



SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND POPULAR MOBILISATION IN THE MENA

Digest of Current Publications and Events

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24.11.2017

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CALL FOR PAPERS & CONFERENCES

[Reminder:] BRISMES 2018 Call for Papers: New Approaches to Studying the Middle East

25-28 June 2018 | Department of Middle Eastern Studies, King's College London

Deadline: 1 December 2017

The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies and the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at King's College London invite proposals for the 2018 Annual BRISMES Conference on the theme of 'New Approaches to Studying the Middle East'. Middle Eastern studies has been undergoing a quiet revolution over the past decade. As scholars have grappled with explaining unfolding events in the region, the field has seen a heightened level of reflection on theoretical models, concepts, sources, and methodologies, as well as on the politics and ethics of Middle Eastern studies. The Arab Spring and its aftermath have stirred debate about how we study authoritarianism, regime resilience, protest movements, and the interplay between socio-economic and political dynamics. The unprecedented displacement of Syrians has forced us to think in new ways about movement, trauma and health care, refugee education, and the role of transnational networks. The continued expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land has deepened engagement with the field of settler colonial studies. In political economy, a renewed focus on the global, the historical and the social have encouraged a more sustained dialogue with international relations, history and historical sociology, while historians of the region have been galvanised by the broader turns to 'world history' and 'global international relations'. Anthropology has built on new conceptualisations of female agency in the context of studying Islamism and expanded its focus on sexuality and youth. Deepening engagement with queer studies has given rise to innovative readings of techniques of subjection and the positionality of the critique itself.

Methodologically, new forms of data and ways of analysing are revolutionising what we know and are allowing us to revisit old debates. The adoption of event database analysis has given social movement scholars a pioneering way to study protests temporally and spatially, while the 'world historical' turn has challenged methodological nationalism and bolstered multi-lingual, multi-site archival research. New disciplines such as digital humanities have introduced novel methods like e-ethnographies, while advances in text analysis have shed light on how people communicate. Quantitative and spatial methods are providing new insights into primary source material from the region, such as census data, maps, newspapers, economic indicators, and other government statistics. Meanwhile, others have sought to use survey experiments to arrive at generalisable inferences about attitudes and opinions. Within literature and the arts, challenging traditional epistemologies and geographies, exploring disciplinary boundaries and studies on new hybrid genres have stimulated innovative research. The past decade has also seen growing attention to previously neglected sites. Literature on the Arabian Peninsula has flourished, as access to some countries has become somewhat easier and academic interest has shifted beyond oil and religion. Research on cities has similarly grown in response to the broader shift towards 'seeing like a city', while the global turn has encouraged scholars to relocate the Middle East in relation to other regions, such as the Indian Ocean, the Americas or Europe.

Meanwhile, escalating attacks on academic freedom across the region have brought the politics and challenges of academic research back to the fore. The continuing resource gap between Middle Eastern and Western universities further pressures research in the region, even while initiatives to bridge this gap are increasing. The expansion of digitally available sources and the blurring of private-public boundaries in social media has sharpened discussions about the ethics of research, while the growth of cloud-based research data has heightened debates about data security in the context of increasingly intrusive 'counter-terrorism' strategies.

BRISMES 2018 offers an opportunity to take stock of, celebrate and foster innovations in the field. We encourage proposals that take up the theme in original ways, exploring not only new approaches, but bringing different new approaches into dialogue with each other, including across disciplines and across regions. We similarly encourage proposals reflecting on the ethical and political challenges facing research in and on the Middle East. In addition, we warmly invite proposals on any topic related to Middle Eastern Studies, regardless of their fit with the conference's main theme. Our aim is to foster dialogue between scholars studying the Middle East and North Africa from all disciplines. Proposals for complete panel sessions are particularly welcome.

More information [here](#)

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Transnational solidarity with the Palestinians and BDS campaign (BRISMES panel)

Marwan Darweish of Coventry University is organising the following panel: There has been growth in the last two decades in transnational networks of civil society actors mobilising in order to affect the Palestinian Israeli conflict. The aim of this panel is to examine some of the factors that can enhance or weaken the vitality, scale and strength of such international civil society solidarity networks mobilising to exercise leverage on Israel and other international actors to end the Israeli occupation and support the call for equality and justice. The panel will particularly focus on Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign.

If you are interested in participating, please email Marwan aa1223@coventry.ac.uk ASAP (the closing date is very soon)

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The Gülen Movement in light of the July 15, 2016, coup attempt in Turkey

Panel proposal for the 2018 WOCMES meetings, 16-22 July in Seville, Spain

Deadline: 1 December 2017

We are seeking paper abstracts for a WOCMES 2018 proposed panel on developments in the Gülen Movement in light of the July 15, 2016, attempted coup d'état in Turkey. There has been much academic discussion and debate about the movement's structure, projects, and religious, economic, and political motivations. Movement members themselves have also promoted a particular image of Gülen and his community through many co-sponsored events over the years. This panel seeks to bring together interested academics and others to discuss the state of the movement in the context of the rapidly changing political situation in Turkey and within the international context, especially after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan accused the movement of spearheading the July 15, 2016, coup.

