



Middle East
Centre

A stylized map of the Middle East region, composed of a mosaic of dark green and black squares and circles of varying sizes, set against a lighter green background.

LSE MIDDLE EAST CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

Message from the Director

As the Middle East Centre celebrates its fifth anniversary, we reflect on the excellent progress made and look forward to further achievement and expansion. Over the past two years I have focused on placing the Middle East Centre on an even more intellectually and financially sustainable path and positioning its activities, staff and publications at the heart of LSE's academic life.

My main activities this year have been focused on working, in conjunction with the staff of the Middle East Centre, to expand the Centre's intellectual reach, research output and academic profile. To this end, the MEC has expanded its staff, and increased the number of its publications, research seminars and research projects.

The Centre's Academic Collaboration with Arab Universities Programme has gone from strength to strength, with 14 projects now running. This necessitated the appointment of a new Projects Coordinator to manage the programme, with Chelsea Milsom joining the team in November. Sandra Sfeir was appointed Centre Administrator in September, replacing Sara Masry who is now studying in Tehran. Emma Pearson led the organisation of the very successful British Society for Middle Eastern Studies Annual Conference which we were delighted to host at LSE in June.

The Kuwait Programme on Development, Governance and Globalisation in the Gulf States moved to the Middle East Centre in October and we have successfully integrated the Programme into the MEC and made its activities even more productive and sustainable over the long term.

We have started a major research initiative on 'The Comparative Political Economy of the MENA Region', led by Dr Steffen Hertog and our new Research Officer, Ferdinand Eibl. This programme is research-driven, drawing on available academic expertise at LSE but also globally. We have also appointed Courtney Freer as a Research Officer to act as my deputy in the Kuwait Programme and to develop her own post-doctoral programme of research.

The Middle East Centre, in partnership with The Abraaj Group, held a very successful LSE Alumni Forum in Dubai on 11 May. The forum successfully raised the profile of the Middle East Centre and LSE in the region, cementing links between alumni and the School also publicising the research work the centre does in and on the region.

The Centre continues to organise a large and popular series of public events, as well as smaller research-focused seminars aimed at producing original, cutting edge social science research. Partly as a result of this, the publications programme is flourishing with nine new papers being published this year.

We are grateful to our many colleagues, partners and supporters, who have helped us have such a successful year. We look forward to another busy and productive year in 2015-2016.

Professor Toby Dodge

2010-2015 in numbers

15

current number of MEC staff

191

public events
organised since 2010

thirteen thousand eight hundred

events attendees

29

final year PhD
students supported
by the Emirates PhD
Scholarship since 2010

31

visiting fellows hosted at the MEC since 2010

8,100

Twitter followers

twelve
thousand

website views per month

2,880

likes on Facebook

4,700

newsletter recipients

fourteen

academic collaboration projects led by

20

LSE academics from

in collaboration with

6

different departments

9

different institutional partners from

7

countries in the Arab World

About the LSE Middle East Centre

The Middle East Centre builds on LSE's long engagement with the Middle East and provides a central hub for the wide range of research on the region carried out around the School. LSE is one of the world's leading social science institutions and comprises departments covering all branches of the social sciences. The Centre taps into this expertise to promote both public understanding and innovative interdisciplinary research on the region, with foci on history, political economy, society and international relations. The Middle East Centre was established in October 2010 with support from the Aman Trust and the Emirates Foundation.

Objectives

- Promoting open and critical debate about the politics, societies and economics of the Middle East;
- Fostering research and training among LSE and visiting scholars and students;
- Providing a rich research environment for the development of new scholars;
- Establishing and cultivating ties with Middle Eastern institutions;
- Stimulating collaboration with scholars in other international institutions;
- Disseminating knowledge about the Middle East through Centre lectures, online presence, and publications; and through LSE community and media activities.

Funders

In 2014/15, the Centre's work has been generously supported by:

- The Emirates Foundation
- The Aman Trust
- The Leverhulme Trust
- The Abraaj Group
- Chevron
- Open Society Foundation
- The American Political Science Association
- The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences
- Scholar Rescue Fund, Institute of International Education
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- The Fares Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Tufts University
- I.B. Tauris

Constitution and Governance

Management Committee

LSE academics on the Management Committee provide advice on research strategy, general management and resource issues arising across the Centre, as well as progress on individual research themes and funded projects.

Management Committee Members

Dr Roham Alvandi

Department of International History

Dr Federica Bicchi

Department of International Relations

Dr John Chalcraft

Department of Government

Dr Katerina Dalacoura

Department of International Relations

Professor Toby Dodge

Middle East Centre

Dr Steffen Hertog

Department of Government

Professor Christopher Hughes

Department of International Relations

Robert Lowe

Middle East Centre

Dr Michael Mason

Department of Geography and Environment

Dr Kirsten Schulze

Department of International History

Dr Hakan Seckinelgin

Department of Social Policy

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides independent, external and income-orientated advice to the Middle East Centre.

Advisory Board Members

Mustafa Abdel-Wadood

Partner, The Abraaj Group

Professor Lisa Anderson

President, American University in Cairo

Masood Ahmed

Director Middle East and Central Asia, IMF

Mohammad A.J. Al Fahim

Honorary Chairman, Al Fahim Group

Dr Bassem Awadallah

Secretary General, Islamic Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Hind Bahwan

Chairperson, Bahwan Cyber Technologies

Dr Maleeha Lodhi

Azmi Mikati

Chief Executive Officer, M1 Group

Arif Naqvi

Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer, The Abraaj Group

Zaki Nusseibeh

Adviser, Presidential Court, UAE

Ferit F. Sahenk

Chairman, Dogus Group

Dr Nasser Saidi

Chief Economist, Dubai International Financial Centre

Professor Avi Shlaim

St Antony's College, University of Oxford

Professor Charles Tripp

School of Oriental and African Studies

About the LSE Kuwait Programme

Established in 2007, the Kuwait Programme on Development, Governance and Globalisation in the Gulf States is a multidisciplinary global research programme based in the LSE Middle East Centre and directed by Professor Toby Dodge, who is also the Kuwait Professor. The Programme funds systematic and practical enquiry into fundamental questions in the social sciences of relevance to the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Research Themes

- Kuwait and the Gulf in the shifting global economy;
- massive capital flows, sovereign wealth funds;
- carbon-heavy, resource-rich economic development;
- health care and social welfare provision in Kuwait, and health system innovation more generally;
- education and human capital development in Kuwait;
- water and resource management,
- and urban form, geography, and sustainability.

