



# **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POPULAR MOBILISATION IN THE MENA**

## **Digest of Current Publications and Events**

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# CALL FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

## **Freedom of speech and Higher Education: The case of the academic boycott of Israel**

Trinity College Dublin, 12 September 2017

Conference announcement and call for papers

Deadline: 1 July 2017

Academic freedom includes the liberty of individuals to express freely opinions about the institution or system in which they work, to fulfil their functions without discrimination or fear of repression by the state or any other actor, to participate in professional or representative academic bodies, and to enjoy all the internationally recognized human rights applicable to other individuals in the same jurisdiction. The enjoyment of academic freedom carries with it obligations, such as the duty to respect the academic freedom of others, to ensure the fair discussion of contrary views, and to treat all without discrimination on any of the prohibited grounds (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "The Right to Education (Art.13)," December 8, 1999)

Questions of freedom of speech have been to the forefront in contemporary academic debate. Historically, universities have always provided space for critical thinking and engaged civil society activism. In recent years there has been much discussion about how neoliberalism in higher education has affected academic freedom and the expression of dissenting and controversial views. The conference examines these effects with particular reference to academic boycotts in general, and in particular the controversies surrounding the academic boycott of Israel.

There have been claims that austerity and the cuts in public funding for the higher education sector have led to universities responding by:

- Changing university culture to emphasise training for the job market at the possible expense of broader educational goals
- Hiring increasing numbers of temporary, adjunct and precarious academic staff
- Placing greater emphasis on research funding from public, EU and private sources, leading to increasing pressure on academics to seek and compete for scarce financial resources
- A greater reliance on managerialism, cost cutting and bureaucratic measures which put greater administrative pressure on academics

This response may result in stifling critical thinking, dissent and freedom of expression by academics and students and lead to self-censorship and curtailing expression on controversial topics. Today's public university culture is shifting from one based on 'the liberal university' to one focused on a business model, the provision of training and resource management, all of which narrows the space for the exchange of ideas and for freedom of expression.

This has thrown into sharp relief a constant question for academics as to whether their role encompasses or precludes political activism – whether homo academicus should also be homo

politicus. With growing global political polarisation, this question has returned to the spotlight with academics under fire for expressing political opinions in Turkey, the US and elsewhere.

#### The case of the academic boycott of Israel

Rather than examining these issues on either an abstract or an anecdotal level, the conference focuses on the hotly contested issue of academic boycott, as this offers a paradigmatic example of how controversial topics are dealt with by the contemporary university and of the effects of the neoliberalisation of the public university on academic freedom.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) was initiated in 2004 to contribute to the struggle for Palestinian freedom, justice and equality. It advocates for a boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions for their deep and persistent complicity in Israel's denial of Palestinian rights – including academic freedom – that are stipulated in international law. Across the world, academics and students have responded to the Palestinian call for boycott by refusing to cooperate with Israeli higher education institutions on grounds of conscience. This stance has inevitably caused controversy in universities globally.

Since the academic boycott is a controversial topic, one would expect those who support the boycott to be challenged. However, the challenge rarely comes from within the world of ideas and is usually offered through a mixture of 'lawfare', bureaucratic strictures, threat to employment and disciplinary measures. In other words, the academic boycott of Israel is an arena in which disciplinarity – rather than the ideals of the liberal university – is brought to bear. While this is an unsatisfactory way of dealing with controversial topics, the question remains as to how university administrators and academics can best facilitate the free exchange of ideas in this arena.

Keynote speakers at the conference are Steven Salaita (Author of *Uncivil Rites: Palestine and the Limits of Academic Freedom*, Steven was denied a Professorship in University of Illinois due to his views on Israel/Palestine and will speak on "Freedom to boycott: BDS and the modern University"), Kathleen Lynch (Chair of Equality Studies, UCD, specialising in neoliberalism and educational policy and theory), and John Reynolds (Department of Law, Maynooth University, specialising in international law and critical legal studies)

#### Call for papers

The conference does not propose to debate the pros and cons of the academic boycott of Israel but rather to make links and draw lessons about the role of the public university in fostering academic freedom, and the freedom to express critical, even if controversial views. We are inviting proposals for papers by academics at all levels as well as graduate students, university administrators and members of student groups and professional academic associations.

The conference will be interdisciplinary, situated between law, the arts, social sciences and humanities and will seek to include academics from Ireland and abroad, as well as university administrators and academics with practical experiences of the issues surrounding academic freedom in higher education.

We are inviting proposals for papers on:

- Academics as political actors and advocates
- Challenges to academic freedom and the freedom to dissent
- The practice of academic boycott and academic freedom
- The effects of 'lawfare' and disciplinary measures on support for the academic boycott of Israel
- Links between academic precarity, managerialism and disciplinarity
- Comparisons with previous academic boycotts, such as the boycott of Apartheid South Africa

We invite abstracts (up to 250 words) on any of the themes above or addressing related themes you feel deserve consideration. Abstracts should include a title, your email address and institutional affiliation if any (independent scholars are welcome to submit). Please send abstracts to David Landy at <sept12tcdconference@gmail.com> by 1 July 2017.

#### Conference information

Detailed information will be made available in due course, but this will be a one-day conference on 12 September 2017 at Trinity College Dublin, with a public lecture the evening before. The conference is hosted by the MPhil in Race, Ethnicity and Conflict in the Department of Sociology, Trinity College Dublin. Trinity was an early and important supporter of the academic boycott of Apartheid South Africa and remains well known for its liberal stance and openness towards diverse and dissenting voices.

