SSA-Sponsored Events and Syria-Related Papers at MESA 2011

Meetings in Conjunction
Thursday, 12/1

SSA Board Meeting: 2-3pm, Park Tower Suite 8218 (L)
SSA Business Meeting: 3-3:30, Delaware B (L)
SSA Reception: 3:30-5pm, Delaware B (L)

The SSA is honored that Nikolaos van Dam will be joining us at the Reception for a critical appreciation of the recently published fourth edition of his classic study, *The Struggle for Power in Syria: Politics and Society under Asad and the Ba'ath Party* (I. B. Tauris, 2011), with comments by a panel of scholars, including Joshua Landis and Lisa Wedeen.

SSA Sponsored Panels
Thursday, 12/1:

Grassroots Syria: New Insights into Contemporary Society, Politics and Economics, 5pm (P2645)

While much academic research on Syria looks at government policies, official state strategies and the formal economy, in contrast the realm of everyday life is relatively understudied. Yet as sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists have come to recognize, 'everyday life' provides an important arena in which power is produced, imposed and resisted in modern societies. This panel therefore explores what low-level, 'grassroots' phenomena can tell us about social and political change in contemporary Syria.

Daniel Neep (British Institute in Damascus, University of Exeter), Chair

Paul Anderson (University of Cambridge), “Trust in a ‘transitioning’ economy: the rise and fall of Aleppo’s ‘money collectors’”

Erik Mohns (University of Southern Denmark), “Representations of Nationness among Palestinians in the 'Yarmouk Camp' of Damascus”


Sebastian Maisel (Grand Valley State University), “Construction of Yezidi Identity in Syria: Attitudes towards reform from the bottom of society”

Bethany Honeysett (Edinburgh University), “Furniture and Pickles: An Anthropological take on Grassroots Syria”

Friday, 12/2:
Cotton, Camels, and Chemicals: Environmental Perspectives on the History of Bilad al-Sham, 2pm (P2768)

This panel brings together four papers on the environmental history of greater Syria, ranging in time and place from 17th-century Cilicia to 1930s Damascus. A central concern of the panel is the interaction between ecology and human settlement. How do environmental dynamics influence human societies? Of course, the relationship between the environment and humans is far from unidirectional; humans play critical roles in shaping their environments and their local ecologies. The panel foregrounds the colonial dimensions of these issues with examinations of French mandate authorities' cotton cultivation and river canal schemes as well as the chemical and medical impact of Syrian nationalist rural development programs. A final issue addressed in these papers is the symbolic purchase of the environment as it relates to its inhabitants.

Samuel Dolbee (NYU), “Fighting Pests and Tarbushes, Too: Rural Development and the Ecology of Class in Late 1930s Syria”

Graham Pitts (Georgetown), “Paradise Dried Up: The Rise and Fall of the River Barada, A Hydrogeography of Damascus from the beginning of time to the present”

Elizabeth Williams (Georgetown), “Contesting Cotton: The Production of Agricultural Space in French Mandate Syria”

Chris Gratien (Georgetown), “Climate, Geography and Settlement in Ottoman Cilicia, 1600-1900”

Sherene Seikaly (American University in Cairo), Discussant

Full List of Syria-Related Papers

12/1, 5pm

[P2645-12137] Furniture and Pickles: An Anthropological take on Grassroots Syria by Bethany Honeysett (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

[P2645-11317] Representations of Nationness among Palestinians in the 'Yarmouk Camp' of Damascus by Erik Mohns (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

[P2645-11441] Trust in a “transitioning” economy: the rise and fall of Aleppo’s “money collectors” by Paul Anderson (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

[P2645-11701] UNHCR in Syria: A Humanitarian Regime of Sovereignty by Sophia Hoffmann (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

[P2645-12343] Construction of Yezidi Identity in Syria: Attitudes towards reform from the bottom of society by Sebastian Maisel (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

[P2887-12021] Love, Sexuality, and Marriage in Contemporary Syrian Television Drama: Cultural (De)Constructions of Gender and Self-Identity by Rebecca Joubin (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)
Memories of a Soul: Recouping Existence in Mamduh Azam’s Qasr al-Matar by Alexa S. Firat (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

Jesuits, Jews, and Franco-Maronites: La Mission Civilisatrice in Ottoman Lebanon by Edward Falk (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

Colonial Alternatives: Lawrence and Loder on Egypt, Syria, and Iraq by James Whidden (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

Miracles in Our Present Day: A Traditionalist Scholar Negotiating Saints and Miracles in Early 20th Century Egypt & Syria by Jonathan AC Brown (Thursday, 12/01/11 5:00pm)

How do the social sciences fare under authoritarianism? An exploration and critique of social science research in Baathist Syria by Reinoud Leenders (Friday, 12/02/11 8:30am)

Between Settlement, Military Service, and Transit: Jacobite Assyrians under the French Mandate of Syria by Arvo Makko (Friday, 12/02/11 8:30am)

Defining Kurdish Women and Masculinity in the Kurdish Press of the 1930s and 1940s under the French Mandate by Ahmet Serdar Akturk (Friday, 12/02/11 11:00am)

