“I know how skilled Qatar is at soft power and that the whole football spectacle is staged to buy Qatar an absolute dictatorship, legitimacy, and security. That we have all

now been enlisted in their world show makes the continued criticism of Qatar justified, crucial, important!" (Malmvig, 2022, Own translation).

To some extent the Danish media is also praising and applauding Qatar for their abilities to exploit the World Cup as it according to several extracts, seems that through a geopolitical and soft power lens, the World Cup has been a success.

Apart from the category *World Cup a facilitator for change*, another prominent one is *Migrant worker death due to World Cup*. The category *World Cup a facilitator for change* is about how the World Cup can be used for creating change but also how it already has due to the enormous media exposure since it was made official that Qatar was to be the host, which is of a more positive notion. Therefore, this category also consists of extracts arguing not to boycott the World Cup as that might result in less pressure on Qatar to keep changing and improving. This category, therefore, implies that the World Cup in Qatar is a good thing. An example of this can be seen in an extract from Kristeligt Dagblad:

"In exchange for the recognition the World Cup brings, Qatar has also made changes that might never have seen the light of day were it not for the World Cup. One of those changes is the abolition of the so-called kafala system. A discriminatory statute that until 2020 subjected guest workers to a series of restrictions, prohibiting them from changing jobs, leaving the country, and setting a minimum wage." (Sørensen, 2022, Own translation).

This showing that not only has some improvement already been made in Qatar due to the World Cup but also that the media has picked up on it. This seems in line with what Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021) argue might happen when an emerging country hosts a mega-event, which is that the hosting country starts improving its standards, some of which have not always lived up to the standard set by developing countries (p. 177). In this example, those could be argued to be both working and living conditions for migrant workers coming to Qatar. However, it should be noted that despite that category being on the more positive side of things, most of the narratives put forward by Danish media do not communicate a very positive image of Qatar.

4.1.2 United States of America

The overall data set from the US have led to 22 categories as well, thus showing that the American media tries to communicate a wide variety of narratives about the World Cup and Qatar. Figure 15 shows the five most represented categories.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
LGBTQ+ problems	23	15,6
Bad conditions for migrant workers	14	9,5
High inequality among people living in Qatars rights	14	9,5
Human rights problems	11	7,5
The Western countries critique Qatar	10	6,8
Total	72	48,9

Figure 15: The most prominent narratives presented in American media (Appendix B)

What is interesting here is that the top categories are quite different from the Danish, though it should be noticed how all the top categories here relate to problems in Qatar or critique and are therefore all negatively loaded. The category *LGBTQ+ problems* concern the fact that homosexuality is illegal in Qatar which the American media according to the QCA has made a big deal about communicating to the public. Apart from stating the fact that it is illegal this narrative contains codes pertaining to harassment, the death penalty, and no rights for people identifying with LGBTQ+. The media, therefore, paints a quite strong picture of Qatar not living up to the implicit expectations of how people identifying with LGBTQ+ should be treated. An example of this can be seen in an extract from Business Insider stating that “*Last month, Human Rights Watch reported that Qatari security forces arbitrarily arrested lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and subjected them to ill-treatment in detention*” (Gillet, 2022). This shows a quite strong image, which can have dire consequences for Qatar as Bob et al. and Van der Merwe (2007, 2007, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007) state that mega-events can have impacts on the destination even after the mega-event (p. 368). One of those is the destination image being affected, which as mentioned in the literature Hunt (1971) argues is an essential element in attracting tourists (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010, p. 577). The American media, therefore, highlights the many problems in both these categories but also considering that all the top categories arguably seem to paint Qatar in a quite negative light is therefore not optimal for Qatar.

Another part of this narrative relates more specifically to the World Cup, where the extracts concern the fact that several fans visiting Qatar during the games have been held back for bringing symbols supporting LGBTQ+ with them and being asked to remove them. The category *LGBTQ+ problems* can to some extent be argued to relate to the critique of the gulf-state. However, as many of the extracts from the American media concerns critique directly towards LGBTQ+ a category of its own was formed. The second biggest category across the American media extracts is *Bad conditions for migrant workers*. However, as this category also is deduced from Danish article extracts and therefore analyzed and presented in the earlier section, it will not be elaborated on further.

Though a top narrative that stands out from the others is the category *The Western countries critique Qatar*. A code within this category is *Qatar criticizes the Western critic to be racist*. This category is the American media stating that the Qataris themselves, both the government and news media among others are starting to critique how the West is criticizing them. And therefore, as an attempt of diverging the focus and the negative images the Western media is creating, they call the West hypocritical and racist.

This relates to the literature on the subject of the importance of image but also how according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill & Vorster (2010) a mega-event does not necessarily mean positive media exposure and that good stories about the hosting country should exist as the media very likely finds something negative to communicate about the destination (p. 230). Based on the results from the QCA it could be assumed that all these quite negative categories are the bad narratives the American media has found in Qatar and from the fact that no positive categories and narratives are at the top it could be assumed that the American media has not managed to find many existing good stories about Qatar.

4.1.3 France

The data from the French media stands out as the top categories identified are somewhat of another character than from Denmark and the US. This is the category *Environmental problems*, which also can be seen in Figure 16.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Environmental problems	16	16
Migrant death due to World Cup	13	13
Bad conditions for migrant workers	13	13
World Cup as a facilitator for change	10	10
LGBTQ+ problems	8	8
Only European/Western media has critiqued the event	8	8
Total	68	60,0

Figure 16: The most prominent narratives presented in French media (Appendix B)

The category of environmental problems communicated by French media relates to the amount and misuse of energy caused by the World Cup, which despite Qatar's promise to be carbon-neutral has proven otherwise based on the article extracts (Appendix A). The category consists of the codes in Figure 17 below.

Control over air-condition in stadiums
Environmental impacts due to the World Cup
Misuse of energy consumption
Huge energy use in relation to hosting the World Cup does not seem environmentally friendly
Qatar is the country with highest CO2 emissions
Qatar promises CO2 neutral world cup
World Cup in Qatar raises social and environmental questions
Wasting energy on cooling empty stadiums is not environmentally friendly

Figure 17: Codes within the category Environmental Problems in French media (Appendix B)

Through this category, the French media seem to be trying to push an image of Qatar wasting energy on the World Cup, which according to the French media was not even necessary. However, some extracts also relate to Qatar stating that air-conditioning will only be used in the summer and not during the World Cup, although, several media have investigated and found out that the opposite was the case, thus arguably creating an image of Qatar using high amounts of energy but also trying to hide it from the world. An article from *Télérama* states:

“Because a fresh breeze should escape from these mouthpieces to balance the air. It's ingenious. “Originally, air conditioning was considered in Qatari stadiums to guarantee

their use after the World Cup, during the summer, but not during the World Cup. That's what the government said." (Gontier, 2022, Own translation).

Both the second and third category, seen in Figure 16 further up, pertains to the migrant workers, who help build the stadiums and other necessary buildings for Qatar to be ready for the World Cup. Although the two categories both concern the migrant workers, the narratives within them are quite different because *Migrant death due to World Cup* conveys the message of several thousand migrant workers dying from bad working conditions, whereas the category *Bad conditions for migrant workers* is solely about how bad the conditions are for migrant workers in Qatar.

The categories contain both extracts with somewhat contradicting statements from French media and from French media incorporating statements made by Qatar. In an article from OuestFrance, Qatari nationals claim that not so many have died, as the extract states: *"According to Qatari authorities, three people have died since 2014 in accidents at World Cup-related venues, and 39 others have died in "non-work related" incidents."* (OuestFrance, 2022, Own translation). However somewhat contradicting is another extract by the same news media in the same article (OuestFrance, 2022) which mentions that solely in 2020, 50 migrant workers died, thus implying that the numbers Qatar put forward cannot be true.

A category that deviates from the Danish and American media's narratives is the category *Only European/Western media has critiqued the event* which communicates somewhat of a critique or a debate about how interesting it is that it is only European and Western news media that have been criticizing Qatar and the World Cup. Considering the literature about using mega-events to improve countries that have not lived up to standards and ethics set by developing countries (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177), it becomes interesting as it could be argued that the standards and ethics Haghirian and Robles-Gil (2021) talk about in this case would be set by countries of the Global North and therefore the Western and European countries. Considering this it can be reasoned that the media of countries belonging to the Global South, and therefore quite a part of the rest of the world, would not necessarily feel the need to criticize Qatar and hold them to a standard, they might not even themselves live up to or believe in.

4.1.4 The United Kingdom

The UK has the categories *LGBTQ+ problems* and *Environmental problems* as its top two categories being the most communicated narratives across British news articles, which is illustrated in Figure 18. However, the UK stands out by the fact that the category of *Qatar tries to communicate inclusion* is in the top five most present categories in British media extracts, nevertheless, that same category has not been very present across the other countries' media coverage.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
LGBTQ+ problems	20	10,0
Environmental problems	19	9,5
Human rights problems	18	9,0
Criticism of Qatar	16	8,0
Qatar tries to communicate inclusion	12	6,0
Total	85	36,5

Figure 18: The most prominent narratives presented in English media (Appendix B)

The categories *LGBTQ+ problems*, *Environmental problems*, and *Criticism of Qatar* will not be elaborated on further due to them being presented and analyzed for the previously reviewed countries. The narrative *Qatar tries to communicate inclusion* is unique in the way that it tries to shed a more positive light on Qatar. This category narrates how Qatar is trying to communicate that all are welcome at the World Cup and how Qatar will be trying to accommodate other cultures than their own by loosening a little bit on their own conviction and rules in order to for example let fans drink beer according to British media and even according to an article by Financial Times try to ignore fans wavering with LGBTQ+ symbols. The extract states: "*The idea is to let these things go, to ignore the raising of a rainbow flag or gently assist a drunk back into the fan zone,*" said a government adviser." (Kerr, 2022). This portrays an image in British media of Qatar that is trying to be welcome to all and show that they have in fact changed, as they are more open-minded.

Another extract from another article by Financial Times communicates the same, however, adds some kind of a disclaimer that visitors should still respect Qatar's culture. Underlining the implicit meaning that if Qatar can be accommodating by trying to respect other cultures thus loosening a bit on their own rules, visitors should respect the rules that are kept as a sign of respect and mutual understanding. The extract states:

"Everyone will be welcomed to the tournament, regardless of their origin, background, religion, gender, sexual orientation or nationality." Yet minutes later, World Cup chief

operating officer Colin Smith added: "All we ask is that people respect the cultural norms of Qatar." (Nobel, 2022)

Considering a more critical point of view it would also related to Qatar arguably hosting a peripheral mega-event, which in the literature is defined by De Almeida et al. (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) as being what offers emerging countries a possibility to contest the global order of things (p. 175). In this case it can be argued that Qatar contests the global order of things by stating that there is more than one way of doing things and that a way of doing things can also be a Middle Eastern or Arab way. Qatar arguably tries to give a little in order to respects the West's cultural norms but the least that can be done in return is also respecting them and that they have different values which should not just be put aside and disregarded.

4.1.5 India

In general, it can be assumed that the Indian media coverage of Qatar and the World Cup is somewhat of a more positive notion, considering that the top categories are categories like *Excitement about the World Cup*, *World Cup as a facilitator for change* along with *Environmental problems*. A category that could be argued to be of a more neutral nature is the category *Respect for local rules*. This narrative is about respecting Qatar's culture and norms and fans having to follow Qatar's rules while being in their country. The biggest categories are illustrated in Figure 19 below.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Excitement about the World Cup	4	21,1
World cup as a facilitator for change	3	15,8
Environmental problems	3	15,8
Respect for local rules	2	10,5
Support to Qatar ahead of World Cup	2	10,5
Total	14	73,7

Figure 19: The most prominent narratives presented in Indian media (Appendix B)

Coming back to the narratives portraying a somewhat positive image of Qatar according to Indian media, one is *Excitement about the World Cup* which is about Indians looking forward to the World Cup and being convinced that the mega-event will be a success. An example is from the news media IndiaToday which states "*It's such a showcase for Qatar; I think it's going to be an incredible operation. Everything should be super-efficient.*" (Sood, 2022). Another more positive narrative is

Support for Qatar ahead of the World Cup which relates to the Indian news media arguing that there exist many reasons why Qatar should be supported by European countries and another extract with a statement by a Greek politician who defends Qatar, through which showing his support. All in all, it can be deduced that the narratives India is communicating are of a more positive nature and including a positive image of Qatar who is trying to improve and who therefore should be supported, and that the World Cup is worth looking forward to because of that. Stories and coverage of an event can be considered as narratives and imaginaries of a place, which according to Till (cited in Chronis, 2012) help form images of things (p. 1798) like the image of Qatar in this case.

4.1.6 Australia

Like India, Australian media too seems to narrate an image of Qatar that is less negative than the previously reviewed countries' media coverage. Australia's top categories are equally present and are shown in Figure 20.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Qatars privilege due to being wealthy,	4	17,4
LGBTQ+ problems	4	17,4
Attractive working in Qatar for migrant workers after new rules	4	17,4
Total	12	52,2

Figure 20: The most prominent narratives presented in Australian media (Appendix B)

The category *Qatars privilege due to being wealthy* is arguably neither positive nor negative but seems more neutral as the extracts from this category are mostly factual and not as much a meaning or opinion. The category is about Qatar being rich and having lots of money which they have spent tons of buying European football clubs but also spend hosting the World Cup. An interesting narrative, however, is the category *Attractive working in Qatar for migrant workers after new rules* as this speaks to improvements in Qatar thus making it a desirable working place. The category is made up of four codes as seen in Figure 21.

With new reforms Qatar is desirable for migrant workers
New reforms have improved migrant workers conditions
Best migrant conditions in the Middle East
Working in Qatar is desirable for migrant workers

Figure 21: Codes within the category Attractive working in Qatar for migrant workers after new rules in Australian media (Appendix B)

What is being narrated through this category can be argued to, to some extent portray the positive outcome that a mega-event can set off as argued by Black & Van der Westhuizen and Horne & Manzenreiter (2004, 2006, cited in Black, 2010, p. 270). This as this category and therefore Australia's media narratives help put Qatar on the map, however specifically as a good working place for immigrants with better conditions compared to other Middle Eastern countries. A mega-event can contribute to image creation and possibly a better image of the host nation, however, as seen from this category it does not always have to concern the tourism image or even the political one but can also be about making the place most desirable to attract a broader workforce.

4.1.7 Germany

Concerning the German media's portrayal of the World Cup it is worth noticing that just one category accounts for almost 43% of the narratives communicated. What should also be highlighted is how both top categories, see Figure 22 below, are quite similar and could potentially be grouped under one narrative.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Western medias coverage of Qatar under criticism	9	42,9
Criticism about Europe /the West being racist towards Qatar	4	19,0
Total	13	61,9

Figure 22: The most prominent narratives presented in German media (Appendix B)

Both categories criticize how the European and Western media has been portraying Qatar, thus in some way possibly defending Qatar, which is interesting as German media also belong to the Western and European countries. Adding to that, the fact that the German football team covered

their mouth in a photo as a protest about FIFA banning the One-love armband and symbol of support for LGBTQ+ (Preussen, 2022). Based on that it could be expected that German media coverage of Qatar and the World Cup would be on the more negative side, however, these categories do to some extent prove otherwise, thus possibly showing German media's capability of self-critique and self-awareness. The top category *Western media's coverage of Qatar under criticism* stretches over extracts focusing on criticizing the Western critique and their media exposure but it also inhibits a cultural angle as two of the codes within this category relate to critique about the West's focus on cultural differences between them and Qatar and statements from the Middle East in German news articles criticizing Europe for their hypocrisy (Appendix A).

Similar to the UK's category about respecting local rules and cultures and the category about Qatar communicating inclusion, part of this category speaks to the cultural difference and how it is not acceptable that the Western and in particular European media, does not respect Qatar's traditions and beliefs, but they on the contrary expect Qatar to accommodate to their cultural norms and belief which is a form of hypocrisy and what the German media among other things are communicating. Part of this category also relates to hypocrisy about human rights and migrants. An extract from the German news site Deutsche Welle, states this hypocrisy of the Europeans' opinions towards Qatar as they should consider their own place in world history:

"They [other columnists in Arabic-language media] also suggested it was hypocritical of European countries to criticize Qatar when they have yet to properly reckon with their own colonial histories in the Middle East and Africa and how they deal with migration." (Schaer & Hassan, 2022).

4.1.8 The Middle East

The data from the Middle East consists of 42 extracts from news articles which through the QCA have led to seven categories. This is quite interesting as other countries had fewer article extracts but as mentioned further up led to a higher number of categories being identified through the analysis. This points towards the extracts from Middle Eastern media that are more aligned in communicating similar narratives. It is furthermore of interest as the Middle Eastern media consists of articles from both the United Arab Emirates and from media players that work across the Middle

East and does not identify as belonging to one country. The three top categories in Middle Eastern media make up almost 60% of what is being communicated, as seen in Figure 23.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Qatar developing tourist attractions	10	23,8
Atmosphere in Qatar during sports events makes them one to look up to	8	19,0
Support of Qatars cultural symbol at the final	7	16,7
Total	25	59,5

Figure 23: The most prominent narratives presented in Middle Eastern media (Appendix B)

All of these arguably seem to shed a quite positive light on Qatar. The top category *Qatar developing tourist attractions* could however also be argued to be quite neutral as the category consists of codes merely stating facts about how Qatar has developed more sites and experiences for tourists while visiting, as well as more attractions for families and kids along with cultural attractions (Appendix A). This category can therefore be argued to identify a little bit with place branding as the narratives being communicated relate directly to the tourism industry. As stated in the literature review by Hanna, Rowley, and Keegan (2020) place branding, and therefore destination branding, relate to when the specific place is only viewed according to tourism (p. 1), which can be argued to be the case within this category as it quite clearly states all the different things that can be experienced as a tourist. An example of this can be seen in an extract from the media platform GulfNews which lists some of the experiences Qatar created ahead of the World Cup:

“Al Maha Island is a major entertainment venue opening soon which will feature high-end dining options, Lusail Winter Wonderland, where fans can relax on the beach while enjoying festive games, rides, live entertainment and food and drink, and Al Maha Drive, a unique driveway experience reserved only for supercars and classic cars.”
(Cherian, 2022).

The two other top categories by the Middle Eastern media both relate to advocating for Qatar as *Atmosphere in Qatar during sports events makes them one to look up to* is about how the atmosphere at the stadiums is more tranquil compared to other countries and how that makes it more desirable for e.g., women to attend the games, as they according to the extracts are less likely to be harassed (Appendix A). The other category *Support of Qatars cultural symbol at the final* is very specific and relates to the final match, where a cultural symbol of Qatar was placed on a winning

player. This contributed to a lot of debate and critique from Western and European media (Byrnes, 2022), which is contested in this category as these extracts defend Qatar's choice and criticize the European media for what can be argued to be hypocrisy according to an extract from GulfNews:

"Pele wears Mexican Sombrero after 1970 World Cup - media is happy. Olympians wear Greek Laurel Wreath at 2004 Olympics - media is happy... Messi wears Arab Bisht after 2022 World Cup - media outraged!" he wrote." (Ramadan, 2022).

This contest the European media's critique and highlights the fact that when other countries hosted mega-events and used their cultural symbols, the global media did not respond negatively and furious like in this case. A cultural symbol and artifact stirring up this much debate arguably goes to show how important symbols and perceptions of them are. According to Bal and Brysen (1991), signs and symbols can be used as a tool of communication by which a message can be embedded (p. 174).

It could be argued that Qatar placing a cultural artifact on one of the winners at the final, was an attempt of communicating how proud they were to have held the World Cup and perhaps trying through this symbol trying to keep some amount of focus on Qatar, despite it being a moment for another country. This links to Maiello and Pasquinelli's belief (2015) that symbols in mega-events often are planned carefully, according to them, as they take part in the country branding (p. 117) and therefore are a strategic move. However, when using symbols in the way that Qatar did at the final, it is of further importance to consider not only the embedded meaning but also the possible meanings that can be derived by others. This is due to the fact that perception of signs and symbols can vary from the person seeing them and the message or the sender might therefore not always find its way as seen with Qatar, where debates and controversies were formed due to the symbol, which then can lead to a more negative image instead of the nation branding that might have been intended.

4.1.9 North Africa

Similar to the Middle East this group contains articles from both Algerian media and a media player not belonging to a specific country but rather the region. The top categories can be seen in Figure 24.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
World cup as a facilitator for change	8	23,5
Human rights problems	4	11,8
Bad conditions for migrant workers	4	11,8
Total	16	47,1

Figure 24: The most prominent narratives presented in North African media (Appendix B)

The category of *World Cup as a facilitator for change* is also in the top three categories from the Danish and Indian media coverage and to a large extent it communicates the same things about how the World Cup can be seen as a unique opportunity for change in Qatar and how it has already contributed to change concerning migrant workers and general human rights. It is quite intriguing that the North African media coverage, considering the two other top categories being *Human rights problems* and *Bad conditions for migrant workers* seem to have a more negative point of view considering that most of the North African countries share the same religion as Qatar (Pew Research Center, 2015), which can be assumed to influence their culture and their belief and values to be more similar and therefore their media's portrayal. However, these two categories narrate many of the problems concerning human rights violations for women, LGBTQ+, and migrant workers in Qatar.

4.1.10 Canada

The QCA of Canada's media does not show one category to be more present, but two as shown in Figure 25.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
Criticism towards FIFA	3	18,8
Compensation for migrant workers	3	18,8
Total	6	37,5

Figure 25: The most prominent narratives presented in Canadian media (Appendix B)

These categories have not appeared as top categories for other countries so far and seem of a different nature than previously reviewed categories. *Criticism towards FIFA* is about critique towards the FIFA organization and the director of FIFA for not ensuring that Qatar upholds human

rights relating to the working conditions of migrant workers. This category can therefore be seen in conjunction with the second top category of *Compensation for migrant workers* which considering what is being communicated in the extracts can be argued to be FIFA's response for not having done more. The category contains extracts communicating that FIFA ensures that compensation is directed towards the migrant workers due to the terrible conditions they have had to endure. This can be seen in an extract from the media CTVNews that states:

"The current solution is that Infantino should establish a "comprehensive compensation fund and demand Qatar establish an independent migrant workers' centre so workers have a safe space to raise complaints and get the support they need." (Wilson, 2022)

However, whether FIFA since then has ensured that compensation centers are working to compensate the workers is not mentioned in the extracts.

4.1.11 Belgium

The data from Belgian media shows that the two top categories, which can be seen in Figure 26, are similar to other countries' top categories, which is why they will not be commented upon here to avoid repetitions.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
World cup a facilitator for change	3	14,3
LGTBQ+ problems	3	14,3
Total	6	28,6

Figure 26: The most prominent narratives presented in Belgian media (Appendix B)

However, since the data set from Belgium is quite small it makes sense to consider some of the other categories like *European hypocrisy about migrant workers* and *Boycotting the World Cup* despite them not necessarily being the top ones. The category *European hypocrisy about migrant workers* concerns itself with critique towards European media based on them, like Qatar, not treating migrants in an optimal way and therefore implying that some level of hypocrisy is present and that Europe to a higher extent should look within. The Belgian news media RTBF in an extract states:

*"In an op-ed for the English news site Doha News, the artist Ghada Al-Khater writes:
"Forgive me for doubting the intentions of European countries which over the past*

decade have watched migrants fleeing conflict, devastation and poverty drown at the bottom of the Mediterranean". “ (Belga, 2022).

The category *Boycotting the World Cup* is about whether the World Cup should be boycotted and how different news articles to an increasing extent are talking about boycotting the event. This is interesting and this exact debate has been picked up by many countries worldwide (Appendix B), although considering the literature it can be debated how media exposure might be beneficial as it according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010) can have a positive outcome, however, not always (p. 230). Although in this case it could be argued that the negative media outcome to some extent has been key in ensuring that progress was made in Qatar, thus suggesting that the negative media outcome can turn into something positive depending on which angle you consider it.

4.1.12 International media

The grouping to international media is made, as it was not possible to deduce which, if any, country the media outlet was from but also because some media sites showed connections across all of Europe for example or was a worldwide broadcasting network with journalists based across the globe. The top categories can be seen in Figure 27 below.

Biggest categories:	Amount	In %
World Cup in Qatar is highly political	18	13,8
LGBTQ+ problems	14	10,8
Only European/Western media has critiqued the event	11	8,5
Criticism of Qatar	11	8,5
Total	54	41,5

Figure 27: The most prominent narratives presented in International media (Appendix B)

Considering that these categories cover both global and especially European media it can be assumed that some of the top categories here might be the same or similar to top narratives from the Western and European media which have been covered further up. The QCA shows that the international media categories are similar to the top categories for the other countries however here, they are arguably both positive and negative portrayals of Qatar.

LGBTQ+ problems and *Criticism of Qatar* are both portraying Qatar in an arguably more negative light, stressing the harassment, the bad conditions in Qatar, the lack of following human rights, and

the lack of rights for people identifying as LGBTQ+. Furthermore, *Criticism of Qatar* debate and criticize how it can be right that a country not living up to what the international media, believe to be standard norms and values, could be awarded hosting the World Cup. This can be related to what has previously been mentioned in Danish media and in the literature review. Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021) argue that when emerging countries host mega-events it is very likely that either the country emerges worldwide as a cultivated place due to the event, or the mega-event is considered a form of rehabilitation for the country that has not previously lived to up norms and values set by already developed countries (p. 177). In this category it seems relevant as the international extracts criticize the very decisions for Qatar being the host nation, when they do not live up to for example human rights as stated by the media site Reuters which operates internationally: “*The decision to award Qatar hosting rights for the 2022 World Cup has been marred by controversy, including allegations of corruption and human rights violations...*” (Reuters, 2022).

Furthermore, the international media’s biggest narrative is *World Cup in Qatar is highly political* which is otherwise only a category that has appeared at the top within the Danish media’s narratives. As previously mentioned, this category concerns itself with the political implications and meaning behind hosting the World Cup. Despite there being a higher number of extracts from Danish media it is interesting how many of the codes from both Danish and international media within this category are similar. Below in Figure 28, an example of some of the codes within this category can be seen, from which the overall both objectives and descriptions of this category repeat themselves.

Denmark	International
Sport as soft power tool	Sport as soft power
Criticism of Qatar and soft power	Qatar’s <u>ultimate goal</u> concern soft power
Qatar gains political deals	Using the world cup for security, global <u>reach</u> and soft power
Qatar has political objectives by hosting the world cup	Qatar wishes to strengthen their relations to the west
Political relations between UK and Qatar	Qatar wishes to strengthen its relations and network
Public relations	Using the world cup for geopolitical gain
Qatar has power over FIFA	Qatar uses world cup to be seen globally

Figure 28: Codes within the category *World Cup in Qatar is highly political* in Danish and International media (Appendix B)

This showing that hosting a mega-event is not just political according to different authors, but that the international media has similar thoughts they wish to communicate to the public and make them aware of. According to Cornelissen (2010), as mentioned in the literature review, capitalizing on a mega-event to further global relations and soft power is quite normal and especially for emerging countries (p. 3008), like Qatar can be argued to be. De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) furthermore believe that hosting a mega-event is solely based on politics and is typically a part of the country's foreign policy (p. 272). This makes sense when considering some of the extracts about Qatar trying to obtain a wider security net stated by NBCNews *"The real spoils of the tournament for the gas-rich Gulf peninsula may be the satisfied visitors, business deals and international recognition that could lead to greater national security"* (Kuhr & Smith, 2022).

4.2 Summing up

This section has examined the narratives put forward by global media. It has become clear that five narratives were more present across all country's media than others, which can be seen in Figure 29 sorted after the biggest of them.

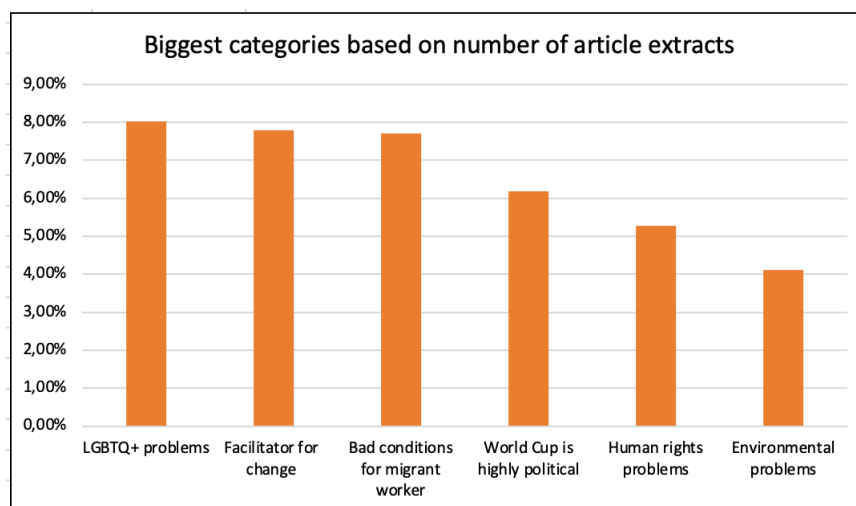


Figure 29: Most prominent narratives across all included countries, based on the number of article extracts (Appendix B)

The analysis indicates that what is argued to be problems happening in Qatar seem to be prioritized quite a lot across the world's media platforms. Problems related to LGBTQ+, migrant workers, and the environment ultimately concern debates about right and wrong. This arguably pertains to the category of *Criticism of Qatar* which is also a narrative being communicated across the different

countries, however not at the very top. However, a more positive or somewhat hopeful category seeing the mega-event as a catalyst for change and improvements in Qatar is *World Cup as a facilitator for change*. This narrative inhibits a more optimistic tone and views of what might change in Qatar in the future. It should also be noted that countries with the most narratives in common proved to be the UK, the US, and the international media. The analysis also indicates that the countries with the least narratives in common were the Middle East, Canada, and Germany, the two latter argued to be quite surprising as they both are part of the Global North but also both took part in the talks about boycotts and the criticism and debate towards the One Love Armband (Appendix B).