Possible topics include:

- Discursive framing of the coup attempt and its aftermath by Erdoğan, Gülen, and other stakeholders in the conflict in Turkey
- The movement's differing representations of itself in Turkey and in the West, and how these differences contribute to the production of contrasting scholarly narratives among Western and Turkish academics
- The effects of shuttering of many institutions (schools, hospitals, media organizations, international aid organizations, etc.) associated with the movement in Turkey
- What has happened to the movement within Turkey since the coup attempt
- What is happening with the movement in various international contexts
- How the government's attempt to clamp down on the movement has had wide-ranging political and human rights effects
- Speculations about what the future may hold for the movement and for Turkey itself.

This event isn't meant to be a platform to disparage or praise the movement, but to produce an interdisciplinary discussion about an influential international organization deeply implicated in the political evolution of Turkey.

Please send panel abstracts (250-300 words) to: Dr. Kim Shively, Professor of Anthropology, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, USA, shively@kutztown.edu by Dec. 1, 2017.

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ASA Annual Meeting 2018: Feeling Race: An Invitation to Explore Racialized Emotions

Deadline: 11 January 2017

Racism is fundamentally about racial domination. It emerged in modernity as part of economic and political projects that led to the colonization, genocide, slavery, and conquest of various peoples in the so-called “New World.” To justify the inhumanity and pillage involved in these projects, Europeans defined the various non-European peoples they encountered as inferior races and themselves as the superior race. In doing so, racialized regimes were established all over the world and the invented races were suffused with cognitive and emotional content (races became socially and emotionally real).

With the theme, “*Feeling Race: An Invitation to Explore Racialized Emotions,*” we encourage sociologists to engage, study, and theorize the multiple ways in which emotions and feelings matter in racial affairs. We “feel race” in the streets, stores, and the workplace; we “feel race” in friendships and in romantic relations; we even “feel race” in events we do not code as racial such as playing video games or watching movies. Albeit we welcome creative ways of addressing the theme, we want to push the analysis of racialized emotions in two specific ways. First, to date most of the analysis on the feelings and emotions associated with racial dynamics has focused on negative emotions (i.e., anger, hate, anxiety, and fear). Hence, we ask analysts to also examine positive racialized emotions such as pride, happiness, comfort, empathy, solidarity, and pleasure. Second, because racialized emotions are relational, sociologists should address the emotions of *all* actors, dominant as well as subordinated, in racialized settings, situations, and interactions.

CFP

Papers must reflect original work or major developments in previously reported work. Papers are NOT eligible if they have been:

- Presented previously at ASA or other professional meetings.
- Published prior to the meeting or accepted for publication before being submitted to organizers for consideration.
- Modified in only secondary respects after presentation or publication.

Length and Style

Only draft/working papers that are 15-35 pages, double-spaced, (including footnotes, tables, and bibliographies), that represent a well thought-out idea or topic will be considered by session organizers. Lengthier versions are more suitable for subsequent publications than for oral presentations at the Annual Meeting.

Session organizers will not consider abstracts, letters, email communications, or telephone calls in lieu of draft/working papers.

Please note that “completed papers” can be uploaded to the archival site after the Annual Meeting.

Submission Requirements

Submitters should prepare the following information and files prior to starting the online submission process. The submitter will receive an email acknowledgement of successful submission.

- Paper Title (15 words or less)
- Description (250 words or less)
- Identify where you wish your paper to be considered (one Regular Session Topic and one Section Session, or two Section Sessions)
- Determine if you want your paper forwarded to a Roundtable Session
- AV equipment requested (if needed)
- Institutional affiliations and email addresses for all co-authors
- 15-35 page draft paper/working paper either converted to a PDF file stored locally and ready for uploading. If necessary, special tables/charts in Excel or PowerPoint can be uploaded as separate files to accompany the paper.

Submission Policies

Authors may submit multiple, unique papers however, ASA policy limits authors to presenting only one single-authored paper and no more than two multi-authored papers on the final program.

Authors may submit a paper to only one Regular Session topic.

Authors may submit a paper to a Regular Session topic and elect a Section topic as a secondary choice.

Authors may submit a paper to a Section topic and elect a secondary Section topic choice.

The online submission system provides submission options reflecting this policy.

Authors choosing to make a dual submission (Regular Session topic primary/Section topic secondary or Section topic/Section topic) must indicate which topic has first preference. This gives the first priority organizer first right of acceptance during the initial review processes. The second priority organizer cannot make an acceptance decision on a dual submission until the first organizer releases the submission.

