

“Old and new challenges in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant”

One day symposium organised by OxGAPS and the John Smith Memorial Trust

Social Science Lecture Theatre (Manor Road Building), University of Oxford,

16 November 2013.

Summary of Proceedings

Summary of Proceedings

A symposium with the theme “**Old and New Challenges in the Arab Countries of the Gulf and the Levant**” was held at the University of Oxford on Saturday, 16 November, 2013. The Symposium was a joint initiative of the *Oxford Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Forum (OxGAPS)* and the *John Smith Memorial Trust (JSMT)*. Around one hundred academics and practitioners from Oxford University and other UK institutions, as well as from the region participated in a highly interactive event with strong audience participation.

Abigail Slenski (St Antony’s College, Oxford) welcomed participants on behalf of OxGAPS and introduced the topics of the three panels.

It was emphasised that all participants were speaking in a personal capacity and that their views were not necessarily those of the institutions that they were part of.

Panel One:

Managing Change in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant.

Professor Brian Brivati, (Academic Director of the John Smith Trust) said that the symposium provided a good opportunity for John Smith fellows from the Middle East to debate important issues facing the region with students and scholars from Oxford University and beyond. He introduced the topic and the speakers.

Dennis Sammut, (OxGAPS and St Peter’s) invited participants to look at recent events in the Middle East region from a wider historical perspective. Like many he feels that the term “Arab Spring” was unsatisfactory, not least since it implied pre-determined seasonality. Change does not come automatically, like the seasons. It needs to be desired, and people need to work for it. The term “Arab Spring,” however, is relevant in other ways. It made us look again at the term “Arab” and to accept that there was such a thing as an Arab political space, after decades in which people rejected that this was the case, insisting that every country in the Middle East was on its own. Whatever we decide to call the events following on from 2010, some fundamental questions have been raised: is change necessary or can it be avoided; can change happen from the top down, or is it necessarily from the bottom up; can change be managed; and finally the question that everybody was and is asking, – some privately and some publicly - does change necessarily entail revolution and the overthrow of the established order?

Sammut argued that the events of recent years suggested a need to look carefully at the three interconnected Ps – Power, Process and People. For too long the source of power in the region has been force, be it in the Baathist regimes of Syria and, until recently, Iraq, or even in some cases the hereditary rulers. The idea that “the Sheikh must be seen with a sword in his hand” remained prevalent. The shift from absolute power to one that is accountable and subject to checks and balances is a challenge that the region has yet to overcome. Yet

revolution was not the solution – it was too costly for all concerned and often did not live up to the ideals of those that spear-headed it. There needs to be an orderly process of renewal. Certainly no one single *model fits all*, and each society must be allowed the space to determine both the nature and the speed of change. However, in this regard, all governments have duties in front of their own populations and in front of the world.

Sammut noted that Saudi Arabia has recently rejected a seat on the UN Security Council, but accepted a seat on the UN Human Rights Council. In doing so, it had accepted that there are such things as Universal Human Rights because this is the bedrock on which the Council is established. He continued saying that for far too long there has been a perception that Arab people are not capable of rational political action. The Arab street is not considered as a voice of public opinion, but a tool of whoever can manipulate it. If this was the case before, which Smmut very much doubted, it certainly is not the case now.

A huge population explosion in many Arab countries is creating huge demands on the economic, social and educational infrastructure. The business of government has become very complex. No leader now, whether he has a sword in his hand or not, is able to rule without the acquiescence and participation of the people. Serious change is, therefore, necessary and leaders must engage their people as partners in building the future.

Brian Whitaker (Author and Former Middle East Editor, The Guardian newspaper), spoke of the revolutions that erupted across the Arab countries, and whether other regimes are able to move quickly enough to avoid a similar fate. According to Whitaker, they probably cannot, and accordingly, amongst leaders, there is alarm developing as to whether and how this can be avoided. Whitaker suggested that a possible model can be found in looking at how modern businesses manage change; this is often embedded into their character as change is needed, due to the rapid developments in technology. There is, however, no sign that Arab governments are adopting this model.