What should also be noted is how the top categories deduced from Danish media mostly are related to ethical controversies relating to the human sphere and how France's media narratives are mostly concerned with the environment and migrant workers. Germany's media, however, proved to be quite self-aware and self-critical as many of the extracts were concerned with how only Europe and the Western countries have been criticizing the World Cup. On what could be argued to be a more positive note are the narratives from India which seem to believe in change in Qatar due to the World Cup. One could argue, however farfetched that India communicating narratives about how the World Cup can provide positive change in the country could be an attempt of convincing India itself that if they in the future were to host a mega-event, positive change, and a positive outcome would come of it. All in all, it can be deduced that many different narratives are being portrayed by global media but most focus on either some sort of criticism and critical debate or a possibility for change.

4.3 VisitQatar's Social Media content and its Portrayal of Qatar

In this section, the findings made from the QCA, and the semiotic analysis of VisitQatar's social media content will be presented. As it is mentioned in the methodology chapter, video material from their Instagram profile has been collected in the period from the 1st of November 2021 to the 31st of December 2022. The videos were analyzed divided into symbols, text in the video, and the caption describing the video. The symbols in the video are the only element subject to a semiotic analysis, however, all three elements have been subject to a QCA.

4.3.1 Symbols

In the analysis of VisitQatar's social media content several symbols were identified. Figure 30 shows an overview of the symbols that occur the most in the videos.

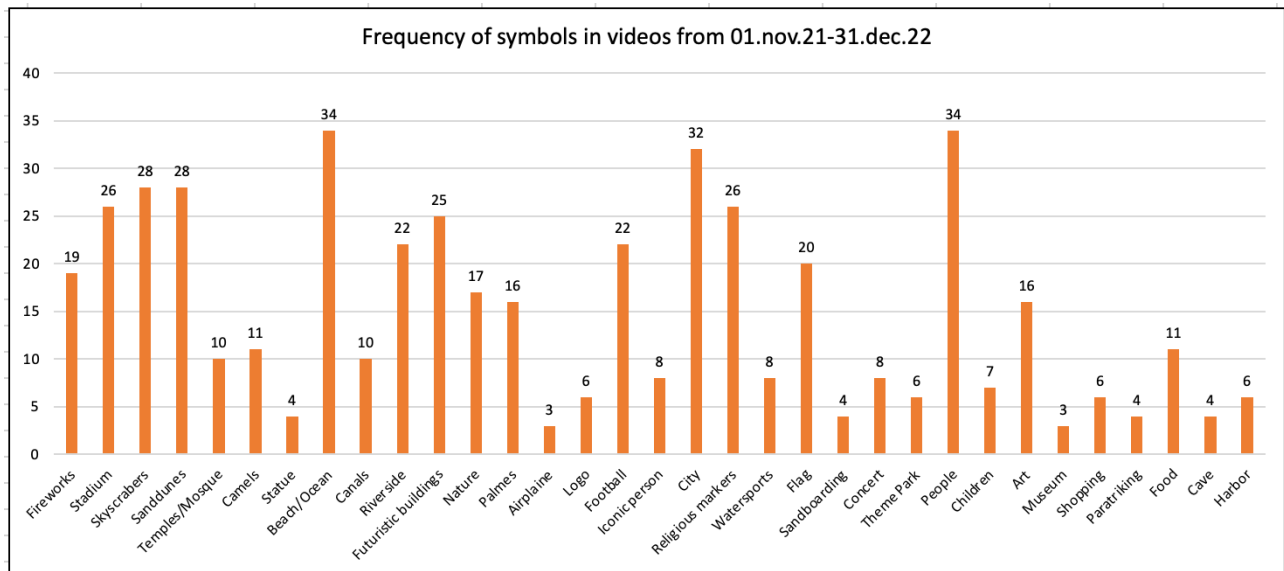


Figure 30: Most frequently occurring symbols in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

Figure 30 shows that the symbols with the highest frequency are *Beach/Ocean* and *People*. The most frequent symbols are listed in Figure 31 further down. These figures help to identify what image VisitQatar seems to be trying to project of the country as symbols are related to certain interpretations depending on the viewer. Just as outlined by Bernsau (1997, as cited in Mueller & Schade, 2012), who argue that the meaning of a symbol depends on societal and temporal discourses and is bound to the context of the usage of the symbol (p. 84). Moreover, Bal & Bryson (1991) believes that signs are used to communicate or frame certain messages, but also that visual images can be perceived as symbols that help narrate meaning (pp. 174, 176).

4.3.1.1 Semiotic analysis

As outlined in the literature review, semiotic analysis consists of both *signifiers* and what is *signified* but it is furthermore important to remember the concept of *collateral experience* which is mentioned in Pierce's Semiotic Model of Representation (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 112). We must have had some previous experience that has provided us with knowledge of this object to be

able to interpret the signifier (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, pp. 35-36) and thereby determine whether our connotations are positively or negatively loaded.

Some symbols have been excluded from the following analysis due to relevancy. The symbols, or signs, that will be included in the semiotic analysis are listed in Figure 31.

Symbol	Frequency
Beach / Ocean	34
People	34
City	32
Skyscrapers	28
Sand dunes	28
Stadium	26
Religious markers	26
Futuristic buildings	25
Riverside	22
Football	22
Flag	20
Fireworks	19
Nature	17
Palms	16

Figure 31: List of the most frequently occurring symbols in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

Beach/Ocean & Riverside

A beach as a signifier can be understood as a sandy coastline on a denotative level which also is illustrated in Figure 32 consisting of images from the videos. Multiple connotations can be argued to be sand, water, swimming, tanning, and warm days which makes these the signified. It can be argued that Qatar may wish to get people to associate Qatar with a destination in which you can relax and enjoy a holiday. Another positive connotation can therefore be relaxation which can be argued to be the mental concept created by the picture of a beach. Furthermore, the ocean can be argued to be associated with a lot of space, freedom, power, peace, calmness, and endlessness as positive connotations.

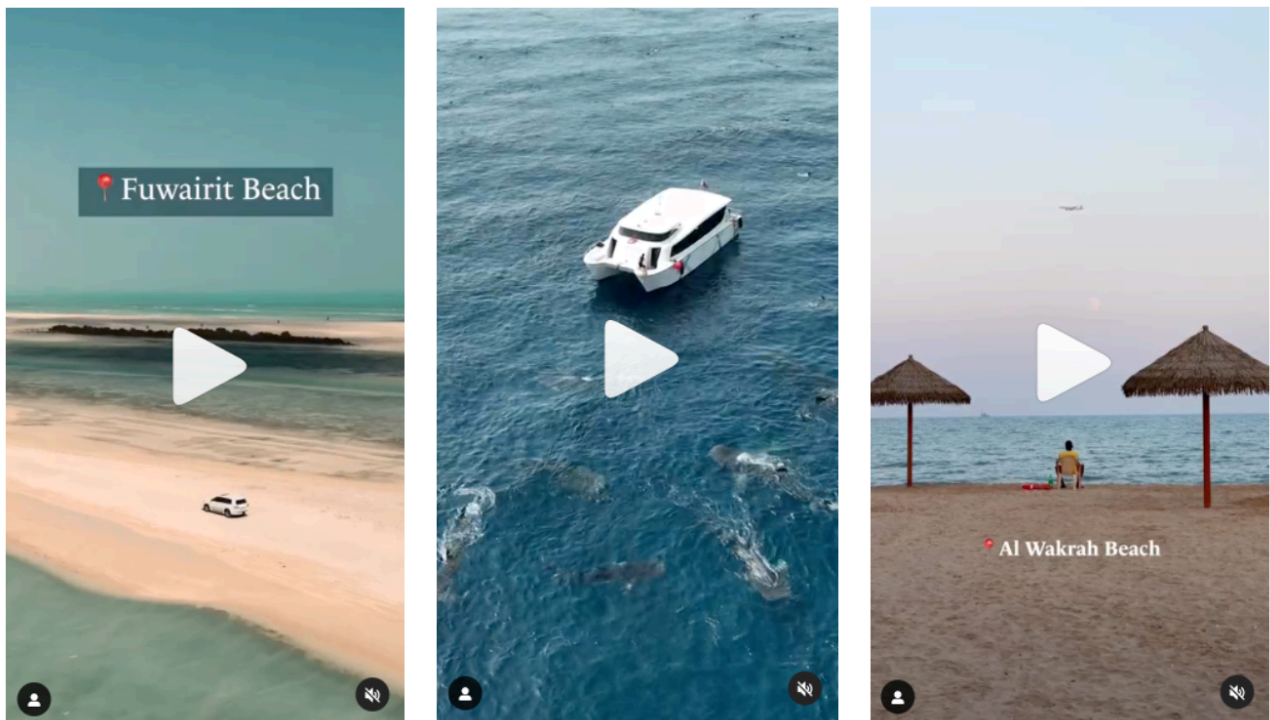


Figure 32: Examples of Beach / Ocean occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022a; VisitQatar, 2022b; VisitQatar, 2022c)

Another signifier is *Riverside* which denotation is “... the area of land by the banks of a river” (Collinsdictionary.com, n.d.). Connotations of a riverside could be viewpoints and streets near the water with cafes, which are based on the images presented in VisitQatar's social media videos examples of which can be seen in Figure 33 below.

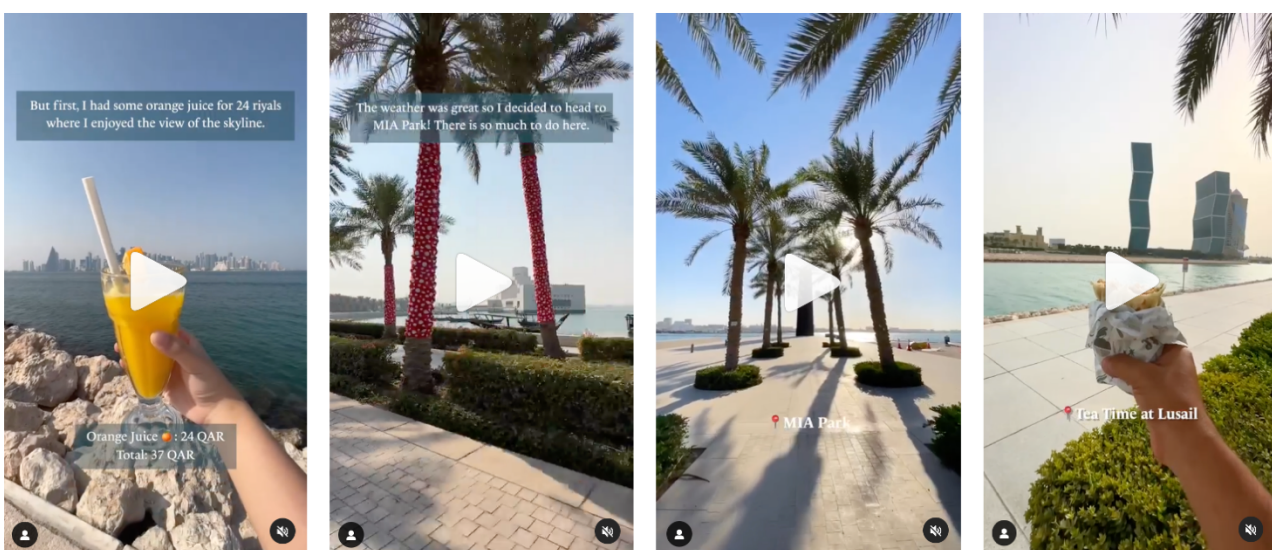


Figure 33: Examples of Riverside occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022d; VisitQatar, 2022e; VisitQatar, 2022f)

In the first of the four pictures in Figure 33, it is possible to see skyscrapers on the horizon, just as in the fourth picture, two futuristic buildings can be seen. The two symbols, *Beach / Ocean* and *Riverside* can be argued to be portrayed by VisitQatar as nice places for tourists, to be and spend time. As mentioned in the presentation of the qualitative news articles from the Middle East, Qatar wishes to showcase the new attractions and tourist sites developed prior to the settlement of the World Cup. Hence, this can also be argued to be the case in a lot of their social media videos.

People & Religious markers

People as a signifier has the denotation as human beings or multiple persons making up a group. Connotations can be things such as belonging, being part of a group, and diversity. When VisitQatar includes people and groups of people in their videos it can be assumed that they wish to be perceived as an accommodating destination that welcomes people regardless of where they are from or how they look like. In the four pictures in Figure 34 it is illustrated how VisitQatar uses people with different looks, clothing, and religion. This contributes to portraying Qatar as a destination with great diversity and moreover, it shows inclusion.

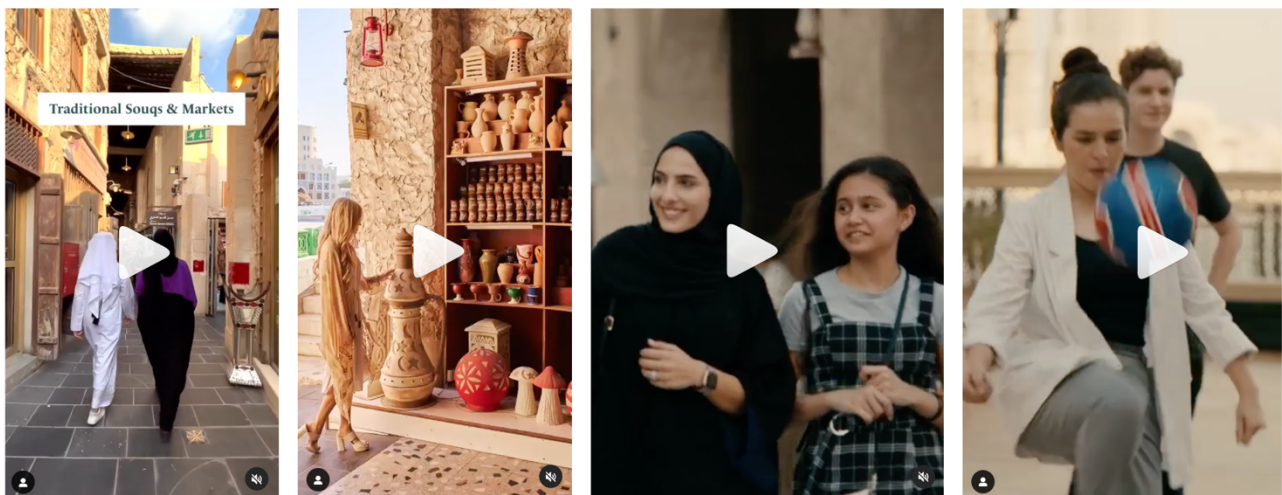


Figure 34: Examples of People occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022g; VisitQatar, 2022h)

Religious markers is a symbol that primarily covers the Qatari national clothing, examples of which can be seen in the pictures from the video below in Figure 35.

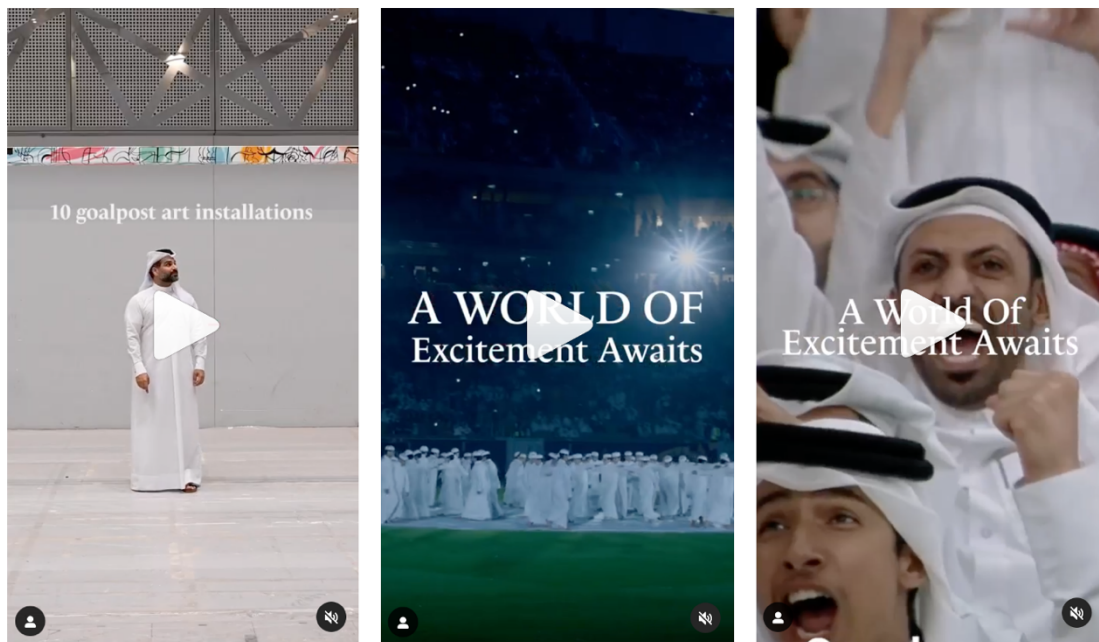


Figure 35: Examples of Religious markers occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022i; VisitQatar, 2022j; VisitQatar, 2022k)

In Figure 35, it can be seen how Qatari men wear a white robe with black head scarves. These signifiers of nationality function as “passports” in Qatar to symbolize their hierarchal status (Harkness, 2021) due to Qatari having more rights and living under better conditions than non-Qatari (Appendix A). This relates to the critical debate about migrant workers’ human rights and working conditions in Qatar being neglected and can to some extent be argued to be racial or national discrimination. However, if people watching these social media videos do not understand the meaning of this robe and believe it to be religious clothing, it could also be perceived as a signifier of inclusion that VisitQatar wishes to portray the nation as being supportive of diversity.

City, Futuristic buildings & Skyscrapers

As a signifier, *City* has the denotation “*an inhabited place of greater size, population, or importance than a town or village*” (Merriam-Webster.com, n.d.,a). Positive connotations can be argued to be diversity, entertainment, and culture. *City* as a signifier can, however, also be argued to have negative connotations such as pollution and stressful environment. Nevertheless, it is the former that is portrayed in VisitQatar’s social media videos.

Futuristic buildings function as a signifier with the denotation: “... *architecture [...] characterized by long horizontal lines and streamlined forms suggesting speed, dynamism, movement and urgency.*”

(Designing Buildings, n.d.). The connotations that can be argued to be associated with *Futuristic buildings* are modernity, unique architecture, and one-of-a-kind. The occurrence of this symbol can potentially contribute to creating an image of Qatar, or Doha, as a modern city in fast development. Figure 36 below shows a few examples of how futuristic buildings are portrayed in the videos.

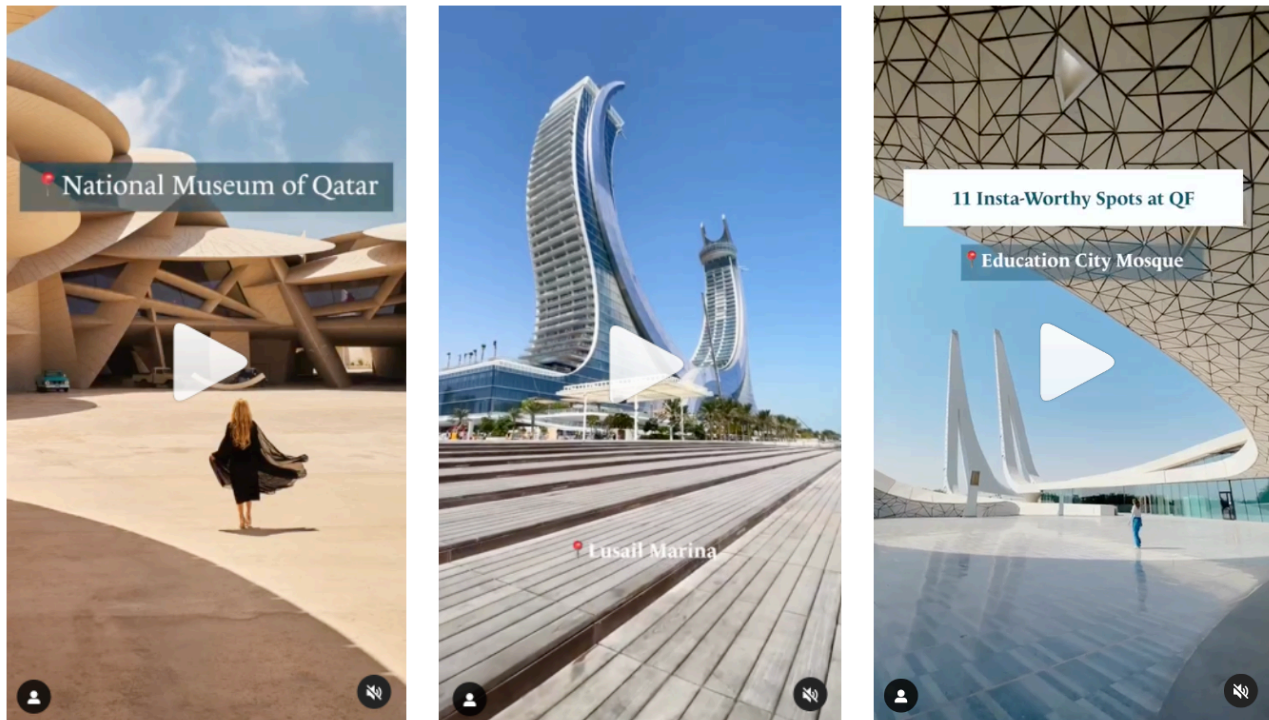


Figure 36: Examples of Futuristic buildings occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022a; VisitQatar, 2022e; VisitQatar, 2022l)

Skyscrapers have become signifiers of power, ambition, and modernity (Shaw, 2010). In the analyzed videos skyscrapers appear in 38% of them. Skyscrapers can be argued to have the positive connotations of power and wealth it can be assumed that these symbols support Qatar's need for global recognition and function as a showcase of the culture and modernity of the city.

These three symbols together can be argued to be portraying a metropolitan destination, which also is one of the codes deduced in the QCA done on the symbols. This will be elaborated on later in the project, however, this assumably contributes to the projected image of Qatar to be a modern destination rich in culture and architecture, which again seconds the statement made in the QCA of international media articles, that VisitQatar wishes to showcase all the things tourists can entertain themselves with during their visit, potentially for the World Cup.

Sand dunes

Sand dunes are often associated with the desert, also due to its denotation “*a hill of sand near an ocean or in a desert that is formed by the wind*” (Merriam-Webster.com, n.d.,b). The desert in Qatar is a part of the country’s history and stays a tradition today according to VisitQatar (n.d.). The desert can thereby be argued to be an iconic symbol of the nation that in a lot of articles also is referred to as “*the desert state*” (Appendix A, Own translation). Connotations of sand dunes or deserts can be argued to be warm weather, no water, being lost, loneliness, and being a place of challenges or obstacles. When pictured in the videos, the desert is a place for activities and tourist experiences like sand boarding and riding camels, which is illustrated in Figure 37.

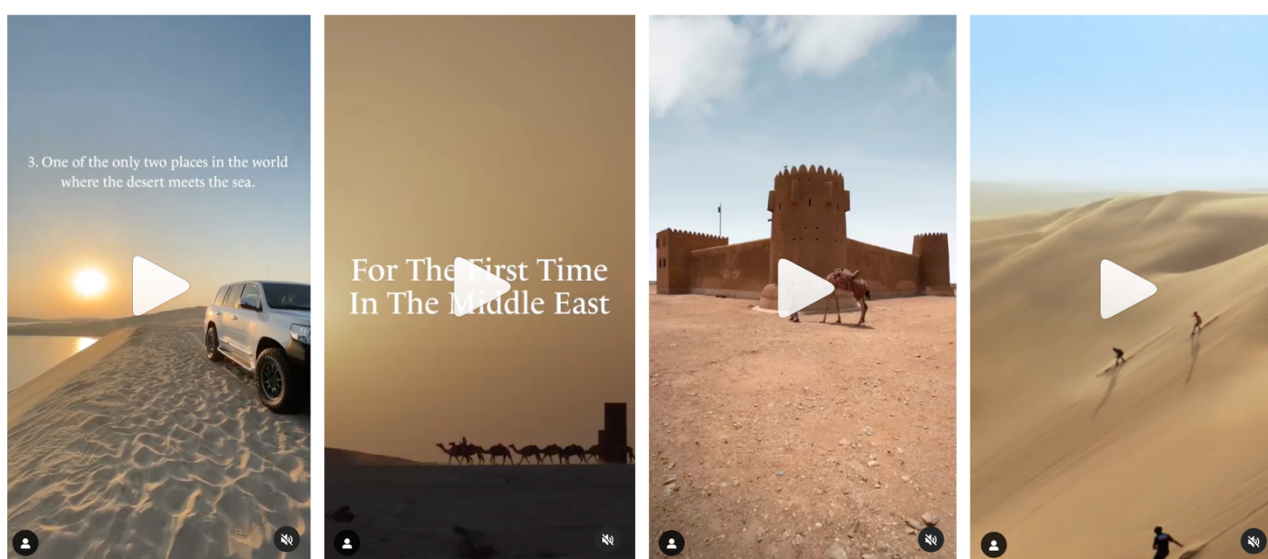


Figure 37: Examples of Sand dunes occurring in VisitQatar’s Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022m; VisitQatar, 2022n; VisitQatar, 2022g; VisitQatar, 2022o)

In Figure 37, it can be seen how VisitQatar portrays the desert in different ways and perhaps to what can be argued to be different target groups. The desert is very characteristic of Qatar as a country and portraying it in different ways or as the location for different activities can be a way of portraying Qatar as a destination for everyone with a lot of different activities. As mentioned previously in the project, Qatar is categorized as a developing, or emerging, country, and as De Almeida et al. (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) explains, hosting mega-events can possibly offer emerging countries the ability to contest the global order of things and improve their position as upcoming places and cultures (p. 175). Moreover, Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021) believe that when emerging countries host mega-events, they can also be the last step in rehabilitating the country that might not in the past have lived up to standards and norms defined by already developed countries (p.

177), like the West. This relates to the earlier presented category deduced from global media extracts about how the World Cup can be a facilitator of change in Qatar.

Stadiums, Football & Fireworks

Stadiums occur in 36% of the selected videos. *Football* also occurs in 30% of the videos and both symbols can be related to the World Cup. Stadiums are often associated with being venues used for sports, concerts, and cultural events, but when used in the videos by VisitQatar it is very clear that the association should be football and the World Cup. In a lot of the clips, the stadiums are lit up by a show of fireworks that can be argued to create awareness about the upcoming global event and celebration of the World Cup. Considering that stadiums and football are symbols that appear just as many times as for example sand dunes, religious markers, and skyscrapers, it can be argued that creating an image of Qatar as a football nation is by VisitQatar deemed just as important as highlighting Qatar as a destination of both culture, city, and nature. However, it should be noted that all selected videos are from the period leading up to and during the World Cup, which explains the need for the DMO to have a great focus on football. As Bramwell (1997) states, mega-events typically are regarded as tourist-enhancing for the destination in question (p. 168). Moreover, Arnegger & Herz (2016) agree with Bramwell, as they state that mega-events have the power to attract visitors, which potentially leads to the enhancement of tourist numbers, while also contributing to an increase in publicity for the destination (p. 76). This supports VisitQatar's choice to prioritize both showcasing football and their new stadium highlighting the upcoming Football World Cup as well as showing what Qatar has to offer as a tourist destination.

The football symbol is in some videos used in relation to the *People* symbol, showing a lot of people with different looks playing with a football, which is illustrated in Figure 38. One video has been clipped as it looks like they play football with each other which is illustrated in the pictures below.



Figure 38: Examples of Football occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022p)

This can be argued to symbolize or signify how football is a sport that brings people together but also due to it being a sport that is played almost all over the world. Moreover, every nation can relate to the feeling of nationality and cheering for the national team in these mega-events like the World Cup.

4.3.1.2 Qualitative content analysis of the symbols

The symbols have furthermore been subject to a QCA in which they were coded and thereafter deduced into categories shown in Figure 39, along with their occurrence.

Category	Amount
Portrayal of activity	6
Cultural sights	5
Football World Cup	4
Nature sights	4
Qatar destination markers	3
Display of culture when visiting Qatar	3
Metropolitan destination	2
Dreaming about travelling	2
People centric	1
Family friendly destination	1

Figure 39: List of the deduced categories along with the number symbols each category covers (Appendix C)

Some categories cover several symbols, which have been grouped together. *Portrayal of activity* is the category covering most symbols, some of which are sandboarding, shopping, and watersports. When deducing categories from the symbols, it can be seen that most of the symbols are concerned with illuminating the activities available in Qatar as well as the culture of which the city has a lot to offer (VisitQatar, n.d.). The categories presented in Figure 39 above can all be argued to be positively loaded, which is expected due to VisitQatar being the sender and is assumed to have the purpose of portraying Qatar in a positive manner. Mega-events automatically ensure a potentially high degree of worldwide media coverage which may not only be positive according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010, p. 230). Mega-events are therefore considered image-forming (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007, p. 294) and according to Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010) it is therefore very important for the destination to have positive stories ready for the media to communicate as they otherwise are likely to find stories that can impact the by the media projected image of the destination negatively (p. 229). These negative, and by Qatar unwanted, stories are by Robertson (2018) referred to as counternarratives. He argues that counternarratives clash with the host country's own marketing and narratives of the event (2018, p. 3222), which can be argued to be the case during the World Cup in Qatar, based on the QCA conducted on the symbols in VisitQatar's social media videos and the QCA conducted on global media extracts, presented earlier.

