



Australian  
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University



CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA  
GRADUATE CONFERENCE

Canberra, 30 November - 1 December 2012

Centre for  
Arab & Islamic Studies  
(The Middle East  
& Central Asia)

ANU College of  
Arts & Social Sciences

# **Change and Continuity in the Middle East and Central Asia Graduate Conference**

**Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies (The Middle East and  
Central Asia)**  
**The Australian National University**

**Canberra, 30 November – 1 December 2012**

The last decade in the Middle East and Central Asia has seen both dramatic change and relative continuity. The recent series of revolutionary movements and changes in the region have provided a challenge to scholars seeking to explain both their emergence and likely consequences. While some authoritarian regimes have crumbled, others have withstood the deluge, and the success or failure of the nascent post-revolutionary structures remains uncertain. Under these circumstances, it is important to examine the extent to which the region has been transformed in the last decade, and to come to terms with the potential challenges and opportunities of the future of the Middle East and Central Asia.

This period of fluidity and indeterminacy is an opportunity for graduate scholars and early career researchers to provide fresh insights into current and recent events, and to reshape the established orthodoxies of their disciplines and traditional approaches to studying the Middle East and Central Asia.

For this reason, The Australian National University's Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia) is hosting this postgraduate conference for graduate students and early career researchers based in Australia and around the world. The two-day interdisciplinary conference will offer an opportunity for emerging scholars to present new ideas and analyses on the region and potentially to have their work published in peer reviewed outlets.

## **Conference Committee:**

Adel Abdel Ghafar (Conference Convenor)  
Brenton Clark  
Liyana Kayali  
Jessie Moritz  
Lee Schrader

'Change and Continuity in the Middle East and Central Asia'  
graduate conference is sponsored and organised by the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies  
(The Middle East and Central Asia) and is supported by the Research School of Social  
Sciences within the College of Arts and Social Sciences, The Australian National University.

# Presenters

**Amro Ali**, The University of Sydney  
**Govand Khalid Azeez**, Macquarie University  
**Dr. Noah Bassil**, Macquarie University  
**Nematullah Bizhan**, The Australian National University  
**Srinjoy Bose**, The Australian National University  
**Bren Carlill**, The University of Melbourne  
**Aminat Chokobaeva**, The Australian National University  
**Jerome Drevon**, Durham University  
**Constance Duncombe**, The University of Queensland  
**Lara Elmaoula**, Monash University  
**Ildal Elsaket**, The University of Sydney  
**William Gourlay**, Monash University  
**Jill, Duchess of Hamilton**, University of London  
**Ahmed Hassin**, Deakin University  
**Alasdair Hynd**, University of South Australia  
**Raihan Ismail**, The Australian National University  
**Zainab Jasim**, The University of Sydney  
**Maryam Khazaeli**, University of Wollongong  
**Nina Markovic**, The Australian National University  
**Wayne McLean**, University of Tasmania  
**Erin Neil**, The Australian National University  
**Umut Ozguc**, Australian Defence Force Academy (UNSW)  
**Dr. Negar Partow**, Massey University  
**Ben Rich**, Monash University  
**Dr. Brooke Rogers**, The University of New South Wales  
**Jamil Sawda**, University of Canberra  
**Jillian Schedneck**, The University of Adelaide  
**Fatin Shabbar**, University of South Australia  
**Jeremy Simpson**, The University of Sydney  
**Mohsen Solhdoost**, The University of Queensland  
**Dr. Grigol Ubiria**, The Australian National University  
**Aly Zaman**, The Australian National University  
**Rizwan Zeb**, The University of Western Australia  
**Ian Zucker**, The University of New South Wales

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# Program

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<b>Friday 30 November</b>	
8:30am – 9:30am	<b>Registration and coffee</b> Foyer, Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (CAIS), Bldg 127, Ellery Crescent, The Australian National University
9:30am – 10:00am	<b>Welcome and opening address</b> Chair: Professor Amin Saikal (The Australian National University)
<b>Session One</b> 10:00am – 11:30am	<b>Panel</b> <b>The Arab Revolutionary Movements: Regional Perspectives</b> CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Professor Bob Bowker (The Australian National University)
	<b>The Winter of Arab Discontent</b> Dr. Noah Bassil
	<b>The Origins of Western Notions of Middle Eastern Revolutions: Counter-Revolutionary Discourse and Neo-Orientalism in the 'Arab Spring'</b> Govand Khalid Azeez
	<b>Revolutionary Change in the Arab World: International Attention &amp; Elision of Popular Discontent</b> Mohsen Solhdoost
11:30am – 11:45am	<b>Morning tea</b>

<b>Session Two</b> 11:45am – 1:15pm	<b><u>Panel A</u></b> <b>Political Islam</b> Location: CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Dr. Matthew Gray (The Australian National University)	<b><u>Panel B</u></b> <b>The International Relations of the Middle East</b> Location: CAIS Tutorial Room Chair: Dr. Kirill Nourzhanov (The Australian National University)
	<b>Saudi Extremism and State Structuration Theory: Towards an Active/Passive Analysis</b> Ben Rich	<b>Pan-Arabism from Below: An Investigation into Egypt's Relational and Structural Power Relationships with the Arab World</b> Amro Ali
	<b>The Saudi Religious Establishment and the Bahraini Uprisings</b> Raihan Ismail	<b>The Neo-Ottoman Agenda: Balancing Ideas and Security in a Jeopardous Strategic Environment</b> Wayne McLean
	<b>The Emergence of 'Ex-Jihadi' Political Parties in Egypt</b> Jerome Drevon	<b>The New Great Game's Emerging Arena: Competing Interests and the Potential for Conflict in Pakistani Balochistan</b> Aly Zaman
1:15pm – 2:15pm	<b>Group conference photo followed by lunch</b>	
<b>Session Three</b> 2:15pm – 3:45pm	<b><u>Panel</u></b> <b>State-Society Relations: Internal and External Dynamics</b> CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Professor Amin Saikal (The Australian National University)	
	<b>International Assistance in Afghanistan's State Building Trajectory: Tax reforms, State-Society Relations and Transparency in Public Expenditure</b> Nematullah Bizhan	
	<b>Stabilisation, Risk and Risk-Management: International Intervention Practices and Local Responses in Afghanistan</b> Jeremy Simpson	
	<b>State, Society, and Legitimacy in Afghanistan's State Building Enterprise</b> Srinjoy Bose	
3:45pm – 4:00pm	<b>Afternoon tea</b>	

<b>Session Four</b> 4:00pm – 5:30pm	<b><u>Panel A</u></b> <b>(En)Gendering Politics in the Middle East: Theoretical Approaches and Practical Outcomes</b> Location: CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Dr. Katrina Lee-Koo (The Australian National University)	<b><u>Panel B</u></b> <b>State-Society Relations: Internal and External Dynamics</b> Location: CAIS Tutorial Room Chair: Ms. Huda Al-Tamimi (The Australian National University)
	<b>Decolonizing Female Political Contribution: A Project of Redefining Women’s Rights in Iraq</b> Fatin Shabbar	<b>State vs. Society in a Nationalist Framework: The Experience of the Kurds in Modern Turkey</b> William Gourlay
	<b>Veiled Resistance: Women’s Rights and the Green Movement in Iran</b> Erin Neil	<b>Indigenising Civil Society: Applying Ibn Khaldun’s Asabiya Concept to Tribes in Iraq</b> Ahmed Hassin
	<b>‘Empowering’ or ‘Empowered’ Emirati Women? State-Sponsored Feminism and Self-Perceptions of Women’s Achievements in the Public Sphere</b> Jillian Schedneck	<b>Pakistan and Afghanistan’s end game</b> Rizwan Zeb
5:45pm	<b>Evening social event: drinks and nibbles at Fellows Bar, ANU University House, Liversidge St. (cnr Balmain Cr), The Australian National University. (approximately a 5 minute walk from the CAIS)</b>	

# Saturday 1 December

<b>Session One</b> 9:30am – 11:00am	<b><u>Panel</u></b> <b>The Arab Revolutionary Movements: Revolt, Resistance, and the State</b> CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Dr. Noah Bassil (Macquarie University)	
	<b>Lebanon and the Syrian Uprising: A Critical Analysis of the Struggle for Power over Lebanon</b> Jamil Sawda	
	<b>From “Democratic Revolutionaries” to “Revolutionary Democrats”:</b> Serbia’s Export of Organised Non-Violent Resistance to the Middle East, and Issues with Democracy-Building in the Region Nina Markovic	
	<b>Bahrain’s Uprising Unveils Al-Jazeera’s Two Faces</b> Zainab Jasim	
11:00am – 11:15am	<b>Coffee break</b>	
<b>Session Two</b> 11:15am – 12:45pm	<b><u>Panel A</u></b> <b>The Politics of Culture: Changing Norms, Symbols and Institutions</b> Location: CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Dr. Matthew Gray (The Australian National University)	<b><u>Panel B</u></b> <b>Peace and Conflict: Confrontation, Evolution, and Mediation</b> Location: CAIS Tutorial Room Chair: Lee Schrader (The Australian National University)
	<b>Stars and the Anti-Revolution: The Politics of Celebrity Blacklists in Egypt</b> Ifdal Elsaket	<b>Agents of Politics, Agents of Place: Narrative Pathways to Peace</b> Dr. Brooke Rogers
	<b>Conversions by Arab Christians for Divorce</b> Jill, Duchess of Hamilton	<b>Dwelling, Enclosures and Security: The Ontopolitics of the West Bank Wall</b> Umut Ozguc
	<b>The Changing Role of Emirati Women: From Housewives to Entrepreneurs</b> Maryam Khazaeli	<b>Why is the Israeli–Palestinian Dispute So Hard to Resolve?</b> Bren Carlill
12:45pm – 1:45pm	<b>Lunch</b>	

