



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

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

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

**20.01.2017**

# CONTENT

<b>Call for Papers &amp; Conferences</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Reminder: Conference: The “Dangerous Classes” in the Middle East and North Africa .....	5
Turkey in Transition (?): Before and After the Attempted July Coup .....	6
Reminder: The Middle East Studies Association’s 51st annual meeting .....	7
Call for MESA Panels: The Association of Middle East Anthropology (AMEA) invites anthropologically-themed panels .....	7
Call for MESA Panelists: Children, Youth, and Media in Middle Eastern, North African, and Gulf Conflict Zones .....	8
Shi’ism and Governance - The University of Chicago Shi’i Studies Group Symposium .....	9
XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology - Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities .....	10
<b>Talks &amp; Other Events</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Palestine Ltd. Neoliberalism and Nationalism in the Occupied Territory .....	11
Empire and Its Legacy in the Middle East .....	11
The Invention of Palestinian Citizenship, 1918-1947 .....	12
The Possibility (and Tensions) of 'Muslim Democracy' .....	12
Islamist movements in the MENA: Adaptation and divergence .....	13
Kurdish Women's Rights in Turkey and Beyond: Between Nationalism and Radical Democracy ....	13
Inside the Muslim Brotherhood: Religion, Identity, and Politics .....	13
Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon’s Party of God .....	14
Understanding Protest Environments beyond Opportunity and Threat .....	14
Labour Mobilization in Egypt after the 25th January Revolution .....	15
The Precarious State of Egypt under Sisi .....	15
After the Revolutions: Arab Memory and Bewilderment .....	16
Popular Historiographic Practices: Documenting War, Loss and Sacrifice (in Song) in the 50s and 60s in Egypt .....	16
<b>Recent &amp; Forthcoming Books</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Egypt in a Time of Revolution - Contentious Politics and the Arab Spring .....	16
Where Did the Revolution Go? Contentious Politics and the Quality of Democracy .....	17
Revolutionary Yiddishland: A History of Jewish Radicalism .....	17
<b>Journal Articles &amp; other Academic Publications</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Struggling to Perform the State: The Politics of Bread in the Syrian Civil War .....	18
Rethinking Popular Sovereignty - From the Nation to the People of a Potential New Historical Bloc .....	19

The Arab Uprisings, the Liberal Civilizing Narrative and the Problem of Orientalism .....	19
Passive, Silent and Revolutionary: The ‘Arab Spring’ Revisited .....	20
Nubians in Contemporary Egypt: Mobilizing Return to Ancestral Lands .....	20
Conquest of Paradise: Secular Binds and Coptic Political Mobilization .....	21
Signs of Visual Resistance in Palestine: Unsettling the Settler-Colonial Matrix.....	21
Bringing Back the Palestinian State: Hamas between Government and Resistance .....	22
The Thingified Subject's Resistance in the Middle East .....	22
Modeling Mechanisms of Democratic Transition in the Arab Uprisings.....	23
<b>News Pieces &amp; Commentary .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Lebanon Battles for Cannabis Legalization.....	23
Activism and Motherhood.....	24
Nationalism in Jordan: king, tribe, or country? Part one .....	24
Notes on the Labor Movement: Egypt in 2016 .....	24
The BDS struggle in US academia.....	25
Egyptian judge orders 15-day detention of anti-Red Sea island deal protesters .....	25
6 Nubian activists briefly detained for protesting new presidential decree over land.....	26
Egypt arrests 12 over island transfer protests .....	26
German university suspends pro-BDS professor.....	26
Facebook closes accounts of Palestine activists.....	27
What were the top 10 BDS victories of 2016? .....	27
Yemen war: Women play growing role for anti-Houthi forces .....	27
Fighting on All Fronts: Women’s Resistance in Syria .....	28
To cope or to resist: How people deal with abruptly deteriorating economic conditions .....	28
Forsaking the Syrian Revolution: An Anti-Imperialist Handbook.....	29
Syria, the International Left, and the Need for Solidarity .....	29
We Must Understand Syria as a Popular Struggle Despite Its Complications.....	29
'Russia, get out of Syria': Thousands join protest on Turkey border .....	30
University of Manchester Students’ Union backs BDS.....	30
And who are we to say the Syrian revolution is dead? .....	31
Number of imprisoned journalists reaches global high, Egypt 3rd worst offender: CPJ .....	31
Feminist Activist and Lawyer Azza Soliman Is the Latest Target of Egypt’s Crackdown on Civil Society .....	31
On War and Peace: The End of Rebellion in Aleppo .....	32
“If the Revolution is a crime, then charge all of us” .....	32
<b>Positions and Opportunities .....</b>	<b>33</b>

Scholarships/Fellowships (BA-, MA-, PhD Students): Research Partnership Violence, Forced Migration and Exile: Trauma in the Arab World and in Germany..... 33

## CALL FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

### Reminder: Conference: The “Dangerous Classes” in the Middle East and North Africa

26 January 2017

Investcorp Lecture Theatre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford

10.00 – 10.15 Introduction: Walter Armbrust

10.15 – 12.45 am: Session One: Chair: Marilyn Booth

Dangerous Women; Dangerous Men

Disorderly Women in Late Ottoman Istanbul, 1876-1914 (Müge Telci Özbek)

Disciplining Sex Work in Colonial Cairo (Francesca Biancani)

Red-light Tehran: Sex-work, Precarity, and Compassionate Governmentality, 1921-1979 (Jairan Gahan)

Competing configurations of masculinity: The decline of *lutigari*-masculinities in Pahlavi Iran (Olmo Gölz)

Dangerous no more? On the twists and turns of the masculinity of Egypt’s Ultras football fans in the aftermath of the 2011 Revolution (Carl Rommel)

12.45 -2.00 pm Lunch

2.00-3-30 pm: Session Two: Chair: Toby Matthiesen

Banditry and Crime

History and Memory of al-Ashqiya’ in Modern Egypt: The Controversy of Adham Al- Sharqawi (Mohammed Ezzeldeen)

A State of Tribal Lawlessness? Rural and Urban Crime in Fars Province, 1910-15 (Mattin Biglari)

“Masters” or “Troublers”? Poor Peasants’ Extralegal Ways to Survive during Early Republican Turkey (Murat Metinsoy)

4.00-5.30 pm: Session Three: Chair: Edmund Herzig

Dangerous Streets

Women in the streets! Urban food riots in late Ottoman *Bilād al-Shām* (Till Grallert)

Unruly Seminaries, Soldiers, and Ruffians in late Qajar Iran (Farzin Vejdani)

Under the Bridge in Teheran: the dangerous class of street drug ‘addicts’ (Maziyar Ghiabi)

Attendance is free - please register to attend. For enquiries please contact the convenor, Stephanie Cronin: [Stephanie.cronin@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Stephanie.cronin@orinst.ox.ac.uk)

More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Turkey in Transition (?): Before and After the Attempted July Coup**

Deadline: 18 February 2017

6-7 June 2017, Athens

Venue: Netherlands Institute at Athens, Makri 11, 11742, Athens, Greece

Organizers:

Dr. Nikos Christofis, University of Crete

Dr. Tryfon Bampilis, Netherlands Institute at Athens

The failed coup d'état in Turkey can be analyzed in many ways, especially in relation to continuities and discontinuities in Turkey's 21st century politics, society and economy. Some scholars argue that the aftermath of the July coup revealed even further the authoritarian character of the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and its party, the AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi/Justice and Development Party), and opened the way to enhance his own powers more. Other scholars argue that Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's policies signal the rebirth of the Turkish nation, or Yeni Türkiye (New Turkey) as it is often referred to. With this conference we attempt to address the above issue and explore the extent to which the coup d'état constitutes a turning point in modern Turkey, or it is used, to reproduce older paradigms.