4.3.1.3 Text in the video

The text added in the social media videos was also analyzed using QCA. The text was marked due to the type of text and in Figure 40 the occurrence is illustrated.

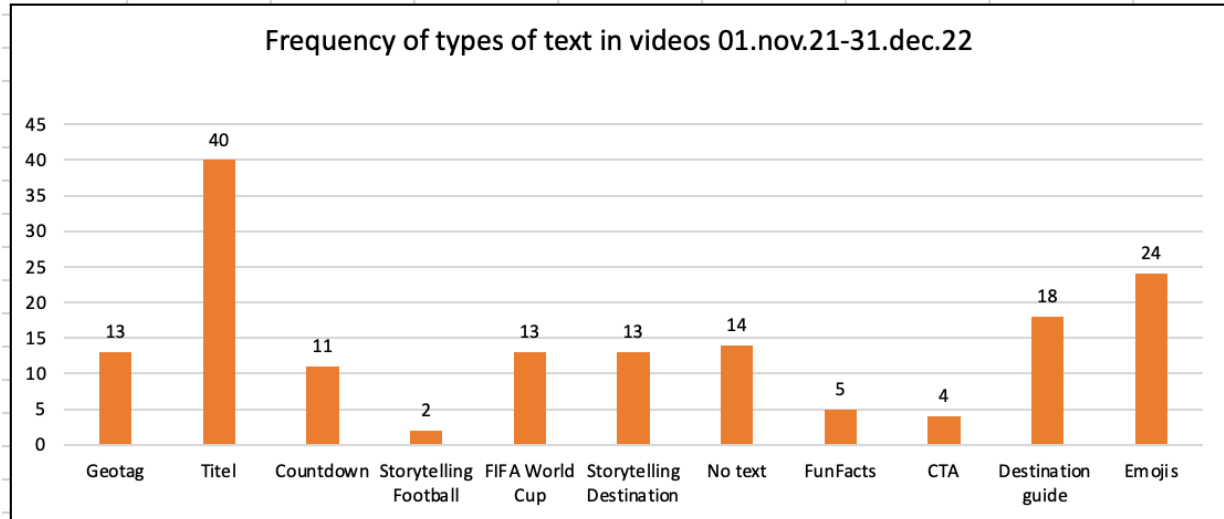


Figure 40: Overview of which types of text occur the most in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

As shown in Figure 40, most videos include a title, however, 14 videos did not include any text at all. The types of text named *Storytelling destination* and *Destination guide* are focusing on showcasing Qatar as a tourist destination and presenting a narrative of the nation.

Text	Code	Category
Geotag	Locations	Exemplifying places to visit for tourists
Titel	Titel	Information
Countdown	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
Storytelling football	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
FIFA World Cup	FIFA World Cup	Excitement for the FIFA World Cup
Storytelling Destination	Information about Qatar	Exemplifying places to visit for tourists
No Text	Image centric	Display of Qatar as a tourism destination
FunFacts	Information about Qatar	Visit Qatar
CTA	Travel to Qatar	Visit Qatar
Destination guide	Information about Qatar	Exemplifying places to visit for tourists

Figure 41: Example of codes and the deduced categories of the text in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

Figure 41 shows how *Geotag*, *Storytelling Destination*, and *Destination guide* are all coded and afterward deduced into the same category *Exemplifying places to visit for tourists*. These three types of text can all be argued to have the purpose of guiding potential tourists to the best sites and attractions in Qatar.

The category *Excitement for the FIFA World Cup* does not seem to focus on the World Cup as much as the texts do on tourist experiences in Qatar. The reason for these three types of text to be in this category is that for example a countdown can be argued to create interest and excitement because it visualizes that you are getting closer to something you may have been looking forward to. Moreover, *Storytelling football* may help create a stronger connection between Qatar as a nation and football, which in a lot of the articles analyzed earlier, Qatar is being criticized for not having. The Western media have been criticizing Qatar for having been chosen as the host of the World Cup when they do not have any traditions for football, as previously outlined. The same can be argued to be the case for *FIFA World Cup* as this text mostly occurs in videos showing symbols such as *Stadium* and *Football* (Appendix C), but also previously played football games in what can be assumed to be Qatar. Assumably it can be because Qatar wants to be portrayed as a nation worthy of hosting the football World Cup.

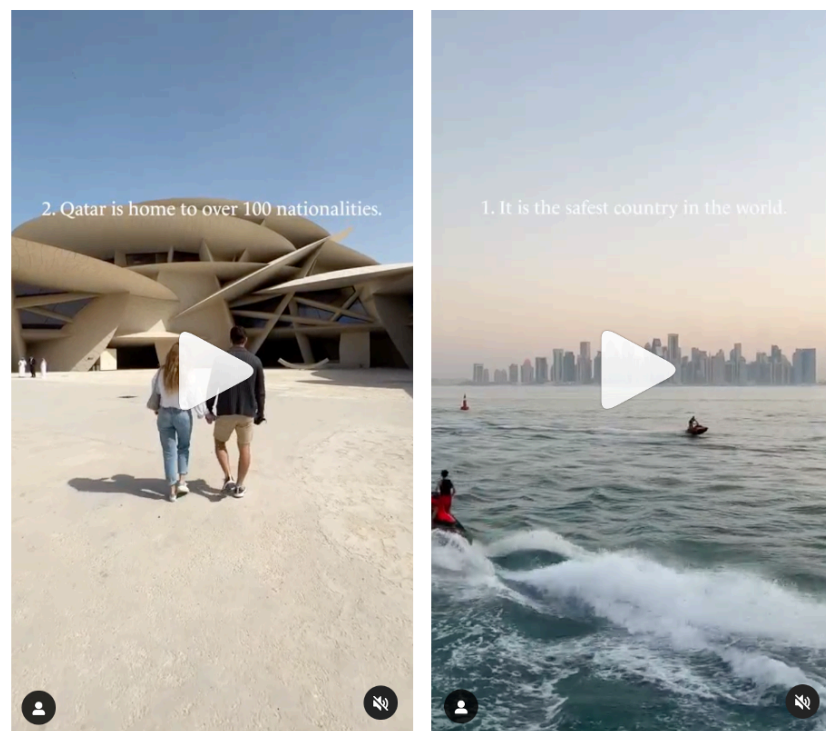


Figure 42: Examples of text occurring in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (VisitQatar, 2022m)

The first picture in Figure 42 shows the text: “*Qatar is home to over 100 nationalities*”. Once again, this can be a way for Qatar to show inclusion and that everyone is welcome regardless of their nationality, just as it has been found out in the semiotic analysis and in the QCA of global article extracts. The second picture has the text: “*It is the safest country in the world*”. This can be argued

to be a very positive statement and arguably nice information for potential tourists. However, one of the Danish article extracts used for the previous analysis, states that *“And there is no crime here because all foreigners are here on a work visa and know that they can be kicked out of the country by the slightest misstep”* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation). This contributes to the portrayal of Qatar as a very safe country with another perspective related to the debate about inequality in Qatar based on people’s nationality. Despite many nationalities being welcome in Qatar, the rights of the people living there may not be equal.

In the literature review, it is outlined that tourism imaginaries become visible through images and dialogs (Salazar, 2012, p. 866). Salazar (2012) states that: *“tourism imaginaries do not exist in a vacuum but have to contend with other circulating images and ideas. Global media streams overwhelm people with thousands of impressions of the world, in real time”* (p. 872). He, therefore, advocates for the importance of news media’s role in creating narratives about certain, for example, places, and people’s imaginaries. If you have not been exposed to articles stating that the low crime rate can be related to the fact that foreigners can be deported for the slightest misstep, your image of Qatar may be more positive, compared to if you know this about Qatar. Hence, tourism imaginaries also contribute to the formation of a destination's image (Baloglu & McCleary (1999, cited in Gravari-Barbas & Graburn, 2016, p. 21) because the image creation of places that Till (2003 cited in Chronis, 2012) suggests can arguably be considered as the result of both reality and the narratives (p. 1798), which again emphasizes the important role the media landscape plays in how a country might be perceived by potential visitors.

4.3.1.4 Caption

The caption is the text written to describe the video or photo published on Instagram. Some of the themes are quite similar to the themes of the text in the video that the section before is about. These are for example *Countdown*, *Fun Fact*, *CTA*, and *Emojis* (Appendix C). *Emojis* are the most used, followed by *FIFA World Cup* which is significantly more than in the text in the video (Appendix C). It is the same pattern for the theme *CTA* that occurs in 51% of the caption compared to it only being the theme of the text in the video in 5% of the videos. This shows a pattern that VisitQatar has used the caption more effectively and directly to promote the World Cup and encourage people to buy

tickets and book their stay in Qatar. The caption is therefore not used to the same degree, to showcase and guide the potential tourists to experiences in Qatar or information about the country, as the text in the video, based on the previously presented data.

The themes were coded from which categories were deduced, and these can be seen in Figure 43 below.

Category	Amount
Excitement for the FIFA World Cup	4
Visit Qatar	2
Portrayal of activity	2
Exemplifying places to visit for tourists	2

Figure 43: Deduced categories of the text in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

The category with the most codes included is *Excitement for the FIFA World Cup*. In the literature review, it is described how Wise & Kohe (2020) believe that sports have become an extension of place narratives that affect people's associations with places due to the high frequency of publications that are linked to specific sports (p. 3), and in this case, the 2022 Football World Cup. Wise & Kohe (2020) moreover argue that sport can be synonymous with places that connect people (p. 3), and the high frequency of captions with a focus on the World Cup can be argued to once again be a way for VisitQatar to show inclusion and that all are welcome.

4.3.2 Summing up

This section has examined the projected image of Qatar based on partly a semiotic analysis and a QCA. The presented data and results are concerned with three elements of VisitQatar's social media from which a positive image of Qatar is identified. All in all, the videos form an image of Qatar as a destination with great summerly weather and possibilities to relax and have fun by the beach. Qatar is also portrayed as a desert state, as sand dunes appear quite a lot which seconds the association with summer and warm weather. Besides the image of Qatar as a charter destination, it is also portrayed as a metropolitan destination with a lot of skyscrapers, futuristic buildings, a lot of, but also different, people, as well as cultural and nature experiences. It can thereby be assumed that portraying Qatar as a destination for everyone seems of high priority. Due to the selected period of

the videos, the projected image can also be argued to be Qatar as a football nation due to the many new stadiums and how football is played in the streets or being the focus of many of the videos. The inclusion of different kind of people with different nationalities and religions help portray Qatar as an inclusive nation where everyone is welcome. Especially in the caption, there is a great focus on the Football World Cup and how excited they are to host it, compared to the symbols and the text in the video, in which the bigger focus is on Qatar as a tourist destination, exemplifying activities, sites and locations and cultural experiences for tourists to experience while visiting Qatar, but also information or fun facts about the country.

5.0 Analysis of the narratives presented in the media landscape

The data presentation of global news articles showed that six narratives were more present across all selected countries than others, which are shown in Figure 44 below.

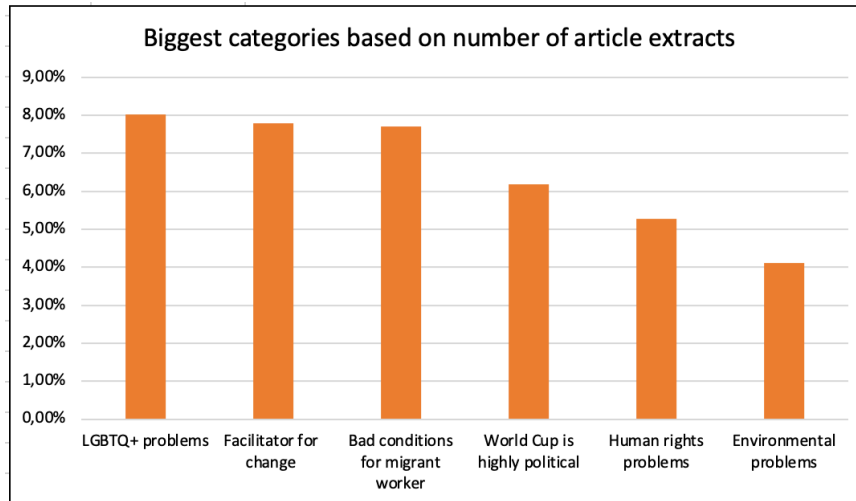


Figure 44: Overview of biggest categories (narratives) based on article extracts (Appendix B)

Due to the high volume of both article extracts and categories, also called narratives in this project, the percentage is arguably not that high. As shown in Figure 44, six narratives proved to be the most present across the dataset both in relation to percentage, but also to be among the top three narratives across at least two countries. However, the narrative of both *LGBTQ+ problems*, *World Cup as a facilitator for change* and *Bad conditions for migrant workers* were among the top three across five and four countries.

The narrative concerning *Human rights problems*, despite being among the top will not be elaborated on. This is because this narrative concerns discussions, debates, and critique mostly relating to human rights not being upheld for people identified as LGBTQ+ and migrant workers in Qatar, which is covered by two other narratives. To illustrate this Figure 45 below shows an example of some of the codes within the narrative *Human rights problems*, highlighting the point made about the narratives sharing similarities with two other narratives which will be elaborated on.

UK	North Africa	Denmark
Criticism of poor human rights in Qatar but also at BBC programme	violation of human rights	Qatars neglect to follow human rights
Criticism of Qatar as host nation due to poor human rights and working conditions	Critiques on human rights violation	Accusation about Qatar forcing transsexual women into conversion therapy
Criticism of Qatar due to poor human rights and working conditions	Criticism about Qatars LGBTQ+ rights and women's rights	Migrant workers can't express themselves honestly in public
Poor women's rights in Qatar	Homosexuals and women's rights are being oppressed	Poor human rights in Qatar
Britain criticizes Qatar as host nation due to poor human rights		
Criticism of poor human rights in Qatar		

Figure 45: Codes making up the category Human rights problems in the UK, North Africa, and Denmark

These narratives and controversies have led to global debate leading up to the Football World Cup 2022 as well as during its settlement. These will therefore be further elaborated on in the following due to the time of their appearance in the media and whether the national DMO, VisitQatar, has used its own social media profile on Instagram to address or as a counterreply to the narratives presented in foreign media.

5.1 Narrative 1: LGBTQ+ problems

The most present category across all analyzed countries is *LGBTQ+ problems* and this narrative can therefore be argued to have been subject to global debate in relation to the Football World Cup in Qatar. Homosexuality is illegal in Qatar along with other sexual orientations and genders belonging to the LGBTQ+ community (Buch, 2022). This law has, based on the dataset, encouraged primarily Western and European media into a critical debate, as the view on homosexuality in the West is very different. This is analyzed from the article extracts, for example, one from the Danish newspaper BT is: *"Then there is probably the most controversial, that is, that homosexuality is illegal in Qatar, and it will be during the World Cup too"* (Jacobsen, 2022, Own translation). Furthermore, the English newspaper Daily Mail states: *"Human Rights Watch said police in Qatar have arbitrarily detained and abused members of the LGBTQ community ahead of the World Cup next month. Homosexuality is illegal in the Gulf state"* (Brown, 2022) just as an American article that was published just two days after the one in Daily Mail, states: *"Homosexuality remains illegal in the conservative Muslim*

country” (Kit, 2022) and *“Homosexuality is illegal under Qatar's strict Islamic laws”* (Kit, 2022). Each article extract from the American article can be argued to be of a negative tone and connect the law against homosexuality to the fact that Qatar has Islamic laws, and a lot of the population are Muslims. The same article moreover states: *“Weeks before soccer's World Cup in Qatar, an ambassador for the host country claimed homosexuality is "damage in the mind."* (Kit, 2022) where homosexuality by Qatar is argued to be a psychic illness.

However, not all the analyzed media from Western countries seem to share this negative view of Qatar. An article from Belgium states *“The organizing committee of the World Cup had promised a World Cup open to all, regardless of their sexual orientation”* (Laarbaui, 2022) and *“In April 2022 the State of Qatar warned that rainbow flags, symbols of sexual diversity, would be removed from their owners in order to protect them”* (Laarbaui, 2022) which both seem to find a more positive notion about homosexuality in Qatar, despite still acknowledging that it is illegal.

The Qatari law against homosexuality got several football teams, here among Denmark, Belgium, and Germany, engaged in wearing a One Love armband during the World Cup, which was banned by FIFA (Syed, 2022) because, just as mentioned, homosexuality is illegal in Qatar. The purpose of the armband was to promote LGBTQ+ inclusion in a country where it is banned by law (Syed, 2022). One of the article extracts is from the EUobserver states: *“A second major criticism of Qatar is the lack of rights for the LGBTQ and the big debate over whether or not to wear a rainbow-coloured armband”* (Debeuf, 2022). Even though a lot of European and Western countries supported this protest by wanting to wear the armband, just as many or even more countries did not (Appendix B). This speaks to the assumed cultural differences between Global North and Global South countries. For example, LGBTQ+ problems are only the focus of 9% of the article extracts from North African media. Moreover, LGBTQ+ problems are not at all mentioned in the article extracts from Indian or Middle Eastern media coverage. However, LGBTQ+ problems are the biggest category of American media article extracts accounting for 15,6%, and of the Canadian media article extracts LGBTQ+ problems account for 17,4%. The Middle East is a region of the world with values somewhat different from the West, and Western countries were further criticized for not respecting nor comprehending this

Middle Eastern culture and values (Chakrabort, 2022), thus showing a culture clash. In an article extract from the US, Vanity Fair, Infantino accuses Europe of being hypocritical:

“Infantino defended Qatar and chastised Western critics for their “hypocrisy.” He added, “I think for what we Europeans have been doing around the world for the last 3,000 years, we should be apologizing for the next 3,000 years before starting to give moral lessons,” Infantino said.” (Kludt, 2022)

It can be assumed that Infantino in this statement refers to the European colonization of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and America back in the 15th to the 18th hundreds (Jensen & Arrouas, 2017). Europe is accused of being hypocritical and this also shows in a Danish article extract that states: *“»You also have that debate [about LGBT] frequently in Europe, I can read«, says Zweiri”* (Jerichow, 2022, Own translation). Critique is therefore also targeted to the European media for their critique of Qatar. An article extract from Gulf News, Dubai states: *“Both come from a misplaced superiority. A belief that European man and his culture are a gift to the world,” he added on Twitter”* (Sherbini, 2022) which accuses the Europeans of arrogancy and believing their values and culture to be “the right one”.

This debate about LGBTQ and the One Love armband is based on the selected articles, most present in the media from the 15th of November 2022 to the 22nd of November 2022, which is a very short period. When comparing to what VisitQatar has posted on their Instagram profile from November 2nd, 2022, to December 2nd, 2022, nothing can really be concluded from the identified symbols. However, three symbols appear more often than others, which are *City*, *People*, and *Beach/Ocean*. To some extent, the two formers may be assumed to relate to this debate, due to the meaning of the symbols outlined in the data presentation. The appearance of different-looking people with different religious markers is argued to symbolize diversity, which also is one of the argued connotations of a city, and thereby also inclusion. In this time frame, *City* appears 13 times and *People* appears 11 times out of which they both appear in the same videos 8 times. So, even though the videos don’t specifically or in an obvious way portray the inclusion of homosexuals and others in the LGBTQ+ community, they arguably try to portray the diversity of people.

According to Marjoribanks (2012, cited in Mauro, 2020), MSEs provide countries with the possibility to create wished-upon narratives (p. 935). However, they also allow for counternarratives to emerge

(Marjoribanks (2012, cited in Mauro, 2020, p. 935). The critical debate that the global media engages in at this time concerning LGBTQ+ problems in Qatar can be argued to be a counternarrative, as it clashes with VisitQatar's own marketing and portrayal of the nation, which according to Robertson (2018) is characteristic of counternarratives (p. 3222). He defines counternarratives as "*being the narratives opposite of what the hosting country or mainstream media portrays*" (Robertson, 2018, p. 3210). Moreover, Robertson (2018) argues that counternarratives are also able to dispute the motivation and purpose behind the event (p. 3222).

In the time frame of the 2nd of November to the 2nd of December 2022, neither the text in the video nor the caption seems to address this debate. Nevertheless, three captions by Qatari DMO prior to and during the World Cup state the following "*Qatar promises guests the warmest of welcomes*" (VisitQatar, 2022q), "*welcome visitors from around the world*" (VisitQatar, 2022r), and " (... #Qatar invites all visitors to experience the different offerings (...)" (VisitQatar, 2022s). Neither of the captions directly addresses people of the LGBTQ+ community, however, these captions, especially the latter stating "all visitors" may to some extent relate to the suspension of arrestments of homosexuals during the World Cup which is mentioned in a Danish article from DR (Halkier, Ekeland, & Grefve, 2022). This is due to these three captions all being written to a video that is marked with the theme *FIFA World Cup* and either *Looking forward/Excitement* or *Iconic person*, both of which also are concerned with the World Cup. Once again, this assumed message from VisitQatar clash with some of the articles in the global media. For example, one from a British media state: "*Homosexuality quite literally is not welcome in the country*" (Browning, 2022).

Although Qatar may wish to communicate that all, including people of the LGBTQ+ community, are welcome during the World Cup, as long as they follow the rules, the narrative communicated in some global media contradicts this message which therefore has a negative impact on the image of hospitality and openness that Qatar seems to want to portray. It could be argued that the global media, and in particular the media coverage and journalistic framing in Western countries, the Global North, are struggling to accept and acknowledge that Qatar is in great development and that the nation is not as conservative as it has been in the past. However, it should also be considered that media and news outlets all over the world may have a particular interest in portraying a specific

phenomenon and subject in a certain light, for different reasons. Thus, framing the narrative in a certain light in the media which might not always be representative for the country's political belief or the inhabitants' convictions. This is despite the media according to Lee, Maguire, and Muller (2009, 2013, cited Morris, 2014) believes newspapers communicate subjects from a local or national perspective (p. 57).

It might furthermore be important to be aware of geography and geographical distribution when being concerned with digital marketing and communication, both regarding social media and online news media. It could be assumed that just as with any other development, the digitalization process as well as technological devices is not equally accessible in all parts of the world. It could be argued that less developed countries like India and parts of Africa, are not yet as digitalized as Western countries, for example, which also is illustrated in Figure 46 below.

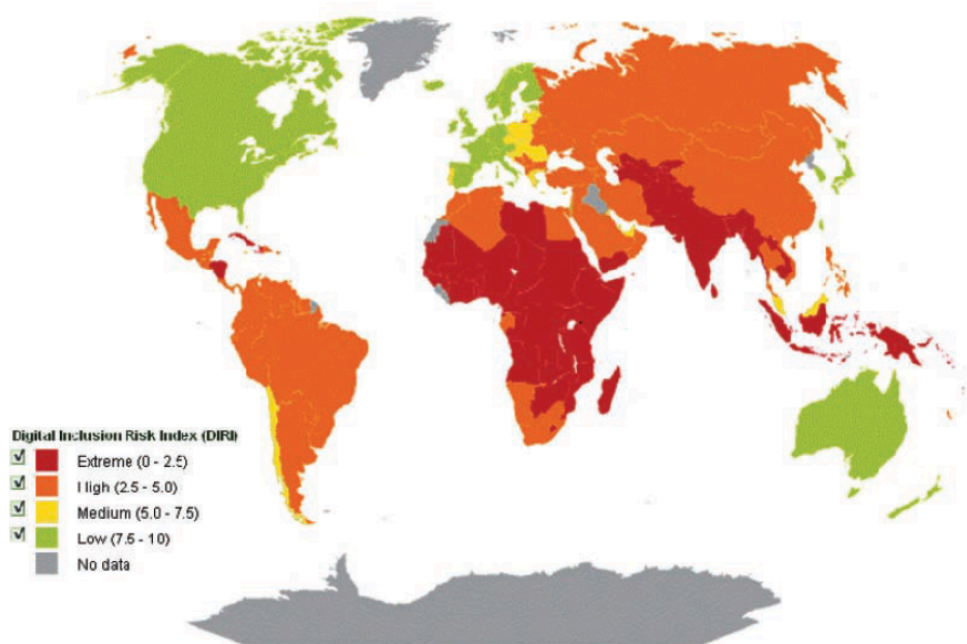


Figure 46: Global map of digital division (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 269)

This assumption is supported by Minghetti & Buhalis (2010) who outline how the digital divide is dependent on factors of social demographics and economic characteristics for example place of residence and geographical location, as well as race and ethnicity (p. 268). This could be argued to influence the narratives portrayed in the online media landscape of news articles and social media

due to an assumably very uneven geographical coverage of digitalization between developed and rich countries compared to emerging countries.

It can thus be argued that it is important to be aware of the rapid technological advancements and their potential to shape market communication as well as their problems in relation to the traditional organization of market communication in tourism. This should be kept in mind for the following narratives as well.

5.2 Narrative 2: World Cup as a Facilitator for change

Mega-events can serve multiple purposes of which a more intangible purpose can be to use the unique opportunities provided to the host nation to pursue symbolic politics as an opportunity to signal to the world, the important changes that the nation may have taken (Black, 2010, p. 262). Just as well, mega-events can be used to reframe narratives about the host nation that might be dominant or reinforce key messages about what the nation is becoming or has become (Black, 2010, p. 262). Due to the previous data analysis and presentation, Qatar can be argued to use the World Cup as a facilitator or catalyst for change in the country and in its society. This narrative is present as one of the biggest narratives in the media from Denmark, India, Belgium, and North Africa (Appendix B), which could be argued to illustrate how this narrative has been present across both Global North and Global South media outlets.

Denmark and Belgium belong to the Global North and their media have been more critical of Qatar regarding the One Love armband, compared to India and North Africa's media coverage, which are Global South countries. Nevertheless, all four countries' media acknowledge the World Cup as a facilitator for change and thereby with a positive notion. These four nations' news media present a narrative of Qatar of positive nature outlining how Qatar has used the World Cup to create changes and improvements in their destination and society. In an article from Africanews it is stated: *"Human rights groups have acknowledged that Qatar has improved its labor laws, including adopting a minimum monthly wage of around \$275 in 2020, and for introducing a social security system"* (Africanews, 2022, Own translation). Moreover, the Danish newspaper Berlingske explained, *"However, we know that Qatar, pressured by the massive international focus in 2020, adopted a*

reform of the so-called kafala system, which tied the migrant workers to their employers, who often housed them in squalid camps and confiscated their passports” (Kamil, 2022, Own translation).

As mentioned earlier, the global media has had a large focus on Qatar due to them hosting the World Cup, and because of this large focus on for example the poor working conditions migrant workers have been subject to no minimum wages and the kafala system, changes have now been made. The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy that organized the World Cup in Qatar also speaks of the World Cup *“as a ‘catalyst for accelerating improvement in our nation and the region’”* (Gibson, 2014, as cited in Henderson, 2014, pp. 284-285). However, a Danish newspaper named Føljeton states:

“Qatar says that they have listened to the critics and improved the conditions. But now a new report with the title ‘All Work, No Pay: The struggle of Qatar’s migrant workers for justice’ from the human rights organization Amnesty International, that the conditions for migrant workers are still very criticizable” (Kønig, 2021, Own translation).

Besides the reformed Kafala system and the improved minimum wage, the winning of the bid to host the men’s World Cup has also been a catalyst for the change that now there is space for Qatari sportswomen, which has not always been the case Knez, Benn, & Alkhaldi, 2014, p. 1769).

A lot of the extracts from Danish media articles are negatively loaded, just like the one above. The World Cup can be argued to be acknowledged as a facilitator of change for the better in Qatar, nevertheless, the articles still focus on what can be criticized. The same can be argued to be the case portrayed by Belgium media from which two of the extracts are concerned instead of boycotting the World Cup it should be the center of criticism and global pressure in order to further change in Qatar.

An article extract from LeMonde, North Africa states:

“There are those who say that after the World Cup, things will go back to the way they were, but the spokesperson for Qatari diplomacy insists that that is not true. There have been many improvements, thanks to the World Cup, but not only for the latter.”
(Dagorn & Deræux, 2022).

Moreover, another article extract from the same media outlet states: *"To protect construction workers, Qatar has banned outdoor work from 11:30am to 3pm. This measure, which is in reality infrequently enforced, is also grossly inadequate to prevent harm to workers' health"* (Dagorn & Deræux, 2022). Based on these two article extracts it could be questioned whether Qatar tries to gain popularity on the global world scene by reforming and improving laws, but not really enforcing them. People also question whether the reforms will be repealed after the World Cup which assumably can be argued as doubting the state (Appendix A).

The time frame in which the global media is engaging in the narrative of how the World Cup can be a facilitator for change in Qatar varies a bit depending on the country. The time frame in which this narrative is most present in the global media landscape is from mid-October 2022 to mid-December 2022, with the occurrence peaking in November 2022 (Appendix D). This time frame is based on media article extracts from the US, the UK, France, Middle East, North Africa, international media, and Belgium (Appendix D).

When compared to the videos posted on VisitQatar's Instagram profile in the same time frame, nothing can really be said to relate to this narrative. Not directly. However, in the videos posted from the 12th of October 2022 to the 18th of December 2022, which is the same time frame, a lot of sand dunes, skyscrapers, beaches, and ocean, as well as scenes from the city are shown (Appendix C). When compared to the captions written in the same period, 54% of the captions are marked with *FIFA World Cup*, 38% are marked with *Football*, and 38% are marked with *Destination Guide* as themes of the caption (Appendix C). Neither the most present symbols nor captions in this time frame seem to address this narrative and debate directly. Instead, it can be argued that they wish to focus on portraying Qatar as a nice place to live and visit as a tourist too.