<b>Session Three</b> 1:45pm – 3:15pm	<b><u>Panel A</u></b> <b>The Politics of Memory and Identity</b> Location: CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Dr. Kirill Nourzhanov (The Australian National University)	<b><u>Panel B</u></b> <b>Social Movements: New Technologies, Mobilisation and Dissent</b> Location: CAIS Tutorial Room Chair: Adel Abdel Ghafar (The Australian National University)
	<b>Nation-Reshaping in Post-Soviet Central Asia</b> Dr. Grigol Ubiria	<b>Beyond the Campus Gates: The Transition of Iran's Student Movement from Support to Opposition</b> Lara Elmaoula
	<b>Born for Misery and Woe: Ways of Remembering the 1916 Great Revolt in Kyrgyzstan</b> Aminat Chokobaeva	<b>A Re-Examination of the Role of Social Media During the Arab Spring</b> Alasdair Hynd
	<b>Stories of Israeli National(ist) Holidays: Discourse, Narrative, and Identity</b> Ian Zucker	<b>Social Media, Representation and Crisis in Iran and Libya</b> Constance Duncombe
		<b>Facebook: the New Civil Society in Iran</b> Dr. Negar Partow
3:15pm – 3:30pm	<b>Afternoon tea</b>	
3:30pm – 4:45pm	<b><u>Plenary Session</u></b> CAIS Lecture Theatre Chair: Professor M. Nazif Shahrani (Indiana University) Panellists: Dr. Noah Bassil, Dr. Negar Partow, Dr. Brooke Rogers & Dr. Grigol Ubiria	

## **Abstracts and Biographical Notes**

**Amro Ali**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Government and International Relations  
The University of Sydney

## **Pan-Arabism from Below: An Investigation into Egypt's Relational and Structural Power Relationships with the Arab World**

### ***Biography***

Amro Ali is a PhD scholar at the Department of Government and International Relations, University of Sydney. He is a graduate of The Australian National University with a Master of Arts (with Honours) in Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies, and a Master of Diplomacy. Amro was, until recently, based in Egypt researching the after-effects of the revolution where he presented his findings in Europe and the US. His research seeks to analyse the resurgence of soft power on the part of non-state actors, particularly civil society, in Egypt. The primary goal is to examine the dynamics of ideas and principles originating from within Egyptian circles and being pushed into the international system, therefore shaping the preferences of Arab populations beyond Egypt's borders. Furthermore, he is also looking at the degree that such ideational forces can nurture an enabling or disabling environment for policy-makers and elites domestically and abroad. Amro has worked as a consultant to diplomatic missions, Australian government departments and international organisations. He writes for openDemocracy, The Guardian, Egypt Independent, and Ahram Online. Amro also blogs at [www.amroali.com](http://www.amroali.com) and tweets @amroali.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation enquires into the changing nature of Egypt's external relations by examining the role of post-revolutionary Egyptian civil society in generating an upward spiral against the state and, in the process, pushing ideas and principles into the international system that shape the preferences of Arab populations beyond Egypt's borders. It will seek to address the conceptual problems in the analytical concept of soft power by examining Egypt's non-state actor role in the agent-centric and structural dimensions of power, and how attraction and persuasion is socio-linguistically constructed between Egypt and the Arab world.

Such relationships not only raise the prospect of Egypt's non-state actor ability to influence external preferences, but to potentially nurture an enabling and disabling environment for policy-makers and elites domestically and abroad. Moreover, the paper will probe if this soft power is being reinforced by a form of pan-Arab nationalism from below (rather than from above); and how this contributes to and benefits from the evolving Arab public sphere that is driven by the "democratisation" of communications, shared narratives, collective identities, that strengthens the ideational forces in the multiple power relationships consisting of structures and agency of actors.

**Govand Khalid Azeez**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Centre for Middle East and North African Studies  
Macquarie University

## **The Origins of Western Notions of Middle Eastern Revolutions: Counter-Revolutionary Discourse and Neo-Orientalism in the 'Arab Spring'**

### ***Biography***

Govand Khalid Azeez is a doctoral candidate in Modern History, Politics, International Relations and Security studies at Macquarie University. He is a member of the Centre for Middle East and North African Studies and graduated with a Masters of International Relations at Macquarie University in 2010. Govand also acquired a Masters of Politics and Public Policy in 2009. His Masters research in 2010 was a comparative study analysing the role of the international community on the objectives of PKK, EZLN and FRETILIN and his current PhD research is a genealogical excavation of Western notions of Middle Eastern studies from the early colonial period to the 'Arab Spring'.

### ***Abstract***

The revolutionary exuberance that shook the Arab world in 2011 could not escape Orientalist dogmas surrounding the Middle East. Despite the revolutionary desire for democracy, human rights and justice, the preponderance of Orientalist stereotypes continued to dominate Western analysis and interpretations of the uprisings. This paper seeks to explain how the past tautological knowledge frameworks of Middle Eastern revolutions continue to shape contemporary notions, and how now—like the past—power is a key to unlocking the way that Arab and Islamic uprisings are known.

Colonial discursive production of dominance did not only produce a representation of the 'Orient' that deserves to be ruled over, confined, civilized or imprisoned. It also established a paradigm and a set formula that functioned as an analytical and ideological tool to help the Westerner evaluate, rank and reify 'Orient' agency according to colonial exigencies. This systematic but implicit formula, tucked away within Eurocentric and Orientalist discourses, came to shape the assessment and interpretations by colonial officers, officials, missionaries and scholars of Middle Eastern resistance.

Through examination of the 'historicity' of revolution in the region, this presentation will uncover the discursive elements and practices surrounding Western perceptions of Middle Eastern revolutions. This presentation explores the way that the epistemic process of Eurocentrism constructed legends, stories, history and a historicity around the colonised's resistance. This is to primarily demonstrate how colonial power adopts certain discourses, rhetorics and images that construct perceptions of these revolutions. The presentation then draws some parallels with the way that recent uprisings have been misrepresented and argues that imperialism remains very much a part of the way that the 'Orient' is known.

**Dr. Noah Bassil**

Lecturer

Department of Modern History, Politics and International Relations &  
the Centre for Middle East and North African Studies  
Macquarie University

**The Winter of Arab Discontent**

***Biography***

Noah Bassil is a Lecturer in Politics and International Relations and continues to hold a position with the Centre for Middle East and North African Studies at Macquarie University. Noah's interests include global political economy, colonialism and post-colonialism, and the political economy of north-south relations. Noah has recently published a book titled "The Crisis of the Sudanese Postcolonial State" which re-examines the origins of the conflict in Darfur by contextualizing events in Sudan within broader regional and international patterns of politics, economics and culture. His current research takes this perspective further as he examines neo-liberalism, imperialism and the erosion of the capacities of the state as the fundamental features of the contemporary global system. Noah teaches Global Political Economy, the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa and Globalization and the North-South.

***Abstract***

2011 has said to mark a shift in the "Arab world" as four long serving dictators fled, resigned or died. These uprisings were dubbed the Arab Spring, and from mainly "Western" reports it seemed that a democratic transformation was in the making. A closer look might suggest that the more that things change the more they stay the same.

This presentation will examine the capacity of reactionary forces to obstruct genuine political and economic change. The electoral victories of Islamists in Tunisia and Egypt signal not the democratic shift many believe but rather the entrenching of the imperial system and global neo-liberalism in a new guise. Elsewhere the region remains controlled by the ancient regimes of ruling monarchs in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait and Morocco.

From this perspective, there is little evidence that across the Arab world there is a blooming of a new age, despite the impact of the new social forces in removing long serving rulers. Rather it could be said that the victories of the Islamist parties in Egypt and Tunisia, the strength of the Arab monarchies and the renewed role of the IMF in aiding the economic "recovery" of the post-election Arab states, are signs that the brief spring has dissipated and has been replaced with a "winter" of Arab discontent.

In this study, the Arab uprisings will be explored through Gramscian political theory, with reference to the way social democratic aspirations have been contained by a "historic bloc" comprised of international, regional and national forces. Also, this study will borrow from Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire and Polanyi's "double-movement" in a bid to contribute to understanding the broader crisis of the contemporary neo-liberal world order and of the forces that hold this system together, in the Arab world, and beyond.

## **Nematullah Bizhan**

Ph.D. Candidate

Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia)

The Australian National University

### **International Assistance in Afghanistan's State Building Trajectory: Tax Reforms, State-Society Relations and Transparency in Public Expenditure**

#### ***Biography***

Nematullah Bizhan is a PhD scholar at The Australian National University studying the impact of international assistance on the course of state building in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2009. As a Fulbright Scholar he also holds a master's degree in development economics from Williams College, Massachusetts. Nematullah has participated in Afghanistan's post-2001 development efforts as a practitioner and a policy maker through the government, UNDP and civil society organisations. He has served as Director General for Policy, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), Head of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) Secretariat, Deputy Minister for Youth, as well as leading the "National Development Budget" at the Ministry of Finance.

#### ***Abstract***

The literature supports the view that when governments are fiscally independent of citizen-taxpayers or dependent on foreign aid/oil, this changes the political incentives that they face and the way in which they seek to obtain, use and hold power. The long run consequences for governments are negative as the state elites are less responsive and accountable to citizens. The state will be less likely to tax its citizens and engage them in the political process. Furthermore, they thus will have less incentive to build up the political and organisational capacities of the state. Historically, sources of state revenue had a significant impact on state development. In particular in Europe, taxes were essential in forming states. Similarly, in the contemporary developing world, tax revenue remains crucial to the process of state building. It is central to the existence of a state, and gives it the means to materialise its objectives into concrete outcomes. However, its role is not limited to raising revenue. Taxes help to shape the state ties with society and build up state institutions. The relationship on how taxation impacts on state-society much depends on how they negotiate or fail in raising revenue. However, many developing countries are dependent on aid or oil, making the state building trajectory different to that of earlier states that emerged broadly dependent on domestic taxation.

Since the emergence of Afghanistan as an independent political unit in 1747, the Afghan state has been largely dependent on external financial resources (tribute, subsidies and foreign aid) and this, among other factors, were important in shaping the trajectory of Afghanistan's state building enterprise. In order to unfold the complexities of this process, this presentation explores how the financial separation of the state from its citizens as a result of dependence on foreign aid or international assistance impacted on state-building in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2009 (when the international community extensively participated in state building enterprise). It will do so by examining tax reforms, state-society relations and transparency in public expenditure.

**Srinjoy Bose**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy  
The Australian National University

## **State, Society, and Legitimacy in Afghanistan's Statebuilding Enterprise**

### ***Biography***

Srinjoy is presently working on his Doctoral thesis which investigates contentious state-society relations in Afghanistan, with particular emphasis on concepts of legitimacy, norms and law, and how they affect the ongoing state building enterprise. Srinjoy comes to the Australian National University as a Prime Minister's Australia-Asia Endeavour Award holder. His intellectual pursuits include: analysing state-society relations, theories of state building in post-conflict and weak states, war-termination theory; Ethics in International Relations, in particular ideas of distributive justice and humanitarian intervention. Srinjoy is a Political Science graduate from the University of Otago (Hons., First Class) and the National University of Singapore (M.Soc.Sc.), and has previously been a researcher with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (New Delhi).

