



SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POPULAR MOBILISATION IN THE MENA

Digest of Current Publications and Events

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MIDDLE EAST STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

November 17-20, 2016
Boston, Massachusetts

Deadline for applications: February 16, 2016

MESA is primarily concerned with the area encompassing Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Israel, Pakistan, and the countries of the Arab World from the seventh century to modern times. Other regions, including Spain, Southeastern Europe, China and the former Soviet Union, also are included for the periods in which their territories were parts of the Middle Eastern empires or were under the influence of Middle Eastern civilization. Comparative work is encouraged.

Please visit: <http://mesana.org/annual-meeting/member-calls.html> for a list of member calls for participation (panel organizers looking for papers; paper presenters looking for panels).

More information [here](#)

[The following panels could be of particular interest to members of the SMPM in MENA listserv:]

Informal Activism in the MENA Region: Class Politics, the Subalterns and Rebellious Subjectivities

Panel Proposal Middle East Studies Association (MESA) 2016, 17-20 November, Boston

Panel Chair: Dr. Paola Rivetti, Dublin City University

Since the uprisings in 2010-2011, new scholarly attention has been paid to the analysis of popular mobilisation and the dynamics of protest in the region. New studies represented a partial break from the extant studies of political change and mobilisations thanks to the inclusion of 'new' theories, such as social movement theory, and to the enlargement of the picture under examination with the inclusion of critiques of neoliberalism and capitalism, or the action of informal networks/groups of protesters (Khatib and Lust, 2014; Chalcraft, 2014; Hanieh, 2013; Achcar, 2013). The revival of the debate on popular mobilisations breaks with past examinations of civil society and democratization, and with the latter's focus on formal organisations (NGOs) and liberal activism. The return of class politics and the subaltern as meaningful analytical categories (Challand, 2014) signals a qualitative shift in the analysis of activism and political change in the field, in continuity with the relatively older literature on poor people's/subaltern politics (Bayat, 1997).

This panel aims to build on this partial shift of perspective and calls for papers that either i) focus on what can be called 'informal activism,' namely loose and non-legalised networks/groups of activists, beyond NGOs, formal trade unions, liberal/leftist political parties, or ii) focus on 'legalised' groups. In any case, the contributions have to utilise a theoretical/analytical toolkit that may advance our understanding of subaltern politics and the production of rebellious subjectivity in the region.

Please send your paper proposal to Dr. Paola Rivetti (paola.rivetti@dcu.ie) **by Friday 5 February 2016** to allow the paper selection and panel submission via myMESA.

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Beyond Nationalism: Clashing Identities between Islamism and Authoritarianism in the Post-Arab Spring

Following what was once hailed as an Arab 'Spring' or 'Arab Awakening', the Arab region has been plagued with violence, socio-political clashes and rising poverty. From a brutal civil war in Libya, Syria and Iraq to a clash between Islamist groups and the military in Egypt and rise of the so-called jihadist group IS (Islamic State), events in the region remain fluid and unpredictable. What is prevalent, however, is a conflict over identity, religion and social boundaries in the post-Arab Spring.

Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism (SEN) would like to invite contributions to a panel at the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) conference taking place on November 17-20, 2016, in Boston.

Accepted participants will be invited to submit their full articles for consideration for a special issue on the SEN-MESA panel. Submissions should tackle questions related to emerging identities and social boundaries in the post-Arab Spring. What were the key events, discourses, ideologies, and (re)allocations of power rooted in the Arab Spring that encouraged the establishment of some social boundaries over others? Possible topics include but are not restricted to the following:

- Social and political conflicts over identity in the Arab region following the Arab 'Spring'.
- Existing and potential conflicts over religion between secularism, political and militant Islam, including the rise of militant groups such as ISIS.
- Human rights, particularly of minority groups, in the region following the Arab 'Spring'.
- Where does the question of nationalism in the Arab region stand today.
- The relationship between identity politics and socio-economic policies following the Arab 'Spring'.

Panel organizers welcome submissions of work in progress as well as contributions from established scholars, research students, post-doctoral fellows and lecturers in the early stages of their career. We invite scholars to submit an abstract between 250-500 words on the topic for consideration. If accepted, authors will be asked to edit their abstracts according to the submission guidelines of MESA for a collective panel submission before February 16, 2016.

Deadline for submission: February 09, 2016

Please send an abstract and a short bio (not exceeding 200 words) to dmansour@aucegypt.edu for consideration. Authors will be notified on the status of their submission on February 12, 2016.

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OTHER CALLS FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

Call for submissions (Summer 2016) : The Journal of the Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia (ACME)

The *Journal of the Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia (ACME)* is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to the anthropological studies of all societies and cultures in the Middle East and Central Eurasia.

Its scope is to publish original research by social scientists not only in the area of anthropology but also in sociology, folklore, religion, material culture and related social sciences. It includes all areas of modern and contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia (Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, China) including topics on minority groups and religious themes. The journal also will review monographic studies, reference works, results of conferences, and international workshops. ACME also publishes review essays, reviews of books and multimedia products (including music, films, and web sites) relevant to the main aims of the journal. All submissions for articles are peer-reviewed.