Moreover, due to over half of the captions focusing on the World Cup and 38% of them focusing on football, Qatar could be argued to also project an image of them being a nation able to and worth of hosting the Football World Cup. Nevertheless, the purpose of this showcasing can also assumably be linked to how the World Cup attracts global media exposure, and Qatar wants to show that the country has changed over the past years when it comes to tourist attractions and the development of the city (Sørensen, 2022). According to Law (2002, cited in Williams & Lew, 2015) this is one of

the indirect effects and purposes of large events, that they can be used to promote a destination's image as a way for the country to kickstart its tourism industry (p. 193). As it is mentioned in the literature review, a country can succeed in projecting a positive image by exercising soft power through sports diplomacy, which can further a more positive place branding of the nation (Guthrie-Shimizu (2013, as cited in Connell, 2018, p. 94).

MSEs, like the World Cup, therefore arguably offer Qatar an opportunity to increase its soft power through the narratives portrayed in the global media, which is seconded by Grix & Houlihan and Manzenreiter (2013, 2010, cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015) who furthermore describe it as a way of attracting tourists to the destination due to the hopefully positive narratives presented (p. 706). Nevertheless, it is by Fan (2007) argued that soft power is intangible and thus not possible to control and predict (p. 147) which could be argued to be emphasized in this project. This is due to the assumption that Qatar wishes to project a positive narrative of the country, however, a lot of the narratives identified here are arguably of a negative notion. Although the media coverage seems to frame Qatar negatively, it still creates a lot of attention to Qatar, which by some countries could be assumed to be attractive. Cornelissen (2009, cited in De Almeida, Júnior, & Pike, 2014) argues that mega-events inhibit symbolic meaning which apart from being a tool for destination branding and image, highly relates to politics (p. 273), thus making events such as the Football World Cup enmeshed in geopolitics and soft power. This is because sport is able to further formal and informal diplomacy due to its symbolic power but also its ability to promote a nation's political values, foreign policies, and culture (Nye, 1990, as cited in Connell, 2018, p. 98).

According to Oliveira (2015), places work towards developing their communities and gaining a competitive advantage in the global competition (p. 18), of which hosting MSEs can be a strategic tool. The competition is about not only attracting consumers and tourists but also entrepreneurs, investors (Kotler et al., 1999 and Florida, 2002 as cited in Oliveira, 2015, p. 18), and large events within culture or sport, like the World Cup, as these may contribute to international recognition of media and governments (Anholt, 2007). For Qatar to host the World Cup it has demanded a lot of new infrastructure and expansion of the city's capacity (Foxman, 2022). A Danish article extract from Kristeligt Dagblad states: *"In 50 years, Qatar has transformed from a poor spot in the desert to a modern state. Hosting the World Cup is a natural extension of the state's efforts to positively stand*

out in the region” (Sørensen, 2022, Own translation). Moreover, an American article from NPR published the same day as the one from Kristeligt Dagblad states: “Qatar also frames the World Cup as an “incredible opportunity to enhance welfare standards,” and officials say that conditions for workers have improved since the selection” (Sullivan, 2022). Both these article extracts are concerned with the change that has happened in Qatar over the past years both regarding cultural development but also socio-political. Hence, this can be argued to be part of the place branding of Qatar as Anholt (2004, cited in Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020) defines to be “the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques to the economic, socio-political and cultural developments of cities, regions and countries” (p. 1).

In four videos posted by VisitQatar from the 24th of November and 4th of December, the iconic football star Andrea Pirlo, who for example has played for Juventus and AC Milan (Bold.dk, n.d.), has been used in a small social media campaign named “No Football, No Worries” (VisitQatar, 2022d) as it appears in Figure 47.


Date	Post/titel	Fireworks	Stadium	Skyscrapers	Sand dunes	Temples/ Mosque	Camels	Statue	Beach/ Ocean	Canals	Riverside	Futuristic buildings	Nature	Palmes	Airplane	Logo	Football	Iconic person
20.nov.22	0 days to go		X								X	X	X				X	
21.nov.22	Energy excitement enthusiasm	X	X															
21.nov.22	From crystal clear waters to windy desert dunes		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X						
23.nov.22	Looking for picturesque spots											X	X				X	
24.nov.22	No Football. No Worries.			X					X		X			X				X
25.nov.22	Explore Qatar's most- loved cultural district			X		X		X			X		X				X	
27.nov.22	No Football. No Worries.					X					X							X
28.nov.22	Explore worldwide cuisines and cultures									X	X	X	X					
30.nov.22	No Football. No Worries.				X				X									X
02.dec.22	Travelling to  for the @fifaworldcup?	X		X	X				X			X	X					
04.dec.22	No Football. No Worries.				X				X									X

Figure 47: Illustration of Iconic person marked in VisitQatar's Instagram videos (Appendix C)

The purpose of this campaign can be argued to be that even though you are not going to watch the football games, you can still enjoy all the other things Qatar has to offer, like for example the beaches or the desert, which are also symbols marked in these videos. Another interesting point is that it aligns with, according to Marković, Radosavljević, & Borisavljević (2009), a very typical promotional tool used in destination marketing (p. 66). This is celebrity or influencer marketing, which depending on the influencer or celebrity used, can help enhance a destination's image and trustworthiness as well as help develop familiarity with the destination (Lee, 2008, cited in Marković, Radosavljević, &

Borisavljević, 2009, p. 68). It can therefore be argued to be quite clever of Qatar's DMO to use an iconic football star in four of their marketing videos as it both possibly enhances trust but also possibly helps the viewers identify more with the destination, as it suddenly might portray something familiar and relatable.

Henderson (2014) states that *"World championships and famous sportspersons have positive connotations and contradict external views of the region as a place of violent upheaval and religious extremism."* (p. 291). This negative view of Qatar is seconded by article extracts from several countries' media including Denmark. The Danish newspaper Berlingske states: *"Qatar is the epitome of everything we hate: Conservative Muslims, who install air conditioning in the desert, give a damn about dead migrants and is so rich that they can bribe their way to the World Cup."* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation).

Similar to the ending reflections on the narratives of LGBTQ+ problems, this extract by a Danish newspaper arguably very vividly shows their take on the subject of the World Cup, which can be argued to possibly portray a general belief within the Danish population, but it might as well be the media trying to sway its readers towards a very specific opinion in this case. A country's media and its power of communication therefore arguably hold tremendous power to influence. The Danish newspaper Berlingske is the oldest newspaper in Denmark (Bang, 2011), and it can be assumed that they might be quite good at accommodating the Danish population's interests and convictions as it is still in play since its start in 1749 (Bang, 2011). It might therefore be possible, however farfetched, to presume that it might portray the broad belief of the Danish population. Similar to the above-mentioned presumption is the argument made by Martin (2000, cited in Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017) who argue that the media can work as a mediator and as some kind of communicator for the debates and understandings of the public (p. 73). This is seconded by several authors (cited in Morris, 2014) who likewise believe that newspapers and other media outlets usually communicate debates and subjects that stem from the respective inhabitants' beliefs (p. 47). An argument could therefore be made, that it is potentially what the Danish news outlet is narrating – its countrymen's opinions.

Also, a German newspaper states: “*Abdel Aziz had noticed a strong cultural bias in some of the criticism, which focused on the difference between Western and Middle Eastern cultures*” (Schaer & Hassan, 2022) which explains how a lot of the criticism of Qatar assumably is based on cultural differences like for example religion and perhaps also the pace of development in an emerging country like Qatar compared to the developed countries in the West. However, the latter moreover relates to the controversy of bad conditions for migrant workers and violation of human rights, which will be elaborated on later. This is due to the assumption that the reason Qatar has been able to create such big developments in the city in only 10 years prior to the World Cup, is because they have migrant workers working under very bad conditions. Nevertheless, the usage of sportspersons and the reassuring messages they symbolize can according to Henderson (2014) also be with the purpose of empowering the internal audience and boosting national pride (p. 291).

To quickly sum up this identified narrative, it can be argued that Qatar wants to use the media exposure of the World Cup to enter a new position in the globalized world by presenting Qatar as a football nation, a modern country in development, and a tourist destination. Nevertheless, the Western countries’ media coverage can be argued to hold Qatar’s past as a radical and conservative Islamic country, against them which possibly disputes VisitQatar’s projected image of Qatar. However, just because a country subscribes to a certain religion or cultural understanding, should not mean that it cannot narrate a positive and including image of itself to the world.

Költringer & Dickinger (2015) also states that depending on the source of information, the goals of communication may vary, and this can provide diverging representations of the destination (p. 1837), which is the case concerning the messages communicated by VisitQatar on their Instagram profile compared to the messages communicated by global media.

5.3 Narrative 3: Bad Conditions for Migrant workers

During the analysis of the dataset and the following presentation, it became evident that the narrative *Bad conditions for migrant workers* was present in four countries’ top five categories. Therefore, this narrative is deemed relevant for further analysis as it has been up for debate and criticism in multiple countries’ media coverage, these being Denmark, the US, France, and North Africa. The criticism of the migrant workers’ conditions by the media is concerned with different

aspects ranging from the salary and the employer to the number of hours they work and their rights while staying in Qatar. Danish article extracts from Berlingske states: *"You don't settle down in Qatar. You sell your labor power and stay here on the mercy of the locals. They have no right to retirement or prospect of becoming citizens. Everyone is in transit."* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation), and *"The salary is ridiculously low compared to Qatar's exorbitant wealth"* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation). These two article extracts from Danish media are concerned with the low salary and poor rights of migrant workers, compared to locals in Qatar. This negative narrative is seconded by the UK from which an article extract from DailyMail states: *"Qatar's labour laws allow officials to confiscate the passports of workers who travel there to stop them from leaving the country."* (Brown, 2022) along with another article from DailyMail stating: *"Many of the labourers who toiled to build the eight stadiums [...] working tirelessly to fulfil a brutal schedule which saw many of their colleagues perish."* (Lodge, Haigh, Bhatia, Chaudhary, & Averre, 2022).

American media also engage in this negative narrative of Qatar, criticizing the relationship between employer and migrant worker in relation to abuse and poor human rights: *"Migrant domestic workers, who have weaker legal protections, are often confined to their employers' homes and remain the most vulnerable to abuses including verbal, physical, and sexual abuse."* (Begum, 2022). Furthermore, the American newspaper The Conversation U.S states: *"In Qatar and its oil-rich peers, control by a minority of citizens over millions of workers with fewer rights leads to discrimination and abuse."* (Mednicoff, 2022). The media from Denmark, the UK, and the US are very much contributing to a negative narrative of Qatar by emphasizing the bad working conditions and human rights that migrant workers are subject to in Qatar.

Even though French and North African media also emphasize the bad working conditions of migrant workers, they seem to also present narratives of a more neutral notion compared to the aforementioned countries. Article extracts from French media seem to be more informative than blameworthy in tone. For example, an article from FRANCE 24 states: *"Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch shone a light on mistreatment of people constructing a stadium in a 2016 report titled 'Qatar World Cup of Shame'"* (FRANCE 24, 2022), while another article in LeMonde states:

“It documented the daily lives of Nepalese workers on the construction sites of Lusail – a new Qatari city built north of Doha, intended to house the largest of the seven stadiums constructed – whose papers had been confiscated, who were not paid their wages, and who were housed in insanitary conditions. The same year, Le Monde also denounced the working conditions of immigrants in Qatar.” (Dagorn & Deræux, 2022).

The same goes for North African media. An article extract from Africanews states: *“But the Gulf state has faced particular attention over the foreign workers who have built the infrastructure for Qatar’s economic miracle”* (Rédaction Africanews, 2022) while another is concerned with deaths due to bad working conditions states: *“Sources speak of the number of 6,500 deaths among employees often from Southeast Asia. This is the number 1 argument that has been cited for several years in addition to the energy aspect.”* (TSA, 2022, Own translation). Nevertheless, both of these article extracts can be argued to be of a more neutral tone than the ones presented in Danish, American, and British media. As mentioned earlier in the data presentation, France and Qatar has close business relations, which may be a reason for French media not to share the same critical perspective in the media as the other Global North countries. Mega-events can as mentioned be used to improve countries that have not lived up to standards and ethics set by developing countries (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177), hence the West or Global North. It could be therefore argued that the standards and ethics Haghirian and Robles-Gil talk about would be set by countries of the Global North and therefore the Western and European countries. Considering this it can be reasoned that the media from countries belonging to the Global South, would not necessarily feel the need to criticize Qatar and hold them to a standard, they might not even themselves live up to or believe in. North Africa is part of the Global South like Qatar, which could assumably mean that they share more of the same values and culture and thereby their media are not that critical towards the treatment of migrant workers in Qatar.

An article extract from the French media FRANCE 24 states: *“There exists a systematic conspiracy “by European media” however these media have forgotten the miserable conditions suffered by workers in Europe”* in which European media is accused of being hypocritical when criticizing Qatar’s treatment of migrant workers. The reason why this is stated in a French newspaper could be

reasoned with the French-Qatari business relationship. Also, the French media coverage itself could be argued to be hypocritical if they criticized Qatar in the same amount as for example the media from Denmark, the US, and the UK, due to them doing a lot of business with Qatar. Nevertheless, this article extract somehow makes it visible that hidden power structures exist and may influence media representations.

Even though Qatar received a lot of criticism for its treatment of migrant workers, an article from Australia presents another narrative of how working in Qatar is actually attractive to workers from countries like Nepal, India, and Bangladesh, from which the migrant workers often arrive (Zayadin, 2021). As earlier mentioned in the data presented from Australia this narrative can be argued to portray the more positive outcomes of a mega-event, which is outlined by Black & Van der Westhuizen and Horne & Manzenreiter (2004, 2006, cited in Black, 2010, p. 270), as it is due to improvements in working conditions that Qatar is argued to be an attractive country to work in. For example, two of the article extracts state: *“Now that Qatar has scrapped its kafala, or indentured labour, system, it is regarded as a desirable place to work.”* (Ahmed, 2022) and *“It is the only country in the region which sets a minimum wage, mandates a rest day and pays overtime.”* (Ahmed, 2022). The narrative portrayed by Australian media can thereby be argued to help put Qatar on the map, as a good place for immigrants to work, as the conditions are better than in other Middle Eastern countries. It can be argued that Qatar has used the World Cup to gain soft power and has used it as a means to be portrayed more attractive to people, as Nye (2004, cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015) outlines (p. 705). Soft power in this case means the ability in shaping other people's preferences in order to make them match your own (Grix & Lee, 2013, p. 526). According to Grix & Houlihan and Manzenreiter (2013, 2010 cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015) MSEs offer countries an opportunity to either increase or create soft power through the way that the event is portrayed in the global media and tourists become attracted to the destination (p. 706).

The occurrence of article extracts in the narrative *Bad conditions for migrant workers* peaks in the period from October 10th, 2022, to December 23rd, 2022 (Appendix D), which is approximately six weeks prior to the opening game of the World Cup and to the end of the World Cup. In this time frame, the most present symbols in VisitQatar's video material are *City, Beach/Ocean, and People*

(Appendix C). *City* occurs in 52% of the videos posted in this period, just as *People* occurs in 48% and *Beach/Ocean* occurs in 46% (Appendix C). There does not seem to be any direct and clear connection between the narratives presented by global media and the narrative presented by VisitQatar. However, the fact that 52% of videos show pictures from the city could be argued to clash with the global media that criticizes how Qatar has had migrant workers building and expanding the city prior to the World Cup under bad and poor working conditions. It could be assumed or argued that either VisitQatar wants to highlight the fast development of the city since they won the hosting of the World Cup and that somehow should justify their treatment of migrant workers, which especially the media from the Global North countries are criticizing, as mentioned earlier. This is seconded by Human Rights Watch (2012, cited in Henderson, 2014) as they state that the urban building boom in Qatar has been made possible by guest workers from overseas who work long hours regardless of the season and low salaries (pp. 289-290).

On the other hand, VisitQatar could also be argued to be ignorant, or strategic, of this connection and therefore deliberately not wanting to acknowledge it in their own marketing material. Qatari officials have, perhaps instead, made statements about how they feel unfairly treated in the global media prior to the World Cup. This is therefore also a category deduced from the codes identified in article extracts for both Danish and French media.

Moreover, it can just like the earlier analyzed narratives, be argued that the emphasis on the beach and ocean is to create awareness of Qatar as a tourist destination and that the different types of people used in the videos, as well as the fact that people occur in the video, are to show that it is a welcoming destination and a destination for everyone to enjoy. This is based on the semiotic process presented by Peirce's Model of Representation which consists of three components: the sign, an object, and an interpretant (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, p. 35), as mentioned in the literature review. The sign-object relationship determines why a sign is interpreted the way it is, and this is divided into icon, index, and symbol as described in the literature review (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, p. 35). The sign-object relationship of the beach could be argued to be symbolic as it is based on social and cultural conventions of relaxation and vacation, as earlier established in the data presentation and semiotic analysis. In a tourism context, the collateral experience refers to the prior

knowledge and experiences a potential tourist has with the represented object in tourism marketing (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010, p. 36), which could be argued to second this symbolic interpretation. Pennington & Thomsen (2010) moreover argues that the inclusion of people in an advertisement could suggest social interaction (p. 39), which to some extent also seconds the abovementioned argument of the sign-object relationship of people to be symbolic as well.

This follows Oliveira's (2015) beliefs that places work towards developing their communities and gaining a competitive advantage in the global competition (p. 18), which is part of the place branding concept. In relation to this, destination branding is an aspect of place branding where the place is viewed in terms of the tourism industry (Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020, p. 1), which could be argued to be the case here due to the emphasis of beaches and ocean, that assumably can be a more conventional association to tourism. Within this more conventional approach to marketing a tourism destination, Crompton (1979) defines an image as *"the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a person has of a destination"* (p. 18) and this may be interesting here, as decision-makers act upon their perceptions and beliefs of the country as a destination, and not an objective reality of it (Hunt, 1975, cited in Donaldson & Ferreira, 2007, p. 369).

On the other hand, it is worth noticing that migrant workers do not seem to appear in any of the videos compared to them making up the majority of the population in Qatar (Reid, 2023). A Danish article extract from Berlingske states: *"...the camps outside the city center where migrant workers are packed away at night as if they were Qatar's dirty secret"* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation). Human Rights Watch (2012, as cited in Henderson, 2014) furthermore describes how migrant workers often are housed in dormitories of inferior standard and are tied to their employer by the Kafala system (pp. 289-290). This system is by Henderson (2014) believed to be repeated in many of the Gulf and Asian states, but due to Qatar hosting the World Cup, the issues of ill-treatment of migrant workers have been put under a microscope here by the worlds media, and not everywhere else (pp. 289-290).

With this in mind, it could be assumed that Qatar deliberately does not include migrant workers in its videos, but instead uses tourists, or possibly actors, nevertheless, it could be questioned to what extent the portrayal of Qatar in the Instagram videos is authentic or polished. It can therefore

perhaps be argued that VisitQatar uses one of the image-restoring strategies, within the concept of place branding, presented by Avraham & Ketter (2013). One of the strategies VisitQatar could be argued to use is *Delivering a Counter-message to the Negative Stereotype* (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 154) because the DMO tries to highlight conventional tourist attractions and activities, but also symbols of inclusion to counter the negative perceptions in other countries and narratives presented in the global media.

5.4 Narrative 4: World Cup in Qatar is highly political

The World Cup in Qatar has through the dataset and content analysis proven to be portrayed by the global media as quite a political move by Qatar. And it's not only the dataset telling the tale about the World Cup being enmeshed with politics and power, as many authors (Cf. Andreff & Szymanski, 2006, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) mentioned in the literature review also argue that the main reason for countries choosing to host mega-events is due to the potential political benefits it can set off (p. 174). Quite a few of the analyzed countries' media all communicate narratives about Qatar trying to obtain a political advantage. One of them is Denmark, with an article extract from JydskeVestkyst which states:

"The World Cup is held for political reasons, not sporting ones, says Stanis Elsborg, who is a senior analyst at Play the Game in Aarhus. He compares it to the 1936 Berlin Olympics, where Adolf Hitler used the Games to create a beautiful painting of Nazi society. Qatar wants to bask in the sport's universal values - unity, emotions, inclusion, excitement, and fair play - so the world associates them with something other than corruption scandals and slave-like working conditions for migrants." (Jørgensen, 2021, Own translation).

This extract is quite critical of Qatar's motives and even goes so far as to compare it to one of the darkest eras in World History, through which painting Qatar in a relatively negative light. Another country's media that also seem to narrate that the World Cup is about politics is the UK, where the British newspaper Financial Times argues that a motivation is to build relationships in order to secure their position in the Middle East and secure strong military allies, should anything happen: *"Crowd control is not the only area of co-operation. Qatar, a longstanding western partner, is also leveraging*

its strategic relationships to build a stronger defensive cordon against military and terrorist threats, officials say” (Kerr, 2022).

Apart from Qatar securing its political and military position many extracts also communicate narratives concerning Qatar trying to obtain soft power. This being quite similar to a point made in the literature review about mega-events not solely being political but also, and especially for emerging countries like Qatar, it is about building relationships and soft power, according to Cornelissen (2010, p. 3008). The international news site Reuters also states that soft power plays a role as the extract state: *“In the soft power level, it will demonstrate that Qatar is a global and multilateral player.”* (Gebeily & Mills, 2022). The newspaper, The Australian Financial Review arguably seconds that with the extract stating Qatar’s high ambitions regarding soft power: *“Qatar embarked on a quest for soft power to match its bank balances.”* (The Australian Financial Times, 2022). De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) also believe that choosing to host mega-events is very closely linked to a country's foreign policy (p. 272) which the American newspaper VanityFair also narrates as they state:

“Those takeovers are widely seen as textbook cases of “sportswashing,” whereby a country with a tarnished image uses a beloved game to launder its reputation. The 2022 World Cup may be the ultimate expression of that. “Sports and the geopolitical power of these tournaments are indivisible,” said Wallace. “This is a tournament that was brought here for the glorification of a very tiny, very wealthy nation-state that has preoccupations with its standing in the world. That’s why we’re here. There is not a chance we would be here if not for the politics of sport.” “ (Kludt, 2022).

This indirectly points toward Qatar trying to improve its position in the world, which arguably relates to foreign policy. This can assumably also be Qatar’s way of contesting the world order through the idea of the World Cup as a peripheral mega-event to insert themselves on the global platform. What is interesting is that it seems that the French media network Les Echos seems to have picked up on this as they state: *“Qatar is also the symbol of Europe's loss of influence in the world.”* (Gaveriaux, 2022, Own translation), which arguably is in line with De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) who believe that only Global South countries can contest the global order of things (p. 272).

The narratives concerning the World Cup being about politics are highly communicated by Danish, international, British, Indian, American, and French media, however, the other countries do not seem to communicate this narrative at all in their articles.

The time frame concerning the narrative of *World Cup is highly political* starts quite early leading up to the World Cup. However, material from VisitQatar's Instagram has not been included until approximately a year before the World Cup beginning in November 2022. Nevertheless, the number of extracts communicating the narrative of the World Cup being political accelerates just a few days before the start of the event and again just as the final game was to be held in December.

VisitQatar's social media material does not directly link to a political image of trying to obtain more power, build relationships or improve their position in the world. Although, it could be argued that Qatar's material both concerning symbols, texts and captions all communicate narratives of Qatar as a tourist destination along with what it has to offer. The two most prominent narratives derived from the symbols are *Portrayal of activity* and *Cultural Sights*, which arguably exemplifies what there is to experience while being in Qatar from specific sights to actual activities thus making it easier for potential tourists to potentially visualize themselves in the exact same activity. The top narrative derived from the text in the videos is *Exemplifying places to visit for tourist* which arguably is quite similar to the two above-mentioned categories and is present across 60% of all texts in VisitQatar's videos (Appendix C). The captions used in VisitQatar's videos yet seem to mostly be concerned with excitement and looking forward to the World Cup and not visiting the sights as much as the text and symbols in the videos. VisitQatar arguably, therefore, seems through the visual part of their video to focus on everything tourism-related in Qatar, whereas the text is more related to joy and enthusiasm for the World Cup, through which VisitQatar possibly tries to build up an atmosphere. As the article extracts VisitQatar's advertisement picks up in density in the period right before the beginning of the World Cup on the 20th of November 2022 (FIFA, n.d.). It should be noted that VisitQatar's own advertisement does not only seem to be accelerating from the beginning of November like the global political narratives do (Appendix C, D). VisitQatar's advertisement already accelerates from the beginning of October, which can be presumed to be related to creating an exciting atmosphere surrounding the World Cup, but also showing off what the fans arriving in Qatar in November can look forward to experiences apart from just the football.

Petrone (2019) also argues that countries like the BRICS countries usually tend to have a harder time being viewed as role models, thus obtaining soft power (p. 22). Despite Qatar not being a BRICS country, they are a part of the Global South and a highly emerging economy (MSCI, 2023), through which it would be argued that Petrone's idea also applies. This arguably seems to be the case, despite VisitQatar trying to communicate positive narratives about Qatar as a tourist destination, with many things to see and explore. Furthermore, Qatar also seems quite proud to host the event, the global media picture however still illustrates their problems and, in this case, focuses on criticizing them for playing a political game. As mentioned earlier, different strategies can be used to change prolonged negative images of a destination, as argued by Avraham & Ketter (2013). Another one of these is to host spotlight events to improve the destination's image and create local and international identity (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 157). The main purpose of this form of place branding is to shift media attention from portraying a negative image of the destination to a positive one (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 157). However, this change may not last long (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 157), and due to Qatar receiving just as much negative media coverage, the potential success of this strategy could be questioned.

It could therefore be argued that despite Qatar trying, what could be assumed to be their best, the rest of the world and especially the media from the Global North still does not see them as a role model or someone equal to themselves.

5.5 Narrative 5: Environmental problems

Environmental problems cannot be said to be a subject that only relates to the World Cup in Qatar, as it is a global problem and therefore a subject that continuously is present in global debates around the world. However, concerning Qatar, the subject of the environment and the World Cup's effects on the climate has been one of the most present narratives portrayed by global media (Appendix B). As argued by Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, Lill, & Vorster (2010) MSEs like the World Cup can, if successful, help a country to reposition itself (p. 229). However, for emerging countries, and especially countries belonging to the Global South, Black (2010) believes that the only option is succeeding as the consequences otherwise might be severe (p. 274). It can therefore be presumed that Qatar, as both a Global South country and an emerging economy, the only option is to succeed and a potential part of that is the media's positive portrayal of the country and the event.

Despite Qatar working to obtain this, a lot of, what could be argued to be rather negative narratives relating to environmental and climate problems and imprints have been communicated by global media. According to Collins, Jones & Munday (2009, cited in Henderson, 2014) when hosting a mega-event, the effects on the environment should also be considered (p. 284). And according to Henderson (2014), the topic of the environmental aspect of the World Cup has been subject to huge debates by global media (p. 289). It can be assumed that a lot of the debates concerning the environmental aspect of the World Cup started when both Qatar and FIFA pledged that the World Cup in Qatar would be carbon-neutral and therefore the first of its kind (FIFA, n.d.).

However, the Belgian news outlet LaLibre stated that despite Qatar communicating to the world that its goal was to host a carbon-neutral event, that is not truly what has happened:

“The second controversy is about the environmental cost of organizing such an event. Despite the organizers' assumed objective of making this tournament carbon-neutral event, Qatar has never specified the processes that will be implemented to achieve this.....The fact that air conditions systems have been installed in the open air in seven of the eight stadiums raises even more questions about the feasibility of the objective” (LaLibre, 2022, Own translation).

From the analysis of the article extracts in Appendix A, it is clear that it is not only the Belgian news outlet that disputes Qatar’s statement about hosting a carbon-neutral World Cup (Appendix B). The British newspaper FirstNews also claimed that Qatar has been misleading in their attempt of trying to advertise a carbon-neutral event as the extract states: *“It is a false claim that the offset programme the World Cup has chosen will reduce carbon from the environment. To label this a “carbon-neutral World Cup” is really misleading”*. (FirstNews, 2022).

The controversies and debate concerning the climate are therefore not only related to the emissions themselves but also related to Qatar’s promise of zero emissions. This narrative is also communicated by several of the analyzed countries' article extracts as both French, Danish, British, North African, and Indian media highlight the problems concerning the air-conditioning used in the stadiums. The Danish news outlet Sport.TV2 stated that: *“The country use air-conditioning to cool the stadiums in the desert heat, just like the laws have required both cooling and big amounts of*

cleaned water, which requires a huge energy use” (Secher, 2022, Own translation) which is in line with an extract from the North African media outlet TSA, which states:

“Moreover, the Qatari stadiums which were built in the middle of the desert and kept under air conditioning are not a good example in terms of energy saving in a global context marked by the awareness of the populations on the environmental risks which threaten the planet” (TSA, 2022, Own translation).

Both extracts arguably shed a quite negative light on Qatar for causing huge emissions and therefore not upholding their pledge.

Among the French article extracts the narrative of environmental problems was the biggest and was present across 16% of the total extracts (Appendix B). An extract from the French media outlet Telerama could also be argued to be quite negative as it questions the need to cool an empty stadium that is not in use:

“The day of our game, the investigator reveals that it is over 30 degrees outside but, from the control center, we discover that the air conditioning is already working in a stadium west of Doha, however completely empty but managed remotely. » Cooling empty stadiums? It must be for the comfort of the lawn.” (Gontier, 2022, Own translation).

Despite 15,8% of Indian media’s article extracts communicating the narrative of environmental problems, what is interesting is that they seem to notice and communicate how it is mostly European media that is criticizing the event and its environmental effects, but also implying that a reason for it has nothing to do with the climate, but instead with-it disruption the European league. This is shown in an extract from IndiaToday which states: *“Also, for the first time in its history, the Fifa World Cup will be held in the winter months of November and December. This has provoked some ill-advised hostility in Europe, as it'll disrupt the league seasons there.”* (Sood, 2022).