In addition it organises public lectures, seminars and workshops, produces an acclaimed working paper series, supports post-doctoral researchers and PhD students and develops academic networks between LSE and Gulf institutions. The Programme also runs an annual competitive call for short-term research fellows, which is open to GCC nationals. The Programme appointed two short-term research fellows in 2015.

The Programme is funded by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences.

“The LSE Kuwait Programme has been providing an intellectual route, lit by some of the most distinguished scholarship, to a better understanding of GCC societies, their economies, political imperatives, and international relations. Without this Programme, generously sponsored by KFAS and well-managed by LSE, our understanding of this dynamic and strategically significant set of countries would have been that much dimmer.”

Professor Anoush Ehteshami, Durham University on the work of the Kuwait Programme.

People

Centre Staff

Professor Toby Dodge

Centre Director

Toby Dodge is Director of the LSE Middle East Centre and Director of the Kuwait on Development, Governance and Globalisation in the Gulf States. He is also a professor in the International Relations Department at LSE. His research concentrates on the evolution of the post-colonial state in the international system, with a main focus on the Middle East, specifically Iraq. His main publications include *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (2005); *Iraq: From War to a New Authoritarianism* (2013); and *Iraq's Future: The Aftermath of Regime Change* (2005).

Robert Lowe

Centre Manager

Robert Lowe has managed the Centre since it opened in 2010, with the responsibility for operations, staff and research activities. He was previously Manager and Research Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House. His publications include Co-editor, *The Kurdish Policy Imperative* (2010) and Co-editor, *Aid, Diplomacy and Facts on the Ground: The Case of Palestine* (2005).

Chelsea Milsom

Projects Coordinator

Chelsea joined the Middle East Centre in November 2014. She studied Arabic at the University of Edinburgh and as part of her degree spent a year studying in Jordan. Chelsea manages the Academic Collaboration with Arab Universities Programme as well as the annual Emirates scholarships for Master's and PhD students.

Emma Pearson

Communications Assistant

Emma Pearson assists with the Centre's events programme and communications. She is also Communications Assistant at the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, managing the Society's e-publications. Emma managed the BRISMES Annual Conference 2015 at LSE.

Ian Sinclair

Kuwait Programme Administrator

Ian Sinclair is the Administrator of the Kuwait Programme. He joined the Programme in 2008 and is responsible for the day-to-day administrative management of the Programme's operations and research activities.

Sandra Sfeir

Centre Administrator

Sandra joined the Middle East Centre in September 2014. She has a BA in Politics and Economics from SOAS. Prior to joining the Centre, she completed an internship at Chatham House's press office and has also worked in Arabic media. Sandra's main responsibility is managing and coordinating the Centre's events programme.

Ribale Sleiman Haidar

Communications Manager

Ribale Sleiman Haidar runs the outreach work done by the Centre. She manages the MEC's publication series, website and social media presence as well as the blog. Prior to becoming Communications Manager, she was Centre Coordinator running the Centre's events programme and managing the collaboration projects with Arab universities.

Research Staff

Valeria Cetorelli

Research Officer

Valeria is currently working on a project looking at women's health in the occupied Palestinian territory, led by Dr Ernestina Coast. She is also finalising her PhD in Demography at LSE. Her thesis assesses the effects of the 2003–2011 Iraq War on fertility, maternal and newborn health using longitudinal data from multiple consecutive surveys.

Dr Filippo Dionigi

Leverhulme Early Career Fellow

Dr Filippo Dionigi is Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, researching the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on Arab statehood from a comparative perspective. In addition, he is leading on a capacity-building project in collaboration with Tunis Business School (TBS). His book *Hezbollah, Islamist Politics and International Society*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in December 2014.

Ferdinand Eibl

Kuwait Programme Research Officer

Ferdinand Eibl joined the Kuwait Programme in March 2015 as Research Officer working on a research project entitled 'The comparative political economy of the MENA region', led by Steffen Hertog. In addition, Ferdinand is completing his PhD on the political economy of welfare provision in the Middle East at the University of Oxford.

Dr Fatima El-Issawi

Research Fellow

Fatima El-Issawi is currently leading a collaboration project with the American University of Dubai entitled 'Arab National Media and Politics: Democracy Revisited', looking at changes in media practices in traditional media industries in Morocco and Algeria. Fatima has over 15 years of experience in covering the Middle East for international media.

Professor Fawaz Gerges

Emirates Chair in Contemporary Middle East Studies

Fawaz A. Gerges is Professor of International Relations at LSE. He was also the Director of the Middle East Centre from 2010 until 2013. His forthcoming books include *ISIS: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2015) and *The Struggle for the Arab World: The Nationalist-Islamist Long War* (Princeton University Press, 2016).

Dr Zeynep Kaya

Research Fellow

Zeynep Kaya is leading a research project on the role of international actors in enhancing women's rights after a military intervention, taking the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a case study. Prior to that, she completed her PhD in International Relations at LSE. Zeynep is also working on her book, *The Idea of Kurdistan: International Norms and Nationalism*.

Dr Aitemad Muhanna-Matar

Research Fellow

Aitemad Muhanna-Matar is conducting research on Salafist youth in Tunisia and the process of subjectification. Previously, her research concentrated on the historical trajectory of Gazan women's

religiosity, agency and subjectivity. Her book, *Agency and Gender in Gaza: Masculinity, Femininity and Family during the Second Intifada*, was published by Ashgate in October 2013.

Dr Zlatko Nikoloski

Kuwait Programme Research Fellow

Zlatko Nikoloski is a development economist currently leading a project on the prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors and access to, utilisation of and satisfaction with healthcare services in Kuwait, looking at evidence from the WHO World Health survey.

Dr Karen E. Young

Research Fellow

Karen Young is Research Fellow at the MEC working on the 'Contemporary Challenges Resulting from the Demographic Profile of GCC states' project. Previously, she was Assistant Professor of Political Science at the American University of Sharjah, UAE from 2009 to 2014.

Visiting Appointments

Dr Pejman Abdolmohammadi

Visiting Fellow

Pejman Abdolmohammadi is Lecturer in Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies at John Cabot University in Rome. His research and teaching activities focus on the politics and history of modern Iran, the intellectual history of Iran, geopolitics of the Persian Gulf, and international relations of the Middle East.

Dr Khalid Almezaini

Kuwait Programme Visiting Fellow

Khalid Almezaini is Assistant Professor at Qatar University where he teaches International Relations of the Gulf States and Security of the Gulf. Before joining Qatar University, Khalid taught Middle East politics at the universities of Cambridge, Exeter and Edinburgh.

Dr Hessah Al-Ojayan

Kuwait Programme Visiting Fellow

Hessah Al-Ojayan is Assistant Professor of Finance at Kuwait University. Her research interests include Islamic finance and economics, GCC and emerging capital markets, SMEs, and the history of finance and economics in the Middle East.