ACME is published with the financial support and collaboration of Groupe Sociétés, Religions, Laïcités, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), France.

More information [here](#)

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Workshop: The Arab Uprisings and National Identities: Interrogating the Politics of Culture and Relations of “Soft Power” in the Maghreb.

May 12th-13th 2016, Perugia (Italy)

Deadline for applications: **25th January 2016**

Organizers: Anna Baldinetti, Lorenzo Medici, Charis Boutieri

This research project aims to explore the intricate and multi-layered encounter between arabization policies in the Maghreb countries from the 1970s to the present and other shapers of cultural identity both internal and external to the nation-state. In particular, the project addresses the question of whether the Arab Uprisings have substantially modified or even reversed earlier politics of culture in the Maghreb region. From an imposed Arabization as the foundation of a national identity after independence to the transnational Arabization mediated either through financing curricula and satellite TV channels such as al-Jazeera by Saudi Arabia and Qatar respectively or by international agencies (UNESCO, The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and ISESCO), modern standard Arabic occupies an important position in articulations of national citizenship in the Maghreb. Part of the goals of these policies has been to prevent further assimilation to western cultures of the presumed authentic Arabo-Muslim identities of the national Maghrebi population and

the sizable Maghrebi diasporas. At the same time, the widespread diffusion of the English language, either as the indirect consequence of global market integration and cultural globalisation, and/or as the direct product of sustained policies of cultural influence of the United States and the United Kingdom, has become difficult to ignore; this is especially the case in the post-revolt context. The Arab Uprisings appeared to open up a space for the redefinition of the politics of language and culture in relation to national identity and democratic citizenship. One example of this newly carved space was the early post-revolutionary Libyan state that quickly pushed for the recognition of the linguistic and cultural rights of the Imazighen, the Tuareg, and the Tebu.

Language politics and language rights are among the most pressing axes of contemporary politics of cultural influence and recognition and of politics *tout court*. The inclusion of linguistic rights as human rights in international law and the foregrounding of linguistic conflicts in various contexts invite the attention of both scholars and policy-makers. What is relationship between language politics and rights and relations of “soft power”? Through the concept of “soft power,” a largely under-scrutinized notion that alludes to various types of linguistic and cultural interaction that affect socio-economic and political processes, this project will address the “cultural” aspects of transition in the Maghreb. This research project will attempt to respond to the following queries:

What are the diverse manifestations of multilingualism in the Maghreb after the Arab Uprising?
To what extent are the decades of Arabization without the accommodation of minority linguistic rights held accountable for the stalling of democratization in post-Uprising Maghreb?
What are the consequences of the promotion and diffusion of western languages (predominantly English as a replacement of French) on the political contest for cultural “soft power” in the Maghreb?
Using case studies from the Maghreb, this research proposes:
To analyse the role of regional actors (Qatar and Saudi Arabia) in the unfolding of the politics of Arabization in the decades proceeding and the years proceeding the Arab Uprising.
To interrogate the workings of “soft power” in relation to western influence in the region during political transition.
To scrutinize the contemporary politics of culture in the Maghreb after 2011 in relation to dilemmas of national identity.
To examine language politics among the Maghrebi diaspora (for instance, actions of diffusion and teaching of the Arabic language within Western-based Maghrebi communities)

Submission of Abstracts for Consideration: Please send a 450-word abstract and paper title to the team of organizers **by 25th January 2016**. We welcome contributions from all academic disciplines that can provide a qualitative evaluation of their proposed topic based on original research. We encourage contributors to emphasize their methodological framework and highlight the contribution of their work in relation to the specific objectives of the project. More information [here](#)

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CfP: Avenues of Social and Political Change: Five Years of Contention in the Middle East and North Africa

April 8, 2016

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Abstract Submission Deadline: February 5, 2016

Five years after the eruption of mass protests across North Africa and the Middle East, citizens of these countries now live under contrasting conditions. While some countries, such as Tunisia, have made headway on the road to freedom and social justice, others, are embroiled in civil strife, like Syria, or are being crushed by the return of authoritarianism, like Egypt. Yet despite the zigzagging trajectory that these uprisings have thus far treaded, new channels and imaginings of social, political and economic change have opened up over the past five years. This conference will explore current possibilities that have been opened up through and in the aftermath of the grassroots uprisings that have swept through the region since 2011 and the sustained struggles for these arenas as well as the counter-efforts that have attempted to constrain and constrict them. Instead of succumbing to a choice between either presenting a triumphant narrative or emphasizing the democratic setbacks facing social movements, activists, and the population at large, this conference will attempt to reframe the question to ask what actual and concrete opportunities for economic, social and political transformation have unfolded beyond and despite of the historical and structural constraints that are in place.