We invite submissions on the following, but not limited, related topics, and we encourage contributions from all related fields (history, politics, sociology, and anthropology):

- Factors and consequences of the July 15 coup d'état
- AKP rule and opposition parties
- Political regime change
- The ideological aspects of the AKP's strategy
- The role of religion and religious communities
- Turkey in a "state of emergency"
- Left politics and social movements
- The Kurdish question
- Legal aspects
- Turkish foreign policy (esp. in relation with the wider Middle East)
- Neoliberalism and state (re)-formation
- Refugees-Immigrants and the EU
- Gender

Keynote speakers:

Joost Lagendijk, Political Analyst and Publicist

Hamit Bozarslan, EHESS, Paris

Prof. Joost Jongerden, Wageningen University

If you are interested in participating (or if you have any queries), please send a word abstract (250-300 words) to [turkeyintransition@gmail.com](mailto:turkeyintransition@gmail.com) by February 18, 2017. We will acknowledge receipt of all emails and will reply to all. If you do not receive a reply, please resend your abstract.

Please include the following in your email:

- Author name;
- Affiliation;
- email address;

- abstracts in Word format;
- a short CV (max. 100 words)

All participants will be notified by March 5, 2017.

As we intent to compile an edited volume and/or a special issue for publication in an international reference publisher, we kindly request for the accepted abstracts, a draft paper of 7000-8000 words before the conference in order to be considered for publication. There is no fee for this conference, but early registration is encouraged due to limited space. Please note that we are unable to provide any financial help to participants.

*More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Reminder: The Middle East Studies Association's 51st annual meeting**

Deadline 15 February 2017

18-21 November 2017, Washington, DC.

All submissions must be made through myMESA, MESA's membership and electronic submissions system. The system opens on January 1, 2017, and closes at midnight (Mountain Standard Time) on February 15, 2017.

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.

*More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Call for MESA Panels: The Association of Middle East Anthropology (AMEA) invites anthropologically-themed panels**

Deadline 10 February 2017

November 18-21, in Washington, DC

The Program Committee of the Association of Middle East Anthropology (AMEA), an organization affiliated with the Middle East Studies Association, invites anthropologists to submit panels for AMEA sponsorship at the 2017 MESA annual meetings in Washington, DC.

A central objective of AMEA is to promote the presentation of the many important theoretical and methodological contributions anthropologists have made to the study of the Middle East and North Africa. In order to do this, AMEA is looking to sponsor panels that introduce new methodologies, new areas of research, and/or refigured theoretical paradigms.

If you would like to have your panel considered for AMEA sponsorship, please send your panel proposal to the AMEA program committee chair, Kim Shively at [shively@kutztown.edu](mailto:shively@kutztown.edu) by Friday, Feb. 10, 2017.

All papers and panels must be submitted through the normal MESA review process. The deadline for paper or panel submission to MESA is Wednesday, February 15.

More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Call for MESA Panelists: Children, Youth, and Media in Middle Eastern, North African, and Gulf Conflict Zones**

Deadline 8 February 2017

November 18-21, in Washington, DC

This panel seeks to carve out new pathways into the subject of children, youth and media. Abstracts are sought that critically interpret how Middle Eastern, North African, and Persian/Arabian Gulf children and youth use, play with, produce, interpret and/or are influenced by media in conflict zones. Abstracts should come from or be framed from the “voice”, or perspective of children and youth and connect how their respective media uses and practices impinge on the development of their culture, constructions of civic and national identity, intergroup attitudes, political opinions, and/or peace and conflict related practices and behaviors. To that effect, papers might examine the media uses and associated daily lives -- past and/or present -- of among others, Algerian, Iranian, Iraqi, Israeli, Lebanese, Libyan, Palestinian, Syrian, Tuareg, Yemini or Yezedi girls and boys. Papers that explore these areas as they relate to the lives of those among them who have been (forcibly-) migrated, are borderlands children, have been born due to the uses of rape as a weapon of war, and/or whom, through them, have become child mothers, are particularly encouraged.

Abstracts, and so papers, may conceptualize children/childhood or youth from a biological, legal, constructed, and/or subaltern perspective. They may either be modern or historical in focus. Field-based research from a variety of disciplinary, theoretical, and methodological perspectives are encouraged. Research from communication, children and youth/childhood studies, anthropology, political science, sociology, psychology, history and related disciplines are all welcome. To that effect, media analogous analyses of non-formal education, arts, music, dance, and leisure practices and spaces are invited. The goal of the panel will be to foster a critical transdisciplinary merger of these varied disciplinary approaches.



If interested, and for any questions, please email Yael Warshel at [ywarshel@gmail.com](mailto:ywarshel@gmail.com)

The following information should be emailed by Feb 8, 2017:

- 1) your name, affiliation, and contact details.
- 2) a 300-400 word abstract fitting the above panel theme and MESA's criteria for evaluating abstracts, including being, "scholarly", and possessing "a strong, focused statement of thesis or significance, clear goals and methodology, well-organized research data, specified sources, and convincing, coherent conclusions."

[Back to top](#)

## **Shi'ism and Governance - The University of Chicago Shi'i Studies Group Symposium**

Deadline: February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Symposium Date: May 12-13, 2017

The relationship between Shi'ism and governance—whether through doctrinal beliefs, political movements and ideologies, or practical exigencies—constitutes a highly relevant area of study within Islamic history and modern life. From the earliest disagreements over the succession to the Prophet Muhammad to current debates over Islamism and the modern state, various thinkers and movements within Shi'ism formulated original and innovative answers to the question of how Shi'i communities should approach governance, politics, and communal relations in the larger societies within which they lived.

Given its historic minority status, how have Shi'is theorized their position vis-à-vis caliphates they intrinsically rejected? How have Shi'is legitimized or contested the rhetoric and practice of Shi'i dynasties and governments once they came into power? How can we theorize Shi'i pre-modern and modern notions of "governance" and the "political," and is this a useful metric for understanding the relationship between Shi'ism and power? Finally, how have other schools of thought approached and responded to Shi'i notions of governance or politics? We welcome contributions from scholars and graduate students working on these questions from any relevant scholarly perspective, including social, intellectual and political history, anthropology, sociology, political science, area studies, literature, and religious studies.

Papers may focus on both modern and pre-modern subject areas and might address—although by no means are limited to—such topics as the following:

- Historic Shi'i notions of leadership and what constituted the authority of the Islamic ruler;
- Shi'i beliefs of the Imamate and the Caliphate regarding governance and political responsibilities;
- Modern Shi'i scholarly thought and the various political positions of Twelver Grand Ayatollahs towards governance;
- Polemic debates between Shi'is and other thought schools on the theory of proper Islamic rule;

- Political Islam, mass movements, and the modern state;
- Sectarianism, communal relations, and the state in the modern Middle East;
- Comparative studies on approaches towards governance between different Shi'i groups such as the Zaydis, Twelvers, Isma'ilis and Alawis in historical and modern contexts.

#### Format of the Symposium

Presenters will be requested to present for 15-20 minutes followed by additional time for moderated discussion between panelists and the audience.

Abstracts of around 300 words along with a CV should be submitted by February 24, 2017. Send abstracts to Mohammad Sagha at [msagha@uchicago.edu](mailto:msagha@uchicago.edu), with the words "UChicago Shi'i Studies Symposium Application" in the subject line.