### ***Abstract***

In contemporary times, much stress has been laid on state building and institutional approaches to the study of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Observers comment on the social purposes of the state by studying institutional principles and practices. Within this literature, there is a strong sense that state failure – whether defined as failure to monopolise legitimate violence, failure to impose social control, deliver development, good governance and other basic services – is a principal cause of contemporary civil conflicts and state-society strife in general. The recent liberal literature examining state building, argues functioning structures are a prerequisite to successful conflict management and post-conflict development. Such a view of state building, however, ignores several of the historical processes (and lessons) of state formation. Experiences of the past century have taught us that ambitious rearrangements of institutions cause more unanticipated problems than they solve, but that the problem is exacerbated if local structures, imperatives, laws and norms are dismissed.

State building efforts in countries emerging from violent (and protracted) conflict often fail because they are not coherent overarching strategies guiding state building activities. Strategies that do exist frequently shy away from understanding and engaging with the complex socio-political contexts in which reconstruction and state building activities take place. Thus, in order to understand state building failures, it is necessary to first understand (and paint a picture of) the complexity of the state. One method of doing so is to investigate the role of legitimacy (and the related concept of authority) in state-society relations, and how it impacts state building.

Within the broader contexts of the weak state/strong society thesis and Afghanistan's own history of weakness and contentious state-society relations, the concept of legitimacy takes on several and varied meanings. Different interpretations directly affect the western-oriented state building enterprise. Tensions exist between an international understanding of legitimacy and a domestic view – the latter itself can be divided into various actors/categories to include: state/government, regional, religious, tribe, social and political, etc.

**Bren Carlill**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
The University of Melbourne

## **Why is the Israeli–Palestinian Dispute So Hard to Resolve?**

### ***Biography***

Bren Carlill is a part-time PhD candidate at The University of Melbourne, examining why the Israeli-Palestinian dispute appears so intractable. He is also an executive officer at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, responsible for coordinating departmental policy on European security architecture, including relations with NATO and the OSCE, and issues involving Russian foreign and security policy. The views expressed in this presentation are his own.

### ***Abstract***

Never in modern history has a conflict been so long-running, so resistant to resolution or so misunderstood as the Israeli–Palestinian dispute. A significant reason why is because of the widespread belief that it is one conflict. In actuality, it consists of two distinct types of conflict. The first type of conflict is over territory and can (theoretically) be resolved by sharing or dividing land between Israelis and Palestinians. The second type of conflict is over the existence of the other's national movement. Today, two such existential conflicts exist—one fought by (some) Islamists intent on destroying Israel, the other by (some) religious Jews intent on preventing the establishment of an Arab state west of the Jordan River. These conflicts are win–lose in nature, and cannot be negotiated away. They must be won or managed. By examining the Israeli–Palestinian dispute as two distinct but over-lapping types of conflict—instead of one conflict with national and religious aspects—it makes a lot more sense.

This presentation will examine the history of the Israeli–Palestinian dispute (and wider Arab–Israel dispute) in light of this territorial/existential dichotomy to provide clarity as to why Israeli–Palestinian peace has yet to be realised—or even if it can be realised. It will show how, over time, one existential conflict has split to create numerous conflicts—some territorial and motivated by nationalism, others existential and motivated by religion. The presentation will provide insight as to how the existential conflicts were ignored when efforts to address the territorial conflicts were made—and how this led to the failure of the Oslo peace process. With a better understanding of the true nature of the dispute, it will be easier to map a way forward, providing hope for a better future for Israelis and Palestinians.

**Aminat Chokobaeva**

Ph.D. Candidate

Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia)

The Australian National University

**Born for Misery and Woe: Ways of Remembering the 1916 Great Revolt in Kyrgyzstan**

***Biography***

Aminat Chokobaeva is a native of Kyrgyzstan with a keen interest in the cultural politics and history of the Soviet Central Asia. She joined the Australian National University in April 2011 after being awarded an International Postgraduate Research Scholarship. Aminat's undergraduate degree was in International and Comparative Politics from the American University in Central Asia. She has worked for two years as a research assistant at the University of Central Asia, helping to develop Arts and Humanities curriculum and conducting research on education and development in the former Soviet Union.

***Abstract***

This presentation focuses on remembrance of the 1916 anti-colonial uprising in Tsarist Central Asia from the early Soviet period to the demise of the Soviet Union. Termed “the unknown genocide” by a contemporary Kyrgyz politician, the revolt claimed 100 – 120 000 victims out of an estimated Kyrgyz population of 780 000. Despite the human dimension of the catastrophe, the memories of the violence and suffering in the hands of Russian authorities and settlers have been suppressed by the Soviet government. Yet, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union and its censorship apparatus, the personal memories of loss and survival are rarely discussed.

This presentation's emphasis is on the prominence of trauma in the oral testimonies of the uprising, which is entirely absent from the official records. History writing was a dangerous occupation in the Soviet Union, but the perseverance of alternative memories in family histories, popular poetry, cinema, and novels reveals the challenges peculiar to the Soviet attempts to reconcile the mutually exclusive Bolshevik projects of nation-building on the one hand and the friendship of nations on the other. The history of the 1916 revolt proved especially controversial for Soviet historians as the new Stalinist rhetoric of Russian patriotism gained currency during World War II. The largest revolt ever to take place in Russian Central Asia, Urkun became a key site of the discursive struggles between the participants of the rebellion and the changing Bolshevik historiography. The disputes on events of the past gave the Soviet state that emerged victorious from the great Patriotic War a terrain on which to assert control over the nascent Kyrgyz national history.

The presentation attempts to answer the question of why the personal memories were silenced and historical issues surrounding the uprising were never fully resolved. This study seeks to explore the tensions between the institutional memory and unofficial remembrance of the revolt. Ultimately, the central concern of the paper is not an analysis of the uprising itself but rather an investigation of what its use in Soviet and post-Soviet contexts reveals about the cultural hierarchies and ambiguities involved in nation-building in Kyrgyzstan.

**Jerome Drevon**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Governmental and International Affairs  
Durham University

## **The Emergence of 'Ex-Jihadi' Political Parties in Egypt**

### ***Biography***

Jerome is a French PhD student at Durham University in the United Kingdom where he specialises in the study of Islamist armed groups in the Middle East. He has extensively travelled the region and lived in Egypt, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territories and Syria. Before his PhD, he worked in several NGOs and research centres in Europe and in the Middle East. His research interests lie in Security Studies and Social Movement Studies and he is currently focusing on the evolution of Islamist armed groups in terms of ideology and practice. His PhD is centred in particular on the evolution of two Egyptian militant groups, the *al-Jamaah al-Islamiyah* (Islamic Group) and *Jamaah/Tandhim al-Jihad* (The Jihad Group/Organisation). He interviewed most of their leaders and senior members during his stay in Egypt, as well as dozens of militants and sympathisers.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation investigates the creation of two political parties by former jihadi groups in Egypt, *Hizb al-Bina wal-Tanmiyah* (Building and Development Party), the party of *al-Jamaah al-Islamiyah* (the Islamic Group, IG thereafter) and *Hizb al-Salamah wal Tanmiyah* (Party of Safety and Development), an agglomeration of individuals affiliated to *Jamaah al-Jihad* (the Jihad Group, JG thereafter). It is qualitative and informed by multiple interviews of the main leaders of both movements (including Tareq al-Zumur, Najih Ibrahim, Usama Hafez, Abd al-Akhr Hamad, Kamal Habib, Usama Qasem, Ali Faraj)

This comparative study of the inception and initial developments of these two parties is based on a multi-level analysis grounded in Social Movement Theory. First, the use of process tracing explains the comprehensive ideological revisions of the IG in the mid-90s and the failure of the JG to achieve the same comprehensiveness. It sheds light on the emergence of a moderate faction in the former that managed to impose its views on the movement and draw the foundations of a political platform while the JG's divisions accentuated and prevented a similar result. Thereafter, it analyses the impact of the revolution on the two movements. It demonstrates that the institutional arrangement developed by the IG in the 90s set up the organisational and ideological premises necessary to the joining of the political arena after the revolution. On the other hand, the historical divisions between JG factions prevented the emergence of a united front after the revolution. It obstructed a broad legitimisation of the democratic process and hindered the construction of a political platform of those who united under *Hizb al-Salamah wal Tanmiyah*.

This presentation is therefore an alternative path between structuralist and essentialist studies of Islamist ideology. Rather than overlooking or essentialising the role of ideas, it analyses their articulation in the context of evolving political opportunities and organisational dynamics.

**Constance Duncombe**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Political Science and International Studies  
The University of Queensland

## **Social Media, Representation and Crisis in Iran and Libya**

### ***Biography***

Constance Duncombe is a PhD candidate in the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland. Her core thesis research is centred on examining the interplay of schemas of representation and foreign policy conduct, with particular emphasis on the case studies of the United States and Iran. Her other research interests include the processes of democratisation within the Middle East and how these have been influenced by the emergence of digital media as a form of connection and communication.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation delves into the emergence of information communication technology (ICT) products such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and weblogs as part of the growth in social media networks, and the role this has to play in the maintenance of the hegemonic discourse of enlightened West/subordinate non-West. As such, this paper asks the question: do the 'new media' reinforce cosy assumptions of western hegemony? This paper argues that despite the privileging of news articles regarding social media use from a Western vantage point, the use of ICTs by non-Western audiences does not in fact reinforce the dichotomy of enlightened West/subordinate non-West. Using Western media coverage of the events surrounding the 2009 Green Movement protests in Iran and the 2011 anti-Gaddafi protests in Libya, and in particular reports that refer specifically to or actually use ICT products (such as Twitter or weblog excerpts, Facebook posts, and YouTube videos made by Iranians or Libyans), this paper will offer a more substantial conception of how forms of representation are still evident within a supposedly egalitarian medium, and why they should be discounted or at least questioned. This presentation begins by outlining its methodology, followed by an examination of the changes in news media as a result of ICT, and what impact this has had on the proliferation of civil society networks. This is followed by an exploration of the material representations inherent in ICT, which is complemented by an examination of the cultural representations evident in Western media reports involving non-Western ICT use.

