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
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.