[Back to top](#)

## **XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology - Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities**

Toronto, Canada, July 15-21, 2018

Abstract submission opens 25 April 2017

Since the inception of the discipline, sociologists have been concerned with power, violence and justice. Current social, economic and political challenges enhance their relevance. As capitalist globalization expands and deepens, corporate power increases along with global, national and local inequalities. New geo-political power configurations and confrontations are emerging, with violence being used as a tool to oppress and also to resist oppression. Colonial histories and contemporary land appropriations reflect the structures and cultural processes that perpetuate violence against indigenous and minority communities. States' failures to meet their responsibility to provide basic resources are often deflected by blaming the most vulnerable. Both global economic and geo-political processes create crises and massive displacements of people and, at the same time, fuel racism, nationalism and xenophobia. We have also seen an increasing buildup of a culture of fear as a powerful tool used by states, corporations and other institutions to generate popular support for curtailing freedom in the name of security. Efforts to curtail the flow of desperate refugees, attest to the reinforcement of national and racialized borders. Despite visible progress on equality issues, violence against women and intersectional violence point to the entrenchment of the gender border around the world. Equally significant is the need to consider the role of state and institutional power relations to ongoing everyday violence. In response to disempowerment, violence, and injustice we have also witnessed nonviolent movements, humanitarian interventions, and peace processes that have empowered communities, reduced violence, and promoted justice. These diverse communities have built solidarities outside the neo-liberal frames of state-global capital nexus.

This XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology will focus on how scholars, public intellectuals, policy makers, journalists and activists from diverse fields can and do contribute to our understanding of power, violence and justice.

More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

### **Palestine Ltd. Neoliberalism and Nationalism in the Occupied Territory**

23 January 2017, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Venue: SOAS, Russell Square: College Buildings, Khalili Lecture Theatre, London

Speaker: Toufic Haddad

Chair: Gilbert Achcar, SOAS

In *Palestine Ltd* (IB Tauris, 2016), Toufic Haddad explores how neoliberal frameworks have shaped and informed the common understandings of international, Israeli and Palestinian interactions throughout the Oslo peace process. Drawing upon more than 20 years of policy literature, field-based interviews and recently declassified or leaked documents, he details how these frameworks have led to struggles over influencing Palestinian political and economic behaviour, and attempts to mould the class character of Palestinian society and its leadership. A dystopian vision of Palestine emerges as the by-product of this complex asymmetrical interaction, where nationalism, neo-colonialism and ‘disaster capitalism’ both intersect and diverge. *More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

### **Empire and Its Legacy in the Middle East**

24 January 2017, 18:00-20:00)

Venue: Council Room (K2.29) King’s Building Strand Campus, King’s College London

Speaker: Roger Hardy (King's College London)

Almost fifty years after Britain and France left the Middle East, the toxic legacies of their rule continue to fester. To make sense of today’s conflicts and crises, we need to grasp how Western imperialism shaped the region and its destiny in the half-century between 1917 and 1967. Roger Hardy unearths an imperial history stretching from North Africa to southern Arabia that sowed the seeds of future conflict and poisoned relations between the Middle East and the West. Drawing on a rich cast of eye-witnesses — ranging from nationalists and colonial administrators to soldiers, spies, and courtesans — *The Poisoned Well* brings to life the making of the modern Middle East,

highlighting the great dramas of decolonisation such as the end of the Palestine mandate, the Suez crisis, the Algerian war of independence, and the retreat from Aden. *More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **The Invention of Palestinian Citizenship, 1918-1947**

24 January 2017, 5:45 - 7:00 PM

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

Speakers: Lauren Banko (University of Manchester), Nelida Fuccaro (SOAS)

Lauren Banko in conversation with Nelida Fuccaro on the subject of her book *The Invention of Palestinian Citizenship, 1918-1947* (Banko, L. Edinburgh University Press, 2016). In the two decades after the First World War, nationality and citizenship in Palestine became less like abstract concepts for the Arab population and more like meaningful statuses integrated into political, social and civil life and as markers of civic identity in a changing society. Banko situates the evolution of citizenship at the centre of state formation under the quasi-colonial mandate administration in Palestine and emphasises the ways in which British officials crafted citizenship to be separate from nationality based on prior colonial legislation elsewhere, a view of the territory as divided communally, and the need to offer Jewish immigrants the easiest path to acquisition of Palestinian citizenship in order to uphold the mandate's policy. *More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **The Possibility (and Tensions) of 'Muslim Democracy'**

25 January 2017, 5.00 pm - 6.30 pm |

Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstr. 14, 14193 Berlin

Speaker: Asef Bayat

Chair: Cilja Harders

How can we imagine a democratic polity in societies where people take their religion seriously? Can we then imagine such a thing as 'Muslim democracy'? And if so what is it, and how different it may be from liberal democracy? In an attempt to address this question, I would suggest that post-Islamist trajectory might materialize in some kind of 'Muslim democracy', but one in which tension with liberal values may mark its principal character.

*More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Islamist movements in the MENA: Adaptation and divergence**

26 January 2017, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Venue: Elliott School for International Affairs, Lindner Commons, Room 602, 1957 E St NW, Washington, DC 20052

Panelists: Khalil al-Anani, Monica Marks, Jillian Schwedler, Eva Wegner

Moderated by: Marc Lynch

In the post-Arab uprisings political landscape, Islamist movements across the Middle East and North Africa are adapting in unique ways to face challenges from the evolution of Salafi-jihadist movements to local insurgencies and repression. Some – like Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood under President Sisi – have faced severe domestic and regional repression disrupting their organization, ideology and strategy. Others have found new opportunities, whether in formal politics or as members of military coalitions. These structural changes have produced an intriguingly diverse array of responses at the ideological, strategic and organization level. This panel of top scholars will seek to address timely questions such as: what explains the variation in the ways in which Islamists have adapted to these new challenges and opportunities? To what extent have Islamist parties, movements, members or intellectuals engaged in significant strategic adaptation, ideological rethinking, or internal reorganization? What are the appropriate historical or cross-national comparisons to make sense of the current political moment? *More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Kurdish Women's Rights in Turkey and Beyond: Between Nationalism and Radical Democracy**

30 January 2017, 2:00pm

Venue: Fellows Dining Room, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford

Speaker: Naje Al-Ali (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

*More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Inside the Muslim Brotherhood: Religion, Identity, and Politics**

30 January 2017, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Venue: Lindner Family Commons, Room 602, 1957 E St NE, Washington, DC 20002

Speaker: Dr. Khalil al-Anani

Dr. Khalil al-Anani is an associate professor at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in Qatar. He previously taught at Johns Hopkins University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, and George Mason University. His research focuses on Comparative Politics, Democratization, Religion and Politics, Islamist Movements, Social Movements, Egyptian Politics, Identity Politics, and Arab Politics. Prof. al-Anani has published several books (in English and Arabic)

including, “*Elections and Democratization in the Middle East*” (co-editor, Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), and “*The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt: Gerontocracy Fighting against Time?*” (Cairo: Shorouk Press, 2007), and has published several academic articles in leading journals such as *The Middle East Journal*, *Sociology of Islam*, *Digest of Middle East Studies*. He has also published policy papers and op-ed pieces in leading newspapers including *The Washington Post*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *CNN*, and *Al-Monitor*. More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon’s Party of God**

31 January 2017, 5:45-7:00 pm

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

Speaker: Joseph Daher

Chair: Adam Hanieh, SOAS

Talk by Daher to mark the publication of his book *Hezbollah: The Political Economy of Lebanon’s Party of God* (Pluto Press, 2016). Where previous books have focused on aspects of the party’s identity, the military question or its religious discourse, here Joseph Daher presents an alternative perspective, built upon political economy. Drawing on extensive fieldwork in Lebanon and dozens of interviews, as well as new archival and other primary sources, Daher’s analysis confidently positions Hezbollah within socio-economic and political developments in Lebanon and the Middle East. He emphasises Hezbollah’s historic ties with its main sponsor, the Islamic Republic of Iran, its media and cultural wings and its relationship with Western economic policies. More information [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Understanding Protest Environments beyond Opportunity and Threat**

02 February 2017, 18:00-20:00

Venue: King’s College, Council Room (K2.29) King’s Building Strand Campus, London

Speaker: Dr John Chalcraft (LSE)

