



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

Digest of Current Publications and Events

Editor: Jann Boeddeling (j.boeddeling@lse.ac.uk)

31.10.2015

CONTENT

Call for Papers & Conferences	3
The Subalterns Project: 1st Workshop.....	3
Kurdish Studies Summer School: Kurdish Politics and Society: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives.....	3
Tenth Nordic Conference on Middle Eastern Studies: Formations of Middle Eastern Subjectivities.	4
Political Economy Workshop for Graduate Students/Researchers: Call for Letters of Interest	5
Call for Submissions: Mobilization: An International Quarterly.....	6
Talks & Other Events	6
Film Festival: Rulers and the Ruled: Power in a Changing Arab World.....	6
Talk: ISIS Between Unity and Fragmentation.....	7
Film: Syria's Rebellious Women	7
Panel Discussion: Revolutionary Egypt: Four Years On.....	7
Talk: The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and the evolution of an insurgency.....	8
Recent & Forthcoming Books	8
War Against the People: Israel, the Palestinians and Global Pacification.....	8
Gramsci on Tahrir: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt.....	8
Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War.....	9
Other Publications	10
The right to live	10
Fuel Protests in Armenia	10
Is This the Third Palestinian Intifada?	10
Filming Revolution.....	11
Jadaliyya Media Roundups.....	11

CALL FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

The Subalterns Project: 1st Workshop

7-8 November 2015

University of Edinburgh

Room G2, 19 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LD

Speakers: Dr Sussan Babaie, Professor Albert de Jong, Dr Rebecca Gould, Dr Alexey Khismatulin, Dr Derek Mancini-Lander, Dr Bruno De Nicola, Ms Michelle Quay, Dr Lloyd Ridgeon, Dr Christine van Ruymbeke, Dr Miklos Sarkozy, Dr Riza Yildirim

The aim of this project is to involve scholars from a wide range of disciplines in the commencement of an organised effort to utilise an extensive range of sources to recover evidence of the 'voices' of 'subalterns' across the pre-modern and modern terrains of both rural and urban society across the Persianate world.

The wide-ranging sources to be explored for direct and indirect access to these voices could include elite Persian diplomatic and political-economic (court-level) materials but also those drawn from such a broad range of 'cultural' spheres as, for example, art and architecture (including cinema, for the modern period), prose, poetry and other media and religious materials (Sunni, Shi`i and Sufi) of all genres in all relevant languages. The project seeks also to explore attitudes toward the subaltern by the authors of these sources. Finally, the project aims also to identify problems in accessing/using the sources and questions/avenues for further research across Persianate history and, in the process, to establish an on-going network to chart pathways for further associated research projects and support for these. More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

Kurdish Studies Summer School: Kurdish Politics and Society: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives

27 - 29 June 2016

University of Leicester, United Kingdom

Please join us at this three-day intensive summer school focusing on Kurdish politics and society. This is the first-ever Kurdish Studies Summer School and will bring together scholars, postgraduate students and community advocates.

This summer school is designed to engage postgraduate students (Master and PhD), independent scholars, recent graduates in the field of Kurdish Studies as well as community advocates in the politics, society and culture of Kurds.

Confirmed keynote lecturers and panellists include:

- Professor Christine Allison
- Professor Hamit Bozarslan

- Dr Necla Acik
- Dr Kamran Matin
- Dr Ipek Demir

The lectures and workshops will be organized in line with the lecturers' area of expertise. They will be broadly in these areas:

- Area 1: 'Kurdish language, literature, popular culture and folklore in Kurdistan'
- Area 2: 'Coercion and Violence in Kurdistan and in the Middle East'
- Area 3: 'International Relations, nationalism, and the Kurdish Question'
- Area 4: 'Gender and Kurdish Studies'
- Area 5: 'Kurdish Diaspora'

Those wishing to present a paper and receive feedback, please send a long abstract (max 500 words) to id34@le.ac.uk. Please note that both the word-limit and abstract deadline are strict.

Abstract deadline: 30 October 2015; Abstract shortlisting will be finalised and communicated by **15 November 2015**.