Following the conference, the organisers intend to produce an edited collection of the papers in the form of either an edited book or a journal special issue

More information [here](#)

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## Revolutions Against Capital, Capital Against Revolutions?

Historical Materialism Annual Conference, Central London, 9-12 November 2017

Deadline for abstracts: 1 May 2017

One hundred years ago, hailing the Russian Revolution, Antonio Gramsci characterised the Bolsheviks' success as a "revolution against *Capital*." As against the interpretations of mechanical "Marxism," the Russian Revolution was the "crucial proof" that revolution need not be postponed until the "proper" historical developments had occurred.

2017 will witness both the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution and the 150th anniversary of the first publication of Marx's *Capital*. Fittingly, the journal *Historical Materialism* will celebrate its own twentieth anniversary.

In his time, Gramsci qualified his title by arguing that his criticism was directed at those who use "the Master's works to draw up a superficial interpretation, dictatorial statements which cannot be disputed," by contrast, he argues, the Bolsheviks "live out Marxist thought." From its

inception, *Historical Materialism* has been committed to a project of collective research in critical Marxist theory which actively counters any mechanical application of Marxism qua doctrine. How the Russian Revolution was eventually lived out — with all of its aftershocks, reversals, counter-revolutions, and ultimate defeat — also calls not just for a work of memory but for one of theorisation.

We might view the alignment of these anniversaries, then, as disclosing the changing fates of the Marxist tradition and its continued attempt to analyse and transform the world. Especially once it is read against the grain of the mechanical and determinist image affixed to it by many of the official Marxisms of the 20th Century, and animated by the liberation movements that followed in its wake, the work-in-progress that was *Capital* seems vitally relevant to an understanding of the forces at work in our crisis-ridden present. The Russian Revolution, on the contrary, risks appearing as a museum-piece or lifeless talisman. By retrieving Gramsci's provocation, we wish to unsettle the facile gesture that would praise Marxian theory all the better to bury Marxist politics.

Gramsci also remarks that Marx "predicted the predictable" but could not predict the particular leaps and bounds human society would take. Surveying today's political landscape that seems especially true. Since 2008, we have witnessed a continuing crisis of capitalism, contradictory revolutionary upsurges — and brutal counterrevolutions — across the Middle East and North Africa and a resurgent 'populist' right represented by Trump, the right-wing elements of the Brexit campaign, the authoritarian turn in central Europe and populist right wing politics in France; the power of Putin's Russia and authoritarian state power in Turkey, Israel, Egypt and India. Even the "pink tide" of Latin America appears to be turning. Disturbingly, we seem to face a wave of reaction, and in some domains a recrudescence of fascism, much greater in scope and intensity than the revolutionary impetus that preceded and sometimes occasioned it. There is a new virulence to the politics of revanchist nationalism, ethno-racial supremacy, and aggressive patriarchy, but its articulation to the imperatives of capital accumulation or the politics of class remains a matter of much (necessary) debate.

This year's Historical Materialism Conference seeks to use the "three anniversaries" as an opportunity to reflect on the history of the Marxist tradition and its continued relevance to our historical moment. We welcome papers which unpack the complex and under-appreciated legacies of Marx's *Capital* and the Russian Revolution, exploring their global scope, their impact on the racial and gendered histories of capitalism and anti-capitalism, investigating their limits and sounding out their yet-untapped potentialities. We also wish to apply the lessons of these anniversaries to our current perilous state affairs: dissecting its political and economic dynamics and tracing its possible revolutionary potentials.

N.B. CFPs for streams running throughout the Conference will be circulated soon. Abstracts should be between 250 and 350 words. Panels should include abstracts for all individual presentations.

More information [here](#)

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## TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

### **Contentious cultural politics in the Middle East**

18 April 2017, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Venue: Elliott School for International Affairs, 1957 E St NW, Washington, DC 20052, USA

Speakers: Laryssa Chomiak, Centre d'Etudes Maghrébines à Tunis; Lisel Hintz, Barnard College; Jillian Schwedler, Hunter College CUNY; Lisa Wedeen, University of Chicago

Moderated by: Marc Lynch, POMEPS Director

*More information* [here](#)

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### **The Evolution of Ennahdha in Tunisia: In Conversation with Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi**

20 April 2017, 18:00 – 19:30

Venue: Venue to be announced on the day, LSE, London WC2A 2AZ, United Kingdom

Speaker: Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi

Discussant: Madawi Al-Rasheed, LSE Middle East Centre

Chair: Toby Dodge, LSE Middle East Centre

Six years after the uprisings that swept the region, Tunisia has undergone two rounds of elections and will hold important local elections later this year. The founder of the Ennahdha (Renaissance) Party, Sheikh Rached Ghannouchi, discusses the achievements of the 2011 uprising, the challenges facing the region, as well as the evolution of Ennahdha following its 10th Party Congress in 2016.

