



American Political Science Association

# MENA NEWSLETTER

Issue 4, Spring 2018

With support  
from Carnegie  
Corporation of  
New York

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## CONTACT US

American Political Science Association  
1527 New Hampshire Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20036

[menanewsletter@apsanet.org](mailto:menanewsletter@apsanet.org)  
<http://web.apsanet.org/mena>

## OUR MISSION

The APSA MENA Workshops program is an initiative, made possible through a grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York, to enhance scholarly networks and support political science research among early-career scholars in the Middle East and North Africa.

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Readers,

Greetings! Welcome to the Spring 2018 issue of the APSA MENA Newsletter — a project emanating from the [APSA MENA](#) annual workshops.

This issue focuses on the different ways MENA scholars attempt to integrate several disciplinary perspectives in their research of the region. Our research symposium includes four pieces that offer various perspective on interdisciplinary research in the MENA region. Marco Pinfari reflects on his own experience in two international collaborative projects with an interdisciplinary research agenda. Through these reflections, he explores the value of interdisciplinary research in bridging Middle East studies and disciplinary debates. Nadine Sika explores the impact of ‘trust’ on youth political participation through relying on quantitative and qualitative data gathered from young people in six countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Nermin Allam analyzes women’s activism and participation in Egypt during the 2011 uprisings through an intersectional approach and an interdisciplinary orientation. Ahmed Abd Rabou examines civil-military relations and the absence of a democratic transition in Egypt. After identifying the gaps in this field, he advocates for an approach that combines theories of democratization with political psychology, sociology and anthropology.

In this issue, we have introduced a new section entitled ‘Five Questions for ...’. In every issue, we will attempt to interview scholars who have long-standing experience in conducting Political Science research on/in the MENA region to find out about their current research. The interviews hope to unravel personal insights on, motivations for, and drivers of regional scholarship. In addition, we have introduced Arabic abstracts to our pieces as an initial step on the path of scholarship dissemination and scholarly engagement with a wider audience in the Arabic-speaking world.

This issue includes a list of news, announcements, and calls. One of the APSA MENA Newsletter’s most important goals remains to engender a sense of community among MENA scholars around the world. If you have anything that you would like to share with others, please contact us, and we will be happy to include it in the next issue. Also, please visit our [webpage](#), where you can see previous issues and subscribe to our newsletter.

Sincerely,

May Darwich and Abdul-Wahab Kayyali

May Darwich  
[may.darwich@durham.ac.uk](mailto:may.darwich@durham.ac.uk)

Abdul-Wahab Kayyali  
[akayyali@gwu.edu](mailto:akayyali@gwu.edu)

## NOTE FROM APSA

Hello and greetings from APSA!

Over the past couple of months, the International Programs team has been busy designing new initiatives and receiving applications to several programs. 2018 will witness several APSA sponsored programs - the APSA MENA workshops; Arab scholars participating in ICPSR; hosting a one-day research development group at the APSA annual meeting; and organizing workshops with political science departments.

The APSA MENA workshops will resume this year with its fifth iteration led by Ahmed Jazouli (Independent Scholar, Morocco), Tofigh Maboudi (Loyola University Chicago, USA), Asma Nouira (University of Tunis El Manar, Tunisia), Abdallah Saaf (Mohammed V University, Morocco), and Peter J. Schraeder (Loyola University Chicago, USA). The workshop's theme is "*The Evolving Role of Political Institutions in the Arab World*" and will take place in September 2018 in Rabat and in January 2019 in Tunis. The leaders will work closely with the selected 20 fellows from the Arab world during the two one-week workshops discussing theoretical and methodological approaches related to the theme as well as offering peer-reviews to the fellows' manuscripts.

APSA is collaborating with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan to sponsor 3 Arab scholars to participate in the 2018 Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research. The selected fellows will participate in the first session of the summer program from June 25 to July 20, 2018.

After a successful collaboration with the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS) last summer, APSA and POMEPS are organizing a Research Development Group (RDG) for scholars from the Arab world at APSA's annual meeting in Boston. The RDG will bring 7 PhD students and early-career scholars together for an intensive one-day of paper presentations and rigorous peer feedback.

Over the past year APSA has been expanding its network to work directly with political science and related departments at universities in the Arab world on projects supporting excellence in the study, research, and teaching of political science. During the month of April, APSA has supported workshops on teaching research methods at Zayed University; Archival methods and discourse analysis approaches for PhD students and faculty at Birzeit University; and research methodology workshops for MA students from Cairo University and The American University in Cairo (AUC).

Finally, we would like to thank the newsletter co-editors for their leadership through the past two years. It was great working with them and we look forward to the next phase of the newsletter. We encourage all readers to contribute to future newsletters through announcements, research submissions, and feedback on how we can continue to improve this publication.

Best to all in the coming months and stay well!

Andrew Stinson and Ahmed Morsy

APSA MENA Project  
[menaworkshops@apsanet.org](mailto:menaworkshops@apsanet.org)

Andrew Stinson  
[astinson@apsanet.org](mailto:astinson@apsanet.org)

Ahmed Morsy  
[amorsy@apsanet.org](mailto:amorsy@apsanet.org)



## RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM:

### INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN MENA POLITICAL SCIENCE

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#### STRATEGIES FOR ADVANCING INTER- AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH ON THE MIDDLE EAST

By **Marco Pinfari**

This piece reflects on the author's experience in two international collaborative projects that had an interdisciplinary research agenda. In acknowledging the key role that interdisciplinary research can play in positioning Middle East studies more firmly into discipline-specific debates, it discusses the value of forming *multi-disciplinary* research teams and the importance of articulating and implementing large collaborative projects through thematic rather than country- or region-specific research strands.

هذه المقالة خاطرة فكرية عن تجربة الكاتب في مشروعين بحثيين ضمن إطار تعاون دولي وأجندة بحثية عابرة للمجالات. تقرر المقالة بالدور المحوري للأبحاث العابرة للمجالات في دراسات الشرق الأوسط وفي الحوارات التابعة للمجالات المتخصصة، وتناقش القيمة المضافة من تشكيل فرق بحثية متعددة المجالات والتخصصات، وأهمية تنفيذ المشاريع البحثية التي تعنى بمواضيع نظرية محددة بدلاً من المشاريع التي تركز على بلد معين أو منطقة معينة.