This can be argued to be quite interesting as India, like Qatar, also belongs to the Global South and is likewise considered an emerging economy in the world (Worldpopulationreview, n.d.). This potentially speaks to some kind of support from other Global South countries' media, though not from all as the narratives concerning environmental problems outlined by North African media, were more critical and in this regard more aligned with the other Western countries. As stated by Grix &

Lee (2013) MSEs have not prior to 2013 been hosted by emerging countries, making it interesting to investigate (p. 523). One of the few emerging countries that has hosted a global mega-event is in fact India, which has hosted both the Hockey and the Cricket World Cup (Venkatraman, 2022; Wood, 2010). Despite those events not being quite similar in volume to the Football World Cup, both events have still been on a global scale with participating countries from all over the world. Based on this it is possible to assume that India has been in a somewhat similar situation as Qatar and therefore possibly understands the consequences and critiques from the global media, which arguably might be why they in their newspaper are not necessarily negative about Qatar, but the Europeans' criticism. It could therefore be argued that there unconsciously exists an idea of supporting other Global South countries hosting a mega-event.

Furthermore, this show of support from another media from a Global South country hosting a mega-event could be argued to be related De Almeida et al. (2004 cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) idea of peripheral mega-events (p. 175). By the Indian media using their narratives to dispute the European media's critique, they can assumably be argued to try to communicate to the world that Qatar is good enough, which arguably contests Europe's position in the world as a driver of the global media image. It can be argued that through the event, Qatar is contesting the global order of things and even India is seconding this by indirectly implying that all countries, no matter being Global North or South has a right to be considered and heard and that everything should not be about living up to European or Western standards. Furthermore, it is according to De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) only possible for emerging or developing nations to contest the global order of things (p. 272).

Contrary to some of the other narratives that have been elaborated upon, the narrative of environmental problems only seems to have been communicated by the analyzed media since July 2022 (Appendix D). The time frame for this narrative is therefore narrower, though like the other narratives the media's communication of the narrative accelerated closer to the World Cup.

When comparing to what VisitQatar has advertised through their Instagram between July 2022 and December 2022, nothing directly related to environmental problems becomes evident. However, the

symbol of *nature sights* is relatively present and is represented across 12,5% of all the symbols identified in VisitQatar's Instagram material used in the analysis (Appendix C). The symbol of *nature sights* cannot necessarily be linked to the narrative and controversies about environmental debates. However, it could be reasoned that since the nature symbol has been present continuously since November 2021 and until the end of the World Cup in end December 2022, it might be due to VisitQatar trying to highlight nature and other natural parts of the city's environment to promote a positive connotation towards the environment. Accordingly, it can be seen that the symbol *metropolitan destination* only was present across 6,3% of the identified symbols. It might prove to have no relation, but it could be assumed that VisitQatar tried to focus more on the natural aspect, and therefore not on futuristic buildings and skyscrapers, which are man build and causes a carbon footprint when building.

Considering the narrative of environmental problems is a global debate, which also extends beyond the World Cup a lot can be debated. We live in an era where the climate debate takes up a lot of space in both the global media and global politics. Due to this, it can be argued to make sense that all Qatar's "missteps" however big or small concerning the climate and environmental impact are blown out of proportion and portrayed quite negatively by the global media landscape. However, considering the fact that environmental problems are not solely in Qatar but in the whole world, it can be argued to be common knowledge that everyone and every country has a responsibility. And maybe especially countries belonging to the Global North, as data shows (Worldometer, n.d.), that those five out of seven top countries to emit the most CO₂ globally are from the Global North. This is assumable because the way of living in these countries is somewhat more luxurious than in some Global South countries. Therefore, it can be viewed as quite a controversy and maybe even argued to be hypocritical that all those Global North countries are shaming and criticizing Qatar for just trying to also incorporate a bit of luxury in their daily life and at the World Cup where all participating countries actually can take advantage of it. Qatar even argued that building a high number of stadiums with air-conditioning would be sustainable long-term as they would use the stadiums again in the future (Appendix A), but Qatar is still blamed for the World Cup's effects on the climate.

Another point that might be worth considering is the fact that there in the media often are talks about it being a global responsibility to reduce the carbon footprint (Miller P. , 2007), which will not be disputed. However, it is interesting that there does not seem to be a global narrative about blaming the Global North countries for the big role they play in CO2 emissions. It is also interesting to consider Maiello & Pasquinelli's (2015) point, where they argue that the European countries do not seek to host mega-events to the same extent as before, as the positive outcomes from it are far less than what they used to be (p. 116). One could therefore ask the question of the lessened benefits for the European countries hosting the World Cup might be due to them not wanting to attract criticism and negative publicity in the Global Media, like in Qatar?

On a final note, it is worth noticing that the narrative about the environment takes up so much space in the global debates and controversies put forward by the media. This especially since Qatar like other previous developing countries hosting mega-events like South Africa also had goals about a reduced carbon emission at the World Cup in 2010 (Death, 2011, p. 99). Since South Africa hosted the event in 2010 it has been a criterion for countries bidding on the hostmanship, for mega-events like the Olympics, to incorporate an environmental sphere in their application (Deat, 2009; Hiller, 1998, cited in Death, 2011, p. 101). However, despite the environmental aspect being more present at mega-events since 2010, a study conducted by Morris (2014) showed that prior to both the South African mega-event in 2010 and the mega-event held in Russia in 2014 the global media narrated scandals related to the events (p. 53). Although negative and filled with debates and contradictions, they were according to (Morris, 2014) related to political and financials aspect and not the environment (p. 53), like in Qatar.

Considering this, it arguably seems like the narrative of the climate and the environment taking up so much space within the global media is specific for this event and hosting country. Some of it might however be due to the increase in global awareness on the climate and the environment.

5.6 Summing up

This chapter has examined the five most discussed narratives in global media surrounding the Football World Cup 2022 in Qatar. These narratives, or controversies, have been analyzed and discussed in regard to relevant theory and the timing of the occurrence in the global media.

Moreover, the timing of the controversies in the media has been compared to the narratives presented in the videos posted on VisitQatar's social media in order to identify any potential counternarratives or evidence of Qatar responding to the negative narratives presented of the nation in global media. The first narrative *LGBTQ+ problems* is very much discussed in global media concerning the fact that homosexuality is illegal in Qatar while people of the LGBTQ+ community have been subject to harassment. The European debate is moreover very concerned with the ban on LGBTQ+ symbols at the World Cup like the One Love armband, which has made Qatar and FIFA accuse the West of hypocrisy due to their past. VisitQatar tries through their social media to communicate that all are welcome during the World Cup, also people of the LGBTQ+ community as long as they follow the rules, however, the messages communicated in some global media contradict this message which therefore has a negative impact on the image of hospitality and openness that Qatar seems to want to portray.

The second narrative is about how the World Cup can be a facilitator for change which was one of the biggest narratives in Danish, Indian, Belgian, and North African media, hence both Global North and Global South countries. This debate is concerned with how the World Cup has created change in the form of for example reforming the Kafala system and improving rights and working conditions for migrant workers. However, doubts exist about whether reforms will be repealed later which contributes to a negative narrative of Qatar's intentions and image. In the time frame where this debate is at its highest, VisitQatar aims at projecting an image of Qatar as a football nation, a modern country in development, and a tourist destination by emphasizing these themes in the Instagram videos and different narratives are thereby presented, some positive and some negative.

Bad conditions for migrant workers cover the criticism Qatar received due to the ill-treatment of the migrant workers that prepared the city for the World Cup. Especially Danish, American, French, and North African media engaged in this debate however contributing to two differently loaded narratives. The two formers are very negative and critical, while the two latter are of a more neutral tone. This difference could be assumed to be related to the respective countries' relationship with Qatar. In contradiction to the negative narrative created by Western countries, an Australian article outlines why Qatar is an attractive country to work in for migrant workers, which provides the debate

with a more positive narrative. VisitQatar does not address this controversy in its own marketing. Instead, they emphasize the beach and ocean, assumably to create awareness of Qatar as a tourist destination as well as different types of people, perhaps to show that it is a destination for everyone.

The World Cup in Qatar has, based on the dataset and content analysis, proven to be portrayed as quite a political move by Qatar, by the global media. The narratives concerning the World Cup being about politics are highly communicated by Danish, international, British, Indian, American, and French media, while the other countries do not seem to communicate this narrative at all in their articles. Moreover, many extracts also communicate narratives concerning Qatar trying to obtain soft power which the negative concept of sports washing is used in relation to. This can assumably also be Qatar's way of contesting the world order through the idea of the World Cup as a peripheral mega-event to insert themselves on the global platform. Despite VisitQatar trying to communicate positive narratives about Qatar as a tourist destination, with many things to see and explore and seeming quite proud to host the event, the global media keeps criticizing them for playing a political game. It could therefore be argued that despite Qatar trying, what could be assumed to be their best, the rest of the world and especially the Global North still does not see them as equals.

Environmental problems are in general up for debate these years, and the World Cup in Qatar was no exception. Concerning Qatar, the subject of the environment and the World Cup's effects on the climate has been one of the most present narratives portrayed by global media. Qatar received criticism for their pledge to a carbon-neutral World Cup and for the announcement of air-conditioning the new stadiums in the middle of the desert. This negative narrative is communicated by French, Danish, British, North African, and Indian media, in which the biggest issue seems to be Qatar not living up to its promises. VisitQatar does not directly address the issue in its social media videos, however, they do highlight nature and other natural parts of the city's environment for what can be assumed to be the purpose of promoting a positive connotation towards the environment and a potential counternarrative. In relation to this debate, the global responsibility to reduce carbon footprint is also brought up as there does not seem to be a global narrative about blaming the Global North countries for the big role they play in CO₂ emissions, but the Global North makes a big deal of blaming Qatar.

6.0 Discussion

6.1 Temporality and Dynamics of Communication

The temporal orientation of news is continuously evolving (Poell, 2020, p. 614), and according to Castells (2000, cited in Poell, 2020), the sequential order of phenomena is, or has been, breaking down, due to new information technologies allowing social practices to occur simultaneously in different geographic locations (p. 611). He refers to this as *timeless time* (Castells, 2000, cited in Poell, 2020, p. 611). Hence, a reorganization of temporality is potentially enabled through communication technologies (Poell, 2020, p. 611). Barassi (2015, cited in Poell, 2020) moreover argues that there is a certain connection between people's practices and dominant constructions of social time (p. 611). Communication is dynamic (Cottle, 2003, p. 3), and meaning by Couldry and Hepp (2015, cited in Poell, 2020) is argued to be unfolded over time (p. 611), which could support the contribution of the following elaboration of the narratives and when they appear in the media.

In the analysis, the time frame in which each narrative is most frequently occurring has been outlined and compared to the videos posted by VisitQatar to achieve a picture of the sequential order. Based on Figure 48, a comparison of the temporal occurrence of different narratives will be done in order to discuss the dynamics of communication that potentially influence the time in which the narratives occur in the media.

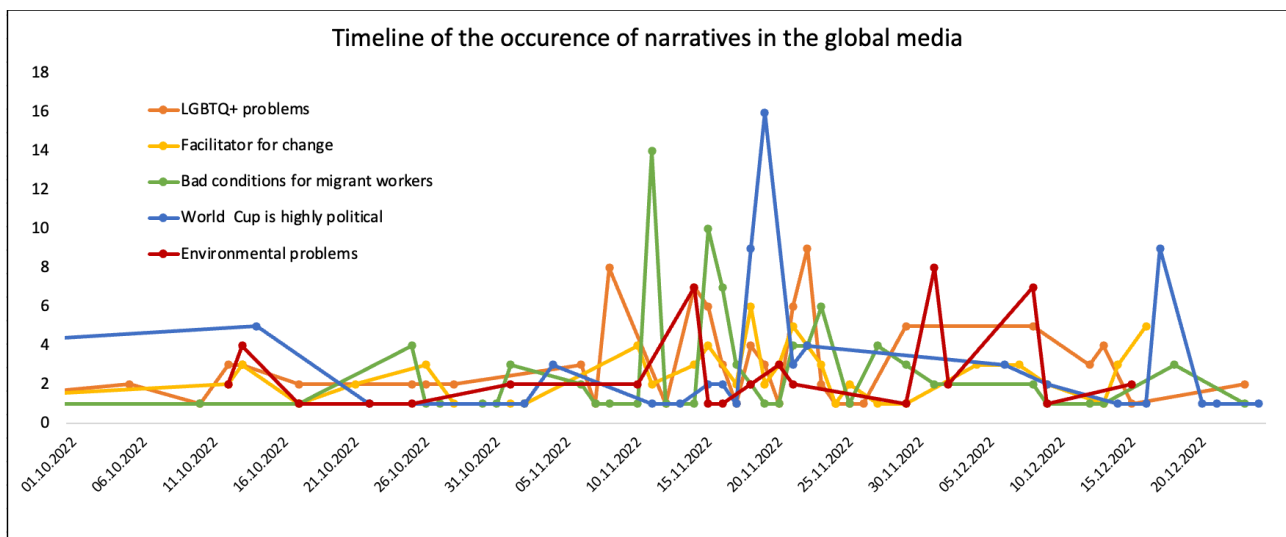


Figure 48: Timeline of the occurrence of narratives in the global media (Appendix D)

Figure 48 shows the five analyzed narratives based on their occurrence from October 1st, 2022, to December 24th, 2022, as this period has the highest peaks. This figure does not consider the countries' media outlets and therefore presents the highest occurrence of narratives in the media flow (Appendix D). *LGBTQ+ problems* tend to peak three times between the 10th of November and the 25th of November, just before the beginning of the World Cup and the first couple of days. This narrative of how people of the LGBTQ+ community are subject to harassment and cannot feel safe in Qatar due to homosexuality being illegal is beside the three peaks present in the media landscape in the whole period. The same goes for the narrative concerning how migrant workers are badly treated and are working under poor conditions to prepare for the World Cup. This narrative, however, peaks four times between the 11th and the 30th of November, which is very close to the peaks of *LGBTQ+ problems*. It could be discussed whether one identified problem can set off the media's attention to other problems, almost acting as a catalyst for other controversies. This is arguably to some extent supported by Poell (2020), who argues that the temporal orientation of communication in media practices is organized in relation with, amongst others, the civil society, techno-commercial infrastructures of the media, and political-cultural institutions of government (p. 612). Hence, he argues that all these in combination shape the media practices (Poell, 2020, p. 612), which can be argued to further contribute to the complexity and dynamics of the communication of a mega-event like the World Cup, that could be presumed to be of a political or strategic purpose.

Looking at Figure 48 it shows how *LGBTQ+ problems* are the first narrative with a significant peak followed by the narrative *Bad conditions for migrant workers*. Hereafter, *Environmental problems* become more present in the media coverage of the World Cup in Qatar. This narrative peak one time around the 15th of November and then it has two more peaks in the first half of December 2022. *Environmental problems* seem to be the most present narrative in the latter period but are followed by a stabile occurrence of *LGBTQ+ problems*. Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras (2017) states that “a critical part of media representations of event preparation and hosting are the situated narratives of corruption, slowness, and disorganization that are differentially applied to countries outside of the core economies and geopolitical powers.” (p. 72). This is a very relevant point in the case of the World Cup in Qatar, as it has been subject to somewhat negative narratives concerning the law in Qatar and bad labor rights and conditions for the migrant workers preparing the city for the World Cup.

Overall, it could seem like the communication of a mega-event is very complex, which is supported by Cottle (2003) who is concerned with the complex power relations between media sources and journalism. As established in the analysis, multiple controversies are created in the media and Cottle (2003, p. 3) outlines how communication is a field of historical change, politics, and organizational complexity, which in relation to tourism not simplifies it, due to the complexity of the industry itself. The complexity of the tourism industry lies within the research methods originating from a range of disciplines like economics, sociology, and geographics, but also due to the products consisting of a collection of components that vary (Baggio, 2014). Hence, it could be argued that from a tourism point of view, discussions are to appear when different cultures meet at a mega-event like the Football World Cup, due to all eyes being on one country, but with each of their own perspectives. Arguably, this could be what the narratives represent. The complexity of mega-events and the impact they are assumed to have on not only the host country but also on different perceptions other countries develop and communicate, which potentially can turn into stories and media discussions between other nations.

The narrative *World Cup is highly political* has two significant peaks as illustrated in Figure 48. The first real peak is around the 19th of November 2022 and the other one is about a month later on the 18th of December 2022. These peaks are quite interesting as they both appear two days before respectively the opening and the closing ceremony of the World Cup which by Haghirian & Robles-Gil (2021) are argued to be of high global significance and in the context of global mediatized political performances (p. 177). Burchell et al. (cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) state: “*the narrative of a nation, is spelled out through representations of shared experiences*” and “*sets of stories, historical events, national symbols and rituals*” (p. 177), and these two ceremonies can thus be seen as a part of the nation’s public diplomacy as it is a way for the nation to present itself in a positive manner and thereby contribute to the projected image of the destination and the narrative of the country. However, it is important to remember that this narrative may not only be of positive notion as it is a portrayal not only by Qatar or the Middle Eastern media but by multiple countries’ media outlets. The media is by Howe (2009, cited in Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017) argued to be producers of geographic knowledge (p. 72). Thus, the media is able to constantly shape and reshape people’s relationships with the rest of the world (Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017, p. 72), which seconds the great impact media-created narratives have on others’ perceptions and image of a

place. Media can thereby mediate public knowledge and discourses as well as people's understanding of a place (Martin, 2000, cited in Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017, p. 72).

In comparison to the aforementioned narratives illustrated in Figure 48, *World Cup as a facilitator for change* has a different media flow. This narrative seems to be present, more or less, throughout the entire period without any significant peaks. Based on the analysis, this narrative could be argued to be quite nuanced depending on the countries' media from which the article extracts originate.

As it is illustrated in Figure 48 above, the media landscape changes over time, focusing on different narratives and debates. This could be argued to align with social constructivist epistemology because it is concerned with how knowledge is changeable, as it is influenced by time and place (Egholm, 2014, p. 148). This is arguably supported by Back and Gergen (1963, cited in Ritchie, 1987) who argue that respondents', or readers', opinions about current events can be significantly influenced by the temporal orientation (p. 5). However, at this time, there had not been conducted much research on the relationship between the communication process and temporality (Ritchie, 1987, p. 5). Nevertheless, it is moreover supported by Couldry and Hepp (2015, cited in Poell, 2020) who as mentioned earlier argue that meaning unfolds over time (p. 611), which arguably makes it changeable. It could be discussed whether temporal orientation also is a reason why *Environmental problems* is one of the narratives most present in the analyzed media. Global warming, climate and the environment are very relevant and highly discussed topics in recent years which could advocate for why it is such a present narrative in the media coverage of the World Cup in Qatar, as it might not have been the case by previous World Cups in same degree.

Moreover, humans are by Schmidt (2022) argued to be influenced by discourses that are developed in a social context and in coordination with other people, just as meaning and understandings are (Amineh & Asl, 2015, p. 13), which moreover could advocate for the difference in the amount of media coverage concerning environmental problems in preparing and hosting the World Cup. It can be argued that knowledge depends on geography and according to Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras (2017), media play a role in constructing the "media geography" of mega-events (p. 70).

Therefore, the reality can be very different depending on the country, as culture can be argued to play a huge role in how we perceive others and whether it is with a positive or a negative perspective

(Gaonkar, 2002, p. 4), but also depending on the media and their positionality regarding values and for example ethics. An article extract from Gulf News, Dubai states: *"Both come from a misplaced superiority. A belief that European man and his culture are a gift to the world," he added on Twitter*" (Sherbini, 2022) in which Europeans are portrayed as being arrogant. This negative portrayal of Europeans and specific use of words could be a way for the Middle Eastern media to undermine the opinions of and narratives presented by European media. This article extract moreover emphasizes the differences in culture between Europe and the Middle East. This speaks to the epistemological approach that is concerned with how different assumptions of the world influence the produced knowledge (Schmidt & Løgstrup, 2022), which perhaps could arguably be related to one's geographical position. It leaves questions about what dynamics are in play when contributing to the narratives as well as the political or strategic intentions behind them, which will be discussed later.

The World Cup in Qatar generated colossal media exposure (Appendix A) by the global world, thus allowing for different narratives both positive and negative to be formed. One could even go as far as to argue that some of the analyzed narratives seem somewhat of a response to each other if the narratives pertaining to the massive critique of Qatar are considered, as the narratives about how the Western or European media should be and are critiqued for the way of portraying Qatar, could be argued to be somewhat of a response. Robertson (2018) refers to this as a counternarrative (p. 3210), and it is moreover described in the literature review, how hosting spotlight events, like the Football World Cup, can be a strategy to deliver counter-messages to negative stereotypes and already existing perceptions of a destination (Avraham & Ketter, 2013, p. 154), that the host nation might want to change.

All of which is arguably only made possible by the development and rapid advancements made in technology. Both Gössling (2021, p. 734) and Buhalis and Law (2008; Buhalis 2003, cited in Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 267) argue that the internet and through which information and communication are essential and rapidly evolving, which could be argued to make it possible for the world's media to cover the event and communicate about it in the way that it has done. The internet and the many communication channels, therefore, contribute to shaping the global discourses, which supports the above-discussed philosophical views on how knowledge can be produced and shaped by individuals. It, furthermore, also underlines that market communication is not only communicated by a single

actor like believed within traditional tourism marketing (Kannan & Li, 2017, p. 27). Communication can be argued to be organic due to it being formed by different actors in the media landscape which the findings of this project support. It is more complex than the traditional communication model *SMCR* which is a linear model of communication (Reddy, 2014, p. 21). It could therefore be relevant to consider the *Transaction Model of Communication* which acknowledge the complexity and dynamics of communication and describes it as a process in which people generate social realities within amongst others, cultural and relational contexts (Lapum, St-Amant, Hughes, & Garmaise-Yee, 2020). Both seem to be relevant for the case of this project as geography and culture are argued to play a role in the interpretation of messages communicated in the news media. This can be argued to align with this model as humans are considered to simultaneously send and receive messages, which makes the sender and receiver linked reciprocally (Reddy, 2014, p. 23). Moreover, this could be discussed to further be related to the counternarratives earlier mentioned and how messages are changeable over time and depending on the interpretation as well as culture and geography of the receiver. Arguably, communication can be made of multiple senders all contributing to shaping the narratives, or the message, which as mentioned, can influence the image of for example a place.

This leads back to the issue concerning the contradiction between the projected and perceived image of a destination, in which it is important to consider the communication channel. An epistemological question arises, according to Dretske (2008, p. 34), as one could assume that a gap between the projected and the perceived image may be created in relation to the amount of transmitted information that ends up in the mind of a person. As described earlier in the project, knowledge and opinions are subjective and depend on the person being exposed to them, as meaning is created based on our previous experiences and previously obtained knowledge. So, when reflecting on the impacts of the image and expectations to and of Qatar, it becomes relevant to bear in mind the power of tourism imaginaries as these moreover could be argued to depend on previous experiences and cultural references.

Tourism imaginaries can be argued to be part of the field of market communication because they are concerned with forming mental images (Howie & Lewis, 2014, p. 134) with potentially the purpose of attracting tourists. Geographical imaginaries are also produced and distributed

everywhere and all the time in tourism advertising (Howie & Lewis, 2014, p. 134). Geographical imaginaries are constructed within people's personal backgrounds, social framings, and political constructions (Howie & Lewis, 2014, p. 134). They help frame understandings of the world as people need to know some history or cultural background of for example a place or event to fully understand the narratives concerning it (Howie & Lewis, 2014, p. 134). This could be discussed in the case of these different narratives presented in the analysis, as the communication and presentation in the media could be dependent on the geographical imaginaries that the journalists have of Qatar. But also, the difference in or clash between the geographical imaginaries in the minds of foreign journalists compared to the people working for VisitQatar could be argued to shape the different narratives and intentions behind the communication in the media.

Tourism imaginaries are known to contribute to a destination's image (Baloglu & McCleary, cited in Gravari-Barbas & Graburn, 2016, p. 21) and as put by Till (cited in Chronis, 2012, p. 1798), that specific image creation is highly influenced by the reality at the destination but also the narratives that are communicated to the potential tourist. Till's beliefs, therefore, make it highly relevant to consider the narratives created and communicated by the world's media coverage of the mega-event in Qatar. This is because they arguably are image forming and are part of tourism imaginaries as they take part in giving the potential tourist or visitor an image of Qatar before going there, whether negative or positive. Salazar (2012) arguably agrees as he defines tourism imaginaries as *"tourism imaginaries do not exist in a vacuum but have to contend with other circulating images and ideas. Global media streams overwhelm people with thousands of impressions of the world, in real time"* (Salazar, 2012, p. 872). This project is concerned with both global media in the form of news and social media. In the content created and shared by VisitQatar on Instagram, they could be argued to make use of stereotypes often associated with the Middle East, especially the sand dunes (Appendix C). The stereotypes could be considered as imaginaries and VisitQatar therefore arguably puts a lot of different imaginaries in play in their Instagram videos focusing on family vacations, football vacations during the World Cup, and cultural and shopping vacations. Hence, this way VisitQatar makes use of more traditional marketing compared to how the World Cup arguably is a more both subtle and complex form of tourism marketing. One could ask how Qatar's tourist arrivals are then looking post the World Cup? A Middle Eastern newspaper writes: *"Even after the World Cup buzz*

settled down, the country registered a “healthy growth” of visitors, with 3,559,063 people arriving on flights in January 2023...” (Dwivedi, 2023), which is an increase of 64% compared to the same period in 2022 (Dwivedi, 2023). This aligns with the arguments in the analysis of VisitQatar using Instagram to show a lot of tourist attractions to portray the country as an attractive destination. Therefore, VisitQatar could be argued to have used the World Cup as a traditional form of marketing to boost tourist arrivals, and in the long run boost the entire tourism industry, based on articles and the analysis of this project.

People are not only presented with messages communicated in one form of media, like the news but also a lot of other forms, including the messages and content shared on social media that is outlined above. Miller & Lammas (2010, cited in Blichfeldt & Smed, 2015) argue that meaning can be negotiated in dialogue among different actors which can result in the communication becoming non-linear and thereby chaotic (pp. 289-290), which can be argued to be the case of social media. When consumers or readers pass on messages communicated by, for example, a newspaper or an organization on social media, the message might align with the original one. However, there is also the possibility for counterproductive messages to occur (Blichfeldt & Smed, 2015, p. 290), as earlier mentioned, or for the messages to change meaning. This is due to how the reach, form, and content of social media communication are unpredictable, according to Blichfeldt & Smed (2015, p. 290). The traditional information system is based on *“a message flow and feedback system between senders, receivers and a mediating channel”* (Blichfeldt & Smed, 2015, p. 290), which assumably has been challenged by the rapid expansion of social media (Gössling, 2021, p. 734) (Buhalis and Law, 2008; Buhalis 2003, cited in Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 267). Social media can therefore be presumed to not always be passing on the original or intended message, as it allows others to hijack the message in order to further messages of conflicting interests and other discourses (Blichfeldt & Smed, 2015, p. 290). This is by McGillivray (2017) referred to as *digital disruption* and which therefore can impact and change the prevailing place or event narrative (McGillivray, 2017, p. 1888).

Some of the article extracts identified in the analysis could be argued to be a comment on this digital disruption and hijacking of the message or contesting other media’s communicated narratives. For example, a German article states: *“...under pressure, Qatar has amended labor laws and improved*

its relationship with bodies like the International Labor Organization, he pointed out. "The Western media just doesn't seem to want to acknowledge successes on this front..." (Islamabad, 2020) and "There is a lot of nuance missing from this debate he told DW, and just talking about stereotypes, whether that comes from a conscious bias or not, is partially to blame" (Islamabad, 2020) in which the German media outlet could be argued to contest the messages distributed by other European media. The same could seem to be the case in another article extract from the international media NBC News: "Everybody's a little bit upset and frustrated by the Western media coverage," said Antoniadis at Georgetown University in Qatar" (Kuhr & Smith, 2022).

Hence, it can be discussed how this digital disruption is a result of communication being developed due to time and geographical location. How a message is shared or further distributed may vary depending on the geographical location of the receiver, as perhaps Western countries could be assumed to highlight criticism whereas other Middle Eastern countries, in this case, would highlight more positive stories. As mentioned earlier, communication arguably evolves depending on the receiver and other inputs from everyday life, which may support how communication is a dynamic concept and related to geographical imaginaries. This discussion moreover leads back to the field of media geography and how media play a huge role in the discussion concerning regional cultures and what shapes the identities (Paasi, 1989, cited in Stöber, 2006, p. 37). Moreover, Paasi (1989, cited in Stöber, 2006, p. 37) highlights how the information people receive from mass media about other cultures can influence international understanding and promote or maintain stereotypes.

This section has discussed the temporality and dynamics of communication and how it may influence the messages and narratives communicated in news media and social media. Moreover, the impact of geography on tourism imaginaries and the understanding of the world and how it is able to contribute to what is communicated has been considered. It has been outlined how communication is shaped by not only time and place, but also multiple actors with different or even opposite agendas and intentions, some of these being within politics. The politics of communication will therefore be further discussed in the next section.

6.2 The Politics of Communication

According to Williams & Lew (2015), information is a vital part of the tourism industry (p. 63) and information is initially only accessible through some kind of communication. As discussed in the section above, communication changes over time and place but also depends on the reader as communication is socially constructed. However, communication and how things are portrayed or communicated also depend on the means of communication. Buhalis and Law (2008, 2003, cited in Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010) argue that especially the internet and multimedia have improved communication within tourism (p. 267). This project has so far pointed towards many different narratives being communicated about the World Cup in Qatar and how they have changed and possibly developed over time. However, their nature and the different interests influencing what is being communicated have not yet been discussed. Furthermore, based on the analysis it could be argued that communication in this case is not just about marketing of for example a destination as what is known to be traditional tourism marketing according to Kannan & Li (2017, p. 27).