*More information* [here](#)

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### **Words in/of Exile: Syrian Cultural Practices in Berlin**

26 April 2017

Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstraße 14, 14193 Berlin

Speakers: Talal Derki (Film Director), Mohammad Attar (Playwright), Rasha Abbas (Writer)

Chair: Khaled Saghie (Beirut / EUME Fellow 2016/17)

The relationship between art and exile continues to preoccupy scholars and artists alike. In the last few years, Syrian artists have significantly contributed to the Berlin's artistic scene and offered new ways to understand how art and exile nurture each other. What distinguishes exilic art production in Berlin? How do exilic artists contribute to the local art scene and how do they circulate within it? This



panel invites the film director Talal Derki, the playwright Mohammad al-Attar, and the writer Rasha Abbas to critically reflect on what it means to be an artist in Berlin today. *More information* [here](#)

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## **Negri in Cambridge and London**

25 and 26 April 2017

Venue (25 April, 5.00pm-7.00pm): The Bateman Auditorium, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge

Venue (26 April): the School of Oriental and African Studies [SOAS, London

Speaker: Antonio Negri

On Tuesday 25 April the Italian political thinker Antonio Negri will be in Cambridge to deliver the first of two talks on the possibilities for a renewal of revolutionary thought and action. His chosen topic for the Cambridge talk is: "Post-operaismo or neo-operaismo". In this talk he will give a new reading of the development and ongoing validity of the "operaista" [workerist] tradition in Italian political thought, and will offer perspectives for the future of revolutionary activity in that vein. The meeting will also mark the publication of his most recent collection of essays in English, entitled Marx and Foucault (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017) The speaker will be introduced by the translator of that volume, Ed Emery [SOAS]. The ensuing discussion will be introduced by Elisabetta Brighi [University of Westminster] The talk will be in Italian, but a translated abstract will be available. Discussion will be in Italian, French and English **ADMISSION:** For reasons of space we recommend that you book in advance *More information* [here](#)

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## **Ḥukm al-Nās (The Rule of the People?): Conceptualising the Collective in Egypt around 1900**

26 April 2017

Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstraße 14, 14193 Berlin

Speaker: Maha AbdelMegeed (Qatar, EUME Fellow 2016/17)

Moderation: Michael Allan (University of Oregon, EUME-CNMS Fellow of the AvH 2017-18)

*More information* [here](#)

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## **The Commander: Fawzi al-Qawuqji and the Fight for Arab Independence 1914-1948**

2 May 2017, 5:45 PM - 7:00 PM

Venue: Paul Webley Wing (Senate House), Wolfson Lecture Theatre, London, UK

Speaker: Laila Parsons, Institute of Islamic Studies (McGill University)

Chair: Charles Tripp, SOAS

Lecture by Professor Parson's on her latest book *The Commander: Fawzi al-Qawuqji and the Fight for Arab Independence 1914-1948* (Hill and Wang, 2016). Revered by some as the Arab Garibaldi, maligned by others as an intriguer and opportunist, Fawzi al-Qawuqji manned the ramparts of Arab history for four decades. In his most famous role, he would command the Arab Liberation Army in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. Laila Parsons tells Qawuqji's dramatic story and sets it in the full context of his turbulent times. Following Israel's decisive victory, Qawuqji was widely faulted as a poor leader with possibly dubious motives. *The Commander* shows us that the truth was more complex: although he doubtless made some strategic mistakes, he never gave up fighting for Arab independence and unity, even as those ideals were undermined by powers inside and outside the Arab world. In Qawuqji's life story we find the origins of today's turmoil in the Arab Middle East. *More information* [here](#)

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## **Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse in Syria: A Social-Institutionalist Explanation**

2 May 2017, 17:15 – 19:15#

Venue: Room 9.04, 9th Floor, Tower 2, LSE, London WC2A 2AZ, United Kingdom

Speaker: Thomas Pierret, University of Edinburgh

Over the last four years, the Syrian insurgency has witnessed the rise and consolidation of certain factions, particularly Islamist ones, but also the demise of once powerful groups of a more nationalist persuasion. Common explanations of these opposite trajectories have focused on factors such as popular support, ideology, and external funding. Drawing on Paul Staniland's social-institutionalist conceptual framework, Thomas Pierret proposes a different explanation that revolves around the social networks upon which insurgent groups were built. He argues that groups that have relied on long-standing networks stemming from armed militancy or religious proselytism had a determining organisational advantage over counterparts that lacked such a background. Organisational superiority explains why some factions maintained their cohesion despite military setbacks and temporary resource shortages, whereas some well-funded groups disintegrated as a result of internal feuds or military attacks on the part of other rebel factions. *More information* [here](#)

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## RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

### **Muslim Community Organizations in the West: History, Developments and Future Perspectives**

Mario Peucker and Rauf Ceylan (Eds)  
May 2017 - Springer

The book focusses on the historical emergence and contemporary challenges of Muslim community organizations and their struggle for recognition as ordinary voices in multiethnic and multi-religious civil societies of Western democracies. It offers a range of different perspectives on how Muslim communities position themselves and navigate the social and political landscape shaped by, on the one hand, normalization of ethno-religious diversity and, on the other, ongoing misrecognition and essentialisation of Muslims in the West. The contributions from internationally acclaimed scholars as well as emerging researchers from Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland and Australia shine new light on both country-specific similarities and divergences.

