



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

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

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# CALL FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

## **Deadline extended: Empire, Capital, and Transnational Resistance: Philosophical and Interdisciplinary Approaches**

**13 – 15 September 2017**

Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics (CAPPE), University of Brighton, UK

Deadline for abstracts: 30 June 2017

Keynote Speaker: John Chalcraft (LSE)

The past decade has witnessed widespread resistance to neoliberalism across the world. Unlike the anti-colonial revolts of the 1950s and 1960s, this resistance has tended either to fizzle out or to be appropriated by states. This conference considers recent forms of resistance to corporate, neoliberal and state power in the context of the post-colonial world. It looks towards the emergence of transnational forms of resistance linking different parts of the globe, exploring their limits and their potential.

The Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics at the University of Brighton welcomes interdisciplinary papers on any aspect(s) of such resistance from, among others, those working in philosophy, politics, ethics, area studies, global ethics, geography, cultural and critical theory.

Possible themes include:

- \* What is resistance?
- \* What is political action? What counts as political resistance?
- \* What is political about political philosophy and or politics?
- \* How should we understand 'the state', 'empire' and 'capital' in today's world?
- \* How does the changing relationship between state and corporation affect understandings of citizenship?
- \* What are the interrelations between corporate and disciplinary power?
- \* What is "the question of difference" in the neoliberal conjuncture?
- \* What relationships are there between neoliberalism and populism?
- \* Borders
- \* Rethinking 'colonialism'
- \* Trump, Brexit and the Right: implications for realignments of resistance

Please email ABSTRACTS, of no more than 300 words, for a 20-min. presentation, to Bob Brecher - R.Brecher@brighton.ac.uk -- by 30 June 2017.

The conference fee is £210. This includes refreshments, lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and a buffet dinner on the Thursday evening. There are a limited number of places available for graduate students and for people who have no institutional affiliation at the reduced price of £105. Please indicate if you wish to be considered for one of these places when sending your abstract.

Please note: the conference fee does not include accommodation and, unfortunately, we are unable to offer travel grants or other forms of financial assistance. A limited amount of reasonably priced student halls of residence accommodation is available on a first come first served basis. For further information about the conference and/or for updates please email Ian Sinclair: [i.a.sinclair@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:i.a.sinclair@brighton.ac.uk)

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## TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

### **The Calculus of Dissidence: The Socialist Forces Front and the Failure of Opposition in Algeria**

30 May 2017, 17:15-19:15

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

Speaker: Hugh Roberts, Tufts University

The Socialist Forces Front (FFS) is routinely referred to as Algeria's oldest opposition party. Finally legalised in 1989, the FFS from its foundation in 1963 provided the main template of 'opposition' in Algeria, but its achievements have been meagre at best. Hugh Roberts examines the FFS's origins in the rebellion of 1963-5, arguing that its achievements as an opposition movement have been limited because it has not been engaged in opposition properly so called, merely dissidence. *More information [here](#)*

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## **Beyond Tragedy and Betrayal: Towards an Intellectual History of the Arab Nahda**

31 May 2017, 6 pm

Venue: Centre Marc Bloch, Germaine Tillion Saal, 8th floor, Friedrichstr. 191, 10117 Berlin

Speaker: Jens Hanssen (University of Toronto)

The *Nahda* has served as the bedrock of discourses of Arab modernity ever since it first acquired programmatic status in the 1890s. If the study of this 19th- and early 20th century reform-and-revival movement has traditionally been the domain of historians in search for the roots of Arab nationalism, recently new literary approaches have widened the scope of inquiry and focussed on how *Nahda* narratives have perpetuated ideas of cultural defeat and intellectual betrayal. This talk explores how an intellectual history of the *Nahda* can move beyond the vindicationism of nationalist readings and the vituperative readings of contemporary literary critics. *More information* [here](#)

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## **The will of the people? Revolutionary legacies, reactionary manipulations**

1-2 June 2017, Kingston University

**Venue:** Clattern Lecture Theatre, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2EE

Speakers include: Gilbert Achcar (SOAS), Peter Hallward (Kingston), Lars Lih (McGill), Marisa Linton (Kingston), Karma Nabulsi (Oxford), Yves Sintomer (Paris VIII; Harvard)