Graduate students are invited to submit proposals (250-400 words) to present working projects or completed research papers on the following themes: (De)democratization and the limits of authoritarianism; prospects for electoral politics; re-imagining public space; the role of labor strikes and worker unions; political economy; collective memory/amnesia and the production of historical narratives; gender politics; activism and political subjectivities; Islamists and conceptions of the secular/religious, resurgence of nationalism; state power and representations

Paper abstracts and inquiries about the conference are to be sent to: ascmenaconference@gmail.com

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TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

Film Screening: The Tentmakers of Cairo

23 January 2016, 2:00pm

Location: The British Museum, London

Filmed over three years, this feature-length documentary tells the story of Egypt's struggle with democracy through the lives of a small community of artists striving to maintain their ancient art form. After 18 days of unrest in early 2011, amidst chants for "Bread, Freedom and Justice". Hosam, his brother Ekramy, and stitchers Hany and Tarek all find themselves thrown into an unknown and unpredictable world as President Mubarak's 40 year rule is brought to an end.

Rejoicing and celebrations for the revolution soon turn to conflict and our small street, a microcosm of Egyptian society, is infiltrated by the propaganda, rumors and paranoia that constantly blares from television sets, radios and mobile phones in each and every shop. Survival is no longer about the need of the market as a whole, but about each individual. Soon our heroes find themselves pitted against each other, as shops are burnt to the ground, traditions walked away from and poverty becomes more and more real. More information [here](#)

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Book talk: Popular Protest in Palestine: The Uncertain Future of Unarmed Resistance

26 January, 5:45 PM

Location: Khalili Lecture Theatre SOAS Campus, Russel Square, London

Speaker: Marwan Darweish (Coventry University)

Talk to mark the publication of *Popular Protest in Palestine: The Uncertain Future of Unarmed Resistance* (co-authored with Andrew Rigby - Pluto, 2015) which provides an overview and analysis of the role and significance of unarmed civil (popular) resistance in the Palestinian national movement. The main focus is on the contemporary popular resistance movement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), but it is prefaced by a historical review of the thread of unarmed civil resistance that has run throughout the history of the Palestinian liberation struggle. *Popular Protest in Palestine* also addresses the international dimensions of the Palestinian struggle, focusing in particular on the BDS campaign, the role of international solidarity activists in the OPT and beyond, and the changing forms of engagement developed by international agencies seeking to work on the roots of the conflict whilst fulfilling their humanitarian aid mandates. More information [here](#)

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Film Screening: Where Should the Birds Fly by Fida Qishta

26 January, 6:30 PM

Location: P21 Gallery, 21 Chalton Street, London, NW1 1JD

Where Should The Birds Fly is the first film about Gaza made by Palestinians living the reality of Israel's siege and blockade of this tiny enclave. It is the story of two young women, survivors of Israel's Operation Cast Lead. Mona Samouni, now 12 years old and the filmmaker, Fida Qishta, now 27, represent the spirit and future of Palestinians. The film is a visual documentation of the Goldstone Report. But it is so much more. It reveals the strength and hope, the humanity and humor that flourishes among the people of Gaza. Few films document so powerfully and personally the impact of modern warfare and sanctions on a civilian population.

The film itself breaks the blockade. Filmmakers in Gaza have never had the opportunity to make a full length, professional documentary of their reality. Fida Qishta, born and raised in Rafah, Gaza, began her filmmaking career as a wedding videographer, and soon moved on to working with international human rights observers in Gaza, documenting day to day life under siege. Her commentary on the siege was published in The International Herald Tribune. Her video reports of Operation Cast Lead were published widely including in the UK newspaper The Guardian and in their weekly news magazine, The Observer. More information [here](#)

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Book Launch: Burning Country – Syrians in Revolution and War

27 January 2016, 7:00 pm

Location: The Mosaic Rooms, 226 Cromwell Road, London SW5 0SW

Speaker: Robin Yassin-Kassab

Join author and media commentator Robin Yassin-Kassab in conversation with Malu Halassa to launch *Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War*, his new title co-authored by Leila Al-Shami. In 2011, many Syrians took to the streets of Damascus to demand the overthrow of the government of Bashar al-Assad. Today, much of Syria has become a warzone where foreign journalists find it almost impossible to report on life in this devastated land. *Burning Country* offers a unique grassroots perspective on the Syrian opposition movement – a biting and forceful polemic against the international community's failure to give material support to those fighting the Assad government. It explores the horrific and complicated reality of life in present-day Syria with detail and sophistication, drawing on new first-hand testimonies from opposition fighters, exiles lost in an archipelago of refugee camps, and courageous human rights activists among many others. These stories are interwoven with a trenchant analysis of the brutalisation of the conflict and the militarisation of the uprising, of the rise of the Islamists and sectarian warfare, and the role of governments in Syria and elsewhere in exacerbating those violent processes. More information [here](#)

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Book Launch: Salafism and the Arab Uprisings

27 January 2016, 5.00pm-7.00pm

Location: MBI Al Jaber Conference Room, 21 Russell Square, London WC1B 5EA.

Speaker: Francesco Cavatorta, Université Laval

Chair: Gilbert Achcar, SOAS

Event to mark the publication of *Salafism After the Arab Awakening: Contending with People's Power* (Edited by Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone, Hurst, 2016). Salafism is playing a significant role in the post-uprising Arab world. The talk will explore some of the questions related to its forceful emergence, looking specifically at what explains its powerful appearance on the public scene, the many forms of activism it has taken up, and the complex interplay between the national and international dimensions.