My experience with inter- or multi-disciplinary collaborative research involving Egypt (and the Middle East at large) began in the immediate aftermath of the 2011 Tahrir revolution when, as a Fellow in Global Politics at the London School of Economics (LSE), I coordinated a project with the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) of Cairo University, titled “Egypt in the Arab Spring: Multidisciplinary Research Perspectives”.<sup>1</sup> Having moved to the American University in Cairo (AUC) in 2012, I later had the opportunity to engage with other collaborative projects in European universities from the other end — not as the leading European investigator but rather as one of the regional partners. In this capacity, I have led so far three AUC research teams in international collaborative

projects, at least one of which — the EU Seventh-Framework “MeCoDEM – Media, Conflict, and Democratization”<sup>2</sup> — had a particularly marked interdisciplinary focus.

Most scholars would intuitively agree that interdisciplinary collaborative projects are key to repositioning Middle East studies away from the ivory tower of area studies, and back into the mainstream of current debates within comparative politics, international relations and other relevant research areas within political science, sociology, media and cultural studies (Valbjørn 2004; Teti 2007). Understanding *how* exactly such projects can do so, however, may be more difficult than it seems. For scholars like Lisa Anderson (1990: 74), the diffidence towards area studies should be compounded by an attempt to develop more “theoretically informed” analytical approaches to the region that would speak to key discipline-specific debates, rather than just appeal to area specialists. In this sense, interdisciplinarity may be seen as a step back rather than as a step forward; it may signal that a scholar is prepared to dull the analytical edge and weaken the conceptual strength of its work in favour of reaching out to other approaches. If this were indeed the case, interdisciplinarity would risk paving the way to a re-edition of the area studies approach under a different name.

Practically (and institutionally) it is also clear that Middle East studies have not entirely moved away from their emphasis on region-specific exceptionalism. Even universities in the region, like AUC, still sport research centers focused specifically on “Middle East Studies” despite the fact that a substantial part of the research and course offering by humanities and social sciences scholars across the entire institution is centered on the Middle East. Also, the typical structure of collaborative projects seems to encourage and reinforce a certain division of labour in which most of the theoretically-informed content of the project is developed by partners in the Global-North, while regional partners are usually in charge of empirical research and case-study analysis that implements an agreed conceptual framework. This is not to say that such partners are not involved

in shaping that framework in the first place and in reflecting on its theoretical and policy implications; indeed, it is increasingly the case that they are active parts in all stages of such projects, even in large research consortia. However, the nature of comparative research in collaborative projects tends to reinforce that very bias towards compartmentalized area studies that such research has the potential to overcome.

In the collaborative projects that I contributed to design, several strategies were used to address these potential shortcomings. In the LSE-FEPS collaborative project that focused on the 2011 Tahrir revolution, for instance, we consciously chose to refer to the concept of *multi-disciplinarity* rather than *inter-disciplinarity* in its title, in order to convey the message that the project was designed to encourage a dialogue between colleagues firmly positioned within different disciplinary traditions. By 2012, hardly any interdisciplinary study on the Tahrir revolution had been published, and that certainly influenced our decision. However, the naming also reflected the conviction that – especially in a field that is self-conscious of the area-study bias – a thematic intellectual dialogue should at least *begin* as a multi-disciplinary exchange between scholars grounded in their own disciplines and, if possible, *end* by integrating each other's insights into inter-disciplinary contributions.

In assessing this project retrospectively, this vision worked well in inspiring the structure of the two conferences that we held in London and Cairo; each focused on two separate but related disciplinary approaches (respectively political economy and democratization studies, and history and international relations), within each conference, we succeeded in having at least one presentation in each session delivered by a scholar specialized in the field (one from each institution) followed by presentations from PhD candidates and other early-career scholars, again chosen from both institutions. The original plan to integrate these contributions into an inter-disciplinary framework that would lead to a publication, however, was thwarted by the trajectory itself of Egypt's transition; the final conference was held on 27 June 2013, just few days before the *coup d'état* that suddenly shuffled the cards of our intellectual conversation.

In larger comparative projects that involve several country teams, each responsible for case studies

drawn from their country or region, preference should ideally be given to cross-cutting thematic research designs over approaches that supplement general theoretical or conceptual frameworks with self-contained case studies. When each geographically-identified unit of analysis appears repeatedly in different research threads in relation to specific research puzzles, it is much easier to steer away from the fallacies of case-oriented exceptionalism. In the project MeCoDEM, unsurprisingly, we also realized that the involvement of country teams in general discussions about the operational definitions of key concepts (including the definition of basic concepts like “conflict” and “democratization”) helps broaden the conceptual horizons of these discussions and has the potential to contribute to existing academic debates with refreshing new perspectives.

Still, large collaborative projects rarely succeed in applying interdisciplinarity to *each* individual research strand; in fact, large thematic strands inevitably tend to be organized around discipline-specific questions (for instance, in our case, about the impact of journalistic ethics or about the nature of civil society activism) and be addressed by experts in those specific fields. Even so, however, this research architecture required at least the formation of multi-disciplinary country teams, which can have the potential to spur other types of academic collaboration *within* each institution beyond the scope of the project in question. Moreover, as noted above, projects that are multi-disciplinary in nature and encourage regular interactions of large research teams over several years are likely to open the door for inter-disciplinary cooperation across research teams, especially in the last phases on in the life cycle of the project. In our case, for instance, a mixed team of media studies specialists and political scientists eventually developed a successful special-issue proposal on an eminently inter- or even trans-disciplinary theme – the political aesthetics of democratization conflicts.

The actual impact of multi- or inter-disciplinary projects on Middle East studies, especially within the region itself, will certainly depend on several other factors. One major concern, in particular, is the extent to which themes that lend themselves to a subtler interdisciplinary analysis may be less likely to receive research funding in the first place, because they may be perceived as less policy relevant than area-specific research questions that (directly or indirectly) reinforce existing stereotypes on the



region. But paying more attention to research design and to the importance of multi-disciplinary collaborations can go a long way in reshaping these very perceptions, and in making interdisciplinary research the norm — rather than the exception — of Middle East studies.

*Marco Pinfari is Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Department of Political Science, and Associate Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HUSS) at the American University in Cairo (AUC), Egypt. E-mail: [mpinfari@aucegypt.edu](mailto:mpinfari@aucegypt.edu)*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup><http://www.lse.ac.uk/middle-east-centre/research/collaboration-programme/2011-12/marco-pinfari>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mecodem.eu/>

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## YOUTH CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE MENA REGION: DOES TRUST MATTER?

By **Nadine Sika** (2014)

This article addresses the relationship between regime type and political trust through relying on quantitative and qualitative data gathered from young people in six countries in the Middle East and North Africa. It also analyses the extent to which an individual's mode of political participation influences their trust in political institutions. The results of the fieldwork show that young people tend to distrust their political institutions. However, the political context in which young people live is an important indicator for the levels of

trust exerted by young people who are civically and politically engaged.

