



Middle East politics after the uprisings: new venues for research and cooperation

Florian Kohstall, University of Berlin
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ABSTRACT:

The popular uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have had a deep impact, not only on the societies in the respective countries, but also on academic disciplines and scientific relations between Europe and Arab countries. Many of the developments that have taken place in the region are not exceptional but reflect and accelerate global trends. The importance of new media, new forms of social mobilization and new instruments of governance are not limited to the MENA. However, the way in which we apprehend and study these phenomena can differ greatly from one region to another, depending on traced research paths, dominant narratives, funding policies and other factors. In this session, I will explore some of the trends in research of Middle East Politics that have emerged after the uprisings. We will discuss how the uprising in Egypt for example opened a window of opportunities for a better understanding of different actors such as the Military and the Muslim Brotherhood and explore institutional dynamics such as elections. I will then introduce a field of study that has been widely neglected in the study of Middle East countries, namely the field of public policy. Taking the case of higher education policies as an example, I will illustrate how the study of public policy may contribute to a better understanding of regime dynamics and their transnational embeddedness. We will conclude by exploring how we as scholars could contribute to a more comparative and collaborative study and understanding of Middle East countries in times of transformation.

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