Debates about the nature and value of democracy and of popular sovereignty have returned to the centre of political discussion in recent years and over the past year in particular. Right-wing or extreme right-wing groups claiming to champion 'the will of the people' have established themselves all over the world, from Venezuela to Finland, and have taken or consolidated power by various means in places as different as the USA, Turkey, Russia, the UK, and Poland. These recent re-appropriations of the phrase, however, cannot erase its revolutionary origins and implications. Popular sovereignty is indissociable from the effective formulation and imposition of the people's will, and democracy remains an empty word unless it affirms the power of ordinary people to prevail over any form of privileged interest or ruling class. This conference aims to address some of the central questions that have become so divisive in contemporary political struggles, and to review some of the most significant revolutionary sequences that sought to empower a genuinely egalitarian and inclusive collective will to political change - from the French and Russian Revolutions to recent mobilisations in parts of the Middle East and Latin America. *More information & booking* [here](#)

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## **The Global Settler Colonial Present**

5 June 2017, 17:00 – 19:00

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

Speaker: Lorenzo Veracini, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne

This paper focuses on a specific mode of domination and its contemporary manifestations. It outlines the global settler colonial present: a predicament fundamentally characterised by a logic of elimination and containment rather than exploitation. This appraisal of a developing dispensation is offered as a reminder of the need to develop indigenous-nonindigenous alliances. This paper emphasises a growing commonality of dispossession. It argues that a commonality between indigenous and non-indigenous dispossessions informs a non-Indigenous responsibility to engage in reconciliation and indigenous-led struggles. Of course, commonality does not mean identity and this article is not suggesting that ‘we’ are actually becoming ‘indigenous’. I remain a migrant and a settler on indigenous land. But it seems important to note that we are increasingly being subjected to a mode of domination that treats us like indigenous peoples. ‘Responsibility’ literally means being able to respond. Focusing on a growing crisis and a convergence of interests offer important opportunities for responsible resistance and reconciliation. *More information* [here](#)

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## **Political Remittances and Political Transnationalism: Narratives, Political Practices and the Role of the State**

**19-20 June 2017**

**Venue: University of Oxford, Nuffield College, Clay Room**

Conveners: Dr Félix Krawatzek and Dr Lea Müller-Funk

This workshop seeks to gather an interdisciplinary group of researchers undertaking innovative research on migrants’ political remittances and political transnationalism. The question of how political ideas and practices circulate between migrants and their home country has clearly gained in relevance with the current increase in worldwide migration and requires historically sound investigations. The workshop continues discussions initiated during “Political, Social, and Economic Migrant Remittances: Content, Social Networks, and Impacts” held at Nuffield College (Oxford) in September 2016. Political remittances and political transnationalism have increasingly been addressed across social sciences and the humanities. Research has covered a wide array of topics, such as migrants’ transnational political practices to understand the development of the home country, the interlinkages of political remittances and conflict resolution vs conflict exacerbation, the connection between political transnationalism, immigrant integration and identity constructions, and the role of diaspora engagement policies on political transnationalism. These phenomena have been studied using methods such as interviews, ethnography, text and corpus analysis, surveys, network analysis or policy analysis. However, important questions remain open: What factors can be identified from historical and cross-country comparisons to improve understandings of political transnationalism? What can different disciplines learn from each other in studying political narratives and practices circulating among migrants? What influence do states have on political

transnationalism? What theoretical concepts have been developed to study these phenomena across disciplines? What type of sources and methodologies are appropriate to study the flow of political remittances? *More information* [here](#)

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## **Personalised Media and Participatory Culture**

Project Conference 29-30 June 2017

London School of Economics

For some years now the idea of digital media as an activator in politics and the civic sphere has taken hold. Digital networks have been said to redefine relationships between individuals, audiences and media organisations, and those between citizens and the state by acting as a virtual public sphere. The sorts of participatory connections – and dare we say it – *cultures* that are apparently enabled by digital media have been assumed, celebrated and also decried. In many cases it has been argued that young people are at the forefront of ‘digital revolutions’. But are such assumptions borne out equally in different parts of the global north and global south? Are the movements and networks that fall under discussions of ‘digital revolution’ actually primarily digital? Any what are the real-world effects of assumptions about the motivating, connective and civilising power of the digital in low income communities of the global south?

