



Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Auswärtige Politik
German Council on
Foreign Relations

The New York Review of Books Foundation

June 4 – 5 2016

DGAP, 17 Rauchstrasse, 10787 Berlin

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FRITT ORD



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THE MIDDLE EAST: WORLD CRISIS?



NYU Remarque Institute





THE MIDDLE EAST: WORLD CRISIS?

Our justification for holding a conference on the Middle East in the Spring of 2016 is that the region is now subject to a *conjoncture* of political instability, economic dysfunction, growing religious extremism and seemingly endless war which is bringing misery and hardship to tens of millions of its citizens, and with a capacity to increase already shocking levels of violence in a zone stretching from the Afghan-Pakistan border to the southern shores of the Mediterranean.

Shifting our perspective to take in a broader reach of history, both the United States and Europe seem now dangerously vulnerable to large scale terrorist violence arising from the region, a dystopic series which began with the 9/11 attacks in New York City and Washington; continued with the London bombings of July 2005; and continues still with the attacks in Paris last November and in Brussels just three months ago.

Is this the beginning of a history of destruction which might persist for years to come, and with a capacity to transform Western politics and society for the worse? There seems to be no way of knowing. In the era of World War II and the Cold War the Western powers could marshal the resources to defeat or at least contain their adversaries. But in the present crisis these resources seem much reduced, if they exist at all, nor is it clear how effective they would be if they did exist.

The tolerance of Western public opinions for large scale military intervention has gone; the resources available for economic assistance are much diminished following the Crash of 2007-2008, and attempts to enlist local powers ~ Saudi Arabia, Jordan ~ as Western surrogates has not so far been successful.

In the late summer of 2015 the crisis took on a new and frightening dimension. A year of escalating violence in Syria and Iraq, driven by the Islamic fanaticism of Isis, has unleashed a huge wave of refugees fleeing for their lives and seeking sanctuary mostly in the member states of the European Union.

With the added violence of the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, this has become for Europe in particular perhaps the gravest crisis of its kind since the Second World War and engages the continent in the day to day affairs of the Middle East in ways that are unprecedented. In our conference we hope to contribute towards an understanding of the region's multiple crises and explore paths to their solution.

In this search for answers there are multiple questions to be asked, among them: What are the origins of Isis, the reasons for its success, and does there exist a strategy for its containment or defeat and, if not, what are the consequences of this for the region? How do we interpret the ambiguous record of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey, presiding over perhaps the only authentically successful economy in the Islamic Middle East, but whose authoritarianism and violations of human rights are increasingly apparent? Finally, how long can the present stalemate in negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians continue before there is a new *intifada* in the Palestinian territories, even more violent than its predecessors?

As co-organizers of the conference, the DGAP and The New York Review of Books Foundation wish to thank all those who are participating in the conference and who have come here from Europe, the United States, and the Middle East itself. We also wish to thank our supporters whose generosity has made the conference possible: The Fritt Ord Foundation of Oslo, a loyal and long standing supporter of New York Review Foundation conferences. Also The Dan David Prize of Tel Aviv, The Europaeum of Oxford, The London Magazine, The Remarque Institute at New York University, the Sekyra Group of Prague, and the ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius of Hamburg. We also welcome all those attending the conference for what we are sure will be a memorable occasion.

Sylke Tempel
Simon Head



PROGRAMME

SATURDAY MORNING, JUNE 4

- 9.45 am WELCOMING REMARKS
Dr Sylke Tempel, The DGAP
Dr Knut Olav Åmås, Fritt Ord Foundation, Oslo
Simon Head, New York Review of Books Foundation
Professor Itamar Rabinovich, The Dan David Prize
Sascha Suhrke, ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius
- 10.00 – 11.30 am PANEL I: THE POLITICS AND FOREIGN RELATIONS OF IRAN
Chair: Dr Ali Fathollah-Nejad, The DGAP
Professor Shaul Bakhash, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
Professor Haleh Esfandiari, Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, Washington, DC
Professor Mahmood Amiry-Moghaddam, University of Oslo
- 11.30 – 12.00 pm COFFEE BREAK
- 12.00 – 1.30 pm PANEL II: THE RISE OF ISIS AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SYRIAN AND IRAQI STATES
Professor Aziz Al-Azmeh, Central European University, Budapest
Professor Bassma Kodmani, University of Paris, and The Arab Reform Initiative
Dr Malise Ruthven, *The New York Review of Books*
- 1.30 – 2.30 pm LUNCH