More information [here](#)

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TALKS & OTHER EVENTS

Marxist approaches to understanding Islam and Islamism: a critical reappraisal

29 November 2017, 18:30-20:00

Venue: King's College London, room K2.31 (Nash Lecture Theatre), London WC2R 2LS

Speaker: Dr Anne Alexander

The role of Islam in the contemporary world has been a highly contested topic for decades. The demonisation of Muslims, and the pathologisation of Islamism, plays a crucial role in building the resurgent movements of the racist Right and fascism. Meanwhile, the managers of the neo-liberal state in Europe and North America (whether liberals, social democrats or conservatives) have also been happy to bolster Islamophobic narratives in order to justify imperialist interventions abroad and deflect anger over austerity at home onto "an enemy within". This paper critically reflects on key trends in the Marxist analysis of Islam as a religion, and of Islamism as an ideological current which aims to make state or society more "Islamic" as a method for solving social and political problems, arguing against approaches premised on the idea that Islam has an unchanging, timeless essence which can explain either the role of a highly diverse set of social movements or guide revolutionary socialists in how to relate to them. *More information* [here](#)

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Communicating Contentious Politics: Workshop on social movements and networked communication in the Arab World

30 November 2017 - 9:00am to 5:00pm

Venue: Board Room, Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford

More information [here](#)

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"On the Ruins of History" - Is this a Walter Benjamin Moment in Arab Thought, Art, and Politics?

1-2 December 2017

Forum Transregionale Studien, Wallotstr. 14, 14193 Berlin

This workshop is organized by the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in cooperation with Europe in the Middle East—The Middle East in Europe (EUME).

Over the last years, the interest in German philosopher and critic Walter Benjamin has continuously increased in the Arab world, especially after the uprisings in 2011. The recent attention to Benjamin has resulted in several Arabic translations of his work, such as *Berliner Kindheit um 1900* (transl. by Ahmed Farouk, 2014) and a number of other works. What is the source of this renewed attention to Benjamin? What is happening in the current conditions of the Arab world that draws our critical attention to a seminal thinker in post-Weimar Germany?

This workshop seeks to discuss and specify the origins of the Arab cultural concern about Benjamin's notions of 'history', 'violence', 'law', 'language', 'time', and 'revolution' among others. These meditations of life, history, and death in the "here-and-now" ("Jetztzeit") of the post-revolutionary moment in the MENA discloses the ambivalent futures of memory, the reverberations of the disintegration of entire nations and cultures, and the possibilities of critical thought and practice.

This workshop hopes to approach the memories of the future in contemporary Arab thought, art, and history through close readings and translations of Benjamin's writings. *More information* [here](#)

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

5 December 2017, 20:00

Venue: De KROOK, 'De Blauwe Vogel' Hall, Square Miriam Makeba 1, 9000 Gent

Speakers: Corinne Torrekens, Stéphane Lacroix, Fabio Merone, Sami Zemni

The Middle East and North Africa Research group warmly invites you to the presentation of the book 'Salafism After the Arab Awakening. Contending with People's Power'. Prof. Dr. Sami Zemni will introduce the evening, after which Dr. Fabio Merone will present the publication and Prof. Dr. Stéphane Lacroix his contribution on the "Islamist dilemmas in post-Arab Spring Saudi Arabia". Finally Prof. Dr Corinne Torrekens will offer her critical reading of the edited volume, before opening the discussion to the audience. The book will be offered for sale after the discussion. One of the most interesting consequences of the Arab awakening has been the central role of Salafists in a number of countries. In particular, there seems to have been a move away from traditional quietism towards an increasing degree of politicisation. The arrival on the political scene of Salafist parties in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen, as well as the seemingly growing desire of Salafists in other Arab countries to enter institutional politics through the creation of political parties, highlights quite clearly the debates around how to react to the awakening within Salafist circles. The book 'Salafism After the Arab Awakening' examines in detail how Salafism, both theologically and politically, is contending with the Arab uprisings across a number of countries. The focus is primarily on what kind of politicisation, if any, has taken place and what forms it has adopted. As some of the contributions make clear, politicisation does not necessarily diminish the role of jihad or the influence of quietism, revealing tensions and struggles within the complex world of Salafism. *More information* [here](#)

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Religious Infrastructure and Electoral Mobilization in Egypt

05 December 2017, 18:00-20:00

Venue: 4th Floor, Auditorium 2, Bush House, King's College, London

Speaker: Dr Steven Brooke

Why do Islamist parties dominate Middle Eastern elections? We argue that mosques provide Islamic parties with a ready-made platform for face-to-face mobilization of large numbers of voters. This ubiquitous religious infrastructure exercises a particularly pronounced effect in founding elections, when parties must quickly establish linkages with newly-politicized voters. We test this hypothesis by combining a precinct-level spatial dataset from Egypt's 2012 presidential election from Egypt's two largest cities, Cairo and Alexandria, with web-scraped spatial data on thousands of houses of worship. Both proximity and density of mosques around a particular polling station were important predictors of electoral success for Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohammed Morsi. Churches exercised the same effect for his opponent, former regime figure Ahmed Shafiq. Qualitative and survey data from the period support our argument that Islamist parties derive at least part of their electoral advantage from their ability to exploit an inherited infrastructure of religious institutions.