Whitaker said that leadership was not dictatorship; change is necessary and will bring benefits. He presented an example of the Kotters model, whereby one obtains consent, or buys consent from the public or from a workforce. This entailed empowerment: delegating authority; allowing initiative; persistence; implementing sound policies over a period of time, which can lead to long-term change including transparency, by increasing media freedoms and lifting restrictions on NGO's and think-tanks, and accountability, which is often lacking from the top of government, with barriers to accountability caused by rentier states policies and patrimonialism. It is common for the heads of state to hinder meritocracy by appointing family members to key positions. Whittaker cited Morroco and Jordan as examples of a shift towards greater transparency and accountability, but emphasized that others are lagging behind.

Dr Hafiz Khan (Middlesex University) addressed the socio-demographic changes in the GCC countries. He argued that a combination of economic, societal, and cultural factors are behind a dramatic population change; a process further propelled by the continuous improvement in human capital, technology, social development, and the proper utilisation of modern health care. The success of a country is largely embedded with clear targeted visions and long-term policy actions. This requires rigorous action plans based on population information, alongside a regular cycle of data collection, with high quality assurance. One could say that the recent Arab Spring was caused by huge youth bulges in the Gulf population. This shows how demographic challenges are often embedded within the socio-economic, cultural and political system of a country

Although the dynamics of population and socio-economic linkages are evident for developed countries, it is often unclear for some of the oil-rich countries, particularly in the Middle East. More attention needs to be given to the socio-demographic changes of Middle Eastern countries and the subsequent human resources. Khan then spoke about the mechanisms of population change, saying that fertility is falling dramatically in all GCC countries whilst at the same time there is a dramatic increase in life expectancy. These are the main determinants of future population changes and ageing in GCC countries. The GCC countries can utilise their large bulge of youth and older population for nation building purposes by investing in people for capacity building. In the long term, the problem that the region is not well prepared to deal with is that of an “ageing population.” GCC countries should take this issue seriously by acting now to implement policy programmes that engage with academia and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs). There are several challenges ahead: ensuring that there is reliable data for population projection; providing elderly care; dealing with significant health burdens (e.g., disability); providing health treatment; and building awareness for a sustainable ageing society.

The panel Chairman then invited three discussants from the region, all of whom are actively involved in very different ways in the processes unfolding in their respective countries, to comment on the presentations of the panel.

Dr Nada Dhaif (Bahrain) spoke about the Arab “awakening” and how it revealed the corruption of *presidents*, adding that the focus should now shift towards the corruption of monarchs. Dr Dhaif sensed an internal fragility in the monarchies of certain nations, anticipating their eventual fall. Jordan and Morocco are perhaps more stable than others, due to the political acumen and legitimacy of their lineage, tracing back to the Prophet Mohammed. Other monarchies lack this degree of legitimacy. The monarchs in the Gulf have a nepotistic control of the economy and social affairs that will undoubtedly lead to unrest.

Maryam al Rayes (Iraq) said that change began in Iraq in 2003 and then spread to the rest of the Arab world. These changes include women’s issues, such as the recognition of women’s rights and the passing of nationality onto children regardless of foreign marriage, as well as the holding of elections within a parliamentary system.

She noted the disparity of intervention – foreign intervention debates have taken place in Syria, where human rights abuses are committed, whereas in Bahrain, such abuses are ignored. She spoke about how the Arab world is against change forced upon them by other countries, however, there is a need for outside countries to respect the ongoing process of change.

Rayes said that democracy exists in parts of the region, but the real issues concern security. In countries like Iraq, the government cannot be solely responsible for security, and continued external support is required. Her comments emphasised that engaged help from the outside world was welcome, but that interference was not.

Ghaith al Amaireh (Jordan) argued that change should come from within institutions. Even before the Arab spring change was already taking place in Jordan. The country has sound institutions and rule of law, but needs to improve its communication. There is a need to simplify the rhetoric and to better articulate the changes already taking place. He highlighted Jordan as a model of managing change through reform.