**Lara Elmaoula**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Political and Social Inquiry  
Monash University

## **Beyond the Campus Gates: The Transition of Iran's Student Movement from Support to Opposition**

### ***Biography***

Lara graduated from Monash University in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.). She received First-Class Honours in her thesis which examined the de-radicalisation of Lebanon's Hezbollah, from a radical military organisation to a proxy Lebanese army with a political wing. During her undergraduate degree Lara undertook an internship at Victorian Parliament under the supervision of Peter Hall, the current leader of the Nationals in Victoria's Legislative Council. Her report is currently stored at the library in Victoria's Parliament House. Lara is currently undertaking her PhD at Monash University.

### ***Abstract***

Prior to the uprisings following the 2009 Presidential elections of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iran's civil society was largely viewed as passive and apathetic. However, the unprecedented nature of the protests that have not been witnessed in Iran since the 1979 revolution brought the attention of the international world to focus on the calls for democratic reform from within the country, demands that had been brewing domestically for over a decade.

Iran's student movement has played a monumental role throughout the history of the nation. From the Constitutional Revolution to the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Iran's students have been at the vanguard for social and political change. The importance of Iran's student movement will be examined, with particular reference to *Daftar-I Tahkim-va Vahdat* (DTV) the largest national student organization in Iran. Particular focus will be on the DTV's transition from supporting the regime and being organs of the state, including assisting the regime during the early 1980s in Islamizing the nation's universities during the Cultural Revolution (1980-83), to opposing the same government that they helped install. The student masterminds of the infamous 444-day takeover of the U.S. Embassy are today's leading reformers. Essentially, what can account for this pivotal transition from being advocates of the regime, to contemporarily being the main targets of government crackdown against dissidents under President Ahmadinejad? In 2009 the government made the activities and affiliation with the DTV illegal, the same organization that they established to combat secular and Marxist forces in universities.

The aforementioned transition will be examined within the wider theoretical framework of the impact of student politics on government policies, in particular the importance of student movements in developing nations and under authoritarian regimes. Further the theoretical framework will assist in explaining the systematic government repression and treatment of student activists.

**Ifdal Elsaket**

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies

The University of Sydney

## **Stars and the Anti-Revolution: The Politics of Celebrity Blacklists in Egypt**

### ***Biography***

Ifdal Elsaket is a PhD candidate in the History and Arabic & Islamic Departments at the University of Sydney.

### ***Abstract***

During demonstrations in Tahrir Square, Egyptian activists erected a large poster denouncing a number of Egypt's most popular celebrities. The poster was essentially a blacklist, shaming television, film, music and sporting stars who opposed the revolution and/or supported the Mubarak regime. Similar blacklists have appeared on various websites and blogs, proving particularly popular amongst Egyptians. Despite their resonance among Egyptians, however, scholars have largely ignored them. This presentation argues that blacklists are significant social documents that reveal the importance of popular culture as a site of political experience in Egypt. It will also contend that blacklists shed light on quotidian forms of dissent and illuminate the cultural arenas people work within to negotiate, contest, and ultimately punish those in, or close to, power. Predicated on subaltern consumer agency, and functioning within larger discussions about the place of the "remnants" or *falul* in Egyptian public life, celebrity blacklists underscore the dialectic between popular culture and politics in articulating ideal visions of Egyptian nationhood and citizenship in post-Mubarak Egypt.

**William Gourlay**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Political and Social Inquiry  
Monash University

## **State vs. Society in a Nationalist Framework: The Experience of the Kurds in Modern Turkey**

### ***Biography***

Since graduating from the University of Melbourne (BA 1990), William Gourlay has worked as a teacher, editor and writer in Izmir, London and his native Melbourne. A committed Turkophile, he has been a repeat visitor to Turkey for the last 20 years, as well as travelling in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Iran and Central Asia. He completed his Master of Islamic Studies at Monash University in 2011. His master's thesis examined shifting notions of popular legitimacy in Iran since the emergence of the reformist movement in 1997. For his doctoral research he is investigating the collective identities of the Kurdish and Alevi minorities in the Republic of Turkey, focusing in particular on conceptions of nationalism and nation building, modernisation and democratisation.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation will highlight recent developments in the Kurdish issue in the Republic of Turkey, particularly within the context of the Turkish nation-building project, the role of competing elites in that process and within modes of national integration. The Turkish nation-state was established on a secularist, nationalist platform that decreed 'unity of language, culture and ideal', a position denying an identity to the Kurds. Expressions of ethnic difference were deemed a threat to national integrity and were suppressed by the state apparatus. Here, the 'guardian state', controlled by military, judicial and bureaucratic elites, was privileged over the demands and rights of society. This situation reached its crescendo during the 1990s, when the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) conflict peaked: defence of the state was deemed paramount at the expense of human rights and democratisation. The Turkish experience thus conforms with E.J. Hobsbawm's contention that the nation is begat by the state and nationalism, rather than vice versa, and that the nation and nationalism are constructed from above. In recent years, however, as elements of the nation-building project – namely modernisation and economic development – have progressed, the dominant position of established elites and the prevailing nationalist discourse have been challenged so that questions of Kurdish identity and political rights have been reclassified as socio-political issues rather than manifestations of 'separatism'. This presentation will examine how, as new entrepreneurial classes have arisen and Islam has reasserted itself in the public sphere, priorities of the state have shifted from those of 'safeguarding the nation' to those of *hizmet* (service), thus allowing reappraisal of the Kurdish issue and pluralism within Turkey. The presentation will finish by briefly examining implications Turkey's Kurdish experience may have for post-revolutionary regimes in the Middle East, many of which espouse a 'Turkish model' of political development.

**Jill, Duchess of Hamilton**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Oriental and African Studies  
University of London

## **Conversions by Arab Christians for Divorce**

### ***Biography***

Jill, Duchess of Hamilton, was born in Sydney and has lived both in Australia and in the UK since being sent to London by the Murdoch Press as a journalist in 1964. Her numerous books include *The Captain Cook Myth*, (1980), *First to Damascus, the Story of the Australian Light Horse and Lawrence of Arabia*, (2002), *Gallipoli to Gaza, the Desert Poets of World War One*, (2003), *God, Guns & Israel, the British, the First World War and the Jews in the Holy Land*, (2004). In 2005 she obtained an MA with a distinction in Applied Economics of the Middle East from SOAS, the School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London and has since been completing a PhD. For 20 years she owned a house on Magnetic Island, Queensland. For the past eight years she has spent much time in Jerusalem.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation looks at religious conversions by Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Copts in the Middle East to either the Greek Orthodox Church or to Islam to facilitate divorce. Since the Maltese divorce referendum in 2011, the media have emphasised that the Philippines and the Vatican are now the sole countries where married couples cannot divorce. However, they ignored the absence of civil Personal Status Law on Arab Christians in the Middle East. The majority cannot divorce. While it is generally known that marriage and divorce for Arabs in the Middle East is governed by religious law, little academic literature has focused on how, in the 21st century, around 10 to 15 million Arab Christians are still subjected to a legally pluralistic system of a variety of Christian religious laws. Christians, either stay locked into dead marriages, apply for a difficult-to-attain annulment or convert to another religion so they can divorce.

In the Middle East, apart from in Turkey, Tunisia or Algeria, if a couple are divorcing or separating in Damascus or Amman the outcome is decided by holy law. It is the same for Muslims, Christians and Jews in Beirut, Baghdad, Jerusalem or Amman -- they attend courts run by qadis, priests, bishops or rabbis. Family Law is covered by the different legal codes for the different members of different recognised religions.

People often refer to Christians as a monolithic whole, yet in Jerusalem, for instance, Christians come under 10 different Personal Status codes: Latin Catholic, Melkite, Maronite, Syrian Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Chaldean, Anglican, Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox and Armenian. In Lebanon there are 14 codes for Christians. Some can divorce; others cannot. In Egypt, the Coptic Church has made the dissolution of marriages nearly impossible. Conversions to Islam in Egypt for divorce have ignited underlying tensions with Muslims.

**Ahmed Hassin**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation  
Deakin University

## **Indigenising Civil Society: Applying Ibn Khaldun's Asabiya Concept to Tribes in Iraq**

### ***Biography***

Ahmed is a PhD candidate at Deakin University. His thesis explores the roles of civil society organisations in post-conflict nation building and reconstruction in Iraq since the US-led invasion of 2003. In 2004, Ahmed established an NGO in Iraq that deals with disability issues and has been successful in service provision and capacity building for more than 10,000 beneficiaries since it was established. Ahmed holds a B.A. in English from Baghdad University, an M.B.A. in Management Practice, Change management and Organisation development from Victoria University and an M.A International and Community Development from Deakin University. Ahmed's research interests include Iraq, civil society, management and development of NGOs and developmental studies.

### ***Abstract***

After the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, civil society has become among the buzz words that are frequently used by local and international government and non-government institutions. However, the connotations of civil society were merely drawn from Western conceptions referring to formally organised types of institutions, like NGOs, unions and media. This presentation argues that Muslim/Arab theories should also be tested in their original indigenous societies before generalisation of Western models. The Western conceptualisation overlooks the informal type of civil society organisations and excludes family and kinship ties from its equation. Indigenous social structures, i.e. tribes are key active players in the daily life of the Iraqi political, economic, social and cultural scenes. This presentation argues that the spirit of social solidarity drawn from Ibn Khaldun's "asabiya" concepts as well as functions of civil society organisations are the bases for examining tribes in Iraq. Tribes have played significant roles in conflict management, peace-building, reconciliation, policy-formulation, advocacy, active citizenship and democratisation since 2003. The presentation concludes that, based on their sense of solidarity that is the impetus to functions, tribes are among the active civil society organisations in Iraq.

**Alasdair Hynd**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
International Centre for Muslim and Non-Muslim Understanding  
University of South Australia

## **A Re-Examination of the Role of Social Media During the Arab Spring**

### ***Biography***

Alasdair Hynd is a PhD Researcher from the International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding at the University of South Australia. He graduated with honours in International Relations from Flinders University in 2011. His honours thesis examined the effect of the Arab Spring on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly the Palestinian attempt to gain statehood through the United Nations. His PhD dissertation focuses on the causes and effects of the events of the Arab Spring, with a particular focus on the forms of grassroots popular mobilisation which made the toppling of Ben Ali and Mubarak possible. His research interests include the Israel-Palestine conflict, American and Western imperialism in the Middle East, the nuclear programs of the Middle East, the Arab Spring, the philosophy of technology, and the Kurdish statehood question.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation will analyse the popular claim that social media networking was a major cause of the Arab Spring, and possibly the crucial factor in successfully toppling Mubarak, Ben Ali and others. In the days after the successful removal of Ben Ali from power, and the first few days of the protest movement against Mubarak, a narrative quickly formed, reported mainly by journalists on the ground, which explained that the protest movements which were spreading across the region were the result of a new politically-aware generation of tech-savvy activists who utilised the Internet to mobilise populations against their governments. This narrative offered journalists and commentators an easily accessible and novel explanation to convey to their readers, subsequently emerging as the dominant narrative.