As shown in the analysis different narratives are communicated with varying nature, thus arguably portraying the media outlets' different interests, which highly depends on opinions, making the communication of the World Cup somewhat political. Different media therefore throughout their communication help frame the global perception of the World Cup in Qatar.

As illustrated in the beginning of the discussion and mentioned in the previous section different narratives appear in the media at different times, thus making it seem like there is a battle of controlling or at least contributing to the narratives of Qatar as the host of the Football World Cup. But who frames these narratives? Different media outlets have been used for retrieving article extracts, but during the analysis, it has not been reflected upon the background of the media. The media outlet's underlying interests could be argued to influence the narrative being presented, as for example if the media is commercial, what could be assumed to be the most important for the journalists could be to write a story that sells magazines and generates clicks on their sites. As mentioned in the analysis, an article extract from the French media FRANCE 24 states: *"There exists a systematic conspiracy "by European media" however these media have forgotten the miserable conditions suffered by workers in Europe"* which can be argued to present a power of European

media that together tries to shape the narrative of Qatar, thus being the ones to determine how the story of the World Cup in Qatar plays out in the media.

European media trying to shape narratives, through which the communication relates to Scheufele's (1999) thoughts about how the media constructs meaning through framing (p. 105). The intentions driving the media can be very different but can relate to commercial, religious, economic, and for example political intentions. According to Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992, cited in Scheufele, 1999) the media frame what they are communicating to the public based on their own organization and their perceptions of the public, which also speaks to the social constructivist approach (p. 105). The opinion of the public's preferences is therefore also a motivation driving the media and how that narrates a story. Martin (2000, cited in Bailey, Oliver, Gaffney, & Kolivras, 2017, p. 73) and other authors (cited in Morris, 2014), also mentioned in the analysis, agree as they believe that the media tend to communicate its readers' beliefs (p. 47). The above article extracts arguably shows a more commercial intention driving the French media, in order to generate clicks and thereby make money.

An example of another possible intention driving the media is the below extract from the American media outlet NPR, which could be argued to be of more political nature, as the extract frames the World Cup in Qatar as good in the sense that it has contributed to change, through the political pressure that has been asserted on Qatar. However, if investigating NPR, it shows that they claim to be both a non-profit and an independent organization (NPR, n.d.), which arguably speaks to them communicating a more neutral message, without any political or other intentions driving them. However, as argued magazines and media outlets must make money and in order to do so their content has to generate clicks (Chatterjee & Ramakrishnan, 2011). The content NPR narrates, therefore, might not be neutral because them having to generate clicks to continue to operate. It is therefore important to remember that the intentions driving different media also must be taken into account. However, Scheufele (1999) argues that the framing by the media contributes to turning events and happenings into something more than they might be (p. 106), which arguably seems to be what has happened with the World Cup in Qatar. Especially regarding the positive changes that have happened, as those might not have happened if the media had not framed the rather negative stories, by which pushing for change and making the event a political battle for change.

An extract from the American media outlet NPR states: *“Qatar also frames the World Cup as an ‘incredible opportunity to enhance welfare standards,’ and officials say that conditions for workers have improved since the selection”* (Sullivan, 2022) and this could be argued to be Qatar trying to define the history by highlighting the positive effects of them hosting the World Cup. The same could be argued to be the case for this article extract from a North African media outlet:

“There are those who say that after the World Cup, things will go back to the way they were, but the spokesperson for Qatari diplomacy insists that that is not true. There have been many improvements, thanks to the World Cup, but not only for the latter.”
(Dagorn & Deræux, 2022).

In this quote, Qatar seems to try to defend the positive changes that have happened in the country as a response to the ones arguably trying to undermine the intentions and realness of the changes, which makes the “fight for framing the history” visible.

The global media picture does not only consist of media outlets, as it in this project also consists of Qatar’s official DMO. Kannan & Li (2017) argue that what contributes to influencing the image of a destination consists of both user-generated content, the media, and the DMO (p. 27). Like the media, the DMO also has intentions driving their communication and what they choose to narrate and especially where they have different channels and platforms. Although it can be argued that when the official DMO communicates, the content might be more direct, and it might be easier for the reader to unpack the real meanings behind and the intentions driving what is being narrated. Considering the analysis and what has previously been discussed in this project it can, however, be discussed what intentions are driving VisitQatar’s market communication. The obvious answer would be to generate higher reach to make people aware of Qatar as a destination, which according to Gartrell (1994, cited in Bornhorst, Ritchie, & Shee, 2010), is one of the primary roles of the DMO according to traditional marketing. However, whether VisitQatar’s market communication contained a character of more than just advertizing for it as a tourism destination is hard to say based on the analysis.

Questions could be raised about whether Qatar uses the World Cup simply as a geopolitical tool to prove itself worthy in a global context and that the potential for change is a derived effect that Qatar

needs to accommodate due to the global media attention in this period. The true intentions Qatar assumably hoped to obtain by hosting the event can therefore be both debated and questioned. As it based on the analysis could be argued that other countries' media believes it to be due to Qatar wanting to obtain relationships and power, which is also seconded by literature as Cornelissen (2010) who argues that it is often a motivation for emerging economies hosting mega-events (p. 3008). However, many powers and intentions also seem to be in play due to the analysis. For example, contesting the world order by showing that a Global South and emerging country can also succeed in hosting a mega-event and that their ways of doing things could also be argued to be a way. This highlights the fact that it is not only Western and Global North countries' values and ethics and ways of doing things that can work. This is in line with De Almeida et al. (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 175) beliefs that only emerging countries hold the power of contesting the world order and the possibility of repositioning themselves in the eyes of the world. However, it is not only the World Cup as a stand-alone event, but that also arguably contributes to contesting the world order, if considering some of the narratives produced by other countries' media. The Indian news media for example also arguably contribute to this, through their framing of the world cup which subscribed to a more positive note.

According to Kannan & Li (2017), people, communication technologies such as social media and online news sites among others now contribute to forming the message (p. 27), but it could also be argued that the intentions driving those communication platforms also play a role. For example, Indian media narrates stories about how Qatar shows inclusion, how the World Cup facilitates change, criticism towards the Western media's portrayal of the event, and excitement towards the World Cup (Appendix B) through which possibly showing their support in order to frame the good outcomes of the World Cup. The news media New Delhi state: *"The energy-rich state has several reasons to be on Europe's good books."* (Mint, 2022). The Indian media could be argued to frame the world cup in a more positive light and advocating for Qatar, perhaps driven by political motivations of making the world aware that other countries should also be considered and praised for when doing something good. An example being the changes that Qatar have made since being appointed host country. The Indian media might perhaps be framing their stories of Qatar based on the Indian population's possible belief that India should also be on the world map, and this event makes it possible to show support for another emerging country like theirs. This is in line with Neuman, Just,

and Crigler's (1992, cited in Scheufele, 1999) beliefs about how the media framing is based on their perceptions of the public's mindsets (p. 105).

Nonetheless, the framing and intentions driving the media might not always be of political character as above but can also be for commercial reasons. Those not necessarily being about generating clicks as previously argued but can arguably also be to further a commercial agenda. According to Lim, Chung, & Weaver (2012), traditional market communication by the country's DMO has changed into allowing others to contribute to forming the market communication of a destination as a result of the emergence of the Internet (pp. 197-198). This is seconded by Kannan & Li (2017) who believe that everyone can contribute to the communication flow and the image forming of the destination (p. 27) which arguably allows for the country's own media coverage to also contribute to framing the destination. In the below extract, the Middle Eastern newspaper states: *"The government is also working to develop new attractions and experiences that will appeal to a diverse range of visitors."* and *"The Qatar government is "particularly focused" on attracting tourists from outside the Middle East..."* (Dwivedi, 2023). Both extracts bear the character of the media framing Qatar as a tourist destination and therefore contributing to the image formation of the destination. Of course, this newspaper is a national newspaper in Qatar, and it can therefore be assumed that it is of interest to portray Qatar positively. This also highlights that the intentions driving a certain portrayal of something in newspapers should be considered and highlights the necessity for considering the framing conducted by the media.

Contrary to Qatar and India, the Danish media seems to have other intentions driving the framing of the event. By first glance at the below extract from Berlingske, it would be easy to assume that the media subscribes to perhaps a more political or ethical framing of the World Cup. However, it could also be intentions that derive from cultural understandings. The Danish newspaper Berlingske states: *"Qatar is the epitome of everything we hate: Conservative Muslims, who install air conditioning in the desert, give a damn about dead migrants and is so rich that they can bribe their way to the World Cup."* (Kamil, 2022, Own translation) which could be argued to tap into the opinion of the population considered by the first line, perhaps as a way to obtain more clicks. Nevertheless, this framing of the story of World Cup in Qatar is very negative and highlights narratives that possibly undermine Qatar,

such as not caring about the environment, the deaths of migrant workers, and as a nation rich enough to commit bribery. The latter, moreover, creates doubt about the ethics of Qatari officials, which could lead back to doubts about whether the changes for better working conditions are real or a scam. However, the intentions driving how Berlingske frames Qatar in the above extract could also be about attention, driven by commercial interests. According to Davenport and Beck (2011, cited in Ooi, 2003) tourists and inherently viewers' attention is also a driver for the media's advertising and communicating about tourism experiences. (pp. 8-9) and in this case the mega-event in Qatar as a tourist experience. This belongs to the thinking behind the *attention economy* which Davenport & Beck (2011, cited in Ooi, 2003) define as battling for viewers' and tourists' attention (pp. 8-9). Bargallo, Bruni, Francalan & Giacomazzi (2012) argue that within the attention economy, the goal is to obtain the attention of the viewers, and therefore different actors compete against each other (p. 507). They also believe that when it comes to more traditional media, contrary to social media, it is not only the content that is important in attracting attention, but also the way that it is framed (Barbagallo, Bruni, Francalan, & Giacomazzi, 2012, p. 507).

In the above extract by Berlingske, the framing is arguably very critical but also filled with conflict and the statement could by some probably be perceived as quite offensive. However, if considering Davenport & Becks believes in the attention economy, the extract still might be seen as offensive, but arguably also as daring by some and a statement which makes people talk and therefore points attention to the newspaper. The attention economy in this specific case, can therefore be argued to be driven by the commercial interest of selling newspapers and generating clicks, through which it is important to constantly gain the attention of individuals. The attention economy however defined from a tourism experience perspective about selling tourism products, therefore arguably also applies in this case of communicating and reporting about a global tourism and somewhat political and cultural event. Attracting attention to not only tourism products but also media outlets is also argued to be important by Poell (2020), who argues that due to the growth of the Internet, it has become more important for media outlets to stand out in a media environment that is oversaturated with news (pp. 613-614). Battling for attention by the different media outlets has therefore arguably become a driver and an arguably strategic choice.

An American article from the Los Angeles Times state “*Qatar walks tightrope between Arab values and Western norms with World Cup gamble*” (Baxter, 2022). This implies that the Western and more developed countries hold some kind of power or at least their media coverage does if it can go as far as to drive an emerging country to change. It is also interesting how it arguably seems like the Western media almost insists that Qatar makes a change when considering the volume of the narratives they are communicating. It arguably seems like the Western media are pushing their own values onto Qatar, and through that possibly indicating that their own values are better and superior to Qatar’s.

If considering the concept of the attention economy, the extract is quite interesting though, as it does not seem controversial or dramatic, which are things that might attract attention. The extract is therefore quite different from the Danish extract above that arguably stands out and fosters discussions. However, as the attention economy is about obtaining attention through competition (Barbagallo, Bruni, Francalan, & Giacomazzi, 2012, p. 507), it can be argued to outshine each other by standing out, so that the media content seems special and one of a kind. This might explain why the analysis turned out with so many different narratives, both across all media outlets but also within a specific country’s media sites. This can be argued to be because the different media compete against each other for readers and clicks, thus subscribing to the attention economy, and therefore narrating different things in different ways is a goal.

Considering mega-events, sport is able to promote a nation's political values, foreign policies, and culture (Nye, 1990, cited in Connell, 2018, p. 98), as mentioned in the analysis, which could be argued to relate to what can be assumed to be a “fight for power in determining the history of the World Cup” The Football World Cup is therefore enmeshed in geopolitics and soft power as sports are able to further formal and informal diplomacy due to its symbolic power (Nye, 1990, cited in Connell, 2018, p. 98). The question about who has, or where they have, the power to determine the story and framing of the history of the World Cup in Qatar, is raised again. This is also argued by Blaker (2001, cited in Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020) who argues that the unavoidable difference between the represented and its representation is the occurrence of politics (p. 111). The reason as to why the media coverage of the World Cup in Qatar has proved through our analysis to vary this much can be argued to be due to political interest. However, based on what has previously been

discussed we argue that what is being narrated has as much to do with commercial interests relating to the attention economy. Narrating controversial and conflicted pieces to generate clicks, or narrating stories that according to several authors (cited in (Morris, 2014), somewhat reflects the specific countries' inhabitants' beliefs and opinions (p. 47), and through that generate clicks. It can moreover be discussed whether the narratives presented in the media to some extent are "chosen" or constructed based on current discussions or relevant topics in the media outlet's own country that people are interested in reading about at the time. This way the media outlets are able to further the number of clicks and sold newspapers.

Cornelissen (2010) outlines how showcasing economic accomplishments, signaling diplomatic status, or projecting soft power, all are purposes that can be argued as geopolitical (p. 3008). This is due to them being able to play a key role in the creation of political imaginings of a country and the type of society and state that are crafted (Cornelissen, 2010, p. 3008).

The media coverage of the World Cup in Qatar therefore arguably shapes both the destination in terms of furthering development but also geopolitics, destination image and therefore Qatar's potential to attract more tourism to the destination. It could therefore be deduced that the destination image and soft power might be codependent, especially within tourism, as suggested by Blanchard & Lu (2012, p. 569). Although it could also be argued based on what has been discussed that communication and politics also are co-dependent as they seem to influence each other in this case. It can be assumed that inhabitants from Global North countries are more critical towards the World Cup in Qatar due to our findings and the argument by several authors (cited in (Morris, 2014), that the media to an extent is narrating the inhabitants' opinions (p. 47). We, therefore, argue that the media are trying to frame and therefore push a political agenda to create change in Qatar might be an aspiration of the inhabitants from those countries. The media therefore unconsciously becomes a voice for its population and a means to drive change, which also shows the degree of politics that communication is enmeshed in.

One could thereby argue, based on the analysis of the project and the discussion up until now, that the media landscape is shaped by geopolitical powers and hierarchy. The dynamics that shape the narratives and stories could assumably be of a geopolitical character which makes it relevant to

consider the international relations between the countries as they could have specific interests that reflect on the presented narratives. In the analysis, it became clear that France and Qatar have a close relationship when it comes to business, based on article extracts. A Danish article states:

“In the months and years after [a meeting between France and Qatar], Qatar bought Parris Saint-Germain, a lot of planes, combat planes and ships, significant shares of large French companies, and offered French companies a number of attractive contracts in Qatar, including the extremely profitable gas industry” (Thøgersen, 2022, Own translation).

One could therefore argue that the reason why French media might not appear as critical of the treatment of migrant workers and human rights problems as other Western countries’ media, is because they are aware of the cooperation and business deals between them. France could be assumed to become the subject of criticism of hypocrisy if they were to brutally criticize Qatar while still doing a lot of business with them. As mentioned in the analysis, the French media’s criticism of Qatar is mainly concerned with the large amount of CO₂ emissions that Qatar’s hosting of the Football World Cup has resulted in.

The most present narrative in American media was LGBTQ+ problems (Appendix B), which in America is a debate with very strong opinions varying across the country. As an example, the Trump administration spent *“the majority of its four years in office launching a barrage of attacks infringing on the rights of LGBTQ people, promoting discriminatory policies, and creating barriers to access critical government services”* (American Progress, 2021). These actions reveal the Trump administration’s blatant disrespect for the rights, dignity, and well-being of people within the LGBTQ community as well as their families and friends (American Progress, 2021). Compared to the Biden administration which prioritized reversing the damaging actions of the Trump administration in order to executive actions that prioritize the lives and rights of LGBTQ people (American Progress, 2021). According to Woodruff (2023), America is a divided country:

“But for the past decade and more, it’s become clear politics has been generating deeper divides — not only over issues, but over culture and character. We hear leaders of one party calling the other not just wrong, but anti-American.” (Woodruff, 2023).

Based on this, it could be argued that the LGBTQ+ community has been up for a lot of debate among Americans, which also shows that inhabitants in one country do not all subscribe to the same opinions, making it difficult for the media to narrate all the population's opinions at the same time, however, it creates an opportunity for the media to do a more wide framing of their narratives. Based on these two examples, one could argue that the narratives and presented controversies could be of a certain geographical character originating based on domestic issues or motivations in the country which the media represents. This is also supported by the high quantity of narratives the analysis turned up with, as it solely in the US media showed 22 different narratives, all consisting of different codes (Appendix B).

Therefore, geographics needs to be considered when reflecting upon the narratives of a place that is created by media. Especially sport contributes to creating and forming place narratives as a result of media's involvement in MSEs (Wise & Kohe, 2020, p. 3), and even more in the case of high-profile events such as the World Cup because sports, according to Wise & Kohe (2020), has become an extension of place narratives (p. 3).

This section has discussed the politics and different intentions that have driven the communication of the World Cup in Qatar and how different interests of the media contribute to framing the mega-event and how it might be remembered and defined by history. Moreover, the different interest that might drive the framing by the media has been discussed and shows that despite the media's intentions being driven by the attention economy, the nature of the attraction by media can vary. It has been outlined how some media try to create attention and generate clicks by framing controversial and conflicted narratives, whereas other media might unconsciously frame local inhabitants' opinions that might bear a political agenda.

This shows that different intentions drive the media's framing and the history of the World Cup, but also that the media holds some degree of power in determining not only the history of the World Cup but also in pushing political agendas to the surface, which might, for example, contribute to the changes made in Qatar. How communication and how the mega-event can therefore be used as more than just a tourism event and market communication is evident and will be elaborated on in the following chapter that touches upon both what and how a mega-event such as the World Cup in Qatar can be used as more than just a marketing tool for the tourism destination Qatar.

6.3 Mega-events as more than a marketing tool

Mega-events are known to be short-term events, but with lasting effects on the host destination according to Roche (2006, cited in Maiello & Pasquinelli, 2015, p. 116). Especially the effects on the host destination of the event are argued to be tourism-related by Bramwell (1997), who believes that mega-events are viewed as an event that can help attract tourists (p. 168), thus arguably making it somewhat of a marketing tool. Merwe (2007) seconds that belief as he claims that especially emerging countries, like Qatar, are determined to host mega-events in order to improve the marketing of their tourism destination (p. 69).

However, this project has shown that mega-events like the World Cup can contribute to a destination in more ways than just its tourism arrivals and destination image. This can be seen through the many narratives that World Cup has set off, that relate to commercial, cultural, and political intentions as elaborated on, in the section above. The belief that mega-events can be used for other purposes is however seconded by Cf. Andreff & Szymanski (2006, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016) who argue that especially MSEs have the potential to foster soft power to the hosting destination (p. 174).

Market communication of a mega-event and the mega-event itself has the power to drive change and facilitate new relations being built globally, despite it not necessarily being intended for that purpose. The field and economy of tourism can then suddenly be used for many other purposes than just enhancing tourists' image of a destination and attracting more tourists to the respective country through which making money. Based on what has been previously discussed, mega-events are much more than marketing. Mega-events play a large role in a country's tourism industry and are moreover used for political reasons (Cornelissen, 2010, p. 3008) which for tourism can be argued to potentially play a role as a tool for diplomacy. Mega-events can therefore be used as a tool to obtain or improve a country's soft power (Grix & Brannagan, 2016, p. 252), which arguably makes hosting a mega-event desirable. For emerging countries especially, De Almeida, Júnior, and Pike (2014) argue that mega-events moreover can contribute to these countries being able to challenge the world order (p. 272).

Tourism is not only a leisure industry but also a tool to obtain international recognition and change of image (Arnegger & Herz, 2016) as well as what can be argued to be validation in a global world.

This relates to De Almeida et al.'s (2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 175) beliefs about the intentions of emerging economies hosting a mega-event is due to the idea of *peripheral mega-events* as they argue to offer these countries the option to in a symbolic sense contest the global order of things and position themselves as upcoming places and cultures (De Almeida et al., 2004, cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 175). In addition to this, MSEs have the potential to facilitate growth in the number of tourist arrivals and agreeing with Arnegger & Herz (2016), to capitalize on the event to market a specific image of the destination to the world stage (Florek, Breitbarth & Conejo, 2008 cited in Kenyon & Bodet, 2017). The image, however, could be questioned whether it has been improved or aggravated as a result of the World Cup and the associated media coverage as a lot of it, based on this analysis was of a negative notion. Nevertheless, Mogielnicki (2022) argues that even though Qatar received criticism, in the long-term Qatar's brand recognition has been enhanced and will help accelerate its tourism agenda. Mogielnicki (2022) describes how Qatar in 2014 launched a new national strategy for the tourism sector for the year 2030. This strategy states that Qatar aims at attracting 5,8 million more tourists per year by 2030 compared to back in 2012 and boosts annual domestic tourist trips to about 2.5 million (Mogielnicki, 2022). This supports the claim of Qatar using the hostmanship of the World Cup for strategic purposes.

Though a lot of articles acknowledge the World Cup as Qatar's way of boosting its tourism industry, the purpose behind hosting the World Cup could be argued to be not only enhancing tourism and gaining brand recognition but also political due to the analysis in this project. Tourism can be argued to be a tool to kickstart development within construction, entrepreneurship, and expansion of businesses due to the income tourists bring to the country (Mogielnicki, 2022). The narratives in the analysis have already shown that the mega-event has nurtured development in Qatar, through the new constructions which have been build and the expansion of business relations to for example France (Appendix B). It could therefore be discussed if an economic agenda is one of Qatar's main goals for hosting the World Cup. However, Qatar is known to be a rich country already but as some articles show, there is high inequality among citizens in Qatar, and perhaps this is a way for Qatar to try and equalize this economic imbalance. This once again emphasizes how, whether it is regarding the mega-event or communication, there are a lot of interests at stake, hence it is important to consider mega-events, communication, politics, and tourism in a holistic perspective.

6.3.1 Soft power

When shaping other people's preferences to make them match your own by making something attractive to them, is by Nye (2004, cited in Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2015, p. 705) considered soft power and this could be argued to be what Qatar aims at. As outlined in the literature review, hosting mega-events may also be a means for governments to obtain soft power through the event (Cf. Andreff & Szymanski, 2006, cited in Brannagan & Rookwood, 2016, p. 174). Nevertheless, a boost in the national tourism industry and global validation has arguably come with demands on Qatar to change politics and laws and to improve working conditions so they come closer to matching the standards of the Western countries, which could be argued to be a setback in Qatar's aim of soft power. So, for Qatar to increase tourism revenue, the nation was assumably pressured by arguably global media into compromising on their culture and values for example in the form of allowing heterosexuals to visit without harassment or arrestments, and the abolition of the kafala system. It can thereby to some extent be argued that hosting a mega-event like the Football World Cup can result in political and governmental changes that might have been a desire in the emerging country as a start, which thereby dismisses the argument of it being a setback. However, for Qatar to gain global acknowledgment it can be presumed that they perhaps needed to accommodate and show a degree of change, in order to be acknowledged on more equal terms with Western and more developed countries.

Soft power is a tool that may be used for various purposes, also purposes that at first do not seem obvious. Especially in these years and right now, soft power could to some extent be argued to be the strategy to strive for compared to hard power, considering the global scene right now with the war in Ukraine. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is considered hard power (Cambridge Dictionary, u.d.) and it has led the European Union (EU) to create sanctions on diplomatic trade deals between EU and Russia (Det Europæiske Råd, 2023a) because they do not approve of this unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine (Det Europæiske Råd, 2023b). When otherwise allied countries are abandoning the relationship as a result of a country pursuing hard power, it could be argued that soft power becomes more attractive as it arguably is considered more acceptable globally. However, this could perhaps also lead to a misuse of the concept as it can be argued to be the only way for a country to shape other people's preferences, perceptions, or opinions of it if hard power is not an option.

In the case of Qatar and the 2022 World Cup, it could be interpreted and to some extent argued that Qatar may wish to use the mega-event as a soft power tool to make itself visible as a country that wants to be acknowledged by the rest of the world as more than just a small desert state but as a desert state that has developed into a tourism destination to be taken seriously in the global competition for tourists.

These beliefs are supported by Grix & Kramareva (cited in Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021) who argue that when developing countries host mega-events like Qatar, one of two things usually happen (p. 177). One is that the country in question rehabilitates and develops from its previous standards and norms that might not have lived up to the developed countries' ones, in order to adapt to them (Haghirian & Robles-Gil, 2021, p. 177). The developed countries are most of the Western world (World Population Review, n.d.). It is interesting as it begs the question of why it is the developed and Western countries' norms and values that emerging countries should look up to. Some of it might be traced back to colonialism from back in the day, where certain world structures and lines of which countries were in power were drawn, thus shaping not only history afterward concerning development but potentially also the general thoughts about which countries in the world today should be considered role models and ones to look up to, and therefore also the ones in power.

Reflecting on this in relation to Qatar, it could be presumed that Qatar wants to step out of the shadow of the more traditional or popular tourist destinations and be considered when potential tourists are to choose their travel destination. It can be assumed that Qatar by hosting the World Cup has gained access to new tourism markets and target groups due to the expansion of communication channels during the World Cup and greater attention on the country as a tourist destination. With media all over the world covering the World Cup with, among others, the purpose of gaining clicks, the change happening in Qatar as well as its tourism offers can be argued to become more visible to potential tourists.

Hence it could be argued that it could also be a form of place branding, or in this case, destination branding as Qatar presumably hosted the World Cup as a means of, among others, boosting its tourism industry. According to Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan (2020), destination branding is the aspect

of place branding in which a place is viewed in terms of tourism (p. 1). Due to place branding being defined as *“the practice of applying brand strategy and other marketing techniques to the economic, socio-political and cultural developments of cities, regions and countries”* (Anholt, 2004, cited in Hanna, Rowley, & Keegan, 2020, p. 1), one could argue that when talking about tourism in Qatar, other factors such as economic and socio-political should not be underestimated or ignored. Tourism is a political industry with a lot of derivative effects of economic and socio-political nature (Jovičić, 2011, p. 599) which could be argued to become very visible in the media presented narrative across the world. So, hosting a mega-event like the Football World Cup does not only provide soft power or the ability to improve a country’s geopolitical position, but it also just as well impacts the destination’s image in terms of tourism and the effects on the tourism industry.

This is seconded by Merwe (2007) who also believes that emerging economies' pursuit to host mega-events is a strategic move solely in order to further their marketing efforts (p. 69). Although some things do not necessarily seem like tourism at first, they can turn out to be, and to be able to influence the place branding of a destination and thereby also the projected as well as perceived image of the destination.

Taking a more critical point of view on soft power as a concept, it could be discussed and contested why other countries should try to live up to and adapt to more Western norms. A point of view like this, coincides with Fan’s (2007, p. 153) critique of the traditional definition of soft power by Nye, as the definition is made from an American viewpoint. Yet despite this critique, the definition of soft power is widely known and recognized, also by non-Western countries, who also seem to want to obtain more soft power. Both the Australian media outlet Fairfax Media recognized Qatar’s motivation for soft power by stating: *“Qatar embarked on a quest for soft power to match its bank balances.”* (The Australian Financial Review, 2022) but also, the Danish newspaper Politiken stated: *“When Qatar since the 1990s have tried to become world hub for piece mediation, culture, media, and education, it is not just about nation branding or sportswashing but about safety... They needed soft power.”* (Malmvig, 2022, Own translation).

Regarding the critiques of soft power, one can ask the question of why emerging countries, who according to Petrone (2019) struggle in obtaining soft power (p. 22), might idolize it and not try to obtain another form of power, more fitting for their culture and values? This is in line with Madise

& Isike (2020) who argue that countries should adopt a version of soft power fitting their belief and value system (p. 4) like for example in South Africa, where a South African perspective on soft power matching their cultural background, called *Ubuntu* is used (Ogunnubi, 2022, p. 250), instead of the Western perspective presented by Nye. Furthermore, several authors (Giglio & Proni, 2020, p. 196) within the literary world believe the general concept of soft power to be too intangible to try to obtain anyhow. All of these should be considered in the case of Qatar hosting a mega-event to possibly try to obtain more soft power in its 'American' definition and accommodate and bend to Western cultures' values and beliefs due to perhaps pressure by Western media coverage.

This section has been concerned with the politics of communication and how mega-events can be used as a soft power tool and not only for traditional marketing. Hence, this section outlines how mega-events are more than just marketing and tourism but can also be strategic and political tools for especially emerging countries. Tourism can be argued to be a field overlapping with others as it influences on a destination's economy, infrastructure, governance, and more, which also has been outlined in this discussion, but based on this project, so are mega-events. It is therefore argued to be important to have a holistic approach when researching tourism and mega-events, as

“tourism is essentially integrated with other sectors in the economy, tourism trends cannot be considered in isolation from key drivers that will shape the future world. Some trends operate at a global level and successful tourism management must recognise and deal with changes across a wide range of behavioural, technological and environmental factors” (Dwyer et al., 2008, cited in Brondoni, 2016, p. 10).

The next section will address some of the potential issues or problems related to the aforementioned but also opportunities that this complex field offers.