Young people’s uptake and uses of new and emerging digital technologies for cultural and civic participation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region remains under-studied and under-theorised, particularly in the context of their everyday lives. This conference aims at problematising the assumed connections between particular parts of the world, networks (both digital and real-world), participatory cultures, young people, and emerging media tools. Keynotes and panels will aim at assessing and theorising the nature and extent of digital media’s articulation with artistic, civic, cultural and political participation and pinning down what exactly is *new* about the participatory uses and potentials of new media in particular communities and geographic spaces. In doing so, we aim to present a fresh perspective on concepts such as the ‘digital age’, ‘empowerment’, ‘networks’ and ‘participation’ amidst the range of face-to-face and old-media participatory civic, political and cultural networks, practices and identities that abound in modernity.

During the conference we will present the findings of our project that concentrated on participatory networks and media in Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and UAE. Through mapping the field of youth participation textually and analytically, and through interviews with young people, experts and stakeholders, the research presents a wide and different range of forms of social and political participation of youth in the MENA region. We suggest factors that can explain how young people decide to participate in their communities. Our research evaluates and theorises young people’s civic engagement and public participation not only in the narrow domain of institutional politics, but in a broader sense that encompasses artistic and cultural consumption, cultural remixing and the production of popular culture as an emerging civic participatory culture.



The opening keynote will be delivered by **Professor Mohamed Zayani** (Georgetown University, Qatar) with plenary keynote panels and a few parallel panels. *More information* [here](#)

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## RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

### **We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria**

Wendy Pearlman

June 2017 – HarperCollins

Reminiscent of the work of Nobel Prize winner Svetlana Alexievich, an astonishing collection of intimate wartime testimonies and poetic fragments from a cross-section of Syrians whose lives have been transformed by revolution, war, and flight. Against the backdrop of the wave of demonstrations known as the Arab Spring, in 2011 hundreds of thousands of Syrians took to the streets demanding freedom, democracy and human rights. The government's ferocious response, and the refusal of the demonstrators to back down, sparked a brutal civil war that over the past five years has escalated into the worst humanitarian catastrophe of our times. Yet despite all the reporting, the video, and the wrenching photography, the stories of ordinary Syrians remain unheard, while the stories told about them have been distorted by broad brush dread and political expediency. This fierce and poignant collection changes that. Based on interviews with hundreds of displaced Syrians conducted over four years across the Middle East and Europe, *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled* is a breathtaking mosaic of first-hand testimonials from the frontlines. Some of the testimonies are several pages long, eloquent narratives that could stand alone as short stories; others are only a few sentences, poetic and aphoristic. Together, they cohere into an unforgettable chronicle that is not only a testament to the power of storytelling but to the strength of those who face darkness with hope, courage, and moral conviction.

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### **Chronicles of the Egyptian Revolution and its Aftermath: 2011-2016**

Cherif Bassiouni

2016 - Cambridge University Press

This book is about the Egyptian people's 2011 Revolution for freedom, justice, and human dignity, and its aftermath. The Revolution succeeded in toppling the authoritarian Mubarak regime in less

than three weeks. It was then co-opted by the Muslim Brotherhood through Egypt's first free and fair elections in 2012, which was in turn crushed in 2013 by a popularly supported military regime whose practices of repression negatively impacted the justice system and human rights. The problems facing the country and its people are daunting, particularly economic, demographic, and social pressures. The contextual analysis of these and other historic and contemporary issues give the reader a comprehensive understanding of what has occurred in the last five years and an insight into where the country is heading. Even though the Revolution has been suppressed and the promise of democracy shunted aside, the majority of the Egyptian people continue to hope for the unachieved dreams of social justice, human dignity, and freedom. Egypt's geopolitical importance makes it indispensable to the stability of the Middle East, and thus important to the world.