Settling on this interpretation is highly problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, it assumes that the Internet was the defining factor in toppling dictators, and without it the protest movements in Egypt and Tunisia would not have succeeded. Secondly, it overemphasises the ability of progress in technology to shape our decisions and actions. Finally, this narrative assumes that social media works as a vehicle for freedom and democracy. This last point is perhaps the most important, as it is the position advanced by many American think tanks and commentators. This position argues that the Internet is an inherently free and democratic space where these values will triumph against despotism and censorship. The aim of this paper will be to challenge the dominant narrative of social media's central role in the Arab Spring. It will argue that the Internet has no inherent qualities, but that it is essentially neutral, open to interpretation and use by anyone, for any purpose – including anti-democratic movements and censorship –and that its role in the Arab Spring has been greatly overemphasised.

**Raihan Ismail**

Ph.D. Candidate

Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and  
Central Asia)

The Australian National University

**The Saudi Religious Establishment and the Bahraini Uprisings*****Biography***

Raihan Ismail is a PhD student (final year) at the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies. Her PhD topic is “The attitudes of the Saudi ‘ulama towards the Shi’a”. She was born in Egypt and raised in Malaysia speaking Malay, Arabic, and English fluently. She completed her Bachelor in Political Science, with a minor in Islamic Studies, at the International Islamic University Malaysia. She then pursued her Masters in International Relations at the same university before moving to Australia.

Raihan’s research interests include religious minorities, sectarian conflict in the Middle East, and democracy and Islam with a specific focus on Islamist parties in Egypt and Malaysia. She presented at the “Middle East in Revolt” conference in Melbourne in 2012. Her paper was on “Political Islam in the New Egypt”. She has also published newspaper articles on Malaysian politics. She has given seminars and lectures on women and the Arab uprisings to government departments, including DFAT and AusAID, and non-governmental organisations.

Raihan also publishes, with a forthcoming article in the Journal for Shia Islamic Studies discussing the attitudes of the Saudi ‘ulama towards domestic Shi’a communities in Saudi Arabia.

***Abstract***

In response to the Bahraini uprisings which started in February 2011, the Saudi government, with the agreement of the Gulf Cooperation Council, dispatched one thousand troops and military personnel to assist the Al-Khalifa family maintain order. Although many protesters have died since the uprising started and there have been numerous allegations of torture committed by the Bahraini government, Saudi Arabia’s involvement in Bahrain has received nothing but support from the Saudi religious establishment and to a large extent the Saudi public.

The legitimacy that the Saudi clerics have given the Saudi ruling family and the Al-Khalifa government contradict their positions towards the other Arab uprisings that have swept up Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. The clerics condemned these regimes for the treatment of their civilian populations. However, Bahrain is treated differently: many Saudi clerics encourage and applaud the Saudi government for intervening in support of Bahrain’s rulers. Although the protests were initially orchestrated by Sunnis and Shi’a alike, they quickly turned sectarian due in part to the Bahraini government’s selective crackdowns on Shi’a protesters and the state media’s role in blaming the uprisings on the island kingdom’s Shi’a population. Sunni clerics in both Saudi Arabia and Bahrain express support for the Sunni led government in Bahrain and both demonise the protesters as barbaric agents of Iran. The Saudi religious establishment promotes Sunni solidarity against the “deviant” Shi’a, thus defining the Bahraini uprisings as a sectarian conflict.

This presentation analyses the rhetoric of the Saudi religious establishment and its role in legitimising the intervention. This paper finds that by attributing the Bahraini awakening to sectarianism and fuelling Sunni religious fervour, the Saudi clerics have helped contain the Arab revolts from spreading to other Gulf countries.

**Zainab Jasim**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Media and Communication  
The University of Sydney

## **Bahrain's Uprising Unveils Al-Jazeera's Two Faces**

### ***Biography***

Zainab Jasim is a journalist and researcher  
Researcher - Gulf Centre in London – 2012- current  
Research assistance – University of Sydney – Australia – 2012 – current  
Radio journalist – SBS Radio, the Arabic Program – Australia- 2011 – current  
TV reporter to MBC, Aljazeera children, Dubai channels from Bahrain 2006- 2009  
Journalist in Al-Wasat newspaper – Bahrain – 2003- 2005

### ***Abstract***

The recent uprisings in the Middle East have changed the region forever. There is no doubt that media outlets around the world have played a crucial role in motivating and delivering the voice of these revolutions. Al-Jazeera network, based in Doha and financed directly by Qatar's Emir Hamad Al-Thany, obviously has stood by the pro-democracy movements in the Middle East. However, Al-Jazeera, founded in 1996, has been accused of supporting the Syrian revolution and at the same time neglecting the uprising in Bahrain, a Gulf state and ally to Qatar.

This presentation examines to what extent Al-Jazeera network has been influenced by Qatar's foreign policies in covering Bahrain's uprising. Furthermore, this study compares Al-Jazeera's coverage of Bahrain's uprising and Al-Jazeera's coverage of other uprisings in the region [Syria, Egypt and Libya]. Al-Jazeera's coverage of the revolution in Bahrain and the coverage of Syrian, Libyan and Egyptian uprisings are compared in terms of the frequency, duration of news stories, topic preferences, story placement, number of reporters, and the number of shows and documentary films during the first year of the uprisings. This comparative study proves the hypothesis that Bahrain's uprising has been covered by Al-Jazeera network less than other Arab uprisings because of the Gulf state's geopolitical location.

**Maryam Khazaeli**  
Masters Student  
University of Wollongong

## **The Changing Role of Emirati Women: From Housewives to Entrepreneurs**

### ***Biography***

Maryam was born and raised in Esfahan, Iran and has studied in both Iran and the UAE. Maryam has a particular interest in historic and contemporary Iranian migration to the UAE, and one of her works on this subject was recently presented to, and published by the Gulf Research Meeting at the University of Cambridge (July 2012). Her recent studies at the University of Wollongong have focused on the experience of female Emirati entrepreneurs and Iranian immigrants in the UAE - for which she is currently completing primary research in country. Maryam has previously completed Migration Studies at the European University Institute (June 2012), and in the Philosophy of Art (2009) in Iran. Maryam is fluent in Persian, Arabic and English.

### ***Abstract***

The United Arab Emirates is ranked as a country with the highest increase in new start up activity at 38 per cent in the reports released by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2008. With the growing attention to women's entrepreneurship on a global scale, there is increasing interest in the profile of entrepreneurial women in the Arab countries. In this presentation specific attention is given to the UAE as one amongst the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries due to its internationalised work places.

Given the highly internationalised population composition of the UAE with less than 15% of the population being Emirati in nationality, the threat of being discriminated against has forced the UAE to encourage and support the emergence of young Emiratis with new business ideas as one of the many tools to support Emiratisation. This national identity policy attempts to represent young Emiratis as an innovative generation. In this regard, Emirati women are given space to represent themselves and value their national identity through their business achievements and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Although many resources are devoted to assist women establish and develop their enterprises, there are still cultural considerations which prevent Emirati women from benefiting from equal social mobility in public places. Networking, as an integrated part of entrepreneurship besides socialising and business communication are issues that arise while studying entrepreneurial Emirati women profiles. The need to have permission from male members of the family to go on business travel is one of the illustrative examples of limitations in their mobility. As a result of Islamic and cultural considerations which limits women's interactions with the opposite sex, has led Emirati women to invest mostly in traditional entrepreneurial activities such as fashion designing, clothing and jewellery.

This study attempts to explore the changing role of business women in the UAE over different economic periods and draws the prospects of women entrepreneurs in the UAE based on previous trends and current approaches. It investigates how the role of women in the UAE society is been changed due to economic changes experienced in different eras from 1900 till present.

Through interviews conducted with entrepreneurs, questionnaires filled by both male and female Emirati entrepreneurs, discussions and observations done in Emirati work places this research aims to answer: Are Entrepreneur Women in the today's economy of the UAE encouraged to start 'opportunity based' entrepreneurship rather than 'necessity based' entrepreneurship? That is: Do Emirati women choose to be an entrepreneur as one of several desirable career options in private sector rather than take that path through lack of other job opportunities in public sector?

**Nina Markovic**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Centre for European Studies  
The Australian National University

## **From “Democratic Revolutionaries” to “Revolutionary Democrats”: Serbia's Export of Organised Non-Violent Resistance to the Middle East, and Issues with Democracy-Building in the Region**

### ***Biography***

Nina Markovic is a PhD candidate in Political Science at The Australian National University Centre for European Studies. Her PhD research project investigates political and diplomatic relations between the European Union and Serbia, from the early 1960s to present day. She has conducted over 50 interviews with politicians and civic activists in modern-day Serbia, and has presented at many international conferences. In 2011-12 Ms Markovic obtained a six-month EU-Oceania scholarship to undertake further research at LUISS University in Rome, where she also taught an Eastern European component of the course on Comparative Politics. She holds a combined Master degree from The Australian National University in Arts (International Relations) and Diplomacy, with a final thesis on “Challenges to democracy building in post-Communist Europe after the Cold War”. She is a published poet and fluent in four European languages.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation investigates the role of Serbian actors in the training of emerging leaders of the Middle East youth movements, particularly in Egypt since 2009. This aspect of the Egyptian revolt has not been sufficiently addressed by international or regional scholars. A civic resistance movement OTPOR, which first emerged in the mid-1990s, toppled former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic on 5 October 2000. Since then, former OTPOR activists have been engaged in the business of exporting revolutions abroad, from Ukraine to Iran. OTPOR's clenched fist symbol, training manuals, non-violent revolutionary strategies and coordination methods have been adopted over the past decade by hundreds of pro-democracy activists in the Middle East. OTPOR's successor, the Center for Applied Non-Violent Action and Strategies (CANVAS) successfully trained Egyptian youth activists in Belgrade and Cairo. Those activists later headed the April 6 Youth Movement and Kifaya group, which played a key role in Egypt's street protests that led to Mubarak's departure on 11 February 2011.