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed

Visiting Professor

Madawi Al-Rasheed is Visiting Professor at the Middle East Centre at LSE and Research Fellow at the Open Society Foundation. She was Professor of Anthropology of Religion at King's College, London between 1994 and 2013. Her most recent book, *Muted Modernists: The Struggle Over Divine Politics in Saudi Arabia* will be published in October 2015 by Hurst and OUP.

Sharifa Alshalfan

Kuwait Programme Visiting Fellow

Sharifa Alshalfan is an architect and a researcher. She holds an MSc in City Design and Social Science from LSE. Her research interests include land-use policies and urban governance with a focus on housing in the GCC states, mainly Kuwait.

Dr Omar Alshehabi

Kuwait Programme Visiting Fellow

Omar AlShehabi is an Assistant Professor in Economics at the Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) in Kuwait. His research focuses on the socio-economic evolution of developing countries with high per-capita oil income.

Dr Kristian Coates-Ulrichsen

Visiting Fellow

Kristian Coates Ulrichsen researches Gulf politics and foreign policies at the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University in Houston. His book entitled *The First World War in the Middle East*, was published by Hurst in 2014.

Dr Heba Elsayed

Visiting Fellow

Heba Elsayed is acting as Principal Investigator on two research projects: a Leverhulme-funded project investigating Egyptian youths' consumption of New Information Technologies and a British Academy-funded project - co-hosted with the American University in Cairo - focusing on street sexual harassment in Egypt and the media's role in fuelling this.

Maryam Ficociello

Kuwait Programme Visiting Fellow

Maryam Ficociello is a Senior Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers' Risk Assurance Services, Middle East. Her research topic is 'The State of Subsidiary Corporate Governance Practices in the GCC'.

Dr Malihe Maghazei

Visiting Fellow

Originally from Iran, Malihe Maghazei is an historian of the Middle East with focus on gender. Her research interests include gender and Islam, intellectual movements in Iran and modern Iranian history.

Dr Rebecca Steinfield

Visiting Fellow

Rebecca Steinfield is a political scientist researching the politics of reproduction and genital alteration. She is writing her first book, *Wars of the Wombs: Struggles over Reproduction in Israel* (Stanford University Press, forthcoming).

Dr Mandy Turner

Visiting Fellow

Mandy Turner is the Director of the Kenyon Institute (Council for British Research in the Levant) in East Jerusalem. Her research focuses thematically on the political economy of war and peace, with a country specialism on Palestine. Recent research has also focused on political activists in Israel.

Dr Benedetta Voltolini

Visiting Fellow

Benedetta Voltolini is Lecturer in International Relations at Maastricht University (Netherlands) and will become Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at Sciences Po, Paris from September 2015. She holds a PhD in International Relations from LSE. Her thesis investigated the role of lobbying in EU foreign policy, with a specific focus on the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“The two years I spent at the Centre were highly enjoyable. It was a warm and friendly environment, and I always received help and support from colleagues.”

Malihe Maghazei, Scholar at Risk Visiting Fellow from Iran 2012-14, on her time at the MEC.

Research Projects

The Comparative Political Economy of the MENA Region

This project acts as a facilitator to re-energise comparative political economy research on the MENA region. Its primary aim will be to put the region into wider comparative context in the developing world, not only to test the applicability of wider political economy concepts in the MENA, but to draw on regional cases to generate theoretical innovation in comparative political economy. Currently the project team is working on creating a new dataset on expenditures and development outcomes in MENA and Sub-Saharan African oil-rich states, spanning over five decades.

Principal Investigator

Dr Steffen Hertog, Government Department, LSE

European and US Policies towards Inward Investment from the Gulf in Strategic Industries

Professor Mark Thatcher is running a research project on European and US policies towards inward investment from the Gulf in strategic industries. Professor Thatcher has published two policy briefs and held a workshop in Kuwait in September 2014 on 'The International Political Economy of Sovereign Wealth Fund Investment'.

Principal Investigator

Professor Mark Thatcher, Government Department, LSE

Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on Arab Statehood

Dr Filippo Dionigi is currently carrying out a three-year research project funded by the Leverhulme Trust studying the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on Arab statehood mainly from an International Relations perspective. His research focuses on how Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq have coped with the influx of forced migrants generated by the Syrian crisis since 2011 and what consequences this process had on the state as an institution. Based on a long-term comparative methodology and relying on fieldwork research, the project aims at critically assessing the idea of

statehood in the Arab Middle East while exploring the interdependence of state, citizenship, and displacement. The research will lead to the production of a number of research papers and eventually a book-length monograph on the topic.

Principal Investigator

Dr Filippo Dionigi, LSE Middle East Centre

Mutations among Saudi Islamists after the Arab Spring

Since joining the Middle East Centre, Madawi Al-Rasheed has been conducting research on mutations among Saudi Islamists after the 2011 Arab Uprisings. This research focuses on the new reinterpretations of Islamic texts prevalent among a small minority of Saudi reformers and their activism in the pursuit of democratic governance and civil society. The result of this research project, sponsored by the Open Society Foundation Fellowship Programme, will appear in a monograph entitled *Muted Modernists: The Struggle Over Divine Politics in Saudi Arabia* (Hurst & OUP, 2015).

Principal Investigator

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, LSE Middle East Centre

Kuwait Programme Applied Research Grants

After an open, competitive process, in 2015 the Programme awarded two large grants for long-term applied research on Kuwait and the Gulf to LSE Cities and LSE Health.

Prevalence of Cardiovascular Risk Factors and Access to, Utilisation of and Satisfaction with Healthcare Services in Kuwait: Evidence from the WHO World Health Survey

The project will examine the causes of some of the most prevalent chronic diseases, paying particular attention to the diabetes/obesity/hypertension nexus, and study the main determinants of the access to, utilisation of and satisfaction with the healthcare system in Kuwait. The project started in May 2015 and is led by Dr Zlatko Nikoloski and Professor Elias Mossialos from LSE Health. The project plans to travel to Kuwait for research and networking trips, publish two journal articles and complete a descriptive report which will be distributed in Kuwait during their final trip.

Principal Investigator

Dr Zlatko Nikoloski, LSE Health

Resource Urbanisms: Natural Resources, Urban Form and Infrastructure in the Case of Asia's Diverging City Models

The project primarily focuses on the case of two natural resources, land and energy, and explore their relationships with city form, urban dwelling and mobility. It will analyse these relationships through a comparative case study approach, which considers extreme and divergent city models in Asia, looking at Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Hong Kong and Singapore. The project will begin in August 2015 and is led by Philipp Rode, with assistance from Professor Ricky Burdett, Alexandra Gomes and Jens Kandt. The project plans to conduct research trips to Kuwait and to publish three journal articles and an edited book, as well as holding a workshop in London.

