

# **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:**

## **Early Career Researchers' Interdisciplinary Seminar Series on Politics of the Middle East**

**\*\*Deadline for applications: Sunday, 25th October 2020 at midnight BST\*\***

### **Aims**

This is a cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional seminar series which aims to bring together a diverse body of early career researchers (postdoctoral, PhD students/candidates, and advanced masters) working on the politics of the Middle East. It addresses the need for early career researchers studying this region to have a forum where they can: (1) present their work and receive feedback from peers and more senior academics in the field, (2) engage with contemporary research designs and theoretical debates, and (3) develop cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional relationships to facilitate further collaborations, particularly across geographic borders. More widely, the series will strengthen the regional knowledge and analytic skills of early career researchers.

The series seeks to recruit 24 presenters whose work makes original theoretical and empirical contributions to the production of knowledge on the politics of the Middle East. Although there are constraints on the number of presenters, we are keen to include as many participants as possible in the seminar series. Applicants not accepted as presenters will be invited to participate as members of the audience.

### **Themes**

The themes of interest include, but are by no means limited to:

- Coloniality, decoloniality, postcolonialism and anticolonialism
- War, conflict, and political violence
- Resistance, revolution, and regime change
- Authoritarianism, authoritarian resilience, and hybrid regimes
- Citizenship, foreignness, and alienation
- Race and racism
- Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and minority religions
- Queer, LGBT, and gender studies

- Culture, identity, and nation-building
- Sovereignty, independence, and the fragile state
- Neoliberalism, World Bank and IMF, and international political economy
- Alternative and indigenous theories of and/or from the Middle East
- Innovative methods of research and fieldwork
- Informal politics, resistance, resilience

## **Programme and Structure**

The series runs over a period of 12 months starting from January 2021. It meets monthly for a two-hour session with the exception of the opening session, which will be longer to allow for introductions.

**All events will be held online** and papers will be circulated at least one week prior to each session. Participants are expected to attend **every session** and are required to read the papers being presented in advance and prepare questions and comments.

As the intention of the seminar series is to foster meaningful and rigorous dialogue and forge long-term linkages between early career researchers, we would like to stress the importance of commitment from participants.

### *Standard sessions*

In the twelve standard sessions, two participants will present a piece of work-in-progress (thesis chapter, book chapter, journal manuscript, book proposal etc.) to the group. Participants will be paired on the basis of complementary thematic, geographic or disciplinary concerns.

Each presenter will invite an academic of their choice to act as discussant although presenters are welcome to agree on a shared discussant to allow for more conversation from the wider group. Organisers will be on hand to assist the presenters in arranging discussants.

To ensure a dialogue between the two works presented, both papers will be presented in the first section of the session. Each paper is allocated an initial 40 minutes, to include a 10 minute presentation, 15 minutes of feedback from the discussant, and finishing with a 15 minute Q&A with the seminar participants.

The second part of the session will comprise a general discussion of the themes brought out by both papers. Sessions will conclude with a 5 minute reflection from the session convenor(s).

Presenters are also encouraged to invite their supervisors and colleagues interested in their work.

### *Non-standard sessions*

We are committed to our participants' intellectual and professional development. We will therefore also run writing retreats and special sessions that will be organised ad hoc throughout the year and are keen to gather and accommodate requests for sessions that will be of interest to the group. We will also be organising workshops and master-classes in coordination with the seminar participants, hopefully hosted by other institutions.

### **Application**

We accept applications from early career researchers in **any** discipline across the social sciences and humanities.

### *How to apply*

Applications should include:

- A short bio (name, professional title or status, thesis title, and keywords that describe your research interests)
- A short statement of interest indicating how you will benefit from participation (150 words)
- Abstract of the work-in-progress you plan to present (250 words)

Please send your application to [pome.seminarseries@gmail.com](mailto:pome.seminarseries@gmail.com)

The deadline for applications is **Sunday, 25th October 2020 at midnight BST**.

Notifications of acceptance will be sent in **November** and the first session is to be held in January 2020.

### **Organisers**

Annie Evans (Loughborough), Dina Hosni (Frankfurt Goethe/American University in Cairo), Hannah Owens (Queen Mary), Hesham Shafick (Queen Mary), Maia

Holtermann Entwistle (SOAS), Mathew Kirk (Queen's Belfast), Rasmieyh Abdelnabi (George Mason), Saif Al Islam Eid (Doha Institute/Arab Center).