Former Serbian 'revolutionaries' have been engaged in the transfer of the revolution's know-how abroad, particularly the successful Serbian model of regime-change that involves a sophisticated preparation. The presentation demonstrates how Middle East revolutionaries, seeking to challenge local political status quo, were the pro-active participants in this process. However, if the Serbian experience with the regime-change is to be examined further, long-term challenges may quickly become evident. These include broad-ranging issues such as: (1) how to re-integrate social movements with an established anti-state identity into the mainstream politics? (2) how to tackle key internal challenges to democracy-building following the regime-change? and (3) how new state structures should respond to quarrelling political elites, without alienating minority groups, and the demands of unemployed youth in the shaping of their nation's future?

**Wayne McLean**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Government  
University of Tasmania

## **The Neo-Ottoman Agenda: Balancing Ideas and Security in a Jeopardous Strategic Environment**

### ***Biography***

Wayne McLean is a RHD student in the School of Government under the primary supervision of Dr Matthew Sussex. His current research explores the role of 'pivotal' middle powers in the international system through two progressive theoretical perspectives - Regional Security Complex Theory and neo-classical realism. His research reveals congruence across certain regional and international themes (balancing, hedging and activist foreign policies) despite differing internal themes such as drug violence in Mexico, neo-Ottomanism in Turkey, and a military modernisation project in Australia.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation uses a neoclassical realist framework to describe Turkey's shift in Middle Eastern affairs away from 'Kemalist' isolationism, and towards 'neo-Ottomanism'. This involves state behaviour that seeks to re-establish a leadership role for Turkey in the region. Domestically, Turks have been receptive to this shift in foreign policy. They view their country as secure and successful, with both politicians and the military enjoying high levels of support and legitimacy with domestic constituents who see Turkey as a model for other states in the region. But this domestic view belies the fact that Turkey is in a strategically vulnerable position, with a debt stricken Greece to the West, civil unrest in Syria to the South, and continuing political volatility to the East in Iraq. Yet these issues do not dominate the domestic discourse that crosses into foreign policy, with a preference for the elevation of ideational threats, such as the role of religion and threats posed by 'Western' ideas and values. Thus, traditional security benefits, such as those gained via the US relationship, are increasingly perceived as one of Turkey's greatest threats. How can we explain these seemingly contradictory links between ideas and empirical security?

International relations scholars have struggled to accurately capture this dichotomy. Structural assessments view Turkey as an undifferentiated unit simply bandwagoning or balancing against the West and the Middle East. Similarly, analysis attempting to capture the role of ideas often turns to crude 'clash of civilisation' styled theses, or 'ground up' ideational models to describe Turkish behaviour. This presentation argues that these arguments are unsatisfactory and that a neoclassical realist framework can help to describe the behaviour of Turkey in reasserting a leadership role in the Middle East, while also accounting for emergence of counterintuitive ideas in the domestic discourse surrounding foreign policy.

**Erin Neil**  
Masters Student  
Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and  
Central Asia)  
The Australian National University

## **Veiled Resistance: Women's Rights and the Green Movement in Iran**

### ***Biography***

Erin is undertaking a Masters degree at the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at The Australian National University. She graduated with a Bachelor of International Relations from The Australian National University in 2010. She is currently working on a research sub-thesis investigating the women's rights movement and women's participation in the Green Movement in Iran. Erin is a devoted student of both Arabic and Persian languages and has undertaken a number of study ventures in Syria. During 2012, Erin has served as the President of the ANU Persian Society, a student organisation dedicated to the promotion of Persian culture and language. Under her leadership the Society has grown substantially and formed important ties between the Iranian community of Canberra and The Australian National University community. Her other interests include gender studies and feminism and she is a regular contributor to a number of blogging sites.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation will examine the relationship between the women's rights movement in Iran and female participation in the Green Movement, showing the natural continuity between the two. In the decades following the 1979 revolution, the legal rights of women have been restricted with consequential impacts on their everyday lives. Over the past thirty years, such restrictions have triggered women to push for greater legal rights and for gender equality.

Iranian women have been at the forefront of the Green Movement, a complex, evolving Movement that reached its apex with the demonstrations that followed the disputed results of the 2009 presidential election. They organised and participated in demonstrations and reported the community sentiment and specific events in the traditional and online media. Further, they encouraged others to join the Movement using online and other social activism and expressed their views in music, literature, art and film.

Through the analysis of the key channels, individuals and general trajectory of the post-revolutionary women's rights movement, this presentation will explore connections between these activities and the extensive involvement of women in the Green Movement.

**Umut Ozguc**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Australian Defence Force Academy (UNSW)

## **Dwelling, Enclosures and Security: The Ontopolitics of the West Bank Wall**

### ***Biography***

Umut Ozguc is a PhD candidate at the University of New South Wales/ Canberra in International Studies and Politics. Her thesis looks at controversial border control practices from a post-structuralist perspective. She completed her Masters degree at the University of New South Wales. Her research interests include critical security/border studies, human security and international political sociology.

### ***Abstract***

In 2002, the Israeli Government started to construct a wall in the West Bank. This paper argues that the West Bank Wall is not simply a physical barrier or an architectural figure of the Israeli occupation. Rather, it is a performative act that (re)produces national identities, bodies and spaces. This presentation seeks to demonstrate the performativity of the Wall through Derridean notion of ontopolitics which disturbs the violent connection between ontological value of being and the topos of territory, building and dwelling (Derrida, 1994, p.82). It argues that the Derridean notion of ontopolitics helps us to see how the act of building as dwelling derives from sedentary accounts of history which writes 'insecurity' in the form of bounded identity, home and territory. In its ontopolitical interrogations, this presentation challenges the fixed possibilities of the Wall by tracing the historical roots of the West Bank Wall to the Wall and Tower projects of the pre-state era and their affinities with the current Wall discourse promoted by Fence for Life Movement in Israel.

This presentation concludes that any story inspired by the Derridean insights should not simply focus on the ontopolitics of the Self, but rather on its inherent failures. Derrida's deconstruction and his concepts of supplement, coup de force, iterability, differance and undecidability show us impossibility of stable notion of identity, home and territory that the Self aims to ground itself. Derrida seeks to present a 'third space' in politics, which offers the possibility of alternative politics. In its concluding remarks, this paper discusses the alternative politics that the Wall has produced and argues that the Wall and its discourses do not necessarily show us the success of Israeli sovereign/biopolitical power and hegemonic practices of Jewish-Israeli identity as many studies suggest, but rather their inherent failures.

**Dr. Negar Partow**  
Lecturer  
Centre of Defence and Security Studies  
Massey University

## **Facebook; the New Civil Society in Iran**

### ***Biography***

Dr Negar Partow is a New Zealand/Iranian expert on Middle East politics, religion, human rights and global security. Her research focuses on the relationship between human rights, human security, and state security in both democratic and non-democratic states. Born in Iran's capital city, Tehran, she lived there through the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the 1980 to 1988 Iran–Iraq War. She studied a BA in English literature and Persian translation in Tehran where she also completed a Masters degree in ancient languages and culture of the Middle East. Dr Partow moved to New Zealand in 2002, predominantly attracted by New Zealand's highly democratic system of government, gender equality, and its emphasis on Human Rights. She joined Victoria University of Wellington in 2002 where she completed a second Masters degree in Religious studies, focusing on the relationship between religion and politics. She was awarded a scholarship and began writing her PhD thesis in 2006 exploring messianism and political authority in Israel and Iran, which she completed in November 2011. Dr Partow joined Massey University as a lecturer based on its Wellington campus in January 2012 to develop its new Master of International Security program as well as teaching undergraduate and post-graduate papers.

### ***Abstract***

Despite the vast use of Facebook in Iran, little is written on the role it has played in the formation of a new form of civil society in Iran. This new form of civil society represents an informed, active, and inclusivist community. Facebook has allowed individuals to freely express their ideas on political, religious and social issues and enabled them to communicate with each other and take action about various issues free from the control of the state. This presentation studies the impact of Iranian Facebook civil society on social responses to the results of the presidential election of 2009, the potential conflict between Iran and Israel, and the 2012 earthquake in east- Azarbyjan province. By studying these cases in Iran, this presentation argues that the development of such a free civil society has become a potential security threat for totalitarian states. While this society can successfully resist the success of the totalitarian policies of these states, it is very difficult to control. Due to its non-state nature it has made totalitarian states to spend unnecessary costs to deal with political issues by using security orientated policies and has weakened their attempt in creating an invincible image.

**Ben Rich**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Global Terrorism Research Centre  
Monash University

## **Saudi Extremism and State Structuration Theory: Towards an Active/Passive Analysis**

### ***Biography***

Ben Rich is currently a PhD candidate at the Global Terrorism Research Centre (GTReC), Monash University. His academic background has focused on international relations and radicalization studies, with an honours thesis reviewing conventional military balancing in the Persian Gulf. His current research interests focus on politics and state in the Arabian Peninsula and he has spent considerable time working and conducting research inside the Saudi Kingdom.

### ***Abstract***

10 years in the wake on the attacks of September 11 and the structural causes behind the militant anti-modern extremism that emerged inside Saudi Arabia and drove many of its young citizens towards engaging in global Jihad remains poorly conceptualized. Although an understanding of the immediate causes for the emergence of Al Qaeda and its subordinate sister organisation inside the Kingdom has developed through the tireless works of scholars like Hegghammer(2010), Lacroix(2011) and Cordesman(2005), their focus on the influence of contemporary events and individuals over the Jihadist process provides us with micro, meso and macro explanations without elaborating on the underlying social, political and cultural structures that such conditions emerged from.

This presentation argues that the anti-modern rejectionist patterns of the Salafic doctrine inherent in Saudi society and state since 1744 are antithetical to the simultaneous attempt by the regime to move towards economic modernization and a more cosmopolitan orientation in the global order. Utilizing Anthony Giddens'(1991) and Katarina Kinnvall's(2004) theories of social structuration and ontological insecurity, it contends that as the Kingdom moves forward, it simultaneously must respond to and manage an increasingly visible social paradox that has been linked in the past to political extremism and militancy in disaffected elements of the Saudi population.

It is the aim of this study to provide the policy maker, the scholar and the casual reader an alternative approach by which to judge the phenomenon of Saudi Jihadism that both builds upon and is complimentary to the established bodies of work on the subject. As the Middle East continues to be wracked by turmoil and instability, a deep knowledge of the drivers behind political and religious discontent inside one of the most geostrategically important states on the planet is critical the world over.