تتناول هذه المقالة العلاقة ما بين النظام السياسي والثقة السياسية بالإعتماد على بيانات كمية ونوعية لفئات شبابية في ست دول من الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا. كما وتحلل المقالة العلاقة ما بين نمط المشاركة السياسية وتأثير هذه المشاركة على الثقة في المؤسسات السياسية. تبين نتائج البحث الميداني فقدان ثقة الشباب في المؤسسات السياسية، ولكن ذلك يعتمد بشكل كبير على السياق السياسي الذي يعيشه الشباب، بحيث ينعكس هذا السياق على الثقة السياسية ونسبة المشاركة المدنية والسياسية.

Since the 2010/11 Arab Uprisings, much ink has been spelled on the dynamics of political participation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The role of young people in political and civic participation has also been extensively analyzed. The relationship between participation and political trust in the region, however, has been rarely addressed in the literature. Political trust is "an attitude of confidence stemming from the practical judgment that the occupants of a given office or institution are likely to act in the public interest, and faithfully to execute their particular duties under the law or constitution" (Bruno 2017, p. 296). A trusting citizen believes that it is worthy to rely on some public official to fulfill their obligations that are assigned to them by law (Kathrine Hawley 2014). The relationship between trust in institutions and civic and political participation is highly contested amongst scholars.

Recent studies have asserted that trust levels are not necessarily tied to a regime type. Trust can be high in both democratic and authoritarian regimes alike (Jamal 2007; Jamal 2008; Miguel et.al. 2015). While a regime type may not influence generalized political trust levels, it might influence civic and political participatory modes. Some scholars have contended the existence of a positive relationship between political trust and civic and political participation. In democratic as well as authoritarian regimes, participation in formal political and civil society organizations has a positive impact on trust in institutions (Jamal and Mazur 2012; Gengler 2012; Putnam 2001). The relationship between unconventional participation, "extra-representational participation" or "elite-challenging activities" (Braun and Hutter, 2016; Inglehart and Catterberg, 2002).

Does a regime type influence the extent to which an individual trust the government of that regime? Is an

individual's mode of participation influenced by his/her trust in political institutions? How can we--as MENA scholars--add to the existing research and scholarly debates on trust and political participation?

After almost three years of quantitative and qualitative fieldwork with youth in the MENA region within the scope of a research project entitled *Power2Youth*,<sup>1</sup> our fieldwork reveals two interesting trends: First, youth are more drawn to unconventional civic and political participation, like developing "virtual" civil society organizations, crowd funding, demonstrations, and protest movements, than they are to conventional participation like being part of political parties or civil society organizations. Second, trust levels amongst young people in the region are very low, with seemingly lower levels of trust amongst young activists. Can these two findings from the region lead to a deeper understanding about trust and participation in autocracies?

General trust in formal institutions, like the police, parliament, political parties, courts, central and local governments, with the exception of the military tends to be low amongst youth in the region. Our preliminary results reveal that the context of the regime, within which young people live, is important in determining the levels of trust. For instance, young people in Turkey tend to have higher trust levels than the rest of young people in the MENA regimes (Sika 2017). When the research groups in each country have conducted qualitative fieldwork, mainly semi-structured interviews and focus groups with young activists across the MENA region, young people have expressed their dissatisfaction with the political elite. In Tunisia for example, political party members who were interviewed have argued that they do not trust the political elite, even those who have higher ranks within their own party. They contend that their leadership is mainly interested in their own personal power, rather than that of the nation as a whole (Sika 2016). Parliaments are amongst the least trusted institutions in the region, as youth perceive political reforms to be only cosmetic (Akesbi and Zerhouni 2016).

After conducting the qualitative fieldwork, the research team and I believed that low trust levels led to new forms of civic and political participation amongst young people in the region. In Lebanon, youth have voiced their frustration with formal political and civil society organizations. An interesting development was the *#YouStink*

movement.<sup>2</sup> While the movement was initially developed to mobilize against the rising environmental hazards in Beirut, youth activists have gone a step further. During their demonstrations in downtown Beirut, young activists called on the governing elite to enhance transparency, accountability and good governance (Herb 2016). In Turkey, for instance, youth who mobilized for the Gezi park protests, later developed new urban solidarity movements like the *Caferağa Dayanışması* (*Caferağa Neighbourhood Solidarity*) whose main aim is to resist the development of new urban mega-projects (Alper, et al. 2016). In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the *Electronic Intifada*<sup>3</sup> was used extensively by young Palestinian activists to provide a counter discourse to the mainstream Western, pro-Israeli media (Bir Zeit University 2016).

The survey analysis of the same study was carried out in six MENA countries — Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Morocco between April 2014 and April 2017. The preliminary results of this quantitative analysis show that political institutions, mainly the central government, the courts and the parliament, are not trusted equally in similar regime types within the MENA region. For example, individuals who participate through unconventional means in Turkey have high trust levels toward their central government, while in Morocco they have the least trust in the central government. Thus, we add to the literature through arguing that trust in political institutions is not necessarily related to a regime type, as much as it is related to the political context within each polity.

Our quantitative and qualitative fieldwork also shows that the extent to which an individual participates civically and politically on the other hand, is not determined by their low levels of trust. It is individually different, based on the type of participation, and on the institutional and cultural arrangements within each regime. The preliminary results of these surveys show that trust levels are not necessarily linked to conventional participation, as argued in the literature (Jamal 2008; Gengler 2012). They show that the context within each of these regimes, impacts both the mode of participation and the level of trust in political institutions. For instance, in two similar regimes like Morocco and Lebanon whose political structure is considered "partly free" by Freedom House (2016), we see two different patterns of trust in institutions. In Lebanon,

there is a negative relationship between trust and conventional forms of participation, while in Morocco, there is a positive relation. Unconventional participation, on the other hand, is negatively associated with trust levels in the central government. While this negative association is mostly observed in Morocco, Lebanon and Turkey, it is absent in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Tunisia.

Even though these observations are based on preliminary quantitative and qualitative results from fieldwork in the region, they suggest that research in and on the MENA can bring in more nuanced analysis to our understanding of trust, participation and political institutions. Research here proposes that trust is not related to a regime type, but is rather associated with the political context in each regime. It also proposes that the extent to which an individual participates civically and/or politically, is not determined by high or low levels of trust. It varies according to the institutional and cultural arrangements within each regime.