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### **Tunisian Islamic left and the Arab Spring (Arabic Edition)**

Mamdouh Al-shikh  
2017 - CreateSpace Independent Publishing

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### **Using Gramsci: A New Approach**

Michele Filippini  
2016 – Pluto Press

This is a new approach to one of the greatest political theorists, Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci's Prison Notebooks are one of the most popular Marxist texts available and continue to inspire readers across the world. In *Using Gramsci*, Michele Filippini proposes a new approach based on the analysis of previously ignored concepts in his works, creating a book which stands apart. Including chapters on ideology, the individual, collective organisms, society, crisis and temporality, *Using Gramsci* offers a new pattern in Gramscian studies aimed to speak to the broader audience of social sciences scholars. The tools that are provided in this book extend the uses of Gramsci beyond the field of political theory and Marxism, while remaining firmly rooted in his writings. Working from the original Italian texts, Filippini also examines the more traditional areas of Gramsci's thought, including hegemony, organic intellectuals and civil society.

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## **JOURNAL ARTICLES & OTHER ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS**

### **Being and Belonging in Transnational Salafism - Informality, Social Capital and Authority in European and Middle Eastern Salafi Networks**

Zoltan Pall and Martijn de Koning

Journal of Muslims in Europe, Volume 6, Issue 1, pages 76 – 103

This article is an inquiry into how the transnational networks of Salafism in Europe and the Middle East are structured by looking at two case studies: one about a Lebanese-Palestinian preacher in Sweden and one about a Dutch preacher in the Netherlands and the UK. By presenting these case studies we explain the predominance of informality in these networks, and highlight the different ways in which they link European Salafi preachers to the Middle East, yielding different types of social capital. Our findings are based on ethnographic fieldwork in Lebanon, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK between 2007 and 2012.

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### **The Educational Context of Islamist Activism: Elite Students and Religious Institutions in Egypt**

Neil Ketchley and Michael Biggs

Mobilization: An International Quarterly: March 2017, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 57-76

The literature on student activism finds that protesters come from prestigious universities and from the social sciences and humanities. Studies of political Islam, however, emphasize the prominence of engineering and medical students from secular institutions. Contributing to both literatures, this paper investigates Islamist students targeted by security forces in Egypt following the coup of 2013. Matching 1,352 arrested students to the population of male undergraduates, it analyzes how the arrest rate varied across 348 university faculties. We find that activists came disproportionately from institutions that provided a religiously inflected education. This contradicts the conventional emphasis on secular institutions. Most importantly, we find that Islamists tended to come from faculties that required higher grades and that admitted students who studied science in secondary school. Controlling for grades, engineering and medicine were not especially prominent. These findings suggest that Islamist students conform to the more general pattern: political activism attracts the academic elite.

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## **Constructing a Collective Identity Across Conflict Lines: Joint Israeli-Palestinian Peace Movement Organizations**

Michelle

Mobilization: An International Quarterly: June 2016, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 193-212.

For collective action to occur and be sustainable, social movements must construct collective identities and develop a sense of themselves as collective actors. This is especially difficult for movements that work across deep political and cultural chasms, and in situations of protracted conflict. Yet, there has been almost no research on how movement organizations, which work across conflict lines in situations of protracted conflict, are able to establish this sense of cohesion. This project investigates how two joint Israeli-Palestinian peace movement organizations are able to construct shared collective identities in a political environment where each side is cast as the enemy of the other. The findings indicate that in protracted conflicts, trust building is a distinct and critical process inherent in constructing a collective identity. The findings similarly reveal that while storytelling goes a long way toward establishing trust initially, ultimately, collective identity construction depends on visible confirmatory actions.

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## **War, States, and Contention: From Tilly to the War on Terror**

Sidney Tarrow

Mobilization: An International Quarterly: March 2016, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 1-22.

In his vast body of social scientific work, Charles Tilly made two fundamental contributions to our understanding of the development of the modern state. First, rather than developing naturally out of collective life or as the result of constitution making, Tilly argued that states grew out of war and preparations for war. In a second part of his work, he saw state development intersecting with changes in contentious politics—at a minimum through the action of social movements within civil society, and at a maximum through revolution. The first part of Tilly's work is best known in political science, particularly in international relations and the study of the state, while the second is better known in sociology. However, Tilly never attempted to bring the two major strands of his work together. Bridging war, states, and contention is the goal of this essay, which begins “with Tilly,” proceeds to a critical reflection “contra Tilly,” and concludes by going “beyond Tilly” to attempt a Tillian analysis of the effects of America's post-9/11 wars on the American state and on contentious politics.

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## NEWS PIECES & COMMENTARY

### **Learning Arabic from Egypt's Revolution**

Peter Hessler

The New Yorker, 17 April 2017

When you move to another country as an adult, the language flows around you like a river. Perhaps a child can immediately abandon himself to the current, but most older people will begin by picking out the words and phrases that seem to matter most, which is what I did after my family moved to Cairo, in October of 2011. It was the first fall after the Arab Spring; Hosni Mubarak, the former President, had been forced to resign the previous February. Every weekday, my wife, Leslie, and I met with a tutor for two hours at a language school called Kalimat, where we studied Egyptian Arabic. At the end of each session, we made a vocabulary list. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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### **Alexandria's church bombing and the deepening of melancholia**

Amro Ali

Mada Masr, 12 April 2017

It was not supposed to be like this. The week leading up to the annual Sham el-Nassim holiday is usually filled with joy and elation as we welcome the spring. And it certainly was not supposed to be like this for Christians on their holy Palm Sunday. Twenty-eight victims lost to the bombing at St. George Coptic Orthodox Church in Tanta, and 17 lost to the bombing at St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria. Dark clouds had spread on Sunday morning, and I had remarked to a friend that this was quite unusually gloomy for April weather in Alexandria. It turned out to be fitting for the events that were to come in a few hours. Alexandria, historically, seems to understand itself as a city when it is confronted with tragedy. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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### **[Egypt:] Parliament approves Emergency Law amendment, permitting indefinite detention**