More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

Tenth Nordic Conference on Middle Eastern Studies: Formations of Middle Eastern Subjectivities

University of Southern Denmark, Odense
22-24 September 2016

Papers and roundtables on all topics within the field of Middle East and Islamic studies are welcome, including – but not limited to – the following themes:

Researching the Middle East beyond the confines of area studies

The urban bias in Middle East studies

The meanings of age and generation in the Middle East

Global/local Islam and Muslims' religious practices

Configurations of Conflict in the Middle East

Nationalism and post-colonial identities

'Being there': Accounts, testimonials and political subject formation in the Middle East

Middle Eastern economies in global and historical perspective

The makings of cultural heritage in the Middle East

Cultural memory and the meaning of place

Middle East Media; Visual, literary, and popular cultures

Language politics and identities

The Middle East and global networks: Migration, diaspora and transnationality

Minorities in the Middle East

Middle Eastern Christians within and outside the Middle East

Disciplinary, methodological, and theoretical questions regarding the interrelation among these three fields of research will be discussed at two roundtables on Area Studies and the formation of modern Muslim subjectivities that take place Thursday and Friday after dinner.

Confirmed keynote speakers at these roundtables are:

Pinar Bilgin (Bilkent University, Ankara)

Henner Fürtig (GIGA, German Institute of Global and Area Studies)

Sherine Hafez (University of California, Davis)

Matteo Legrenzi (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

Zachary Lockman (New York University)

Emma Murphy (Durham University)

Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen (University of Copenhagen)

Samuli Schielke (Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin).

In addition, the conference presents two keynote addresses by Ingolf Thuesen (University of Copenhagen) who will address the cultural heritage theme and Walter Armbrust (St. Antony's College, Oxford) who is going to discuss disciplinary challenges in researching Arab media. More information [here](#)

The **deadline** for submitting proposals for a roundtable or a pre-organized **panel is 31 December 2015** and for individual **papers 31 January 2016**

[Back to top](#)

Political Economy Workshop for Graduate Students/Researchers: Call for Letters of Interest

We are writing to solicit Letters of Interest (LI) from doctoral students and other researchers for a workshop to be held in Spring or Summer 2016 on the political economy of the Middle East. The aim of the workshop is to connect doctoral students and researchers with mid-career and senior scholars working in the field and to provide them with the opportunity to present their research and to receive feedback from a community of scholars working in the field of critical political economy. The workshop will consist of three main parts. The first will involve doctoral students presenting their research and receiving written and verbal feedback from the participants. The second will feature methodological and theoretical sessions offered by invited scholars. The third will involve breaking up into groups for extended discussions, prior to one-on-one meetings that can take place after the conclusion of the workshop.

All expenses for invited students' travel and accommodation will be covered by the [Arab Studies Institute](#) and participating organizations. For anyone interested in submitting a "letter of interest" to attend the workshop, please provide the following information:

- Title of your project.
- Institutional affiliation and thesis advisor (and committee members, if possible).
- Research narrative (approximately 500 words). Please detail the scope of your research, main research questions, and methodology.
- Expected completion date of Ph.D. [If you are not a Ph.D. student, you may still apply]
- List of relevant publications (if applicable).

Please submit all LI by the early **deadline of November 5th, 2015** to the Pedagogy Working Group at the Political Economy Project at Pedagogy@PoliticalEconomyProject.org. Later submissions will be accepted through the end of November, pending availability. The committee will review the LI and then invite selected students to submit more detailed proposals of their research to be presented at the workshop.

[Back to top](#)

Call for Submissions: Mobilization: An International Quarterly

Mobilization: An International Quarterly is the premier journal of research specializing in social movements, protests, insurgencies, revolutions, and other forms of contentious politics. *Mobilization* is fully peer-reviewed and widely indexed. Today, *Mobilization* is published four times a year, in March, June, September, and December. The editorial board is composed of thirty internationally recognized scholars from political science, sociology and social psychology.

Colleagues working on **social movements, protests, insurgencies, revolutions**, and other forms of contentious politics and collective action, particularly with an empirical focus, please do consider submitting your articles to us. European authors should send their blinded manuscript along with a separate cover page with author contact details to Marco Giugni marco.giugni@unige.ch (European Editor). More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

Film Festival: Rulers and the Ruled: Power in a Changing Arab World

BBC Arabic Festival: Films & Documentaries from a Changing Arab World
30/10 - 02/11/2015

The BBC Arabic Festival will present a bold and diverse range of short films and documentaries from across the Middle East, by Arab and non-Arab, experienced and first-time filmmakers. This year's theme, 'Rulers and the Ruled: Power in a Changing Arab World' explores the struggles for power that continue to shake the region. Each film will be followed by discussions with the filmmakers themselves. Check bbcarabic.com/festival for programme details. More information [here](#)

