Kohstall | Richter | Dhouib | Kastner [eds.]

Academia in Transformation

Scholars Facing the Arab Uprisings

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Florian Kohstall | Carola Richter
Sarhan Dhouib | Fatima Kastner [eds.]

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Scholars Facing the Arab Uprisings

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agya ARAB-GERMAN YOUNG ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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1 A Note from the Editors

Florian Kohstall, Carola Richter, Sarhan Dhouib and Fatima Kastner

On 17 June 2017, Egypt's Ministry of Education announced its decision to remove references to "the revolutions of 25 January 2011 and 30 June 2013" from schoolbooks. This decision came in response to the major controversy that had emerged over a question in the general high school exam of Egypt's *thanawiyya amma:* "How would things be if (Abdel Fattah) Al-Sisi had not given the June 30th speech?". Whereas the 25 January 2011 marked the start of the uprisings against President Hosni Mubarak, mass demonstrations on 30 June 2013 against the elected President Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood paved the way for his ousting through the military and the later election of President Al-Sisi. While several parliamentarians and education experts, pointing to the importance of understanding both uprisings, opposed the education minister's decision, those responsible for teaching in the classroom — educators — might have welcomed the decision that relieved them of having to teach two of the most controversial events in recent Egyptian history. The controversy that erupted suggests that it may be too early to open the debate in the classroom and underscores the difference in perceptions within and beyond Egypt regarding the uprisings and their limitations.

As early as at the first conference of the newly established Arab German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) in October 2013, a "transformation" working group was established. It was widely recognized by all AGYA members, regardless of their disciplinary background, that the consequences of the popular uprisings that had affected various Arab countries since 2010 would be a key aspect of exchange and activities within the recently created Academy consisting of 25 Middle Eastern and North African scholars and 25 German scholars. Addressing transformation issues was considered to be just as important as addressing those associated with education, energy and the environment, cultural heritage, health and innovation — each of which were the focus of other working groups. This notwithstanding, the term "transformation" became subject to considerable debate within the working group. Discussions involving what we expected to be a quick look at the core countries of the

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uprisings in the MENA region (i.e., Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya and Syria) evoked mixed feelings on how to approach the uprisings and their consequences. Would transformation apply primarily to changes in the Middle East and North Africa, thus eclipsing important developments in Germany and Europe? Would we focus on political developments exclusively or include the legal, social, cultural and economic aspects of the developments? And how would we address the issue of transformation as both a historical development and normative aspiration? In other words, how might an exploration of transformation enable a deeper understanding of events from a historical perspective while, at the same time, foster the pursuit of such change from one stage to the next?

This publication is not about transformation *itself*. It focuses rather on how the uprisings have affected and to what extent they have transformed the field of academia — which includes a variety of academic disciplines such as political science, Arabic studies, communication studies, philosophy, socio-legal studies, computer sciences and archaeology. The contributions featured here present a unique opportunity to foster open dialogue — across disciplines and cultures — on the recent transformations underway in Arab countries and how these transformations interact with changes in other parts of the world. Each author brings his or her specific disciplinary background and geographic origin but also unique personal experience to this dialogue. As individuals, the authors represent different perspectives in terms of observation and engagement, empathy and distance, sympathy and skepticism. While the 2010/11 uprisings in Arab countries are our focus, we nevertheless aim to contextualize these events and their developments within the variety of academic disciplines featured. Rather than viewing "Arab countries" as objects of study in themselves, we see them as already changing cultures within the context of broader global trends. Indeed, we claim that many of the developments underway in the region at once reflect and accelerate extant global trends. From our transcultural perspective, ideas, norms and concepts do not travel linearly and in one direction, but are rather diffused in a context of mutual exchange. Thus, the transformations of academic disciplines we emphasize here should also be seen in the light of long-term changes that are not bound to one region. Indeed, "Academia in Transformation" became the terrain upon which scholars from various disciplines and geographical and cultural backgrounds debated their positions and reflected upon their own work and that of their colleagues.

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During several meetings, and amid the presence of the renowned Tunisian scholar Amal Grami and the German legal philosopher Hans Jörg Sandkühler, we developed a deeper understanding of each discipline's dominant and marginalized debates, the research carried out by each working group member and, sometimes, the impact of personal biographies on research and knowledge production. During this exchange, we explored each discipline's explicit and implicit assumptions and the tools they work with. The exchange also helped us reflect on the spectrum of positionalities held by each contributor during the Arab uprisings and how these positionalities affect our research foci. The perspective of those of us who were directly subject to the violence and emotional rollercoaster of the political turmoil was different from those who observed the events from a distance. Each contributor has emphasized the importance of distance in being able to reflect on the events of 2010 and 2011 as well as the significance of personal engagement and empathy in shaping individual perceptions.

The present volume features nine contributions from scholars of different disciplinary backgrounds who explore the ways in which the Arab uprising entered their discipline's discourse and molded the relations of power within the discipline. Contributors addressed this common theme in terms of an open-ended question, because the extent to which political and social events taking place at a critical historical juncture will have a lasting effect on a given academic discipline is unclear. And for those events that do leave a lasting mark, the nature of their impact differs from discipline to discipline. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 or the terrorist attacks of September 2001 are widely seen as epochal marker events. In the context of the Arab uprisings, Tunisian street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi's act of self-immolation in December 2010 and the Tahrir square protests that began just one month later mark points of departure for developments that cannot be reduced to a single date.

The shared observations reflected in the various contributions presented here are the product of our long, often intense, discussions and our writing exercises. One theme found in all the contributions is that the Arab uprisings urged scholars in the Middle East and Europe alike to revisit their analytical frameworks and theoretical approaches. This is apparent in Florian Kohstall's contribution, in which he argues that the uprisings prompted us to concern ourselves less with regime change — the traditional focus of democratization theories — and look instead for evidence of continuity and change with respect to the uprisings. Such an approach also calls for

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new forms of cooperation between the different sites of knowledge production in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. Similar shifts are also observable in the discipline of communication studies. Most scholars in the field, when focusing on the Middle East, emphasize the role played by new media and its political impact, but when examining the media in the West and other world regions, concentrate on daily events instead. Carola Richter and Hanan Badr provide a thorough review of foreign and local scholarly communications literature, thus shedding light on the often obscured complexity of media reality in the Middle East.

Two further contributions also explore concepts, norms and ideas that are being revisited but not fundamentally rethought as a result of the Arab uprisings. In her contribution, Fatima Kastner examines the extent to which political transitions initiated thus far in post-uprising Arab countries have affected the socio-legal discourse on transitional justice. After presenting the crucial steps of developments that have shaped today's understanding of the normative concept of transitional justice, her article illustrates some alterations that do in fact result from the transitions experienced in some Arab countries, which might have the potential to serve as innovative sources for future attempts at transitional justice. In their contribution, computer scientists Tobias Amft and Kalman Graffi present how the Arab uprisings accentuated the shift in and rebalancing of the use of technology, particularly in terms of circumventing government control of internet access and content. As they demonstrate, the uprisings may not have affected the discourse on technological development and innovation, but they have provided an opportunity to subject certain assumptions to a real-world test.

Other contributions show that in the context of the Arab uprisings, we see an increased focus on daily life and micro-level analyses — which mark turning points in the respective disciplines. Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge's examination of Arabic literary studies and revolutionary forms of expression makes the case that the emphasis on everyday language celebrates a revival of Arabic. This requires not only new and innovative teaching methods, but also new formats for research cooperation that build on, emphasize and convey new materials, ranging from wall paintings to revolutionary and anti-revolutionary songs. Similarly, Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami examine the content and methods of teaching Arabic as a foreign language in Beirut. They point to the fact that even countries like Lebanon, which have remained in the shadow of the uprisings, are recasting their Arabic language curriculum. As a recent

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target country for students of Arabic, the country and its universities have become learning hubs and sites of critical reflection for students and social scientists. Academic life in other countries mired in war and conflict has been subject to utter destruction. In his contribution, Ammar Abdulrahman documents how archaeological research and the protection of cultural heritage sites in Syria have collapsed under the destruction of war. And while protecting Syria's cultural heritage has become an issue taken up by the international community, local archaeologists and those otherwise tasked with protecting such sites have either been forced to flee or risk losing their lives.

While the uprisings have had an impact on the use of analytical frameworks, materials used and teaching methods applied, they have also prompted many to reflect on the changing relations within the scholarly community. Two of our contributions provide personal accounts of how transformations underway in academia have affected the personal experience of individual scholars. Jan Claudius Völkel charts the manifold changes in student–professor relationships and classrooms that he witnessed while teaching political science at Cairo University in Egypt before, during and after the uprisings. Drawing comparisons to his experience as an instructor in Germany, he underscores the tragedy of Egyptian students and professors with great potential who suddenly suffer a new cycle of censorship and restrictions. The importance of transformative learning and transcultural exchange are also emphasized in Sarhan Dhouib's contribution, which highlights the value of philosophy in navigating the shift from an authoritarian to a post-authoritarian context. This involves engaging in a *dual critique* that acknowledges and explores the cultural features of authoritarian contexts in the Arab world while also questioning perceptions of the "other" in the West as essential to facilitating transformation.

Most contributors to this volume emphasize in one way or another the shifting positions of domestic and foreign scholars in the disciplines featured here as well as the hierarchy of knowledge production in Arab and Western institutions. Of course, boundaries have blurred as a result of scholars' increasing mobility and the emergence of technologies enabling interaction across vast geographical distances. We remain unsurprised by the fact that knowledge production on the Middle East and North Africa continues to be shaped by Western universities, research institutes and think tanks. Yet it is astonishing that this continues to be the case in periods of rapid change when local scholarship is clearly in a better position to

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provide critical insights into events as they unfold. Foreign scholars have drawn criticism for what has been decried as "sightseeing the Middle East" in times of revolution. The authors of this volume argue that local scholars, who often work in an unsafe environment, must be afforded due respect if the disciplines featured here are to be advanced.

The themes addressed in this publication — reflecting on dominant theoretical approaches, interests in micro-analysis and the relationship between foreign and local knowledge production — must be linked to the changing conditions for conducting research in the countries focused on. The uprisings did not precipitate a sustained improvement in research conditions in loosened political and social environments. Instead, after a short period of opened access to archives and reconsiderations of dominant theoretical approaches, the windows of opportunity have since been quickly shut down again by the return of the security state. This is true even in Tunisia, where social science research can once again be subject to political constraints.

The contributions to this publication draw on a range of forms, from traditional academic approaches to personal observations to essayistic variations on the common themes. They thus reflect both the transformations we describe and those we are undergoing. Our conclusions are tentative as they are reached in a specific moment and shaped by the specifics of our individual and communal experience(s) that are linked to our professional positions, our proximity to the events in a given country and our personal backgrounds vis-à-vis the societies we study. The scholars of this volume share "des regards croisées", different perspectives that interact with each other. While the writing of some of our German authors is informed by their long-term residency in an Arab country, authors with origins in an Arab-speaking country have pursued a long-running academic career in German or European universities. The publication also includes contributions by "academics in exile" who look back on debates within a specific discipline in their home country. Interweaving scholarly observations with the aim of giving expression to voices otherwise unheard, these contributions resemble the work of what Tahar Ben Jelloun referred to as the "public writer".

It is our sincere hope that this book offers at least two added values. For one, we aim to foster a broad-based effort to integrate the events of 2010 and 2011 and the subsequent developments in different Arab countries into our respective disciplines which, by definition, share a universal vocation. The region has been stigmatized for its presumed exceptionalism for

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far too long. Some scholars of the Middle East and North Africa have claimed that 2011 marked an end to this presumed exceptionalism, as political apathy gave way to powerful political leadership. Seven years later, the cruel reality on the ground in many countries across the region has dimmed this optimism, demanding that we consolidate our knowledge about these events and develop further our understanding of the macro-debates, micro-processes and scientific traditions that abound. Questioning dominant approaches, accounting for the intimate dynamics of daily life and questioning the hierarchy in knowledge production are at the core of the transcultural and multidisciplinary perspective we aim to promote. Adopting such a stance involves acknowledging the universal importance of the events of 2010/11. Indeed, the impact of the uprisings on specific academic disciplines may have a longer reach than the uprisings' social and political effects, given the return of authoritarianism in countries such as Egypt or the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Libya, Yemen and Iraq.

A second added value involves leveraging the opportunities for academic cooperation that have been generated by the various transformations unleashed and rendered visible since the events of 2010 and 2011. We are strong advocates of the need to strengthen and advance cooperation across disciplines and institutional and national boundaries. The contributions presented here illustrate the extent to which we depend on detailed observations of unfolding events as well as transcultural perspectives which juxtapose observations from the field against scholarly debates on the region. As Hans Jörg Sandkühler argues, this transcultural perspective is essential to recognizing the plurality of different cultures of knowledge and framing questions within their temporal and regional contexts, which represents a form of human freedom. Ultimately, this perspective requires a willingness to debate and the space to carry out debate. But this space is too often constrained by restrictions that are placed on academic freedoms as well as de facto power relations that are present in different funding schemes and instruments of cooperation. Whereas these instruments should have the potential to foster a transcultural perspective, they often reproduce current power relations, which limits opportunities for debate. Different forms and instruments of cooperation must be part of the debate and should ultimately be conceived by those who animate the debate. AGYA is one of many initiatives and forms of cooperation that has the potential to contribute directly to this debate. This volume represents a first step in forging a way forward.

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2 Introduction: Academia in Transformation — Testing the Paradigms of New Knowledge

Amal Grami

The Arab uprisings created a window of change and transformation, thus becoming an event with considerable intellectual as well as political impact. Eventually, they succeeded in changing researchers' perceptions of the "Arab world", leading to the development of alternative forms of knowledge and challenges to the dominant Western systems of representation. People in Arab countries are today no longer considered to be vulnerable "docile citizens" or "resilient bodies" unwilling and/or unable to challenge the status quo and their authoritarian rulers. Scholars from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are for the most part no longer represented as silent, passive and incapable of resolving conflicts regarding the relationship between power, knowledge, action and thought.

Hence, the Arab uprisings had a deep impact not only on societies in the MENA region, but also on academic disciplines in European and Arab countries, and scientific relations between them. Emerging post-Arab uprising paradigms have brought about changes in the perception and evaluation of institutions, with universities being no exception to this trend. Since the outbreak of the uprisings, scholars from a variety of disciplines have demonstrated renewed interest in protest, contestation and cultural forms of expression and discourse. There have been attempts to understand how the "disciplined society" became aware of its rights and staked a claim to political and economic change. For such scholars, the dominant question was how to theorize political, social and cultural change in societal contexts that have often been viewed by the West as stagnant and hostile to progressive politics.

In fact, academic literature on the Arab uprisings has proved that transformations, regardless of their rapidity and whether they are ongoing, continuous or structural, superficial or complex, visible or invisible, are of great importance to a large number of scholars and analysts who believe that the process of transformation is a vital topic to study. The academic community has thus begun to interpret actions in the region and analyze the new realities. While some scholars have continued to work on tradi-

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tional issues, showing little or no interest in questions raised by non-academics, other Middle Eastern studies, Islamic studies and international-relations scholars have imported analytical tools that have previously been applied to other regions of the world, such as Latin America, Europe, Eastern Europe and East Asia.

Indeed, we have witnessed a proliferation of academic articles, university seminars and conferences devoted to exploring the nature and contours of political and social transformation. However, transformation within the academic setting itself has remained largely hidden and marginalized as a subject of study. This prevailing state of blindness has motivated some scholars to focus on various aspects of transformation in the academic milieu. Some believe it is important to develop new modes of inquiry and forms of knowledge able to help them understand this new historical conjuncture and the nature of transformation. This group of scholars' preliminary focus has been on paradigms and concepts, analytical tools, methodologies, theories, narratives and perspectives. Some have attempted to criticize Western misinterpretations of the rest of the world, along with the respective academic discipline.

The members of the Transformation Working Group at the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) have attempted to improve their understanding of issues related to transformation in post-Arab uprising societies by taking a transcultural perspective. This book is one of the results of the working group's attempts to grasp the complexities that arise from these issues. Over a period of months, members of the working group reflected on how ideas, norms and concepts are diffused in a context of mutual exchange, and how scientific relations between Europe and the Arab world can be improved. There is evidently a shift underway to a focus on understanding the meaning of what others "communicate concerning values, ideals, feelings, moral decisions, and such concepts as freedom, justice, love, labor, autonomy, commitment and democracy" (Mezirow 2003 a: 204).

Coming from a wide range of disciplines, from Arab countries as well as from Germany, the contributors to this volume have sought to reflect together on current challenges. On the one hand, this combination of different disciplines and their respective research objects, methods and overarching theories has provided an excellent foundation for transdisciplinary work. However, we should note that this discussion forum has also led to confrontation and compromises. The participating scholars have started to learn how to think differently, while becoming more self-critical. Their

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goal has been to address major issues confronting today's societies, while simultaneously thinking critically about how best to construct a form of collaborative knowledge. Through both theoretical observations and personal experiences the key objective of the interdisciplinary group has been to demonstrate that the organization of knowledge has changed, not only in countries affected by the so-called Arab Spring, but also in Europe, the United States and Asia.

Overview of articles

The book includes 9 articles that build on and communicate with one another and present a general reflection at the end. In his article *"Middle East Studies and Academic Cooperation in the Wake of the Arab Uprisings"***,** Florian Kohstall sheds light on the field of Middle East studies, a very interesting area. Since 2010, as coordinator for research and teaching programs at the Freie Universität Berlin's Cairo office, he has engaged critically with a number of issues such as "inequalities, especially between researchers working on the ground and those observing the events from the outside". Positioning himself simultaneously as a witness, observer and scholar, Kohstall describes "the role of students and professors in Egypt's uprising", along with that of other new actors. In addition, he criticizes various concepts and theoretical tools, and highlights new paradigms used to analyze transformation processes.

While seriousness is presented in academia as the normative standard of all critical thinking and writing in the humanities, Kohstall in contrast argues that expressing one's emotions (empathy, joy, fear, discomfort or disorientation, for example) during the Arab uprisings was a "liberating experience". After analyzing cases of transformation, Kohstall "suggests new avenues for cooperation and proposes employing a more comparative approach in the further development of the field of Middle East studies".

In his article *"Political Science in Egypt: Talkin' Bout a Revolution",* Jan Claudius Völkel explores the conditions for researchers teaching political science or social sciences under authoritarian regimes in the Arab world, and particularly in Egypt. He points out that if "political science in Germany is to a substantial extent understood as 'democracy science'", this field of research is "dangerous" and represents a risk in other countries. In fact, many scholars in the Arab world remain under state control and suffer under a lack of academic freedom. Although they participated

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in the transition process and engaged in critical teaching and research, such scholars are no longer able to contribute to forming democratic societies. According to Völkel, "the current developments in Egypt represent a missed chance to develop political science further into a meaningful discipline that would not only prepare students for the job market, but also contribute to improving the overall quality of Egypt's academic landscape".

Despite such challenges, the "exchange of faculty and students through workshops and conferences [has] helped trigger fresh ideas about modern teaching methodologies". There is no doubt that scholars and students alike will struggle to establish a new environment in which academic freedom is respected. We should bear in mind that one of the rights people ought to seek is the right to knowledge, as this is essential to democratic citizenship.

In their article *"Opening Up the Text. Arabic Literary Studies on the Move",* Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge highlight the relationship between art and literature in times of political and social transformation. They demonstrate how Arab writers revisited the societal roles of art and literature in a time of political upheaval. Additionally, Winckler and Junge discuss the involvement of Arab literature scholars in teaching "new text forms (e.g., blogs, graffiti and slogans) and explor[ing] their sociopolitical conditions and the socio-cultural practices of writing". Winckler and Junge further show how writers and scholars have been involved in "the unleashed creativity of the uprisings". While scholars in the West often neglect "research conducted at universities in the Arab world, particularly if published in Arabic or by an Arab publisher...and exclude Arab scholars in the region from contributing to internationally acknowledged knowledge production", the authors note that new initiatives and programs promoting the exchange of perspectives and experiences between scholars from universities in Germany and in the Arab world are being implemented today. The Arabic language is, as a consequence, increasingly being practiced as a living language of knowledge production and academic communication.