Principal Investigator

Philipp Rode, LSE Cities

“Working in the occupied Golan Heights, meeting with Syrian farmers and learning about their agricultural livelihoods and how they adapt to climatic changes under occupation, compelled me to pursue my PhD on the topic of identity, resistance and belonging to the land. My research aims to explore how livelihoods of politically and socially marginalised communities acquire political subjectivity. Such topics linking livelihoods, politics and political ecology offer an inclusive angle to unravel the complexities of Arab societies and their daily acts of belonging and existing.”

Mona Dajani on how working part of the Transboundary Climate Security collaboration project encouraged her to pursue her PhD at LSE.

Academic Collaboration with Arab Universities Programme

As part of the Academic Collaboration with Arab Universities Programme, the MEC has run fourteen research projects led by LSE academics from six different departments. The programme highlights the role played by the Centre as the principal hub for Middle East Studies within the School as well as a key partner to institutions in the region. To date, the Centre has partnered with nine universities in Arab countries.

The programme aims to support collaboration and knowledge exchange between LSE and Arab universities through research and academic capacity building. In the third round of funding in 2014, five new projects were supported. The Programme is funded by the Emirates Foundation.

Ongoing Projects

Contemporary Challenges Resulting from the Demographic Profile of GCC States: Labour Markets, Migration, and National Identity

Principal Investigators

Dr Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr Omar Al Nuaimi, United Arab Emirates University

Transboundary Climate Security: Climate Vulnerability and Human Security in the Jordan River Basin

Principal Investigators

Dr Michael Mason, Department of Geography and Environment, LSE
Dr Ziad Mimi, Birzeit University

The Palimpsest of Agrarian Change

Principal Investigators

Professor Martha Mundy, Department of Anthropology, LSE
Professor Rami Zurayk, American University of Beirut

Trust, Constitution and the Process of Subjectification among Tunisian Youth

Principal Investigators

Dr Aitemad Muhanna-Matar, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr James Sater, American University of Sharjah

Women's Health in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: Inclusion and Exclusion

Principal Investigators

Dr Ernestina Coast, Department of Social Policy, LSE
Professor Rita Giacaman, Birzeit University

Gentrification and Neighbourhood Change in Ras Beirut

Principal Investigators

Dr Fran Tonkiss, Department of Sociology, LSE
Professor Cynthia Myntti, American University of Beirut

Understanding the Role of International Actors in Enhancing Women's Rights after a Foreign Military Intervention: A Case Study of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Principal Investigators

Dr Zeynep Kaya, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr Deniz Gokalp, American University in Dubai

New Projects Commencing 2014/15

Policy Mobilities, Urban Politics and Assemblage: A View from Lebanon

This project examines the process of urbanisation in Lebanon using theories of policy mobilities and assemblage and analyses how the policies from international organisations circulate through the country and eventually 'land' on the ground. The research team considers how this knowledge circulates back from Lebanon to organisations that work internationally and how lessons from Lebanon may possibly function as part of knowledge geometries being circulated around the world.

Principal Investigators

Dr Romola Sanyal, Department of Geography, LSE
Dr Mona Harb and Dr Mona Fawaz, American University of Beirut

Mapping Foreign Policy in the GCC: Resources, Recipients and Regional Effects

This project supports new scholarly work emerging from and about the foreign policies of the GCC states through investigations of the respective states' resources (financial and natural), recipients of economic aid and political support, and the regional effects of these policies. The project also seeks to outline domestic sources of foreign policy input, including states' long-term interests and survival imperatives.

Principal Investigators

Professor Toby Dodge, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr Line Khatib, American University of Sharjah

Capacity Building in International Relations Didactics: Addressing the Educational Gap in Tunisia

This project provides collaborative teaching and research development as well as capacity building components. It aims to strengthen the teaching, assessment and course development capacities of

International Relations courses at Tunis Business School (TBS). It also aims to enhance the overall academic experience of TBS students and to contribute to developing their intellectual and critical thinking skills.

Principal Investigators

Dr Filippo Dionigi, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr Corinna Mullin, Tunis Business School, University of Tunis

Arab National Media and Politics: Democracy Revisited

This project examines the relationship between Arab traditional mass media and the political sphere during political change in the Arab world. Based on international scholarly work on media and democratisation, this project aims to investigate the role played by Arab national media in the process of democratisation of Arab political regimes. It looks also into the process of democratisation of national mass media.

Principal Investigators

Dr Fatima El Issawi, Middle East Centre, LSE
Dr Bradley Freeman, American University in Dubai

Examining Emirati Female Labour Force Participation and Entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates: A Multidisciplinary Approach

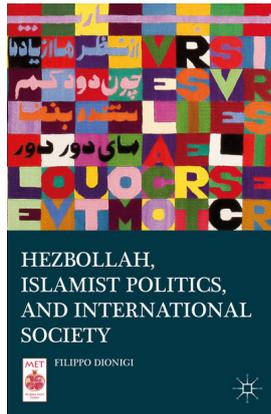
This project investigates female labour force participation and entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates, taking into account themes of national culture, values, identity and heritage, which are not usually captured by conventional labour force surveys, nor addressed systematically in the limited qualitative research available.

Principal Investigators

Dr Berkay Ozcan, Department of Social Policy, LSE
Dr Gina Poncini and Dr Wifag Adnan, Zayed University

Publications

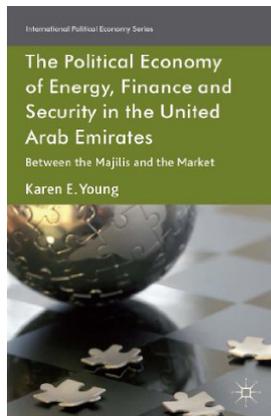
Books



Hezbollah, Islamist Politics, and International Society

Filippo Dionigi (Palgrave Macmillan, December 2014)

How do the norms of the liberal international order influence the activity of Islamist movements? This book assesses the extent to which Islamist groups, which have traditionally attempted to shield their communities from 'external' moral conceptions, have been influenced by the principles that regulate international society. Through an analysis of Lebanon's Hezbollah, Filippo Dionigi concludes that international norms are significant factors changing Islamist politics. We are still far from an accomplished resolution of the tension between Islamist communitarianism and liberal normative views, but a precarious equilibrium may emerge whereby Islamists are persuaded to rethink the idea of an allegedly 'authentic' Islamic morality as opposed to the legitimacy of international norms.