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 4

- 2.30 – 4.00 pm PANEL III: TURKEY, EGYPT, AND SAUDI ARABIA: REGIONAL POWERS MANQUE?
Chair: Sarah Hartmann, MENA Program, DGAP
Amro Ali, University of Sydney
Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, The London School of Economics
DC, and columnist, *Dicken*, online Turkish newspaper
- 4.00 – 4.30 pm COFFEE BREAK
- 4.30 – 6.00 pm PANEL IV: EUROPE: IMMIGRATION, ASYLUM, AND HUMAN RIGHTS
Chair: Sascha Suhrke, ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius
Dr Emily Haber, State Secretary in the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Berlin
Flemming Rose, author and journalist, formerly Foreign Editor, *Jyllands Posten*, Copenhagen
Hugh Williamson, Director for Europe and Central Asia, Human Rights Watch, Berlin
Professor Unni Wikan, University of Oslo

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 5

- 10.00-11.30 am PANEL V: THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT
Chair: Professor Yaron Ezrahi, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Professor Shlomo Avineri, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Edward Mortimer, All Souls College, University of Oxford
Qamar Mishirqi-Assad, University of Haifa

11.30 – 12.00 pm COFFEE BREAK

12.00 – 1.30 pm PANEL VI: OUTSIDE POWERS; FROM IMPERIALISM TO IMPOTENCE?

Chair: Dr Luděk Sekyra, Sekyra Group, Prague

Hugh Eakin, Senior Editor, *The New York Review of Books*

Professor Dr Josef Joffe, Publisher/Editor, *Die Zeit*; Fellow, The Hoover Institution, Stanford, California

Dr Sylke Tempel, Editor in Chief, *Internationale Politik*, The DGAP

SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 5

1.30 – 2.30 pm LUNCH

2.30 – 4.00 pm PANEL VII: THE MIDDLE EAST: WORLD CRISIS?

Chair: Simon Head, The New York Review of Books Foundation

Professor Dr Gudrun Krämer, Free University of Berlin

Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Chairman, Dan David Foundation, Tel Aviv; Professor at New York and Tel Aviv Universities

Professor Bassam Tibi, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

END OF CONFERENCE

THE DAN DAVID PRIZE was inaugurated in May 2001 by Dan David (1929-2011) a leading member of the Israeli business community. The Prize is a joint international enterprise endowed by the Dan David Foundation and headquartered at Tel Aviv University. The prize has an annual value of \$32 million which is divided equally each year between recipients for outstanding achievements with a scientific, technological, cultural or social impact. The Prize encourages research that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. It fosters values of excellence, creativity, justice, democracy and progress, and without reference to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, nationality, disability or political affiliation. Recipients have included Margaret Atwood, Goenawan Mohamad, and Amos Oz. The Laureates for 2015 included Jimmy Wales, the founder of the Wikipedia, and Professor Peter R. Brown, Professor of History at Princeton.

THE FRITT ORD FOUNDATION ~ THE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION FOUNDATION ~ is a private Norwegian Foundation descending from the Narvesen Kiosk Company, Norway's only distribution channel for newspapers and journals in the years following World War II. Having experienced the suppression of free speech under the German occupation, the then managing director of Narvesen, Jens Henrik Nordlie, came to believe that free and open distribution of printed information in Norway was best served by turning Narvesen into a public utility. The Fritt Ord Foundation was established in June 1974 by Nordlie, Supreme Court Advocate Jens Christian Hauge, and Narvesen's Deputy Executive Director, Finn Skedsmo. Fritt Ord's remit is to protect and promote freedom of expression in Norway and throughout the world, and encompassing not only the freedom of the written and spoken word, but of art, film, theatre and all the performing arts.