*Nadine Sika is Assistant Professor at the American University in Cairo (AUC). Her recent book is Youth Activism and Contentious Politics in Egypt: Dynamics of Continuity and Change (Cambridge UP, 2017). E-mail: [nadinesika@aucegypt.edu](mailto:nadinesika@aucegypt.edu)*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This research project is an EUFP7 funded project (Grant Agreement number 612782), it was directed by the Instituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) in Rome and implemented by a consortium of more than 10 regional and international institutions. American University in Cairo (AUC) was a partner in this project and I was the Principle Investigator for the fieldwork in Egypt. For more information on the project see: <http://www.power2youth.eu/>

<sup>2</sup> This movement was established in August 2015, in response to the mounting garbage on the streets in Beirut. It demanded better and reliable basic services, more access to public space, and an end to the privatized coastline. For more information on the movement see: [http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y\\_20.pdf](http://www.iai.it/sites/default/files/p2y_20.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The Electronic Intifada was established in 2001 as an independent online news publication concerned with publishing facts on life in the Palestinian Territories. For more information see: <https://electronicintifada.net/about-ei>

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**BOOK SYNOPSIS: WOMEN AND THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION: ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVISM DURING THE 2011 ARAB UPRISINGS. BY NERMIN ALLAM. CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017.**

By **Nermin Allam**

In *Women and the Egyptian Revolution: Engagement and Activism during the 2011 Arab Uprisings*, I offer an oral history of women's engagement in the January 25th uprising that led to the ousting of former Egyptian president Ḥusnī Mubārak. The book embraces an intersectional approach and an interdisciplinary orientation to capture and explain the complexity of women's experiences. This approach is apt to understand the complex structures and processes that influence women's engagement in politics. It retains the authenticity of the subject and the researcher.

في كتابي "النساء والثورة المصرية: الاشتباك والنضال خلال الانتفاضات العربية عام ٢٠١١"، أقدم تاريخ شفهي لاشتباك النساء في انتفاضة ٢٥ يناير / كانون الثاني التي أسفرت عن تنحي الرئيس المصري السابق محمد حسني مبارك. يعتمد الكتاب على منهجية تقاطعية وتوجه متعدد المجالات لتفسير وتوضيح التجربة النسائية المعقدة خلال هذه الانتفاضة. هذه المنهجية مناسبة لغرض استيعاب البنى والعمليات المركبة التي تؤثر على الاشتباك النسائي مع السياسة. فهذه المنهجية تحافظ على أصالة تجربة المدروس والباحث في نفس الآن.

It is always a great source of pride to talk about one's book, after all a book is one of the methods to demonstrate knowledge and hopefully gain grounds in academia. I was ready to celebrate this feeling as I filed away piles of interview transcripts, returned overdue library books, and sent--what at times seemed like never ending--final corrections. What I was less prepared for is the intense and often disheartening feeling of futility that is all too present whenever I read or talk about my book. In *Women and the Egyptian Revolution: Engagement and Activism during the 2011 Arab Uprisings*, I offer an oral history of women's engagement in the January 25th uprising that led to the ousting of former Egyptian president Ḥusnī Mubārak in 2011. Reading through the book brings too many complicated feelings of euphoria, nostalgia, and disappointment. The uprising, a then seemingly historical juncture in

Egypt's history, ended with the consolidation of authoritarianism and the persecution of activists, including independent feminists.

Complexity towards how I perceive, view, and talk about my research is not all new; it has been inextricably tangled with my process of studying and writing on women's experiences in the Egyptian uprising. In line with postcolonial feminists, I embrace an intersectional approach and an interdisciplinary orientation to capture and explain the complexity of women's experiences (Abu-Lughod 2013; Ahmed 2011; Badran 1996; Hatem 1992, 2000, 2011; Mahmood 2005). Women's studies have been creative and productive in embracing interdisciplinary and intersectional research to understand the complex structures and processes that influence women's engagement in politics. Studies that embrace intersectionality recognize the limitations of gender as a single analytical category (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). They emphasise and analyse the complex relationships between different structures and subject formations (Crenshaw 1989, 1991; McCall 2005). Capturing these complex relations necessitates crossing our disciplinary boundaries and engaging creatively in disciplinary interactions. Crossing disciplinary boundaries, scholars maintain, is fundamental to mirror social reality, open up a space for women's voices, and expose--and many argue combat--epistemological and empirical oppression (Klein 1995; Woodward and Woodward 2015).

My book builds upon and expands the intersectional and interdisciplinary line of thinking found in women's studies, particularly in postcolonial contributions. This line of thinking is apt to capture the complexity of the topic while retaining the authenticity of the subject--and I would also argue the researcher. I focus not only on documenting women's accounts, but also situating their experiences within the socio-economic flows, political trajectories, and historical contours of Egypt. I argue that during the 2011 uprising female protestors distanced themselves from the discourse of women's rights in the framing of their participation as the former has been closely linked to the ruling regimes in Egypt and associated with Western reform agendas.

In carrying out my study, I quickly recognized that examining women's engagement in the uprising put our political theories on female participation in national struggles up for debate and critique. Studies



on women's engagement in political struggles often view the absence of gender issues from women's collective action frame as a sign of passivity, and/or false consciousness. To understand how gender issues featured in the framing of women's engagement, my study moves beyond the field of political science and incorporates insights from the fields of anthropology, sociology, and history. My theoretical framework is a synthesis of collective action frame theory and political opportunities. The premise of this model is that members of social movements are not independent from the polity they are challenging; they rather operate on the boundaries of history, politics, and culture (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Noonan 1995; Snow et al. 1986; Tarrow 1998, 2012; Tilly and Tarrow 2007). The absence of gender issues from women's collective action frames, I thus hold, is not a sign of passivity but rather part of the process of 'frame alignment.' Female protestors oriented their messages in relation to the existent opportunities and constraints during the uprising by framing their participation around their 'Egyptianess.' This articulation aligned with historical framing of women's political engagement, was politically detached from the legacies of the old regime--which claimed the role of championing women's rights and reflected women's subjective experience of liminal solidarity during the uprising.

The analysis presented avoids what Nancy Fraser astutely critiques as either limiting the structural constraints so well that we "deny women any agency" or portraying women's agency "so glowingly that the power of subordination evaporates" (1992: 17). Women's experiences, I rather maintain, is too irreducibly complex, women occupy different social locations and their experiences are shaped by fluid determinations. To capture these factors and its influence on women's activism, I adopted an intersectional approach that examines these forces as collective rather than as separate or discrete.