Register for free tickets: http://www.bbc.co.uk/showsandtours/shows/bbc_arabic_festival_2015

[Back to top](#)

Talk: ISIS Between Unity and Fragmentation

06 November 2015, 5:00pm

Investcorp Lecture Theatre, St Antony's College, Oxford

Speaker: Dr Alia Brahim

More information [here](#)

Film: Syria's Rebellious Women

13 November 2015, 5:00-7:00 PM

SOAS, Russell Square, Khalili Lecture Theatre

Female activists who remain in rebel-held parts of Syria face numerous complex challenges. As well as facing the constant danger of bombing by the Assad government's air force, these women have to battle the conservative traditions of a male-dominated society, aggravated by a militarised environment from which many civilians have fled. More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

Panel Discussion: Revolutionary Egypt: Four Years On

17 November 2015, 5:30 PM

Reem Abou-El-Fadl (SOAS), Charles Tripp (SOAS), Miriyam Aouragh (Westminster), Adam Hanieh (SOAS), Nicola Pratt (Warwick) and Kerem Oktem (Graz)

SOAS, Russell Square, Khalili Lecture Theatre

Panel discussion to mark the launch of the 2015 edited volume *Revolutionary Egypt: Connecting Domestic and International Struggles*, (Routledge) taking stock and looking forward, four years since the outbreak of the January 2011 revolution (advertised in the previous Digest).

[Back to top](#)

Talk: The Syrian Jihad: Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State and the evolution of an insurgency

18 November 2015, 2-3pm

LSE, Hong Kong Theatre, Clement House

Speaker: Charles Lister

The eruption of the anti-Assad revolution in Syria has had many unintended consequences, among which is the opportunity it offered Sunni jihadists to establish a foothold in the heart of the Middle East. Charles Lister assesses and explains the emergence since 2011 of Sunni jihadist organisations in Syria's fledgling insurgency, charts their evolution and situates them within the global Islamist project. More information [here](#).

[Back to top](#)

RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

War Against the People: Israel, the Palestinians and Global Pacification

Jeff Halper

Sep 2015 – Pluto Press

Modern warfare has a new form. The days of international combat are fading. So how do major world powers maintain control over their people today? *War Against the People* is a disturbing insight into the new ways world powers such as the US, Israel, Britain and China forge war today. It is a subliminal war of surveillance and whitewashed terror, conducted through new, high-tech military apparatuses, designed and first used in Israel against the Palestinian population. Including hidden camera systems, sophisticated sensors, information databases on civilian activity, automated targeting systems and, in some cases, unmanned drones, it is used to control the very people the nation's leaders profess to serve.

Drawing from years of research, as well as investigations and interviews conducted at international arms fairs, Jeff Halper reveals that this practice is much more insidious than was previously thought. As Western governments tighten the grip on their use of private information and claw back individual liberties, *War Against the People* is a timely reminder that fundamental human rights are being compromised for vast sections of the world, and that this is a subject that should concern everyone.

[Back to top](#)

Gramsci on Tahrir: Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt

Jan 2016 – Pluto Press

[Brecht De Smet](#)

Coming in the wake of intense political and academic debate on the nature and development of the Arab Uprisings, *Gramsci on Tahrir* zeroes in on the complex dynamic of Egypt's revolution and counter-revolution. It shows how a Gramscian understanding of the revolutionary process provides a powerful instrument for charting the possibilities for an emancipatory project by the Egyptian subaltern classes.

Central to De Smet's argument is Gramsci's take on Caesarism which involves looking at a situation in which the forces in struggle are balanced in a truly catastrophic way, and how the interplay of these forces can only end in mutual destruction. The forces acting in Egypt provide a clear example of a state with the absence of strong hegemonies and capable counter-hegemonies. Through this analysis, we can see how the current situation in Egypt demonstrates how both national histories and global power relations enable, define and displace popular resistance and social transformation. *Gramsci on Tahrir* is a major contribution to the existing literature on Egypt and the Arab Uprisings with important implications for radical political theory.

[Back to top](#)

Burning Country: Syrians in Revolution and War

Jan 2016 – Pluto Press

Robin Yassin-Kassab, 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 explores the horrific and complicated reality of life in present-day Syria with unprecedented 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 expertly 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.

With chapters focusing on ISIS and Islamism, regional geopolitics, the new grassroots revolutionary organisations, and the worst refugee crisis since World War Two, *Burning Country* is a vivid and groundbreaking look at a modern-day political and humanitarian nightmare.