A spirited question and answer session followed, during which many different views emerged. One participant said that there needs to be more tolerance from outside the region, with regards to the long established structures of power, some of which pre-date Islam, and in particular, increased respect towards the monarchic structure. The Gulf States have a structure to study that cannot simply be remodelled on that of the West.

On the other hand a female participant suggested that the language of the presentations was too moderate and that in a period of crisis and long term cultural change, we need to focus on the people who are denied a voice or are unrepresented.

Panel Two:

Human Rights and the Rule of Law: A Tangled Tale.

Panel Chairman, **Dennis Sammut** introduced guest speaker, Baroness Helena Kennedy, renowned human rights barrister and campaigner, Member of the House of Lords and Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford.

Baroness Kennedy began her remarks by stating that the rule of law is fundamental to any successful society. Neither the state, nor its various branches, need be above the law. This requires having independent judges that make decisions, and independent lawyers that challenge the government.

She brought in the concept of human rights by revisiting the breakdown of such a system where, as in 1930's Germany, the state passed "discriminatory and vile laws," upheld by judges and lawyers. After the Second World War, discussions began on how to inject a sense of justice and humanity into *all* legal systems. Baroness Kennedy described a famous dinner party in 1947, at which Eleanor Roosevelt brought together international lawyers, judges and

learned representatives with the aim of discussing the prospect of creating a system of global law. At that dinner the concept of human rights was born, with efforts made to reach consensus on internationally shared values.

Baroness Kennedy defined human rights as “a template for testing all legal systems.” She emphasised the importance of injecting human values into legal processes in the face of change and globalisation, to create a language, within and between states, on how to live together and respect one another. Baroness Kennedy drew from her experiences as a practitioner in the field, observing many of the progressive steps made leading up to the millennium. Yet, after 9/11, many of these efforts were reversed, by injecting the backdrop of national security concerns. She emphasised that this context further necessitates a “zone in which power is challenged”, and that “human rights is not a subject just for lawyers, but for every one of us.” Baroness Kennedy concluded: “The rule of law is meaningless without human rights. It is one and the same coin and you can’t have one without the other as they are entangled in each other. One cannot deliver rule of law without respecting human rights; human rights should be high on national and global agendas as the only way to attain peace and justice.”

Following these opening remarks, the Chairman invited five practitioners, involved with human rights issues in the countries under the focus of the symposium, to reflect on some of the issues raised in Baroness Kennedy’s presentation.

Melkar al Khoury (Lebanon) began by emphasising that human rights and the rule of law are two sides of the same coin only so long as we believe that human rights are guaranteed for all. He spoke of new laws emerging across the Middle East, targeting religious minorities, insisting that even if the majority outnumbers the minority “truth is not a question of numbers.” He spoke of recent calls from Al Azhar and other religious leaders for tolerance to reduce tensions. Khoury stated that tolerance is an insult, since it assumes a wrongdoing has been committed. He urged that respect and a true understanding of human dignity, rather than tolerance, become the essence of human rights.

Sarah al Sharji, (Oman), tackled the idea of definitions of the terms of human rights. She emphasized that global standards for human rights must account for global variety of culture and understanding. She stated that rights are often qualified, not just in the Arab world, but also in the West; this again shows the issue of definitions. This role of government is not unique, government is made up of people whose primary aim is to serve people. Government decisions on laws and judiciary enforcement cannot be separated from the people. Nobody should be entitled to anything that infringes on the rights of others. To conclude, Sharji called for more effort to give a better understanding to all people on what rights they possess, and on what they are entitled to within the larger group.

Maimuna Al Suleimanli, (Oman), suggested recreating human rights, to keep people curious about what a legal system entails within the goal of creating a lifestyle of human rights. With access to information growing globally, human rights should focus on collective rights. She said that we need to capitalize on getting human rights to be reflected in rule of law. This

should be the domain of everyone, not just lawyers and politicians. She concluded by asking: “How is the society reflective of rule of law? Have we just recycled the international take on human rights?”

