

CONFERENCE

Media in Political Transition: Focus on Tunisia

15-16 July, 2014

Organized by the University of Cambridge Centre for the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa (CIRMENA) and the Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies

PROGRAMME

On 26 January 2014, three years after uprisings roiled the Arab world and President Zine el-Abeddin Ben Ali was ousted, Tunisia adopted a new Constitution, which enshrines freedom of expression and freedom of conscience within a democratic political system of elections and representative government. This two-day Conference will examine the forces that led to this signal achievement, particularly as they relate to the emergence of a liberated media as a key factor in the development of a politically pluralistic Tunisia. Importantly, it will provide context to these changes by considering the impact of the last three tumultuous years on the changing political/media environment in the larger Maghrib region. The mediated nature of the Arab uprisings has led to significant theoretical reassessment in the field of media studies, while the trajectory of political change in the region, from 'leaderless activism' to inexperienced party politics negotiating new structural terrains, is challenging existing analytical frames and encouraging new ones. The conference will offer an academic platform focused on Tunisia and the Maghrib that will bring together scholars and experts from different disciplines to share insights and develop new ways of understanding the structural relationship between media and state, the contours of the emerging Fourth Estate, and the social discourses that are constituting a politics in transition.

July 15, 2014

Registration, Graham Storey Room, Trinity Hall, Cambridge

1:30 - 2pm

Opening and Welcome Dr. Roxane Farmanfarmanian, CIRMENA and Dr. Ezzeddine Abdelmoula, Manager of Studies, Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies

PANEL I: Transitioning the Political, North Africa in Theoretical Context

2:00 - 4:00 pm

Moderator: Moulay Hicham Ben Abdallah (Moulay Hicham Foundation for Social Science Research on MENA)

Dr. Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou (Deputy Director and Academic Dean of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy and Visiting Professor at the Graduate Institute, Geneva): Revisiting Transitivity as Democratising Theory

Professor Michael Willis (University of Oxford): Self-Conscious Exceptionalism? Tunisia's Ennahda Movement in Comparative Regional Perspective

Dr. Corinna Mullin, Dr. Ian Patel (University of Tunis/SOAS, Kings College London): Contesting Transitional Justice in Tunisia: Hegemonic justice and non-institutionalized resistance

Coffee

4:00 - 4:20 pm

PANEL II: Structuring a Free Media: Law and Regulation in a Democratising Tunisia

4:20 - 6:15 pm

Moderator: Dr. Ezzeddine Abdelmoula (Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies)

Professor George Joffé (University of Cambridge) Government-Media Relations in Tunisia: A Paradigm Shift?

Dr. Fatima el-Issawi (London School of Economics): Regulatory media reform: The Tunisian Experience: A successful example?

Marc Janssen (Expert for the European Union) The Building of Independent Media Regulation in Post-revolutionary Tunisia

Alexis Artaud de la Ferrière (University of Cambridge) The Scissors and the Magnifying Glass: Internet Governance in the Transitional Tunisian Context

Dinner for Speakers, Queens' College

7 - 10pm

July 16, 2014

**Coffee and Croissants, Graham Storey Room, Trinity Hall, Cambridge
8:30-9:30 a.m.**

**PANEL III: Comparative Expressions of Transition
9:30-11:00 a.m.**

Moderator: Dr. Roxane Farmanfarmaian (University of Cambridge)

Dr. Ezzeddine Abdelmoula (Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies) Media and Political Change in the Arab Setting: A Critical Perspective

Dr. Anne Alexander (University of Cambridge): Revolution and counterrevolution in the Egyptian media: Reflections in comparison with Tunisia

Dr. Luisa Gandolfo (University of Aberdeen): 'Spect-acting' the Revolution: Artifying Tunisian political discourses

Fabio Merone (PhD Candidate, University of Ghent): Enduring Class Struggle: Beyond Political Islam and the fight for identity

Coffee: 11:00-11:20 a.m.

**PANEL IV: The Function of Media: Defining Public, Private and Professional in Tunisia
11:20 am – 1:00 pm**

Moderator: Professor Michael Willis, University of Oxford

Dr. Roxane Farmanfarmaian (University of Cambridge): What is Private, What is Public, and Who Exercises Media Power in Tunisia? A hybrid-functional perspective on Tunisia's media sector

Samar Samir Mezghanni (PhD Candidate, University of Cambridge): Civil Society and Media Capacity Building: Partnerships reinforcing citizenship

Cyrine Ben Amor (PhD Candidate, Goldsmiths University): Social Media in Transitional Tunisia: A new information landscape?

**Lunch
1:00-2:15 pm**

July 16, 2014

Graham Storey Room, Trinity Hall, Cambridge

**PANEL V: Agency, Activism and Voice: The new media platforms in Tunisia
2:15-4:15 pm**

Moderator: Professor George Joffé, University of Cambridge

Rory McCarthy (PhD Candidate, University of Oxford): Ennahda, Free Speech and the Protection of the Sacred

Zoe Petkanas (PhD Candidate, University of Cambridge): Women, Politics, and the TV Talk-Show since the Revolution

Kayla Branson (The Risk Advisory Group): Islamist cyber-activism: Contesting the message, redefining the public

Omar Sayfo (PhD Candidate, University of Utrecht): Web Animation as a Liberal Space for Political Criticism: the Case of 'Captain Khobza'

Close: Dr. Roxane Farmanfarmanian, CIRMENA and Dr. Ezzeddine Abdelmoula, Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies

Conference location: Trinity Hall, Cambridge

Registration Required: el402@cam.ac.uk

(Prayer Room will be available)