Mada Masr, 11 April 2017

A three-month state of emergency and an amendment to the Emergency Law were approved by Parliament in the legislative body's Tuesday session, after the Cabinet and presidency officially declared the exceptional rule of law on Monday, and Parliament's legislative committee discussed the amendment proposed by Alliance to Support Egypt MP Tharwat Bekhit earlier in the day. The

amendment to the Emergency Law will now be sent to the State Council for an advisory legal review, after which it will be sent back to Parliament for a final vote and then presidential ratification and publication in the Egyptian Gazette. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **In Egypt, twin bombings and double trouble**

Amr Khalifa

Middle East Eye, 10 April 2017

Twin bombings, pools of blood, at least 44 dead: it's a week before Easter and both Christian and Muslim Egyptians find themselves in the middle of deadly standoff between the Islamic State (IS) and the Egyptian government. Only 110 days after the last major church bombing, the government insists it is victorious in its fight against IS in Sinai and refuses to see the reality of an insurgency spreading across the Nile Delta. Such stubbornness has not only borne deadly attacks, but has also served to undercut an all-important Christian support base for an ailing regime. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Thousands protest Palestinian Authority pay cut in Gaza**

Al-Jazeera English, 8 April 2017

Thousands of Palestinian Authority (PA) employees have demonstrated in Gaza City as protests continue against a PA decision to impose drastic salary cuts for its employees in Gaza. Demonstrators gathered in al-Saraya square in central Gaza City on Saturday in the largest protest since the 30 percent cut was announced, calling on PA leaders like Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and Finance Minister Shukri Bishara to resign. "I have many financial commitments and without my salary, I'll go to jail," Rami Abu Abdu, a father of eight, told Al Jazeera. "My children are dependent on my income. If the president doesn't retract the decision, we will end up in jail because we can't pay our debts," he said, referring to PA President Mahmoud Abbas. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Al-Azhar and Sisi's Regime: Structural Roots of Disagreement**

Belal Abdallah

Atlantic Council, 7 April 2017

Tensions between Egypt's religious leadership and its political leadership—represented by the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed el-Tayeb, and Egypt's President respectively—have reached a point where

they can no longer be concealed. The underlying disagreement has become public, and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has raised this issue in his public speeches, the most recent of which dealt with verbal divorce, to the point where Sisi told el-Tayeb, “you’ve exhausted me, honorable Imam.” The Council of Senior Scholars, which is headed by the Sheikh of al-Azhar, rejected Sisi’s call for divorce to be documented in order for it to be recognized. As further evidence of this disagreement, the al-Azhar Sheikh addressed the issue of democracy and human rights at a conference on renewing religious discourse in November 2015, a time when Sisi’s regime was facing harsh criticism of its human rights practices. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Egypt’s women turn to social media to recount childhood sexual violence**

Mada Masr, 6 April 2017

Women in Egypt have seized upon the existence of a social media hashtag in the past few days to relay accounts of sexual violence and harassment they experienced at ages as young as five years old and that often involved relatives or close family members. The testimonies communicated through the hashtag #عمري\_كان\_تحرش\_محاولة\_أول or “My first sexual harassment experience was at age” dominated discussion on several media platforms. Several television programs inviting many of the women who shared their experience online to further expound on their accounts. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Egypt’s Coming Revolt of the Poor**

Zeinab Abul-Magd

Foreign Policy, 31 March 2017

Earlier this month, bread riots erupted in Egypt. Thousands of angry demonstrators blocked roads and crowded around state-affiliated bakeries, protesting a government decision to reduce the number of loaves of subsidized bread each family could purchase. As security forces clashed with rioters in poor localities in Alexandria, Kafr El Sheikh, Minya, and Asyut, protesters chanted, “We want to eat!” Social media activists have dubbed the movement “the supply riots” (*intifadat al-tamwin*). When President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi meets with President Donald Trump in the White House on April 3, he will no doubt portray the protests as a thing of the past and his military regime as a bastion of stability in the region. However, unrest is almost certain to return to Egypt, and the country’s army is responsible for triggering it. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Israel's Ugly New Travel Ban Tells the World: Stay Away if You Don't Agree With Us**

Allison Kaplan Sommer

Haaretz, 8 March 2017

At first glance, Israel's sweeping travel ban passed by the Knesset on Monday night essentially changes nothing. The authorities at Israel's borders and airports already have complete discretion to keep anyone out, and numerous prospective visitors have been blacklisted and turned away because they are believed to be hostile to Israel. [...] But, actually, it changes everything. The statement it makes and the message it sends - that those who so deeply object to the occupation that they choose not to buy settlement products--are no longer welcome to visit, see and experience their country is a drastic shift in Israel's relationship with the outside world. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Protest, outrage follow assassination of Palestinian youth leader Basil al-Araj by occupation forces**

Samidoun - Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, 7 March 2017

Basil al-Araj stood "with his gun in one hand and his pen in the other, a solid, conscious fighter who would not compromise one iota on principles or constants and who did not melt like some intellectuals in the acid of temptations or acceptance of the status quo," said imprisoned Palestinian leader Ahmad Sa'adat, the general secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestinian leftist party, in a statement from Israeli prison on the assassination of the Palestinian youth leader by attacking Israeli occupation forces on Monday, 6 March. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **'Basil al-Araj was a beacon for Palestinian youth'**