To take an example from the book, in Chapter Five titled '*Beto' Sūzān' [Suzanne's Clique]: Gender and Political Opportunities in the 2011 Uprising*, I emphasised the different location of women's groups and how their positionality influenced the ways in which they negotiated sexism, paternalism, as well as past relations of co-optation with the regime. Furthermore, I argued that women's exercise of agency is not conditioned on the location of their activism. This practice, which I term: 'the spatial conditionality of agency,' reproduces the arbitrary

public/private divide and religious/secular dichotomy which in turn serve patriarchal and Orientalist discourses. I thus highlighted the role of women's philanthropic and social organizations--notwithstanding the absence of an explicit feminist agenda in them-- in shaping concepts of civil society, participation, and agency. I contended that these organizations were indeed umbrellas under which new challengers were formed and women were politicized. In so doing, I expanded notions of women's activism and agency within Egypt's particular political and cultural structures where the discourse of gender equality and the project of women's empowerment were largely appropriated by the former regime.

Undertaking such research that mirrors the complexity of women's experiences demanded investigating the various pieces of the analysis and bringing them together--while retaining the voice of the subject. The data for the book thus drew upon rich interviews with female protestors and activists, leaders of women's rights organizations, and Tawakkul Karmān, the Nobel Laureate and Yemeni activist. Data was also gathered from public transcripts as well as secondary literature published in English and Arabic on the topic. This methodological eclecticism yields rich qualitative data and enabled a nuanced investigation of women's lived experiences in the uprising.

The book's interdisciplinary and intersectional analysis contributed to opening up a space in our research for the "subaltern to speak." Appropriating the critical theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's connotation, it granted women from the Middle East and North African societies a place of enunciation in our scholarship (Spivak 1988; see also Abu-Lughod 1990; Mahmood 2005; Mohanty 1984). In line with postcolonial feminists, the analysis challenges universal, essential, as well as patriarchal discourses that have often dominated the representation of non-Western women in the literature on women's engagement in national struggles. The resulting organic, interdisciplinary, and situated knowledge is complex yet important in order to understand the different and specific experiences of women in the region's political struggles with a view to locating their agency rather than their plight.

In her last concert, Amy Winehouse--the talented Jazz singer and song writer--stood on the stage confused, refusing to sing her number one hit, Back to Black,

notwithstanding requests from the audience. She later explained how the song brought too many mixed memories of her lost struggle to survive and thrive. I often think of my book on women's engagement in the uprising as my Back to Black. My feeling of accomplishment as I hold the final product is quickly replaced by feelings of despair and futility as I reflect on the turn of events in Egypt. My point is that the way we think and write about social movements and women's experiences in them is far too complex and complicated. We risk losing the robustness of our empirical data, the authenticity of our analysis, and the relevancy of our research if we are not willing to cross-disciplinary boundaries and think critically about intersectional relations.

*Nermin Allam is an Assistant Professor of Politics at Rutgers University-Newark. Prior to joining Rutgers, she was a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada postdoctoral fellow and visiting scholar at Princeton University.*

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## CIVIL-SECURITY RELATIONS: REVISITING THE PARADOX OF DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

By **Ahmed Abd Rabou**

The Arab uprisings and their aftermath have brought the issue of Civil-Military Relations (CMR) to the forefront of Middle Eastern studies. There has been a rise in the number of academic studies looking to understand the issue of democratization in the region as a product of civilian control over the military. After the 2011 uprisings, Arab militaries have taken different paths towards pro-reform movements, ranging between complete openness and harsh crackdown. This article aims to unpack the various aspects in the study of regional civil-military relations.

أبرزت الانتفاضات العربية وانعكاساتها أهمية العلاقات المدنية العسكرية في مجال دراسات الشرق الأوسط، حيث تضاعفت الدراسات التي تفسر الانتقال إلى الديمقراطية كعملية تسيطر فيها القوى المدنية على المؤسسة العسكرية. بعد انتفاضات ٢٠١١، أخذت المؤسسات العسكرية العربية مسارات مختلفة تجاه الحركات الاحتجاجية وتراوحت هذه المسارات ما بين الاستيعاب الكامل والسحق التام. تسعى هذه المقالة للتركيز على هذا التفاوت لتفسير الجوانب المتعددة للعلاقات المدنية-العسكرية في المنطقة.

The absence of Arab Democracy remains a recurrent academic puzzle. Many scholars have attempted to address this paradox, and a sufficient explanation remains elusive. Diamond (2010) suggests that the emergence of one single Arab democracy may lead other Arab countries to democratize. Paradoxically, when such democratic polity occurred one year later in Tunisia, it was not followed by a broad wave of democratization. Instead, the Arab uprisings that initially sparked some hope have ended in civil wars, massacres, and backslides on democratic transitions across the region.

The Arab uprisings and their aftermath have brought the issue of civil-military relations to the forefront of Middle Eastern studies. There has been a rise in the number of academic studies looking to understand the

issue of democratization in the region as a process of emerging civilian control (Erdag 2015), in which civilian actors (such as political parties, legislature, executives, and judiciaries) gradually take the upper hand in making public policy decisions, recruiting the elite, and controlling the military budget (Chambers and Croissant 2010). In the period between 2011 and 2013, Arab militaries have reacted differently to pro-reform movements, ranging between complete openness in Tunisia, heavy crackdown in Bahrain and Syria, and direct interference in the political transition in Egypt (Lutterbeck 2013).

Several scholars have attempted to explain this variation. Lutterbeck (2013) attempts to make sense of the response of Arab militaries to the uprisings by drawing a correlation between the institutionalization of the military, its link to society, and its response to pro-reform movements. In his analysis, Lutterbeck measures the level of institutionalization with a number of indicators, such as the degree to which the military embodied meritocratic principles<sup>1</sup> versus family or tribal ties, the degree of its politicization, the presence of favoritism and corruption, and commitment to national interests. Lutterbeck measures the military link to society through the conscription system versus foreign mercenaries or drawing forces mainly from minority groups. In this model, if the military has both weak ties to society, combined with a low level of institutionalization, they will resist pro-reform movements. Conversely, if the respective military has a combination of strong links to society alongside a high level of institutionalization, it will show openness to pro-reform movements. Abul-Magd (2017) analyzes the political dominance of the Egyptian military as being motivated by their economic stakes in the country. Abul-Magd traces the history of the Egyptian military not only as a political actor, but also as an economic player. Other scholars have equally highlighted the economic motivation of the Egyptian military to claim power and resist changes (Marshall 2015; Noll 2017; Nagarajan 2013).

Although all these explanations are important for a better understanding of civil-military relations in the region, they are not sufficient for offering a full understanding of why civilian control is noticeably absent even after the uprisings. For example, Lutterbeck's model oversimplifies civil-military relations in the region, which generally goes beyond institutionalization and attachment to society. For example, the Egyptian military is both linked to

society and has high levels of institutionalization; however, this did not prevent the military from intervening in politics and overthrowing the elected president.