Francesco Cavatorta is associate professor of political science at Université Laval in Quebec, Canada. His research focuses on authoritarianism and democratisation in the Arab world, Islamist movements and parties and civil society activism. He has published his work in numerous peer-reviewed journals and he recently co-authored (with Vincent Durac) the textbook *Politics and Governance in the Middle East* (Palgrave, 2015). More information [here](#)

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Israel and the Palestinians: Colonialism and Prospects for Justice (Amira Hass)

29 January 2016, 18:00-20:00

Location: SOAS, Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre

Speaker: Amira Hass, Haaretz

Chair: Karma Nabulsi, Oxford University

Amira Hass is reporter and columnist on the Occupied Palestinian Territories for Haaretz newspaper in Israel, and is author of *Drinking the Sea at Gaza* (1999) and *Reporting from Ramallah* (2003). She has also published her mother's *Diary of Bergen-Belsen, 1944-45* (2009). In 2009, she received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Women's Media Foundation and was described as "one of the greatest truth-seekers of them all". More information [here](#)

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Beyond the "Tunisian Exception": (Un)changing politics and social movements

2 February 2016, 17.15-19.15

Location: Room 9.04, Tower 2, Clement's Inn, LSE

Speaker: Dr Choukri Hmed, Paris Dauphine University

Chair: Dr John Chalcraft, LSE

Tunisia is frequently known as the small “noiseless country” of the MENA that achieved its political transition and successfully managed to avoid civil war and authoritarian consolidation. Based on an ongoing fieldwork, Choukri Hmed presents his paper which, without undermining these political outcomes, proposes an analysis of the (un)changing frames and issues in both social movements and the political field in the country. More information & registration [here](#)

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Leftist Movements in the Gulf States and the Global Cold War

2 February 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm

Location: King's College London, Anatomy Museum, Strand Building, 6th Floor

Speaker: Toby Matthiesen, University of Oxford

Chair: Dr Craig Larkin

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Between Radical Islam and Kurdishness: Hizbullah in Eastern Turkey

2 February 2016, 5:45 - 7:00 PM

Speaker: Mehmet Kurt, Bingol University

Location: SOAS, Khalili Lecture Theatre

While the conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) is escalating again, an important factor is being left out in much of the academic and political analysis: the role played by Islamist radical groups. While the early 1990s in Turkey was characterised by the armed conflict between the PKK and the Turkish Armed Forces, another important but less documented development was the emergence of Islam-referenced violence perpetrated by Kurdish Hizbullah. Hizbullah's main agenda was to overthrow the secular regime and establish a sharia-based government. However, it formed a strategic alliance with the Turkish state in a mutual endeavour against the PKK and managed to eliminate the PKK from many Kurdish towns, killing more than a thousand civilians in the process. The last 15 years have also witnessed the re-emergence of other Kurdish Islamist groups, often in the disguise of civil society organisations. The state considers these CSOs as a palatable alternative to the PKK and their activities are facilitated with the hope that they will divert people from PKK support. Despite varying approaches to Islamic

radicalism, all such groups have been met with hostility and resistance from pro-PKK activists resulting in conflict between ethnic Kurds. Instability and conflict in Syria and Iraq have served to increase radicalisation within these CSOs. More information [here](#)

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Democratisation in the Maghreb

03 February 2016, 18.00-19.30

Location: Room 9.04, Tower 2, Clement's Inn, LSE

Speaker: Dr Jonathan Hill, King's College London & LSE Middle East Centre

Chair: John King, Society for Algerian Studies

The Arab Spring's influence on the Maghreb has been piecemeal and partial. In Tunisia, the Ben Ali regime was overthrown in a fortnight enabling the country to redraft its constitution and hold multi-party elections, while in Algeria, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika went on to win an unprecedented fourth term in office despite being too ill to stand or campaign. What explains these varied experiences? Why did Ben Ali's regime fall and Bouteflika's survive? Why has Morocco not gone the same way as Tunisia? And what of Mauritania, the oft forgotten and frequently ignored other Maghreb country?

Jonathan Hill addresses these and other questions by using Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way's (2010) celebrated model for explaining democratisation to analyse and compare Morocco's, Algeria's, Tunisia's and Mauritania's political development over the past 10 years. More information & registration [here](#)

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Gender in the Apocalyptic and Utopian Thinking of Daesh

8 February 2016, 6:00-8:00 pm

Location: King's College London, room: K2.31, Strand Building, 2nd Floor

Speaker: Katherine Brown, Birmingham University

Chair: Prof. Michael Kerr

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Rival Kurdish Movements in Turkey

Mustafa Gürbüz

2016 (January) - Amsterdam University Press

This book explores the conditions that encourage non-violent civic engagement in emerging civil societies. Gürbüz examines the radical transformations over the past decade in the politics of Turkey's Kurdish minority. On the eve of the new millennium, the Turkish state was still openly denying the existence of Kurds, calling them "mountain Turks," and Kurdish populated cities were ruled under martial law. Kurdish politics in Turkey was dominated by a revolutionary movement, the PKK, which engaged in violent clashes with the state. Less than a decade later, the PKK's rebellion had all but ended, and Kurdish political and civic movements of numerous stripes had emerged. The Turkish state even introduced an official Kurdish-language TV channel. How did this rapid change occur? Gürbüz proposes that contending social movements has transformed the politics of the region, ushering in an era of post-conflict political and cultural competition.

