Political Science Second Annual Conference

“Representation and Reproduction of the Middle East and North Africa in Political Science”

October 12-13, 2019
Location: P071 EIWALEED Hall

DAY 1: SATURDAY OCTOBER 12, 2019

09:00-09:30 AM
Welcome and Introduction by Rabab El Mahdi
Chair of the Department of Political Science, American University in Cairo

SESSION 1: Violence, Conflict and Intervention
This session questions the study of the Middle East and North Africa as exceptionally violent, conflict prone, economically illiterate and underdeveloped. Challenging these dominant notions of the region, we ask: What relations are missed by examining violence, conflict, and intervention in traditional security studies? In what ways have the politico-economic vestiges and material continuities with the past, been elided by the focus on the analysis of the extraordinary, the violent and the extreme? And how can we move beyond statist approaches to understanding violence, conflict, and intervention?

09:30-11:00 AM
Chair: Maye Kassem, American University in Cairo

Turbulence and Insecurity in the Middle East Regional System
Waleed Hazboun, Alabama University

Appropriating the 'Other': The Politics of Intertextuality and the Visual Framing of Violence in the Middle East
Marco Pinfari, American University in Cairo

International Relations Theory and the Middle East: The Two-Way Street
Bahgat Korany, American University in Cairo

11:00-11:15 AM
Coffee break
11:15 AM-12:45 PM
Chair: Nadine Sika, American University in Cairo

*When Leviathan Exits: On the Causes of Simultaneous Breakdown of State and Regime*
Oliver Schlumberger, University of Tübingen

*Political Economy in the Middle East: The Limits of Universalism*
Amr Adly, American University in Cairo

*Eternal Authoritarianism and New Forms of Orientalism*
Rabab el-Mahdi, American University in Cairo

12:45-1:45 PM
Lunch

SESSION 2: Citizenship, Minorities and Exclusion
This session examines the Middle East and North Africa as a space with a long history and memory of stark displacement and migration dynamics, all of which have reshaped relations between populations and the state. We ask: How can the weakening of central powers in the region invite us to rethink the functioning of national borders and boundaries in the everyday lives of peoples? How has the dislodging of incumbent authorities and reassertions of new authoritarianisms given rise to new political imaginaries and agencies? And how does political science simplify complex social aspects of membership that reproduce theories of oriental despotism and hyper-masculinity?

1:45-3:15 PM
Chair: Marco Pinfari, American University in Cairo

*Refugees as City-Makers: Lessons from Beirut.*
Mona Harb, American University in Beirut

*The Oslo Generation of Palestinian Refugees: Thinking Beyond the Nation?*
Sophie Richter-Devroe, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

3:15-4:45 PM
Chair: Sean Lee, American University in Cairo

*Rethinking the Political: Jordanian Women’s Activism against Gender-Based Violence*
Dana Olwan, Syracuse University

*The Arab Apocalypse: A Critique of the Masculinized Politics of Disaster*
Andrew Delatolla, American University in Cairo

*Sex, Race and Death: Representations of MENA in Orthodox and Critical Security Studies*
Melanie Richter-Montpetit, Sussex University
4:45-5:00 PM
Closing Remarks

6:30 PM
Dinner (Pick up at 6:30 PM from Dusit to Downtown)
DAY 2: SUNDAY OCTOBER 13, 2019

09:00-09:30 AM
Reception

SESSION 3: Borders, Territoriality and Sovereignty
This session examines tensions in the Middle East and North Africa between the power of communities, government, and international recognition through which states are established. We ask: How can we define and re-consider territoriality and sovereignty in light of historic and current crises in the region? In what ways have new forms of collective action rehearsed and reversed in the past decade shaped our imagining of the demos and their capacities and limitations? And what practices are mobilized by local communities and non-state actors that move beyond formal state boundaries, identities and control?

09:30-11:00 AM
Chair: Andrew Delatolla, American University in Cairo

(Dis)courtesy Bias: Methodological Cognates, Ethics, and Evidentiary Validity in Violence-Adjacent Research
Sara Parkinson, Johns Hopkins University

Farm Warfare: Mobilizing the Sovereignty of the Border in Gaza
Shourideh C. Molavi, American University in Cairo

11:00-11:15 AM
Coffee break

11:15 AM-12:45 PM
Chair: Shourideh C. Molavi, American University in Cairo

Regulation of Armed Conflict in Islamic Jurisprudence: Critical Comparativism
Nesrine Badawi, American University in Cairo

On Law, Comedy and Revolution: Reading Alice in Wonderland in Mandate Palestine
Mai Taha, American University in Cairo

12:45-1:45 PM
Lunch

1:45-3:15 PM
Discussion and Closing Remarks

4:45 PM
Dinner (Pick up at 4:45 PM from Dusit to Maadi)