

Seminar:
Strategic Nonviolent Struggle in the
Middle East Before the 'Arab Spring'




Why Did we Not see the Arab Spring Coming?

- The Challenges of “Predicting” a Revolution:
 - ◆ Poor Data
 - ◆ Poor Analysis
 - ◆ The risks of “Modeling”
 - ◆ Understanding Diversity in the MENA region
- The MINDSET—*Stability breeds Stability*
- *INSTEAD: Look at Human Security and Society*

Civil Society in the Middle East

- ◆ When did we begin to study 'civil society' and 'social movements' in the MENA region?
 - ◆ How do we define 'civil society' in the Middle East?
 - Finding a common ground-a plurality of definitions
 - Does the 'western definition' work?
- CIVITAS-CIVILITY-CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil Society in the Middle East- A Definition

- ◆ Active Individual
 - ◆ Freedom
 - ◆ Independence
 - ◆ Volunteers
 - ◆ Good Governance and Transparency
 - ◆ Legal Recognition
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Is there a Civil Society in the Middle East?

- ◆ What were the main Obstacles in the Middle East
 - Economic Context-*The Missing Middle Class*-
 - Militarization-*A Culture of Fear*-
 - Political Context-*The Role of the State*-
 - Historical and Cultural Frames
 - Legal Obstacles
 - Internal/Organizational Obstacles
- ◆ Where does this leave us?

The Actors

- ◆ What did the MENA civil society look like? Who were the main actors?
 - ◆ Islamist Movements
 - ◆ NGOs
 - ◆ Unions
 - ◆ Professional Associations
- ‘Traditional’ and Civil society
- Creating a Public Space

Early Mobilizations

- The 1980s and 1990s: the rise of the civil society
 - Public Demonstrations: Riots
 - Old-school activism: Trade Unions
 - Building Communities: Local Activism
 - “Quiet Encroachment”
 - From economic, to cultural, to political activism.
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