Chair: Dr Maysoun Sukarieh (King’s College London)

This lecture aims to develop conceptual understandings of the relationship between mobilization and the political environment. It presents an alternative to conventional social movement theorizing on political opportunity. A political extension of Gramsci’s writings on hegemony provides the conceptual framework. Research on movements in the Middle East and North Africa provide the main empirical base. Hegemonic incorporation is understood to be a process whereby established political institutions, procedures and norms win consent among the subordinated members of a given political community. This article identifies and elaborates five incorporation mechanisms: participation, delegation, legitimation, nesting, and co-optation. These mechanisms are enabling conditions for consent and contained contention; they drive forward hegemonic incorporation,

thickening and stabilizing hegemonic political structures. When these mechanisms breakdown, disincorporation follows, a process which destabilizes hegemonic structures, and provides enabling conditions for either withdrawal or transgressive mobilization. This analysis aims to get theorists beyond instrumental, static, and deterministic concepts of political opportunity structure, without accepting existing alternatives rooted in culture, attribution, or relationality. These constructionist alternatives do not give political power and structure its due, and they suffer from subjectivism, voluntarism, excessive interactionism, and a too a-structural use of mechanisms. This article aims to open up a new way to understand and research the relationship between the political environment and shifts between transgression, consent, contained contention, and withdrawal. *More information [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Labour Mobilization in Egypt after the 25th January Revolution**

07 February 2017, 18:00-20:00

Venue: Nash Lecture Theatre (K2.31) Strand Campus, King's College London

Speaker: Christopher Barrie (University of Oxford)

Chair: Dr Michael Farquhar (King's College London)

Prevailing understandings of labour protest and strikes take as their focus stable democratic settings where autonomous trade union structures are an established component of the organizational resources available to workers. We extend the analysis of labour mobilization to a radically different context: Egypt in the year of the 25th January Revolution, when workers mobilized en masse in the absence of union leadership. For this, we use a catalogue of 4,912 protest events reported in Arabic-language newspapers. State-level signals of opportunity and aggregate shifts in economic conditions are poor predictors of labour activism in this context. Instead, local and national mobilization advancing both labour and non-labour demands is shown to inspire subsequent labour protest. These findings speak to the value of understanding labour protest and strikes not as delimited domains of action but as parts of a wider universe of contentious politics. *More information [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **The Precarious State of Egypt under Sisi**

10/02/2017 5:00pm

Venue: Investcorp Lecture Theatre, St Antony's College, University of Oxford

Speakers: Lucie Ryzova (Birmingham), Reem Abou-El-Fadl (SOAS)

*More information [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **After the Revolutions: Arab Memory and Bewilderment**

15 February 2017

Venue: SOAS, University of London, Alumni Lecture Theatre in the Paul Webley Wing (Senate House), London

Speaker: Hisham Matar

In the BRISMES Annual Lecture, prize-winning Libyan novelist Hisham Matar will offer a literary response to the present, reflecting on the seismic shifts experienced in the Arab region. He will be looking back, as well as casting forward towards shared yearnings for the future, the hopes and fears it engenders, and what this might reveal about the current imagination.

This year's Annual Lecture is held in collaboration with the London Middle East Institute at SOAS and will be followed by a drinks reception. *More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **Popular Historiographic Practices: Documenting War, Loss and Sacrifice (in Song) in the 50s and 60s in Egypt**

15 February 2017

Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstraße 14, 14193 Berlin

Speaker: Alia Mossallam (Cairo / EUME Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung 2017-19)

Moderation: Michael Allan (University of Oregon / EUME-CNMS Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung 2017)

*More information* [here](#)

[Back to top](#)

## **RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS**

### **Egypt in a Time of Revolution - Contentious Politics and the Arab Spring**

Neil Ketchley

April 2017 – Cambridge University Press

This book considers the diverse forms of mass mobilization and contentious politics that emerged during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 and its aftermath. Drawing on a catalogue of more than 8,000



protest events, as well as interviews, video footage and still photographs, Neil Ketchley provides the first systematic account of how Egyptians banded together to overthrow Hosni Mubarak, and how old regime forces engineered a return to authoritarian rule. Eschewing top-down, structuralist and culturalist explanations, the author shows that the causes and consequences of Mubarak's ousting can only be understood by paying close attention to the evolving dynamics of contentious politics witnessed in Egypt since 2011. Setting these events within a larger social and political context, Ketchley sheds new light on the trajectories and legacies of the Arab Spring, as well as recurring patterns of contentious collective action found in the Middle East and beyond.

[Back to top](#)

## **Where Did the Revolution Go? Contentious Politics and the Quality of Democracy**

Donatella Della Porta

2016 – Cambridge University Press

Where Did the Revolution Go? considers the apparent disappearance of the large social movements that have contributed to democratization. Revived by recent events of the Arab Spring, this question is once again paramount. Is the disappearance real, given the focus of mass media and scholarship on electoral processes and 'normal politics'? Does it always happen, or only under certain circumstances? Are those who struggled for change destined to be disappointed by the slow pace of transformation? Which mechanisms are activated and deactivated during the rise and fall of democratization? This volume addresses these questions through empirical analysis based on quantitative and qualitative methods (including oral history) of cases in two waves of democratization: Central Eastern European cases in 1989 as well as cases in the Middle East and Mediterranean region in 2011.

[Back to top](#)

## **Revolutionary Yiddishland: A History of Jewish Radicalism**

Alain Brossat and Sylvia Klingberg

2016 – Verso

Jewish radicals manned the barricades on the avenues of Petrograd and the alleys of the Warsaw ghetto; they were in the vanguard of those resisting Franco and the Nazis. They originated in Yiddishland, a vast expanse of Eastern Europe that, before the Holocaust, ran from the Baltic Sea to the western edge of Russia and incorporated hundreds of Jewish communities with a combined population of some 11 million people. Within this territory, revolutionaries arose from the Jewish misery of Eastern and Central Europe; they were raised in the fear of God and taught to respect religious tradition, but were caught up in the great current of revolutionary utopian thinking. Socialists, Communists, Bundists, Zionists, Trotskyists, manual workers and intellectuals, they

embodied the multifarious activity and radicalism of a Jewish working class that glimpsed the Messiah in the folds of the red flag. Today, the world from which they came has disappeared, dismantled and destroyed by the Nazi genocide. After this irremediable break, there remain only survivors, and the work of memory for red Yiddishland. This book traces the struggles of these militants, their singular trajectories, their oscillation between great hope and doubt, their lost illusions—a red and Jewish gaze on the history of the twentieth century.

[Back to top](#)

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

### **Struggling to Perform the State: The Politics of Bread in the Syrian Civil War**

José Ciro Martínez, Brent Eng

International Political Sociology, published online: 9 January 2017 (advance access)

Recent studies of civil war have problematized frameworks that rely on a strict binary between state-sanctioned order and anarchy. This paper extends these insights and combines them with theories of performativity to examine welfare practices during the Syrian conflict (2011–2015). Specifically, we argue that conceptualizing the state as a construct—as an effect of power—can expand the study of civil war beyond its quantifiable aspects and embrace the performative dimensions of political life. By means of everyday, iterative acts such as welfare provision, competing groups summon the state, and the political order it seeks to enshrine, into existence: they make it both tangible and thinkable. During civil war, the ability to perform these prosaic acts becomes a matter of pressing military and political concern. Through close scrutiny of various cases, we dissect the impact of subsidized bread provision by the Assad regime, the Free Syrian Army, and armed Islamist groups as they struggle to perform the state. Our aim is to bring attention to under-studied governance practices so as to analyze the otherwise opaque relations between welfare provision, military success, and civilian agency during Syria’s civil war.