In consideration of the situation of Syrian refugees, Winckler and Junge suggest that "to study Arabic literature at German universities, selected seminars and lectures should be conducted in Arabic. As a positive side effect, this would also improve the language skills of other students of Arabic". Moreover, Winckler and Junge think that it is urgent to encourage Syrian "authors to gain more visibility and improve their reputations within the German cultural sphere". In this regard, activism and academia can be combined in a creative process of writing symbiosis, creating the

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possibility of collaborations that facilitate the development of new skills, and helping to introduce different understandings of literacy.

In their article *"An Uprising in Teaching Arabic Language"*, Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami draw from the field of education to explore another case of transformation involving language, thinking here in terms of "transformative pedagogy". They describe the motivations of students traveling to the Middle East today, who show an interest "both in the events surrounding them as well as in the ongoing transformations, not only of political regimes but also of the surrounding culture and values". Aware that Arabic has become a language of change, protest and revolution, Orfali, Siblini and Houssami discuss recent developments in teaching the Arabic language from different perspectives (exposing students to the language by having them listen to native speakers, participate in community social work, attend clubs focusing on Arab culture or listen to folk music, for example). These scholars focus on new teaching techniques created by a Lebanese institute that teaches the Arabic language, including colloquial speech, to foreign students. According to Orfali, Siblini and Houssami, the "Summer Arabic Program already provides some models that can be emulated and developed further when dealing with the refugee crisis in various Arab states and in Europe".

In her article *"Justice in Transformation: Rethinking Theory and Practice of the Global Transitional Justice Model"*, Fatima Kastner analyzes the socio-legal studies discourse on transitional justice, focusing on the evolution of the global transitional justice model. After studying the emergence of several related concepts and discussing different ways of understanding them, Kastner analyzes the complex factors involved when governments attempt to develop and promote lasting periods of peace, or sustain processes of democratization and reconciliation in post-uprising societies. It is clear that resolving crisis situations requires critical decisions that balance the conflicting claims of established systems and possible future outcomes. Kastner highlights the changes arising from the "Arab Spring" transitions, such as "the demand to include economic and financial crimes within the liberal normative concept of transitional justice". She argues that "there is a strong demand to widen the present liberal understanding of transitional justice both in the direction of local notions of justice and toward economic accountability". Her article argues that instead of maintaining its precarious critical role, the humanities should become a creative laboratory for future forms of intellectual labor. There is no doubt that the passage from authoritarianism to a new order of society

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will take time, and push scholars to rethink the processes of reconciliation, democratization and the establishment of the rule of law.

In his article *"Philosophy in Transition — Philosophy of Transition",* Sarhan Dhouib compares the role of philosophy in an authoritarian state to its transformative role in a post-revolutionary context. Dhouib takes the reader through a transcultural philosophizing approach, in which he — as an observer, witness and actor — narrates transformation from personal experience in both Tunisia and Germany. Despite the lack of academic freedom under the Ben Ali regime, some philosophers were involved in combating "cultural and intellectual poverty" and in building "intercultural and interdisciplinary dialog". Convinced that the Arab uprisings radically defined new ways of existing in the world, Dhouib writes that discussion, debates and seminars have since served as mini-democracies, and that professors and students alike have been involved in the creation of a learning society. After analyzing the relationship between philosophy, human rights and democracy, Dhouib moves toward rethinking the aims of higher education as a community of rational and democratic discourse, within which democracy is learned and practiced. Focusing on "a (self-) critical look at academic life in Europe and Germany, particularly with regard to the issues of equality of opportunity and support for young talents", Dhouib acknowledges the advantage of "German–Arab networks". For him, "German–Arab exchange in times of political transformation not only enables us to think through questions of human rights, experiences with injustice and the culture of remembrance from a dual perspective, and to advance the idea of a transcultural philosophy. It also serves to dismantle prejudices and blinders".

Drawing on Jack Mezirow's descriptions of new forms of knowledge, in which transformative learning is "the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action" (Mezirow 2003 b: 58 f.), we can say that Dhouib defends the idea that philosophy is a "school of freedom". For him, university is creating new opportunities and spaces for discourse among young scholars. In addition, the role of professors is to attempt to create a community of critical reasoning, critical reflection, and free and critical conversations. Such "decolonized" universities would not only teach democracy and human rights as subjects of study, but also teach democratically and, in the process, create

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and support a democratic society. In this sense, higher education would itself become a learning society.

The article by Carola Richter and Hanan Badr, *"Communication Studies in Transformation — Self-Reflections on an Evolving Discipline in Times of Change"*, deals with the transformation of the scientific knowledge produced in communication studies of post-Arab uprising media. By reflecting on the phenomenon of mediatization, Richter and Badr show how scholars "shift their focus from the mass consumption of media to individualized forms of media production and use". The authors criticize the methodologies and concepts used by many communication studies scholars as tools for understanding the Arab uprisings. In fact, "scholars referred to the events in the Arab countries as long as they seemed to support particular favored academic approaches, but stopped doing so as soon as their concepts proved no longer able to encompass the complexities of the interactions between the region's media, society and processes of transformation". Like Winckler and Junge, Richter and Badr hold that "scientific knowledge generated in Arabic remains largely unknown and disconnected from international research". From their point of view, it is urgent "to focus less on technology and more on people-centered analyses of media practices".

Drawing on the widespread observation that the Arab uprisings were characterized by the strong use of social media tools and familiar internet platforms, Tobias Amft's and Kalman Graffi's article, *"Webs of Change? The Transformation of Online Social Networks and Communication Infrastructures from a Technological Point of View"*, examines the impact of the Arab uprisings on academic thinking in the field of computer science, especially with regard to topics such as privacy, anonymity and security in networking and communications. After discussing "the technological weaknesses that allow these networks to be spied on, censored and blocked, thus hindering the dissemination of information", Amft and Graffi present practical solutions for combating surveillance and censorship, such as encryption and proxy-based routing. These "solutions originate from the computer science subject areas of security and dependability" as well as "operating, communication, database and distributed systems". Despite some regimes' attempts to block information and punish activists, Amft and Graffi affirm that "new forms of secure communication will be developed. In the end, information will flow".

In his article *"The Damage Done: the 'Arab Spring', Cultural Heritage and Archaeologists at Risk",* Ammar Abdulrahman takes an archaeolo-

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gist's point of view in highlighting the challenges his field faces with regard to safeguarding valuable historical artifacts particularly in Syria, but also in Iraq and Egypt. Artifact trafficking is also flourishing in Libya, Yemen and Tunisia, he notes. In this war against cultural memory, organized networks take advantage of the lack of law enforcement and surveillance in broad areas to buy and sell valuable antiquities, with "most of the artifacts illicitly traded find[ing] their way into markets in European and other Western countries". Despite the dangers of the current environment, archaeologists are still working to preserve and restore monuments that have been damaged in the Syrian conflict. In addition to his account of the situation in Syria, Abdulrahman describes the efforts of many local actors and international organizations to raise awareness regarding the value of this cultural heritage, as well as to combat the illegal trafficking of artifacts. Abdulrahman believes that responsibility implies knowledge as well as action. In order to move forward, he calls for greater efforts both from those within and outside the academy. Abdulrahman suggests that "Syrian archaeologists currently living abroad can support students of archaeology inside Syria through their scientific networks and thereby help establish the next generation of experts. In addition, networks of local and foreign experts must be maintained". The reason to promote greater involvement, according to Abdulrahman, is that "Syrian cultural heritage is much more than a local issue; as a global matter, it concerns all of humanity".

In sum, this book marks a new trajectory for studying the Middle East. It offers a theoretical discourse that can be transformed into research and action with regard to academic liberties and the preservation of cultural heritage in conflict zones. By tackling the question of how cultural paradigms influence changes within academia, and by demonstrating "collective engagement", the volume's contributors are in fact developing ways of confronting problems from multiple directions rather than compartmentalizing knowledge. From their point of view, transformation, or this act of unveiling the reality behind culturally influenced academic discourses, is an ongoing, never-ending and dynamic process. By presenting various examples of researcher mobility and connectivity, as well as collaboration between scholars living in Europe and the Arab world, the members of AGYA and their co-authors aim to explore the contemporary configurations of knowledge, culture and connection that come about through researchers' cross-border movements. Indeed, AGYA's researchers have been interacting with such productive intensity that they

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themselves have had a transformative effect on the scholars around them, and even on their broader academic disciplines.

Finally, it is clear that transformation as described in this book can be regarded as a creative environment rather than a destructive one. Scholars are sharing knowledge and ideas through a process of cultural exchange and agency. Most importantly, for all those writing here, the goal is not simply to interrogate knowledge, but rather to experience it first hand, learning how to produce ruptures and negotiate and overcome barriers. The experience of composing this book has enabled the creation of places and spaces of knowledge production, while also creating new solidarity and collaborative relationships among AGYA members. Alongside the transformations of identity, memory, awareness and other modes of consciousness, a new "transnational imagination" is emerging. Indeed, it is evident that an emancipatory transformation is taking place within academia. The strengths of this book, with its focus on "Academia in Transformation", are numerous. The contributors revise structures of meaning; think through new kinds of research methodologies and methods in a way which is attentive to their ontological and epistemological anchors, and explore options for new roles, relationships and actions. However, the overarching hope is that each of the articles provides promise of a better future within academia. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos rightfully argues, "[t]here is no guarantee that a better world may be possible, nor that all those who have not given up struggling for it conceive it in the same way" (Santos, 2006: 52). If we lose sight of the possibility of new ways of learning and producing knowledge, or of the fact that spaces can be produced from an assemblage of linkages, experiences and practices that are different from what might be visible today, then we become complicit in silencing voices and eliminating alternative forms of existence and opportunities for more democratic politics.

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3 Middle East Studies and Academic Cooperation in the Wake of the Arab Uprisings

Florian Kohstall

"You are asking the wrong questions!" With this sentence, Jonas Lüscher (2013) starts his debut novel *Frühling der Barbaren* (Spring of the Barbarians), which describes a Swiss businessman's trip to Tunisia. Initially planning only to visit one of his subcontractors, the young, fortunate entrepreneur named Preising instead winds up traveling into the desert to attend a wedding predominantly attended by British bankers at a lush holiday resort. While the bankers are partying in this artificial oasis, the British pound collapses and England goes bankrupt. Overnight, the bankers lose their jobs, and with their credit cards now blocked, they are unable to even pay for their breakfasts. When the resort goes up in flames, everyone tries to escape the chaos on their own. Lüscher's novel is ostensibly about the financial crisis, but he skillfully interweaves his story with themes drawn from the so-called Arab Spring. From the orientalist images of camels and palm-tree gardens to the children working in the Tunisian subcontractor's company, from the side effects of mass tourism to the brutal violence on Tahrir Square, the political present is portrayed in this novel without ever being named.

The introductory sentence of Lüscher's book repeats an often-reiterated criticism of the field of Middle East studies in the wake of the Arab uprisings. Political scientists studying Arab countries are said to have missed forecasting this major transformation because they had asked the wrong questions. For decades they seem to have overemphasized the stability of authoritarian regimes on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, thereby overlooking the massing forces of mobilization that drove the uprisings. And indeed, the ouster of two presidents-for-life, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, did take many in the discipline by surprise. Middle East scholars followed the events in a manner similar to Lüscher's character Preising: as astonished observers in the middle of a storm that would profoundly transform the region and their objects of study.

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Within the discipline of Middle East studies, the Arab uprisings were quickly recognized as a milestone event, comparable to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 or the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington in 2001. Such events dominate scholarly debate for years after taking place, in no small measure because they occur so unexpectedly (Howard and Walters 2014). At the annual conferences of the American Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and the German Middle East Studies Association for Contemporary Research and Documentation (DAVO) in both 2011 and 2012, most panels and presentations revolved around the so-called Arab Spring. The conferences' programs provide a good overview of the hot topics in Middle East studies at that time. Scholars were struggling with the appropriate terminology (e.g., revolt, revolution or regime change), as well as with the development of new theoretical approaches suitable for analyzing the events that started in Tunisia in December 2010 and subsequently affected most of the region's countries.

It is necessary to refute the often made criticism that scholars should have anticipated the events (Heydemann 2002; Gause 2011). But it is also essential to admit that scholars sometimes find themselves in the position of perplexed observers, able to do no more than record what they see without necessarily being able to explain it. Lüscher's book reminds us not only of the complexity of such events, but also of the pitfalls of narrating them.

In this article, I will address two of the several major challenges political scientists working on the Middle East today face due to the rebellions. First, I argue that the uprisings provided us with new opportunities for research. Scholars were able to identify new actors, revisit analytical frameworks, and benefit from increased public attention on the field and additional research funding. This helped us explore new fields of inquiry (see also Bank 2015; Catusse et al. 2015; Schwedler 2015). As a result, our focus moved beyond the so-called inter-paradigm debate on democratization and autocracy, which primarily concentrated on regime change (Pace and Cavatorta 2012). In a second step, I will address the constraints and challenges that hamper further development within the field of Middle East studies. The uprisings not only provided scholars with an increase in public attention and funding; they also brought a number of inequalities to the forefront, especially between researchers working on the ground and those observing the events from the outside. In conclusion, I will suggest new avenues for cooperation and propose employing a more comparative approach in the further development of the field of Middle East studies.

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The observations in this article are largely based on my own research trajectory. They are far from comprehensive, and reflect a rather selective way of reading through the enormous amount of academic literature produced in the past five years.[1] In addition, the article is based on observations from my personal experiences as coordinator for research and teaching programs and director of the Cairo Office of Freie Universität Berlin since 2010.

New trends in Middle East studies following the uprisings

Six years after the uprisings, it is very hard to recall the festive atmosphere that reigned in Tunisia and Egypt after the departure of Ben Ali and Mubarak. In Egypt, configurations of power very similar to those that defined the Mubarak era have been reinstated. Tunisia, the first and probably most pioneering of all "Arab Spring" countries, is still struggling to achieve internal security and political stability. On a regional level, the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (Daesh) and the ongoing wars in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen continue to dominate headlines. Europe has been deeply affected by an unprecedented arrival of refugees that is a direct consequence of developments in the region. This obscures the initial euphoria that accompanied the events in 2011, when Egypt's long-term President Hosni Mubarak, who had governed the country for 30 years, was ousted by mass demonstrations.

Times of euphoria and self-reflection

Current events also risk overshadowing the crucial period of self-reflection we Middle East scholars lived through at that time. Many of us had worked for decades to explain various features of authoritarian rule, such as the use of violence, the co-optation of oppositional forces and the presence of electoral fraud. While not a pleasant experience, investigating the numerous facets of authoritarian rule represented a very agnostic way of analyzing political change. After the 1990 s, the expected worldwide expansion of democratic rule failed to reach the Middle East (while suffering

1 For a more comprehensive review of that literature, see (for example) Grimm 2015.

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major setbacks in other regions). When in 2010–2011, demonstrators finally overcame police cordons and dictators were forced to flee, many scholars shared the joy of the protesters on Tahrir Square and elsewhere. For me and many of my colleagues alike, the events of 2011 were a liberating experience. Liberating because, despite their austere and sober analysis, most scholars were very empathic with the region they studied. They had long hoped that living conditions for the region's people would ultimately improve. Liberating too because the region's politics received considerable attention due to the uprisings; Middle East scholars were frequently asked by the media and by decision-makers to explain the course of events (Anderson 2012). Research-funding organizations made new calls for the transformation processes to be studied. This interest in the region opened up opportunities to engage in public debate and explore new avenues of research.

Observing the field of Middle East studies before 2011, one might have gotten the impression that authoritarianism was the only debate in town. Along with the focus on the role of political Islam, the issue of authoritarian resilience had become one of the most dominant subjects of inquiry for specialists in the region. The inter-paradigm debate on democratization and authoritarianism served as a point of reference for many prominent fields of study, including examinations of public policy allocation, social movements and local governance in the region. This often marginalized other important developments and inhibited us from asking questions that were also deserving of study, especially with regard to the unexpected uprisings, but also with regard to ongoing transformations in the social and economic spheres.

A look back at my own Ph.D. research, concluded in 2009, might illustrate the need to move beyond the debate on regime change: In this research, I compared the university reform politics of two authoritarian regimes. Taking Egypt and Morocco as examples, I concentrated on a specific policy sector and presented how both regimes negotiated with international donors and adopted different reform measures to internationalize higher education. The thesis demonstrated that Morocco possessed greater flexibility than Egypt with regard to the implementation of social reforms. In Morocco, party pluralism and civil society were able to provide a filter with which to channel social demands and implement reform policies more effectively, while Mubarak's dependence on single-party rule through the National Democratic Party (NDP) limited the regime's reform

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flexibility (Kohstall 2009). These were important findings for the uprisings that occurred later.

The question of why monarchies survived the "Arab Spring" reappeared prominently on the agenda after the uprising (Gause 2013). However, when I concluded my doctorate degree in 2009, I would not have dared to predict that Egypt's limited social reform flexibility would get Mubarak into serious trouble one day, with Morocco sailing relatively smoothly through the troubled waters of the uprisings. King Mohammed VI was quickly able to silence the demands of the 20 February Movement, Morocco's umbrella protest organization, through the implementation of another cycle of constitutional reforms. The dominant analytical current on authoritarian resilience made it difficult to imagine any other outcome, in particular a large-scale uprising. Consequently, my thesis concentrated its main findings on variations of authoritarian governance and how different regimes adjust to international and domestic pressure instead of outlining possible weaknesses in regime configuration. This illustrates how a set frame of analysis can lead to the neglect of important developments. While agnostic with regard to democratization, scholars also overemphasized the impossibility of change through a focus on authoritarian resilience.

A more diversified but unfinished research agenda

In the wake of the uprisings, many scholars turned their interests away from Islamist movements and authoritarianism, previously the dominant subjects of analysis. The uprisings presented a golden opportunity to observe history as it unfolded. This contributed to an important shift in the discipline, from the study of authoritarianism to the study of new actors and emerging institutional processes. On the streets, we were able to observe the pluralization of political protest movements, emerging social actors and political parties; in an analogous fashion, the field of Middle East studies also experienced a moment of pluralization through its inquiry into new and different research subjects. The role of new media, the negative effects of economic policies on regime stability and the powerful mobilization of various marginalized actors became particularly prominent research subjects. None of these themes were completely new to the discipline, but the way scholars now approached these questions differed greatly from the pre-uprisings era. I will illustrate this by focusing on just three

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out of the many research trends that became very important after the events in the region.

The first trend focused on explaining the dynamics of the uprisings, with a particular focus on the idea of "politics from below", an already established research tradition that was now experiencing a comeback (Bayat 2013; see also Harders 2009). Scholars following this trend sought to identify and categorize the different actors that played an important role in the uprisings, such as workers, women, various religious groups and unemployed graduates (Albrecht and Demmelhuber 2013). By tracing back these different population groups' activities, the scholars showed how each had already acquired important protest experience, and how these different protest cultures merged in the 2011 mass mobilization (El Ghobashy 2011; Camau and Vairel 2015). My own contribution here focused on the role of students and professors in Egypt's uprising. While in my Ph.D. research I had considered members of this group to be marginalized actors, I could now emphasize their fight for university autonomy under Mubarak as a step toward mass mobilization. Once the protests started, students and professors joined in large numbers, quickly launching demonstrations on university campuses. Long confined by the regime to being isolated pockets of protest, universities now became the avant-garde in an uprising that included many sections of society (Kohstall 2013). This highlights how the rebellions changed our perception and the way in which we approached various actors. The uprisings made developments visible that had remained hidden before.

A second trend, focused more on the issue of "politics from above", also benefited from developments after the uprisings. The Egyptian army, which had long been off limits for researchers, suddenly became exposed to critical public examination through the act of seizing power. This opened new opportunities for intra- and interregional comparison of different "coup-proofing" strategies, and for the exploration of the confines of civil and military regimes (Albrecht 2015). Another central actor whose role had been long obscured by semi-legality now became exposed to a new quality of investigation; Islamist movements and parties' strategies became clearer once they entered the electoral race without self-restraint and gained power in Tunisia and Egypt. For a long time, scholars had described the Muslim Brotherhood as a moderate movement (Rutherford 2006; Hamzawy 2005; Al Anani 2010). Now researchers could confront the moderation hypothesis with Ennahda's ruling practices in Tunisia and Morsi's presidency in Egypt (Roy 2012; Gerges 2013; Cavatorta 2013). In

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different political settings, they were able to observe how broadly unknown political organizations operated within an existing political configuration. However, Morsi's short presidency in Egypt probably illustrated best that the moderation hypothesis was difficult to apply to a political setting where all actors refused to set up a clear political framework.