THE ZEIT-STIFTUNG EBELIN UND GERD BUCERIUS was founded in 1971 by Gerd Bucerius, lawyer, politician and publisher. Bucerius founded *Die Zeit* itself in 1946, and from 1949 until 1962 he was elected as a backbench member for the the CDU in the Bundestag. Bucerius regarded it as his public duty to engage in a wide range of public debates. His passionate interest in politics, the economy and culture shaped *Die Zeit* and also the foundation that bears his name and that of his wife, Ebelin. The Stiftung promotes innovation in higher education and it founded the first private law school in Gemany, the Bucerius Law School. The ZEIT-Stiftung contributes to the humanities and social sciences through its scholarship program Trajectories of Change. The Foundation also funds programs that promote access to higher education, training and lifelong learning. Further investment is aimed at developing a free press in Eastern Europe.

BIOGRAPHIES

AMRO ALI is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney and an Associate of the Sydney Democracy Network. He has been a fellow at the Wissenschaftszentrum in Berlin. His research examines Alexandria as a laboratory in the creation of new spaces in politics. He is a contributor to *The Guardian*, *OpenDemocracy* and *Jadaliyya*.

AZIZ AL-AZMEH is University Professor in History and Director of the Centre for Religious Studies at the Central European University in Budapest. He has been a long term Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin, and a visiting Professor at Columbia, Yale, and Georgetown Universities. He is the author of *Islams and Modernities* (2005).

MAHMOOD AMIRY-MOGHADDAM is Professor of Medicine and Head of the Laboratory of Molecular Neuroscience at the University of Oslo. He is the co-founder and spokesperson for the NGO Iran Human Rights and is the author of many scholarly articles on neuroscience including 'The Molecular Basis of Water Transport in the Brain', *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 2013.

SHLOMO AVINERI is Herbert Samuel Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has been a visiting professor at Yale and Cornell Universities, and at All Souls College, Oxford. He was Director General of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1975-1977 and won the Israel Prize for Political Science in 1996. He is the author of *Herzl's Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State* (2014).

SHAUL BAKHASH is Clarence J. Robinson Professor in Middle East History at George Mason University, and has been a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. In pre-revolutionary Iran he worked as a journalist at *Kayhan*, a leading Teheran daily. He is the author of *The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution* (1990).

HUGH EAKIN is a Senior Editor at *The New York Review of Books* and founding Editor of *New York Review Daily*. For *The Review* he has reported from Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and from Norway and Denmark. His work has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

HALEH ESFANDIARI is Director of the Middle East Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington DC. She was detained in solitary confinement in Evin Prison in Teheran, from May until August 21, 2007. She is the author of *My Prison, My Home* (2009).

YARON EZRAHI is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has been a Visiting Professor at Harvard and Duke Universities, and in 2009 received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Israel Association of Political Science. He is the author of *Democracies: Necessary Political Fictions* (2012).

ALI FATHOLLAH-NEJAD has a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. He is currently an Associate Fellow with the Middle East and North African Program of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). He is a contributor to *The Guardian* and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

EMILY HABER is State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior in Berlin. As a diplomat she has served in the German Embassies in Moscow and Ankara and from 2009 until 2011 she was Political Director at the Foreign Ministry and was the EU's principal negotiations in its negotiations with Iran concerning its nuclear program.

SARAH HARTMANN is Acting Head of the Middle East and North Africa Program at The DGAP. She has been a Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World in Leiden, the CEDEJ in Cairo and the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. She is completing a PhD on the privatization of Egyptian education during the final years of the Mubarak regime.

SIMON HEAD is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Public Knowledge at New York University, and is Director of Programs for the New York Review of Books Foundation. He was a Fellow at the Rothermere American Institute, Oxford, 2005-2011. He is the author of *Mindless: Why Smarter Machines Are Making Dumber Humans* (2014).

JOSEF JOFFE is Publisher-Editor of *Die Zeit*, and was a columnist and editorial page editor at the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 1985-2000. He is a Fellow at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California. He is the author of *The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics and a Half Century of False Prophecies* (2013).

BASSMA KODMANI is Executive Director of the Arab Reform Initiative and a former Spokesperson for The Syrian National Council. She is Associate Professor of International Relations at the University of Paris and was a Senior Visiting Fellow at the College de France 2005-2006. She is the author of *La Diaspora Palestinienne* (2015).

GUDRUN KRAMER is Professor of Islamic Studies, Chair of the Institute of Islamic Studies at the Free University of Berlin, and Co-Editor of the third edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam. She is a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and is the author of *Demokratie im Islam: Der Kampf für Toleranz und Freiheit in der Arabischen Welt* (2011).