More information [here](#)

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Bombs, Bridges, and Biography: Lessons for the Present from the Father of Algeria?

6 December 2017, 18:30–20:00

Venue: LSE, Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building, 54 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3LJ

Speaker: Tom Woerner-Powell

From his struggle against French colonialism in North Africa to his stand against sectarianism in Syria, the actions of Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri, the symbolic father of modern Algeria, have been an inspiration to many. Launching his new [book](#), Tom Woerner-Powell questions prevailing depictions of the historical figure and discusses his continued salience as a symbolic mediator between the supposedly conflicting zones of 'Islam and Europe', 'East and West'. *More information* [here](#)

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In Search of the Archive: On Writing History in Egypt Today

6 December 2017, 5.00 pm - 6.30 pm |

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

Speaker: Pascale Ghazaleh

What is a historian, barred from the archives, to do? In the years since 2011, the National Archives in Egypt have come under ever-tighter control from national security. Self-appointed definers and

defenders of Egypt's national interests, *al-amn* processes and filters applications from scholars wishing to access the archives. Increasingly, this has entailed rejection of some applications, and long postponement of replies to many others. Non-Egyptian researchers have waited for months, frittering away their allocated time and returning, frustrated, to their home institutions. Egyptian researchers whose applications include vocabulary or refer to ideas that could be construed as subversive have found that their prior experience, however long, counts for nothing in ensuring continued admittance. This, then, is an account by a historian endeavoring to return to the archives after a few years' absence, and the tale of the Kafkaesque adventures that ensued. It is an account based on personal experience and hearsay – not one based on rigorous empiricism or solid analysis, because most of the vetting process remains shrouded in secrecy. As such, the presentation will be, in part, anecdotal, narrating different phases of one individual's attempts to breach the barriers erected by security around the archives. These attempts, of course, can be related to those made by other researchers, some fruitful but many unsuccessful. These anecdotes will open up onto a wider reflection on the question of what to do without the relevant archives – the archives one needs to write history. *More information* [here](#)

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Egypt: Seven Years Forward

11 December 2017, 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Venue: SOAS, Russell Square: College Buildings, Room: DLT, London, UK

Speakers: Mohamad Adam (TIMEP and journalist), Khaled Fahmy)University of Cambridge(, Amr Hamzawy)Stanford University(, Nancy Okail)Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy(

As we approach the seventh anniversary of the Egyptian Revolution, join us for an evening of reflections on Egypt's road to revolution, current state and future. Panellists will offer remarks on the state's fulfilment of the revolution's demands, what is missing, and what is needed to be undertaken and the challenges and opportunities ahead for Egypt to surpass the defeatist moment felt by many revolutionaries. *More information* [here](#)

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RECENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

What's Wrong with Rights? Social Movements, Law and Liberal Imaginations

Radha D'Souza

January 2018 – Pluto Press

Through mapping the rights discourse and the transformations in transnational finance capitalism since the world wars, and interrogating the connections between the two, Radha D'Souza examines contemporary rights in theory and practice through the lens of the struggles of the people of the Third World, their experiences of national liberation and socialism and their aspirations for emancipation and freedom. Social movements demand rights to remedy wrongs and injustices in society. But why do organisations like the World Bank and IMF, the G7 states and the World Economic Forum want to promote rights? Activists and activist scholars are critical of human rights in their diagnosis of problems. But in their prognosis, they reinstate human rights and bring back through the backdoor what they dismiss through the front. Why are activists and activist scholars unable to 'let go' of human rights? Why do indigenous peoples find the need to invoke the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People to make their claims sound reasonable? Are rights in the 20th and 21st centuries the same as rights in the 17th and 18th centuries? This book examines what is entailed in reducing rights to 'human' rights and in the argument 'our understandings of rights are better than theirs' that is popular within social movements and in critical scholarship.

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A People's History of the Russian Revolution

Neil Faulkner

2017 – Pluto Press

The Russian Revolution may well be the most misunderstood event in modern history. In this fast-paced introduction, Neil Faulkner debunks the myths that continue to shroud it, showing how a mass movement of millions, organised in democratic assemblies, mobilised for militant action and destroyed a regime of landlords, profiteers and warmongers. Faulkner rejects caricatures of Lenin and the Bolsheviks as authoritarian conspirators, 'democratic-centralists' or the progenitors of Stalinist dictatorship; though short-lived, the Revolution of October 1917 was an explosion of democracy and creativity. Crushed by bloody counter-revolution, its socialist vision was ultimately displaced by a monstrous form of bureaucratic state-capitalism. Laced with first-hand testimony, this history rescues the democratic essence of the revolution from its detractors and deniers, offering a perfect primer for the modern reader.