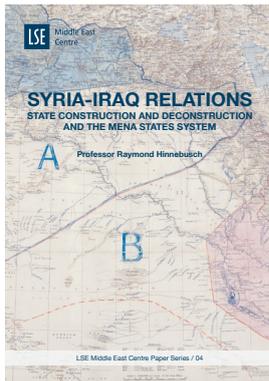


The Political Economy of Energy, Finance and Security in the United Arab Emirates: Between the Majilis and the Market

Karen Young (Palgrave Macmillan, August 2014)

The political economy of the United Arab Emirates is firmly rooted in patterns of social behavior, ways of negotiating and disarming dissent that are the foundational institutions of its political structure. These informal institutions are organic, but not outside of the norm of any developing state. There are a number of ways they might structure change and repress dissent, including, but in no way limited to: the formation and contestation of civil society organisations, demands for citizenship or legal status change among expatriates, a regional and outward focus on military power, and a realignment or reinterpretation of federalism.

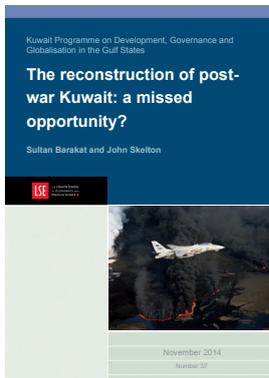
MEC Paper Series



Syria-Iraq Relations: State Construction and Deconstruction and the MENA States System

Raymond Hinnebusch, October 2014

This paper examines Syria-Iraq relations in order to explore wider issues of regional politics. It presents an overview of the historical stages in relations between the two countries since their formation, with the aim of using their changing relations as indicators of changes in both regional states and in the regional states system.



The Reconstruction of Post-War Kuwait: A Missed Opportunity?

Sultan Barakat, University of York and John Skelton, Mercy Corps Liberia, November 2014

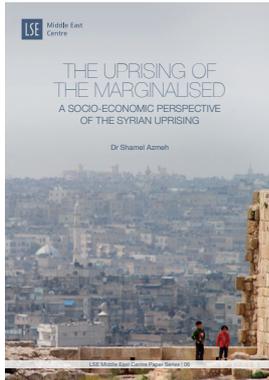
The reconstruction of Kuwait, following its occupation by Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 1990, constitutes a significant though rarely studied episode of post-war recovery. This paper reflects, from a long-term perspective, on the decisions which were taken following liberation and how these have affected the country's subsequent political, social and economic trajectory. The paper argues that had Kuwait's reconstruction assumed a different shape, it is conceivable that the country would have experienced a profoundly different development trajectory over the following two decades.



New Trends of Women's Activism after the Arab Uprisings: Redefining Women's Leadership

Aitemad Muhanna-Matar, November 2014

Given the complex context of division in women's political participation in post-uprising countries, this paper focuses on how emerging young female leaders – ordinary educated women with no specific feminist consciousness or previous political involvement – succeeded in shaping a new form of women's activism.



The Uprising of the Marginalised: A Socio-Economic Perspective of the Syrian Uprising

Shamel Azmeh, November 2014

This paper examines the political and socio-economic compromise that underlined the rule of the Ba'th party in Syria for four decades and unpacking how a combination of internal and external shifts that started in the 1990s and intensified in the 2000s led to the erosion of this compromise, providing the background to the events that began in 2011.

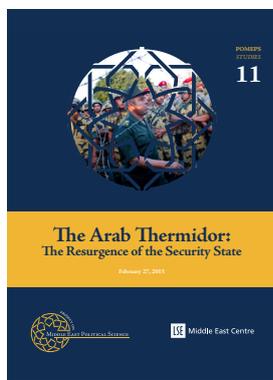


Divine Politics Reconsidered: Saudi Islamists on Peaceful Revolution

Madawi Al-Rasheed, May 2015

Focusing on mutations of Saudi Islamism during the Arab uprisings, this paper examines the responses of Salman al-Awdah, one of the most influential Saudi Islamist scholars. As he reflects on peaceful revolution in the Arab world, al-Awdah combines his Salafi heritage with insights from Western thought, thus producing a hybrid discourse that engages with the inevitability of political change.

MEC Collected Volumes



The Arab Thermidor: The Resurgence of the Security State

with the Project on the Middle East Political Science (POMEPS), February 2015

How should we understand the authoritarian resurgence in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings? In October 2014, the MEC and POMEPS organised a workshop to dig deeply into the causes, mechanisms, and drivers of 'The Arab Thermidor'. More than a dozen scholars looked at specific sectors such as the military, police and intelligence services, different countries, and the broader regional environment.

Contributors: Eva Bellin; Raymond Hinnebusch; Steven Heydemann; Ellis Goldberg; Pete Moore; Robert Springborg; Yezid Sayigh; Ali Ansari; Frederic Wehrey; Toby Matthiesen; Curtis Ryan; John Entelis; Salwa Ismail.



The New Politics of intervention of Gulf Arab States

April 2015

The purpose of the papers collected is to address drivers of foreign policy within GCC member-states, and the subsequent interaction and effect of these policies in neighbouring countries. The papers provide some shared conceptual clarity on frameworks for analysing foreign policy in the subregion, and put forward some hypotheses about how the process of state-building is changing both the agents and the practice of policy making.

Contributors: Karen Young; Anoushiravan Ehteshami; David Roberts; Madawi Al-Rasheed; Christopher Phillips; Florence Gaub.



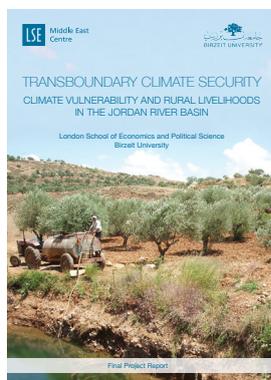
Challenges to Citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa Region

April 2015

This collected papers volume reflects a range of theoretical and empirical understandings of how belonging and political identity have evolved in juridical practice and social life in the Middle East and North Africa region after 2011. The papers explore how, even within non-revolutionary states, ideas about citizenship have been changing and as citizens and non-citizens test those boundaries within law and society, the outcomes reveal tensions and mounting pressures to reform along gender, class and ethnic lines.

Contributors: Karen Young; Kevin Gray; Claire Beaugrand; James Sater; Thomas DeGeorges; Yuting Wang.