Situating Maktab ‘Anbar: Between Cultural, Administrative and Religious Reorganization in Late Ottoman Damascus by Randi C. Deguilhem (Friday, 12/02/11 11:00am)

Contesting Cotton: The Production of Agricultural Space in French Mandate Syria by Elizabeth Williams (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

Fighting Pests and Tarbushes, Too: Rural Development and the Ecology of Class in Late 1930s Syria by Samuel Dolbee (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

From Cairo to Mecca and Back Again: What a Thirteenth-Century Sufi Scholar Collected along the Way by Erik S. Ohlander (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

Paradise Dried Up: The Rise and Fall of the River Barada, A Hydrogeography of Damascus from the beginning of time to the present, by Graham Pitts (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

Ibrahim b. Khidr al-Qaramani (d. 1556): A Merchant and Urban Notable of Early Ottoman Aleppo by Charles L. Wilkins (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

Making Jerusalem Ottoman by Amy Singer (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)

Making Memories: trauma, anxiety, and masculinity in modern Lebanon and Syria by James Casey (Friday, 12/02/11 2:00pm)
12/2, 4:30pm

[P2656-11324] Mental Illness and the Plural Medical Marketplace in Syria, 1922-?1956 by Beverly Tsacoyianis (Friday, 12/02/11 4:30pm)

12/3, 8:30am

[P2953-12307] Literacy, Law, and Empire in the 15th-16th-Century Eastern Mediterranean World by Timothy J. Fitzgerald (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

[P2953-11472] Verifying Sainthood: Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulusi's 17th Century Travelogue in Light of the Kadizadeli Movement by Nir Shafir (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

[P2762-11720] Bridging the Global South? Syria’s Expatriate Communities in South America by Maria del Mar Logrono-Narbona (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

[P2762-12280] Chavez of Arabia: a genealogy of diplomatic relations between Syria and Venezuela by Camila Pastor de Maria y Campos (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

[P2762-11888] Syrian-Cuban Relations by Luis Mesa Delmonte (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

[P2651-11515] The Novels of Nu'man Abdu al-Qasatili: Masculinity and the Modern Arab Man by Fruma Zachs (Saturday, 12/03/11 8:30am)

12/3, 11am

[P2931-11378] Beyond the mountain refuge: The constitution of the 'Alawi (Nusayri) community in northwestern Syria, 11th-14th century by Stefan Winter (Saturday, 12/03/11 11:00am)

[P2790-12149] Syrians and other Arab Students in Moscow in the 1960s and 70s by Masha Kirasirova (Saturday, 12/03/11 11:00am)

12/3, 2:30pm

[P2911-11273] Seeking Justice on the Mamluk Frontier: The Formal and Informal Legal Institutions of Late Medieval Transjordan by Bethany J. Walker (Saturday, 12/03/11 2:30pm)

[P2897-12189] “Class A Talks English:” Linguistic Choice and Social Inequality in Damascus by Mandy Terc (Saturday, 12/03/11 2:30pm)

12/3, 5pm

[P2612-11453] Becoming Beiruti: Syrian Migrant Youth Coming of Age in Lebanon by Jared McCormick (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

[P2612-11377] "New Movements, Old Forms: Contesting Youth and Belonging in Syrian Popular Culture" by Shayna Silverstein (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)
Shatila's camp experience after the Syrian withdrawal in 2005 by Hala C. Abou-Zaki (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

The conjuncture of the political crisis within the Sunni space in North Lebanon 2005-2010 by Tine Gade (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

The new missions of the Lebanese army in the aftermath of the Syro-Lebanese crisis by Nayla Moussa (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

The post-2005 Syro-Lebanese crisis as a catalyst for the Shiite community by Catherine Le Thomas (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

“That which your right hands possess”: liberation, otherness, and religion in a Syrian soap opera by Edith Szanto (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

Water Availability in Syria, Will It Be Enough? by Khaldoon Mourad (Saturday, 12/03/11 5:00pm)

12/4, 8:30am

Feeding the Poor: Fodula and Taamiye Records of Sultan Süleyman’s Imarets in Istanbul and Damascus by Serife Eroglu Memis (Sunday, 12/04/11 8:30am)

Bonding with Bilad al-Sham: the familiarization and sanctification of Palestine and Syria in Early Islamic Literature by Daniella Talmon-Heller (Sunday, 12/04/11 8:30am)

12/4, 11am

Authoritarian States and Contentious Societies: Comparative Analysis of State-Dissidents Interactions in Iran, Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria by Hamid Rezai (Sunday, 12/04/11 11:00am)

Leadership Succession and Government-Activist Interaction in Jordan and Syria by Andrew M. Spath (Sunday, 12/04/11 11:00am)

12/4, 1:30pm

Conservation Theory and Bedouin Livelihood Realities in the Syrian Badia by Haian Dukhan (Sunday, 12/04/11 1:30pm)

Beleaguered Masculinity and Syrian Political Culture by Bethany Kibler (Sunday, 12/04/11 1:30pm)