[Back to top](#)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The right to live

Faiza Rady, Al-Ahram Weekly
Issue No.1268, 29 October, 2015

Textile workers vow to continue industrial action until they receive the 10 per cent pay increase decreed by President Al-Sisi in July. “Twenty thousand textile workers at the Ghazl Al-Mahalla plants have been on strike since 21 October,” Abdel-Ghany Al-Naggar, a veteran worker at the mill, told Al-Ahram Weekly. “All we are demanding is that the company implements President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi’s July decree increasing the salaries of public sector workers by 10 per cent.”

On 19 October workers refused to accept their salaries until the company includes the raise in their paycheques. Responding to the workers’ demands, Ibrahim Badir, the company’s CEO, claimed the Ministry of Finance had refused to disburse the 10 per cent increase to Gazl Al-Mahalla on the grounds that the workers, who are already entitled to a seven per cent annual raise, were not eligible for it. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

Fuel Protests in Armenia

Zhanna Andreyan & Georgi Derlugian
New Left Review 95, September-October 2015

The three-week-long occupation of Yerevan’s main avenue ended on a bitterly comical note, worthy of a William Saroyan short story. As riot police moved in, on 6 July 2015, to dismantle the trash-can barricades and evict the last remaining protesters, the Chief of Police was heard urging his troops to be careful, in avuncular tones: ‘Easy, easy, these are our brothers and sisters; they won their victory for all of us.’ With tv cameras recording the scene for the national news, such pleas might sound patronizing, if not downright cynical; but perhaps in the Armenian context this is not the whole story. In the early days of the protests, sparked by the government’s sudden hike in electricity prices, our colleague Petr Liakhov recorded a typical observation from an onlooker: ‘These kids look so full of romantic energy, just like myself back in 1988! I used to sit-in at the very same spot. Well, you know how it all ended . . .’ [\[1\]](#) It turned out he was a colonel in the Armenian Army. ‘How did I become what I am? A logical progression. First, in 1989, abandon graduate studies and join an “illegal armed formation”’—Soviet-era policespeak for the nationalist guerrillas—‘then, once your “illegal armed formation” wins the war, it becomes a legal national army in which, with a degree of diligence, you can rise through the ranks.’ *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

Is This the Third Palestinian Intifada?

by Norman G. Finkelstein, Mouin Rabbani and Jamie Stern-Weiner
Jadaliyya - Oct 25 2015

The Palestinian uprising is now entering its fourth week. There appears to be a broad consensus on the genesis of the violence, which has left at least 40 Palestinians and seven Israelis dead since October 1, and more than 1,200 Palestinians injured. How it may develop in the days and weeks ahead is much less clear.

Israel's military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, now almost fifty years old, is more entrenched than ever, while even the pretense of a political process aimed at bringing the occupation and the conflict to an end has been effectively abandoned. Political despair has been compounded by economic desperation. In Gaza, two-fifths of the population lives in poverty, and youth unemployment is the world's highest, at more than 60 percent. In East Jerusalem, the epicenter of the uprising, 75 percent of Palestinians live below the poverty line. Even in the remainder of the West Bank, where donor aid and a credit bubble have sustained the fiction of an economy, fully one in three of those aged 20 to 24 are unemployed. It is no coincidence that, of the 30 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces from October 1–14, nearly two-thirds were between the ages of 18 and 22. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

Filming Revolution: a meta-documentary about filmmaking in Egypt since the revolution

Jadaliyya - Oct 25 2015

by Jadaliyya Reports

Filming Revolution is an interactive data-base documentary archive about independent and documentary filmmaking in Egypt since the revolution. Bringing together the collective wisdom and creative strategies of media-makers in Egypt, before, during, and after the revolution, the website consists of thirty interviews with Egyptian filmmakers, artists, activists, and archivists, discussing their work and their ideas about how (and whether) to make films in the time of revolution. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

Jadaliyya Media Roundups

[Syria Media Roundup \(October 26\)](#)

[Palestine Media Roundup \(October 22 – 28\)](#)

[ISIS in the News: Extensive Media Roundup \(August-September 2015\)](#)

[Egypt Media Roundup \(October 26\)](#)

[Egypt Media Roundup \(October 19\)](#)

[Arabian Peninsula Media Roundup \(October 20\)](#)

[Back to top](#)