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JOURNAL ARTICLES & OTHER ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

[New publication:] *Revolutionary Marxism*

The first issue of *Revolutionary Marxism*, the English-language annual publication of the Turkish journal *Devrimci Marksizm*, appeared at the end of 2016. It was distributed and sold around the world from Beirut to Buenos Aires, from San Petersburg to Skopje, from Milan to Montevideo. It may not have sold in the thousands, but on its modest scale, it perfectly fulfilled the mission it was meant for: to contribute to internationalism in militant Marxist theory, leading naturally to proletarian internationalism in the political and organisational spheres, in the Middle East and North Africa, in the Balkans and the Caucasus, in the Mediterranean and Eurasian regions, and in the world at large. In line with this goal, we have now taken a new step and included translations of the editorial piece you are now reading into several other languages, which we are publishing at the end of the edition. This way we can at least transmit the gist of our message to people around the world who cannot read English, but are interested in the voice of internationalist and revolutionary Marxism. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Revolution as the driving force of history in the Middle East

Sungur Savran

Revolutionary Marxism 2018, pp. 71-92

First of all, we wish to put the proposition of Marxism to the effect that history does not move forward (and at times backward) on the basis of an uninterrupted process and through peaceful reforms, but through deep convulsions and leaps to the test for the particular historical development of our region. That this proposition, i.e. the idea that revolutions are the locomotive of history, is true for the Western world (i.e. the advanced capitalist countries), for Latin America, and for Asian countries such as Russia and China has long been demonstrated. But we have not seen similar studies on the MENA region in those languages we are familiar with. Our objective is to take an initial step into this long neglected domain, modest and somewhat schematic given the constraints of time. Secondly, the concept of revolution is considered to be out of fashion on large sections of the left, to put it bluntly and without recourse to cosmetic touches. A majority of the left has turned its back on Marxism in disillusion, one that was created by the collapse of the experiments in socialist construction in the 20th century. Within this framework, revolution has suffered the same fate of being thrown away, in similar fashion to the centrality of class struggle or the importance of the revolutionary party. In our region as in the rest of the world, the agenda consists exclusively of the piecemeal and gradual progress to be attained in the areas of democracy and “civil society”. We wish to shake up these reformist illusions, by showing that in the modern history of the Middle East, all substantive gains, be it in the sphere of the interests of workers and toilers or that of fighting

imperialism or the wresting of democratic rights from despotic regimes or of the rights of the oppressed categories, have been the product of revolutions. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Islamism: A comparative-historical overview

Burak Gürel

Revolutionary Marxism 2017, pp. 77-101

Islamism has been one of the most hotly debated political ideologies of the world for more than three decades. A series of significant political developments have kept Islamism in the headlines during the 1980s and 1990s, such as the Iranian Revolution (1979), the war between the Soviet Union and the Afghan mujahideen (1979–89), the emergence of Hezbollah in Lebanon (1982) and Hamas in Palestine (1987), the Algerian Civil War (1992–97), and the Taliban’s takeover in Afghanistan (1996). Younger generations’ first encounter with Islamism was the suicide attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan. Islamism continues to be an important political subject in the twenty- first century. The war between the Taliban and the US-led coalition in Afghanistan is continuing. Different Islamist actors, ranging from the Islamic Republic of Iran to al-Qaeda–linked groups in Eurasia, pose a significant challenge to the United States and other Western powers. The Palestinian question remains important, and Hamas continues to be a powerful force in the Palestinian national movement. Islamist movements have recently resurged in the Arab world in the process of the Arab Spring that started in December 2010. The electoral success of Ennahda in Tunisia in 2011, the victory of Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimeen (the Muslim Brotherhood) in the presidential elections in Egypt in 2012, the killing of the United States ambassador to Libya by Salafists in 2012, and the shockingly rapid rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in 2014 are different manifestations of this recent revival. Finally, cultural and political problems experienced by the Muslim minorities in Western Europe introduce a new spatial dimension to Islamist politics. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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NEWS PIECES & COMMENTARY

Actors Sign Petition Urging Egypt's al-Sisi to Seek a Second Term as Elections Loom

Fanack.com, 17 November 2017

'To Build It' is the name of a campaign launched in September 2017 to urge Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to run for a second term in the 2018 elections. Several members of parliament and political parties initiated the campaign, collecting signatures for a petition demanding that al-Sisi run again, which he is widely expected to do. The campaign has so far drawn broad support from public figures inside and outside the political arena. Among them are many names from the entertainment industry, including famous actors and singers. Egyptian media have reported several times on actors signing the petition. Egypt Today, which is affiliated with the notorious pro-regime Youm7 newspaper, wrote, 'The To Build It campaign has attracted a vast turnout from leading figures,' and published pictures of famous actors including Hany Salama and Wafaa Amer signing the petition. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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The Zionist Project's Duality: Escaping Racist Oppression and Reproducing It in Colonial Context