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Anatomy of Authoritarianism in the Arab Republics

Joseph Sassoon

2016 (February) - Cambridge University Press

By examining the system of authoritarianism in eight Arab republics, Joseph Sassoon portrays life under these regimes and explores the mechanisms underpinning their resilience. How did the leadership in these countries create such enduring systems? What was the economic system that prolonged the regimes' longevity, but simultaneously led to their collapse? Why did these seemingly stable regimes begin to falter? This book seeks to answer these questions by utilizing the Iraqi archives and memoirs of those who were embedded in these republics: political leaders, ministers, generals, security agency chiefs, party members, and business people. Taking a thematic approach, the book begins in 1952 with the Egyptian Revolution and ends with the Arab uprisings of 2011. It seeks to deepen our understanding of the authoritarianism and coercive systems that prevailed in these countries and the difficult process of transition from authoritarianism that began after 2011.

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Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East

Vedi R. Hadiz

2016 (January) - Cambridge University Press

In a novel approach to the field of Islamic politics, this provocative new study compares the evolution of Islamic populism in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, to the Middle East. Utilising approaches from historical sociology and political economy, Vedi R. Hadiz argues that competing strands of Islamic politics can be understood as the product of contemporary struggles over power, material resources and the result of conflict across a variety of social and historical contexts. Drawing from detailed case studies across the Middle East and Southeast Asia, the book engages with broader theoretical questions about political change in the context of socio-economic transformations and presents an innovative, comparative framework to shed new light on the diverse trajectories of Islamic politics in the modern world.

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Security Theology, Surveillance and the Politics of Fear

Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian

2015 - Cambridge University Press

This examination of Palestinian experiences of life and death within the context of Israeli settler colonialism broadens the analytical horizon to include those who 'keep on existing' and explores how Israeli theologies and ideologies of security, surveillance and fear can obscure violence and power dynamics while perpetuating existing power structures. Drawing from everyday aspects of Palestinian victimization, survival, life and death, and moving between the local and the global, Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian introduces and defines her notion of 'Israeli security theology' and the politics of fear within Palestine/Israel. She relies on a feminist analysis, invoking the intimate politics of the everyday and centering the Palestinian body, family life, memory and memorialization, birth and death as critical sites from which to examine the settler colonial state's machineries of surveillance which produce and maintain a political economy of fear that justifies colonial violence.

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Chaos and Counterrevolution - After the Arab Spring

Richard Falk

2015- Zed Books

The Arab Spring has consistently confounded expectations. While many in the West believed that the uprisings would usher in a new age of liberal, secular democracy in the Middle East, in reality their outcomes have proven to be both complex and contradictory. Most ominously, many countries have already experienced a dramatic counterrevolution, in the form of renewed dictatorship, while others have simply descended into chaos and internal conflict. Richard Falk, a distinguished scholar of international law and former UN Rapporteur on Palestine, has been writing on the Arab Spring since its inception in 2011. Chaos and Counterrevolution brings together his collected writings on the

uprisings and their aftermath across the region, and offers a unique perspective on these momentous events. Through essays whose subjects range from the Syrian civil war and the emergence of ISIS to the coup in Egypt and the Gezi Park protests in Turkey, Falk explores how and why the Arab Spring has drifted so far from its original goals, and demonstrates how the West has exacerbated the problem through inept and counterproductive interventionism. *Chaos and Counterrevolution* provides invaluable insight into what has already become one of the defining episodes of our age.

'The blogposts collected in this volume showcase both the immediacy of contemporaneous reporting and the reflective, thoughtful analysis that has characterized all of Falk's writing over many decades. His deep knowledge of the region (especially Turkey) gives extraordinary depth and texture to his compelling insights; and the power of his narrative and the excitements - and disappointments - he records impel the narrative forward with intense force.' *Laleh Khalili*

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Gaining Freedoms - Claiming Space in Istanbul and Berlin

Berna Turam

2015 – Stanford University Press

Gaining Freedoms reveals a new locus for global political change: everyday urban contestation. Cities are often assumed hotbeds of socio-economic division, but this assessment overlooks the importance of urban space and the everyday activities of urban life for empowerment, emancipation, and democratization. Through proximity, neighborhoods, streets, and squares can create unconventional power contestations over lifestyle and consumption. And through struggle, negotiation, and cooperation, competing claims across groups can become platforms to defend freedom and rights from government encroachments.

Drawing on more than seven years of fieldwork in three contested urban sites—a downtown neighborhood and a university campus in Istanbul, and a Turkish neighborhood in Berlin—Berna Turam shows how democratic contestation echoes through urban space. Countering common assumptions that Turkey is strongly polarized between Islamists and secularists, she illustrates how contested urban space encourages creative politics, the kind of politics that advance rights, expression, and representation shared between pious and secular groups. Exceptional moments of protest, like the recent Gezi protests which bookend this study, offer clear external signs of upheaval and disruption, but it is the everyday contestation and interaction that forge alliances and inspire change. Ultimately, Turam argues that the process of democratization is not the reduction of conflict, but rather the capacity to form new alliances out of conflict.