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## **Fifty Years of "The Battle of Algiers": Past as Prologue**

Sohail Daulatzai

2016 – Univ Of Minnesota Press

*The Battle of Algiers*, a 1966 film that poetically captures Algerian resistance to French colonial occupation, is widely considered one of the greatest political films of all time. With an artistic defiance that matched the boldness of the anticolonial struggles of the time, it was embraced across the political spectrum—from leftist groups like the Black Panther Party and the Palestine Liberation Organization to right-wing juntas in the 1970s and later, the Pentagon in 2003. With a philosophical nod to Frantz Fanon, Sohail Daulatzai demonstrates that tracing the film's afterlife reveals a larger story about how dreams of freedom were shared and crushed in the fifty years since its release. As the War on Terror expands and the "threat" of the Muslim looms, *The Battle of Algiers* is more than an artifact of the past—it's a prophetic testament to the present and a cautionary tale of an imperial future, as perpetual war has been declared on permanent unrest.

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

### **BDS in a Time of Precarity - Graduate Students, Untenured Faculty and Solidarity with Palestine**

Omar Sirri

Middle East Report 281

The University of Toronto is not known as a particularly progressive institution. Like many universities, it has adopted neoliberal thinking and practice, becoming part of Academia, Inc. But two seemingly unrelated events during the 2014-2015 academic year showcased the increasing political activity of the school's graduate student body. In October 2014, Toronto graduate students launched a campaign in support of the global boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement, calling on the school to divest from companies that facilitate and profit from Israel's violations of international law, including war crimes, in its treatment of Palestinians under occupation. Then, the following March, graduate student workers in the Canadian Union of Public Employees' Local 3902 mounted a near four-week strike to demand that university funding packages no longer leave them below the city's poverty line. These events point to trends—the increasing reliance of universities on graduate students, adjuncts and untenured faculty to teach classes and the growing embrace of BDS by those same precarious academic workers—that make up a common political-economic reality, one that takes seriously the polemic that universities today are no more than hedge funds that grant degrees.

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### **The Emergence of Alevi Televisual Activism - From Secrecy to Visibility**

Nazlı Özkan

MER281

Back in the 1990s there was this columnist writing for the *Hürriyet* newspaper in Turkey, Hikmet Bil, who published reader letters in his column. He would sometimes receive questions like if an Alevi woman could marry a Sunni man. Not that we were particularly interested in the question itself, but we would archive that column for the mere reason that a newspaper had the word Alevism used in a sentence.... Now think about seeing Alevism on television today—it is that big of a difference for us.

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## **Refusing to Forgive - Tunisia's Maneesh M'sameh Campaign**

Laryssa Chomiak, Lana Salman  
MER281

In 2015, Tunisia's President Beji Caid Essebsi proposed a draft economic reconciliation law to forgive graft and other corrupt acts committed by civil servants and businessmen under the regime of ousted president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in exchange for closed-door confessions and return of ill-gotten gains. Such economic crimes were a major trigger of the 2010-2011 protests that led to the Tunisian revolution—and Essebsi's bill provoked a powerful response, a campaign called Maneesh M'sameh (I Will Not Forgive). The campaign's initial goal was to protect the integrity of investigations of economic crimes by the Truth and Dignity Commission (L'Instance Vérité et Dignité), created in the summer of 2014. Maneesh M'sameh has gone on to spark debate about the meaning of truth and reconciliation. It has also brought to the fore lingering issues of corruption and structural inequality. On April 29, 2017, the movement called for protests of Parliament's decision to reconsider a third version of the draft law. The large demonstrations drew the rank and file of opposition political parties and other critics of the controversial bill.

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## **Voter Participation and Loud Claim Making in Algeria**

Robert P. Parks  
MER281

Change looms on the horizon in Algeria—change that could well touch the edifice of the country's framework of governance. In the short term, given the protracted period of low international oil and gas prices, the state is likely to introduce economic reforms that will modify its expenditures on popular distributional and social welfare programs. And in April 2019, an election will likely usher in a successor to the sitting fourth-term president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who first took office in 1999.