In Egypt, one should think of cultural and economic aspects, rather than simply institutional ones. In fact, the connectivity of the Egyptian military to Egyptian society helped the former to gain popularity and legitimacy to oust the former president while manipulating the political scene. In addition, the security apparatus has played a pivotal role in hindering civilian control of the country and has worked alongside the military to formulate a new political order. In Tunisia as well, what motivated the army's behavior was not only its connectivity to society, or the norms of institutionalism. Rather, the army's history, ideology and professional norms — which were all shaped since independence by former president Habib Bourgiba — were pivotal in moving the army in the direction of the pro-reform movements.

The economic incentives are also important for explaining why both Egyptian and Turkish militaries have dominated the political arena in their respective countries. However, other factors still merit examination and analysis, e.g. the ideology of both militaries and the political culture of the general public. Other regional and international factors have also played increasingly important roles in hindering democratic aspirations in the region, with sectarian conflict sparked by an intensified cold/proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In this context, revisiting the issue of democracy using the civil-military approach in the region is necessary. To provide a more comprehensive explanation of authoritarian resilience in the region, a new civil-military approach is required. Such an approach includes five new aspects. First, a study of the ideology of military officers and the political culture of citizens, particularly in countries where military actors are hegemonic. This aspect is extremely important in explaining the popularity of some military interventions, and necessitates collaboration between political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists. A recent study I conducted indicates how some middle and lower ranking officers believed it their duty to protect the country when the Egyptian military ousted president Morsi in July 2013. Similar aspects have also been found regarding the Turkish military.

Second, the scope of civil-military relations (CMR) should be extended to include analysis of civil-security relations (CSR), as intelligence and other internal security services are often critical in tightening the military/security grip on power in many Middle Eastern countries. This topic requires significant collaboration between civilian scholars (as in academia and think tanks) and scholars at military and security academies. This collaboration should exceed studying topics like security sector reform (SSR), and include studying the organization, motivations, and the institutional culture of security services. Security actors have accumulated years of knowledge in dealing with civilians and are frequently compared to military actors who are left to make macro decisions. Furthermore, there is evidence that security actors participated in hindering democracy in some societies, where the military was excluded from the political game, for example, in Tunisia prior to 2011 (Abd Rabou 2017).

Third, scholars should also redefine the concept of 'civilian control' to account for religious actors. Religious actors should be distinguished from other civilian players, particularly in political regimes where religion has preserved its power to spur political action, as is the case in most in non-Western societies. The popularity of military interventions in politics in the Middle East can also be attributed to the fear of being controlled by religious political actors,<sup>2</sup> as was the case in Egypt few years ago. The rise of political Islam in some Arab countries was also viewed as a threat to civilian control, a factor that has been underestimated, marginalized, or even neglected in Middle Eastern academia.

Fourth, the concept of 'civilian control' needs specification and clarification. A military general can take his military uniform off and puts on a suit to run for general elections, and still be considered a 'civilian.' This notion has been debated in many Arab countries, including Egypt. Many more efforts are needed to redefine the required transitional time period between a military appointment and running for office. How many years are needed between these two points? To be considered a civilian, what types of activities should a former military general be involved in? These are all essential questions for the Middle East that have not been well-addressed to date.

Finally, a collaboration between political scientists



and psychologists is also needed to study the politics of fear and media, as well as communication strategies used by many militaries in the region to invest in creating a culture of fear. This culture not only deters civilians from resisting military and security dominance, but generally polarizes citizens and successfully co-opts some of them, leading to an anti-democratic style of governance.

*Ahmed Abd Rabou is Assistant Professor of Comparative Politics at Cairo University and is currently Visiting Assistant Professor at Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. His current research focuses on civil-military relations, political Islam and democratization in Egypt. E-mail: [Ahmed.AbdRabou@du.edu](mailto:Ahmed.AbdRabou@du.edu)*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Such as the absence of nepotism, cronyism, and discrimination in addition to providing equal opportunities and rewarding merit.

<sup>2</sup> Such as the Muslim Brotherhood or the Salafi movement.

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## FIVE QUESTIONS FOR NATHAN BROWN



Nathan Brown is professor of political science at the George Washington University. He has served as president of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) from 2013-2015. He has had an illustrious and accomplished career as a scholar of Middle East and North Africa political science. In the below interview, we ask him about his latest research, teaching and public life, and advice for junior scholars.

نathan براون أستاذ العلوم السياسية في جامعة جورج واشنطن. شغل براون منصب رئيس جمعية دراسات الشرق الأوسط MESA من ٢٠١٣-٢٠١٥. يمتلك براون مسيرة مهنية حافلة بالإنجازات كباحث في العلوم السياسية لمنطقة الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا. في المقابلة التالية، نسأل براون عن آخر مشاريعه البحثية، التدريس والنشاط العام، وأي نصائح لديه للباحثين الجدد.

### 1. WHAT IS YOUR LATEST RESEARCH PROJECT, AND HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN IT?

I have three. Yes, I'm spread a little thin. But I'm not doing any of them alone.

First, I am working with three graduate students to write a book on authoritarianism, arguing that our emerging understandings of authoritarian states and regimes is overly functionalist.

Second, I am working with two Egyptian political scientists to write a good, basic book on Egypt in both an Arabic and an English edition, drawing on recent scholarship in both languages.

And third, I am interested in how Islamic movements and institutions grapple with modern administrative states. This is not a book project but an area where I seek to learn from other scholars in conferences and workshops, and, I hope, make a modest published contribution.

All draw on past work that I have done; all are also based on a decision to spend less time working alone and more time mentoring and collaborating with younger scholars. I conduct research in coordination with them but also work to write publishable books and articles in international outlets whose ways and modes of operation sometimes seem forbidding or inaccessible to junior scholars or those in the region.

### 2. HOW DOES YOUR SCHOLARSHIP INTERACT WITH POLITICAL SCIENCE AS A DISCIPLINE, AND WITH ITS BROADER COMMUNITY?

I was trained at a time when political scientists were less concerned with questions of research design. When I go to a job talk today, most of the questions seem to focus more on *how* the scholar can make the claims that she or he is making than on the claims themselves. That didn't used to be the case. Causal explanation was important but not so central as it is now.

I have no quarrel with this trend. I've learned to think more rigorously about such questions. But I'm playing catch-up. Maybe it's better to say that I find it more helpful to combine disciplinary approaches. When I write as a scholar, I think I sometimes approach questions in ways that are informed as much by history and anthropology as they political science.

I still very much hope to contribute to my home discipline by investing my energies in addressing broader conceptual questions about politics; in attempting to probe why people make the decisions and act the way that they do; and in seeking to understand how politics is experienced. It requires

me to rely more heavily on historical depth, cultural breadth, curiosity, and even empathy than I otherwise would.