6.4 Tourism and tourism literature in the 21st century

Traditional tourism was defined in 1937, where The League of Nations defined a tourist as a traveler who went to a destination and stayed for at least 24 hours and experienced some of what the country had to offer (Reiser, 2003, p. 309). Back in the early days, tourism was not considered in the complex and broad light that it is today. It was to a higher degree considered as for example summer and sun on a trip to Spain or a definition stated by Reiser (2003) about tourism concerning itself with

the economy tourism generates, the movement of people, or the interactions that happen when people travel (p. 310). However, this definition arguably also lacks the perspectives into other fields and the acknowledgment that tourism holds the power to influence things like politics and power as discussed and elaborated upon in the analysis and discussion in previous sections. This is also supported by the fact that tourism is the biggest industry in the world (Reiser, 2003, p. 309) and that 8% of all jobs worldwide are due to tourism (Lockwood, 2007, p. 30), which arguably shows the power the tourism industry hold as it has the power to affect so many people. The tourism industry's influence on other economies and industries became even more clear during the Covid-19 pandemic when a lot of activities globally were suddenly disrupted (Korstanje, Seraphin, & Wa, 2023). This means that we and others studying tourism must be more attentive and pay attention to how the field of tourism nowadays is used and can be used in the 21st century, considering that tourism is more than just tourist arrivals.

Tourism can be used to continuously shape cultures, places, and politics (Hollinshead, Ateljevic, and Ali, 2009, cited in Huang & Suliman, 2020, p. 16), which arguably shows that tourism also has the power to set in motion a wide variety of things at a destination, but also influence power structures and much more than just tourism. This can be argued to show that the traditional, basic, and somewhat old way of viewing tourism no longer exists. That means that the belief of tourism being just arrivals, visiting places, and economic benefits and growth as defined by several authors (Leiper, 1979, p. 392) does not seem to apply in the 21st century. This is especially as the world has become more connected due to globalization and different fields to a higher degree overlap and influence each other.

Nowadays, we would argue that tourism is enmeshed in all things ranging from geopolitics, and power to forming a destination image. However, tourism also holds the power to influence a country's infrastructure, policy, and governance making. Tourism's capability of influencing both policy and governance making is also argued by Hall & Jenkins (2004), as the field of tourism policy really started to take its foothold in the world of politics and governance in the 1970's (p. 525).

As tourism has only been considered and defined since the mid-1900s (Reiser, 2003, p. 309), the field can still be considered relatively new, and therefore there might still be spheres within tourism that are under-researched, if researched at all. This perhaps is also due to the rapid developments that are happening in the world due to globalization, which arguably shapes all industries including the field of tourism. The literature within tourism therefore constantly needs to involve and keep up with to include and address all the fields that tourism can also address now. All of this shows how interesting the tourism field is due to how much the field can actually inhibit. One could almost go as far as arguing that tourism to a certain extent, has become an umbrella term in which different perspectives and powers in and across countries are a part of.

The theories about mega-events in relation to tourism should arguably to a higher extent consider its impact on other fields, leading to thoughts about a new model or concept for how mega-events should be thought of in general. When browsing through literature, most research on mega-events consider different factors like either soft power, destination image (Varga, 2013, cited in Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2020, p. 111), economic impact (Jones & Ponzini, 2018, p. 435; Cottle, 2003), or consumer perspective (Custódio & Gouveia, 2007). Hiller (1998) states that little attention has been given to mega-events as part of a bigger picture which supports the need for more holistic research of mega-events and their potential impacts on other fields (p. 47). He furthermore argues that having a longitudinal approach when researching mega-events allows the researcher to distinguish between the pre-event, the event, and the post-event, as these stages allow for different impacts and consequences (Hiller, 1998, p. 47). Hiller (1998) thereby supports our argument of having to keep a holistic approach to identify intended and unintended impacts and potential gains of hosting mega-events.

A more appropriate model to consider when examining mega-events could be one that considers all three stages of the event while considering all relevant external factors in relation to each other based on the thinking behind the model of sustainability (three circles of sustainability). This is because this model contains spheres overlapping each other, and arguably seems more dynamic and is therefore perhaps a better way to consider the impacts of and by mega-events. Based on this, we have constructed a model that might be more suited when examining and researching mega-events.

Reciprocal influence of mega events

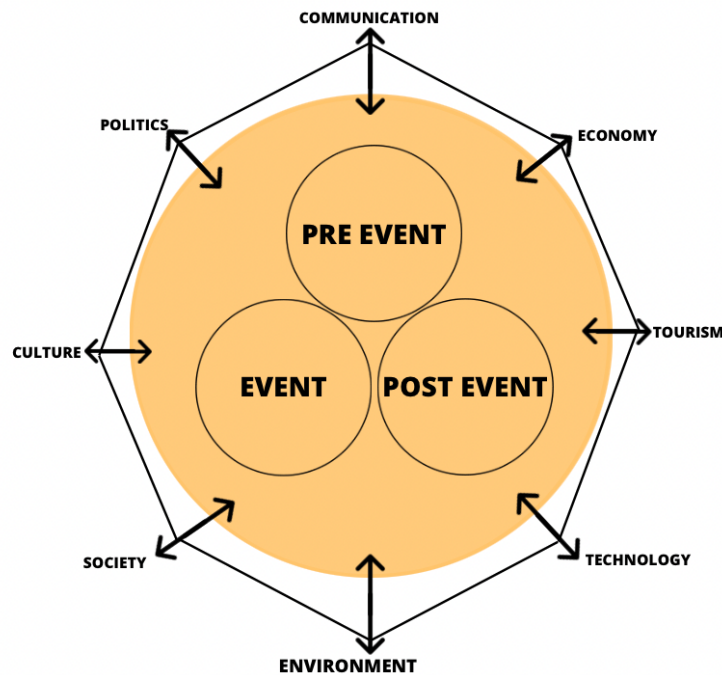


Figure 49: Reciprocal influence of mega-events

In Figure 49 above, politics covers the previously outlined concepts of soft power and geopolitics. As illustrated with the black polygon in Figure 49, external factors can influence each other during the preparations for the event, the settlement, and after the event. However, mega-events are both being influenced by these external factors, but as discussed in the project, the external factors are also influenced by the mega-event itself.

This project does not necessarily contribute to the literature with any new theory, however, we argue that this project contributes with important and relevant reflections towards a new concept or thoughts hereof in researching mega-events within tourism. Nevertheless, due to the scope of this project, it does not examine the communicated narratives after the World Cup in Qatar, which arguably should be researched to gain the bigger picture as argued above and illustrated in the new model in Figure 49. However, we find it relevant to investigate how the media flow evolves after the World Cup is settled and how the narratives communicated could have the ability to create further change, either physically or in the form of diplomacy or power structures.

7.0 Conclusion

This project has investigated the Football World Cup 2022 in Qatar and analyzed how the media coverage has contributed to different narratives. It has, furthermore, been explored how these narratives help shape Qatar's image from a tourism perspective and finally, it has been discussed how a mega-event like the World Cup can possibly change the hosting country's geopolitical position globally.

From the analysis it can be concluded that many narratives surrounding the World Cup exist in the media, however, six narratives have proved to be more present than others across the analyzed countries' media. These are *LGBTQ+ problems*, *World Cup as a facilitator for change*, *Bad conditions for migrant workers*, *Environmental problems*, *Human rights problems*, and *World Cup is highly political*. Some of these narratives were more expected than others, which was partially due to which countries' media they were deduced from. Drawing from the literature review and therefore previous research into Global South countries hosting mega-events, it was not surprising that some media outlets from Global North countries were framing the event and Qatar in a more negative light with a lot of criticism, whereas similar emerging economies highlighted more positive narratives like how the World Cup contributed to change. It was therefore discussed how hosting a mega-event can contribute to especially political and societal change for an emerging country like Qatar, due to pressure from the media among other things. This was shown as Qatar, as argued, possibly due to pressure from the media, abolished the Kafala system and loosened some of its rules for incoming tourists. Based on the project it can be concluded that what the media frames and communicates to a high extent reflects both a country's inhabitants' beliefs but also general global debates. An example of this is the strong presence of both the narrative *Environmental problems* and *LGBTQ+ problems*, which to a higher extent than previously is debated on a global scale outside of the World Cup. Because those controversies are being discussed globally to the extent that they are, it connects well to them being strong narratives that frame the World Cup. This project therefore shows how global dynamics can influence the narratives framed by media and it can be concluded how different interests by media should be considered as it speaks to the media's agenda and therefore why narratives are framed differently.

Based on both the analysis and discussion it can furthermore be concluded that Qatar has capitalized on hosting the event to further the global awareness of Qatar as a tourism destination and moreover to change the traditional image the world might have had of Qatar into a new one more adapted to today's global, and especially Global North countries standards. Thereby having the world acknowledge Qatar as a tourism destination to be both considered but also taken seriously.

It has been reflected upon how Qatar has used the World Cup to further its geopolitical position globally and to some extent it can be concluded that external factors like the media have contributed to potentially assuring this geopolitical change. Moreover, it can be concluded that Qatar through the event has obtained some degree of soft power, which they can use as a tool to further their agenda of becoming a more visible destination both in terms of tourism, but also politics.

It can, based on this project, be concluded that mega-events as a tourism tool can facilitate change in politics and power dynamics within the host country and its global relations. It can, furthermore, be concluded that mega-events should, by tourism researchers, be considered with a more holistic approach in order to acknowledge and take into account the different powers of reciprocal influence.

8.0 Bibliography

- Abdel-Hak, Y. (2022, November 17). *VM i Qatar handler om meget mere end fodbold*. Retrieved March 2023, from Pov.International: <https://pov.international/vm-i-qatar-handler-om-meget-mere-end-fodbold/>
- Africanews. (2022, October 26). *Mondial 2022 : le Qatar répond aux critiques avant le coup d'envoi*. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from Africanews.fr: <https://fr.africanews.com/2022/10/26/mondial-2022-le-qatar-repond-aux-critiques-avant-le-coup-denvoi/>
- Ahmed, T. (2022, December 13). Qatar's World Cup exposes moral compromises of globalisation. *The Australian Financial Review*.
- Al Jazeera. (2022, March 10). *US officially designates Qatar as a major non-NATO ally*. Retrieved March 2023, from Al Jazeera: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/10/us-officially-designates-qatar-as-a-major-non-nato-ally>
- Al-Saadi, H. (2014). *Demystifying Ontology and Epistemology in research methods*. School of Education, University of Sheffield.
- Al-Saai, N. (2022, December 13). *Missing coverage from the Western media during the Qatar World Cup*. Retrieved March 2023, from SOAS, University of London: <https://www.soas.ac.uk/study/blog/missing-coverage-western-media-during-qatar-world-cup>
- AMCHARTS.COM. (n.d.). *Visited Countries Map*. Retrieved April 7, 2023, from AMCHARTS.COM: https://visitedplaces.com/world/?map=world&projection=geoNaturalEarth1&theme=dark-green&water=1&graticule=0&names=1&duration=2000&placeduration=100&slider=0&autoplay=0&autozoom=none&home=DK&places=~BE_DK_FR_DE_GB_CA_US_DZ_IN_AU_NZ_QA_SA_MA~~
- American Progress. (2021, January 12). *Improving the Lives and Rights of LGBTQ People in America*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from American Progress: <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/improving-lives-rights-lgbtq-people-america/>
- Amineh, R., & Asl, H. (2015). Review of Constructivism and Social Constructivism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages*, 1(1), pp. 9-16.
- Amnesty International. (n.d.). *Qatar*. Retrieved March 2023, from Amnesty International: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/middle-east-and-north-africa/qatar/report-qatar/>
- Analyseskolen.dk. (n.d.). *DENOTATION OG KONNOTATION*. Retrieved February 26, 2023, from Analyseskolen.dk: <https://analyseskolen.dk/denotation-og-konnotation/>
- Andreu, L., Bigné, J., & Cooper, C. (2000). Projected and Perceived Image of Spain as a Tourist Destination for British Travellers. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 9(4), pp. 47-67.
- Anholt, S. (2007). What is Competitive Identity? In S. Anholt, *Competitive Identity*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Arnegger, J., & Herz, M. (2016, January 16). Economic and destination image impacts of mega-events in emerging tourist destinations. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5, pp. 76-85.
- Arnegger, J., & Herz, M. (2016). Economic and destination image impacts of mega-events in emerging tourist destinations. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5, s. 76-85.

- Arrouas, M. (2020, May). *BRIKS-landene*. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from Faktalink.dk: <https://faktalink.dk/titelliste/brik-landene-2013-de-nye-oekonomier-1>
- Ataman, M. (2022, November 30). *World Cup 2022: Massive hypocrisy of the West Towards Qatar*. Retrieved March 2023, from Daily Sabah: <https://www.dailysabah.com/opinion/columns/world-cup-2022-massive-hypocrisy-of-the-west-toward-qatar>
- Avraham, E., & Ketter, E. (2013). Marketing Destinations with Prolonged Negative Images: Towards a Theoretical Model. *Tourism Geographies*, 15(1), pp. 145-164.
- Baggio, R. (2014). Complex tourism systems: a visibility graph approach. *Kybernetes*, 43(3-4), pp. 445-461.
- Bailey, K., Oliver, R., Gaffney, C., & Kolivras, K. (2017). Negotiating “New” Narratives: Rio de Janeiro and the “Media Geography” of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 41(1), pp. 70–93.
- Bal, M., & Bryson, N. (1991). Semiotics and Art History. *The Art Bulletin*, 73(2), pp. 174-208.
- Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(4), pp. 868-897.
- Bang, J. (2011, August 15). *Aviser i Danmark, 1634-*. Retrieved April 2023, from Danmarkshistorien: <https://danmarkshistorien.dk/vis/materiale/avisen-1634>
- Barbagallo, D., Bruni, L., Francalan, C., & Giacomazzi, P. (2012). \$Q (PSLULFDO 6WXG\ RQ WKH 5HODWLRQVKLS EHWZHHQ 7ZLWWHU 6HQWLPHQW DQG ,QIOXHGFH LQ WKH 7RXULVP 'RPDLQ. In M. Fuchs, F. Ricci, & L. Cantoni, *nformation and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2012*.
- Baumberger, C., Beisbart, C., & Brun, G. (2017). What is Understanding? An Overview of Recent Debates in Epistemology and Philosophy of Science. In S. Grimm, C. Baumberger, & S. Ammon, *Explaining Understanding: New Perspectives from Epistemology and Philosophy of Science* (pp. 1-34). New York & London: Routledge.
- Baxter, K. (2022, November 20). *Qatar walks tightrope between Arab values and Western norms with World Cup gamble*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from Los Angeles Times: <https://www.latimes.com/sports/soccer/story/2022-11-20/qatar-world-cup-politics-arab-world-gulf-states>
- BBC. (n.d.). *The USA's international influence*. Retrieved April 2023, from BBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/z6frqp3/revision/2>
- Beerli, A., & Martin, J. (2004). Factors Influencing Destination Image. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(3), pp. 657–681.
- Begum, R. (2022, November 27). *Qatar Can't Hide Its Abuses by Calling Criticism Racist*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/11/27/qatar-cant-hide-its-abuses-calling-criticism-racist>
- Belga. (22. October 2022). *Mondial-2022 : des médias du Qatar répliquent aux critiques européennes*. Hentet March 2023 fra RTBF: <https://www.rtbf.be/article/mondial-2022-des-medias-du-qatar-repliquent-aux-critiques-europeennes-11082972>
- Black, D. (2010). The Symbolic Politics of Sport Mega-Events: 2010 in Comparative Perspective. *Politikon*, 34(3), pp. 261-276.
- Blanchard, J.-M., & Lu, F. (2012). Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power. *Asian Perspective. Special Issue: China and Soft Power*, 36(4), pp. 565-589.

- Blichfeldt, B., & Smed, K. (2015). 'Do it to Denmark': A case study on viral processes in marketing messages. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 21(3), pp. 289-301.
- Bold.dk. (n.d.). *Om Andrea Pirlo*. Retrieved April 14, 2023, from Bold.dk: <https://bold.dk/fodbold/spiller/andrea-pirlo>
- Bornhorst, T., Ritchie, J., & Shee, L. (2010). Determinants of tourism success for DMOs & destinations: An empirical examination of stakeholders' perspectives. *Tourism Management*, 31, pp. 572–589.
- Bourke, B. (2014). Positionality: Reflecting on the Research Process. *The Qualitative Report*, 19, pp. 1-9.
- Bramwell, B. (1997). Strategic planning before and after a mega-event. *Tourism Management*, 18(3), pp. 167-176.
- Brannagan, P., & Giulianotti, R. (2015). Soft power and soft disempowerment: Qatar, global sport and football's 2022 World Cup finals. *Leisure Studies*, 34(6), pp. 703-719.
- Brannagan, P., & Rookwood, J. (2016). Sports mega-events, soft power and soft disempowerment: international supporters' perspectives on Qatar's acquisition of the 2022 FIFA World Cup finals. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 8(2), pp. 173-188.
- Brock, J. (20. November 2022). *Alle alarmklokker ringede, da fodboldens magtfulde mænd valgte det mindst egnede land til VM-vært*. Hentet March 2023 fra Infomedia: <https://apps-infomedia-dk.zorac.aub.aau.dk/Mediearkiv/link?articles=e93bf679>
- Brondoni, S. (2016). Global Tourism Management. Mass, Experience and Sensations Tourism. *Symphonya. Emerging Issues in Management*, 1, pp. 7-24.
- Brown, T. (2022, November 6). *Qatari minister blasts 'arrogant' critics of World Cup host's repressive anti-LGBT laws in furious rant amid huge public backlash to football stars David Beckham and Gary Neville taking money from Middle Eastern state to front the tournament*. Retrieved April 14, 2023, from Mail Online: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11396215/Qatari-minister-blasts-arrogant-critics-World-Cup-hosts-repressive-anti-LGBT-laws.html>
- Browning, L. (2022, October 17). *Alleged corruption to bring the tournament to Qatar, anti-LGBT sentiment and criticism over workers' rights... why neutrals WON'T be supporting the hosts at this World Cup, with minnows facing an early exit*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from MailOnline: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-11308163/Qatar-World-Cup-2022-neutrals-wont-supporting-hosts-time.html>
- Buch, D. (2022, December 4). *Homoseksuel i Qatar til TV 2: - Man må leve i skyggen*. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from TV2 Nyheder: <https://nyheder.tv2.dk/udland/2022-12-04-homoseksuel-i-qatar-til-tv-2-man-maa-leve-i-skyggen>
- Bukamal, H. (2022). Deconstructing insider–outsider researcher positionality. *British Journal of Special Education*, 49(3), pp. 327–349.
- Byrnes, S. (2022, December 27). *Western media's World Cup coverage was ignorant, intolerant and insensitive*. Retrieved April 2023, from TheNationalNews: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/2022/12/20/western-medias-world-cup-coverage-was-ignorant-intolerant-and-insensitive/>
- Cambridge Dictionary. (u.d.). *Hard Power*. Hentet February 2023 fra Cambridge Dictionary: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/hard-power>
- Chakrabort, U. (2022, November 29). *"You're protesting an Islamic country hosting an event," The head of Qatar's FIFA World Cup committee slams western countries for sending 'divisive'*

- message's with the OneLove armband*. Retrieved April 16, 2023, from First Sportz: <https://firstsportz.com/football-news-youre-protesting-an-islamic-country-hosting-an-event-the-head-of-qatars-fifa-world-cup-slams-western-countries-for-sending-divisive-messages-with-the-onelove-armband/>
- Chatterjee, S., & Ramakrishnan, S. (11. December 2011). *Newspaper companies put their money where the clicks are*. Hentet May 2023 fra Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-newspapercompanies-idUSTRE7B627L20111207>
- Cherian, D. (24. October 2022). *Qatar Airways, Qatar Tourism reveal attractions ahead of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022*. Hentet March 2023 fra GulfNews: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2727589244/Record/5F749F176CE04195PQ/19?accountid=8144>
- Chronis, A. (2012). Between place and story: Gettysburg as Tourism imaginary. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(4), pp. 1797-1816.
- Collinsdictionary.com. (n.d.). *Riverside*. Retrieved April 8, 2023, from Collinsdictionary.com: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/riverside>
- Connell, J. (2018). Fiji, rugby and the geopolitics of soft power. Shaping national and international identity. *New Zealand Geographer*, 74, pp. 92-100.
- Cornelissen, S. (2010, November-December). The Geopolitics of Global Aspiration: Sport Mega-events and Emerging Powers. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 27(16-18), pp. 3008-3025.
- Cottle, S. (2003). News, Public Relations and Power: Mapping the Field. In S. Cottle, *News, public relations and power* (pp. 1-27). London: SAGE.
- Crompton, J. L. (1979). An Assessment of the Image of Mexico as a Vacation Destination and the Influence of Geographical Location Upon That Image. *Journal of Travel Research*, 17(1), pp. 18-23.
- Custódio, M., & Gouveia, P. (2007, March). Evaluation of the Cognitive Image of a Country/Destination by the Media during the Coverage of Mega-events: the case of UEFA EURO 2004TM in Portugal. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH*, 9, pp. 285–296.
- Dagorn, G., & Deræux, I. (2022, November 15). *World Cup 2022: The difficulty with estimating the number of deaths on Qatar construction sites*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from LeMonde: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/les-decodeurs/article/2022/11/15/world-cup-2022-the-difficulty-with-estimating-the-number-of-deaths-on-qatar-construction-sites_6004375_8.html
- Death, C. (2011). 'Greening' the 2010 FIFA World Cup: Environmental Sustainability and the Mega-Event in South Africa. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*, 13(2), pp. 99-117.
- De Almeida, B., Júnior, W., & Pike, E. (2014). The 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Brazil's soft power. *Contemporary Social Science*, 9(2), pp. 271-283.
- Debeuf, K. (2022, November 29). *Is the overwhelming critique of Qatar hypocritical?* Retrieved May 3, 2023, from EUobserver: <https://euobserver.com/opinion/156486>
- Designing Buildings. (n.d.). *Futurist architecture*. Retrieved April 8, 2023, from Designing Buildings: https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Futurist_architecture
- Det Europæiske Råd. (2023a, April 14). *EU's sanktioner mod Rusland kort fortalt*. Retrieved May 11, 2023, from Det Europæiske Råd:

- <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/da/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/sanctions-against-russia-explained/>
- Det Europæiske Råd. (2023b, March 31). *Konsekvenserne af Ruslands invasion af Ukraine på markederne: EU's reaktion*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from Det Europæiske Råd: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/da/policies/eu-response-ukraine-invasion/impact-of-russia-s-invasion-of-ukraine-on-the-markets-eu-response/>
- Donaldson, R., & Ferreira, S. (2007, December). Crime, Perceptions and Touristic Decisionmaking: Some Empirical Evidence and Prospects for the 2010 World Cup. *Politikon*, 34(3), pp. 353–371.
- Dretske, F. (2008). Epistemology and Information - Volume 8. In P. Adriaans, & J. Benthem, *Philosophy of Information* (pp. 29-48). Elsevier B. V.
- Duan, X., Marafa, L., Chan, C.-S., Xu, H., & Cheung, L. (2020). Measuring the Gaps in the Projected Image and Perceived Image of Rural Tourism Destinations in China's Yangtze River Delta. *Sustainability*, 12, pp. 1-16.
- Dwivedi, A. (2023, March 6). *Qatar looks to boost technology and tourism sectors after buzz of World Cup*. Retrieved April 26, 2023, from The National News: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/gulf-news/2023/03/06/qatar-looks-to-boost-technology-and-tourism-sectors-after-buzz-of-world-cup/>
- Egholm, L. (2014). *Videnskabsteori - Perspektiver på organisationer og samfund* (Vol. 1). Hans Reitzels Forlag.
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2010, January-March). Qualitative Content Analysis: A Focus on Trustworthiness. *Sage Open*, pp. 1–10.
- Erlingsson, C., & Brysiewicz, P. (2017). A hands-on guide to doing content analysis. *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 7, pp. 93-99.
- Fan, Y. (2007, November). Soft power: Power of attraction or confusion? *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4(2), pp. 147–158.
- FIFA. (n.d.). *Qatar v Ecuador to kick off FIFA World Cup 2022™ on 20 November*. Retrieved April 2023, from FIFA: <https://www.fifa.com/fifaplus/en/articles/qatar-v-ecuador-to-kick-off-fifa-world-cup-2022-tm-on-20-november>
- FIFA. (u.d.). *Sustainability*. Hentet April 2023 fra FIFA: <https://www.fifa.com/social-impact/sustainability>
- FirstNews. (2022, December 08). *Everything you need to know about the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022*. Retrieved March 2023, from FirstNews: <https://www.firstnews.co.uk/talking-points/in-the-news/worldcup-talk-to-your-kids/>
- Foxman, S. (2022, September 22). *With Two Months to Qatar's World Cup, There's a Lot Left to Do*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Bloomberg: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-09-22/fifa-world-cup-in-qatar-brings-new-infrastructure-hotels-stadiums>
- FRANCE 24. (2022, October 25). *Qatar's emir slams 'unprecedented' criticism of World Cup hosts*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from FRANCE 24: <https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20221025-qatar-s-emir-slams-defamation-campaign-against-world-cup-hosts>
- Gaonkar, D. (2002). Towards New Imaginaries: An Introduction. *Public Culture*, 14(1), pp. 1-19.
- Gaveriaux, L.-M. (2022, October 13). *Les critiques sur la Coupe du monde brouillent les liens entre le Qatar et la France*. Retrieved March 2023, from Les Echos:

- <https://www.lesechos.fr/monde/afrique-moyen-orient/les-critiques-sur-la-coupe-du-monde-brouillent-les-liens-entre-le-qatar-et-la-france-1868436>
- Gössling, S. (2021). Tourism, technology and ICT: a critical review of affordances and concessions. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(5), pp. 733-750.
- Gebeily, M., & Mills, A. (2022, November 18). *After criticism, smooth World Cup seen as crucial to Qatar*. Retrieved March 2023, from Reuters: After criticism, smooth World Cup seen as crucial to Qatar
- Giglio, S., & Proni, M. (2020). *Football and Social Sciences in Brazil*. Springer.
- Gillet, K. (2022, November 08). *Qatar World Cup ambassador said being gay is 'damage in the mind' in a tense TV interview amid mounting criticism of the hosts*. Retrieved March 2023, from BusinessInsider:
<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2733095866/A54E5FE20C1746B2PQ/7?accountid=8144>
- Golafshani, N. (2003, December). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), pp. 597-607.
- Gontier, S. (2022, November 14). *Au Qatar, TF1 a (presque) enquêté sur la Coupe du monde*. Retrieved March 2023, from Télérama: <https://www.telerama.fr/ecrans/au-qatar-tf1-a-presque-enquete-sur-la-coupe-du-monde-7012958.php>
- Google. (n.d.). *Qatar*. Retrieved February 2023, from Google:
https://www.google.com/search?q=qatar&client=safari&rls=en&biw=1402&bih=778&tbs=qdr%3Ay&sxsrf=AJOqlzXMPJJvm8kybOf_Fmp0Y0d16bmxCw%3A1676197690818&ei=Or_oY7S8Mc7P7_UPIJyEA&ved=0ahUKEwi0wbz_4o_9AhXO57sIHRTOCAIQ4dUDCA4&uact=5&oq=qatar&gs_lcp=Cgxnd3Mtd2l6LXNI
- Gotham, K. F. (2002). Marketing Mardi Gras: Commodification, Spectacle and the Political Economy of Tourism in New Orleans. *Urban Studies*, 39(10), pp. 1735-1756.
- Gravari-Barbas, M., & Graburn, N. (2016). *Tourism Imaginaries at the Disciplinary Crossroads. Place, Practice, Media*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Grix, J., & Brannagan, P. (2016). Of Mechanisms and Myths: Conceptualising States' "Soft Power" Strategies through Sports Mega- Events. *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 27(2), pp. 251-272.
- Grix, J., & Lee, D. (2013). Soft Power, Sports Mega-Events and Emerging States: The Lure of the Politics of Attraction. *Global Society*, 27(4), pp. 521-536.
- Haghirian, M., & Robles-Gil, P. (2021). Soft Power and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar: Learning from Experiences of Past Mega-Sporting Event Hosts. *Qatar University Press*, 3(2), pp. 171-193.
- Halkier, E., Ekeland, H., & Grefve, D. (2022, October 13). *VM-lande sender diplomater og politi til Qatar, men fans er stadig bekymrede*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from DR.dk:
<https://www.dr.dk/sporten/fodbold/vm/vm-lande-sender-diplomater-og-politi-til-qatar-men-fans-er-stadig-bekymrede>
- Hall, C. (1997). Geography, marketing and the selling of places. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 6(3-4), pp. 61-84.
- Hall, C., & Jenkins, J. (2004). Tourism and Public Policy. In A. Lew, C. Hall, & A. Williams, A *companion to tourism* (pp. 523-540). Blackwell Publishing.
- Handel, S. (n.d.). <https://www.theemotionmachine.com/the-us-vs-them-mentality-how-group-thinking-can-irrationally-divide-us/>. Retrieved April 5, 2023, from The emotion Machine:
<https://www.theemotionmachine.com/the-us-vs-them-mentality-how-group-thinking-can-irrationally-divide-us/>