Dr Mona Hejres (Bahrain), added democracy and good governance to the interdependence of human rights and the rule of law. She said that the crisis is one of morals and values, not just of human rights, and that the solution will come from the bottom up. She called for moving beyond seeing human rights as a political vehicle and towards creating, through education, a culture of human rights believers. In this way, we can build the institutions necessary to properly uphold the rule of law, with slow and gradual reform that will allow us to achieve the stability and prosperity we seek.

Adi Khair (Jordan) explained that in his own country the government is proactive and serves as a leading advocate for human rights. However, even with state support complications can arise, for example, the government sometimes finds opposition to implementing human rights safeguards from within the parliament, or within sections of society – and these are often cultural issues. He asked if it is the government’s job to change culture, or is this the job of civil society; or a partnership of both? Who is accountable when some citizens do not acknowledge or understand human rights? He ended by saying that human rights is a question of humanity and of respecting oneself and others as human beings; the first step is in acknowledging and understanding these rights.

The floor opened to a vibrant discussion with initial questions raised on issues of female genital mutilation (FGM), Iraq and reports of human rights violation in light of the struggle of governments to provide security and fight internal terrorism, and ways that culture and/or religion might conflict with human values. Responses focused on the idea that religion and values do sometimes impact human rights adherence, but a process of cultural change is under way across the Gulf and the Levant. Participants agreed that there are basic values that have to be accepted by all societies, but changing deeply embedded cultural traditions is a process that requires time and understanding.

Baroness Kennedy, in her closing remarks, said that the fight for human rights is a journey that no country has yet completed; everyone is on this journey, going back and forth. In the 21st century, competition between security and human rights will continue to be a great struggle, but this struggle is the only way to ensure nations create peace and greater justice. She remarked that this has been one of the best discussions on human rights that she has been to for a very long time.

Panel Three:

The choices of the past and the challenges of the future: Pan-Arab, Pan-Islamic, or simply Global? The region within regional and global processes.

The third panel of the day, chaired by **Professor Edmund Herzig** (Oriental Institute and Wadham College) looked at the choices of the past, the challenges of the future, and whether they are pan-Arab, pan-Islamic, or simply global.

On the panel, **Dr Abdel Razzak Takriti** (Sheffield University) put forth three periods of history that were important to the question of cooperation and regional thought. Firstly, the Raj period, from 1798 onwards, treated the Gulf as a buffer zone. Anglo-French rivalry was already growing before Napoleon's arrival on the Nile, and the French presence in Egypt ensured an increase in British interference in the region. This led to a pattern in which the British would sign a treaty with a local ruler or sheikh, hence automatically 'upgrading' them from a simple local chieftain to a person who had a sense of security based on the support of a foreign power.

Dr Takriti considered this interference in the area an important marker in the ideology of the region, and a significant factor in the rise of Arabism in the early 20th century, his second period of history. He discussed this period through the experience of Kuwait, which by the middle of the 20th century, was home to a growing merchant community, providing a space for civic organisations and making it different to anywhere else in the region. These merchants were among the first to be educated transnationally, in Baghdad and elsewhere. Education was a very important mechanism in spreading Arabism, and it was in Kuwait that people from the southern Gulf were exposed to the notion of transnational Arabism and a mistrust of foreign occupation.

Dr Takriti said that in the third period, in the 1950s, the region saw the rise of Nasserism, which led to a greater conscience of the British dominance in the area, and the genesis of political parties. Arabism was fast becoming less a romantic attachment or linguistic project, and more a politicisation of the people. The choices of the past, initially affecting only the (united) Arab world, rapidly became a challenge the whole world was facing. Tripartite aggression towards Egypt in 1956 fuelled nationalism even further, ramping up hostility to the foreign powers in the Middle East.