To give a third example, researchers also rediscovered institutions such as electoral processes and constitutional arrangements. In Egypt in 2011–2012, elections were held in a relatively free and fair environment for the first time. This in turn facilitated access to opinion polls and relatively viable data on electoral turnout and results. Consequently, scholars could now engage, at least cautiously, in electoral sociology, whereas before they had mainly concentrated on "the menu of manipulation" of elections under authoritarianism (Schedler 2002). Comparing constitutional change and electoral processes in Tunisia and Egypt was not only instructive in highlighting different paths of transformation, but was also a way to critically assess the literature on founding elections (Gervasio & Teti 2011; Kohstall 2014). Founding elections had played an important role in transitions from authoritarian rule in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Applying these findings to the Middle East now enabled scholars to add a new, critical perspective to the study of this issue.

Summarizing these trends, I argue in accordance with André Bank (2015) that the uprisings contributed to a more comparatively informed study of Middle East politics. Scholars brought in fresh approaches from the broader political science discipline that previously had been rather infrequently applied in Middle East studies. Studies on the mobilization of diverse actors relied both on the literature on social movements (Allal & Pierret 2013; Bennani Chraïbi & Fillieule 2012) and on comparisons with other revolutionary experiences, such as those of 1848, 1968 and 1989 (Harders 2011; Stepan & Linz 2013; Wallerstein 2011; Weyland 2012). What many characterized in the beginning as a "Facebook revolution" subsequently attracted the attention of scholars not intimately familiar with the region. But it also convinced specialists in the area to experiment with new instruments. This contributed to the diversification of the research agenda. Yet the debate over how to adjust the discipline to these new research opportunities is still in full swing. Jilian Schwedler (2015) criticizes the focus on regimes and social movements as dominant categories of analysis. Our obsession with comparison may lead to the neglect of purely local dynamics of protest and repression, or of questions such as how neo-liberal reforms shape politics on the local level. In a sim-

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ilar vein, Koen Bogaert (2013) argues that the Arab uprisings have to be set in the context of the transformation of global capitalism during the past 30 years. Instead of asking whether a given regime is democratic or authoritarian, it would be more relevant to investigate how authoritarian practices have changed over the past decades he says.

Despite the promising new trends described above, it is evident that no new research agenda has been forged so far. As the revolutionary experiences in the various countries quickly developed along very different paths, we do not share the privilege of our colleagues working on other areas, such as the transitologists who studied the transition from authoritarian rule in Latin America in the 1980 s using shared tools and a unified approach (O'Donnell, Schmitter & Whitehead 1986). Similarly, Soviet-bloc specialists were able to join in an analogous effort to study transformation processes in Eastern Europe after 1989. By contrast, the Arab countries experienced no domino effect. On the contrary, the uprisings resulted in very different developments: from the negotiation of a new constitution in Tunisia to the ouster of an elected president in Egypt; from the brutal repression of demonstrations in Bahrain and Syria to foreign intervention in Libya and Yemen. Rather than approaching these different developments with a single set of theoretical tools, it appears crucial to emphasize their very specific contexts.

Hence, many scholars tend to point out that the only common trends in the region are the revival of the security state and increasing fragmentation of the political order (POMEPS 2015; Perthes 2015). While these trends are real, and while structuralist, non-culturalist explanations for the longevity of authoritarian regimes in Arab countries remain valid (Kienle 2012), it is worthwhile remembering how much the region and the field of Middle East studies have diversified. Even if more generalizable observations are necessary, micro-level developments should not be disregarded, especially with regard to the interplay between change and continuity in different sectors (Belakhdar et al. 2014; Rivetti 2015). This might, for example, help us to understand better that the new wave of repression is not simply a return to the old order, but that increasing mobilization has rather been countered by a new and unprecedented spiral of violence. For Middle East scholars, the uprisings were a wake-up call to study developments not necessarily related to regime change. The major challenge ahead remains one of better integrating our studies into the broader political science discipline, while still paying enough attention to local contexts. To do so, scholars in the field will have to improve cooperation with both colleagues

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who are less familiar with the Middle East and with colleagues living and researching in the countries we are observing.

Local versus foreign scholarship

Besides providing the opportunity to discover new actors and revisit analytical frames, the uprisings also cast a spotlight on another underexamined issue — that of the hierarchy of scholars working on the region. This question is not new; however, it gained attention as a consequence of the uprisings. Scholars working in the region also benefited from the increase in interest in the Middle East. At least in their early days, the events of 2011 opened up new opportunities to engage in debate and to provide the discipline with fresh analysis. Local researchers were frequently asked by the media, think tanks and international organizations to give their perspective on the events. They were partners in many newly established research and cooperation projects, and they participated actively in the ad hoc debate provided by newly created online publication platforms, newsletters and expert talks. The question is whether this interest in the viewpoints of local scholars have had a lasting effect on the discipline. Have the questions raised by scholars working in the field been echoed in the broader debate? Did increased cooperation with local scholars really improve the conditions under which humanities and social sciences were practiced in the countries affected by the uprisings?[2]

Academic knowledge production and activism

In September 2011, Mona Abaza, an internationally trained and renowned sociologist, published an article on the newly established Jadaliyya platform (which was founded in October 2010, but was catapulted to the forefront of critical debate on the Middle East thanks to the uprisings) entitled "Academic Tourists Sightseeing the Arab Spring". Concerned about the "international academic division of labor", she accused Western researchers of exploiting the Arab uprisings as a sensational topic, and of using their Egyptian colleagues as mere service providers, or in Orientalist

2 For a similar concern about translocal cooperations, see also the contribution of Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge in this volume.

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terms, as "*les indigènes de service*" (Abaza 2011). Abaza's text provides ample material for reflection on the role of local scholarship and its constraints. Her argument about an "international academic division of labor" has to be carefully assessed, especially in the context of the Arab uprisings. Still, her distinction between "Western" and "local" scholars appears to be a disturbing simplification in a time of internationalization marked by the circulation of scholars and knowledge. Many Egyptian scholars write from European and US universities and do not necessarily share the conditions of colleagues working in academic institutions in the Middle East. A distinction between those working on the ground and those observing developments from outside seems a much more appropriate way to capture the balance of power regarding the production of knowledge on the Arab uprisings.

Two tiny examples of international cooperation between local and foreign scholars, drawn from a much larger universe, may illustrate what has been achieved and what still needs to be done in order to incorporate local scholarship into international knowledge production better. In April 2011, as a representative of the Freie Universität Berlin, I organized an international conference entitled "From Revolution to Transformation" in conjunction with the American University in Cairo. This symposium offered a unique occasion for the comparison of the revolutionary events in Egypt in 2011 with those in East Germany in 1989. Many of the Egyptian scholars we had invited presented first-hand accounts from Tahrir Square. Like many other professors, they had participated in the protests against Mubarak from the beginning. When they returned to their classrooms, events were still fresh and ongoing. After Tahrir, universities quickly became another site of the uprising. Many of those engaged in the protests considered that after Mubarak's removal, it was time to reform the university system. This continuous engagement was strongly reflected in the academic presentations during the symposium. Scholars focused on the institutionalization of the Tahrir protest culture, the importance of different groups (e.g., workers) in the uprising, and on concepts such as the "civil state" as opposed to the military or religious state. Their analyses were extremely important in balancing some of the media commentary that had framed the uprisings as a "Facebook revolution" and (over-) emphasized the role of the young educated middle class in the protests.

Another series of events jointly organized by the Freie Universität Berlin, Orient-Institut Beirut (OIB) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) confirmed these observations. In the Cairo Talks on

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Transformation and Change (CTTC), a series of debates held between April 2011 and February 2015, scholars discussed crucial aspects of Egypt's transformation process, from the constitutional amendments in March 2014 to the state of the economy after the uprising.[3] Each time, one Egyptian and one German scholar opened the debate, each giving a 10 to 15-minute presentation. In most cases, the audience — composed of Egyptian students and professors, as well as decision-makers and representatives from European organizations present in Cairo — reacted most directly to the Egyptian scholar's talk. In their presentations the Egyptian contributors focused on what had happened on the ground, while the Germans tended to take a somewhat distant observer's perspective, centered more on comparative and theoretical questions. The CTTC format was very valuable in confronting these different perspectives. It illustrated the high level of interest in a scholarly debate on the social, economic and political implications of the uprisings. Establishing CTTC as a forum for academic debate only a short distance away from Cairo's Tahrir Square also meant providing scholars who had become activists (if they had not already been so before) a "retreat" and time to reflect. Nevertheless, it also reflected a broader challenge for the conduct of Middle East studies with regard to the differing positions of those working on the ground and those observing the events from a distance. In Cairo, first-hand accounts quickly became the knowledge of the moment, while scholars observing the events from outside often asked how they could insert these observations into established analytical frames.

Local scholars and those based in the country provided the audience with crucial knowledge on the rapidly unfolding events, thereby raising new questions that remain of critical importance in the discipline's further development. Yet despite this important contribution to knowledge production, the academic debate remains largely shaped by scholars observing events from the outside. Knowledge production on the Arab uprisings in peer-reviewed journals is dominated by researchers working at US think tanks and universities.[4] They often observe the unfolding events from the outside, where they enjoy a safe working environment. Instead of

3 For the program of the Cairo Talks on Transformation and Change, see: http://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/cairo/veranstaltungen/Cairo_Talks_on_Transformation_and_Change__CTTC_/index.html.

4 A recently published study on peer-reviewed articles on the Arab uprisings shows that 75 percent of this scholarly production comes from outside the Arab World,

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being confronted with the choice of joining the protests or sharing their experience in a lecture hall, they might choose the luxury of writing instead of acting. One passage described in the introduction to the Lüscher novel captures the contrasts between local and foreign scholarship during times of crisis. When Preising relates his experiences in Tunisia to a Swiss colleague, the latter responds: "We are both captured in this inability to act, but Preising managed to see this inability as a virtue, while I suffered a lot from it. If we wanted to change something, we would have to act" (Lüscher 2013 — author's translation).

Especially on site, times of political crisis like the transformation period following the Egyptian uprising seem to privilege the production of ad hoc knowledge to the disadvantage of academic scholarship. Scholars have to cope with rapidly unfolding events at a time when they are adjusting their tools and re-examining their analytical frameworks. This seems especially true for local scholars. As experts working in the countries involved, they are frequently asked to give media interviews and expert talks. They are considered to be the local voices. At the same time, they have to choose between different intellectual positions. They present themselves at their universities as neutral academic observers, while often simultaneously engaging directly in activism or choosing to adopt the position of an adviser or the critical role of the intellectual.

Political uncertainty and restrictions on academic freedom

Local knowledge production is not only bound by the choice between activism and scholarship. It is also hampered by restrictions on academic freedom and the uncertainty of a rapidly changing political environment. Times of political crisis feel like emotional rollercoasters.[5] In Egypt, as the constitutional referendum in March 2011 gave way to the events of Maspero in October of the same year, when a Coptic demonstration was violently dissolved by the military, initially high hopes were quickly replaced by deep disappointment. Keeping the necessary distance to produce

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predominantly from the United States (AlMaghlouth et al. 2015). See also Carola Richter and Hanan Badr's contribution in this volume on the problem of visibility of local knowledge.

5 For a personal account of these "rollercoaster" emotions, see also the contribution by Sarhan Dhouib in this volume.

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academic scholarship became extremely difficult under such circumstances.

Closely interlinked with this factor is the difficulty of conducting social science research in Egypt and other countries of the Middle East. After a short period of political pluralization in Egypt, social scientists were again exposed to new waves of scrutiny. Even early in the uprisings, they were directly exposed to the political struggles and violence that emerged within universities in many countries. In the aftermath of the uprisings, Egyptian universities benefited from political liberalization for a short time. When the selection process for university presidents and deans was changed to an electoral model in 2011, in a move to accommodate student protests, professors started to develop new courses and teaching materials in order to integrate theoretical perspectives on social movements and revolutions into the curriculum (Sharobeem 2015). International cooperation on various social science topics flourished. But this was a short honeymoon for the social sciences in Egypt. With the overthrow of President Morsi in 2013, political activity on campus was prohibited, several professors linked to the Muslim Brotherhood were banned from teaching, and efforts to engage in international collaboration again drew suspicions of foreign intervention.[6]

Today social scientists face even greater difficulties in doing quantitative and qualitative research than was the case under Mubarak. Accurate data is treated as a state secret, gaining access to archives requires lengthy permission procedures, and potential interviewees have been imprisoned or remain at risk of persecution (Fahmy 2016). The situation in war-torn countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria or Yemen is even worse. In fact, in very few countries of the region does social science research still make any appreciable contribution to the cause of freedom and autonomy. When the Arab Council for Social Sciences, created in March 2011, held its second annual conference in March 2015 in Beirut, a lively influx of researchers from all over the region was evident. Lebanon, along with Morocco and Tunisia, today appears as one of the few places in the region

6 See the excellent documentation of this issue by the Egyptian organization Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression (AFTE), afteegypt.org. For an insider's perspective on Egyptian universities, see also Jan Claudius Völkel's contribution in this volume.

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where social science research can be conducted and presented relatively free of concern.[7]

Many of the aforementioned restrictions also apply to foreign researchers, at least when they engage in long-term field research. Examples ranging from Michel Seurat to Giulio Regeni[8] illustrate the dangers faced by foreign researchers. Local researchers feel these restrictions on a regular basis. In addition, they work in an academic environment where education does not provide the same training in theoretical tools and approaches received in Western universities, and where the incentives for academic promotion differ. However, foreign and local researchers working on the ground are similarly affected by the political environment and the restrictions authorities impose on research in the humanities and social sciences.

Toward a more comparative approach in Middle East studies

Seven years after the start of the Arab uprisings, it seems more important than ever to engage in an active debate not only on how to develop Middle East studies further, but also on how to establish consistent forms of academic cooperation with researchers in the countries being studied and provide them with a safe research environment. This article has highlighted how the uprisings provided us with numerous opportunities to reassess analytical tools and develop new research questions. At this stage, we have examined different actors and institutional arrangements from new angles, but due to the rapidly changing context and the continuing violence on the ground, the field of Middle East studies remains fragmented and fragile, fragmented because the diverse new findings have not yet coalesced into new research agendas, fragile because locally based scholars in particular continue to struggle with numerous constraints that reemerged as quickly as the uprisings themselves appeared. The contribution of scholars working on site, however, seems more important than ever if our discipline is to

7 See the contribution by Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami in this volume on the new ways of teaching the Arab language in Beirut after the uprisings.

8 French sociologist Michel Seurat died in 1986 while being held hostage by the Islamic Jihad in Lebanon. Giulio Regeni, a doctoral student from Cambridge, disappeared on January 25, 2016, in Cairo and was found dead 10 days later with the body evincing extensive signs of torture, presumably inflicted on him by the police and state security.

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develop new questions and concepts and become better integrated into broader political science debates. In order to face these challenges, Middle East studies must be established as a truly comparative discipline. This will require considerable engagement and commitment on the part of senior scholars, funding organizations and governmental authorities.

Scholars such as Abaza and others often call for the development of an indigenous sociology in order to rebalance the unequal relationship between "Western" and "Eastern" scholarship on the Middle East. I do not think that more reading and deeper exegesis of the famous Arab sociologist Ibn Khaldun and other indigenous pioneers would necessarily save the discipline in Egypt's academic environment. Instead, I think that a more intense dialogue is needed between those engaging in Middle East studies from inside and outside the region. Those coming from the outside rely heavily on the first-hand knowledge provided by their colleagues working on the ground, benefiting from their local colleagues' contacts and descriptions of events. But for scholars observing events from the outside, it is probably time to throw overboard the old perception of the countries of the Middle East as "our place for fieldwork". We should take into account the rich academic environment in the areas we engage in and with. Instead of limiting ourselves to looking for primary sources and treating our colleagues working in Egyptian universities as interview partners, it would be very helpful if we accorded these colleagues more respect by taking their debates more seriously and citing their work.

In addition, it is time to rethink funding policies in order to improve cooperation further. Local scholars benefit considerably from foreign funding when it enables them to pursue research stays abroad, where they can spend time in libraries and establish the necessary distance from the tumultuous events in their home countries. This allows them to participate more actively in the scholarly debate through the publication of peer-reviewed articles. Even apart from the aforementioned debate series, many examples of successful cooperation do exist, but need further support to be institutionalized. However, a truly comparative approach is needed to engage scholars from Europe and the Middle East in a dialogue on relevant theoretical tools and concepts.

Too often, doctoral candidates coming from the Middle East are encouraged to work on their own country when they study at European universities. Senior scholars from Egypt are often awarded scholarships because they are considered experts on their own country. This has a number of undeniable advantages, as they have a true mastery of the local language

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and privileged access to sources. But it is a disadvantage with regard to enabling the necessary distance from the field, and with regard to the analytical tools they mobilize. Academic research is often most valuable when theory is mastered without being swayed by the numerous existing *idée reçus*, which one unavoidably holds not only about foreign countries, but also about one's own. Hence, as a second step, professors should encourage their doctoral students to focus on countries other than their country of origin, and scholarship organizations should support long-term research cooperation projects and joint publications in which the local not only represents the local, but also engages in the discipline's broader debates. This could help to bridge the gap between "local" and "foreign" research, and encourage cooperation on a more even playing field. Of course, much has to be done to overcome the current and past limitations of the humanities and social sciences in the countries of the Middle East. It will take a long time to convince paranoid governmental authorities that independent research is not necessarily intended as whistle-blowing. A more comparative approach in Middle East studies would have the advantage of emphasizing theoretical findings over the acquisition of empirical data, thus drawing attention away from the raw data of fieldwork to scholarly debates and innovative questions in the discipline.

The participation of scholars doing research on the ground seems crucial if the discipline aims to develop further. The uprisings have illustrated the limits of the inter-paradigm debate on democratization and authoritarianism. This approach was at least partly shaped by Western governments' demand for policy advice. Since the Cold War, regime change has remained one of the most intriguing questions for the discipline, thanks to the idea that such change could create new allies (Camau 2006). A more intense dialogue with local scholars might help us to move beyond this debate and engage more intensely with questions of daily concern to the people and societies we study. This is not to say that such debates would ignore issues such as democracy and human rights, good governance and accountability. On the contrary, these issues have been at the core of protesters' demands and animate the debate in Middle East academic circles. But the question of regime change is framed differently — not as an end in itself, but as a means of achieving these goals. When we look at our "Western" colleagues in political science studying US, French or German politics or EU integration, it quickly becomes evident that the question of regime change here is more softly embedded in questions of daily concern. Thus, the debate on regime change should not be our only point of

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reference. We should be equally concerned with protest movements, questions of social inequality and public policy. This might not only help us to join the broader political science debates, but also prepare us to ask the right questions next time.

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4 Political Science in Egypt: Talkin' Bout a Revolution

Jan Claudius Völkel

> *"Today Egypt's educational system both reflects and augments the social unrest of its own people – and of those it has influenced. Historic conflicts between religious and secular leaders, between tradition and innovation, and between foreign and national interest, influence contemporary Egyptian education."*
>
> (Cochran 1986: 1)

The job description was promising: the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) was looking for a long-term lecturer in political science in spring 2012 to teach on Cairo University's "Euro-Mediterranean Studies Programme" (EMSP) for the coming five years. "Given the revolutionary changes in the country," stated the call for applications, the successful candidate should offer courses on "societal transformation, development of civil-society structures, democratization, crisis and conflict resolution" (DAAD 2012, translation from German to English by the author).

This sounded like the perfect position to me, as I had been closely following contemporary political and economic developments across the Arab world since my early academic years. I had also been dealing with questions of democratization and transformation for a considerable time. Thus, I submitted my application for this position in summer 2012, and excitedly received an invitation for a job interview at the DAAD headquarters in Bonn, Germany, in September 2012.