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## **Reviving Activism in Jordan - The Movement Against Israeli Gas**

Curtis Ryan  
MER281

In January 2011, hundreds and sometimes thousands of Jordanians began protesting like clockwork on Friday afternoons; they continued to do so for nearly two years. The crowds were small compared to those in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and Bahrain, but the turnout was sustained and marked a significant uptick for Jordan, where peaceful protest had not been uncommon. But by 2013 the demonstrations declined in both size and frequency. The regime weathered the main storm of the Arab uprisings, and without having resorted to violent repression. Many in the regime credited top-

down reforms, including a revised constitution and amended laws on parties, public gatherings and elections.

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## **Palestinian Workers Campaign for Social Justice**

N. Alva  
MER281

On the hot afternoon of April 19, 2016, thousands of workers and unemployed took to the streets of the West Bank city of Ramallah in protest the labor policies of the Palestinian Authority (PA). As the sun beat down on their shoulders, the marchers remained defiant, shouting “*Haramiyya!* (Thieves!),” as they reached the rally point in front of the Council of Ministers and Ministry of Interior buildings. Organizers from independent workers’ movements, left political parties and women’s committees took turns addressing the crowd from a makeshift platform on the back of a truck. PA police and security forces were deployed, some in riot gear and armored vehicles, but they did not visibly interfere. The demonstration was the first public, collective manifestation of a campaign against Social Security Law 6, ratified by decree on March 9, 2016 by President Mahmoud ‘Abbas.

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## **Virtual Space and Collective Action in Egypt - Post-Revolutionary Communities on Facebook**

Sherine Hafez  
MER281

Traffic crawls as usual through Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo, making its noisy way around the 65-foot pole flying the Egyptian flag newly erected in the middle of the plaza. It is hard to imagine that in January 2011 this very spot was the epicenter of the grassroots revolution that toppled President Husni Mubarak. Since the summer 2013 coup, the military-backed regime has remade this space of insurrection into one of imposed national unity. The revolutionary graffiti is long since whitewashed; the headquarters of Mubarak’s National Democratic Party, incinerated during the uprising, is demolished.

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## **The State of Jordanian Women’s Organizations—Five Years Beyond the Arab Spring**

Peter A. Ferguson

Politics and Governance, Volume 5, No 2 (Open Access)

This paper explores the failure of women’s organizations to effect the improvement of the status of Jordanian women during the Arab Spring. Through an examination of the regime’s political liberalization strategy, leadership failures within women’s organizations, and international donor influence on programmatic focus, the underlying explanation for this failure is found to be rooted in the historical depoliticization of women in Jordan. This is tested in the context of the Arab Spring through an analysis of the results of popular protests, proposed electoral law reforms, and efforts to amend the Jordanian constitution. The paper draws in part on a large collection of interviews and a focus group conducted in Jordan during the spring/summer of 2012, as well as analysis of primary documents from the government and a variety of women’s organizations in Jordan.

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## **The Tunisian Revolution & Governance of Religion**

Teije Hidde Donker & Kasper Ly Netterstrøm

Middle East Critique, Volume 26, 2017 - Issue 2, Pages 137-157

This article examines how the Tunisian revolution and subsequent political transition has influenced the relationship between state power and Islam. It aims to provide an in-depth and historically informed analysis of these relations through an exploration of one specific case: The attempts by successive Ministers of Religious Affairs to reform the state’s management of Tunisian religious institutions after January 2011. The article builds on multiple fieldwork visits to Tunisia by both authors, in addition to an extensive set of primary and secondary sources. The authors argue that relations between state and religious authority have changed considerably throughout the 2011–2015 period, and that a wide variety of actors, interests and political conflicts intersected with the question of state-religion relations. The fact that non-Islamist actors played such a crucial role in shaping the governance of Tunisian religious institutions underlines the necessity for scholars to give more attention to the role non-Islamist actors play in the institutionalization of public religion in Arab and Muslim majority countries.