[Back to top](#)

## **Rethinking Popular Sovereignty - From the Nation to the People of a Potential New Historical Bloc**

Panagiotis Sotiris

historical materialism Blog

During the past decades traditional notions of sovereignty have been challenged in Europe. First, we have the erosion of sovereignty induced by the process of European Integration. Secondly, the new waves of migrants and refugees arriving in Europe and the anti-immigrant and anti-refugee policies of 'Fortress Europe' and 'closed borders' along with the intensification of racism and islamophobia, both as ideological climate but also as official state policy, have opened up the debate regarding the relation between sovereignty and ethnicity. On the one hand, any attempt towards a rupture with the embedded and constitutionalised neoliberalism of the EU in order to initiate processes of social transformation and emancipation, should necessarily take the form of a reclaiming of popular sovereignty and democratic control over crucial aspects of economic and social policy. On the other hand, we must deal with the association of sovereignty with nationalism, racism and colonialism, tragically exemplified in the way the Far Right links the question of sovereignty to its own authoritarian racist agenda. To deal with these challenges I take a critical position to both neo-Kantian conceptions of cosmopolitan rights and 'neo-republican' defences of the nation-state and the people as common history and shared values. In contrast I suggest that we rethink the people in a 'post-nationalist' and de-colonial way as the emerging community of all the persons that work, struggle and hope on a particular territory, as the reflection of the emergence of a potential historical bloc. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **The Arab Uprisings, the Liberal Civilizing Narrative and the Problem of Orientalism**

Stefan Borg

Middle East Critique, Volume 25, 2016 - Issue 3, Pages 211-227

This article engages the problem of Orientalism in Western elite foreign policy discourse on the Arab uprisings. Reconstructing discursive representations among US and EU foreign policy elites, it argues that the Arab uprisings were inserted into a liberal civilizing narrative that emphasizes the underlying identity of 'the Arab world' and 'the West.' In this narrative, human rights play a crucial role. Difference, to the extent acknowledged, is inscribed temporally rather than spatially. Such a narrative thus breaks with Orientalizing ways of representing the Arab world as irredeemably different. Having noticed the hierarchical rendition of subjectivity that the liberal civilizing narrative nevertheless enacts temporally, the article also discusses challenges to the liberal civilizing narrative. It concludes by arguing for a politics of rights claiming approach to make sense of the Arab uprisings.

[Back to top](#)

## **Passive, Silent and Revolutionary: The 'Arab Spring' Revisited**

Billie Jeanne Brownlee & Maziyar Ghiabi

Middle East Critique, Volume 25, 2016 - Issue 3, Pages 299-316

To counter the trend toward mechanization of research and aridity of critical analysis, this article makes a case for an interdisciplinary quest. To borrow Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze's phrase, we are convinced that 'everything is political, but every politics is simultaneously a macropolitics and a micropolitics.' With an eye to open-ended research questions, this article attempts to build a body of theoretical, political and anthropological considerations, which, it is hoped, could function as a case of enquiry into the mechanics of power, revolt and revolution. The objective is to draw comparative and phenomenological lines between the events of the 2011 'Arab Spring,' in its local ecologies of protest, with its global reverberations as materialized in the slogans, acts and ideals of Greek and Spanish Indignados and the UK and US occupy movements. In order to do so, it proposes to clarify terminological ambiguities and to bring into the analytical scenario new subjects, new means and new connections. The article resolves to lay the ground for a scholarship of silence, by which the set of unheard voices, hidden actions and defiant tactics of the ordinary, through extraordinary people, find place in the interpretation of phenomena such as revolts and revolutions.

[Back to top](#)

## **Nubians in Contemporary Egypt: Mobilizing Return to Ancestral Lands**

Maja Janmyr

Middle East Critique, Volume 25, 2016 - Issue 2, Pages 127-146

*Based* on original fieldwork, this article examines how Nubians in Egypt have mobilized to demand a return to ancestral lands along the Nile River. It begins with a historically informed analysis explaining how any attempts to make demands from the Egyptian state long have been quashed, effectively constraining any comprehensive mobilization. It thereafter argues that the emergence of several unprecedented legal and political opportunities in the past decade paved the way for substantial Nubian mobilization. This culminated in a Nubian representation in the drafting process of the 2014 Egyptian Constitution, and a subsequent constitutional reference to Nubian return. Finally, this article explores how Nubian activists have deployed competing legal and historical frames in demanding return to ancestral lands. These frames range from the right of return based on international indigenous/minority rights frameworks, to drawing parallels with the Palestinian right of return, to a less confrontational development discourse rooted in the displacement of the Nubians in the 1960s.

[Back to top](#)

## **Conquest of Paradise: Secular Binds and Coptic Political Mobilization**

Candace Lukasik

Middle East Critique, Volume 25, 2016 - Issue 2, Pages 107-125

This article explores conflicts within the Coptic community related to problems of definition and representation. Coptic groups that emerged from Egypt's 2011 revolution brought these tensions to the fore. Groups such as the prominent Maspero Youth Union (MYU) [Itihad Shabab Maspero] were formed to contest the hegemony of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egyptian national politics. The MYU and others have attempted to reconstruct social boundaries drawn by the Church and the state, promoting political secularism, or the separation of religion from politics, as a solution to inter-communal strife and remedy to intra-communal conflict over the position of the Coptic Orthodox Church as the sole representative of the community. At the same time, the group has emphasized their Coptic identity through religious symbols and imagery at protest events, as depicted at the Maspero memorial march in 2012. While the MYU officially endorsed secular governance as a means to overcome sectarianism, its actions also made visible internal conflicts over the representation of Coptic identity in contemporary Egyptian society. Although the promise of secularism and equal citizenship is not specific to the Coptic or Egyptian context, this article focuses on its paradoxical effects within the Coptic community and its relationship to the state.

[Back to top](#)

## **Signs of Visual Resistance in Palestine: Unsettling the Settler-Colonial Matrix**

Jaafar Alloul

Middle East Critique, Volume 25, 2016 - Issue 1, Pages 23-44

This article contrasts historical and contemporary discourses and visualizations of the notions of Homeland, the Other and the Self that have been applied in the Zionist/Israeli project to colonize Palestine and displace its indigenous inhabitants. It actively connects theories of visual sociology and cultural studies (postmodern critical theory) with (1) various Israeli and Palestinian political discourses of Belonging (nationhood) while also (2) providing the reader with clear-cut, material examples of both exclusivist Zionist technologies of power and subaltern Palestinian techniques of counter-discourse, ultimately retracing historical continuity and unveiling resonant dialectics of modern nationalist doctrine across the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries throughout both Europe and the Middle East. Critically tracing and decoding the altering semiotic identity of a set of politicized posters highlights the key importance and the ongoing use of abstract power (discourse) within Israeli strategies of occupation and siege while simultaneously disclosing innovative Palestinian forms of visual resistance that advocate 'existence' in an asymmetric configuration of 'conflict'. In order to interpret the selected visuals fully, one needs foremost to be acquainted with the interwoven 'migration' of populations, ideas, and praxes through both time and space.

[Back to top](#)

## **Bringing Back the Palestinian State: Hamas between Government and Resistance**

Somdeep Sen

Middle East Critique, Volume 24, 2015 - Issue 2, Pages 211-225

Most of the literature on Hamas that focuses on its role as both a government and a resistance movement has emphasized how the organization either is conditioned historically to being a sociopolitical and military entity or is treading a path of de-radicalization. Emphasizing the limitations of such analyses, this article proposes a recalibration of the manner in which we study Palestinian politics in general and the Islamic Resistance in particular. To this effect, and drawing on reflections from fieldwork experiences in the Gaza Strip, it claims that Hamas today isn't necessarily engaging in a praxis of political behavior of its own creation but rather is living a Palestinian vernacular condition mandated by the Oslo Accords. That said, and within this condition, political behavior not only is informed by the state as an aspiration but also by the state as a model and inspiration, as it marks and informs the conduct of political factions. Then, by proposing the existence of a Palestinian state in oscillation between being an aspiration and an inspiration, it is hoped that it would allow for new parameters and a vocabulary for understanding Palestinian politics as more than a 'problem' waiting to be solved. Rather, Palestinian politics emerge as a site for reconsidering the manner in which the politics of liberation movements can be understood.