Dr Hassan Turunc (School of Area Studies) addressed the issue of external powers and their role in the region through the example of Turkey. Domestically, Turkey has changed a lot since the 1980s. A privatisation programme, initiated with military backing, oversaw a transformation of Turkish society from an agricultural to a liberal, service-based economy. Rapid urbanisation, and its consequences, changed the preferences of the people and what drove Turkish relations with the Middle East. Dr Turunc explained how a preoccupation with prestige maximisation led Turkey to involve itself in every Middle Eastern dispute, as well as to apply (perhaps over-zealously) to host the Olympic Games and for a seat on the UN Security Council, and keen to play a leading role in NATO, which has seen Turkey involved

in the vast majority NATO missions since 1995. However, Turkey has made choices that have brought it into problems that go beyond just the Middle East. It has been hamstrung by its relationship with Russia (who provides 60 per cent of its oil), while coming out against Assad might still come back to bite Turkey in the future.

The discussants focussed on the role of the foreign powers in the region, both in the past and the future.

Haval Raouf (Iraq) claimed that nationalism has lost its 'shiny image' since 1952, and that people affected by the 'Arab Spring' are more interested today in improving their quality of life. Global problems from the past are now creating only pan-Arab problems today.

Safa Mahdi Ubeid al Algqi (Iraq) added to this, saying that the leaders of the Arab countries are also culpable for treating their countries as their personal properties. He explained that stable political systems are a prerequisite for an effective transnational movement, hence the failure of pan-Arabism. Rather than changing leaders, the West should be helping to change the whole society and culture of the region first.

The third discussant **Afif Tabsh** (Lebanon) summarized the conversation well when he said that we should all learn from experiences of the past rather than doing away with them.

The discussion that followed focused on the question 'what is change?' Questions focused on the purpose of political Islam in unifying countries, what it means to be a secular, a semi-secular or a religious state, and whether or not any universalist ideas remained in the Arab world. The conversation also turned to the role of larger regional players like Iran and Saudi in propagating or diminishing such visions and the role of regional conflicts, such as the Syrian civil war.

Concluding the symposium, **Mehdi Badali** (New College) thanked participants for an engaging day of discussions.

This summary of proceedings was compiled by

**Reema Naada (St Antony's), Abigail Slenski (St Antony's), Mehdi Badali (New College)
and Gurkan Gurkas (Ruskin)**

with additional editing by Merabi Chkhenkeli (St Anne's).

More information on the organisers of the Symposium is available

on www.oxgaps.org and www.johnsmithtrust.org.

“Old and new challenges in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant”

One day symposium organised by OxGAPS and the John Smith Memorial Trust

Social Science Lecture Theatre (Manor Road Building), University of Oxford,

16 November 2013.

Program

10.30 am: Coffee and registration

11.00 am: Welcome

Abigail Slenski, OxGAPS

11.15 am Panel One:

Managing Change in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant

Chair: **Professor Brian Brivati** (John Smith Trust)

Panel: **Dennis Sammut** (OxGAPS); **Brian Whitaker** (Former Middle East Editor, The Guardian); **Dr Hafiz Khan** (Middlesex University).

Discussants: **Dr Nada Dhaif** (Bahrain, Medical doctor and civil society activist); **Ghaith al Amaireh**, Policy Analyst, Political Affairs Directorate, Office of HM The King of Jordan); **Maryam al Rayes** (Iraq, Political Advisor to the Prime Minister).

Open Discussion.

1.00 p.m. Lunch

2.00 p.m.

Human Rights and the Rule of Law: a tangled tale

Guest Speaker: **Baroness Helena Kennedy**, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford

Discussants: **Melkar al Khoury** (Lebanon, UNHCR/Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights); **Sarah al Sharji** (Oman, Ministry of Legal Affairs); **Maimuna al Suleimanli** (Oman, Environmental Services Holding Company/Editor of law magazine *Law and Life*); **Dr Mona Hejres** (Bahrain, Medical Doctor and Human Rights Campaigner); **Adi Khair** (Jordan, Diplomat with the Jordanian Foreign Ministry).

Open Discussion

3.30 p.m.: Coffee break

3.45 p.m. Panel Two

The choices of the past and the challenges of the future: Pan-Arab, Pan Islamic, or simply Global? The region within regional and global processes.