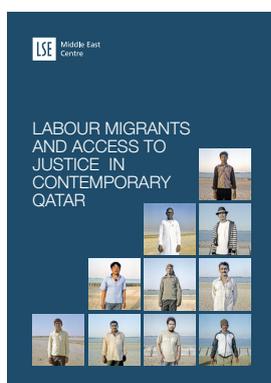
MEC Reports



Transboundary Climate Security: Climate Vulnerability and Rural Livelihoods in the Jordan River Basin

Lead authors: Michael Mason and Ziad Mimi, October 2014

This report presents the principal research findings of a collaborative project between LSE and Birzeit University, which investigated the climate-related vulnerabilities of agricultural communities living in areas with current or historically recent experience of military occupation – labelled '(post)occupation' – within the Jordan River Basin.



Labour Migrants and Access to Justice in Contemporary Qatar

November 2014

Qatar, despite its small size, is one of the primary destinations for the flow of transnational labour migrants in the region. This report examines migrants' access to justice in contemporary Qatar. Considering the problems transnational migrants in Qatar and other Gulf states face, this report makes a series of policy recommendations specific to the justice system and the institutions that comprise it.

MEC Workshop Proceedings



Bahrain after the Elections

March 2015

In November 2014 Bahrain held its first parliamentary elections since the anti-government protests erupted in 2011. With the main Shi'a opposition party al-Wefaq's boycott of the elections and the subsequent arrest of its leader Ali Salman, the role of the elections in determining the future of Bahrain was questioned. On 21 January 2015, the LSE Kuwait Programme organised a workshop entitled 'The Future of Bahrain after the Elections' bringing together experts, UK government officials and civil society organisation representatives.

Events

Public Lectures and Seminars

Thursday 9 October 2014

Lessons for Democratisation Theory from the Arab World: Insights from a Paired Comparison of Egypt and Tunisia

Dr Eva Bellin, Brandeis University

Thursday 16 October 2014

Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The United States and Iran in the Cold War

Dr Roham Alvandi, LSE

Tuesday 21 October 2014

The Political Economy of Energy, Finance and Security in the UAE: Between the Majilis and the Market

Dr Karen Young, LSE

Monday 27 October 2014

Mizrahi Mothers, Wrapped in the Flag: Ultra-Nationalism, Apartheid, and the Divinity of Bureaucracy in Israel

Professor Smadar Lavie, University of California

Thursday 6 November 2014

New Trends of Women's Activism after the Arab Uprisings: Redefining Women's Leadership

Dr Aitemad Muhanna-Matar, LSE

Tuesday 11 November 2014

The Kurdish National Liberation Movement in Iraq: From Insurgency to Statehood

Dr Yaniv Voller, University of Edinburgh

Wednesday 12 November 2014

1960s Algeria: Women, Public Space and Moral Panic

Dr Natalya Vince, University of Portsmouth

Tuesday 18 November 2014

Transboundary Climate Security: Climate Vulnerability and Rural Livelihoods in the Jordan River Basin

Dr Michael Mason, LSE; Muna Dajani, LSE

Wednesday 19 November 2014

Anglo-Iranian Relations Revisited: The Curious Case of the Proposed Nuclear Company of Britain and Iran

Professor Ali Ansari, St Andrews University

Monday 24 November 2014

The Uprising of the Marginalised: A Socio-Economic Perspective into the Collapse of the Ba'ath Rule in Syria

Dr Shamel Azmeh, LSE

Tuesday 2 December 2014

The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication

Dr Lina Khatib, Carnegie Middle East Center; Dr Dina Matar, SOAS; Dr Atef Alshaer, University of Westminster

5 January 2015

Iraq's Geopolitical Risk in Regional Perspective

Professor Toby Dodge, LSE

Monday 12 January 2015

Berber Government: The Kabyle Polity in Pre-Colonial Algeria

Professor Hugh Roberts, Tufts University

Tuesday 20 January 2015

Bahrain's Election Boycott: Lessons from Kuwait

Dr Kristin Smith Diwan, American University

Thursday 22 January 2015

Careers in the Middle East

Heidi Minshall, FCO; Joel Bubbers, British Council; Noman Elkhaja, Amnesty International; Tom Finn, Middle East Eye

Tuesday 27 January 2015

Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq: Motivations and Implications

Professor Peter Neumann, King's College London

Monday 2 February 2015

Hezbollah, Islamist Politics, and International Society

Dr Filippo Dionigi, LSE

Friday 6 February 2015

Jobs or Privileges: Unleashing the Employment Potential of the Middle East and North Africa

Marc Schiffbauer and Hania Sahnoun, World Bank

Wednesday 11 February 2015

Syria and the Future of the State Order in the Levant

Steven Heydemann, United States Institute of Peace

Thursday 12 February 2015

Recalibrating Authoritarianism after the Arab Spring

Steven Heydemann, United States Institute of Peace

Friday 13 February 2015

The Politics of Foreign Aid in the Arab World: The Impact of the Arab Uprisings

Alaa Tartir, LSE; Jeremy Wildeman, University of Essex; Dr Leila Mouhib, Université Libre de Bruxelles; Dr Steven Heydemann, United States Institute of Peace; Dr Benoit Challand, New York University

Tuesday 17 February 2015

Iraq After America: Strongmen, Sectarians, Resistance

Joel Rayburn, National Defense University

Tuesday 24 February 2015

Middle East Border Geopolitics: Established and Emerging Themes

Dr Richard Schofield, King's College London

Tuesday 10 March 2015

Algeria: A State and its Discontents

Professor Lahouari Addi, Sciences Po Lyon

Tuesday 17 March 2015

Empire, Revolt, and State Formation in the Middle East and North Africa in the 1920s

Dr Jonathan Wrytzen, Yale University

Wednesday 18 March 2015

The Origins of Kuwait's National Assembly in Comparative Perspective

Dr Michael Herb, Georgia State University

Thursday 19 March 2015

Democracy in Turkey: Institutions, Society and Foreign Relations

Dr Deniz Kandiyoti, SOAS; Dr. Ali Çarkoglu, Koç Üniversitesi; Dr. Berna Turam, Northeastern University

Monday 27 April 2015

The Algeria-UK Relationship: the building of a partnership

HE Amar Abba, Embassy of Algeria

Tuesday 5 May 2015

An Impending Nuclear Deal With Iran?

Mark Fitzpatrick, International Institute for Strategic Studies

Tuesday 2 June 2015

Saudi Islamists on Peaceful Revolution: Divine Politics Reconsidered

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, LSE

Research Seminars

The Centre runs a seminar series looking at social movements and popular mobilisation in the MENA. Following discussions and reviews, papers presented at the seminars are published by the Middle East Centre.