Gilbert Achcar

Jadaliyya, 3 November 2017

Duality between the position of oppressed and that of oppressor is not rare in history. It is encountered in particular in the case of national movements embodying the quest of an oppressed nation for liberation from colonialism while this same nation oppresses in its own country a minority—be it national or racial or religious or belonging to any other identity—and while the national movement disregards this latter oppression or, worse, endorses it under various pretexts such as accusing the minority of constituting a "fifth column" of colonialism. Reference to the frequency of such duality is often made in order to "normalize" the case of Zionism, in the sense of presenting it as ordinary and similar to many other cases. The aim is usually to belittle the wrongs of Zionism, if not to excuse them, in order to "normalize" the attitude toward the Zionist state and treat it as an ordinary one. I will seek to demonstrate here that this argument is not valid by explaining the singularity of the duality proper to the Zionist case. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Queer Alliances in Times of War

Queer and Feminist Activists from Turkey and Kurdistan
Jadaliyya, 17 October 2017

Antiracist and anti-/de-colonial activists have struggled, and continue to do so, against the rhetoric of the “War on Terror,” a rhetoric circulated by states and reinvented by femonationalist and homonationalist circles. We see ourselves as part of this political tradition. Yet we also argue that certain approaches that attempt to critique the binary implicit in the framework of a clash of civilizations run the risk of reproducing this same binary framework—albeit oppositionally—by reading current social and political dynamics, movements, and conflicts in the world only through the critique of this so-called clash. The discourse of the “War on Terror” is a binary world narrative circulated by the United States of America and its allies to craft the ideological legitimacy of the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq following the attacks on 11 September, 2001. According to this binary “clash of civilizations” discourse, on one side, there are Western nation-states that defend the values of human rights, freedom and democracy; on the other, barbarian Islamist terrorism and its medieval mentality and practices. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Egypt’s rainbow flags affair is more about dictatorship than sex

Brian Whitaker
Medium, 4 October 2017

When the sight of a few people waving rainbow flags at a pop concert becomes an act of “moral terrorism”, when it plunges a country into hysteria and the government responds by arresting dozens of people on suspicion of being gay and orders the media to show them no sympathy, it’s time to ask why. Such was the apparent power of these flags that Egypt has been in paroxysms over them for the last couple of weeks. But to treat this as a case of mass homophobia, or even hyper-homophobia, misses its real significance. At the root of the rainbow flags affair are two fundamentally opposing views of where Egypt is — or should be — heading. This clash over Egypt’s future has many aspects, and liberty of the individual — sexual behaviour included — is one of them. On one side are those, like the head of Egypt’s Supreme Council for Media Regulation, who say homosexuality is disgraceful and the media must help stamp it out. On the other are those who say what happens between consenting adults in private is no concern of the state, the police or anyone else. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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Activists Aren't Backing Down After Egypt's Massive LGBTQ Crackdown

Bo Hanna

Vice, 4 October 2017

On September 22, Mashrou' Leila, a Lebanese band with an openly gay lead singer, played a concert in Cairo. Some who attended waved rainbow flags—an innocuous act in the West, but one that's far more political in a country like Egypt, with a deep history of anti-LGBTQ persecution. In the days that followed, seven people, including some alleged flag wavers and at least one other who posted positively about the incident on social media, were arrested for "promoting sexual deviancy," according to the office of Nabil Sadek, Egypt's top prosecutor. Over the last ten days, the situation has escalated into what organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are calling a full-fledged LGBTQ crackdown. This weekend alone, at least 22 people were arrested, and 33 have been arrested in total, by Amnesty International's count, with charges stemming from dating app usage, social media posts, and more. In one case, police allegedly entrapped and arrested a 19-year-old man using a fake dating app profile, a common act in Egypt; he was sentenced to six years' prison on charges of "debauchery" last week. According to Amnesty, some arrested have been subject to forced anal examinations to determine whether they have had gay sex, an act a spokesperson said violates international prohibitions on torture. *Continue reading [here](#)*

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POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowships

Deadline: 23 March 2018

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is pleased to announce the introduction of a Postdoctoral Fellowship (PDF) scheme aimed at providing a career development opportunity for those in the immediately postdoctoral stage of their career, to provide the opportunity to consolidate their PhD through developing publications, their networks, and their research and professional skills.

The PDF call forms part of ESRC's strategy to supporting early career researchers and will be delivered through our national network of Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) and Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) which encompasses 73 research organisations across the UK.