The interview took a surprising turn when one of the selection committee members asked whether I might be able to teach more courses on the European Union than originally outlined, and fewer on the issues of transformation and democratization. I confirmed that I was also very familiar with the EU, and that I would be happy to teach classes on that subject too once in Cairo.

Some weeks later I received word that I had been accepted, and on February 1, 2013, I started my new job at Cairo University's well-known Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS). I was excited about working and living in Egypt, the epicenter of the uprisings that had shaken almost the entire Arab world, and about becoming part of this unique pro-

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cess that had dominated regional analyses in academic publications and discourses since its outbreak.[1]

Since taking up the position, I have been teaching courses on European studies and the relations between Europe and the MENA region as part of a team of excellent and likeable colleagues, and with students who have been both interested and interesting. Yet I have not taught a single session on transformation and democratization, the original focus of the position advertised in 2012. Hardly a year later, the demand for these issues had all but vanished at Cairo University.

In the following discussion, I will present some personal observations as a political scientist living in Egypt during the last six months under former President Mohammed Morsi (who was ousted on July 3, 2013), and then under the subsequent rule of interim President Adly Mansour and acting President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. I will discuss the consequences of the restoration of the suppression of critical political science at Egypt's most prestigious state university, and use this experience to help illuminate what political science, and academia in general, could achieve in more favorable circumstances. The article will argue that the current developments in Egypt represent a missed chance to develop political science further into a meaningful discipline that would not only prepare students for the job market, but also contribute to improving the overall quality of Egypt's academic landscape.

Political science here and there

Although there are many similarities between the political science *content* taught in Egypt and Europe/North America, there is one important difference. The typical sub-disciplines studied, such as political theory, international relations and comparative politics are similar. Classes in international law and political economy are offered south as well as north of the Mediterranean. One difference, however, is that academic discourses in the Arab world mostly reflect a positivist perspective, with very little openness toward constructivist approaches. The strict belief in norms and

1 See also the contribution of Florian Kohstall on Middle East studies in the region in this volume.

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values leaves little room for divergent opinions or critical questioning of "eternal truths".

Another difference derives from *working conditions.* In liberal democracies, despite some dependence on state resources, institutional autonomy is broadly assured within academia (Hage 2013). By contrast, the social sciences across the Arab world "face notable obstacles due to institutional fragmentation, high levels of bureaucracy, and political restrictions" (Amer 2016). In many regards, researchers in the Arab world are not free in what they do. Lengthy administrative procedures are only one obstacle; research restrictions are another. For each research initiative, scholars need to obtain security clearance from the authorities, which usually takes months if not years, and even some innocuous proposals are turned down for security reasons. Conducting empirical research on the Muslim Brotherhood or the military is almost impossible inside Egypt, particularly since Al-Sisi's rise to the presidency and the reinstatement of the security state. Even topics such as irregular migration, public health or civil society engagement can only be studied, if at all, under close surveillance by the security forces. In addition, basic research is often perceived as unwanted competition to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the state's statistical office that imposes additional hurdles on the approval of research applications.[2]

An important difference also exists regarding the *purpose* of the social sciences, including political science. Until 2011, political science education in Egypt, like in many other Arab countries, primarily served the aim of raising and training new experts for the political system. Graduates were keen to obtain jobs primarily in public administration, the state party, the diplomatic corps, the intelligence agencies or in one of the state-owned media outlets. The popularity of political science in the Arab world before 2011 was mainly "based on a fake assumption held by many students that it is the highway to get prestigious jobs in the government" (Hassan 2009: 8). Yet hundreds of thousands of students in fact failed to get such positions after university graduation (Abdel-Moneim 2016: 15ff.), particularly if they lacked privileged family bonds with the elite circles. This led to massive levels of personal despair and frustration, and eventually contributed to the popular uprisings of 2011 (El-Said 2014: 65).

2 See the contribution by Sarhan Dhouib in this volume on other hurdles and problems of doing research in authoritarian systems.

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Across the Arab world, governing regimes maintained close links to political science faculties, and interfered both directly and indirectly in teaching of the subject. In Egypt, this was particularly strong from the beginning: Legend has it that it was President Gamal Abdel Nasser himself who ordered the establishment of FEPS at Cairo University, as his daughter wanted to study political science. In truth, Hoda Gamal Abdel Nasser did pursue this course of study, and ultimately became a respected professor at FEPS.

However, Nasser's involvement in Cairo University's new teaching programs was motivated by more than just a desire to help his daughter realize her dreams; 1960 was a year in which Nasser sought to bring Egypt as a whole into line with his comprehensive ideology. The press was nationalized (Völkel 2008: 158), and the social sciences were perceived as a useful medium through which to propagate Nasser's version of Arab socialism, which later became known as "Nasserism". In order to give widespread legitimacy to this comprehensive populist ideology, Cairo University had to "spell out, justify and spread the nationalist and socialist goals of the regime" (Reid 2002: 200); higher education "functioned as a tool to train future party leaders, state cadres, and bureaucrats" (Abd Rabou 2016: 55).

This important charge notwithstanding, Cairo University, like the whole educational sector in Egypt, suffered from chronic underfinancing, as state allocations were clearly not enough to equip universities with sufficient resources to conduct their tasks properly. Consequently, Egypt's educational system even today remains among the world's lowest-ranked, placed 135th out of 138 countries in the "Quality of the education system" category of the World Economic Forum's 2016 2017 Global Competitiveness Report.

The FEPS, as one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education in Egypt, has been closely connected with Egypt's policy circles and state bureaucracy from its beginnings. Its purpose was never simply to train promising academics, but rather to prepare students for future positions in the country's political system. This "structural interconnectedness" was part and parcel of the FEPS' self-understanding from its inception through to the end of Hosni Mubarak's rule. One political science postgraduate, who wished to remain anonymous, remembered that until 2011 the main content of her research consisted of recapitulating the achievements of the state and the government. When this student was considering writing a paper on the 2005 presidential elections — the first os-

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tensibly competitive elections in the country's history, in which Mubarak agreed to allow an official competitor, Ayman Nour, to run — a professor advised her to "simply evaluate the electoral program of President Hosni Mubarak and his development plans for the country" (FEPS postgraduate student, personal communication, May 2016).

This is the opposite of a form of so-called critical academia, that is, one in which academics refuse "to be enslaved" to official politics (Hage 2013). Since 2011, there has certainly been a push for more independent and more professional social sciences throughout the Arab world, illustrated for instance by the creation of the Arab Council for Social Sciences (ACSS) in Beirut in August 2012.[3] However, the social sciences remain "the 'poor cousin' of Arab research" (UNDP 2009: 202). On the eve of the Arab uprisings, Schlumberger (2010: 10) diplomatically identified a "sometimes problematic and less than conducive relationship between the political sphere and the social sciences" across the Arab world. Moreover, the Arab Social Science Monitor published in December 2015 still described Arab social sciences as weak due to "the ever-increasing control and censorship practiced by political authorities over all aspects of civic life in the Arab world in the period preceding the 'Arab Spring'" (Bamyeh 2015: 9). In addition, religious dogmas also impose serious limits on social research; topics such as atheism, existentialism, sexuality or anything that is declared "sensitive" are still widely underrepresented in most curricula. As a consequence, "social science in the Arab world is doubly delegitimized — from above by the political leaders and from below by religious leaders" (Hanafi 2014: 202).

The strong state and pressure group control over the social sciences across the Arab world stands in sharp contrast to the specific German conception of social science, where much still depends on the developments after World War II and the process of denazification undergone by higher education and universities. Before 1945, political science was understood as a theory of the state ("*Staatswissenschaft*"); afterward, the field was particularly strongly influenced by the scholars who had emigrated from Germany during the Nazi period, and who brought back ideas of democracy as a key focus of study when the war was over. Scholars such as Ernst Fraenkel, Franz L. Neumann, Karl Loewenstein, Arnold Bergstraesser and

3 See their website at www.theacss.org. The creation of the ACSS was financially supported by the Ford Foundation and the Canadian International Development Research Center.

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Eric Voegelin spent years in exile in the United States, and there developed the idea that political science should share in the obligation to contribute to Germany's liberation from the Nazi ideology (Porsche-Ludwig 2009: 68).

In large part because of this history, political science in Germany is to a substantial extent understood as "democracy science", meaning that it has the particular normative focus that democracy is the best political system possible, and that studies in political science should not only provide the necessary tools and knowledge to analyze relevant problems, but should also contribute to building democratic societies (Alemann 1994: 15 f.). This fundamental character has been stressed even more since reunification in 1990 and the comprehensive replacement of political science chair holders at East German universities, largely advocates of socialist paradigms, with graduates from West German political science departments (the negative consequences this had for the universities' internal dynamics, and the often very negative consequences for individual scholars, are beyond the scope of this article) (Arnhold 2003: 103ff.).

For me as a graduate of the Freiburg School of Political Science, with a decisively normative-ontological background in the tradition of Arnold Bergstraesser, Wilhelm Hennis and Dieter Oberndörfer, this has always been a very strong element of my own understanding of political science: political science cannot be apolitical. This became a major challenge when events in Egypt started to unfold as they did from summer 2013 on.

Cairo University in its search for itself

The changes of 2011 threw universities in Egypt into new legal and political waters, resulting in many revised syllabi and newly created courses (Sharobeem 2015: 117ff.). However, this also challenged the institutions' longstanding customs regarding the way they conceived academic subjects and presented them to their students. Suddenly, the universities' raison d'être was no longer to provide support for the regime through the inculcation of ideological compliance and the provision of technical expertise; students and some faculty members now demanded a fundamental reorientation of seminar styles and teaching content. During 2011, universities became sites of open and heated debate over the political process; students became highly motivated to contribute to the push for a better Egypt, and those professors and teaching assistants who wholeheartedly supported the

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ongoing transition processes finally felt free and liberated to do what they wanted to do: engage in critical teaching and research instead of training graduates to conform (Abd Rabou 2016: 61; Kohstall in this volume).

Traditionally, Cairo University has been the place where political, economic, societal and diplomatic leaders received their training and their higher education. Much like the institution's Faculty of Law, the FEPS is perceived as a cadre factory that has turned out many important members of Egypt's elite. Since its establishment in 1960, the FEPS has occupied a unique position in Egypt's university landscape, being the only institution that has offered programs in both economics and political science, as well as statistics, from 1963 on. The Department of Public Administration and the Social Science Computing Department were also added to the FEPS in 1990 and 1994 respectively.

Throughout recent decades, many FEPS professors have held high-ranking positions in the country's political or economic system, and former representatives of Egypt's top circles have often taught classes after their tenure as well. The faculty offers study programs in Arabic, English and French, with the first being offered almost free of charge and the latter two requiring relatively high study fees, though still low compared to what particularly the private American University in Cairo (AUC) demands. FEPS's near monopoly on the subject in Egypt (for a long time there was no other place to study political science, except for AUC and some sporadically offered courses at various universities, such as the Faculty of Commerce at Alexandria University) has only recently been broken with the establishment of new political science departments at other public as well as private universities, often with FEPS graduates serving as staff members.

The year 2011 brought an important change to Egypt's law on higher education, namely the introduction of elections for student and university leaders: For the first time, students were allowed to have a say in selecting their own representatives, faculty members, faculty deans and university presidents (Abd Rabou 2016: 62). This was not only perceived as the (overdue) emancipation of universities from state interference, but also brought discussions about candidates' professional and personal merits into university hallways and classrooms (Sharobeem 2015: 119 f.). Instead of simply showing loyalty to the political system, students and professors were suddenly discussing possible solutions to the universities' multiple problems; "competitiveness became a significant principle in the university" (El-Said 2014: 62).

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This legal change was just one visible manifestation of a deeper internal challenge: The search for a new raison d'être. The times when universities simply produced valuable new members of the country's elite seemed to be over. Those students and professors who believed in the ideals of the revolution pushed for reorientation of the old curricula, syllabi and teaching styles. In parallel, those who felt close to or who were members of the Muslim Brotherhood lobbied to give Islam more influence over university life. Until the end of Morsi's presidency, public events and panel discussions at Cairo University saw representatives from across the political spectrum openly exchanging their views and frankly criticizing each other's attitudes.

With the advent of summer 2013 and the renewed change in Egypt's polity, this diversity of voices and opinions came to an abrupt end. Those sympathizing with political Islam quickly disappeared from public events. If they were not arrested or banned from teaching, they either silenced themselves — partly out of frustration regarding the Islamists' ignorance and eventual failure during their short period in power — or went into exile. A similar fate befell many of the democratic activists; thousands, including many students and professors, were arrested for participating in unapproved demonstrations, for insulting the judiciary, or for simply expressing their opinion (Accorsi and Siegelbaum 2014).

Euro-Mediterranean studies as a vehicle for discussions about democratization

The increasingly repressive climate had massive effects both outside and inside the universities, which had become focal points of the societal disputes and clashes after 2011. Since 2013, the state's ongoing "violation of academic freedom in Egypt has been institutionalized in an unprecedented way, causing deterioration in university education and creating a great educational recession" (Abd Rabou 2015). A presidential decree revoked universities' newly gained freedom to elect their own leaders in June 2014 (Maher 2014). Ever since, professors have again been hired or promoted on the basis of pro-governmental attitudes rather than their academic merits. In addition, university professors who wish to attend conferences abroad have needed prior security clearance from the Egyptian authorities since January 2015. Hundreds of students have been referred to military trials or have disappeared without further notice (Saleh 2016). The noted

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AUC professor Emad Shahin received the death penalty for alleged collaboration with foreign secret services. FEPS professors, such as Amr Hamzawy and Ahmed Abd Rabou, left the country in order to escape rising pressure in response to their liberal and repeated pro-democracy statements.

The Euro-Mediterranean Studies Programme (EMSP), created in 2002 with the initial support of an EU Tempus grant, experienced all these ups and downs as well. In 2007, a long-term DAAD lecturer position was established within the program with the aim of enriching its study programs through the perspective of a visiting European lecturer. Additionally, it draws its instructors from the existing professors working in the faculty's different departments.[4]

The EMSP follows the model of the foreign language instructed programs (FLIP) that became possible and popular in Egypt after a legal change in 1990 allowed public universities to offer privately paid study programs (Gamal Eldin 2016: 59ff.). For about EGP 12,000 (€1,200; $1,350 as of October 2016) or EGP 16,000 (€1,600; $1,800),[5] students can enroll in master's or Ph.D. study programs offered completely in English. Studying in English is widely believed to be advantageous for competing in the labor market after graduation (Gamal Eldin 2016: 72), or for achieving a prestigious position within the country or abroad, including in international academic circles (Hanafi & Arvanitis 2014: 725).

These fees, still moderate in comparison to private universities in Egypt, enable advanced study conditions: master's classes rarely have more than 30 students, while Ph.D. classes have no more than 10 students. Up-to-date literature is available in the program's own library, the "documentation center". The multidisciplinary character of EMSP has led to the acceptance of a range of students with different backgrounds, such as economics, law, languages and literature. This diversity of knowledge is a positive in the classroom setting, although some students need to make extra effort to understand theories of European integration or of international relations, since they have never previously studied them.

The EMSP's master's and doctorate programs follow very similar patterns: After two semesters of mandatory classes (four or five per week),

4 See the program's website at www.euromedstudies.net.

5 The fees are not lump sum amounts, but depend on the number of courses the student takes and the length of his/her studies; see http://euromedstudies.net/en/masteruromed/fees.php and http://euromedstudies.net/en/doceuromed/fees.php.

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students start writing their thesis under the supervision of a full professor from the faculty. The academic content of thesis proposals has to be approved by department councils (for FEPS: political science, economics, statistics, public administration, or computer science). After receiving a positive evaluation, the thesis can be registered with the faculty, leading to an administrative process involving the faculty council and the university council, both of which need to approve the proposal. There is at least one year between the registration of the thesis and its defense.

Once theses have been registered in this way, the wording of their titles can be changed only after undergoing the same administrative process, which again requires approval from the faculty council and the university council. This strict rule reflects the traditional understanding of political science in the country; students are not expected to develop their own critical thinking skills, but rather to fulfil the job assigned to them by their supervisor. This fundamentally conflicts with the alternative understanding that the content of research and students' attitudes on certain phenomena might (or even should) change the deeper they dig into the topic. The Humboldtian model of academic freedom, though admittedly never more than an unachieved ideal (Karran 2009), clearly finds its limits if even titles cannot be changed after students have started their research. This policy also stands in fundamental contrast to international practices, in which the use of preliminary working titles is a standard procedure.

A second controversial, and in my view counterproductive rule derived from Egypt's strict higher education law is the requirement that exams make up 70 percent of students' final grade, both at M.A. and Ph.D. level. The remaining coursework, which in my case included an oral presentation, in-class participation and an essay of around eight pages, may account for only 30 percent of the grade.[6] In my view, this reduces students' motivation to engage in activities that do not require as much memorization of facts as exams do. This means that creativity and critical thinking remain underdeveloped.

6 Indeed, with the winter term 2016/2017, this strict rule has been slightly relaxed: exams now count for 50 percent of the final grade, while essays, presentations and participation constitute the remaining 50 percent.

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Focusing teaching and university activities on student development

A relatively small number of professors, mainly among the younger generation, conceive their job not simply as feeding students knowledge, but as encouraging them to develop their own skills and interests. The concept of "learning facilitator" (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows 2006) has only slowly started to gain ground at Cairo University. To this end, the "Euro-Mediterranean Studies Programme" set up a three-year cooperation project with Freie Universität Berlin from 2012 until 2015, initiating an exchange of faculty and students through workshops and conferences that helped trigger fresh ideas about modern teaching methodologies at the FEPS.

Despite the restrictive external conditions, in-class discussions in my seminars have to date been able to be conducted in a very open and confidential manner. Though it usually takes some time at the beginning of each academic year before students are able to build trust with each other and their instructor, lively discussions start to take place after four to six weeks. In our case at EMSP, it is a real blessing that Europe's history is full of discontinuities: the fact that postwar (Western) Germany successfully embarked on the path of democracy despite being a "democracy without democrats" (Lepsius 1990: 64); the importance of the economic upswing in the achievement of political stability in Western Europe after World War II; the role of external superpowers such as the United States and the Soviet Union in Europe; the end of the military juntas in Greece, Spain and Portugal and the subsequent process of democratization in the 1970 s and 1980 s; the overthrow of autocratic regimes after yearlong demonstrations in Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe; and the failure of Yugoslavia and the outbreak of civil war on European soil in the 1990 s, to name but a few.[7] All these topics can be discussed without explicit reference to Egypt and the Arab countries, but everybody is aware of the parallels and potential lessons for Egypt's own future. The active involvement of students in the preparation and conduct of seminars is not yet very common in Egypt, but students quickly appreciate that their opinions are not only tolerated in class, but even requested.

7 See also the contribution by Fatima Kastner in this volume on a global discussion of the transitional justice model.

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Teaching is currently also undergoing a fundamental change in Egypt (at least at master's and doctorate levels), from the traditional style in which professors stand in front of the class talking and students try to keep pace as they take notes to be memorized later, to a more interactive format with the teacher engaging with the students in a less hierarchical manner. Formats in which students give presentations and their fellow students react to them through discussions, group work or other forms of interactive learning are somewhat new to Egypt.[8] However, many professors, particularly among the younger generations, have embarked on this new way of teaching.

A similar change is happening in the way papers and essays are written. Many of my students were not used to developing their own research questions or thinking about an appropriate structure for their paper themselves, as they were used to being told what to do and how to do it. This has been a difficult learning process for some, even at the master's and sometimes doctorate levels. Yet it is an indispensable practice if students are to be brought to a position in which they no longer simply repeat existing knowledge, but also create new expertise and perspectives by engaging in critical thinking and crafting alternative approaches. A fundamental problem is that the habit of giving feedback on papers remains underdeveloped. More than once, after I returned M.A. student essays with detailed comments and invited them to discuss their papers with me if they had questions, the students said they had never previously received comments of this kind.