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## **The Violent Rise of Palestine's Lost Generation**

Dag Tuastad

Middle East Critique, Volume 26, 2017 - Issue 2, Pages 159-169

The 'Oslo generation,' the youth of Palestine born after the 1993 Oslo Agreement, is Palestine's lost generation. They have experienced a near complete exclusion from ordinary political participation, dominated by the elders of the Palestinian national movement. Their trust in the parent generation and the Palestinian National Authority has been undermined equally. The vacuum created by the weakened parental and national authority has been filled with youths who first and foremost follow their age peers. The protests and knife attacks seen in the West Bank during the autumn 2015 were obviously a protest against the Israeli occupation. However, they were also an expression of a clash of generations and the rise of a lost generation.

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## **Contextualizing the Arab Revolts: The Politics behind Three Decades of Neoliberalism in the Arab World**

Koenraad Bogaert

Middle East Critique, Volume 26, 2017 - Issue 1, Pages 213-234

This article argues that attempts to understand the significance and implication of the Arab uprisings must not lose sight of the fact that the current pressures for change are rooted in the fundamental political transformations that took place during the previous three decades. These transformations were intimately related to neoliberal economic reforms. The article examines the impact of neoliberal reforms in two parts. First, it discusses the politics behind three decades of neoliberalism in the region. Second, it elaborates on the urban setting as a locale where we can theorize some of the agency at work in the complex process of neoliberal globalization. As such, we should understand Arab politics—and resistance—as a complexity that goes beyond the mere interaction between 'the regime' and 'the Arab people' and relate these politics to shifting power balances in contemporary globalization.

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## **Development, Mobilization and War: The Iranian Construction Jihad, Construction Mobilization and Trench Builders Association (1979–2013)**

Eric Lob

Middle East Critique, Volume 26, 2017 - Issue 1, Pages 25-44

Based on ethnographic and archival research in Iran, this article examines the intersection of war making, rural development and popular mobilization in the state formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI). To this end, the article profiles three organizations that were instrumental to this process: The Construction Jihad, the Construction Mobilization and the Trench Builders Association. During the last three decades, these organizations have helped the IRI and its factionalized elites in their attempts to promote rural development, mobilize and socialize constituents, gain popular support and electoral votes, and demobilize and marginalize domestic and foreign opponents. These organizations also produced and addressed the unintended consequences of cognitive dissonance, deep-seated disillusionment and ideological detachment among activists, veterans, students and youth. By organizing a critical mass of constituents and aggregating popular claims from below, these organizations exerted bottom-up pressures and demands on the very state and the very elites that they had assisted and supported.

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## **Municipal Politics in Lebanon**

Ziad Abu-Rish

Middle East Report 280,

The municipal system has been a key pillar of debates on administrative decentralization, economic development and political participation in Lebanon. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, activists sought to stop the demolition of the 1924 Barakat Building on the basis that it was a heritage site. In response to public pressure, the Municipality of Beirut expropriated the building in 2013, and has since overseen a contentious process of transforming the space into a memory museum.

International donors have increasingly directed aid flows for Syrian refugees in Lebanon through municipalities instead of the central government. Concomitantly, many of these municipalities have imposed curfews and other systematic violations of the civil and human rights of Syrian refugees residing or working within their boundaries. During the 2015 garbage crisis, protesters demanded that waste management revert back to municipalities in Beirut and Mount Lebanon rather than the central government's Council for Development Reconstruction (CDR). At the same time, several municipalities colluded with the government to create makeshift dumpsites that threatened environmental and health risks. Across such examples, municipalities serve as a crucial site of political praxis in Lebanon.