**Dr. Brooke Rogers**  
Sessional Lecturer  
The University of New South Wales

## **Agents of Politics, Agents of Place: Narrative Pathways to Peace**

### ***Biography***

Brooke L. Rogers was recently awarded a PhD (International Studies) from the University of Queensland, Australia. Her dissertation is entitled 'Un-Othering Place: Renegotiating the Master Narrative of Place'. It contributes to the study of the nexus between 'place', narrative and political rapprochement. Other research interests include peacebuilding and conflict resolution. She has a background in archaeology, anthropology and Egyptology.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation explores the potential for elite political agents to rewrite narratives of conflict by re-imagining historical and place-based notions of ontological security. It argues that the move toward negotiations is dependent upon the political willingness of courageous and imaginative agents to overcome Self/Other characterisations, and make meaningful narrative concessions for the purpose of reconciliation. It recognises that at times, elite political agents can help to perpetuate a Self/Other interpretation by failing to move beyond a deeply entrenched and conflictual narrative cycle.

However, this presentation contends that there are also instances where agents of place have initiated meaningful narrative change. It looks at the case of Egypt and Israel in the late 1970s and early 1980s and in particular the narrative entrepreneurship of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. The courage and willingness shown by Sadat and Begin resulted in positive political rapprochement which undermined the entrenched Egyptian-Israeli narrative of marginalisation and exclusion. It also facilitated the renegotiation of the meaning of Jerusalem and the Sinai Peninsula which heralded a new map of the Middle East – one that included the State of Israel.

**Jamil Sawda**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
University of Canberra

## **Lebanon and the Syrian Uprising: A Critical Analysis of the Struggle for Power over Lebanon**

### ***Biography***

Jamil Sawda is a PhD candidate at the University of Canberra, specialising in Lebanon and Syria. He previously served in the Saudi Diplomatic Service as well as the United Nations as part of the Iraq Team at the UN Headquarters in New York. A graduate of The Australian National University, he holds a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Affairs, a Master of Diplomacy and a Master of Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies. Jamil's research interests include Middle East history and contemporary affairs, especially the Levant; diplomacy; international negotiation and conflict management.

### ***Abstract***

Anti-Syrian forces in Lebanon have attempted to redress the bilateral relationship with Syria since Syrian troops withdrew from the country in 2005 but have largely failed. Syria has continued to exercise considerable influence through its patronage relationships with members of the pro-Syrian coalitions in Lebanon. Since then, Lebanon has been entangled in a showdown between Syria and Iran on the one hand, and the United States and most of the international community on the other, over who dominates affairs in this small country. The emergence of the Syrian uprising in 2011 has led to new challenges and opportunities for the relations between both nations. This presentation will analyse developments in the Lebanese – Syrian relationship by first considering the struggle between the Syrian regime and pro-independence forces post-2005. Second, the presentation dissects the domestic situation in Lebanon during the current uprising in Syria. Thirdly, it will consider the implications of the uprising by outlining whether there will be a fundamental change in the bilateral relationship.

**Jillian Schedneck**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Social Sciences  
University of Adelaide

## **‘Empowering’ or ‘Empowered’ Emirati Women?: State-Sponsored Feminism and Self-Perceptions of Women’s Achievements in the Public Sphere**

### ***Biography***

Jillian Schedneck is a PhD candidate in Gender Studies at the University of Adelaide. Her work focuses on the ways in which national women and men of the United Arab Emirates express national identity. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing from West Virginia University. Her travel memoir, *Abu Dhabi Days, Dubai Nights*, was published by Pan Macmillan in March 2012. Her essays have been published in literary journals in the United States and Australia, and she has taught English and Gender Studies courses in Australia, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and the United States.

### ***Abstract***

This presentation explores the position of Emirati women as symbols of the United Arab Emirates’ modern present and future, as well as the traditions of its past. This notion is constructed through tourist literature and government-produced documents, which portray the ‘modern’ Emirati woman as a highly educated and ambitious career woman, as well as the bearer of cultural tradition. These competing, contradictory and overlapping discourses on the roles and modern identities of Emirati women creates compelling and confining avenues of representation to embody, negotiate and resist. Because of the government’s highly promoted part in national women’s advancements, this presentation will examine the role of state-sponsored feminism in the lives and self-perceptions of my female participants. Using case studies of other Middle Eastern countries, this work furthers analysis on the effects of state-sponsored feminism and how this reality shapes women’s sense of identity, opportunities, and the stories they tell themselves.

It is argued that Emirati women re-inscribe state-sponsored feminist agendas to arrive at complex figurations of women’s empowerment within the UAE, Islam and globalized Dubai. This study’s participants lay out a complex case for incorporating state-sponsored feminism into their personal worldviews on women’s achievements and possibilities within the public and private spheres, re-inscribing the UAE government and media’s portrayals of ‘empowering’ Emirati women, and rejecting international media’s representation of Muslim women who are covered, oppressed and victimized. Indeed, it is found that Emirati women provide challenges to ideas about gender equality and women’s rights through their artistic expressions and individual interview responses, as terms like ‘freedom,’ ‘empowerment’ and ‘feminism’ are differently imagined. This analysis does not simply compare the state’s power over and suppression of individuals, but instead investigates the ways subjectivity has become a vital source for particular strategies of complicity and resistance.

**Fatin Shabbar**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy  
University of South Australia

## **Decolonising Female Political Contribution: A Project of Redefining Women's Rights in Iraq**

### ***Biography***

Fatin Shabbar is a PhD student at the University of South Australia (UniSA) in the school of Psychology, Social Work and Social Policy. She completed a Bachelor of Social Work with First Class Honours in 2008, also at UniSA. Her research focuses on a range of areas including: postcolonial feminism, women and war, gender and religion, traumatised identity, migration, Middle Eastern women and Iraqi women.

### ***Abstract***

The dialogue of 'Women's rights and liberation' has been occupying a significant space in western academic discussions of political development in the Middle East and the Arab region. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq, Tunisia or Egypt, the rights of women in these countries have been generating a heated debate among local and western authorities and public. In this presentation this debate is engaged by drawing on data collected from interviews conducted with 31 'Iraqi women' who live in Iraq.

This presentation argues that the political discourse that became available after the invasion is generally non representative of women's political reality in the region. This argument emphasizes that Iraqi women's daily struggle is not so much against gender inequality, important as that is, but rather it is primarily against the slow death, embodied in the lack of basic survival needs such as food, shelter, water, electricity, security and so on, that both women and men face in Iraq. In this sense, the exclusive focus on 'women's rights' that carries an imperialist language of 'liberation' has to a large extent marginalised women's needs and stigmatized their effective citizenship. This presentation aims to challenge dominant/western political discourses by drawing attention to other discursively political positions that are more relevant to the reality of women in Iraq. The argument in this presentation is analysed using a postcolonial feminist analysis that critiques the western representations of non-western women and encourages the establishment of a new gender dialogue in the Middle East that is more responsive to the socio-political context of the region.

**Jeremy Simpson**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Sociology and Social Policy  
The University of Sydney

## **Stabilisation, Risk and Risk-Management: International Intervention Practices and Local Responses in Afghanistan**

### ***Biography***

Jeremy Simpson holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours from the University of Sydney and is currently completing a PhD in sociology by research also at the University of Sydney. The topic of his thesis is institutional risk-aversion and enclavisation in Afghanistan or the examination of intervention practice in the context of risk. His research interests include the sociology of risk, the sociology of violence and conflict, the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu, qualitative research methodology and the history and culture of Afghanistan. His publications include (2012) 'Stabilisation Operations and Structural Instability in the Contemporary World-System' in *The Routledge Handbook of World-Systems Analysis* (Christopher Chase-Dunn and Salvatore Babones, editors, University of California) and (2010) 'Beyond 'peacekeeping': re-theorising the legitimacy of present practice in transnational paramilitary intervention' (peer-reviewed refereed conference paper published in the proceedings of 2010 conference of The Australian Sociological Association (TASA)). Mr Simpson teaches sociology and research methods at the University of Sydney and has assisted with a number of research projects, including research capacity building for the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. He is a member of the Widening Participation Scholars Network and The Australian Sociological Association.

### ***Abstract***

The presentation concerns a key problematic in relations between the Muslim-majority societies of the Middle East and Central Asia and the materially advantaged non-Muslim majority societies of the global 'north' or 'west': hybrid military-developmental intervention under a discourse of 'stabilisation'. The most recent paradigm cases are Iraq and Afghanistan; the paper is derived from recent sociological research conducted in Afghanistan. The paper examines intervention practice at the level of everyday institutional and interpersonal interaction, and derives from this an explanation of the lack of achievement of significant stabilisation outcomes due to construction by intervening institutions of the local setting and local actors primarily in terms of risk.

This leads to a risk-management approach to the implementation of stabilisation programs of aid and development that prioritises the reduction of risk to international agency personnel over effective implementation. The adoption of an 'enclave' or 'citadel' model of intervention in which maximal high-profile private sector security regimes curtail virtually all possibility of reciprocal relations between local populations and intervening actors reflects both the institutional risk-aversion of the intervening agencies and the construction of an Islamic 'other' in terms of and as a risk. The paper argues that the risks are in practice residual for non-military actors implementing non-military programs, and that security regimes do not represent a response to conditions of risk so much as a pre-emptive risk-management regime that by 'externalising' risk may under certain conditions increase the risks the regime is intended to manage. The presentation considers whether this represents a change in practice or continuity in practice in this particular context, and concludes by indicating some possible future trajectories of 'enclavised intervention' in Central Asia post 2014 and the Afghanistan 'transition', and by suggesting an alternative model of 'reciprocal-risk intervention' emphasising local relations, prolonged engagement and acceptance of residual risk.