Shatha Hammad, Zena Tahhan

Al-Jazeera English, 7 March 2017

The curtain on the window from which Basil al-Araj, 34, would look out onto Ramallah is slightly drawn back. Water bottles line the edge of the window, in an old house in the city where he went into hiding more than two months ago. Cigarette butts are scattered on the table, next to a set of books that Basil spent his time reading. A cup of coffee still sits next to the last meal he consumed, including some beans. Dried blood stains the floor of the house. At 2am on the morning of March 6, the sound of gunfire reverberated through the streets of Ramallah, before the Israeli army announced they had killed the man they had been hunting for months. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## Popular resistance in Palestine: Decline and hope for change

Thimna Bunte

+972 Blog, 7 March 2017

A decade ago popular protests against the separation wall, settlements, and occupation were the great promise of the Palestinian struggle. Now a new book takes a look at why these demonstrations were never actually able to bring out the Palestinian masses to the streets, and what activists can learn for the future. In what may be the most insightful, comprehensive, and sensitive academic study of today's Palestinian popular resistance, Marwan Darweish and Andrew Rigby's new book, *Popular Protest in Palestine – The Uncertain Future of Unarmed Resistance*, provides an excellent analysis of Palestinian unarmed resistance to the Israeli occupation, and the reasons why it has not developed into a popular, mass movement. Woven into their overview is an analysis of Palestinian unarmed resistance in a different role — one that opens the possibility of identifying new and more effective strategies, and thereby a potential for hope. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## Protests Erupt in Idlib as Turkey Steals Syrian Land with New Border Wall

Paul Antonopoulos

Global Research, 2 March 2017

Protests have erupted as Turkey has constructed a border wall that penetrates into Syria's Idlib province proper, in what has been described as an illegal annexation of Syrian territory. Jenan Moussa of Al-Aan Television has chronicled the protests against the Turkish annexation of Syrian land. Turkey has constructed walls that have reaches the Idlib villages of Hatya, Az Zawf, Darriyah, with farmers worried they will lose land, according to Moussa. She then explains how civilians who were initially pro-Turkish are now turning against them for stealing land. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## The World Against a Yemeni Revolution

Malak Ali

Al-Masdar, 1 March 2017

Yemen went through major changes in the past few years. It has been considered a poor country that is still suffering until this day. The people of Yemen attempted to adjust the conditions they live in, however they have not received the results they wanted. Two main influential attempts to make a difference are the reasons behind the major changes in Yemen. It all began with the Yemeni revolution in 2011, followed by the Houthis or "Ansarullah" influence over Yemen leading to the Saudi American aggression on Yemen. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Telling the Stories of Egypt's Endangered Journalists**

Mohammed Elshamy  
NYT, 1 March 2017

I was on a bus heading back to New York when I got news from Egypt that my brother Abdullah had been released from solitary confinement. I was so overwhelmed with joy, all I could do was scream hysterically. Then I realized: Our friend and colleague Shawkan wasn't so lucky. I grew quiet, as the thought of Shawkan still imprisoned left me wondering. When would Shawkan and his family have their moment of relief and happiness? After conducting a hunger strike and suffering from deteriorating health, my older brother, Abdullah Elshamy, was been released from Scorpion High Security Prison in June 2014. Abdullah was a former Abuja-based reporter who inspired me to pursue a career in photojournalism. He was arrested along with Mahmoud Abou Zeid — better known as Shawkan — a respected freelance photojournalist based in Cairo. They were among thousands arrested in August of the previous year when security forces violently dispersed participants at the Rabaa al-'Adaweya sit-in. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Egypt detains 25 Port Said residents, including 6 minors, for protesting stadium tragedy death sentences**

Mada Masr, 1 March 2017

The prosecution ordered the detention of 25 Port Said residents, including six minors, who were arrested during protests against the upholding of death sentences for defendants over the Port Said Stadium tragedy in 2012. Over 100 people were arrested during Monday's protests, according to lawyer Hany al-Gibaly, who is representing a number of them. Gibaly told Mada Masr that 25 people were detained for 15 days pending investigations, and six minors were detained for four days. The remainder of those arrested may be referred to the National Security Agency for further investigation, he added. Charges against the detainees range from illegal gathering, to use of force, burning a police vehicle and resisting authorities, according to Gibaly. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Palestinian women lead resistance in Budrus**

Jaclynn Ashly

Al-Jazeera English, 25 February 2017

When Israeli military jeeps approached the village of Budrus last month, every resident was notified within minutes. Through the speakers of the village's mosque, a warning was issued: Israeli forces had entered the area and were preparing to demolish a house. Men, women and children rushed towards the site of the impending demolition. The village's women were the first on the scene. "There was no organising meeting or discussion beforehand. We knew right when we arrived exactly what we had to do to stop them," resident Najia Awad told Al Jazeera. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Ahwaz protests in Iran: A sign of things to come?**

Heshmat Alavi

Al-Arabiya English, 22 February 2017

Tensions continue to rise between the new US administration and Iran with a series of actions and reactions. Most recently, Iran has launched a new round of military drills, embarking on more provocative actions, while US allies such as Saudi Arabia and Israel have joined in by issuing what is described as twin warnings to Iran. All the while, what should not go neglected is the simmering status inside Iran. The society is considered a powder keg as unrest continues to grow after 38 years of the mullahs' atrocious dictatorship. The last four years of the so-called "moderate" or "reformist" Iranian President Hassan Rowhani has also failed to yield any demands raised by the people despite claiming to hold the "key" to all problems. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Bahrain hit by protests on uprising anniversary**