Chair: **Professor Edmund Herzig**, (Oriental Institute, Oxford University)

Panel: **Dr Abdel Razzak Takriti** (Sheffield University); **Dr Hassan Turunc** (Oxford University)

Discussants: **Haval Raouf** (Iraq - Advisor to the US Consulate in Iraqi Kurdistan); **Safa Mahdi Ubeid al Alggi** (Iraq – CHF International); **Afif Tabsh** (Lebanon - Civil Society activist).

Open Discussion

5.00 p.m. Concluding Remarks

5.30 p.m. Closure

6.00 p.m.: Reception followed by Dinner at the Oxford University Social Club

8.00 p.m. Short walking tour of historical Oxford. (weather permitting)

“Old and new challenges in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant”

One day symposium organised by OxGAPS and the John Smith Memorial Trust

Social Science Lecture Theatre (Manor Road Building), University of Oxford,

16 November 2013.

Speakers and Panellists

(in order as they appear in the program)

Professor Brian BRIVATI is Academic Programme Director of the John Smith Trust and runs programmes for a number of other private sector and government bodies.

Dennis SAMMUT is the co-ordinator of OXGAPS. He has been Director of LINKS since 1997 and has served with the United Nations in Afghanistan and as a Member of the Tagliavini Commission on the War in Georgia. He is a member of the Advisory Council of the European Policy Centre in Brussels and a Trustee of the John Smith Memorial Trust. He is currently finishing a doctoral thesis on *the end of the British Empire in the Middle East in the 1960s* at Oxford University.

Brian WHITAKER is a former Middle East editor of the Guardian Newspaper. He is the author of *'What's Really Wrong with the Middle East'* and *'Unspeakable Love: Gay and Lesbian Life in the Middle East'* (both published by Saqi). His website, *al-bab.com*, covers Arab society, politics and culture.

Dr Hafiz T.A. KHAN joined Middlesex University in January 2009 as a senior lecturer in applied statistics. Currently, he is part of the Department of Economics and International Development. He also works as a Demographer at the Centre for Research into the Older Workforce (CROW) within the Middlesex University Business School. Prior to joining Middlesex University, Dr Khan was a Research Fellow in Demography at the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing (2006-2008), at the University of Oxford.

Dr Nada DHAIF is a medical doctor from Bahrain and founder of the Bahrain Rehabilitation and Anti Violence Organisation (BRAVO). She established BRAVO following her own experiences in 2011 when she was one of twenty one medical professionals arrested, tortured and imprisoned for treating protestors. Nada was exonerated in June 2012 following an appeal.

Ghaith al AMAIREH is from Jordan and is a Policy Analyst in the Political Affairs Directorate, Office of HM The King of Jordan.

Maryam al RAYES is from Iraq where she is a political advisor to Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki. She has previously been a member of the Iraqi Parliament. She graduated as a lawyer from the University of Baghdad.

Baroness Helena KENNEDY is a Barrister, expert in human rights law and civil liberties, and a leading human rights campaigner. She is a Member of the House of Lords, Honorary Fellow of the British Academy and Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford.

Melkar al KHOURY is from Lebanon and works for UNHCR as a human rights and legal research consultant. He is also Executive Assistant and Lecturer at the Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights. Previously he was a Project Officer with Oxfam Beirut Office.

Sarah al SHARJI is from Oman where she is Head of the Treaties and International Co-operation Division and an Assistant Legal Advisor at the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Maimuna al SULEIMANLI is from Oman and Manager for Legal and Regulatory Affairs at the Oman Environmental Services Holding Company. She has recently launched a bilingual legal magazine Law and Life. She is a graduate from the University of Jordan and Glasgow University.

Dr Mona HEJRES is a Medical Doctor from Bahrain who is also a human rights activist. In 2011 she established the Freedom and Human Rights Department under the National Unity Assembly of Bahrain.

Adi KHAIR is from Jordan and a diplomat with the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, currently based in Washington DC. In 2011 he was Special Assistant to the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Libya.

Professor Edmund HERZIG is Masoumeh and Fereydoon Soudavar Professor of Persian Studies at the University of Oxford. His main research interests are in Iranian history of the Safavid (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries) and contemporary periods (post-1979 Revolution, with a focus on the politics and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic). His most recent book is *Iran and the World in the Safavid Age* (co-edited with Willem Floor, 2012). His interests extend beyond Iran to include the history and politics of the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan; he is currently leading a Leverhulme-Trust-funded research project, "Balkh Art and Cultural Heritage", on the history of Balkh in the early Islamic period.