[Back to top](#)

## **The Thingified Subject's Resistance in the Middle East**

Govand Khalid Azeez

Middle East Critique, Volume 24, 2015 - Issue 2, Pages 119-135

Colonization, I postulate, has a far more profound effect on the colonized than conceptualized in Aimé Césaire's postcolonial equation, colonization = thingification. Rather, here I put forward a new postcolonial equation for tracing the infinite and insidious effects of colonialism:

Colonization = thingification + re-appropriation of subjectivity. I argue that Western imperial narratives and what Edward Said calls its 'evaluative judgment' and 'implicit program of action' also subjectify the thingified subject's Weltanschauung, cultural practices and more importantly, subjectivity. I present this equation through theorizing what I call Counter-Revolutionary Discourse (CRD). This discourse is an historicized, Eurocentric-Orientalist implicit program of action and an analytical tool, which functions as a manual that assists the colonial apparatus in surveillance, gauging, ranking and subjectifying Middle Eastern subjectivity and resistance according to imperial exigencies. Through tracking the matrix of Western statements, ideas and practices, this genealogical exploration demonstrates that imperial enthusiasts, from Napoleon, Renan, Le Bon and Stoddard to Winston Churchill and David Petraeus, in encountering Middle Eastern revolutions—from the Mahdi, Urabi, Zaghoul, Mossadegh, the PLO and the PKK to the 'Arab Spring'—draw on four Counter-Revolutionary Discourse systems of thought, which, I argue, are responsible for interpellating Oriental subjectivity and resistance, and which I denominate as: Recrudescence of Fanaticism,

Progress Fetishism, Outsourcing of Agency, and the bipolar cognitive device Revolutionary Narcissism-Red Peril.

[Back to top](#)

## **Modeling Mechanisms of Democratic Transition in the Arab Uprisings**

Bertold Schweitzer

Middle East Critique, Volume 24, 2015 - Issue 1, Pages 55-66

While the Arab uprisings triggered momentous historical change, in many Arab countries the transition to more comprehensively democratic rule is unfinished or has stalled. Most explanations for the dynamics and the difficulties of democratic transition focus on a number of determinants, such as social, cultural, religious, and economic causes, combined with generalizations on empirical uniformities and actors' propensities. An approach focusing on causal social mechanisms, including environmental, cognitive, and relational ones, promises to provide more complete explanations of how relevant factors interact, why democratic transition does or does not proceed, and what could be done to promote it more successfully. This article critically examines the fruitfulness of modeling democratic transition, for the case of Egypt, using the framework of causal social mechanisms.

[Back to top](#)

## **NEWS PIECES & COMMENTARY**

### **Lebanon Battles for Cannabis Legalization**

Yeghia Tashjian

New Eastern Politics, 18 January 2017

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ranked Lebanon in 2011 as one of the world's top five sources of cannabis resin. Recently, cannabis (hashish) legalization became part of the Lebanese debate. While some officials and farmers are lobbying to legalize it for trade and medicinal use, others are resisting these pressures, fearing an uncontrollable market. Farmers and some politicians are arguing that the hashish industry would bring huge amounts of revenue, and that hashish can be used for medicinal treatments. Conservatives argue that the weak and sectarian state in Lebanon will not be able to control legalization. They fear that underground drug dealers, backed by sectarian leaders, will take the opportunity to use the drug as a weapon against each other, as happened during the civil war era. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## Activism and Motherhood

Lara Aharonian

New Eastern Politics, 17 January 17, 2017

Growing up in an Armenian diasporan community in the Middle East, one learns very early in life that activism and volunteerism is an important part of your life and your identity. I learned it from my grandparents, and later on from my parents, that I followed once or more a week to community center meetings, fairs, demonstrations for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, Cultural and awareness events at the Armenian church, theaters and dances, emergency fundraising for Armenia during the earthquake and the war. And then I experienced it first hand while attending scouting groups as a participant first then as a cub leader, volunteering for youth clubs, church bazaars, and Armenian school events over the years. The first lesson most families teach their children in the Armenian Diaspora is to always give back to the community and volunteer, volunteer, volunteer after, work, school or University. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## Nationalism in Jordan: king, tribe, or country? Part one

Nicolai Due-Gundersen

openDemocracy, 16 January 2017

Abdullah I (1882-1951) was, as his name suggests, the first ruler of what became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Yet, his ascension to the throne of a new British protectorate did not mark the beginnings of young nationhood. Transjordan was not to be its own land, its own identity. This much was made clear by Abdullah I's speech as he headed for Amman, the capital of his state. "All the Arab countries [were] the country of every Arab" because Abdullah was not securing a state but the first step in his pan-Arab, dynastic ambitions". Abdullah's brother, King Faisal I (1885-1933) had secured Iraq as another Hashemite kingdom, while his eldest sibling, Ali bin al-Hussein (1879-1935) boasted (a very short-lived) rule over the Kingdom of the Hijaz, which would eventually become Saudi Arabia. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## Notes on the Labor Movement: Egypt in 2016

Nehal Amer

Muftah, 13 January 2017

On the morning of September 24, 2014, forty-eight-year-old transport worker Farag Rizk was found dead. He had left the premises of the private transportation company where he worked in Obour City, gone to the Cairo-Ismailia highway, and hung himself from a billboard. News of Rizk's suicide circulated online, sparking conversations around Egypt's deepening economic crisis, labor rights, and



the impact of neoliberal policies on the working class. A political cartoon inspired by the tragic photos of his death depicted a man hanging from a billboard that read “*Reserve Your Spot in Porto Marina Today.*” It was a haunting expression of Egypt’s sharp and growing class divide. Porto Marina, an elite beach resort on the northern coast of Egypt, represents a lifestyle unattainable for a transport worker like Rizk. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **The BDS struggle in US academia**

David Palumbo-Liu

Al-Jazeera English, 9 January 2017

On January 7, the Delegate Assembly of the Modern Language Association (MLA) voted against a non-binding resolution to endorse the call from Palestinian civil society for the academic boycott of Israeli institutions (Yes, 79; No, 113). At that same session, the Assembly voted for a resolution to condemn the boycott (Yes, 101; No, 93). One of the reasons it is difficult for those supporting Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) to get their motions passed is that external organisations here and in Israel add their resources and legal teams to the anti-boycott side. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Egyptian judge orders 15-day detention of anti-Red Sea island deal protesters**

Ahram Online, 5 January 2017

An Egyptian judge ordered on Thursday the 15-day detention pending investigation of 12 people for illegally protesting against the cabinet’s approval of the Egyptian-Saudi Red Sea island deal last week. The defendants were arrested on Monday after gathering at the Journalists Syndicate in Cairo to protest the cabinet's approval of the deal despite the absence of a final court verdict on a lawsuit challenging the agreement. The defendants are accused of illegal protesting, assaulting public officials, thuggery, illegal assembly, damaging public property and blocking traffic. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **6 Nubian activists briefly detained for protesting new presidential decree over land**

Mada Masr, 6 January 2017

Six Nubian activists were briefly detained on Monday for protesting against a new presidential decree regarding land ownership in the Nubian West Aswan village, before being released by the prosecution on LE200 bail each Wednesday afternoon, lawyer Mohamed Azmy told Mada Masr. The six activists, who face charges of illegal gathering, protesting without a permit and attacking security forces, were stopped by police on their way to the protest location, close to the Aswan bridge between Qoubaneyya and West Aswan village. "They didn't even start protesting," Azmy said.

*Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Egypt arrests 12 over island transfer protests**

Middle East Monitor, 3 January 2017

Egyptian police arrested 12 people involved in a protest against the transfer of two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia that was approved last week. The arrests were made yesterday around the Journalists' Union building in central Cairo where dozens of people, including lawyers and journalists, had gathered to demonstrate. Last week, state media reported that the Egyptian government approved the maritime border agreement and sent it to parliament for ratification despite a court ruling the deal unconstitutional earlier this year. The transfer was announced alongside a Saudi aid package last year leading to mass condemnation of the "land sell-off". *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **German university suspends pro-BDS professor**

Benjamin Weinthal

Jerusalem Post, 10 January 2017

The Otto Suhr Institute at FU said it takes the accusations very seriously. FU's Twitter handle has 6,776 followers. The Otto Suhr Institute, where anti-Israel academic Eleonora Roldán Mendivil teaches, is a well-respected political science department. Roldán Mendivil wrote on her blog, titled "cosas que no se rompen," that it "only makes sense that different groups meet and BDS-affiliated or BDS activists fight against repression, occupation and arbitrary exploitation." She has written, "Israel is a colonial state... Period." Dr. Efraim Zuroff, head of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's office in Jerusalem and the organization's chief Nazi-hunter, told the Post on Tuesday that "obviously, this is a person who is an antisemite. It is unfortunate that someone who has strong antisemitic views is allowed to promote those views in the German education system." *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## Facebook closes accounts of Palestine activists

Middle East Monitor, 7 January 2017

Facebook has closed the accounts of a number of Palestinian activists after using a hashtag lamenting a Palestinian assassinated by Israel 20 years ago, *Quds Press* reported yesterday. Former female prisoner Ghofran Zamel, fiancée of Hassan Salameh who is spending several life sentences in Israeli jails, said that she was surprised to find her Facebook account was shut down yesterday. Zamel said that when she wanted to open her accounts, a message appeared telling her that the accounts were closed but without giving any reasons. She said she sent messages to Facebook to complain. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## What were the top 10 BDS victories of 2016?

Nora Barrows-Friedman

Electronic Intifada, 30 December 2016

2016 began with a bang: French telecommunications giant Orange announced in early January it was dumping its Israel affiliate. This came just months after boycott activists renewed their campaign against the company over its support for Israel's 2014 assault on Gaza and its complicity in Israel's colonization of the occupied West Bank. The same week, a major Irish corporation yanked its cement contracts with Israel following boycott pressure. Meanwhile, churches, student unions and local activists continued to organize strong boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigns that caused panic among Israeli leaders. Embarrassed by these significant victories, Israel spent 2016 waging "an all-out war" on the global BDS campaign, "in a desperate attempt to crush it," according to the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC). *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## Yemen war: Women play growing role for anti-Houthi forces

Nasser al-Sakkaf

Middle East Eye, 27 December 2016

Shoulder to shoulder with male fighters stand Ra'afa Abdullah and Riam al-Ra'awi at the southwestern entrance to Taiz to inspect the women who come to the city from different areas and provinces. The checkpoint is the only entrance to the besieged city. Abdullah and her friend do not need to take up arms. Their duty is to check passengers for weapons and suspicious items. They wake up daily by 5am to prepare breakfast for their families, and then they don their military jackets and caps and go towards their posts in al-Dhabab area. Abdullah said she is working with Popular Resistance fighters to keep Taiz free from Houthi rebels who killed her brother last year. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Fighting on All Fronts: Women's Resistance in Syria**

Leila Al Shami

Al-Jumhuriya, 26 December 2016

As eastern Aleppo falls, pounded by regime and Russian airstrikes, and stormed by Iranian sponsored militia on the ground, one young woman risks everything to communicate to the outside world the horror of the last days in the liberated part of the city. Lina Shamy is in her twenties. She is one of many courageous activists using social media to describe the terror wrought on civilians trapped in the besieged, rebel held area with no safe place to flee. They are caught in the most tragic of circumstances, surrounded by death and destruction as barrel bombs, chlorine and phosphorous rain from the skies. As known activists, they cannot flee to regime held areas, where east Aleppo civilians have been shot, arrested or sent to the front lines to fight. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **To cope or to resist: How people deal with abruptly deteriorating economic conditions**

Lina Attalah, Naira Antoun, Reem Saad and Yasmine M. Ahmed

Mada Masr, 22 December 2016

On November 3, the Central Bank of Egypt announced the liberalization of the currency exchange rate in the lead-up to receipt of a US\$12 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund aimed at decreasing the budget deficit and public debt. The immediate outcomes of the decision were a steep devaluation of the Egyptian pound and price hikes across the board, but the implications on the quality of life and broader living conditions across classes are yet to unfold. In this conversation, anthropologists Reem Saad and Yasmine Moataz speak with Mada Masr's politics and society editors Lina Attalah and Naira Antoun about their research into the history of Egyptian rural communities' responses and suffering in the face of hardship induced by economic repression. In particular, we look at how people survived through deteriorating economic conditions, and at which points these conditions were met with resistance. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Forsaking the Syrian Revolution: An Anti-Imperialist Handbook**

Fadi Bardawil

Al-Jumhuriya, 22 December 2016

Aimé Césaire, wrote these words in the opening paragraphs of his letter of resignation to Maurice Thorez, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, dated October 24, 1956. Césaire lambasts the Party for its reluctance to condemn Stalin, de-stalinize its own practices, and endorsing French government policies in its Algerian colony. “In any case,” he writes, “it is clear that our struggle – the struggle of colonial peoples against colonialism, the struggle of peoples of color against racism – is more complex, or better yet, of a completely different nature than the fight of the French worker against French capitalism, and it cannot in any way be considered a part, a fragment of that struggle.” Césaire diagnoses his present as characterized by a double failure: first the evident failure of capitalism and second, “the dreadful failure of that which for too long we took to be socialism, when it was nothing but Stalinism.” *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Syria, the International Left, and the Need for Solidarity**

Isaac Paul Miller

Muftah, 19 December 2016

In a recent article for Jacobin, Belgian leftist Mauro Gasparini argued that “the global left’s greatest mistake since the turn of the twentieth century is to refuse any consistent solidarity with Syrian rebels.” Gasparini correctly notes that, in the country’s current conflict, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad is the greatest perpetrator of violence, and adds that only popular resistance can counter extremist groups that make up a large part of the Syrian revolution today. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **We Must Understand Syria as a Popular Struggle Despite Its Complications**

Joseph Daher

Muftah, 19 December 2016

The popular uprising in Syria approaches its sixth year, but the debate among the networks, associations, political parties, and individuals that make up the political left is ongoing. Alarming, some sections of leftist discourse on the Syrian revolution often emulate the rhetoric offered by the mainstream bourgeois, media, and even extreme right-wing groups. For example, writing for *The Guardian* in September 2013, Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek characterized the Syrian uprising as a “pseudo struggle.” As he wrote: “there are no clear political stakes, no signs of a broad

emancipatory-democratic coalition, just a complex network of religious and ethnic alliances over-determined by the influence of superpowers.” *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **'Russia, get out of Syria': Thousands join protest on Turkey border**

Middle East Eye, 17 December 2016

Thousands of people protested at the Turkish border on Saturday against a siege of Syria's second city of Aleppo that has prevented deliveries of much-needed aid. The crowds arrived in bus and car convoys from across the country under the slogan "Open the Way for Aleppo" close to Turkey's Cilvegözü border gate, which has become a key hub for transporting the wounded from Aleppo. They unfurled banners reading "Aleppo cannot be left under bombardment". The action was organised by the Turkish charity Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), which is playing a large role in the transport of aid for Aleppo and pressing for greater access. IHH said 5,000 cars packed with humanitarian aid had been driven to the protest. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **University of Manchester Students' Union backs BDS**