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Civil Uprisings in Modern Sudan: The 'Khartoum Springs' of 1964 and 1985

Will J. Berridge

2015 - Bloomsbury

In the wake of the protests that toppled regimes across the Middle East in 2011, Sudanese activists and writers have proudly cited their very own 'Arab Springs' of 1964 and 1985, which overthrew the country's first two military regimes, as evidence of their role as political pioneers in the region. Whilst some of these claims may be exaggerated, Sudan was indeed unique in the region at the time in that it witnessed not one but two popular uprisings which successfully uprooted military authoritarianisms.

Civil Uprisings in Modern Sudan provides the first scholarly book-length history of the 1964 and 1985 uprisings. It explores the uprisings themselves, their legacy and the contemporary relevance they hold in the context of the current political climate of the Middle East. The book also contends that the sort of politics espoused by various kinds of Islamist during the uprisings can be interpreted as a form of early 'post-Islamism', in which Islamist political agendas were seen to be compatible with liberalism and democracy. Using interviews, Arabic language sources and a wealth of archival material, this book is an important and original study that is of great significance for scholars of African and Middle Eastern political history.

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The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath

Peter Cole and Brian McQuinn (Eds)

2015 - Hurst & Co

This book offers a novel, incisive and wide-ranging account of Libya's '17 February Revolution' by tracing how critical towns, communities and political groups helped to shape its course. Each community, whether geographical (e.g. Misrata, Zintan), tribal/communal (e.g. Beni Walid) or political (e.g. the Muslim Brotherhood) took its own path into the uprisings and subsequent conflict of 2011, according to their own histories and relationship to Muammar Qadhafi's regime. The story of each group is told by the authors, based on reportage and expert analysis, from the outbreak of protests in Benghazi in February 2011 through to the transitional period following the end of fighting in October 2011. They describe the emergence of Libya's new politics through the unique stories of those who made it happen, or those who fought against it. *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath* brings together leading journalists, academics, and specialists, each with extensive field experience amidst the constituencies they depict, drawing on interviews with fighters, politicians and civil society leaders who have contributed their own account of events to this volume.

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Egypt in the Future Tense - Hope, Frustration, and Ambivalence before and after 2011

Samuli Schielke

2015 - Indiana University Press

Against the backdrop of the revolutionary uprisings of 2011–2013, Samuli Schielke asks how ordinary Egyptians confront the great promises and grand schemes of religious commitment, middle class respectability, romantic love, and political ideologies in their daily lives, and how they make sense of the existential anxieties and stalled expectations that inevitably accompany such hopes. Drawing on many years of study in Egypt and the life stories of rural, lower-middle-class men before and after the revolution, Schielke views recent events in ways that are both historically deep and personal. Schielke challenges prevailing views of Muslim piety, showing that religious lives are part of a much more complex lived experience.

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Salafism After the Arab Awakening - Contending with People's Power

Francesco Cavatorta and Fabio Merone (Eds)

2015 – Hurst

One of the most interesting consequences of the Arab awakening has been the central role of Salafists in a number of countries. In particular, there seems to have been a move away from traditional quietism towards an increasing degree of politicisation. The arrival on the political scene of Salafist parties in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen, as well as the seemingly growing desire of Salafists in other Arab countries to enter institutional politics through the creation of political parties, highlights quite clearly the debates around how to react to the awakening within Salafist circles.

This book examines in detail how Salafism, both theologically and politically, is contending with the Arab uprisings across a number of countries. The focus is primarily on what kind of politicisation, if any, has taken place and what forms it has adopted. As some of the contributions make clear, politicisation does not necessarily diminish the role of jihad or the influence of quietism, revealing tensions and struggles within the complex world of Salafism.

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The Other Saudis - Shiism, Dissent and Sectarianism

Toby Matthiesen

2014 - Cambridge University Press

Toby Matthiesen traces the politics of the Shia in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia from the nineteenth century until the present day. This book outlines the difficult experiences of being Shia in

a Wahhabi state, and casts new light on how the Shia have mobilised politically to change their position. Shia petitioned the rulers, joined secular opposition parties and founded Islamist movements. Most Saudi Shia opposition activists profited from an amnesty in 1993 and subsequently found a place in civil society and the public sphere. However, since 2011 a new Shia protest movement has again challenged the state. *The Other Saudis* shows how exclusionary state practices created an internal Other and how sectarian discrimination has strengthened Shia communal identities. The book is based on little-known Arabic sources, extensive fieldwork in Saudi Arabia and interviews with key activists. Of immense geopolitical importance, the oil-rich Eastern Province is a crucial but little known factor in regional politics and Gulf security.