Dr Abdel Razak TAKRITI is a Lecturer at Sheffield University. His DPhil thesis examined the history of the Dhufar revolution in Oman (1965-1976) and was completed at St Antony's College, Oxford in 2010. It received the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) 2011 Malcolm Kerr Award for Best Dissertation in the Humanities, and was jointly awarded the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) 2011 Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize for Best PhD Dissertation on a Middle Eastern topic in the Social Sciences or Humanities. Abdel Razzaq's first monograph *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans, and Empires in Oman, 1965-76* is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. He is working on a second co-authored monograph, with Dr Karma Nabulsi, on the Palestinian revolution (1958-1992).

Dr Hassan TURUNC is Academic Fellow at The School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, University of Oxford

Haval RAOOF is from Iraq, and a Rule of Law Advisor with the United States Consulate in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan. He is ammeber of the Iraqi bar Association and the Kurdistan Bar Association and has a PhD from Strasbourg University

Safa Mahdi Ubeid Al ALQGI is from Iraq and the Chief Security Manager at CHF International, a USAID funded humanitarian relief organisation.

Afif TABSH is from Lebanon where he is a civil society activist, trainer and communicator and a World Economic Forum Young Global Shaper.

“Old and new challenges in the Arab countries of the Gulf and the Levant”

One day symposium organised by OxGAPS and the John Smith Memorial Trust

Social Science Lecture Theatre (Manor Road Building), University of Oxford,

16 November 2013.

List of Participants

Abdul Rahem Yucif, (Iraq) Assistant Dean for Students, Al Kindy Medical College, Baghdad University.

Al Tayeb Islam (Bahrain) Research Analyst, IISS

Al Amaireh Ghaith (Jordan) Political Affairs Officer, Office of HM The King

Al Balushi Miad (Oman) Senior international relations specialist in the Research Council of the Department of International Relations

Al Battashi Anwar (Oman); Urban Planning Specialist, Special Economic Zone Authority

Al Binali Fahad (Bahrain) Head of International Co-operation and Development, Ombudsman Office of the Ministry of Interior

Al Dubayan Mohammed, SOAS, University of London

Al Jabri Hussein, (Oman) Head of Training, Directorate General of Customs, Royal Oman Police.

Al Makamreh Wafa (Jordan) Head of International Organisations Division, Directorate for Culture and International Relations, Jordan Ministry of Education

Al Marikhi Omaima (Oman); Entrepreneur

Al Moqbel Bander, Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the UK

Al Rayes Maryam, (Iraq) Political Advisor to the Prime Minister

Al-Sharji Sarah, (Oman) Assistant Legal Advisor, Ministry of Legal Affairs

Al-Sulaimani Maimuna (Oman) Oman Environmental Services Holding Company and
Editor of the law magazine, Law and Life.

Alaribi Isa (Bahrain) PR Consultant for Aluminium Bahrain.

Aleman Nimati (Jordan) planner for Memac Ogilvy and Advize

Alhamadi Mohammed

Alnuaimi Ahmed

Altaineji Khaled

Asam Hasan, OxGAPS

Badali Mef, OxGAPS and New College Oxford

Bahr al Uloom Mohammed Hassan (Exeter University)

Bailey Alison, Oxford Analytica

Boston Janet, Director, The John Smith Memorial Trust

Bou Reslan Jana, (Lebanon), Lecturer at La Sargesse University

Brivati Brian, Academic Director, John Smith Memorial Trust.

Cardonne Rebecca, Exeter College, Oxford

Camouche Ayesha, NGO “Beyond Violence”

Chaaban Nezar (Lebanon) Legal Consultant, UNHCR

Chkhenkeli Merabi, St Anne’s College, Oxford

Corcoran Garry, JSMT Consultant

Demirer Yucel, Kocaeli University, Turkey

Dhaif Nada, (Bahrain) Medical Doctor/Dental Surgeon, Founder of the Bahrain
Rehabilitation and Anti Violence organisation, BRAVO

Diker Niufer BCA

Donaghy Rori, Emirates Centre for Human Rights

D'Urso Joseph, OxGAPS and New College, Oxford.