My most recent book, *Arguing Islam after the Revival of Arab Politics*, probed two questions: how do people make public arguments in religious terms and what happens when they do so? The first question demands a more ethnographic answer. Only the second--do those arguments matter (or when and how do they matter)--involves causality, and then in a much squishier way than is normally pursued in the discipline today.

### 3. HOW DOES YOUR RESEARCH INFORM YOUR TEACHING AND PUBLIC LIFE?

In the United States today, Middle Eastern issues no longer seem distant but are connected to some of the most difficult, even bitterest debates in daily politics. Sharia law, refugees, and mosque construction all have forced their way on to the agenda. Or rather those with agendas have raised these issues in some ways that make it important for those with some expertise on them to come forward.

Americans who have traveled to the Middle East in recent decades in a military capacity now number in the seven digits.

My own approach to speaking (and writing) in more public settings is to figure out where my scholarly work helps me to make a useful contribution--and to work to retain a scholarly voice when speaking. That is sometimes hard. The questions we are asked are sometimes not the ones we wish to be asked. And the terminology used, suspicions voiced, and contempt expressed are sometimes jarring. But my approach is to try to speak to the curiosity rather than the anger and to try to inform public discussions on matters where I can.

### 4. DESPITE YOUR SENIORITY, WHAT DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH AS A SCHOLAR, AND HOW DO YOU MANAGE THAT?

You really want to ask academics about their anxieties? Perhaps my most secret one is that I live in constant fear that I will be revealed as faking imposter syndrome.

My biggest frustration is that I do not have enough time to read. I don't read enough in my field; I don't read enough in other fields that I might learn from; I don't read enough regional press; I don't read anything on Facebook and don't participate much in other social media.

How do I manage that? Badly.

### 5. WHAT SINGLE PIECE OF ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR JUNIOR SCHOLARS STUDYING THE REGION?

Academics come through a system that makes them very dependent on their mentors and their peers, especially in early stages of their careers. I think we sometimes have trouble remembering (at least I have keep reminding myself) how power--our power--slowly, almost imperceptibly, creeps into our relationships with colleagues and students.

Junior scholars are worried about their dissertation committees, peer review, tenure, and sometimes public critics--and for good reason. But they also exercise power over students and peers, even from the first year of graduate school.

A dismissive glance or cutting remark to someone rude to you in a grocery store fades quickly; a student in your discussion section may attach much more importance to it.

So my advice would be: however powerless you feel, remember that you have power over others. And you'll likely get more as you go on.

Use it responsibly.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### ALUMNI NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

APSA provided travel grants for 5 MENA workshops alumni to participate in the Arab Graduate Students Conference organized by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies in Doha, Qatar – March 24-26.

- Imad Alsoos (Free University, Berlin, Germany)
- Rania Abdel Naeem (University of Oxford, UK)
- Youssef Chouhoud (University of Southern California, USA)
- Yasmina Abouzzohour (University of Oxford, UK)
- Hamdi Echkaou (Edinboro University, Pennsylvania, USA)

Six APSA alumni and leaders led by Nathan Brown (George Washington University) have a forthcoming special issue in *The Middle East Law and Governance Journal* to be published by the end of 2018.

- Dana El Kurd (Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies)
- Dina El-Sharnouby (Free University, Berlin)
- Dina Abdelrahman (American University in Cairo)
- Nadine Sika (American University in Cairo)
- Nermin Allam (Rutgers University-Newark)
- Sarah Wessel (University of Hamburg)

Yasmina Abouzzohour and Beatriz Tomé-Alonso had a journal article published in [The Journal of North African Studies](#) titled “Moroccan foreign policy after the Arab Spring: a turn for the Islamists or persistence of royal leadership?”

Kirstin Eggeling published a blog piece in [Foreign Policy Rising](#) on “What A Mural in Qatar Says About Qatar-Gulf Relations”.

May Darwich published a journal article in [Insight Turkey](#) titled “The Saudi Intervention in Yemen: Struggling for Status”.

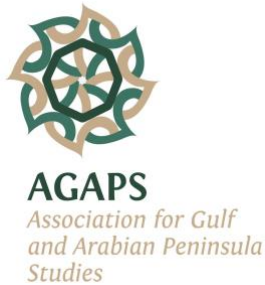
Fabiana Sofia Perera had a blog entry on [Monkey Cage](#) titled: Bitcoin, move over. There’s a new cryptocurrency in town: The Petro.

Imad Alsoos had a blog entry on [Monkey Cage](#) titled: Why Hamas is protesting in Gaza – and why it will continue.

Alexandra Blackman coauthored a blog entry on [Monkey Cage](#) titled: Is marijuana decriminalization possible in the Middle East.



## AGAPS GRADUATE PAPER PRIZE 2018: CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



The *Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies* (AGAPS) invites the submission of graduate student research papers for AGAPS's 2018 Graduate Paper Prize competition. They must primarily focus on the Arabian Peninsula but can be inclusive of the transnational flow of people, goods and ideas across the Gulf, Red Sea and Indian Ocean. AGAPS welcomes submissions from all disciplines. Papers should include an engagement with literature, a clear methodology, and make an original contribution to scholarship in the field. Papers will be evaluated according to originality of research, innovation, contribution to the field, cogency of argument, sources, method and clarity of writing. All applicants must be members of AGAPS at the time of submission. **Submission deadline is 31 August 2018.**

The author of the winning paper will be presented with a certificate at the AGAPS Business Meeting held during the next annual Middle East Studies Association (MESA) conference 15-18 November 2018 in San Antonio, TX. The winning paper will be announced in the *Journal of Arabian Studies* (JAS) and published by JAS if it meets the journal's editorial standards.

### Submission requirements:

The paper must have been written between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018.

The cover letter should include: author's name, contact information, title of paper, name of institution, department, and the name and email address for the faculty member who will provide an endorsement. Email is fine.

Students can nominate themselves but must provide an endorsement by a faculty member stating that the paper was written as a graduate student during the specified time period. For example: This is to verify that "Student Name" prepared the paper, "Title", for my class on "Subject" during the "Semester". This can be sent via email.

The author can be enrolled in an MA or a PhD program and must provide proof of student status. (This can be a letter from the department that can be sent via email.) The author may have just completed a Master's degree but the author must not have defended a dissertation at the time of submission for the AGAPS Graduate Paper Prize.

The paper must not exceed 7,500 words (excluding bibliography) and must not have been submitted for publication elsewhere. It should conform to the following format:

- Standard font (such as Arial or Times Roman)
- Double-spaced
- 1.25" / 3 cm margins
- Page limit of 30 pages
- Black and white

Applicant must be a current member of AGAPS. You can join online at [www.agaps.org](http://www.agaps.org).