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## NEWS PIECES & COMMENTARY

### **[Egypt:] Police arrest 32 workers following dispersal of sit-in at Tourah Cement Company**

Mada Masr, 23 May 2017

Security forces dispersed a sit-in held by workers demanding full-time contracts, as per a previous court ruling, at the privately owned Tourah Cement Company in southern Cairo on Monday. They detained 22 workers during the dispersal, arresting 10 more that evening and issuing warrants for an additional three. Lawyer Haitham Mohamedein told Mada Masr that the 32 arrested workers were detained overnight, and are currently being held at the Maadi and Dar al-Salam police stations. They have been referred to trial, set for May 28, on charges of assaulting a police captain, obstructing justice and using violence to resist authorities. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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### **[Bahrain] Diraz: Clashes grip Ayatollah Isa Qassim's village**

Al Jazeera English, 23 May 2017

Bahrain's interior ministry says it has launched a security operation in Diraz, the home village of leading Shia Muslim cleric Ayatollah Isa Qassim and the site of a sit-in encampment of his followers. The raid on Tuesday followed Qassim's sentencing this week to one year in jail, suspended for three years, on charges of corruption. "The implementation of security operation in Diraz village began this morning ... to impose security and general order after the area became a haven for people wanted in security cases and fugitives from justice," the ministry said on its official Twitter account. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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### **Tunisian forces clash with protesters at oil fields**

Al Jazeera English, 22 May 2017

Tunisian security forces fired tear gas on Monday to disperse hundreds of protesters demanding jobs and a share in revenue from gas and oil companies, as weeks of unrest over jobs and funding in the country's southern provinces escalated into violence. Protesters briefly forced the closure of the Vana pumping station, one of several oil and gas stations impacted over the weekend, after the army allowed an engineer to shut it to avoid a confrontation. The defence ministry warned it would use force to protect and retake southern oil and gas facilities, and clashes broke out at Vana on Monday when the military took back control to restart the pump, two witnesses said. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **[Egypt] Police arrest 28 for critical social media posts in nationwide crackdown**

Mada Masr, 19 May 2017

Police have arrested an estimated 28 activists and young members of several political parties in a sweeping security crackdown across several governorates. According to rights lawyer Khaled Ali the arrests took place over 10 governorates, with charges relating to the sharing of posts critical of the government on social networking sites, particularly Facebook. In a statement published on Thursday Ali wrote that the nationwide arrests are likely a deliberate attempt to “target the parties that have been active over the course of this year, and prosecute their members across the governorates in order to spread fear and to kill any attempt to revive political activism, or to reclaim the public domain.” *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Negev: Israel razes Palestinian village for 113th time**

Patrick Strickland

Al Jazeera English, 18 May 2017

Israeli police forces have destroyed a Palestinian village in the Negev region of the country's south for the 113th time since 2010, displacing its residents and flattening its few still-standing structures. Heavily armed officers as well as riot police forces raided the village on Wednesday morning, and bulldozers destroyed the makeshift homes locals had been living in, local Palestinian media outlets reported. The Adalah Legal Centre for Arab Minority Rights, a Haifa-based advocacy group, estimates that 22 families made up of 110 people live in Araqib. The villagers return and rebuild after each demolition. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Young Algerians Are Done Waiting for Political Parties to Bring Change**

Ahmed Mitiche

Muftah, 17 May 2017

The Interior Ministry announced on Friday, May 5, that the FLN secured 164 of the 462 seats of the lower house, down from 220 seats in 2012. This was the worst result for the FLN, since the country's

first multi-party elections in 1990. Despite the victory, the election was marred by low voter turnout. Only 38% of Algeria's 20 million eligible voters showed up to cast their ballots, down from 43% in 2012. Algeria is one of the youngest countries in the world, with over half of its population under the age of thirty. Young Algerians took to social media using the hashtag #mansotich, which is a play on words, literally meaning "I won't jump," and alluding to similar words "manvotich" and "mansowatch", which mean "I won't vote" and "I won't voice." *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Tunisia's struggle against corruption: time to fight, not forgive**

Mariam Salehi, Irene Weipert-Fenner  
openDemocracy, 16 May 2017

Protests against an 'economic reconciliation law' are currently drawing attention to Tunisia. Proponents argue that Tunisia's economy needs a quick way to deal with past economic crimes under Ben Ali in order to create a stable climate that would drive investment. But a grassroots campaign, *Manich Msamah (I shall not forgive)*, has long mobilised against the bill. It insists that there can be no reconciliation without holding the perpetrators of economic crimes accountable, using the instruments that the official transitional justice process in Tunisia offers. Protests demanding employment and regional development in the marginalized interior of Tunisia are to a large part triggered by recruitment procedures manipulated by corruption and clientelist networks that still exist today. The increase since 2015 in these contentious practices underlines the importance in taking action against such structures by exposing their past, fighting their continuation, and preventing new ones from emerging. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## **Palestinians take to the streets for Nakba Day**