El Khoury Melkar (Lebanon), UNHCR Lebanon/Foundation for Humanitarian and Human Rights.

Fadda Reema OxGAPS and St Antony's College, Oxford.

Fletcher Lily, Mansfield College, Oxford

Gunes Figen University of London

Gurkas Gurkan, OxGAPS and Ruskin College, Oxford.

Haddish Rasheeda Travel Blogger in the Arabian Peninsula

Hamaizia Adel, St Antony's College, Oxford.

Hamed Hazim (Iraq); Diplomat, Advisor to the Iraqi Presidency.

Hejris Mona, (Bahrain) Medical Doctor, Human Rights Campaigner and WHO expert.

Herzig Edmund, Professor of Persian Studies, University of Oxford.

Hoetjusz Gertjan University of Exeter (alumni)

Homoud Noor, (Jordan) Community Outreach Manager, Office of HM Queen Raina of Jordan

Husain Ahmed, (Bahrain) Founder and Managing Director, Reload Consulting Services.

Ivanova Paulina, University College, Oxford

Kadhim Ghassan, JSMT Middle East Programme Co-ordinator

Kareem Ali (Iraq) Head of the Kurdistan Institute for Human Rights

Kennedy, The Baroness Helena, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, Member of the House of Lords.

Keskin Demirer Derya Kocaeli University, Turkey

Khair Adi (Jordan) Diplomat, Jordanian Foreign Ministry.

Khalil Fadi, (Lebanon) Major Engineer, Lebanese Internal Security Forces

Khan Hafiz, Lecturer at Middlesex University.

Mahdi Safa , (Iraq) Chief Security Manager at CHF International

Majed Rima, St Cross College, Oxford

Mkanna Tarek, (Lebanon), Captain, Lebanese Internal Security Forces.

Mkanna Abdalla, (Lebanon) Emergency Public Health Specialist, International Organisation for Migration

Mohammed Talal (Oxford University)

Nimri Wafa (Jordan) Ministry of Information and Technology

Nosova Anastasia London School of Economics

Oudat Maha (Jordan) Vice President of the General Federation of Jordanian Women.

Peters Holly JSMT Programme Intern

Raof Haval (Iraq), Rule of Law Advisor to the US Consulate in Erbil

Sabbagh Ghada (Lebanon) Associate at the Levant Law Practice

Saeed Nazeeha (Bahrain) Correspondent of Radio Monte Carlo

Saqer Mohammed

Sammut Dennis, OxGAPS and St Peter's College, Oxford.

Slenski Abigail, OxGAPS and St Antony's College, Oxford

Stringer Holly, JSMT Programme Co-ordinator

Sulaiman Dadyar, (Iraq) Judge, Erbil Investigation Count and Kurdistan Judicial Council

Syed Shamsuddin, Said Business School, Oxford

Tabsh Afif (Lebanon) Civil society activist, trainer and communicator

Takriti Abdul Razak, Lecturer at Sheffield University

Terro Maya, (Lebanon); Parliamentary candidate; Co-founder of *Foodblessed*, a local hunger relief initiative

Todd Harry, JSMT, Programme co-ordinator

Toksoz Mina, Associate Fellow, Chatham House, London.

Turunc Hassan, Area Studies, Oxford University

Uniakhe Hector Luzhin, ChristChurch College, Oxford

Vibert Corrine, JSMT, Special Projects Co-ordinator

Weeden-Sanz Roberto, St Benet's Hall, Oxford

Wehbeh Youssef, (Lebanon), Programme Officer, Geneva Call

Winterman Kirsten, JSMT, Consultant.

Whitaker Brian, Former Middle East Editor of the Guardian

Wrona Alexander, University of Vienna

Yamada Makio, St Antony's College, Oxford