Middle East Eye, 15 February 2017

Demonstrators marked the sixth anniversary of an anti-government uprising in Bahrain, while an explosion wounded two civilian passers-by in a village outside the capital Manama, the interior ministry said on Wednesday. The ministry did not say what caused Tuesday evening's blast, but protestors sometimes throw petrol bombs during the sporadic protests that still grip the Sunni-ruled but Shia-majority kingdom since the bloody suppression of the 2011 uprising. "Terrorist blast in Sitra causes minor injuries to a married couple passing the site. Police at the scene," the ministry said on its Twitter account without elaborating. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Bahrain: Fears of further violent crackdown on uprising anniversary**

Amnesty International, 14 February 2017

Bahrain is on the verge of a human rights crisis, as recent weeks have seen a pattern of increased repression, characterized by violence against protesters, executions, arbitrary detentions and a crackdown on freedom of expression. "Bahrain is at a tipping point. The first two months of 2017 alone saw an alarming upsurge in arbitrary and abusive force by security forces as well as the first executions since the uprising in 2011," said Lynn Maalouf, Deputy Director at Amnesty International's Beirut regional office. "The authorities must rein in the security forces, respect the rights to peaceful assembly, association and expression, and stop executions, otherwise a full blown human rights crisis risks breaking out." *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Resistance Compounded: Sudan's Female Protest Movement**

Nafisa Eltahir

Elephantmedia, 14 February 2017

Late last year, public outcry in the streets, homes, and social media feeds of Sudan followed the implementation of several unpopular economic policy decisions. Reminiscent of many earlier moments in Sudanese history, the loudest voices condemning the government have been distinctly female. As women all over the world now march against Donald Trump and his inane policies, Sudanese women look on with a knowing familiarity. Liberation of the exchange rate by the Sudanese government in early November closed the threefold gap between the official Sudanese Pound-to-Dollar rate and existing devalued black market prices. Prices immediately spiked, most notably for fuel, electricity and medicines. The drug price surge became the most common rallying cry, and the anger was compounded by the feeling that the government had been intentionally mismanaging its budget. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Sudanese man 'burns himself alive' in protest against president**

The New Arab, 12 February 2017

A Sudanese man has attempted to self-immolate in the capital Khartoum after shouting criticism of longtime Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. The man set himself on fire this week near the presidential palace in the latest act of protest against the Sudanese government. "I am Sudanese and Bashir is a dictator," he reportedly shouted before he made the suicide attempt. Eyewitness to the incident told [\*The New Arab\*](#) that the man poured gasoline on himself and set himself ablaze, prompting onlookers to intervene to put out the flames. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Egypt: Workers Charged over Protests**

Human Rights Watch, 9 February 2017

Egyptian prosecutors should drop all charges against at least 26 workers who were arrested and charged in recent months in connection with peaceful strikes and protests, Human Rights Watch said today. The parliament should also revise a new trade unions draft law to fully legalize independent unions and amend penal code provisions that criminalize the right to organize and strike. Since May 2016, police have arrested scores of striking workers from various industries. Most were later released, but prosecutors have referred dozens for trial, including some before a military court. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Chair in Social Anthropology, University of Amsterdam**

Deadline: 20 May 2017

The Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG) is the largest social-science educational and research institution in the Netherlands. The Faculty serves around 8,000 students in numerous Bachelor's and Master's programmes in Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, Communication Science, Psychology, Social Geography, International Development Studies and Educational Sciences. The academic staff is employed in education as well as research. There are over 1,100 employees at the Faculty, located in a number of buildings in the centre of Amsterdam.

The Department of Anthropology is one of the Departments in the FMG. Research and education are carried out by special institutes. The College of Social Sciences (CSS) and the Graduate School for the Social Sciences (GSSS) are responsible for the undergraduate and graduate teaching programmes in the social sciences. Research takes place under the aegis of the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), a multidisciplinary research institute, the biggest one of its kind in the Netherlands and possibly in Europe. The broad scope and pluralism of our education and research programmes are inspired by and reflect a strong degree of internationalisation.

The Department of Anthropology has an opening for a Chair in Social Anthropology, which is located in the AISSR program group: Moving Matters: People, Goods, Power and Ideas. The post involves 0.6 fte devoted to teaching and 0.4 fte devoted to research and managerial tasks.

#### Job description

The chair in Social Anthropology is located within the Department of Anthropology and performs a key role within the Program Group 'Moving Matters: People, Goods, Power and Ideas'. The successful candidate will pursue innovative ethnographically based and theoretically oriented research into one or more of the following fields: contemporary and/or socio-historical processes of inequality, **conflict and protest**, gender, race and class dynamics, mobility and political economy.

Geographical area of specialization is open but some preference will be given to candidates working on Asia and/or the Global South. Candidates' work should demonstrate the importance of Asia and/or the Global South for anthropological theory. The holder of the position will be responsible for teaching in general social anthropology, ethnographic methods, comparative-historical approaches, and critical development theory. The holder of the position will share responsibility for the Moving Matters research group within the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR).