The fellows must be located on an accredited DTP or CDT pathway, and as such will be embedded within a high-quality environment for research and training and will be able to apply for support to

undertake a varied programme of activities supporting their continuing development for careers both within and outside of academia.

The objective of this call is to provide support to those who are within 12 months of completing their PhD, to support them in consolidating their PhD, and preparing them for the next stage of their research careers. For the majority this is likely to be a research career in academia; however, those with a clearly articulated programme of activities to support the transition to a research career outside of academia, can also be considered (eg a researcher in public, private, or civil society organisations).

Fellows' actual programmes should reflect their prior knowledge and experience and be designed to support their longer term research career aspirations. Activities could include, but are not limited to:

- Produce publications in order to help establish track record
- Engage with a range of different audiences to communicate research findings
- Build networks to develop impact opportunities and inform and support further development
- Collaborate with users through an internship or placement to help develop professional and transferrable skills and understanding of users' organisations, provided they are an integral part of the fellowship
- Further training to improve research and related skills
- Developing funding proposals
- Carry out further limited research (up to 25%) related to their PhD
- Teaching, if this is aligned with the wider purposes of the fellowship (up to a maximum of six hours per week);
- Research visits to internationally leading research organisations – either in the UK or abroad – for the purposes of research collaboration, training, and/or access to data or other resources not available at the applicant's host organisation.

Fellowships are not required to complete all activities on the above list, and the chosen activities should be tailored to the aims of the fellowship and relevant to support the transition to the fellow's desired career. Applicants must demonstrate a realistic and practicable programme of work in their proposal.

Proposals are welcome from both single disciplines and combinations of disciplines but the fellowship activities must be based at least 50% within the social sciences.

Duration of fellowships

The grants provide funding for up to one year full-time, or up to two years part-time to give fellows time to prepare for a successful career in research either within or beyond academia. In exceptional cases, applicants can apply for a fellowship for up to 18 months; however, this must be fully justified by the programme of activities being proposed. Part-time grants are for applicants whose normal working hours are part-time and not for applicants who wish to hold the fellowship and continue other employment. Fellows must spend 100% of their working time (whether full-time or part-time) on the fellowship and cannot take any secondary paid employment during the course of the grant.

A limited amount of teaching will contribute to the professional development of the fellow and therefore grant holders can set aside up to six hours per week (pro rata) to other duties during the fellowship, including training and preparation time.

Eligibility

This opportunity is open to applicants who have completed their PhD at a research organisation (RO) that is part of a DTP or CDT and must be held at an RO that is part of a DTP or CDT, eligible to participate in this initiative and aligned to an accredited pathway: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/funding/funding-opportunities/postdoctoral-fellowships/>

Applicants are eligible for funding whether or not they are established members of the RO at which they are applying. Applicants who are not established members must be accommodated by the RO and provided with appropriate facilities to carry out the fellowship. Further details about eligibility of applicants can be found in the Research Funding Guide (www.esrc.ac.uk/rfg). The call is **not open** to applicants who are established, permanent members of staff in an academic position with a research component.

Applicants do not have to have had an ESRC-funded studentship in order to be eligible to apply.

At the time of submitting a proposal, the applicant must either:

- have been awarded a PhD; or
- have submitted their thesis and passed their viva voce with minor corrections, with the expectation that the PhD will be awarded by the fellowship start date.

The grants are restricted to those with no more than 12 months of active postdoctoral experience at the start date of the grant. Active postdoctoral experience is defined as that accomplished between the viva voce being passed and the proposed start date of the fellowship. This includes professional doctorates as well as the PhD. In calculating 'active' experience we will make allowance for career breaks, where the applicant has interrupted their career for family, health or other personal reasons.

This call welcomes proposals from those returning to research following a career break. Applicants are however required to meet the eligibility criteria of no more than 12 months of active postdoctoral experience.

Funding including costs and staffing

The total cost for each fellowship can include the following:

- Fellow's salary costs
- Indirect costs
- Estate costs
- Up to £10,000 of other costs (to include costs such as mentoring costs, travel and subsistence, conference attendance, training, and fieldwork, for example).

No other costs are permitted. Each proposal will need to show these figures as 100% of full Economic Cost (fEC) and the ESRC will meet 80% fEC on the proposals submitted. All proposals will be subject to

ESRC's funding rules as outlined in our Research Funding Guide (<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/files/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/>).

More information and application [here](#)

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PhD Scholarship in Islamic & Middle Eastern Studies at Edinburgh

Deadline: 28 February 2018

The Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh is delighted to invite applications for two fees only PhD scholarships in any area within its expertise. The scholarship will be funded by IMES and will cover tuition fees at the Home/EU rate (currently £4,195 p.a. for 2017-2018).