Al Jazeera English, 15 May 2017

Demonstrators flooded the streets of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip on Monday to mark the anniversary of the Nakba, or the dispersal of 750,000 Palestinians during the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Nearly seven decades on, the number of registered Palestinian refugees has swelled to more than 5.3 million. They live in United Nations-run camps throughout the region, including in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. The Nakba, or catastrophe, is remembered each year on May 15. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## Thousands protest Tunisia's corruption amnesty bill

Al Jazeera English, 13 May 2017

More than 2,000 Tunisians marched in the country's capital protesting a proposed amnesty bill that would see businessmen accused of corruption under overthrown president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali walk free. At the demonstration against the Economic Reconciliation bill on Saturday, protesters claimed the bill would contradict the spirit of Tunisia's 2011 revolution that overthrew Ben Ali. But government officials said a pardon would be a way for the businessmen to inject their fraudulent money back into the country's economy. Waving flags and banners that read "No to forgiveness" and "Enough Corruption", the protesters, accompanied by opposition party leaders and activists, marched through Tunis' central avenue. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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## POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Visiting Assistant Professor in Middle East Studies, Brown University

Apply by 16 June 2016

Middle East Studies at Brown University invites applications for a Visiting Assistant Professor in Middle East Studies (MES). The position is open to all disciplines, with a preference for the social sciences such as anthropology, history, political science, and sociology. This is a two-year position. We especially welcome candidates who thrive in an interdisciplinary environment, who have experience teaching and supervising undergraduates, and whose work is informed by comparative and global perspectives. The successful candidate will serve as the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) for the MES concentration (major) and will teach two classes a year: a seminar dedicated to developing honors theses for MES students and a lecture course in the applicant's area of interest. The DUS oversees the undergraduate curriculum, is the point of contact for current and potential concentrators, provides oversight for the undergraduate advising program, and represents the Department at undergraduate events on campus.

The salary is \$56,000/year. Additional funding for programming and research expenses will be considered.

#### Qualifications

Doctorate in the field of Modern Middle East Studies; social scientist is preferred.

Native or near-native fluency in Arabic.

Deep knowledge of the intellectual content and research trends of the field of Modern Middle East Studies, in both its social sciences and humanities dimensions.

Ability to manage and create collaborative networks across multiple constituencies.  
Ability to use institutional databases and learn new software as needed.

#### Application Instructions

Review of applications will begin June 16, 2017, and will continue until the position is filled. For full consideration, the following materials should be submitted prior to that date to the application portal in Interfolio.

1. A cover letter stating the applicant's academic field, area of specialization, research agenda, and teaching / advising experience.
2. A curriculum vitae.
3. Names and contact information of three references, who will be contacted for short-listed candidates.
4. Proposed class syllabi

Interviews will be conducted by Skype in late-June 2017. The anticipated start date is August 1, 2017.

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

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## **Chair in Social Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences – University of Amsterdam**

Closing date: 20 June 2017

#### Salary indication

€5,219 to €9,174 gross per month

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

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

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

#### Job description

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

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

#### Tasks:

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

#### Requirements

Applicants will have the following credentials:

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

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

#### Further information

For more information about this position, please contact:

Professor Robert Pool, Chair of the Department of Anthropology

Appointment

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

#### Job application

Applications, by email only, should include a:

- concise statement of motivation (2 pages max.);
- CV, including a complete list of publications;
- statement of future research plans (2 pages max.);
- statement of teaching philosophy (1 page max.);
- list of three referees. At this stage of the procedure, please do not send letters of reference.

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

The subject of the Email message and the attachment must consist of the text 'Chair Social Anthropology of Asia application + applicant's last name'. #LI-DNP

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

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