Materials must be emailed by **31 August 2018** to: Crystal Ennis at [c.a.ennis@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:c.a.ennis@hum.leidenuniv.nl), with a copy to Gwenn Okruhlik at [okruhlik@msn.com](mailto:okruhlik@msn.com). (Early submissions are appreciated.)

## AGAPS PHD DISSERTATION AWARD 2018: CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The *Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies* (AGAPS) invites recent PhD graduates to submit their dissertations for consideration for its 2018 PhD Dissertation Award. AGAPS wishes to recognize exceptional achievement in research and writing. AGAPS welcomes dissertations from across the disciplines and a variety of perspectives. They must *primarily* focus on the Arabian Peninsula, but can be inclusive of the transnational flows of people, material and ideas across the Gulf, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean. Entries will be read by a multi-disciplinary three-member committee. PhD dissertations (in English) accepted for the degree of PhD between 1 July 2017 and 30 June 2018 are eligible. The PhD must have been confirmed/awarded within this timeframe. Dissertations that have not been defended will not be considered. All applicants must be members of AGAPS at the time of submission. **The deadline for submission is 31 August 2018.**

The author of the winning dissertation will be presented with a certificate at the AGAPS Business Meeting held during the next annual Middle East Studies Association (MESA) conference 15-18 November 2018 in San Antonio, TX. The winning dissertation will be announced in the *Journal of Arabian Studies* (JAS). The author will be invited to publish an article based on his/her dissertation in JAS.

### Submission requirements:

- A Brief Application Form (available here <http://agaps.org/agapsmesa/mesa-awards/>)
- A Verification of Degree Completion
- A Letter of Nomination (by author's adviser or sponsor)
- An Abstract (250 words)
- The Manuscript (digital copy)
- AGAPS membership. You can join online at [www.agaps.org](http://www.agaps.org).

All materials should be sent to: Crystal A. Ennis at [c.a.ennis@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:c.a.ennis@hum.leidenuniv.nl), with a copy to Gwenn Okruhlik at [okruhlik@msn.com](mailto:okruhlik@msn.com). Early submissions are appreciated.

## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS - EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST-THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME)

The research program EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST – THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME) invites applications for 5 Postdoctoral Fellowships for the academic year 2018/19 in Berlin. **The deadline for applications is May 15, 2018.**

Please find the call for applications below:

<http://www.eume-berlin.de/en/call-for-application.html>

The fellowships are addressed to scholars who are interested in the methodological perspective of dealing with regions or cultures not as closed entities or polarities, but by looking at processes of transfer, exchange, and interaction in the sense of entangled or shared histories and cultures.

EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST - THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE (EUME) has been initiated in 2006 as a joint research program of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. It builds upon the previous work of the Working Group Modernity and Islam (1996-2006). Since 2011, EUME is continued as a program at the Forum Transregionale Studien. For more information on EUME, please visit [our website](#) and our [EUME Facebook page](#).

## CALL FOR PAPERS FOR THE 2018 COUNCIL FOR BRITISH RESEARCH IN THE LEVANT (CBRL) PRIZE FOR BEST ARTICLE



*Contemporary Levant* is pleased to announce the launch of its annual CBRL Prize for Best Article. The award will recognize excellent research and scholarship that will advance our understanding of the Levant region (please see the [journal website for](#) aims and scope).

A committee from the CBRL and the editorial board of *Contemporary Levant* will select the best article. The winner of the Prize will receive the amount of £100 and will be presented with a certificate of recognition at the CBRL annual general meeting held in December.

### Eligibility:

This is an open call. We are looking for original unpublished articles from scholars in different stages of their careers and from different disciplines (anthropology, sociology, politics, religion and theology, cultural studies, modern history, social geography, media, film studies and literature).

### Submission requirements:

Articles **between 8000 and 10000 words** (including abstract and footnotes) should be submitted as an electronic version to Dr Alice Stefanelli:  
[contemplevant@cbrl.org.uk](mailto:contemplevant@cbrl.org.uk)

### Deadline:

The deadline for submission is **June 11**.

# CONTEMPORARY LEVANT

Published on behalf of the Council for British Research in the Levant

## HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT PUBLISHING YOUR LATEST RESEARCH IN CONTEMPORARY LEVANT?

*Contemporary Levant* is an international peer-reviewed, multi-disciplinary journal of the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL), a British Academy-sponsored institute. The journal publishes original research on contemporary politics, society and culture in the Levant region, its diasporas and neighbouring countries that have a clear relevance to it. The journal aims to foster research agendas that engage with and reflect current and emerging issues in the region.

*Contemporary Levant* welcomes contributions from various disciplines including: anthropology, sociology, politics, religion and theology, cultural studies, modern history, social geography, media, film studies and literature.

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### **The Jeanne Jeffers Mrad Memorial Fund 2018**

In honor of the late Jeanne Jeffers Mrad, the founding director of the Center for Maghreb Studies in Tunisia (CEMAT), the American-Tunisian Association (ATA), a non-profit association based in Washington, has established a special fund to support scholarly exchanges between the United States and Tunisia.

Jeanne Mrad served as the director of CEMAT for over fifteen years before her retirement. CEMAT, which was established to host visiting American scholars, expanded and matured under Jeanne Mrad's invaluable direction. Jeanne Mrad is remembered by her many friends as a respected professional and warm human being who loved her adopted country and worked tirelessly to promote personal and cultural exchanges between Tunisia and the United States. Members of the American Tunisian Association and others among Jeanne Mrad's many friends have donated to the fund in tribute to her extraordinary contribution to their lives, and in the hope of perpetuating the memory of her informed, enthusiastic, and devoted service to international understanding.

The amount offered for grants may be up to \$2500 and are intended to:

1. Facilitate the travel of Tunisian scholar(s) to the United States for the purposes of short-term research or attending international conferences, preferably to present a paper at the Middle East Studies Association's Annual Meeting (MESA) or a similar organization.
2. Contribute towards the costs of organizing a panel/thematic roundtable discussion at an international conference on a theme related to Tunisia (historical or contemporary).
3. Facilitate short-term field research in Tunisia and a co-publication plan with a U.S.-peer/counterpart.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Interested applicants should send a CV, a budget of expected expenses, including funding gaps, a project description, and letter of intent to the following address: [yemna@aimsnorthafrica.org](mailto:yemna@aimsnorthafrica.org) with "Jeanne Mrad Grant Application" in the subject line.

Upon completion, each year's grantee will be required to submit a brief report at the end of his/her trip.