Of particular relevance in this regard was a student conference called "Euro-Mediterranean Relations: A View From Egypt" organized by our program in December 2015 in cooperation with three professors from the University of Dundee, Scotland. Rather than targeting experienced scholars, this conference exclusively sought out current and former EMSP students. The aim was to make students familiar with the proceedings of typical political science conferences. Therefore, a call for papers first invited students to submit abstracts, and then, upon positive evaluation, to write full papers, which they then presented on panels during the full-day conference. A total of 15 students participated in this conference and presented their papers; the international professors, including Christian

8 For a discussion of changing teaching methods, see also the contribution by Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami in this volume.

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Kaunert, Bert Schweitzer and Patricia Bauer from the University of Dundee, as well as Kevin Köhler from the American University in Cairo, discussed each paper and gave thorough feedback on each student's performance. Certainly, this practical hands-on experience is what students in the social sciences in Egypt tend to be missing.

Fear as a factor at Egyptian universities

Without a doubt, making students' intellectual development a focus of teaching has been an important contribution to improving academia in Egypt. However, active participation in class discussions or during university events cannot be taken for granted, since the state security services are once again fiercely engaged in monitoring the universities (Kirkpatrick 2014). The current government sees students as a potential source of unrest, and has thus imposed particularly strict controls on campuses (for a historical account of student–state relations in Egypt, see Abd Rabou 2016: 59ff.; Pratt 2008: 59ff.). Already, the entrance to the university resembles access to a high-security sector, with heavily armed policemen at each campus gate, and thorough controls of individuals and bags using x-ray machines and metal detectors have been in place since the clashes of the summer of 2013. Admittedly, the fatal attacks at universities in Garissa (Kenya, April 2, 2015) and Bacha Khan (Pakistan, January 20, 2016) have created good arguments for those who support heavy security measures; but at the same time, the measures offer a clear illustration of the restrictions under which academia in the country has to operate.

Fear has become a dominant driver in Egypt's society, including in academic settings. Professors risk being professionally blackballed if they offer critical opinions about the government's actions too openly; some have even received personal threats intended to bring them back into line with the regime, sometimes simply for discussing texts critical of recent national developments. Some students have been banned from the university, and thousands have been arrested (Abaza 2016; Abdelrahman 2017).[9]

The situation between summer 2013 and summer 2014, when various places in Cairo, among them Nahda Square just in front of Cairo Universi-

9 See also the contribution by Ammar Abdulrahman in this volume on the implications of the Arab uprisings on student mobility.

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ty, became the sites of violent clashes between supporters of former President Morsi and his opponents, was particularly difficult. For a period of months, Nahda Square witnessed frequent mass demonstrations by thousands of individuals, particularly on Wednesday afternoons; these often turned violent, with participants throwing stones, and security forces using tear gas or firearms. Several times these clashes also spread to the campus, with police storming the university in order to dissolve student demonstrations (Rahim 2013). More than once our faculty building had to be evacuated. I myself was exposed to tear gas twice, and we frequently heard the use of rubber bullets and even live ammunition while in class. Classes often had to be cancelled on short notice, as students were unable to come to university, and the semesters started late and ended early. The external conditions for studying and concentrating were thus extremely harsh at that time, and it was an extraordinary achievement by Cairo University as an institution, as well as on the part of its faculty, staff members and of course students, that these semesters were brought to a successful end, with exams taken and assignments handed in, so that students could at least get their certificates and celebrate their graduation.

However, one thing I have learned — something that certainly cannot be learned by reading books alone — is what it means to live and work under conditions of repression. Although I never experienced personal interference with my work, I felt how fear paralyzed me when demonstrations again turned violent, when attacks against state targets intensified in terms of numbers and casualties, when activists were arrested in increasingly frequent security raids, and when hundreds of detainees received collective death sentences.

One of my colleagues disappeared from the public eye for days, with even his Facebook page being taken down, leading other colleagues and I to fear the worst. Indeed, he had been told by the security services that he should reduce his public presence, and in order to stay safe, he elected to take himself completely offline for a while so that nobody could find out about him. In a workshop in Cairo on March 6, 2016, several colleagues admitted that their reaction after publishing every new piece of work was now one of fear, as they were worried about the potential consequences instead of being happy about the achievement.

It is no wonder there is high demand among professors and students for fellowships and scholarships abroad. Famous political scientists, such as Amr Hamzawy, have left Egypt indefinitely for reasons of personal safety. Two of my closest colleagues from Cairo University are now in Germany

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and the USA, and it is unclear when they will come back to Cairo. The problem of "researchers who publish globally but perish locally" (Hanafi 2011; Hanafi & Arvanitis 2014) due to the language dichotomy between Arabic and English has been drastically elevated: If researchers stay local, they are at risk of disappearing — not necessarily because of imprisonment, but at least because of blocked career opportunities or the complete loss of the ability to work (Mostafa & Shaban 2016). The resulting exodus of researchers is leading to a loss of knowledge and expertise in the country, as well as a loss of important teachers at Cairo University. It is bringing massive hardships for those in exile and their families, as spouses and children are often unable to follow, and parents, siblings and other close relatives typically stay in Egypt. This forced separation creates significant emotional challenges for the individuals affected, and should not be forgotten when discussing conditions within academia in today's Egypt.

For students, the emotional situation is often different, as those between the ages of 20 and 25 often associate the idea of going abroad with feelings of "adventure", or regard it as a "once-in-a-lifetime chance". Students often have a desire to escape societal and cultural repression, if not outright abuse (FEPS postgraduate student, personal communication, May 2016). However, overall student activities have become broadly apolitical, and in some cases have been completely silenced (Abd Rabou 2016: 65). As a DAAD lecturer, I have provided students with information about scholarship opportunities in Germany, and I have also supported those who wish to apply for offers from the Fulbright Commission, the Chevening awards program, and other similar institutions. Many are interested in studying abroad not only because of the potential opportunities, but also simply to escape the repressive situation in Egypt.

Conclusion

The years since 2013 have brought considerable challenges to Egypt's academic sphere in general, and in political science and related disciplines in particular. Even as the country struggles to achieve internal stability, universities are struggling to find a stable position in post-2011 Egypt.

Many students and professors alike have lost their original enthusiasm for the changes initiated in 2011. For them, going "back to business" is the order of the day — that is, concentrating on their studies and teaching without being overly involved in sensitive debates or suspicious activities.

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One colleague told me in 2014: "I will stop being engaged in TV talk shows and newspaper columns, and just concentrate on my academic activities" (FEPS professor, personal communication, fall 2014).

From the universities' perspective, many ambiguities have resulted from the strict legal framework and the government's unclear expectations. On the one hand, Article 21 of Egypt's constitution guarantees academic freedom and the independence of academics from state interference. On the other hand, President Al-Sisi's decrees have made free teaching and research impossible, as everything that might be understood as criticism of the government or one of its policies can be labelled as relevant for the state's security, thus exposing scholars to the serious risk of their actions having negative consequences. There "is an attempt to indirectly prohibit politics on the university campuses" (Sharobeem 2015: 120).

The murder of Italian Ph.D. researcher Giulio Regeni in January 2016 brought another fundamental problem of free research to light: the mistrust of state authorities toward researchers. Particularly when coming from abroad, researchers often encounter a great deal of suspicion. The typical imputation is that researchers might work as spies for foreign secret services, one of the many conspiracy theories flourishing in Egypt (Kirkpatrick 2015); as a consequence, foreign researchers' homes are occasionally searched by the authorities — that is, if they are not banned from entry at Cairo Airport at the outset. However, I should clearly stress that I personally have never experienced any negative responses from either my students or my colleagues.

For their part, researchers increasingly mistrust the authorities. Statements by governmental representatives are usually treated with considerable skepticism, whether they deal with the high number of activists that have been arrested without proper legal procedures being followed ("There are no forced disappearances in Egypt", Essam El-Din 2016), the crash of the Russian airliner over Sinai in October 2015 ("Terrorism was not responsible", Calamur 2015), or the reasons for the devastating floods in Alexandria in the spring and fall of 2015 ("Interior Ministry blames Brotherhood for Alexandria floods", Mada Masr 2015). All these statements come from a regime that once insisted it had found a "complete cure" for Hepatitis C and HIV (Loveluck 2014), and which imposed strict rules on media coverage during its anti-terror operations on the Sinai and after the army's fatal shootings of Mexican tourists in the Western Desert in September 2015 (O'Grady & Dreazen 2015). This mutual mistrust is

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certainly one of the biggest obstacles for Egypt at the moment. If it persists, the chances of establishing fruitful coexistence between state officials and critical social scientists will become vanishingly small.

In their struggle for independence from governmental interference, university representatives often act on a razor's edge, as they cannot risk angering the authorities. This is even more urgent given that universities' budgets are regulated by the Supreme Council of Universities, and not by the universities themselves. This council, chaired by the minister of higher education, is responsible for "[d]elineating and planning the general policy and guidelines for higher education and scientific research in universities, with a strong commitment to realizing the state's needs and meeting its national, social, economic and scientific objectives" (El-Said 2014: 60). Many defenders of university independence see the Supreme Council's dominant position as the biggest obstacle to improved university performance, and have called for a fundamental redesign of its purpose and role,[10] or even its complete dissolution (El-Said 2014: 66).

Aside from these external constraints, universities are struggling to find their core reason to exist. As yet, it remains unclear whether Egyptian universities are today primarily responsible for training good academics, educating qualified candidates for the labor market or producing conforming members of the existing political system. This debate is not held openly, but particularly the younger generations of professors and lecturers still try to come closer to achieving the first potential goal. This remains at odds with the current rigorous university laws and rules, and with the preferences of those professors who benefited from the old regime, and who have nothing against the restoration of the former situation. However, this struggle will continue, and it might well be that Egyptian universities ultimately experience another revolution, this time from within.

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10 Prof. John Adams, British University in Egypt, in his keynote speech at the "The University and Social Transition" conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, organized by Mansoura University, 17 April 2016.

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5 Opening Up the Text: Arabic Literary Studies on the Move

Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge

"Until 25th January, neither the protagonist of my novel 'Brooklyn Heights', nor I myself believed that [political change in Egypt] could become reality. […] The reality of my country surpasses the fiction of the novel" (El-Tahawy 2011: 51 f., our translation). With these words, the Egyptian writer Miral El-Tahawy (b. 1968) explained how the aura of Tahrir Square during 25th January revolution fundamentally changed what is thinkable and imaginable in Arabic fiction. When reality surpasses fiction, the role of literature changes in society. Asked about the role of art in times of political upheaval, the Egyptian playwright and performance artist Laila Suleiman (b. 1981), who staged documentary performances like "Lessons in Revolting" and "No Time For Art" (both 2011), stated: "It is time for art used as a tool. I am at the moment not interested in experimenting for the sake of the process or for [the] ultimate goal of self-expression." When they realized how "the media and the official institutions were rewriting history […] it became one of our main priorities to […] document certain events that were supposed to be forgotten. […] I wanted to find out what I could do artistically with the methods of documentation," Suleiman adds. "My tools are the tools of the theatre. It might reach less people but it can have a much more piercing, more direct effect than a YouTube video" (Malzacher & Warsza 2011). Indeed, since the beginning of the upheavals in 2010, many Arab writers have fundamentally revisited the roles of literature and the arts in society.

Within large portions of Arab societies, the Arab uprisings raised hopes of fundamental political change and tangible social improvement that were quickly shattered by outcomes such as the authoritarian counter-revolution in Egypt and the humanitarian disaster in Syria. These developments continue to have a major impact not only on literature and the arts but also on Arabic literary studies as an academic discipline. This article discusses how scholars in the field have recently approached the relationship between literature and society. Without a doubt, in the last four decades, most of them have been interested in reading modern Arabic literature from a sociopolitical perspective (see, for example, Wielandt 1980; Har-

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low 1987; Klemm 1998; Darraj 2008), which underscores the fact that even postmodern Arabic literature has never been fully detached from politics (Pflitsch 2010: 27ff.). However, since the 1990 s, many scholars have emphasized the importance of exploring Arabic literature for its own sake, in appreciation of its aesthetic value, and not primarily as a medium of social and political representation. These scholars have worked hard to make Arabic literature a more visible part of world literature (see, for example, Abou-Bakr 2004; Ette & Pannewick 2006; Allan 2016) and have been active in Western literary theory debates, arguing with Dipesh Chakrabarty for the need to "provincialize" Western knowledge production and "deprovincialize" Arabic literature (see Klemm & Gruendler 2000; Neuwirth, Pflitsch & Winckler 2010).

The recent transformation processes in the Arab world have urged scholars of Arabic literature to focus again on the relationship between literature and society. This is due to the fact that a new understanding of literature and art became — at least for a period of time — prevalent in Arab societies. Many young writers were activists in the uprisings, and new literary art forms have emerged or gained visibility through the protests. In addition, documentary forms have gained in importance. Another reason for reading society through the lens of literature has been the increasing demand of a Western audience to understand the Arab uprisings through literature, which has been criticized by some Arab writers as a kind of neo-orientalism (Rakha 2012: 162ff.). In addition, Western funding institutions have been eager to fund academic research and various forms of cultural production related to the transformation processes, and many scholars addressed the "Arab Spring" in literature to either implicitly or explicitly express their sympathy for the uprisings, which has been criticized as a form of biased knowledge production (Schielke & Shehata 2016: 1 f.). Though we have witnessed a return to the old question about the relationship between literature and society, it is now posed very differently. Instead of asking "How does literature mirror sociopolitical change?" scholars of Arabic literature instead ask "How does literature take part in this change?". In this way, they shift the focus of inquiry from representation to practice.

This article discusses this new approach to modern Arabic literature, with a particular focus on Germany. It is not meant to offer a comprehensive overview of this field, but rather to selectively map the trends that we consider promising. Though the Arab uprisings have clearly been significant in shaping these trends, they are neither their starting point, nor do

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they represent a radical turn, and they are certainly not the only drivers of the changes and challenges faced by Arabic literary studies. Our central argument involves a changing approach to texts, namely that Arabic literary studies are "opening up" the traditional literary text by reaching beyond its mere textual reality. This expanded approach to texts has an impact on academic research as well as other practices in the field of Arabic literary studies. We therefore discuss recent trends not only in academic research, but also in academic networking, the teaching of Arabic and academia's demonstration of societal commitment. These four different yet related means of opening up the text are summarized as follows:

1) Academic research has expanded the canon of literary texts and shifted its focus from textual representation to the sociocultural conditions and practices of literature and literary texts.
2) More inclusive academic networking is questioning the dominant valuation standards that privilege knowledge produced in the West and calling for a sustainable exchange of views and experiences between scholars based in the West and those based in the Arab world. This deepening of inclusive networking opens up both textual and discursive spaces to hitherto disregarded perspectives and diverse readings.
3) Unlike the prevailing Western academic practice that restricts the role of Arabic to a language of primary sources, Arabic literary studies now emphasize the importance of practicing Arabic as a living language of knowledge production and academic communication.
4) Scholars of Arabic literature are demonstrating an increasing sense of societal commitment, which involves going beyond the text and applying their academic knowledge to various societal contexts.

Research: the "Arab Spring" as a "cultural revolution"

The Arab uprisings unleashed not only a political transformation but also, in many regards, a "cultural revolution" (see Nurtsch 2013; Pannewick 2014; Jacquemond 2015). During and after the protests, various cultural and artistic practices left the realm of subculture and attracted the attention of a wider audience. These practices, such as chanting slogans, creating banners and graffiti, covering old songs, shooting hip-hop videos, autofictional blogging and performing documentary theater, are part of the ongoing transformation that has caught the attention of Arabic literary scholars.

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Among the growing number of publications exploring the cultural and artistic dimensions of the uprisings, we discuss three major overlapping perspectives:

1) Mapping the new artistic forms and aesthetics that have emerged from the protests: Many studies begin by documenting nascent art forms and artefacts, in particular transient artefacts such as street art or banners (see Sanders 2012; Gribbon & Hawas 2012), while literature and the arts are undergoing a "documentary turn" in which documentation is viewed as an important artistic and political tool (see Prince 2014; Heshmat 2015). Nearly all studies emphasize the creativity unleashed by the uprisings, approaching it either from a synchronic perspective that foregrounds the great variety of different art forms (see Pannewick 2014; Boustani, El-Enany & Hamarneh 2016) or from a diachronic perspective that places them in a larger historical framework and traces continuities, transformations or ruptures (see Guth 2011; Ziter 2015). Eventually, this leads to the elaboration of particular poetics and aesthetics, like the "fiction of scandal" exposing scandalous realities (El-Ariss 2012) or the rhetoric of "*kifaya*" (that's enough!) evoking the sense that life under the present sociopolitical conditions has become unbearable (Junge 2015).
2) Discussing the re-emergence of commitment (*iltizam*) and the "new political": In recent works of literature and art, classical topoi of commitment, such as the rebel, the intellectual and the people, reappear but find different forms of expression (see Guth 2011; Botros 2015). More importantly, the concept of who and what is considered political has changed (see Albers, Khalil & Pannewick 2015). Focusing less on political ideology and social movements, many studies now focus instead on "life as politics" (Bayat 2010) in which, for instance, the body, affects and everyday life are seen as the terrain upon which battles over the "new political" are carried out (El-Ariss 2013; Junge 2015; Milich 2015).
3) Focusing on the cultural practices of literature in relation to power, institutions and the economy: This approach views literature from anthropological and sociological perspectives. It focuses on the production of the text in its different social and cultural contexts instead of the literary text and its possible interpretations and thus sees literature as a social practice. Studies with this approach focus, for instance, on the making of Arabic bestsellers and the emergence of a new reading audi-

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ence (Rooke 2011). They also explore the social practice of writing in urban contexts and how "specific institutional, cultural, generational and class milieus contribute to the making of literary careers, sociality and aesthetics" (Schielke & Shehata 2016: 1).

Though distinct in their focus, each of these approaches share a common outcome: They open up the traditional literary text. Since the Arab uprisings, scholars of Arabic literature seem to have embraced different forms of texts more openly, such as the digital, sprayed, graphic, sung or performed text, and they now seem to be more attentive to the effects of texts, such as corporeal, affective, traumatic or emotional effects. In addition, these scholars appear more eager to focus on the conditions that contribute to the making of texts, such as social, institutional, financial or generational conditions. In order to illustrate these trends, this article now presents two recent research projects which are close to our own research.

Documenting post-revolutionary realities: "In 2016"

One project that has expanded the focus of research into Arabic literature beyond the classical literary text is "In 2016: How it felt to live in the Arab World five years after the 'Arab Spring'", conducted by Stephan Guth and Albrecht Hofheinz at the University of Oslo (University of Oslo 2015). This project seeks to recreate the atmosphere of the post-revolutionary realities by letting the texts themselves speak. Instead of developing a master narrative or constructing a canon of representative texts, it seeks to bring together a broad range of different kinds of texts. Focusing on Egypt and Tunisia, it collects fresh and hitherto mostly unexplored sources from literature and social media published exclusively during the year 2016. Instead of relying on comprehensive political statements or religious commentaries, the project foregrounds personal everyday experiences. It thus highlights the corporeal and emotional dimensions of life and/as politics. Bringing together "highbrow" and popular culture, joining major issues with minor topics, and linking famous authors with anonymous writers, it aims to create a textual network that allows us to read beyond the common text(s). It strives towards what one might call a "thick description" of the world that is expressed in the selected sources and which, taken together, may be understood as an academic collage documenting the aftermath of the "Arab Spring". The project's synchronic

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snapshot technique draws upon Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's historical collage "In 1926: Living On the Edge of Time", which catalogues a broad range of literary, journalistic, academic and political texts according to "arrays" (i.e., artifacts, roles or activities) and binary and collapsed codes in order to create the particular atmosphere (or *Stimmung*, as Gumbrecht calls it) of that year (Gumbrecht 1997). By applying Gumbrecht's historiographic and aesthetic approach to the Arab world in 2016, the project opens the approach up to digital, visual and audio sources and thus transforms the collage into a digital hypertext. With the collection of raw data now complete, the various textual items are currently being analyzed, arranged and catalogued. Preliminary findings suggest arrays of phenomena such as "sexual harassment", "narrow spaces", "closed rooms", "vulnerability", "Facebook" or "emotionalism" are relevant, while binary codes such as "courage vs. fear", "idle man vs. hard-working woman", "Rolls vs. Volkswagen" or "piety vs. blasphemy" are also prevalent (Guth 2016 a: 229ff.). In addition, some preliminary studies have been published in a special issue of the *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, including studies on Tunisian Facebook posts, a snapshot of recent Arab films and an overview of popular literary genres in Egypt (Achour-Kallel 2016; Guth 2016 b; Jacquemond 2016). The project's planned online "Encyclopedia of 2016", though still in a nascent state, seeks to enable the reader to "click himself/herself" through the "world of 2016" and, in this way, approximate the experience of how it felt to live in Arab contexts five years after the "Arab Spring". By combining the literary with the social text and the printed with the digital text, the project opens up the literary concept of text. In addition, it emphasizes the interwoven nature of documentation and feeling.