Alex Whitcomb

The Mancunion, 16 December 2016

The Students' Union's final Senate meeting of the year passed one of their most hotly debated motions to date, as the delegates voted to officially endorse the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, in front of a packed and vocal audience. Unusually for Senate, the vote was conducted under secret ballot rules, and the organisers placed extra emphasis on student safety during the debate. However most students will probably still be unaware of what the BDS campaign actually is, and why it is proving so controversial. To its supporters, it is the most effective means of ensuring peace in the Middle East, and its most ardent critics regard it as impractical or thinly veiled anti-Semitism. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **And who are we to say the Syrian revolution is dead?**

Malak Chabkoun

Al-Jazeera English, 8 December 2016

Regardless of what Donald Trump says he is going to do in terms of disarming Syrian rebels and his promises to Vladimir Putin and Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian revolution is not dead. Regardless of how many armed opposition factions are fighting among themselves at the moment, regardless of what the external opposition does, or who it plans to "work with" now that Trump will be the new United States president, the Syrian revolution is not dead. Regardless of how many "Friends of Syria" continue to sell out Syrian revolutionaries, the Syrian revolution is not dead. Regardless of the countless doomsday declarations that there are no options for the US but to submit to Russia in Syria, the Syrian revolution is not dead. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Number of imprisoned journalists reaches global high, Egypt 3rd worst offender: CPJ**

Mada Masr, 14 December 2016

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) 2016 has seen a record number of journalists jailed worldwide, marking the worst year on record with an unprecedented 259 behind bars. Egypt is listed as the third worst offender with 25 journalists in jail, preceded by China with 38 and Turkey with 81. In its latest report, published on Tuesday, the New York-based group writes that, "More journalists are jailed around the world than at any time since the CPJ began keeping detailed records in 1990, with Turkey accounting for nearly a third of the global total." *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **Feminist Activist and Lawyer Azza Soliman Is the Latest Target of Egypt's Crackdown on Civil Society**

Sarah Moawad

Muftah, 9 December 2016

On Wednesday, December 7, prominent women's rights advocate and lawyer Azza Soliman was arrested in her Cairo home by Egyptian security forces. Soliman is the founder of the Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA), an organization that raises awareness of legal and human rights issues, particularly as they pertain to women. Soliman has been on the security forces' radar since standing trial for "illegal protesting," after she witnessed the 2015 murder of socialist activist and protester Shaimaa Al-Sabbagh by police (she was later acquitted along with seventeen others). *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **On War and Peace: The End of Rebellion in Aleppo**

Harout Ekmanian

New Eastern Politics, 8 December 2016

Four and half years, Aleppo has been ravished by those who wanted to liberate it, and those who wanted to cleanse it. The proud people of this city, once a major multicultural and economic hub, were reduced to choose between either of those two, for four and half years. Today, as the end of war inside the city is in sight, Aleppo might have regained a relative peace, but it's far from being free, and it is unlikely to be for a very long time. The reconstruction projects are already being put on the table. New financial and development deals are being discussed, and probably they are made by now. Foreign financiers—governments, individuals and corporations—likely from Russia, China and Iran, would probably have exclusive deals with excessive privileges, imposing their will, taste and model of business. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)

## **“If the Revolution is a crime, then charge all of us”**

Aya Chebbi

New Eastern Politics, 3 December 3 2016

The world has been applauding Tunisia for its new progressive constitution and new consensus caretaker installed government of technocrats that is administrating the country until elections later this year. However, this celebration seems exclusive to the leadership, members of the National Constituent Assembly, political parties and their allies. In fact, the unemployed, the poor, the student, the worker among other Tunisian citizens are yet to celebrate. After changing the government five times during the past three years, this current administration has been the most praised for its appearing stability. Nevertheless, if we have a closer look at Tunisia's internal issues—beside the pictures of the Tunisian Prime Minister shaking hands with Barack Obama—, we will find files of terrorism, corruption, accountability, human rights violations and censorship to be addressed. In fact, abuses are continuing under the interim administration. *Continue reading [here](#)*

[Back to top](#)



## POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### **Scholarships/Fellowships (BA-, MA-, PhD Students): Research Partnership Violence, Forced Migration and Exile: Trauma in the Arab World and in Germany**

Deadline of submission 31 January 2017

Violence, Forced Migration and Exile: Trauma in the Arab World and in Germany" is an interdisciplinary research partnership of the Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität München with four Palestinian universities, the Bethlehem University, the Birzeit University (Birzeit, Westbank), the an-Najah National University (Nablus, Westbank) and the Dar al-Kalima University (Bethlehem), and two Lebanese Universities, the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Lebanese American University (LAU, Beirut). The multilateral cooperation is sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as part of the Programme Higher Education Dialogue with the Muslim World.

In February 2016, the projects recruits fourteen highly motivated students (6 Palestinian, 5 Lebanese and 3 German BA, MA or PhD students) into its three years project.

The project pursues a twofold agenda. On the one hand, it investigates the topics of dealing with violence, trauma and experiences of exile in Germany and the Arab World in a national and country-comparative perspective. The students are supposed to tackle these topics by studying three interrelated fields:

1. the role of religion in dealing with violence and traumatic experience;
2. the significance of the factors gender and generation in shaping the process of coping with trauma
3. and the relations between the private (lifeworld of individuals, families) and the public space (state practises, media representations) in the context of traumatic experience.

The project is open to various methodological and disciplinary approaches, including (but being not limited to) Near and Middle Eastern studies, anthropology, media and communication studies, gender studies, history, Islamic and religious studies, political science, sociology, psychology or philosophy.

On the other hand, this empirical research is designed to further cultural dialogue between Germany and Middle Eastern countries. The project aims at creating an interdisciplinary and multilateral platform for exchange and dialogue between German, Palestinian and Lebanese students. As part of the higher education dialogue, the students are academically trained. A further focus lies on the empowerment of women in science and promoting the South-South cooperation. In the framework of common seminars on theory and methodology, close contacts shall be developed that prepare the ground for future research networks among young researchers in the three regions.

### Responsibilities

- To pursue an individual research project related to the research fields outlined above
  - To publish research results either in a journal or a collection of essays
  - To participate in workshops, meetings and seminars in Lebanon and Germany
  - To assist in the organization of workshops, meetings, and seminars
  - To keep close communication with the project members and partner institutions in Palestine, Lebanon and Germany
  - To assist in the documentation and public relations work of the project activities
- ### Requirements
- Enrolled as a BA, MA or PhD-student at a German, Palestinian or Lebanese university
  - Good oral and written skills in English
  - Good communicative and organizational skills
  - Teamwork experience and able to work in an interdisciplinary environment
  - Ready to travel to Germany and Lebanon and in possession of a valid passport
  - Duration

The project will run until December 2017 with the possibility of renewal.

### Benefits

- To become part of a vibrant and transnational network of scholars in Germany, Palestine and Lebanon
- To gain experience in establishing and working in an international and interdisciplinary environment
- To publish your research in a high quality publication
- To participate in several academic trainings (research methodology, teaching) in Germany and Lebanon
- Project related expenses (travel, books etc.) are covered (no scholarships or grants are available)

### Application Modalities

Application is open to BA, MA and PhD students (humanities or social sciences) enrolled at a German, Palestinian or Lebanese university. Candidates are asked to submit a CV, a letter of motivation, and university certificates. Suitable candidates are called for an interview at the beginning of February 2017. The DAAD values diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity.

### Contact

Please send your application in English until January 31, 2017 to Sarah El Bulbeisi (Sarah.Bulbeisi at lmu.de).

Sarah El Bulbeisi, PhD cand., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Institute for Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Veterinärstraße 1, D-80539 München, phone 0049-89-2180-3932

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

**[Back to top](#)**