Applications for both the Scholarship and the PhD must be made by 28th February 2018. Applications for the PhD can be made via the online admissions portal at the url address given below. Informal enquiries are welcome and should be directed to Professor Andrew Newman:
Andrew.Newman@ed.ac.uk

The award will cover:

The UK/EU rate of tuition fee

A successful non-EU/overseas applicant will be liable for the difference between the UK/EU and overseas tuition fee rate each year.

Subject to satisfactory progress, the scholarship will be awarded for a maximum of three years.

Eligibility

The award is open to UK, EU and overseas students commencing a PhD degree in the academic year 2018-2019.

Only applications to year one of a PhD programme of study will be considered.

Among the areas of supervision we cover are:

- Shiism, Safavids, pre-modern Islamic and Iranian history, history of Islamic science.
- Qur'an, Qur'anic exegesis, Hadith, the Life of Muhammad, early Islam (7th – 9th Centuries).
- Middle Eastern Cinemas; cinematic representations of gender and religious themes; Persian literature
- Modern history of the Middle East and especially Egypt; Cosmopolitan societies: Greeks of the Middle East
- Gender and sexuality in the MENA region, contemporary Arab media

More information and application [here](#)

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POMEPS 2018 Winter and Summer TRE Grants

Deadline: 30 November 2017

The Project on Middle East Political Science is delighted to announce a call for proposals for POMEPS Travel – Research – Engagement grants for the entire year of 2018. The competition is open to academic political scientists at career stages from PhD students to senior faculty from any institution, and is not restricted to U.S. citizens or residents. Awards of up to \$3,000 will be offered to support research travel to the broader Middle East. The research should be in support of an ongoing academic research project. Grant recipients are required to submit at least one article based on their research to POMEPS for possible publication on *Washington Post's* Monkey Cage blog. Opportunities for POMEPS workshops and conferences are often extended to applicants. The proposed travel should anytime in 2018.

POMEPS especially encourages proposals as part of the Islam in a Changing Middle East initiative. The Arab uprisings have created dramatically new opportunities and challenges not only for Islamist movements but also for the academic and policy communities that study them. Islam in a Changing Middle East seeks to support scholars in adapting to the deluge of new information and evidence.

Applications should include:

- Current CV
- Research proposal* including:
- Location of travel
- Travel schedule
- Description of project/research plan
- Budget estimate
- Proposed *Monkey Cage* article topics

More information and application [here](#)

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University Lecturer in the Eastern Islamic World and Persian-Speaking Lands, University of Cambridge

Deadline 17 December 2017

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies wishes to appoint to a University Lectureship in the Eastern Islamic World and Persian-speaking Lands from 1 September 2018. This appointment is tenure-track, subject to an initial probation period.

The appointee will become a key player in the consolidation of our Persian and Middle Eastern Studies research clusters. S/he will have a doctorate in an aspect of the history of the eastern Islamic lands, medieval or modern, or in a related field including but not limited to political or social science. S/he will be expected to be engaged in research that shows his/her potential to built an international

profile, to seek opportunities to win external funding for that research and to publish in his/her specialist field. S/he will also be expected to teach and examine undergraduate students and be able to contribute to a broad chronological range of papers looking at the Persianate world up to the modern era. S/he will further be expected to supervise and examine MPhil and PhD students in areas related to his/her research. The person appointed will be required to take on administrative duties within the Department and the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

Candidates are asked to submit a covering letter together with a curriculum vitae and a publications list, along with the details of two referees, using the University's online application system. Further details are available on the Faculty website: www.ames.cam.ac.uk/faculty/jobs. To apply online for this vacancy and to view further information about the role, please visit: www.jobs.cam.ac.uk/job/15499. This will take you to the role on the University's Job Opportunities pages. There you will need to click on the 'Apply online' button and register an account with the University's Web Recruitment System (if you have not already) and log in before completing the online application form.

Informal enquiries about the post can be directed to Professor Amira K Bennison (email: amira.bennison@ames.cam.ac.uk)

The closing date for applications is midnight GMT on 17 December 2017. Interviews will take place on 31 January and 1 February 2018.

If you have any questions about this vacancy or the application process, please contact Mrs Nadya Mullen by email on administrator@ames.cam.ac.uk.

More information and application [here](#)

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Lecturer in Middle East and North African Studies, Lancaster University

Deadline: 5 January 2017

You are expected to have completed your PhD in an appropriate area, be research active and have excellent teaching abilities at both UG and PG levels and possess the relevant administrative skills. The department is interested in expanding its interdisciplinary offerings in teaching and also in research. In terms of teaching, you would be expected to contribute to departmental teaching and research in the area of Middle East and North African politics. You would also have the opportunity to develop new modules and possible joint degree schemes in their specialist area.

You should base your application on the relevant job description and person specification.

Interview date will be in the week commencing 29 January, 2018

This is a full time, indefinite post.

Informal enquiries may be made to the Head of Department, Dr Patrick Bishop,
p.bishop@lancaster.ac.uk

More information and application [here](#)

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