Literature and art as cultural practices: "Figures of Thought | Turning Points"

Opening up the text in contemporary Arabic literary studies also involves a stronger focus on the contexts and conditions of textual production. In so doing, this approach readdresses the role of literature in society, which is one of the classical topics of Arabic literary studies. The research project "Figures of Thought | Turning Points: Cultural Practices and Social Change in the Arab World" run by Friederike Pannewick at Philipps-Universität Marburg revisits this relationship (University of Marburg 2015 a).

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Normally, there are two dualisms used to analyze literature in regard to society: "either art is seen as a mirror, reflecting society, or it is understood as a medium of political expression; either it is the social structure that shapes and fashions the literary work, or it is the work of art that impacts on a social context" (University of Marburg 2015 b). To escape these dualisms, the project reads literature and the arts as cultural practices. In other words, literature and the arts, because they construct society and are constructed by society, are involved in the conditions of their own production. From this perspective, the text is located within what Stuart Hall has called a "circuit of culture", which includes the production, consumption and regulation of the text and the identity of its agents in addition to the artistic and political signification of the text (see Pannewick 2014; Pannewick & Khalil 2015). This approach includes studies on the literary field or the habitus of authors (see Jacquemond 2015; Lang 2016), but may also include the visual and performing arts (see Albers 2015; Eickhof 2016) or even youth and sport practices like parkour, in which one uses one's body to clear obstacles (see Braune 2014).

While cultural studies have sometimes been described as a radical form of contextualization, the "Figures of Thought" project seeks to combine approaches from literature and art studies with those from cultural studies and anthropology instead in order to discuss the poetics and aesthetics of a text along with its social and cultural context. In other words, the project goes beyond — and eventually returns to — the text. In practice, this may involve combining a close reading with interviews or mapping intertextuality with fieldwork. The approach, of course, does not refer exclusively to the Arab uprisings but also to other turning points, such as the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948 or the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956, both of which marked a change in hegemonic figures of thought and the cultural practice of arts.

Although several cultural, social and anthropological studies of Arabic literature and arts predate the Arab uprisings (see Jacquemond 2003; Mehrez 2008), their attendant cultural revolution has compelled scholars of Arabic literature to incorporate a broader spectrum of sociological and anthropological approaches to the analysis of textual production and its contexts. In other words, the Arab uprisings pushed interdisciplinary approaches to the forefront that are able to address and grasp more comprehensively the opening up of literary texts in societies undergoing transformation. Responding to the urgency and relevance of political and social

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transformation, these perspectives thus gained greater academic legitimacy in the field of Arabic literary studies.

Networks: Towards collaborative research with Arab academia

The processes of political and social transformation underway since the Arab uprisings have had an impact not only on the content and focus of academic research in Arabic literary studies, but have also affected conditions and means of scientific cooperation. While scholars in this field have never been limited to their national realm, international exchange and cooperation has mostly taken place among colleagues working at academic institutions in the West alone and has only rarely involved universities in the Arab world — with the exception of Western-style universities such as the American University of Beirut or the American University in Cairo. As in other disciplines, knowledge production in the field of Arabic studies in internationally renowned publications is still widely dominated by scholars based in Europe and the United States.[1] Research conducted at universities in the Arab world, particularly if published in Arabic or by an Arab publisher, is often neglected by Western colleagues. This is due in part to practical matters of visibility and availability, but there are also epistemological reasons for this blind spot. These include discrepancies in research interests and academic traditions, Arab academia's reticence to address presumably sensitive topics, and reservations prevailing in Western academia regarding the use of Arabic as an academic language. These limitations have far-reaching consequences. They hamper close cooperation and comprehensive exchange across cultural and geographical borders, and exclude Arab scholars in the region from contributing to internationally acknowledged knowledge production. Given the current state of affairs in our globalized world and the challenges faced by the Middle East and North Africa in particular, a serious and sustainable exchange of views and experiences between scholars in the West and the Arab world is urgently needed in order to reach a more comprehensive understanding of the pressing matters that require an effective response from all stakeholders.

1 For a similar conclusion regarding their respective fields of research, see the contributions by Carola Richter and Hanan Badr, Florian Kohstall and Jan Claudius Völkel in this volume.

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In recent years, the number of Western–Arab cooperation and exchange programs has increased significantly. Moving beyond isolated exchange between individual scholars with shared research interests, many of these programs now function as a framework to ensure ongoing exchange between individuals and institutions. As a result, they have built up a transregional network that continues to grow. The two initiatives presented in the following illustrate the major challenges faced by this form of academic cooperation and its achievements thus far. By discussing these initiatives, we also identify the challenges ahead in improving Arab world-based scholars' access to international academic output and ensuring that their academic contributions are recognized and incorporated into international knowledge production. This requires an awareness in Western academia of the need to take account of research literature published in Arabic and thereby expose itself to hitherto disregarded perspectives and diverse readings. Both examples demonstrate how opening up the text productively can be achieved in Western academia.

Building a transregional network — an interdisciplinary postdoctoral fellowship program

In the broader field of Middle East studies, the Berlin-based "Europe in the Middle East — The Middle East in Europe" (EUME) research program, which is part of the larger research organization Forum Transregionale Studien, represents one of the most significant efforts in terms of budget, plus the variety of instruments and the number of disciplines and institutions involved. Launched in 2006 as a joint initiative of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, EUME is a multidisciplinary program with a distinct research and research policy agenda. EUME has set new academic standards in Middle East studies research by aiming to "recollect the legacies of Europe in the Middle East and of the Middle East in Europe in an inclusive way that aims to do justice to their entanglements" and "rethink key concepts and premises that divide Europe from the Middle East" (EUME 2011 a: 1). With regard to research policy, EUME aims to rethink prevailing disciplinary structures in Germany and most other Western countries. This involves exploring "problems inherent in the academic division of labor between Area Studies and the systematic disciplines" which exclude non-European history and literature

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from the "systematic" disciplines and thereby delegate "the study of non-European cultures and societies to regional experts and institutionally small disciplines" (EUME 2011 b: 7). Finally, and most significantly in terms of international exchange, the program sets an example by establishing new forms of academic cooperation and networking. A key element here is the postdoctoral fellowship program, which allows young scholars from Middle Eastern and other countries to pursue their own projects within the EUME framework. In addition to providing a forum for interdisciplinary academic debate through a seminar held every two weeks, the framework helps to integrate the fellows, according to their academic disciplines, into university departments or academic institutions involved in the project (EUME 2011 b: 19). The fellowship program is complemented by a series of summer academies. Most often held at an academic institution in the Middle East, these summer academies foster the growth of scholarly networks by providing an additional 20 doctoral and postdoctoral students with the opportunity to discuss relevant topics in an international and multidisciplinary environment (EUME 2011 b: 20). The program thus aims to create "a platform that rests upon the idea of 'learning communities' (Wolf Lepenies) and the principle of 'research with, rather than research on'" (EUME 2011 a: 1). By placing scholars from different backgrounds on an equal footing, the program provides participants with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with different scholarly traditions, approaches and debates and thereby overcome the divide between them (EUME 2011 b: 7–8). A network of more than 200 scholars based in the MENA region and beyond has emerged from the project, which continues to stimulate research activities within the program as a whole and within the specific institutions involved. The program also engages in public outreach, organizing debates and artistic presentations in public venues (EUME 2011 b: 8).

Towards multiperspectivity and self-reflection — an Arab-German summer school program

A related though slightly different aim is targeted by the "Arabische Philologien im Blickwechsel / نحو دراسات عربية بـرؤى متعـددة" (Towards Multi-Perspectival Arabic Studies) initiative, in which the authors of this article are directly involved. Still in an initial stage of realization, the initiative has a twofold agenda: to facilitate the systematic exchange of perspec-

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tives and experiences between scholars from universities in Germany and the Arab world, and to foster the use of Arabic as an academic language (Arabic Philologies 2014).

The project's summer school program format is designed to engage established and junior scholars alike. Professors, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers from Arab and Western universities are invited to discuss current, innovative approaches to Arabic philology, literature and culture. The summer school's tandem teaching method renders participants' differences and commonalities visible and comprehensible. In addition to addressing issues of contemporary relevance, the summer school encourages participants to reflect on their work at the meta-level. This involves questioning the premises and priority objectives of our work while exploring the drivers of existing discrepancies, such as differences in epistemological or sociopolitical conditions.[2]

The conceptual framework for the summer school program emerged from Arab–German cooperation workshops held in Cairo in 2011. Since then, two trial runs have been held at international workshops in Berlin. The first, held in 2011, focused on the tandem teaching method and featured participants discussing a text or topic from different perspectives at each session. The second, held in 2014, took the form of a workshop-cum-summer school, in which potential key issues and approaches were explored and the summer school program's concept was put into practice. In both cases, the bilingual environment combined with an intercultural tandem teaching method brought to light remarkable differences across research traditions but also underscored the shared approaches and concepts. The alternate use of two languages (German and Arabic in the first case, English and Arabic in the second) raised awareness of the impact of linguistic usage and the need to discuss the translation, or even the very translatability, of academic terms and concepts (Milich & Sadek 2014; Junge & Winckler 2015). In September 2017, a summer school focusing "Entangled Perspectives on Theory, Arts, and History in the Field of Arabic Literary Studies" was held at the American University of Beirut (AGYA 2018; Fischione, Ghoname & Monaco 2018). The next summer school which is planned to be held at the University Mohamed V in Rabat

2 For more information on why and how working conditions differ, see Florian Kohstall's contribution in this volume.

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in September 2018, will discuss "Interdisciplinary Approaches to Feeling, Affect, and Body in Arabic Literature, Arts, and Culture".

The idea behind this project was born in the spirit of optimism surrounding the Arab uprisings. Originally scheduled to be held in Cairo in September 2013, the workshop-cum-summer school was conceived with the processes of social, political and academic transformation in mind. However, as a result of the changes in Egypt in the summer of 2013 and the volatile security situation, the workshop had to be postponed and was eventually held in Berlin in 2014. Despite such challenges, projects of this nature are more important than ever because they help to promote and sustain international intellectual exchange among Arab and Western scholars in the face of a substantial lack of intellectual freedom. Furthermore, they advance the inclusion of younger scholars in international academic exchange. Finally, despite security issues, it is important to carry out programs like the summer school in Arab countries, where a broader spectrum of academic participants can gain access to such exchange.

Language: practicing and teaching Arabic as a modern academic language

Conceptions of how to use and teach Arabic have undergone substantial changes in recent years.[3] A growing number of Arabic literature and culture scholars feel uncomfortable with the way Arabic has been used and addressed in academic teaching at Western universities. Although attitudes and teaching methods have changed considerably in recent decades, Arabic is still dealt with in the West almost exclusively as a language of written sources rather than being practiced as a living language of knowledge production and academic communication. This is reflected in the fact that the research literature discussed in classes is usually written in English, German or French, rather than in Arabic. The same is true of introductory literature or handbooks, which almost exclusively refer to non-Arabic titles. The scientific terms, concepts and approaches used are most often originally developed in Western languages, while there is little if any dis-

3 For a comprehensive discussion of how the recent Arab uprisings have changed the way Arabic as a foreign language is taught, focusing on the example of the American University of Beirut, see the contribution by Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami in this volume.

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cussion of the concepts and academic approaches used in modern Arabic research literature. Finally, as is the case within the field of Arabic and Middle East studies in general, international conferences dealing with Arabic literature and culture are almost exclusively held in languages other than Arabic — typically English or French. This aspect of academic practice has a significant bearing on the arguments made in the previous section of this article; in order to realize the principle of "research with, rather than research on", we argue that it is imperative that scholars from the West and from Arab countries meet on an equal footing. This implies that scholars in the West should no longer restrict their interest to what has already been translated — both in the literal and figurative sense — into Western languages and concepts. Instead, the academic community should consider what is published and discussed in Arabic, taking account of the region's academic traditions and recent debates. This requires the prevailing practice of text consumption being opened up into a matter-of-course use of Arabic as a living language of knowledge production and academic communication, in both its written and spoken forms.

To achieve these goals, changes are necessary both on the levels of consciousness and of capabilities. Scholars have to become more aware of the effects of language use; however, providing students and junior scholars with the ability to read and discuss research literature in Arabic is even more urgent. In recent years, a number of initiatives seeking to address this shortcoming have been created. We will present four of these initiatives, which function on different levels, including (1) enabling German students to plunge into the Arabic language within the region itself, experiencing the way Arabic literature is taught at universities in the Arab world; (2) professionalizing the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language; (3) giving German students of Arabic and Arab students of German the opportunity to interact both on a linguistic level and in the areas of culture, history and lived experiences; and (4) creating links between the various efforts to promote and strengthen the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language on both the individual and institutional levels.

Bachelor Plus in Oriental Studies — a one-year study-abroad program for undergraduate students

Funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Bachelor Plus program is not restricted to any particular university or discipline.

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The program is aimed at establishing four-year bachelor's degree programs at German universities, allowing students to spend an academic year abroad that is fully integrated into the curriculum. The Philipps-Universität Marburg offers its Near and Middle East studies students this opportunity alongside a more traditional three-year bachelor's degree program. Students enrolled in the "B.A. Orientwissenschaft (international)" program who spend their third year abroad can choose among selected universities in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Iran or Tajikistan. During the first half of their stay abroad, students attend intensive language courses, and in the second half either attend regular courses in their academic discipline at the host university or complete a five-month internship. The qualifications acquired during the students' years abroad are integrated into their bachelor's degree programs, and are displayed on their bachelor's certificates (University of Marburg 2016 a; ZAS 2016).

German–Algerian joint program for professionalizing the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language

In 2016, the Department of Arabic Studies at the University of Bamberg launched an exchange project in conjunction with the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Oran I Ahmed Ben Bella. The idea resulted from the above-mentioned discontent with the current situation regarding opportunities for German students of Arabic to practice the language in an academic context, as well as from the observation that teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) remains a developing but still nascient field. Thus, the "Arabic as a Foreign Language in the Algerian Context" (Arabisch als Fremdsprache im algerischen Kontext / اللغة العربية للناطقين بغيرها في السياق الجزائري) project, funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for an initial period of three years, was established with the goal of creating a lasting student exchange between the two cooperating departments. The project has two complementary aims: first, strengthening German students' ability to use Arabic as a living language for academic teaching and communication, and second, to establish teaching Arabic as a foreign language as an academic training program at the University of Oran. In order to prepare a sustainable student exchange, two exploratory workshops were held, one in Bamberg in April 2016, and the other in Oran in October of the same year. Both fo-

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cused on the use of Arabic as a language of communication in academic settings. In addition to activities providing insights into living and study conditions at the two participating universities, the workshops included lectures on teaching methods in the fields of Arabic language and Arabic literature and culture, while also providing the German students with an opportunity to present their own research in Arabic. Another meeting took place in Bamberg in summer 2017 with the goal of establishing terms for a continuous student exchange. Thus, each year, two students from Bamberg will travel to Oran to attend language courses and regular literature classes alongside local Arabic literature students. Similarly, one PhD student from Oran will have the opportunity to spend an academic term at the University of Bamberg, thus enhancing his or her practical and conceptual skills in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language (University of Bamberg 2016).

"Cross-Cultural Exchange via Translation" — tandem workshop for German and Tunisian students

Another workshop which aimed at bringing together university students from Germany and an Arab country was held in Tunis in January 2017 under the title "Cross-Cultural Exchange via Translation — Tandem Translation Workshop for Students from Germany and Tunisia" (AGYA 2017; University of Münster 2017). The idea behind this initiative was to allow students studying the language, history, literature and culture of the partner country to practice their chosen foreign language while also exchanging ideas regarding literature, culture, history, daily life, and recent regional and global developments. Organized within the framework of the Arab–German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) in cooperation with the University of Münster and the University of Tunis El Manar, the workshop brought together students enrolled in the German department at the Higher Institute of Human Sciences (ISSHT) at the University of Tunis El Manar with Arabic and Islamic studies students from the University of Münster. Around 30 graduate and undergraduate students met in Tunis, and were tasked with translating a selection of literary texts and cultural essays from Arabic into German and vice versa. For many of the participants, the workshop was a first occasion to practice the foreign language and be exposed to it on a wider scale — that is, both in an academic context and in daily-life situations. Forming tandem groups consisting of

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two Tunisian and two German participants, the students of both universities were able to benefit from their partners' linguistic, cultural, historical and sociopolitical expertise. While working on the translations, they discussed in-depth questions of language, linguistic usage and problems of translation, as well as issues related to the mentalities, points of view and living conditions reflected and expressed in the various texts. In the medium term, the project aims at establishing exchange programs between the two departments in particular and the two universities in general (especially within the humanities). This is ultimately intended to encompass both research and teaching, and will involve graduate and undergraduate students as well as postgraduate students and experienced researchers. The tandem translation workshop was meant as a pilot project, which organizers hope to continue on a regular basis.

A professional association promoting the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language

The last initiative we will present here functions on the broader political and institutional level of cultural and educational policy. In September 2016, a number of academics from or close to the Department of Arabic Studies at the University of Bamberg founded the Fachverband Arabisch e. V., a professional association that seeks to create links between the various efforts to promote and strengthen the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language on both the individual and institutional levels (Fachverband Arabisch 2016). The association was modeled on similar associations for other languages that have existed and wielded considerable influence in Germany for several decades. It is focused on encouraging the teaching of Arabic at all education levels — secondary schools and universities — as well as on fostering research-based approaches to the didactics of language and culture. The association's creation was driven by the perception of gaps in the current academic infrastructure. For example, Arabic is the only official language of the United Nations for which no academic training in its instruction as a foreign language in secondary schools is available in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. At the same time, interest in learning Arabic within secondary schools is on the rise. The association's current work focuses on remedying this obvious discrepancy, seeking to establish Arabic as a foreign language regularly taught at the secondary level by adequately trained teachers. In February 2018, the association or-

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ganized a conference addressing the issue of "Arabic as a Foreign Language". It also plans to establish a yearbook dealing with the same topic in the near future.

Societal commitment: outside the ivory tower

While the Arab world is currently the center of a far-reaching transformation process, Europe is also being affected by this process in many respects. Due to the vast number of Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi refugees making their way to Europe in 2015, many German universities and academic institutions created programs to facilitate access and provide financial support for refugee students and scholars. Freie Universität Berlin's "Welcome@FUBerlin" program, for instance, offers German language courses to prospective students, allows them to attend selected academic seminars free of charge, and provides comprehensive preparatory courses (through a so-called Studienkolleg program) which ready students for academic studies (Freie Universität Berlin n.d.). A number of German funding institutions, including the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) and the Volkswagen Foundation, provide current research projects with additional grants specifically aimed at integrating refugee scholars (DFG 2015; VolkswagenStiftung 2017). The "Philipp Schwartz Initiative", set up by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, offers funding to universities or academic institutions that host scholars at risk (Humboldt Foundation n.d.), while the "Adopt an Academic" mentoring program instituted by the Arab–German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) and Freie Universität Berlin provides scholars support in their new academic environment (AGYA n.d.).

Arabic studies programs in Germany have to take account of these challenges and play a role in shaping these changes, at least to the degree possible within the framework of their academic expertise. Most institutes of Arabic studies in Germany are already making considerable efforts in this regard, with projects ranging from tandem language and culture courses to providing information in the Arabic language to help newcomers integrate into society and the workforce — generally in cooperation with the public employment services (see University of Marburg 2016 b). However, future challenges will probably require Arabic studies programs to engage in a long-lasting and sustainable course of societal commitment within Germany. This article suggests three possible avenues for such a commitment.