Tuesday 4 November 2014

High-Risk Activism and Popular Struggle Against the Israeli Occupation of the West Bank

Professor Joel Beinin, Stanford University

Wednesday 5 November 2014

Workers in the Arab Uprisings: Social Movement Theory, Political Economy and Class

Professor Joel Beinin, Stanford University

Wednesday 3 December 2014

Battlefields of the Republic: the Struggle for Public Space in Tunisia

Professor Charles Tripp, SOAS

Wednesday 21 January 2015

Theorising Revolution, Anticipating Civil War: Class, State, and Political Practice in 1960s Lebanon

Dr Fadi Bardawil, University of North Carolina

Wednesday 25 February 2015

The Non-Contentious Politics of Labour Protests in Egypt

Dr Marie Duboc, University of Tübingen; Jann Boeddeling, LSE

Tuesday 19 May 2015

Of Regime and Movements: Authoritarian Reform and the 2011 Popular Uprisings in Morocco

Frédéric Vairel, University of Ottawa

Wednesday 20 May 2015

How Self-Limiting Mobilisations Work: The Case of Morocco

Frédéric Vairel, University of Ottawa

Wednesday 3 June

Bahraini Activism in Exile: Legacies and Revolutionary Ruptures

Claire Beaugrand, Institut Français du Proche Orient

Conferences and Workshops

22 September 2014

The International Political Economy of Sovereign Wealth Fund Investment

The workshop examined the growing interdependencies between sovereign wealth funds and Western firms and policy makers, obstacles to cooperation between them and the strategies and policies adopted by each in order to manage their interdependencies. The workshop was held in Kuwait and was led by Professor Mark Thatcher from the LSE and attended by senior Kuwaiti experts and stakeholders.

Friday 10 October 2014

The Arab Thermidor: The Resurgence of the Mukhabarat State Three Years after the Middle Eastern Revolutions

Together with the Project on Middle East Political Science, the LSE Middle East Centre hosted a one-day workshop in London, bringing together scholars based in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States to discuss the resurgence of authoritarianism in the wake of the Arab Spring across a wide range of countries, sectors, and dimensions.

21 January 2015

Bahrain after the Elections

The workshop addressed the November 2014 parliamentary elections in Bahrain. It was split into two sessions: 'The November 2014 parliamentary elections' and 'The future of Bahrain'. The workshop was attended by academics, researchers, UK government officials and civil society organisation representatives.

Friday 20 March 2015

Democracy in Turkey: Institutions, Society and Foreign Relations

This workshop, co-hosted by the Middle East Centre and Contemporary Turkish Studies Programme at LSE, brought together various experts on Turkey to examine questions on the country's democracy and reflect on the profound changes undergone by Turkish society and politics.

“The Society for Algerian Studies and the MEC have co-organised very well-attended lectures with appreciative audiences. The Society looks forward to continuing its successful partnership with the MEC.”

William Sinton, President of the Society for Algerian Studies on the Society's affiliation to the MEC.



Monday 30 March 2015

International Statebuilding and Gender in the Middle East Conference

This full-day conference looked at the impact of the relationship between international, national and local actors on the level of incorporation of gender in the processes of state-building in the Middle East.

Monday 11 May 2015

LSE Middle East Alumni Forum 2015, Dubai

As part of the LSE Global Forum, the LSE Middle East Centre and The Abraaj Group organised the second LSE Middle East Alumni Forum in Dubai which was attended by over 200 people. The event presented an opportunity for LSE alumni to learn about the latest developments on campus, meet leading LSE academics and discuss ground-breaking research as well as the issues that are shaping lives and societies on a global scale.



10-11 June 2015

The Ethics of Political Science Research and Teaching in MENA

This workshop was funded by the American Political Science Association MENA Program and Carnegie Corporation of New York and co-hosted with the King Mohammed V University in Rabat.



Participants at the LSE Middle East Alumni Forum 2015, Dubai

BRISMES Annual Conference 2015: Liberation?

24-26 June 2015, London School of Economics

In June, the MEC hosted the BRISMES Annual Conference – the largest annual gathering in Europe of academic specialists on the Middle East. Over 300 representatives from universities in the UK, the US, Europe and the region met for three days to explore the conference theme of 'liberation'. The 51 panels of this multidisciplinary event included those focussing on the region's history, literature, religions and music, as well as those that grappled with its politics: from the future of western Kurdistan and the changing visions of citizenship across the region to the civil war in Syria, the state breakdown in Libya, and the military crack-down in Egypt.

Plenary Sessions

Each day of the event was further enhanced by a plenary session. Professor Peter Sluglett, director of the Middle East Institute at the National University of Singapore, opened the conference with a fascinating talk on 'Liberation: Tahrir and What We're still Waiting For', while Shereen El Feki, author of 'Sex and the Citadel', provoked a stimulating debate at the end of the second day with her moderated Q&A: 'Liberation in the Bedroom? The Shifting Sexual Landscape of the Arab Region'. The conference ended on a practical note, with a plenary session looking at how academics and activists can better work together to influence policy.



Publishers' Exhibition

Delegates were able to browse and buy the newest titles in Middle Eastern Studies in the publishers' exhibition, and many continued their discussions during the conference dinner and the drinks reception.

The MEC would like to thank the conference sponsors and partners – I.B. Tauris, LSE Kuwait Programme, the Fares Center and the European Association for Middle Eastern Studies (EURAMES) – for their support in making this event such a success.



“BRISMES is very privileged to have a close relationship with the LSE Middle East Centre which has kindly hosted the BRISMES annual conference twice within the last four years. This year's conference was a great success with a high turnout, a challenging programme in response to a provocative title and some wonderful opportunities for networking.”

Frances Guy, President of BRISMES.

Scholarships

Emirates PhD Scholarship Award Winners 2014/15

supported by the Emirates Foundation

The LSE MEC Emirates PhD Scholarship provides support for PhD research at LSE on Middle East topics. The awards, based on need and merit, provide support for students who are in the final stages of their doctoral degree. This year, three awards were granted.

Valeria Cetorelli, Department of Social Policy
Assessing the Effects of the 2003-2011 Iraq War on Fertility, Maternal and Newborn Health

Valeria Cetorelli's research revolves around the sociopolitical determinants of population health, with a particular focus on the Middle East. Her thesis assesses the effects of the 2003-2011 Iraq War on fertility, maternal and newborn health using longitudinal data from multiple consecutive.

Pinar Ceylan, Department of Economic History
Market Integration, Domestic Trade, and Consumption in the Ottoman Empire

Pinar Ceylan's research focuses on commodity markets, trade and consumption in the Ottoman Empire from mid-17th to mid-19th centuries. It aims at revealing aspects of market behaviour that can be simultaneously observed in different regions (non-Western as well as Western ones societies) across the early modern world.