- Hanna, S., & Rowley, J. (2008). An analysis of terminology use in place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4, pp. 61-75.
- Hanna, S., Rowley, J., & Keegan, B. (2020). Place and Destination Branding: A Review and Conceptual Mapping of the Domain. *European Management Review*, pp. 1-13.
- Hannam, K., Butler, G., & Paris, C. (2014). Developments and key issues in tourism mobilities. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 44, pp. 171-185.
- Harkness, G. (2021, January 21). *4 The National Uniform: Strategic Uses of Clothing*. Retrieved April 8, 2023, from NYU Press Scholarship Online: <https://academic.oup.com/nyu-press-scholarship-online/book/37729/chapter-abstract/332083543?redirectedFrom=fulltext>
- Hemmonsby, J., & Tichaawa, T. (2018, May). THE EFFECTS OF MAJOR SPORT EVENT LEVERAGING FOR TOURISM AND DESTINATION BRANDING: THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA AS AN EMERGING DESTINATION. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 21(1), pp. 213-225.
- Henderson, J. C. (2014). Hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup: opportunities and challenges for Qatar. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 19(3-4), pp. 281-298.
- Hewson, C. (2007). Internet-mediated Research as an Emergent Method and it's Potential Role in Facilitating Mixed Methods Research. In S. Hesse-Biber, & P. Leavy, *The Handbook of Emergent Methods*. Guilford Press.
- Hiller, H. H. (1998). Assessing the Impact of Mega-Events: A Linkage Model. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1(1), pp. 47-57.
- Hofweber, T. (2017, October 11). *Logic and Ontology*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/logic-ontology/?ref=https://githubhelp.com#Ont>
- Horne, J. (2007). The Four 'Knowns' of Sports Mega-Events. *Leisure Studies*, 26(1), pp. 81-96.
- Horne, J. (2015). Assessing the sociology of sport: On sports mega-events and capitalist modernity. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(4-5), pp. 466-471.
- Howie, B., & Lewis, N. (2014). Geographical imaginaries: Articulating the values of geography. *New Zealand Geographer*, 70, pp. 131-139.
- Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. (2005, November). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *QUALITATIVE HEALTH RESEARCH*, 15(9), pp. 1277-1288.
- Huang, Y., & Suliman, S. (2020, July 4). Geopolitics, (Re)territorialisation, and China's Patriotic Tourism in the South China Sea. *Geopolitics*, pp. 1-24.
- Hu, Y., & Ritchie, J. (1993). Measuring Destination Attractiveness: A Contextual Approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 32(2), pp. 25-34.
- Human Rights Watch. (n.d.). *Qatar events of 2021*. Retrieved March 2022, from Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/qatar>
- Hunt, J. D. (1971). *Image - A Factor in Tourism*. Colorado: Colorado State University.
- Hunter, W. (2008). A typology of photographic representations for tourism: Depictions of groomed spaces. *Tourism Management*, 29, pp. 354-365.
- Hunter, W. (2016). The social construction of tourism online destination image: A comparative semiotic analysis of the visual representation of Seoul. *Tourism Management*, 54, pp. 221-229.
- Islamabad, H. J. (2020, January 10). *How will Qatar's labor reforms impact South Asian workers?* Retrieved March 2023, from Deutsche Welle: <https://www.dw.com/en/how-will-qatars-labor-reforms-impact-south-asian-workers/a-55122918>

- Jacobsen, J. G. (2022, October 5). *Kontroversiel Qatar-plakat florerer rundt på sociale medier: 'De her regler er gældende'*. Retrieved April 14, 2023, from BT: <https://www.bt.dk/vm/kontroversiel-qatar-plakat-florerer-rundt-pa-sociale-medier-de-her-regler-er-gaeldende>
- Jago, L., Dwyer, L., Lipman, G., Lill, D., & Vorster, S. (2010). Optimising the potential of mega-events: an overview. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 1(3), pp. 220-237.
- Jørgensen, E. (2021, March 30). - *VM i Qatar bliver det største propagandashow i moderne tid*. Retrieved March 2023, from JydskeVestkyst: <https://jv.dk/danmark/vm-i-qatar-bliver-det-stoerste-propagandashow-i-moderne-tid>
- Jenkins, O. H. (2003). Photography and travel brochures: the circle of representation. *Tourism Geographies*, 5(3), pp. 305-328.
- Jensen, J., & Arrouas, M. (2017, February). *Den danske kolonisering og slavehandel*. Retrieved April 16, 2023, from Faktalink: <https://faktalink.dk/titelliste/den-danske-kolonisering-og-slavehandel>
- Jerichow, A. (2022, October 28). Emiren ville have VM til Qatar. Nu har migrantarbejdere gjort alt klar. *Politikken*.
- Jones, Z., & Ponzini, D. (2018). Mega-events and the Preservation of Urban Heritage: Literature Gaps, Potential Overlaps, and a Call for Further Research. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 33(4), pp. 433-450.
- Jovičić, D. (2011). Socio-cultural Impacts of Contemporary Tourism. *Collegium antropologicum*, 35(2), pp. 599-605.
- Kamil, C. (2022, July 16). Der er noget, som ikke stemmer i historien om Qatar. *Berlingske*, 1, 20.
- Kannan, P., & Li, H. (2017). Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 34, pp. 22-45.
- Költringer, C., & Dickinger, A. (2015). Analyzing destination branding and image from online sources: A web content mining approach. *Journal of Business Research*, 68, pp. 1836-1843.
- Kønig, A. T. (2021, December 24). *Nyhedsanalysen: VM i Qatar er stadig en katastrofe*. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from Føljeton: <https://foljeton.dk/99158/vm-i-qatar-er-stadig-en-katastrofe>
- Kenyon, J., & Bodet, G. (2017, July). Exploring the domestic relationship between mega-events and destination image: The image impact of hosting the 2012 Olympic Games for the city of London. *Sport Management Review* 21, pp. 232-249.
- Kerr, S. (2022, November 14). *Qatar's 'soft' World Cup policing strategy faces critical test: Security*. Retrieved March 2023, from FinancialTimes: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2753890287/5F749F176CE04195PQ/4?accountid=8144>
- Kit, G. (2022, November 8). Qatar World Cup ambassador said being gay is 'damage in the mind' in a tense TV interview amid mounting criticism of the hosts. *Business Insider*.
- Kludt, T. (2022, November 20). *"What the Hell Are We All Doing Here?": Media Confronts Moral Dilemmas and Coverage Quirks at Qatar World Cup*. Retrieved April 16, 2023, from Vanity Fair: <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2022/11/world-cup-2022-qatar-media>
- Knez, K., Benn, T., & Alkhaldi, S. (2014). World Cup Football as a Catalyst for Change: Exploring the Lives of Women in Qatar's First National Football Team – A Case Study. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 31(14), pp. 1755-1773.

- Korstanje, M., Seraphin, H., & Wa, S. (2023). *Tourism Through Troubled Times: Challenges and Opportunities of the Tourism Industry in 21st Century*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), pp. 120-124.
- Kuhr, E., & Smith, A. (2022, December 16). *Why Qatar may see the World Cup as a win despite off-field criticism and on-field failure*. Retrieved March 2023, from NBCNews: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/qatar-world-cup-win-human-rights-criticism-rcna60279>
- Kuhr, E., & Smith, A. (2022, December 16). *Why Qatar may see the World Cup as a win despite off-field criticism and on-field failure*. Retrieved March 2023, from NBC News: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/qatar-world-cup-win-human-rights-criticism-rcna60279>
- Kyngäs, H., Mikkonen, K., & Kääriäinen, M. (2020). Inductive Content Analysis. In *The Application of Content Analysis in Nursing Science Research*. Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Lacey, N. (2009). Semiotics. In L. Nick, *Image and Representations: Key Concepts in Media Studies* (pp. 63-82). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lacy, S., Watson, B., Riffe, D., & Lovejoy, J. (2015). Issues and Best Practices in Content Analysis. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 92(4), pp. 791-811.
- LaLibre. (2022, October 12). *Pourquoi il ne faut pas boycotter le Mondial*. Retrieved March 2023, from LaLibre: <https://www.lalibre.be/debats/opinions/2022/10/12/pourquoi-il-ne-faut-pas-boycotter-le-mondial-F3R7I2PWTZDIND6MDFILJI73Q4/>
- Lapum, J., St-Amant, O., Hughes, M., & Garmaise-Yee, a. J. (2020, August 14). *Transaction Model of Communication*. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from Pressbooks: <https://pressbooks.library.torontomu.ca/communicationnursing/chapter/transaction-model-of-communication/>
- Laarbaui, S. (2022, October 12). *Pourquoi il ne faut pas boycotter le Mondial*. Retrieved April 14, 2023, from La Libre: <https://www.lalibre.be/debats/opinions/2022/10/12/pourquoi-il-ne-faut-pas-boycotter-le-mondial-F3R7I2PWTZDIND6MDFILJI73Q4/>
- Lassen, K. (2022, November 12). *VM i Qatar: Foren det kommerielle og politiske*. Retrieved March 2023, from Pov.International: <https://pov.international/vm-i-qatar-foren-det-kommerielle-og-politiske/>
- Leiper, N. (1979). The framework of tourism: Towards a definition of tourism, tourist, and the tourist industry. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6(4), pp. 390-407.
- Lenskyj, H. (2015). Sport mega-events and leisure studies. *Leisure Studies*, 34(4), pp. 501-507.
- Lian, T., & Yu, C. (2017). Representation of online image of tourist destination: a content analysis of Huangshan. *ASIA PACIFIC JOURNAL OF TOURISM RESEARCH*, 22(10), pp. 1063-1082.
- Lichrou, M., O'Malley, L., & Patterson, M. (2008, February). Place-product or place narrative(s)? Perspectives in the Marketing of Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 16(1), pp. 27-39.
- Lim, Y., Chung, Y., & Weaver, P. (2012). The impact of social media on destination branding: Consumer-generated videos versus destination marketer-generated videos. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(3), pp. 197-206.
- Lockwood, A. (2007). *Tourism and Hospitality in the 21st Century*. Routledge.
- Lodge, M., Haigh, E., Bhatia, S., Chaudhary, V., & Averre, D. (2022, November 20). *Qatar's World Cup descends into farce on its first day: Spectators leave empty seats in stadium during first-*

- round match after disgraced Morgan Freeman hosted opening ceremony amid fury over 'most controversial' tournament ever. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from MailOnline: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11449565/Morgan-Freeman-dominates-World-Cup-opening-ceremony-2022.html>
- Luo, A. (2022, December 5). *Content Analysis | Guide, Methods & Examples*. Retrieved March 1, 2023, from Scribbr.com: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/content-analysis/>
- Madise, D., & Isike, C. (2020). Ubuntu diplomacy: Broadening soft power in an African context. *J Public Affairs*, pp. 1-10.
- Maiello, A., & Pasquinelli, C. (2015). Destruction or construction? A (counter) branding analysis of sport mega-events in Rio de Janeiro. *Cities. The International Journal of Urban policy and planning*, 48, pp. 116–124.
- Majaski, C. (2022, May 17). *Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) Definition in Investing*. Retrieved March 2023, from Investopedia: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/bric.asp>
- Makarychev, A., & Yatsyk, A. (2020). Represent and perform: mega events and Russia's imageries. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 12(1), pp. 111-126.
- Malmvig, H. (2022, November 17). *Seniorforsker: Drop fordommene om Qatar. Der er flere gode ting at sige om landet*. Retrieved March 2023, from Politiken: <https://politiken.dk/debat/kroniken/art9081593/Drop-fordommene-om-Qatar.-Der-er-flere-gode-ting-at-sige-om-landet>
- Malmvig, H. (2022, November 19). *Seniorforsker: Drop fordommene om Qatar. Der er flere gode ting at sige om landet*. Retrieved March 2023, from Politiken: <https://politiken.dk/debat/kroniken/art9081593/Drop-fordommene-om-Qatar.-Der-er-flere-gode-ting-at-sige-om-landet>
- Marković, I., Radosavljević, G., & Borisavljević, K. (2009). Celebrity Endorsement Influence on Destination Image. *Our Economy*, 68(4), pp. 66-74.
- Mauro, M. (2020). Media discourse, sport and the nation: narratives and counter-narratives in the digital age. *Media, Culture & Society*, 42(6), pp. 932-951.
- McGillivray, D. (2017). Platform politics: sport events and the affordances of digital and social media. *Sport in Society*, 20(12), pp. 1888-1901.
- Mednicoff, D. (2022, November 23). The World Cup puts the spotlight on Qatar, but also brings attention to its human rights record and politics – 4 things to know. *The Conversation U.S.*
- Merriam-Webster.com. (n.d.,a). *City*. Retrieved April 8, 2023, from Merriam-Webster.com: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/city>
- Merriam-Webster.com. (n.d.,b). *Sand dune*. Retrieved April 10, 2023, from Merriam-Webster.com: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sand%20dune>
- Merwe, J. (2007, July). Political Analysis of South Africa's Hosting of the Rugby and Cricket World Cups: Lessons for the 2010 Football World Cup and Beyond? *Politikon*, 34(1), pp. 67-81.
- Miller, P. (2007). *Confronting Climate Change: A Shared And Global Responsibility*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from United Nations: <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/confronting-climate-change-shared-and-global-responsibility>
- Miller, T. (2022). Chapter 15: Sport, The Environment, and Geopolitics. In L. A. Wenner, *The Oxford Handbook of Sports and Society* (pp. 274-295). Oxford University Press.
- Minghetti, V., & Buhalis, D. (2010). Digital Divide in Tourism. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), pp. 267-281.

- Mint. (2022, December 14). *The Qatargate scandal that has rocked Europe*. Retrieved May 2022, from New Delhi: HT Digital Streams Limited:
<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2754067468/fulltext/3AD29E7EF1D943FAPQ/1?accountid=8144>
- Mogielnicki, R. (2022, December 9). *2022 FIFA World Cup: Tourism Springboard or Critical Spotlight?* Retrieved April 26, 2023, from The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington:
<https://agsiw.org/2022-fifa-world-cup-tourism-springboard-or-critical-spotlight/>
- Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A. (2001). *Advertising in Tourism and Leisure*.
- Morris, D. (2014). *Visual Framing of Global Sporting Events in World Newspapers: Comparing the 2014 Winter Olympics and 2014 FIFA World Cup*. Electronic Theses and Dissertations.
- Mostafanezhad, M. (2018, February). The geopolitical turn in tourism geographies. *Tourism Geographies*, 20(2), pp. 343-346.
- MSCI. (2023, January 31). *MSCI Emerging Markets Index (USD)*. Retrieved February 2023, from Msci.com: <https://www.msci.com/documents/10199/c0db0a48-01f2-4ba9-ad01-226fd5678111>
- Mueller, A., & Schade, M. (2012). Symbols and place identity A semiotic approach to internal place branding – case study Bremen (Germany). *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 5(1), pp. 81-92.
- Murphy, C., Klotz, A., & Kreiner, G. (2017). Blue skies and black boxes: The promise (and practice) of grounded theory in human resource management research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27, pp. 291-305.
- Newman, J. (2022, November 24). *Denmark proposes blanket WITHDRAWAL from FIFA alongside other UEFA nations amid ongoing row over Qatar World Cup armband ban*. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from MailOnline: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11461513/Denmark-proposes-blanket-WITHDRAWAL-FIFA-amid-ongoing-row-Qatar-World-Cup-armband-ban.html>
- Nobel, J. (2022, October 22). *Football tiptoes around social issues as Qatar World Cup nears: Sport*. Retrieved March 2023, from FinancialTimes:
<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2737958297/5F749F176CE04195PQ/8?accountid=8144>
- NPR. (n.d.). *About NPR*. Retrieved May 2023, from NPR: <https://www.npr.org/about/>
- Ogunnubi, O. (2022). South Africa's soft power and the diplomacy of nuclear geopolitics. *GeoJournal*, 87, pp. 247-260.
- Ogunnubi, O., & Amao, O. (2016). South Africa's Emerging "Soft Power" Influence in Africa and Its Impending Limitations: Will the Giant Be Able to Weather the Storm? *African Security*, 9(4), pp. 299-319.
- Oliveira, E. (2015). Place branding as a strategic spatial planning instrument. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11, pp. 18-33.
- Ooi, C.-S. (2003, October). CRAFTING TOURISM EXPERIENCES: MANAGING THE ATTENTION PRODUCT. *Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 12.
- OuestFrance. (2022, November 20). *Coupe du monde 2022. Face aux critiques, le Qatar estime être « traité de manière injuste »*. Retrieved March 2023, from OuestFrance: <https://www.ouest-france.fr/sport/coupe-du-monde/coupe-du-monde-2022-face-aux-critiques-le-qatar-estime-etre-traite-de-maniere-injuste-a3e9e18a-4a46-11ec-b578-a50d7b4312f7>

- Pennington, J., & Thomsen, R. (2010). A Semiotic Model of Destination Representations Applied to Cultural and Heritage Tourism Marketing. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 10(1), pp. 33-53.
- Petrone, F. (2019). BRICS, soft power and climate change: new challenges in global governance? *Ethics & Global Politics*, 12(2), pp. 19-30.
- Pew Research Center. (2015, April 2). *Middle East-North Africa*. Retrieved May 19, 2023, from Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2015/04/02/middle-east-north-africa/>
- Poell, T. (2020). Social media, temporality, and the legitimacy of protest. *SOCIAL MOVEMENT STUDIES*, 19(5-6), pp. 609-624.
- Preussen, W. (2022, November 23). *Germany's football players cover mouths during team photo in FIFA protest*. Retrieved April 2023, from Politico: <https://www.politico.eu/article/germanys-football-players-cover-mouths-during-team-photo-to-protest-fifas-ban-of-pro-lgbtq-armband/>
- Ramadan, A. (22. December 2022). *Qatar World Cup 2022: Why is the West fuming over Messi's bisht?* Hentet March 2023 fra GulfNews: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2756663881/C8913EEC0E0943D1PQ/43?accountid=8144>
- Rédaction Africanews. (2022, October 26). *World Cup: Qatar's ruler lashes out at critics amid human rights scrutiny*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from Africanews.en: <https://www.africanews.com/2022/10/26/world-cup-qatars-ruler-lashes-out-at-critics-amid-human-rights-scrutiny/>
- Reddy, C. T. (2014). COMMUNICATION AND ITS TYPES. *International Research Journal of Management Sociology & Humanity*, 5(8), pp. 17-24.
- Reiser, D. (2003). Globalisation: An old phenomenon that needs to be rediscovered for tourism? *Tourism and hospitality research*, 4(4), pp. 306-320.
- Reuters. (2022, November 29). *World Cup 2022: why is Qatar a controversial location for the tournament?* . Retrieved March 2023, from Reuters: <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/world-cup-2022-why-is-qatar-controversial-location-fifa-tournament-2022-11-15/>
- RGS. (n.d.). *A 60 SECOND GUIDE TO . . . The Global North/South Divide*. Retrieved March 2023, from The Royal Geographical Society : <https://www.rgs.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=9c1ce781-9117-4741-af0a-a6a8b75f32b4&lang=en-GB>
- Richter, L. K. (1989). *The Politics of Tourism in Asia*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. (2014). *Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research*. New York: Routledge.
- Ritchie, L. D. (1987). *Of Time and the Media: Issues of Temporality in Communication Research*. Institute for Communication Research. Stanford University.
- Robertson, C. (2018). The Media Event Build-Up Phase: A Site of Contestation and Counternarratives. *International Journal of Communication*, 12, pp. 3207-3226.
- Robinson, P., Heitmann, S., & Dieke, P. (2011). *Research themes for tourism*. Oxfordshire & Cambridge: CABI.
- Salazar, N. (2012). Tourism Imaginaires: A conceptual approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), pp. 863-882.

- Sørensen, A. (2022, November 18). *I Qatar has styret allerede opnået det, de ville*. Retrieved March 2023, from Kristeligt Dagblad: <https://www.kristeligt-dagblad.dk/debat/i-qatar-har-styret-allerede-opnaaet-det-de-ville>
- Schaer, C., & Hassan, E. (25. November 2022). *Is criticism of Qatar's World Cup racist?* Hentet March 2023 fra Deutsche Welle: <https://www.dw.com/en/is-criticism-of-qatars-world-cup-racist/a-63883663>
- Scheufele, D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*, 49(1), pp. 102-123.
- Schmidt, C. (2022, April 26). *Socialkonstruktivisme*. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from www.laeremiddel.dk: <https://www.laeremiddel.dk/viden-og-vaerktoej/videnskabsteori/videnskabsteoretiske-retninger/socialkonstruktivisme/>
- Schmidt, C., & Løgstrup, L. (2022, April 26). *Hvad er videnskabsteori?* Retrieved February 21, 2023, from www.laeremiddel.dk: <https://www.laeremiddel.dk/viden-og-vaerktoej/videnskabsteori/introduktion-til-videnskabsteori/hvad-er-videnskabsteori/>
- Schreier, M. (2012). Introduction: What is qualitative content analysis? In M. Schreier, *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice* (pp. 1-20). Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore & Washington DC: Sage Publications.
- Secher, M. (2022, November 12). *"Boykot Qatar"? Forstå hele kritikken af VM-værterne*. Retrieved March 2023, from Sport.tv2: <https://sport.tv2.dk/fodbold/2022-11-12-boykot-qatar-forstaa-hele-kritikken-af-vm-vaerterne>
- Shaw, J. (2010, May). *Skyscraper as Symbol*. Retrieved April 9, 2023, from Harvard Magazine: <https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2010/05/skyscraper-as-symbol>
- Sherbini, R. A. (2022, December 22). Qatar World Cup 2022: Why is the West fuming over Messi's bisht? *Gulf News*.
- Sood, A. (2022, July 04). *India queues up for the football World Cup: At the Qatar World Cup this year, India will be represented by its football-loving fans*. Retrieved March 2023, from IndiaToday: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2681008303/50CEC9E20CFE4FAAPQ/2?accountid=8144>
- Sportsnet.ca. (n.d.). *Company Information*. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from Sportsnet.ca: <https://www.sportsnet.ca/about/>
- Statista Research Department. (2023, February 2). *Number of international tourist arrivals worldwide from 2005 to 2022, by region*. Retrieved February 2023, from Statista: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/186743/international-tourist-arrivals-worldwide-by-region-since-2010/>
- Stöber, B. (2006). Media Geography - From Patterns of Diffusion to the Complexity of Meanings. In J. Falkheimer, & A. Jansson, *Geographies of Communication - The Spatial Turn in Media Studies* (pp. 27-42). Göteborg: NORDICOM.
- Stepchenkova, S., & Mills, J. (2010). Destination Image: A Meta-Analysis of 2000–2007 Research. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 19(6), pp. 575-609.
- Sullivan, B. (2022, November 18). *Why Qatar is a controversial host for the World Cup*. Retrieved April 17, 2023, from NPR: <https://www.npr.org/2022/11/18/1137204271/qatar-world-cup-controversies>

- Syed, A. (2022, November 21). *The 'One Love' LGBTQ Rights Armband Is Causing a Stir at the Qatar World Cup*. Retrieved April 13, 2023, from TIME: <https://time.com/6235503/one-love-armband-qatar-world-cup/>
- Tétrault-Farber, G. (2022, November 21). *Denmark manager: sanctions over One Love armband send 'controversial' message*. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from Reuters.com: <https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/denmark-manager-sanctions-over-one-love-armband-send-controversial-message-2022-11-21/>
- Thøgersen, T. B. (22. November 2022a). *Se listen: Her er Qatar mistænkt for korruption*. Hentet March 2023 fra Tipsbladet: <https://www.tipsbladet.dk/nyhed/vm/se-listen-her-er-qatar-mistaenkt-korruption>
- Thøgersen, T. B. (2022, November 18). KORRUPTIONSMISTANKEN HÆNGER TUNGT OVER QATARS VM. *Tipsbladet*, 6.
- Thøgersen, T. B. (2022b, November 11). "JEG VAR NØDT TIL AT : LYVE FOR MIN MOR". *Tipsbladet*.
- The Australian Financial Review. (2022, December 13). *Qatar's World Cup exposes moral compromises of globalisation*. Retrieved March 2023, from FairfaxMedia: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2753100867/7E0319C643CC4D89PQ/43?accountid=8146>
- The Australian Financial Times. (2022, December 13). *Qatar's World Cup exposes moral compromises of globalisation*. Retrieved March 2023, from The Australian Financial Times: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2753100867/7E0319C643CC4D89PQ/43?accountid=8146>
- The World Bank. (n.d.). *International tourism, number of arrivals*. Retrieved February 2023, from Worldbank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL>
- Thussu, D. (2014). *De-Americanizing Soft Power Discourse?* In D. Thussu, *De-Americanizing Soft Power Discourse?* (Vol. 2). Los Angeles: Figueroa Press.
- Trade Arabica. (2022, December). *Qatar looks forward to hosting outstanding mega-events*. Retrieved February 2023, from Trade Arabica, Business News Information: http://www.tradearabia.com/news/IND_404436.html
- TSA-Algerie.com. (2022, November 1). *Mondial 2022 : pourquoi le Qatar fait l'objet de critiques*. Retrieved April 2023, from TSA-Algerie.com: <https://www.tsa-algerie.com/mondial-2022-pourquoi-le-qatar-fait-lobjet-de-critiques/>
- TSA. (2022, November 01). *Mondial 2022 : pourquoi le Qatar fait l'objet de critiques*. Retrieved March 2023, from TSA: <https://www.tsa-algerie.com/mondial-2022-pourquoi-le-qatar-fait-lobjet-de-critiques/>
- Veal, A. J. (2017). *Research Methods for Leisure & Tourism* (5 ed.). Pearson Education.
- Venkatraman, G. (2022, December 31). *A look back at all the times India hosted Men's Hockey World Cup* <https://thebridge.in/hockey/look-back-india-host-men-world-cup-38362>. Retrieved May 2023, from Thebridge: <https://thebridge.in/hockey/look-back-india-host-men-world-cup-38362>
- Venuti, L. (2012). *Translation Changes Everything : Theory and Practice*. (L. Venuti, Ed.) Taylor & Francis Group.
- VisitQatar. (2022a, October 14). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cjs6bT3PR6M/>
- VisitQatar. (2022b, October 28). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CkQ99SrJ2j5/>

- VisitQatar. (2022c, November 14). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CkjAFGyrTc6/>
- VisitQatar. (2022d, November 24). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CIWfAG2vR9B/>
- VisitQatar. (2022e, November 4). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CkjAFGyrTc6/>
- VisitQatar. (2022f, November 28). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/p/ClgybBPP_Fa/
- VisitQatar. (2022g, October 18). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj3N1B0ONiy/>
- VisitQatar. (2022h, February 8). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CZtoy3vpbZJ/>
- VisitQatar. (2022i, November 8). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CktDJC3pjMm/>
- VisitQatar. (2022j, November 10). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CkyYbYRusM6/>
- VisitQatar. (2022k, June 24). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CfLj1N4lO-K/>
- VisitQatar. (2022l, November 23). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CIT6FPkp3Lw/>
- VisitQatar. (2022m, April 23). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Ccs4gMPIRSH/>
- VisitQatar. (2022n, October 1). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CjK4X98MkzT/>
- VisitQatar. (2022o, November 15). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/p/Ck_T2lgJxHs/
- VisitQatar. (2022p, November 20). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CILBtdgPVxz/>
- VisitQatar. (2022q, October 13). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CjqWMUjpvoZ/>
- VisitQatar. (2022r, October 21). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cj-7n60jcqu/>
- VisitQatar. (2022s, September 27). *VisitQatar*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CjA8c2-O6do/>
- VisitQatar. (n.d.). *The desert*. Retrieved April 10, 2023, from VisitQatar: <https://visitqatar.com/intl-en/things-to-do/adventures/the-desert>
- VisitQatar. (n.d.). *Things to do - Art & culture*. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from VisitQatar: <https://visitqatar.com/intl-en/things-to-do/art-culture>
- Williams, S., & Lew, A. (2015). Critical Understandings of Place, Space and Experience. In S. Williams, & A. A. Lew, *Tourism Geography* (Vol. 3, pp. 51-76). London & New York: Routledge.
- Williams, S., & Lew, A. (2015). Theming the urban landscape. In S. Williams, & A. A. Lew, *Tourism Geography. Critical Understandings of Place, Space and Experience* (Vol. 3, pp. 173-198). London & New York: Routledge.

- Wilson, E. (2022, November 19). *Human rights organizations criticize controversial statements from FIFA president*. Retrieved March 2023, from CTVNews: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/sports/human-rights-organizations-criticize-controversial-statements-from-fifa-president-1.6160556>
- Wise, N., & Kohe, G. (2020, December). Sports geography: new approaches, perspectives and directions. *Sport in Society*, 23(1), pp. 1-10.
- Wivel, K. (2022a, November 23). *Fodboldens Frihedsbrøl*. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from Weekendavisen.dk: <https://www.weekendavisen.dk/2022-47/samfund/fodboldens-frihedsbroel>
- Wivel, K. (2022b, December 20). *Qatar fik det sidste trut*. Retrieved from Weekendavisen.dk: <https://www.weekendavisen.dk/2022-51/samfund/qatar-fik-det-sidste-trut>
- Woo, S., O'Boyle, E., & Spector, P. (2017). Best practices in developing, conducting, and evaluating inductive research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27, pp. 255-264.
- Wood, R. (2010, June). *Cricket World Cup Host Countries*. Retrieved May 2023, from Topend Sports: <https://www.topendsports.com/events/cricket-world-cup/hosts/index.htm>
- Woodruff, J. (2023, March 8). *Listening to a divided America*. Retrieved April 28, 2023, from PBS News Hour: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/listening-to-a-divided-america>
- World Population Review. (n.d.). *Developed Countries 2023*. Retrieved May 13, 2023, from World Population Review: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/developed-countries>
- Worldometer. (n.d.). *CO2 Emissions per Capita* . Retrieved May 2023, from Worldometer: <https://www.worldometers.info/co2-emissions/co2-emissions-per-capita/>
- Worldpopulationreview. (n.d.). *Emerging Countries 2023*. Retrieved May 2023, from Worldpopulationreview: https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/emerging-countries?fbclid=IwAR3TuWuiDXQbekPwmyskamyFaQRnRFP3qW2oO3-mCdx6tPzODzcV4me_aBA
- Yakina, H., & Totu, A. (2014). The Semiotic Perspectives of Peirce and Saussure: A Brief Comparative Study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* , 155, pp. 4-8.
- Zayadin, H. (2021, August 19). *Migrant Workers and the Qatar World Cup*. Retrieved May 3, 2023, from Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/08/02/migrant-workers-and-qatar-world-cup>