#### Tasks:

Play a pivotal role in consolidating the longstanding expertise at the University of Amsterdam in the study of inequality and bringing a comparative-historical approach to the teaching and research of the Anthropology department, especially within the PG Moving Matters of the AISSR; stimulate and lead the study of inequality in the context of the Global South within teaching and research at a national and international level; acquire and help acquire external funding for research; actively contribute to the development of anthropology by publishing widely and by participating in national and international research networks and educational initiatives; carry out administrative tasks in the Department of Anthropology, the AISSR and interdisciplinary centres, teaching programs, etc.

#### Requirements

Applicants will have the following credentials:

- a PhD in Anthropology or cognate disciplines.
- strong general knowledge of the fields of social anthropology and of comparative-historical approaches;
- knowledge and experience in leading research projects and teams;
- a commitment to the research agenda of the AISSR in general and the Moving Matters Program Group in particular, and to enhance interdisciplinary collaborations with counterparts in other departments;
- an outstanding track record of empirical research on themes relevant to the research and teaching profile of the Moving Matters group, as evidenced by a strong publication record in international peer reviewed journals and/or books published by internationally recognized press;
- extensive research experience preferably in the Global South and Asia;
- a demonstrated ability to acquire significant research funding from external sources;

- a thorough mastery of ethnographic and comparative-historical research methods;
- a proven record of high-quality teaching at the Bachelor's, Master's and PhD levels, and a commitment to teaching general and specialized courses in the Bachelor's and Master's programs in Anthropology and in the interdisciplinary Research Master Social Sciences;
- a track record of administration and a commitment to carrying out administrative tasks;
- adequate knowledge of Dutch, or the willingness to acquire working fluency of Dutch within five years;
- a track record of participation in public debates relating to inequality in the Global South;
- a Dutch Basic Higher Education Teaching Qualification (or foreign equivalent), or a willingness to acquire this qualification soon after appointment.

#### Further information

For more information about this position, please contact:

Professor Robert Pool, Chair of the Department of Anthropology

#### Appointment

Depending on qualifications and experience, the full-time salary will range from €5.219 to €9.174 (scale H2/1) gross per month, in conformity with the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities. Secondary benefits at Dutch universities are attractive and include 8% holiday pay and an 8.3% end of year bonus.

#### Job application

Applications, by email only, should include a:

- concise statement of motivation (2 pages max.);
- CV, including a complete list of publications;
- statement of future research plans (2 pages max.);
- statement of teaching philosophy (1 page max.);
- list of three referees.

At this stage of the procedure, please do not send letters of reference.

Correspondence will be in English. All documents should be collected as one single pdf attachment and sent to [application-antr-fmg@uva.nl](mailto:application-antr-fmg@uva.nl) not later than Saturday 20 May 2017.

*More information and application [here](#)*

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## **Post-doctoral Research Fellow / Political economy, GIGA German Institute fo Global and Area Studies**

Deadline: 7 May 2017

The GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies / Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien is an independent social-science research institute based in Hamburg. It analyses political, social and economic developments in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, and links this knowledge to questions of global significance. It combines region-specific analysis with innovative comparative research on accountability and participation, growth and development, peace and security, and power and ideas. The GIGA seeks to appoint a Post-doctoral Research Fellow to conduct comparative research in political economy, with a **focus on political mobilisation and radicalisation**.

Applications are invited for a full-time position starting as soon as possible, with an initial contract of three years and an option for additional three years, subject to a successful evaluation. The position is designed for further professional qualification as defined in §2 WissZeitVG (Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act). The salary is commensurate with TV-AVH / TVöD EG 13.

The successful candidate will

- expand the GIGA's expertise in comparative and regional research with specific reference to:
  - o Populism and political participation
  - o Mobilisation, radicalisation, and conflict
  - o Clientelism, rent-seeking, and corruption
- be an active member of the GIGA and at least one Research Programme
- pursue a targeted publication strategy, acquire third-party funding, and conduct research-based knowledge transfer

Your qualifications:

- Outstanding doctorate in economics, political science or other social sciences
- Expertise on one or more of GIGA's research regions
- Excellent academic record in relevant fields, demonstrated by publications in renowned peer-reviewed journals and/or leading publishing houses
- Excellent quantitative and/or qualitative methodological skills
- Experience in interdisciplinary and comparative research and interest in comparative and cross-area studies
- Fit with the GIGA's approach to research
- English-language proficiency; additional language skills relevant to research region are an asset
- Successful record in third-party funding acquisition is an asset

Part-time options will be considered, if so desired by the successful candidate. The reconciliation of work and family life is of great importance to the institute. The GIGA promotes gender equality and actively encourages applications from women. Among equally qualified applicants, women will receive preferential consideration in those areas in which they are underrepresented.

Please fill out the GIGA application form (found at [www.giga-hamburg.de/en/vacancies](http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/vacancies)) and send it

with your full application (Ref.-No. GIGA-17-05) including relevant supporting documentation (cover letter, CV, credentials/diplomas/certificates, two letters of recommendation, list of publications, max. two work samples, work plan for first three years with its fit to the GIGA research agenda) to:

Kerstin Labusga, GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies,  
Neuer Jungfernstieg 21, 20354 Hamburg, Germany  
Email: jobs-ias@giga-hamburg.de (email applications are particularly welcome).

Screening of applications will begin on 10 April 2017.  
The GIGA has extended the application period until 7 May 2017.

*More information and application [here](#)*

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