Davide Luca, Department of Geography & Environment

Essays on the Political Economy of Regional Economic Development: Evidence from Turkey during AKP Rule
Davide Luca's thesis explores the impacts of electoral politics and partisanship on regional development policymaking and performance in Turkey. The thesis aims at assessing the extent to which the electoral victory of Erdogan's Justice and Welfare Party in 2002 marked – or not – a new deal for Turkey's policymaking and public governance.

Emirates Master's Scholarship Award Winners 2014/15

supported by the Emirates Foundation

In its first year, the MEC Emirates Master's Scholarship was offered to three Arab students pursuing their studies at LSE. This is a new initiative which aims to help in the education and career development of Arab state nationals. It equips them with new skills to continue further in Higher Education and make meaningful contributions in the region.

Fatma Mahfouz AbdelAziz
MSc Public Policy and Administration

Originally from Egypt, Fatma recently graduated from the American University in Cairo with a BA in Economics. She joined her course at LSE in an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practical implementation. She aims to take what she learned at LSE to teach in Egypt, while taking part in the current political reform in her country and pursuing a career in consultancy.

Heba Hesham
MSc Gender, Development and Globalisation

Heba graduated from the American University in Cairo, having majored in Economics. She is the co-founder of 'Heya' (She), Egypt's first student organisation to focus on mobilising students towards empowering women and gaining an understanding of the gendered angle of social issues. Her studies at LSE focus on feminist economics and population policy in Egypt.

Hiba Nuseibeh
MSc Conflict Studies

Hiba is from Jerusalem. She graduated from Birzeit University with a BA in Political Science and Economics. She has also worked for the Department of Law and Public Administration at Birzeit University before coming to LSE. During her studies, she focused on post-occupation and statebuilding in Palestine.

Kuwait Programme PhD Scholarship

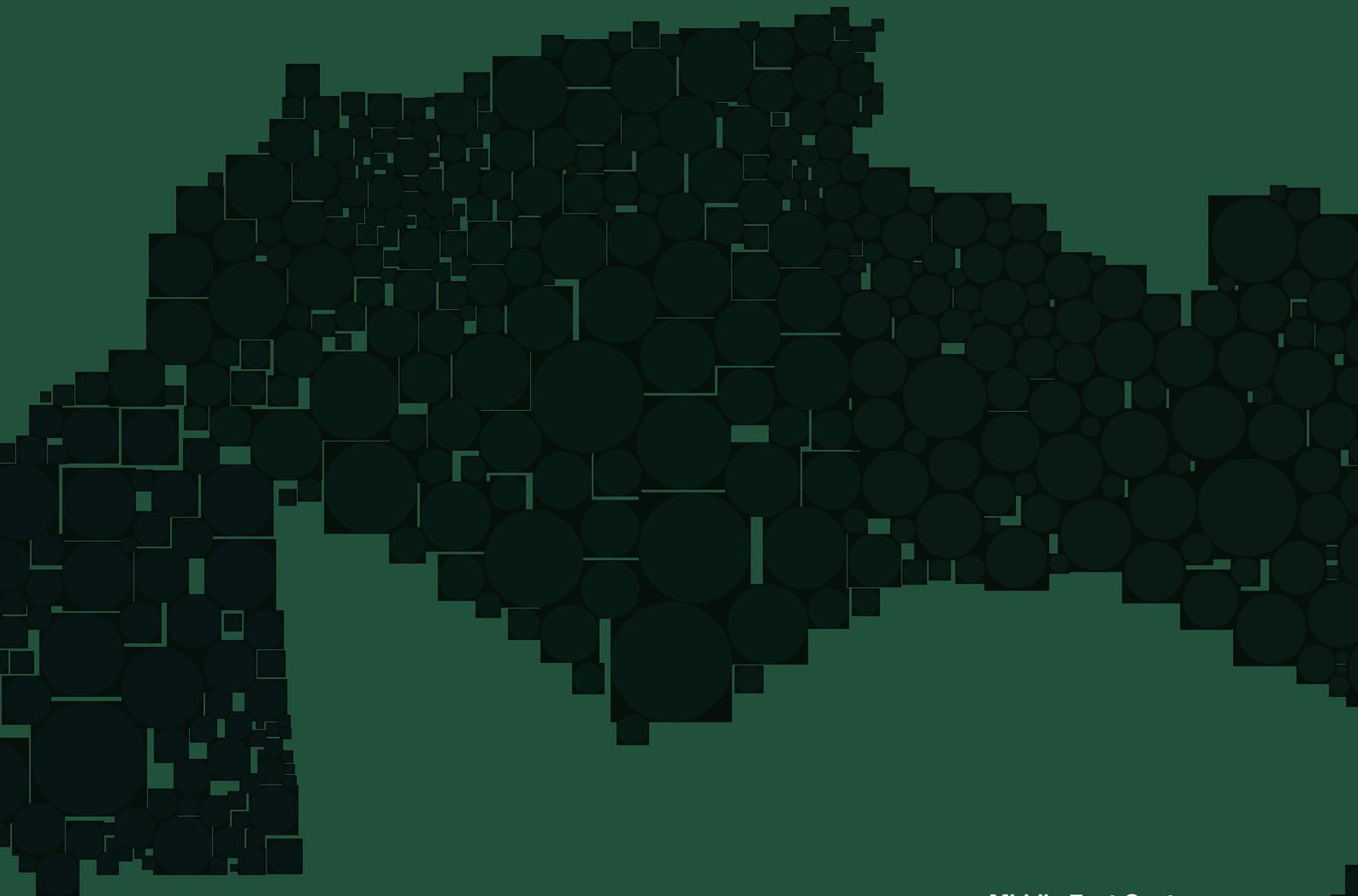
The Programme funds two PhD scholarships at LSE, with both students now in the final year of their scholarship.

Anastasia Nosova, Department of Government
Dynamics of Political Activity of the Business Sector in
Kuwait

Dana Kassem, Department of Economic
Economics of Industry and Microeconomic Theory

“A year ago, I couldn't have imagined the possibilities that being the recipient of the LSE Middle East Centre Emirates Master's scholarship would unlock for me. This opportunity has connected me to a group of world-class scholars and students who continue to prove to me the importance of engaging critically with social issues and the responsibility that knowledge comes with; a responsibility I will personally take very seriously moving forward.”

Heba Hesham, Emirates Master's Scholarship award winner.



Middle East Centre
London School of Economics
and Political Science
Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE

lse.ac.uk/middleeastcentre
twitter.com/lsemiddleeast
blogs.lse.ac.uk/mec

+44 (0)20 7955 6198