QAMAR MISHIRQI-ASSAD has been Director of the Legal Department of Rabbis for Human Rights since 2005. She is a PhD candidate at the Law Faculty of the University of Haifa and her research concerns the impact of the legal sphere on land issues in the West Bank. She also does legal work for Yesh Din, a non-profit organization concerned with human rights issues in the Palestinian territories.

EDWARD MORTIMER is a Fellow of All Souls College Oxford, and a Senior Program Adviser at the Salzburg Global Seminar. From 1998 to 2007 he was Director of Communications for Kofi Annan as Secretary General of the United Nations. He has been a foreign affairs columnist for the *Financial Times*. He is the author of *European Security After The Cold War* (1993).

KNUT OLAV AMAS is the Executive Director of the Fritt Ord Foundation of Oslo. He was the Deputy Minister in the Norwegian Ministry of Culture, Media, and Religious Issues 2013-2014, and the culture and opinions editor of the Norwegian daily *Aftenposten* 2006-2013. He is the author of *Verdien av uenighet (The Value of Disagreement)* (2007).

ITAMAR RABINOVICH is a former Ambassador of Israel to the United States. He was President of Tel Aviv University 1999-2007, and since 2007 has been Chair of the Dan David Foundation. He is a Distinguished Global Professor at New York University and the author of *The Lingering Conflict: Israel, The Arabs, and The Middle East 1948-2012* (2012).

MADAWI AL-RASHEED is Visiting Professor at the Middle East Center at the London School of Economics, Research Fellow at the Open Society Foundation, and Visiting Research Professor at the Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore. She author of *Muted Modernists: The Struggle Over Divine Politics in Saudi Arabia* (2016).

FLEMMING ROSE was Foreign Editor of the Danish daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*. As its cultural editor he was principally responsible for the September 2005 publication of the cartoons that initiated what has come to be known as the *Jyllands-Posten* Muhammad cartoons controversy. He is the author of *Tavshedens Tyranni (Tyranny of Silence)*, (2010).

MALISE RUTHVEN is an author specializing in the politics and religion of the Middle East. He has worked for the Arabic service of the BBC and is a contributor to *The New York Review of Books*. He has taught at Birkbeck College, London and the University of California, San Diego. He is the author of *Islam in the World* (2006).

LUDEK SEKYRA is the founder of the Sekyra Group, a real estate corporation based in Prague. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Law at Charles University. He is a member of the Vice Chancellor's Circle at the University of Oxford, and a Foundation Fellow at Harris Manchester College, Oxford.

SASCHA SUHRKE is Program Director for Politics and Society at the ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius, with responsibility for the Stiftung's Governance Programs. At the Bucerius Summer School he is responsible for the School's programs on Global Governance as well as the Asian Forum on Global Governance. He serves as the Chair of the Grantmakers East Forum at the European Foundation Centre.



SYLKE TEMPEL is Editor in Chief of the journal *Internationale Politik* and *Berlin Policy Journal* both published by DGAP and she has been Middle East Correspondent of *De Woche*. She is a Visiting Professor at the Institute for German Studies at Stanford University and Lecturer at the Stanford Study Center in Berlin. She is the author of *Israel: Reise durch ein altes neues Land* (2008).

BASSAM TIBI is A. D. White Professor at Large at Cornell University and from 1973 until 2009 he was Professor of International Politics at the University of Göttingen. He was a Bosch Fellow at Harvard 1982-2000, and has been a Visiting Fellow at Princeton, UC Berkeley, and Yale. He is the author of *Islam's Predicament with Modernity: Religious Reform and Cultural Change* (2008).

UNNI WIKAN is Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Oslo. She has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Chicago and at Harvard. She is a member of the Norwegian Academy of Arts and Letters and the author of *In Honor of Fadime: Murder and Shame* (2008).

HUGH WILLIAMSON is Director of the Europe and Central Asia Division of Human Rights Watch, and oversees the organization's work in Western and Eastern Europe, The Balkans, Turkey, and in the former states of the Soviet Union. He worked for eleven years as a correspondent for the *Financial Times* and most recently as the paper's deputy foreign editor.