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Mo(ve)ments of Resistance: Politics, Economy and Society in Israel/Palestine 1931–2013

Lev Luis Grinberg

2014 - Academic Studies Press

In *Mo(ve)ments of Resistance*, Grinberg summarizes both his own work and that of other political economists, providing a coherent historical narrative covering the time from the beginning of Socialist Zionism (1904) to the Oslo Accords and the neoliberalization of the economy (1994-1996). The theoretical approach of the book combines eventful sociology, path dependency, and institutional political economy. Grinberg argues that historical political events have been shaped not only by political and economic forces but also by resistance struggles of marginal and weaker social groups: organized workers, Palestinians, and Mizrahi Jews. Major turning points in history, like the Separation War in 1948, the military occupation in 1967, and the Oslo peace process in 1993, are explained in the context of previous social and economic resistance struggles that affected the political outcomes.

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Iran between Islamic Nationalism and Secularism: The Constitutional Revolution of 1906

Vanessa Martin

2013 - I.B. Tauris

With the ratification of a new constitution in December 1906, Iran embarked on a great movement of systemic and institutional change which, along with the introduction of new ideas, was to be one of the most abiding legacies of the first Iranian revolution – known as the Constitutional Revolution. This uprising was significant not only for introducing secular understandings of government, but also Islamic visions of what could constitute a national assembly. The events of the Constitutional Revolution in Tehran have been much discussed, but the provinces, despite their crucial role in the revolution, have received less attention. Here, Vanessa Martin seeks to redress this imbalance. She does so firstly by analyzing the role of the Islamic debate in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and its relationship with secular ideas, and secondly by examining the ramifications of this

debate in the main cities of Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan and Bushehr. By exploring the interaction between Islam and secularism during this tumultuous time, Iran between Islamic Nationalism and Secularism concludes that in each province, the Constitutional Revolution took on a character of its own.

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OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Upended Path: The Rise and Fall of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood

The Middle East Journal, Volume 69, Number 4, Autumn 2015, pp. 527-543(17)

Khalil al-Anani

This article examines the rise and fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt after the 2011 uprising. It analyzes the Brotherhood's behavior and strategy since taking power in June 2012, exploring the underlying factors leading to their downfall in 2013. The article argues that the short-lived Islamist government's fall can be ascribed to three key factors: its lack of a revolutionary agenda, the Brotherhood's organizational stagnation and inertia, and its leaders' incompetence and inexperience in governance.

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Game Changers: Kurdish Women in Peace and War

The Middle East Journal, Volume 70, Number 1, Winter 2016, pp. 30-46(17)

Ofra Bengio

This article argues that Kurdish society historically enabled the rise of charismatic women. More recently, upheavals brought by the so-called Arab Spring have acted as a catalyst for Kurdish women to improve their social standing. Along with gains made by Kurds in creating new autonomous spaces, the advancement of Kurdish women constitutes a “double revolution” that shows the feminist and nationalist agendas can be complementary, and not in conflict as they have for the greater part of modern history.

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My Arab Spring: Tunisia's revolution was a dream

AlJazeera, 17 Dec 2015

Ahmed El Amraoui and Afifa Ltifi

Lina Ben Mhenni, a prominent blogger and human rights activist in Tunisia, told her story to Al Jazeera's Ahmed El Amraoui and Afifa Ltifi. Like most Tunisians, I am against the notion of an Arab Spring, because I think that each country in the Arab world has its own characteristics; each country led its revolution in its own way. When you see what is happening today in different countries in the Arab world, it has nothing to do with a spring. I think the Tunisian revolution was a dream and is still a dream. When President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali left, I was really happy and couldn't believe it. But the dream started even before January 2011.

Indeed, bloggers and online activists tried to defy the regime before the uprising began. We had long been working against censorship and the obstruction of free speech; we tried to talk about opinion prisoners, torture and dictatorship. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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After the spring, when our dreams were hijacked

AlJazeera, 18 Dec 2015

Lamis Andoni

It felt like a dream come true: people asserting their power to defeat the tyrants of the Arab world. There would be no more fear, no more subservience, they said.

But now, five years on, it feels more like a nightmare - and one that refuses to end.

The revolutions were real, and so too were the sacrifices. But maybe it was too good to be true. We were certainly premature in celebrating victory against the entrenched forces of the deep state. For peeling off the upper layers of power and downing the dictators and authoritarian leaders did not uproot their oppressive systems. It merely sent them into retreat, from where they were able to bounce back with a ferocity that crushed our incomplete revolutions and shattered our dreams.

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Extinguishing the flames of the Arab Spring

AlJazeera. 17 Dec 2015

Ahmed El Amraoui

Five years ago today, Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old street vendor, set himself on fire outside a local municipal office in his hometown of Sidi Bouzid to protest against police corruption - a solitary act that would set off a stunning chain of events throughout the Arab world. In the years since

Bouazizi's death, Tunisia has gone through tremendous change. After street protests forced President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali into exile after two decades of his rule, Tunisia adopted a new constitution and held national elections in 2014. Earlier this month, the country's National Dialogue Quartet was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for assisting Tunisia's transition to democracy. But despite the changes that have taken place around them, residents of Sidi Bouzid say their lives are no better than they were before the uprising. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Tunisia's LGBT activists push forward