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First, using Arabic at Arabic studies departments and teaching Arabic at secondary schools should be fostered. In order to make it easier for Arab refugees to study Arabic literature at German universities, selected seminars and lectures should be conducted in Arabic. As a positive side effect, this would also improve the language skills of other students of Arabic. In the long term, however, the main aim is to establish Arabic as a state-approved foreign language in German secondary schools, as demanded by the newly founded Fachverband Arabisch. If integration is conceived not as a one-way street, but rather as a process that goes in two directions, the teaching and learning of Arabic will gain broader importance — and provide university level Arabic studies programs with a new task, namely that of training instructors able to teach Arabic as a foreign language. Taking this path, with all its challenges, would provide Arabic studies with new and immediate relevance for German society.

Second, a greater focus should be placed on studying and teaching Arabic literature written in Germany. A number of Arab and especially Syrian writers now live in Germany, including established authors such as Nihad Siris (b. 1950) and Rosa Yassin Hassan (b. 1974); moreover, new voices are emerging, thus making Arabic literature written in Germany a fast-growing and important field for Arabic literary studies. Studying this topic may help these still marginalized authors to gain more visibility and improve their reputations within the German cultural sphere (Jarmakani 2017). In the long run, some of these authors will probably shift to writing in German, as have other Arab authors including the Syrian poet Adel Karasholi (b. 1936), who has lived in Germany since 1959, and the Iraqi novelist Abbas Khider (b. 1973), who came to Germany in 2000. Their works are now an integral part of contemporary German literature. In the same way that Arab–American literature written mainly in English creates links between Arabic and American literature programs — or even between Arabic, American literature and Romance language departments for works in Spanish or Portuguese (Ette & Pannewick 2006) — the study of Arab–German literature should involve close cooperation between Arabic and German literature departments.

Third, greater efforts should be made to translate Arabic literature and Arab culture for a German audience. This should include translating Arabic texts into German, while also ensuring that the translations are reviewed in German newspapers. At least for the present, the Arab uprisings and their subsequent humanitarian disasters have generated a new interest in literary and cultural anthologies dealing with the region (Bender 2014;

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Halasa, Omareen & Mahfoud 2014). This interest also encompasses literature written by Arab authors in Germany (*Weg sein — hier sein* 2016). While Arabic literature still has a hard time achieving recognition within the German cultural sphere (Reif 2014; Jamarkani 2017), Arabic literary studies programs could help whet this interest, for instance by referencing Arab authors living in Germany in an online encyclopedia, or by launching a German language journal for Arabic literature, continuing the work of former journals such as *Diwan: Zeitschrift für arabische und deutsche Poesie* (2001–2006) and *Lisan: Zeitschrift für arabische Literatur* (2006–2012). Moreover, Arabic studies departments could convey their knowledge about the Arab world more frequently and effectively to cultural multipliers, social workers and primary and secondary school pupils by engaging in public lectures and workshops.

Certainly, the options available to scholars seeking to act on their societal commitment depend largely on the prevailing academic culture, which often limits ambitions to the purely academic realm. However, if they are to help meet future challenges in German society, departments of Arabic studies should be aware of their social responsibilities, and contribute within the limits of their ability to the successful integration of refugees and migrants in Germany. For both scholars and programs of Arabic studies, going beyond the text will be a first and vital step.

Conclusion

The field of Arabic literary studies in Germany has been affected in many ways by the recent Arab uprisings. Though not the only drivers of change in the field, these political and cultural transformations and the sense of urgency and heightened relevance they have created have definitely accelerated developments already underway. These dynamics have fostered an opening up of the text that is not only manifest in academic research approaches but also in academic networking, the practice and teaching of Arabic, and demonstrations of societal commitment.

These changes are thus affecting the field of Arabic literary studies as a whole. Indeed, faced with the fundamental changes in the literary field itself, Arabic literary studies have developed new perspectives on modern Arabic literature, expanded the canon of literary forms and are revisiting the relationship between literature and sociopolitical conditions. In addition, scholars in the field are increasingly emphasizing the importance of

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collaborative research and sustainable exchange between scholars based in the West and the Arab world. Moreover, they are working to ensure that Arabic is acknowledged in international academic contexts as a living language of knowledge production and communication. In Germany in particular, scholars are also working to raise awareness of Arabic as an increasingly important language of cultural and social life in the country. While scholars of Arabic literature will certainly need to build on these initial steps, the field itself is clearly on the move.

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6 An Uprising in Teaching Arabic Language

Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami

Dramatic political and social changes involving geographic regions or religious and ethnic groups increase the academic interest in those places, their people and the languages they speak. Over the past 15 years, academics and practitioners focused on teaching Arabic as a foreign language (TAFL) have witnessed their field undergo considerable change, both in the form of quantitative growth and a qualitative shift, with the increase in the number of learners accompanied by a widespread interest in learning Arabic across different fields of specialization. In the same period, the Arab world has become an increasingly popular destination for study-abroad programs aimed at teaching language and culture in their natural settings. This demand for Arabic instruction from within a wider and naturally more diverse student body has led to the development of new teaching techniques.

This article discusses how the daily political and social experiences in the Arab world inspired some of the teaching philosophies and practices at the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in Lebanon. The CAMES Arabic language summer program offers intensive courses at eight different levels: introductory, high introductory, low intermediate, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced, high advanced and superior. The program emphasizes the instruction of Modern Standard Arabic, or MSA (*fuṣḥā*). CAMES also runs an intensive summer program in colloquial Lebanese Arabic. The MSA program runs for seven weeks and offers highly intensive coursework in Arabic. Each day, students receive six hours of classroom instruction in MSA, with additional exposure to colloquial Lebanese Arabic. Classes are held daily from Monday to Friday, for a total of 30 hours of classroom instruction each week. The total of 186 hours of MSA and colloquial instruction is the equivalent of nine credit hours at the AUB, which are transferable to other universities (CAMES 2016). While the program attracts students from many countries, the majority of students come from the United States.

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This article highlights the specific nature of studying Arabic in Beirut, where students can experience and witness transformations in the Arab world first-hand. Furthermore, the article describes how the abundance of authentic material accessible to instructors at the AUB has inevitably been accompanied by many challenges at the curricular, co-curricular and administrative levels. Finally, this article departs from the discussion of the CAMES Summer Arabic Program to understand the impact of the Arab uprisings on TAFL as a field more generally.

9/11 versus the Arab uprisings

The 9/11 events in the United States in 2001 led to a major turning point in TAFL. Policymakers and students in the United States and across the Western world felt the need to learn more about the emerging "enemy" who had attacked them at home. This development was the precursor of a second wave of innovation in the field that would take place a decade later in 2011, parallel to the popular uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions. The increase in financial governmental support for Arabic language programs following 9/11 was mirrored by the nearly instantaneous increase in student interest. Arabic is now the eighth most studied foreign language in the United States (Modern Language Association 2010). In his study on the teaching of Arabic in the United States after 9/11, Chris Stone (2014) discusses the motives of studying "critical" languages, building on Mary Louise Pratt's notion of using the language itself as a "weapon", rather than regarding a greater interest in language learning as a mere side effect of an act of war. Arabic became relevant not only because it provides direct access to several cultures and heritages, but also because it is the language of a direct threat. Studying it became a "national" necessity. This left its mark on the way Arabic is taught; communicative approaches quickly came to dominate the language curricula, replacing traditional methods that focused on the grammar and philology necessary to access the classical written heritage.

The Arab uprisings prompted interest in the Arab region and its language despite the budget cuts that humanities programs in the United States have faced as a result of the world economic recession. The massive scale of the uprisings and their multifaceted consequences captured the world's attention, particularly as they constituted a threat to the interests of major powers. The changes that the 9/11 events prompted within Arabic

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language curricula became even more relevant and necessary.[1] Arabic in this context constituted a language of change, protest and revolution (see Mehrez 2012). Traveling to the region became increasingly necessary to follow the rapid changes taking place, yet increasingly more difficult for students of the language. Uncensored, slang-inflected and colloquial Arabic was ubiquitous on the streets and on social media, while making little appearance in language textbooks. The traditional methods of approaching the language were being challenged once again.

Lebanon and the Arab uprisings

Syria and Egypt were attractive destinations for learners of Arabic due to the reasonable cost of living there and the unpopularity of foreign languages among their natives, which enabled students of Arabic to practice the language with native speakers. However, the growing degree of insecurity in the countries that participated in the uprisings, especially Egypt and Syria, triggered a shift in viable study-abroad locations. Since 2011, this has led to the diversion of a large number of students from Egypt and Syria to Morocco, Lebanon or Jordan. Lebanon itself was not host to an uprising that demanded the fall of the country's governing regime, but the effect of the Arab uprisings more generally cannot be underestimated in a country where refugees constitute a considerable portion of the population (see UNHCR country profile 2016). The Syrian uprising in particular left its mark on Lebanon on many levels — social, political, economic and humanitarian. The uprising also triggered numerous debates within the country within different sectarian, social and political circles, especially given Hezbollah's substantial military involvement in support of the Syrian regime. Hezbollah and the Syrian regime are widely accused of perpetrating the 2005 assassination of Rafik Hariri, Lebanon's former prime minister and an influential political figure in the country as it emerged from a long civil war and remained under Syrian military control for years. Moreover, since 2011 a large number of Syrian refugees have sought shelter from the emergent civil war in their home country, with their presence increasing pressure on Lebanon's already weak economy. At times Lebanon

1 See the contribution by Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge in this volume for a more detailed account on the implications for Arab literature studies in general.

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itself has experienced serious security threats, for example when clashes occurred in northern Lebanon, where a significant Alawite community resides in an area with a predominantly Sunni population. Despite this, Lebanon has continued to be relatively attractive for tourists and foreign students, especially safe havens such as the AUB. These students have been able to experience closely the Arab uprisings — its agents and consequences — in a relatively safe setting.

Remapping the destinations for studying Arabic abroad

The Arab uprisings clearly rerouted learners of Arabic to safer study-abroad destinations. Jordan, Morocco and Oman quickly became the top destinations for students from Europe and North America. An abundance of advertisements on email lists and at conferences promoted new and long-established programs in these countries. As noted in Mitch Smith's (2012) article, "many American universities will not support study-abroad programs in countries with travel warnings, and sometimes refuse to accept transfer credits from institutions in those nations or withhold financial aid for students traveling there against the advice of the government and college". Universities with strict policies regarding travel warnings have moved some of their programs and students from Egypt and Syria to Jordan, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates (Smith 2012). While almost all colleges take such warnings seriously, some pursue a lenient policy if they trust the academic standing of the host institution and its seriousness in dealing with security issues. Beirut, for example, was certainly caught up in the consequences of both travel warnings and a lack of funding, but also became a viable alternative for students who were not discouraged by the unrest in the Middle East, who needed to do research in Lebanon, or who wanted to experience the Arab uprisings and their repercussions up close (see Faddoul 2013).

The period following the Arab uprisings in late 2010 and early 2011 witnessed two waves of change with regard to enrollment in the Summer Arabic Program (SAP) at CAMES.[2] From 2008 to 2010, an average of 72 students enrolled in the SAP each year. The summer of 2008 marked a

2 For a review of some of the summer programs in Lebanon, see Samaha & Houbeish 2014. See also http://www.studyabroad.com/programs/middle+east,lebanon/summer+program/default.aspx.

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year of relative stability in Lebanon, and for the SAP as well, following the disturbances related to the 2006 war with Israel (when 60 students enrolled). The summer of 2010 (during which 76 students enrolled) was the last summer before any repercussions related to the Arab uprisings took effect in Lebanon. Starting in January 2011, and in the following few months as most applicants were choosing their study-abroad destinations, the probability of the uprisings reaching Lebanon in a kind of domino effect was still appreciable. This explains the slight decrease in SAP student enrollment during the summer of 2011 (65 students). In contrast, the enrollment rate in the summer of 2012 gained momentum, reaching 86 students. This was one of the positive effects of the Arab uprisings, as felt in the TAFL field in Lebanon. The growing interest in Lebanon was boosted by the difficulty of pursuing studying abroad in Syria or Egypt. Even though the political situation in Lebanon was not wholly stable, students who enrolled in the SAP were willing to take on the associated level of risk. It is worth noting that the American University in Beirut campus and the surrounding Ras Beirut area are particularly attractive to students from abroad, as they have been safe havens in the midst of many past conflicts. Smith (2012) quotes AUB Director of International Programs Katherine Nugent Yngve as saying: "The benefits of studying in Lebanon outweigh the risks. (...) Many US students tell us that they feel the State Department's travel warning is an unfair impediment to studying abroad at the AUB, as do their parents, and sometimes their study-abroad advisers."

Starting in 2013, a general sense of disillusion regarding the prospects for improvements in political and security conditions resulting from the Arab uprisings began spreading in Lebanon and other countries in the Arab world. As a result, SAP enrollment decreased (63 students). At this point, Lebanon was struggling to deal with the repercussions of the Syrian crisis.[3] The tension felt across Lebanon diverted many students away from CAMES. However, this relative decrease stabilized in the following two years as Syria fell into civil war (60 students in 2014, 62 students in 2015).

3 See also the contribution by Ammar Abdulrahman in this volume on the implications of the geographical closeness of Syria and Lebanon for the field of archaeology.

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A shift in learners' motives

The decrease in the number of learners applying to study Arabic in Lebanon since 2010 has been outweighed by the increased levels of motivation within the student body. The students who joined the SAP after the Arab uprisings were those who were willing to take the risk of traveling to the Middle East. They were interested both in the events surrounding them as well as in the ongoing transformations, not only of political regimes but also of the surrounding culture and values. Many expressed the fact that they appreciated the opportunity to be in the Middle East, and felt better equipped to understand the nature and events of the Arab uprisings than peers who had shied away from the region. Students were thus eager to learn about the instrumental, social, cultural and intellectual dynamics that had led to the uprisings.

Additions to the curriculum

The wide scope of the teaching materials used at CAMES includes textbooks that are supplemented with readings and materials adapted from current events. Although the program has adopted the *Al-Kitaab fii Taʿallum Al-ʿArabiya* series by Al-Batal, Brustad and Al-Tonsi, the resources added to the curriculum by instructors and coordinators expose learners to real-life events in the comfort of their classrooms, while encouraging them to find out more about various issues that emerge during their stay in Lebanon outside class time. For example, one of the classes taught a unit on prominent women in the Arab world, and connected that theme to the Arab women's rights movement that was actively establishing a presence in social media and organizing demonstrations in Beirut. The final class discussion helped students connect the dots between the movement they were witnessing in Beirut and the issue of sexual harassment, which was a major concern at that time in Tunisia and Egypt.

Lectures in the program also shifted in focus to help students gain a better sense of the changing face of Beirut and Lebanon. One of the general lectures in the summer of 2013 contrasted Lebanese folk music with rising forms of alternative music then gaining ground in Beirut as a result of new realities in the Middle East. For example, Mazen El Sayyed, known as El Rass, is an Arab hip-hop rapper who sings in support of political and social change, thereby rebelling against the status quo (Marrouch 2013). The

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Arab uprisings inspired his song *Min thaa'er* (From a rebel), which was used as an example in the general lecture that showed how the fusion of Modern Standard and colloquial Arabic in his lyrics spoke equally to the Arab masses and to the educated elites.

In addition to lectures, the SAP offers a set of clubs for students to learn about Arab culture. The Arabic calligraphy club, for example, sheds light on an important traditional art form that was used during the Arab uprisings as a means of expression and as an element of an emerging form of graffiti (Nippard 2011; https://beirutwalls.wordpress.com/). A well-known Lebanese graffiti artist, Yazan Halwani, was invited to address the club and its participating students. Halwani gave an overview of how graffiti is helping young Arab artists to creatively voice their discontent with the political and social situations in their countries using words and imagery in different forms and colors. Students learned to decipher the graffiti inscriptions in class and went on a field trip with the artist to inspect walls in Beirut that had become an important platform for this art both regionally and internationally. Students also had the chance to see Halwani at work and produce their own graffiti-style writings.

Learning about graffiti and expressing oneself in Arabic in this creative art form was approached not only from a cultural perspective, but also from a linguistic one. Different graffiti walls were analyzed to identify different grammatical forms, such as imperative verbs in the famous *kun maʿ al-thawra* phrase, or the active participle (*ism fāʿil*) in *malik al-ghāba rākib dabbāba* (The king of the forest is driving a tank). Eventually students learned about specific stylistic forms in Arabic such as parallelism and rhymed prose (*sajʿ*), and practiced producing similar slogans and phrases. The graffiti and music lectures and other activities and material used in CAMES highlighted the importance of colloquial variations of Arabic, a topic we discuss further in the next section.

Increasing interest in colloquial Arabic

The Arab uprisings brought to the fore a closer connection between colloquial dialects and Modern Standard Arabic, and encouraged learners of Arabic as a foreign language to make additional efforts to acquire at least one form of colloquial Arabic. Academics and practitioners in the TAFL field had already been shifting toward more structured integration of both colloquial Arabic and MSA as complementary forms of the same lan-

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guage. The third edition of the *Al-Kitaab* series presents learners with a number of Arabic dialects to choose from to complement the MSA portion of the series. Other series, such as Munther Younes' *ʿArabiyyat Al-Naas*, have also been published, solidly integrating colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic into everyday lessons.

One of the catalysts which increases students' motivation to acquire and even master *ʿāmmiyya* (colloquial) Arabic is that most of the popular chants and slogans of the Arab uprisings found on social media and elsewhere online were colloquial.[4] In the case of CAMES students, the Levantine dialect that students learned in class allowed them to read political slogans relating to the Syrian uprising and communicate with the increasing number of Syrian refugees arriving in Lebanon. At times, CAMES instructors found themselves teaching Damascene and Beiruti colloquial forms in the same class, delving into the peculiarities of each as well as the differences between them. One of the most popular Syrian soap operas, *Bāb al-Ḥāra* (Gate of the Neighborhood), came to be used in the classrooms as support material in *ʿāmmiyya* lessons. The series depicts Middle Eastern society and the popular upheavals that took place during the period of Western-power colonialization, when Syria was under French control and Palestine was occupied by the British forces. In the different episodes shown in class, the vocabulary and themes raised provided students with numerous insights; although the events in the televised series dated back to the 1930 s, much of what was portrayed echoed the events and situations happening in the context of the Syrian uprising. Students benefited tremendously from the overlap between the language used in the series, that heard in Beirut among refugees, and that reported in the news and on social media as used in Syria.

In response to the aforementioned need and demand for *ʿāmmiyya*, CAMES launched an *ʿāmmiyya* track in the summer of 2013, allowing students aiming to acquire the Lebanese dialect a chance to focus more specifically on this goal. The material and resources used for students in this track are based on Educated Spoken Arabic (ESA), a mixture of MSA and colloquial Arabic. In 2014 and 2015, two different levels of the track were offered to accommodate students.

4 On the importance of intercultural exchanges for stimulating students' motivation see also the contribution of Sarhan Dhouib in this volume.

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Social and community service

Many of the CAMES students wanted to help in the refugee crisis that has resulted from the civil war in Syria. This prompted CAMES to increase students' involvement in social service and community work. The students' interest stemmed both from their commitment to humanitarian causes and from the opportunity to interact in Arabic with socially disadvantaged Lebanese and Arab groups, including Syrians and Palestinians who knew few or no foreign languages. Students needed to practice their colloquial Arabic in a setting that would allow them to interact meaningfully with locals and refugees from different age levels and backgrounds. CAMES organized weekly trips to orphanages, retirement homes and refugee camps, and designed various activities for participants to engage in. These activities included reading Arabic and English books aloud to small groups of children, creating and performing sketches and short plays which addressed the problems faced by the participating groups, interviewing elderly people, and reporting on their experiences in articles published in the CAMES SAP newsletter.