## **Mohsen Solhdoost**

Masters Student/Rotary Peace Fellow

The University of Queensland/ Rotary Peace Centre

### **Revolutionary Change in the Arab World: International Attention & Elision of Popular Discontent**

#### ***Biography***

Mohsen Solhdoost was born in Iran in 1981. Having graduated with a B.A. in English Translation, he was hired by UNHCR to work at the border between Iran and Afghanistan in 2004. After a short while, he moved to the Western borders of Iran and continued his job in the UNHCR Voluntary Repatriation Center in Orumieh. He joined UNICEF in 2005 as a Child Protection Assistant in the Psycho-social Unit for its emergency operation and relief efforts for the quake-stricken people of central cities in Iran. In December 2005, he moved to Mashhad and worked on a part-time basis with the Resettlement Unit of UNHCR Sub-office as an Interviewer. In 2006, he was appointed as the Finance/Admin Assistant of the Global Fund Project to Fight HIV/AIDS in Iran. In 2008, he was recruited as the UNHCR Liaison Officer to establish a Refugee Secretariat in the Embassy of Afghanistan in Tehran. He received his M.A. in English Literature and has participated in programs on Humanitarian subjects in Japan, Austria, U.S., and Switzerland. Being awarded a Rotary Peace Fellowship, he is currently doing his second Masters degree in International Studies, Peace and Conflict Resolution in the University of Queensland.

#### ***Abstract***

In 2011, the “Arab Spring” gained international attention as the outbreak of public discontent in a few Arab countries resulted in varying interventions. Yet, the internationalization of such movements which aimed to facilitate democratization processes in countries such as Libya and Egypt has conversely precipitated the consolidation of fundamentalist powers. Contrary to popular expectation, the civil unrest which led to revolutionary changes in Libya and Egypt did not necessarily conclude with democratic change. Thus, the Arab Awakening cannot be comprehended through traditional syllogisms which fail to recognize the unrealized goals of these movements. Further, the discrepancy in the treatment of “friendly” and “unfriendly” Arab countries such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia vs. Egypt and Libya are critically scrutinized in this paper.

With regards to what is said above, this paper explores two unnoticed issues in which the internationalization of the popular dissent in the region has rooted; elimination of Socialist systems and stabilization of access to oil and natural gas resources. The former issue dates back to confrontations with Ba’ath party’s Socialism in Iraq and Syria, and Nasser’s pan-Arab Socialism in Egypt in 1950s. Unlike Saudi Arabia, a non-socialist friendly country whose stability has never been challenged, Saddam Hussein’s fall through a military intervention was followed by Gadhafi’s, as a true disciple of Nasser. The latter issue is reinforced by the idea of ‘regime-change-plans’ through use of ‘hard power’ in Iraq and Libya, and ‘soft power’ in Tunisia and Egypt. To demonstrate the disconnect between the initial demands of people, which was initially stirred up because of unemployment and inflation, and the result of the revolutions, the Salafist Islamists of Muslim Brotherhood, anti-Ghadafi and anti-Assad forces, and the foreign intervention will be taken into consideration.

**Dr. Grigol Ubiria**  
Research Officer  
Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and  
Central Asia)  
The Australian National University

## **Nation-Reshaping in Post-Soviet Central Asia**

### ***Biography***

Grigol Ubiria is a Research Officer at the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies at The Australian National University. He submitted his PhD thesis, entitled “From Tribes to Modern Nations: Soviet Nation-Building in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan,” for external examination in April 2012. Grigol holds MSc in Nationalism Studies from the University of Edinburgh, UK (2005), and MA in Political Science from the Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Georgia (2002). During 2007-2008, Grigol worked as a Researcher at the Caucasus Office of the George Mason University Transnational Crime and Corruption Center. Grigol’s research interests include: nationalism; politics and history of Central Asia and Caucasus.

### ***Abstract***

Shortly after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the governments of all the newly independent states of Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—have launched various nation-building policies aimed at fostering a redefined sense of national identity and belonging among the members of their respective titular nationalities. Among others, these national-building policies have included: history rewriting, selection and promotion of new national heroes, invention of new ‘traditional’ festivals, enhancing the status and role of titular languages in public domain, and de-Russification of toponyms—place names and street signs. By now, these state-led nation-building projects have achieved varying levels of success. The presentation seeks to describe and examine the present and probable future outcomes of these nationalities policies in each Central Asian republic.

**Aly Zaman**

Ph.D. Candidate

Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia)

The Australian National University

**The New Great Game's Emerging Arena: Competing Interests and the Potential for Conflict in Pakistani Balochistan*****Biography***

Aly Zaman is a PhD scholar at the Australian National University's Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia). Prior to commencing his doctoral programme in August 2012, he worked as South Asia Senior Analyst for the International Crisis Group, one of the world's leading conflict prevention organizations. He has also worked as a research analyst at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute and as a Pakistani civil service official. He possesses a Master's degree in Democracy, Politics and Governance from Royal Holloway, University of London, as well as a Master's degree in Defence and Strategic Studies from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. His doctoral research revolves around examining the role of the US in influencing Pakistan's domestic political dynamics.

***Abstract***

The nineteenth century witnessed an epic struggle, referred to as the Great Game, between the British Empire and Czarist Russia for ascendancy in Central Asia. The last decade of the twentieth century saw the inauguration of a New Great Game, this time between a number of global and regional players, for control over the energy-rich Central Asian republics that became independent following the collapse of the Soviet Union. While Afghanistan remains the central battlefield in the ongoing New Great Game, there are increasing signs of the emergence of a neighbouring arena of geo-political competition in Pakistan's insurgency-hit western province of Balochistan, which borders both Afghanistan and Iran and has the potential to provide landlocked Central Asia access to the Arabian Sea. Owing to its pivotal geographic location at the crossroads of the Middle East and Central Asia, Balochistan constitutes an alluring prospect for foreign involvement. China has already constructed a port in Balochistan's coastal town of Gwadar, thereby providing it access to the Arabian Sea and to the energy-rich Persian Gulf. For the United States, Balochistan will be central to the attainment of a number of major foreign policy objectives, including further encircling Iran, blocking Chinese attempts to establish a naval presence in the Arabian Sea and preventing the Taliban from carrying out cross-border attacks in Afghanistan. India and Iran have their own interests in Balochistan, with the former seeking to prevent Chinese penetration of the region whilst destabilizing its other regional rival, Pakistan, and the latter endeavouring both to prevent American encirclement as well as to break out of its growing international isolation through a gas pipeline to Pakistan through Balochistan. This maelstrom of conflicting interests is likely to generate further conflict in what is already one of the world's most volatile regions.

**Rizwan Zeb**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Centre for Muslim States and Societies  
University of Western Australia

## **Pakistan and Afghanistan's End Game**

### ***Biography***

Rizwan Zeb is a doctoral candidate at the Centre for Muslim States and Societies, University of Western Australia, and a Senior Research Analyst at the Institute for Regional Studies, Islamabad, Pakistan. He is also Associate Professor at the Iqra University in Islamabad, and visiting faculty at Quaid-e-Azam University. He has held several international visiting fellow positions: Benjamin Meaker Visiting Professor in Politics and Charles Wallace Visiting Senior Research Fellow, department of Politics, Governance Research Centre, University of Bristol (2006); Visiting Scholar at the India-South Asia Project, Foreign Policy Program, Brookings Institution in Washington, DC (2004); Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (Colombo, Sri Lanka) Mahbub-ul-Haq Fellow (2003-4); and member, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London (current). He is co-author of *Indo-Pak Conflicts: Ripe to Resolve?* (Manahor, 2005), and is currently working on a book on the history and future of Pakistan. At present, he is also guest editing a special issue of a peer review journal (Sage), *Journal of South Asian Development on Afghanistan and the Region: Post 2014*.

### ***Abstract***

The Obama Administration, which took power in 2009, has declared that it intends to pull American troops out of Afghanistan by 2014, leaving the tasks of providing security and development mainly in the hands of the Afghan government and the newly created Afghan National Army.

As the withdrawal date fast approaches, the future stability of Afghanistan and the region including the neighbouring countries will be open to debate/question. A renewed civil war and an eventual return of the Taliban to power cannot be ruled out. The region will face another power competition which will have adverse effects for the whole region. This coupled with the problems such as Muslim extremism, geo-politics of energy resources and terrorism will have serious implications for regional and global security. The most effected country from all these developments would be Pakistan which is already fighting its own war against terror. Despite the fact that it is a frontline state in the WoT, many allege that it is part of the problem.

As the withdrawal date is approaching, it is becoming increasingly clear that Pakistan will play a significant role not only in providing a route to the withdrawing forces but will also have an important role to play in the future of the region including Afghanistan. However, many questions remain: What are Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan? How does it view outside especially Indian presence in Afghanistan and would Pakistan's policy bring it into conflict with the US, India and Iran over Afghanistan? What shape Pakistan-Afghanistan relations will take? Is there a possibility of armed clash between Pakistan and Afghanistan?

**Ian Zucker**  
Ph.D. Candidate  
School of Social Sciences  
University of New South Wales

## **Stories of Israeli National(ist) Holidays: Discourse, Narrative, and Identity**

### ***Biography***

Ian M. Zucker is a second year doctoral research candidate in the School of Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. The primary intent of his research is to interrogate the politics of Israeli national(ist) identity through a feminist narrative analysis. He is specifically interested in national holidays and their role in constituting broader narratives of Israeli nationalism. Ian also has general interests in the politics of representation in popular culture, feminist security studies and emerging masculinities.

### ***Abstract***

In the wake of 'the narrative turn' in International Relations, this paper investigates Israeli nationalism through the vehicle of a feminist narrative analysis. Doing so allows the researcher to unpack the temporal, racialised, and gendered discourses that provide a basis for Israeli national(ist) identity. This is crucial because the interrogation of national stories enables the theorisation of national(ist) identity, from the everyday and from above.

This presentation seeks to interrogate the gendered narrative representations of three Israeli state holidays: Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day), Yom HaZikaron (Day of Remembrance – 'Fallen Soldiers'), and Yom HaAtzmaut (Independence Day). Through an examination of the gendered (national/ist) writings around these holidays, This presentation demonstrates that three discursive categories are central to understanding each holiday's constitutive significance: land/people, (in)security, and hope. These discursive categories are not stable, complete, nor representative of the totality of Israeli identity. They are, however, effective in charting (gendered) representations of the Self/Other relationship, as vividly illustrated in and through the stories which are (re)told and (re)produced about these national(ist) holidays.

This presentation concludes by highlighting and emphasising the performativity of nationalism, as constituted through the 'telling'. It is through this articulatory practice that gendered politics come alive in the narrative framing of national(ist) stories. This framework, therefore, also allows for the theorisation of everyday politics and is immensely useful, since 'stories' provide a tangible avenue through which to gain insights on what it means to 'be' Israeli.

## Notes

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Cover image taken on 8 February 2011 as hundreds of thousands of Egyptians protested in Cairo's Tahrir Square to demand that Hosny Mubarak step down. Photo by: Jonathan Rashad