Al-Monitor, December 14, 2015

Conor McCormick-Cavanagh

The Shams group, Tunisia's first LGBT organization, planned to protest outside Tunisia's parliament building in the Bardo neighborhood of Tunis, the nation's capital. Members of the group and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) allies planned the demonstration for Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day. Dec. 10 was also the day that Marwen (pseudonym), a 22-year old gay Tunisian man from Sousse, imprisoned in September for committing homosexual acts in private, was up for appeal in his case against the justice system. His appeal was postponed until Dec. 17, as the judge announced he would decide the case by then. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Poisoned apple: the curse of social media in the Gulf

Opendemocracy, 30 December 2015

Chloe Majdipour

The increased social media use in the Gulf might signify some progress for its citizens, but the extent to which it empowers them is greatly outweighed by state surveillance through the same vehicle. Contrary to popular belief, the increasing consumption rates and enthusiastic embrace of social media in the Gulf states is not a step toward political and social change. In reality, Gulf monarchies feed citizens this poisoned apple, disguising the control and censorship that their regimes continue to maintain over social media beneath the juicy temptation to use it for change. Constant enactment of repressive laws and fear tactics by the Gulf states rob their citizens of freedom of expression, creates a panoptic gaze, and results in self-censorship by social media users. Simultaneously, governments paint an image of innocence, claiming to support social media use by engaging on various social media platforms and encouraging their potential in the business world. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Third Annual Cultural Resistance International Film Festival of Lebanon

Jadaliyya, 21 January 2016

Samhita Sunya

Sandwiched between the Beirut International Film Festival and a slew of ongoing fall film offerings, the third annual Cultural Resistance International Film Festival of Lebanon (CRIFF) concluded in mid-November. This curiously-named, soon-to-be-renamed-and-revamped festival remains noteworthy for its unique Asia-Mediterranean focus, notwithstanding the modest size of the three-film package that was curated for this year's edition. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Cultures of Resistance Scholarships [for Masters studies at SOAS]

Deadline: 24 February 2016

Thanks to a collaboration between the Cultures of Resistance Network, the SOAS Students' Union, International Students' House and the American Friends of SOAS (AFSOAS), two postgraduate scholarships are available in 2016-17 at SOAS, University of London. Each scholarship is valued at £25,500 in total, funded by Cultures of Resistance and the SOAS Students' Union. Fees will be deducted from this amount and the remainder will be used toward maintenance. In addition, each scholar will benefit from free accommodation at International Student House (ISH) and some food vouchers to be spent in the ISH restaurant.

The scholarships will benefit people from countries that have been affected by wars and extreme poverty. This scholarship embodies the values of the Cultures of Resistance Network, which seeks to empower and enrich communities – especially those that have been affected by armed conflict – through the promotion of human rights, justice for victims of war crimes and the enrichment of civil society and robust grassroots democracy.

Security conditions permitting, scholars are expected to return to their home countries to apply their knowledge and skills for the betterment of their societies. In the case of refugees or those fearing repression and censorship in their home countries, we expect that they will seek employment/work/study abroad toward the aim of improving the future of their home country and that of its citizens. We hope that scholarship recipients will pursue careers that, among other things,

promote universal human rights, international law, equal justice for all and the enrichment of civil society and robust grassroots democracy.

The following full-time programmes are eligible:

- MSc Development Studies with special reference to Central Asia
- MSc Globalisation and Development
- MSc Migration, Mobility and Development
- MSc Violence, Conflict and Development
- MSc Development Economics
- MSc Political Economy of Development
- MA Legal Studies (General Programme)
- MA Dispute and Conflict Resolution
- MA Environmental Law and Sustainable Development
- MA Human Rights Law
- MA International Law
- MA Law, Development and Globalisation
- LLM Dispute and Conflict Resolution
- LLM Environmental Law
- LLM Human Rights, Conflict and Justice
- LLM International Law

Part-time programmes are not eligible.

Candidate Criteria

Although priority will be given to students resident in Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Iraq, Kashmir, Kurdistan, the Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza), Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tibet, Western Sahara, Yemen, West Papua and Papua, the scholarship programme is also open to students resident in the following countries/territories:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bir Tawil, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chechen Republic, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, East Timor, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Golan Heights, Georgia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Candidates must hold (or be expected to obtain) a good honours degree, preferably first class, from a UK institution or overseas equivalent.

Candidates should **describe in their personal statement of their admission application:**

- how the political situation in your home country, especially violent conflict, war, poverty, and/or military occupation, has shaped your experiences and ambitions in life.
- how these experiences have affected your interest in human rights, social justice, and grassroots democracy.
- what academic and social issues you plan to explore during your studies at SOAS.

- what you hope to do upon completion of your program at SOAS.
- what the most pressing problems are in your home country and how the pursuit of education at SOAS in your chosen field would promote human rights, social justice, equality, and the enrichment of civil society in your home country.

Candidates must **have an offer of admission** to pursue a full time eligible programme by the scholarship closing date. Applicants must **meet the English language condition** of their offer of admission to study at SOAS as soon as possible but no later than 1 June 2016. If your offer is conditional on English, please arrange your English test and ensure you meet the English requirements as soon as possible.

More information [here](#)

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