In 2014, CAMES worked with NASMA, a grassroots non-governmental organization located in the Hamra neighborhood close to the AUB that supports families living in different parts of Beirut, including the refugee camps. At its resource center, NASMA receives underprivileged children between the ages of seven and 14 from the surrounding neighborhoods and offers them after-school support, in addition to other social and artistic activities organized at its summer camps.[5] In 2013, NASMA started accommodating an increasing number of Syrian refugee children. Throughout that summer, CAMES and NASMA developed a series of activities that were carried out during the students' several visits to the NASMA resource center. In preparation for their visits, representatives from NASMA introduced the organization and its beneficiaries to the students. Following this introduction, students brainstormed in small groups regarding possible ice-breaking activities that would help them interact with the kids. They also focused on the importance of doing fun and enjoyable activities. The language level of each group of students determined the information and topics they would share with the children. The activities implemented in-

5 For information about NASMA, see http://daleel-madani.org/profile/nasma-learning-and-resource-centre.

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cluded educational tasks, such as setting up a map of Arab countries and providing facts about them. This activity in particular sparked some very interesting conversations between the kids and the students, specifically on the countries most involved in the Arab uprisings, namely Egypt, Tunisia, Syria and Libya. Students later said they had benefited from hearing another view of the events, and that it had been rewarding for them to see how young children understood what was going on around them. In another activity, each person (both the children and the students) drew his or her home or dream house, and wrote down a small paragraph describing it. This revealed some insights into the children's (and students') social conditions and their needs or dreams. In many cases, the children would take the lead in teaching the CAMES students how to say certain words, correcting them and helping them express their ideas — an experience of great value from a language-learning perspective.

In addition to weekly group visits with NASMA, CAMES established an optional language exchange partnership with the Syrian Jusoor NGO and the Civic Engagement Office at the AUB. Most of the participants were Syrian university students with a weak command of English who were teaching Syrian students in special schools for refugees. These students formed tandems with CAMES students learning Arabic, and met on a weekly basis to discuss various topics in English and Arabic. The experience was very successful and rewarding to students on both sides, and in many cases the partnership continued via Skype after the summer program.

Distributing food to elderly people was another initiative executed via FoodBlessed, a local hunger-relief initiative founded in 2012 and run by a group of volunteers in Lebanon.[6] Here too, the focus was on learning the language via social work activities. Students learned the names of dishes and their ingredients, as well as recipe instructions and related vocabulary. Moreover, they were able to converse with the elderly in *ʿāmmiyya* and report on their experiences in class or in essays.

6 For information on these programs, see http://daleel-madani.org/profile/foodblessed and http://www.foodblessed.org.

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Daunting challenges and solutions

While all the changes previously mentioned brought new materials and dynamics to the TAFL classroom, they also posed certain challenges. The *ʿāmmiyya* material in the textbook was not sufficient to accommodate the students' needs. Coordinators responded by organizing workshops and weekly meetings with instructors to devise a convincing pedagogical curriculum able to incorporate *ʿāmmiyya* without jeopardizing the MSA curriculum that needed to be covered for the transfer of credits and to satisfy the requirements of each language level.

One of the biggest challenges for CAMES' Summer Arabic Program following the Arab uprisings was channeling students' interests while also teaching the language and culture objectively. Lebanon has a complex history of relations with Syria that has seen good days and bad days. Teaching challenges arose as some of the instructional content brought up sensitive topics discussed in the Lebanese context. Teachers in the program came from different segments of Lebanese society, and thus had different opinions about issues such as Hezbollah's military participation in Syria or the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Students also had conflicting opinions that often clashed with those of the teachers or their classmates, especially since some students were so-called heritage language students from a Lebanese, Syrian or Egyptian background (Kelleher 2010).

Some of the uprisings were easier to discuss in the classroom than others. For instance, the Egyptian uprising was always a "safer" topic than the Syrian uprising because of its geographical distance. Still, when the need arose to bring up the Syrian situation in class, CAMES instructors found ways to work with the material available. For instance, instructors selected scenes from the Syrian *Bāb al-Ḥāra* television series for a listening activity featuring dialogue that could well have been drawn from the post-uprising period in Syria. Instructors were able to maximize the benefit of watching these scenes and connect the listening to a speaking activity; students were asked to choose a current news article and a scene from *Bāb al-Ḥāra* and compare them. Students' linguistic gains were complemented by a critical thinking exercise, as they were asked to assess the accuracy of the news articles they were reading by cross-checking information from different sources in order to compare terminology, writing style and even rhetorical devices.

Another way CAMES managed to depoliticize the situation and still involve students in current events was to deal with the events from a social

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and humanitarian perspective. In this regard, instructors worked on developing the community service programs, which offered students an interactive opportunity to practice their language skills, especially colloquial Arabic. This was also partly in response to a growing interest, especially among US students, in them seeking out "short-term volunteering-abroad experiences that go beyond the traditional model," as observed by Christine Farrugia (2015), senior research officer at the Institute of International Education. According to this study, students seek out opportunities in which they can engage with community members in various contexts rather than just receiving knowledge in class by interacting with their professors and peers. Along these lines, the CAMES SAP had already been organizing visits to senior citizen centers and orphanages since 2007, in response to students having repeatedly expressed the wish to do so in their end-of-program evaluations. In light of the events of the Arab uprisings, CAMES was able to take its community service initiative in a new direction by facilitating student engagement with refugee children, especially Palestinians and Syrians. Through this community-based activity, students who chose to come to Lebanon with an interest in exploring a society in transition were given the opportunity to witness the direct effects of this change on some of its youth. The importance of this community service in linguistic terms is that students not only interacted with native speakers, but also contributed to designing the activities implemented in the program.

Conclusion

The Arab uprisings had a major impact on the curriculum used in teaching Arabic as a foreign language at the AUB. The changes came in response to demands by students, who asked for more exposure to colloquial Arabic and more interaction with native speakers. The change was gradual, and in addition to the curriculum changes, manifested itself in various social work activities and cultural clubs. These changes helped open up the gates of the AUB campus to the city of Beirut, and gave refugees and other underprivileged groups access to an academic institution from which they could benefit in various ways.

It will be interesting to continue to track the effect of the Arab uprisings on curricula in the Arab world, in Europe and in the United States in order to be able to generalize about the effect of the uprisings on the TAFL field

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as a whole. The methods devised in the CAMES Summer Arabic Program already provide some models that can be emulated and developed further when dealing with the refugee crisis in various Arab states and in Europe. These methods benefit from the participation of refugees and represent one way of helping them integrate into their new settings.

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7 Justice in Transformation: Rethinking Theory and Practice of the Global Transitional Justice Model

Fatima Kastner

When the Tunisian street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire on 17 December 2010, he may not have intended to trigger a social-political tsunami that swept across North Africa and the Middle East (MENA), leaving behind fallen authoritarian regimes and former dictators dethroned, imprisoned or even lynched. However, among the reasons that might have forced him into such an act of despair was his bitter hunger for justice and a better life. His dramatic self-immolation was a hopeless call for humanity that was shared by a multitude of protesters throughout the Arab world, who then generated that revolutionary wave that is referred to as the "Arab Spring". Although each individual protester represents a unique human being with specific personal experiences of injustice, what is common to all demonstrators across the region are the grave human rights violations committed by the former regimes during their hold on power. Facing these dramatic popular uprisings and the following delicate transitional phase, in which the old order did indeed fall but has not yet completely vanished, socio-legal scholars from Arab and Western countries have emphasized the need to initiate processes of political transitions in accordance with the global transitional justice model in order to help post-revolution societies overcome their precarious situation of passage from authoritarianism and dictatorship to a new order of society. By this means, according to the general reasoning, they can determine how best to address systematic abuses of human rights committed in the past and during the time of transition in order to reconcile divided societies, strengthen democratic institution building and to realize a new and just social order, which is above all worth living (Fisher & Stewart 2014).

However, by general definition, classical judicial transitional justice instruments such as ad-hoc, special and hybrid international criminal tribunals, or non-judicial restorative and restitutive mechanisms, such as commissions of inquiry, truth and reconciliation commissions, lustration policies and reparation programs, can be set up only when severe injustice and systematic human rights abuses, as typically practiced during periods

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of dictatorship, autocratic suppression and civil war have come to an end (Schabas & Darcy 2004; Teitel 2015; Mihr 2017). That means transitional justice can only be put to work after a certain regime change and a political process of consolidation have already taken place, or at least after a somehow pacified and stabilized social environment has been realized (Olsen 2010; Eser, Arnold & Kreicker 2012). This includes, for example, the replacement of governments and the renewal of important state bodies and institutions such as the security services and the judicial system in order to provide grounds for processes of reconciliation, democratization and the establishment of the rule of law (Hinton 2010; Engert & Jetschke 2011; Hazan 2017). In the case of the post-"Arab Spring" societies, some former government leaders did indeed fall and new executive powers took their place, but overall, the hopes and dreams of most of the protesters did not come true. In fact, some turned into true nightmares, as documented by the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Syrians and other refugees from the MENA region to Northern Europe, fleeing the deadly threats of civil war, systematic terrorism and inhuman living conditions in their own countries.[1]

However, the transitions being experienced in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings are not finished yet, and the future of most of the fragile state entities that have seen some kind of regime change appears to be more than just uncertain (Gephart, Sakrani & Hellmann 2015). Even though some political reforms and transitional justice strategies have been already launched in countries like Tunisia, Bahrain, Yemen and Egypt, observers are quite skeptical about the short term results, since transitional justice instruments are highly time consuming measures (Fraihat 2016). One illustrative example of this is certainly Argentina and the decades-long fight of its civil society against painful silence and imposed impunity concerning the perpetrators and those responsible for the mass crimes committed during the former military regime in the years 1976–1983. It clearly shows that post-conflict justice sometimes can only be achieved, if at all, after decades of efforts to combat politics of repression and systematic human rights abuses by means of domestic as well as international criminal tribunals, including regional human rights courts (Teitel 2003; Sikkink 2011; Mihr 2017). Thus, given that function of time in regard to the possible ef-

1 See the contribution on the precarious and lawless situation in Syria by Ammar Abdulrahman in this volume.

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fectiveness of transitional justice mechanisms, it might be simply too early to evaluate the outcomes of transitional justice policies in post-"Arab Spring" societies at least from today's perspective.[2] However, how would it be the other way around? Have the Arab uprisings altered the discourse of socio-legal studies on transitional justice? Have any lessons been learned from the extraordinary revolutionary transitions in the MENA region? Could they potentially even have an effect on future attempts to justice in transition?

In the following, I will try to give a tentative answer to these questions. Given the embryonic status of most of the social transitions in the region, it is of no surprise that I have to highlight the speculative nature of my statements. However, after a short historical overview of the emergence of the normative concept of transitional justice as a global model of dealing with systematic human rights abuses, I will first outline the crucial steps in developments that have shaped today's understanding of transitional justice as a certain set of legal and non-legal means that count as tools with which to foster post-conflict justice and both enable democratic institution building as well as processes of reconciliation in any specific transitional society in the world. In a second step, I then ask whether and to what extent the processes of transitions experienced so far in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings have challenged or modified this general liberal understanding of the present global transitional justice model. Lastly, in a third step I will reflect on some possible learning effects from the ongoing dynamic processes in the MENA region that might enlarge the existing toolbox of transitional justice and thereby expand or eventually even transform socio-legal discourse on transitional justice.

Lex Transitus: On the evolution of the new global legal regime of transitional justice

The normative concept of transitional justice emerged historically in the period after the geopolitical caesura of 1945. Its first appearance resulted from the exceptional context of the institutionalization of the international criminal tribunals at Nuremberg and Tokyo after the Second World War.

2 For a personal account on the difficulties of "working through" the times of repression see the contribution by Sarhan Dhouib in this volume.

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Although some legal scholars have criticized the ambiguous legality of these trials, which contradicted fundamental moral principles in international criminal law such as "nullum crimen sine lege", the lasting influence of this first attempt to implement transitional justice cannot be questioned today (Schabas & Darcy 2004; Eser, Arnold & Kreicker 2012; Teitel 2015). Indeed, in the following years international criminal courts were established to conduct transitional justice trials that relied strongly on the legal principles which had been created by the international tribunals of Nuremberg and Tokyo. Both tribunals dealt with war crimes committed before and during the war by the former leaders of the warring parties Germany and Japan. From the very beginning, the trials were tainted by the desire to punish and replace former members of the Nazi regime and the Japanese empire who were considered most responsible for systematic or widespread human rights violations, and to establish international law as a new tool in determining the accountability of individual actions as well as international aggression (Safferling 2011). Notably, the latter, with the invention of a new legal principle called "crimes against humanity", set a novel precedent that had never been used before in international human and humanitarian law and therewith initiated an extraordinarily dynamic chain of legal and institutional developments in the postwar era that radically changed the very nature of the international legal system (Bonacker & Safferling 2013). Since that time, numerous international criminal courts have been created on a global level to deal with large-scale human rights violations, including, for example, the international extraordinary tribunals for the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Cambodia, East Timor, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Following the massive waves of societal and political transitions that occurred in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and Africa in the early 1980 s, these bodies were institutionalized with the goal of achieving recognition for victims and bringing the perpetrators of abuses to justice, with the broader additional aims of promoting peace, the development of democratic institutions, and the rule of law. Other post-conflict, post-authoritarian and post-dictatorial countries, such as Argentina after the end of the military dictatorship, South Africa after the end of the Apartheid regime, and Morocco after the end of the so-called "Years of Lead", used truth and reconciliation commissions to deal with their violent pasts. Such commissions have also been established in other states in transition with a history of repressive rule, including South Korea, the Solomon Islands, El Salvador, Ghana and the Fiji Islands. The general goal of transitional justice tools, be these ad-hoc international

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criminal tribunals or truth and reconciliation commissions, is to overcome the former repressive state system by contributing to politics of human rights, democratization and national reconciliation (Teitel 2015; Mihr 2017).

Since the end of the Cold War, international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and the World Bank have increasingly acknowledged these politics of dealing with past human rights violations by, for example, granting public sector loans and supporting economic development dependent on specific transitional justice policies. Not least due to these redefined lending conditions and standards of development aid from international donors, dealing with past human rights violations has become a global model for action in world society that has taken the transitional justice model from its beginnings as a normative exception to its present status as a global political rule (see Kastner 2016).

While international organizations have played a key role in the global proliferation of the transitional justice model, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), a transnationally operating NGO, has served as a further very influential creator and disseminator of this normative concept. This NGO has its headquarters in New York, but also maintains regional offices in Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, the Maghreb region and the Near East. In establishing the ICTJ in March 2001, its creators laid the foundations for a global culture of post-conflict justice (Boraine 2006; Kastner 2010; Teitel 2011). The ICTJ has monitored political transitions with the aim of promoting peace, bolstering rule of law reforms, and supporting democratic governance in more than 50 countries worldwide. It has collaborated in creating and implementing international criminal tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions, and other alternative instruments of transitional justice in post-conflict societies around the globe.[3] ICTJ staff members make their expertise in dealing with past systematic human rights abuses and state rebuilding after political transitions

3 Transitional justice processes have been initiated to date in: Argentina, Bolivia, Burundi, Brazil, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Côte D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Liberia, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Tunisia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Uganda, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe. Compare the list provided by the International Center for Transitional Justice: http://ictj.org/. See also the list provided by the website of the United States Institute of Peace: http:www.usip.org/library/tc.

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available not only to local protest groups, but also to national and international institutions such as national human rights organizations, the European Union and the United Nations (Kastner 2017 b). They advise diplomats and legal scholars in matters related to the judicialization of transition issues, and help social interest groups, research organizations and governments with the work of reconstructing and documenting human rights violations, as well as preparing and using databases and archives. They provide information on survey methods and techniques for interviewing victims, train people to work with witnesses, and help establish witness protection programs. ICTJ members also offer advice on conducting public hearings and contribute to the development of programs providing restitution and compensation for victims. Their work now also includes consultation on the creation of memorial and commemorative sites, and on formulating and implementing recommendations for political and structural reforms after the respective transitional justice instruments have completed their work. The accumulation and global dissemination of this special expertise in dealing with past state-aided human rights violations has also been reflected in a series of notable international conferences, guidelines and resolutions of the United Nations on the normative concept of transitional justice, which even led the United Nations to declare 2009 the International Year of Reconciliation.[4] As a matter of fact, transitional justice is now viewed as a key element of the United Nations' toolbox for dealing with post-conflict issues, with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping even having established a new Security Sector Reform and Transitional Justice Unit (Kastner 2017 a).[5] This has further promoted and solidified the process of transnational networking, professionalization and standardization in the realm of activities related to dealing with past human rights violations. In sum, the enlarged normative concept of transitional justice has become a conventional instrument for dealing with the past, which has spread globally thanks to the consultation and training programs of the ICTJ and the launching of countless academic journals and books, new research institutes at universities, and other highly specialized international, transnational and local NGOs in the field of post-conflict justice (Kastner 2015 a).

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4 Compare the UN resolution A/ERES/61/17, adopted by the General Assembly at its 61st session, 23 January 2007: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/61/17&Lang=E.

5 See: http://www.un.org/en/events/peacekeepersday/pdf/securityreform.pdf.

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As a result of the formation of this increasingly dense context of know-how transmission, a world political arena has emerged, in which various actors involved in the politics of dealing with the past appear as protagonists and disseminators of specific norms, standards and institutions of transitional justice. Within this multidimensional, constantly self-reinforcing transnational social field a functionally specified global legal regime of transitional justice has emerged to advocate the following: firstly, institutionalized international normative expectations, such as the obligation of the international legal system to investigate past state-aided human rights violations and the victim's right to truth; secondly, behavioral routines and post-conflict measures, such as victim oriented processes of truth seeking, and reparation and reconciliation programs; and, thirdly, standardized non-judicial institutions, such as historical commissions of inquiry, truth commissions, and truth and reconciliation commissions, as well as judicial institutions such as ad-hoc international and hybrid criminal tribunals.[6]

The creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002, a permanent and independent supranational judicial body that prosecutes the perpetrators of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity — when national courts of the contracting state parties are either unwilling or unable to deal with these crimes —, so far represents the ultimate culmination of this ongoing process of evolution of the normative concept of transitional justice into a global legal regime, which I have called "Lex Transitus" in reference to scholarly works which address in critical and analytical fashion the changing frames of normative orders under the structural conditions of globalization (Teubner 2012; Neves 2013; Calliess 2014; Kjaer 2014; Kastner 2015 b; Teitel 2015; Thornhill 2016).

Moreover, in the course of this process, we can observe the world cultural institutionalization of a form of cosmopolitan ethics that resembles what was described in connection with the Holocaust and the moral outcomes of the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals as the increasing consolidation of a global morality and the associated moral imperative of memory, atonement and commemoration (see Levy & Sznaider 2011). States' approaches to past state-aided atrocities, war and genocide are now directed by global institutional models that dictate extremely ritualized procedures for confronting past human rights violations. In the context of this global

6 Compare Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter: http://www.un.org/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml.

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diffusion of discourses and practices of remembering and dealing with violent pasts, the actors involved — individuals as well as collective actors — are constantly observed and evaluated by a transnational civil society network. Even if they merely stage a superficial show of compliance with world cultural norms, standards and institutions of transitional justice, as is the case in many post-conflict states, they are nevertheless confirming them even against their own political will (Sikkink 2011; Calliess 2014; Karstedt 2014). As part of a general process of the dissemination of global cultural patterns of behavior and normative patterns of expectations, which simultaneously overlays the dominant functional structures of global society and the international political system of nation states, transitional justice tools can be described, at least from a macro-sociological point of view, as transcultural transformers (Holzer, Kastner & Werron 2015). One should take care not to overestimate the evolutionary potential of their broad sociocultural effects, but we should also not make the mistake of underestimating them (Kastner et al. 2008). Only then will we also gain an explanation for the exceedingly remarkable phenomenon that — despite the empirical fact of the global diffusion of the normative concept of transitional justice and with it the worldwide proliferation of specific norms, standards and institutions of post-conflict justice — to date there has not been a single case in which, quite literally, the work of dealing with past systematic crimes has been "successful" (on this rather paradoxical effect, see Kastner 2010).

Reconfigurations of the present normative concept of transitional justice emerging from the "Arab Spring" experiences

Transitional justice has become a conventional global model for action in dealing with past systematic human rights violations. As a result of the different forms of local contextualization that have occurred worldwide so far, the normative concept has massively changed since its invention after the Second World War from an originally pure, criminal, legal, that is to say, retributive normative concept to a hybrid, that is to say, a restorative cross societal oriented post-conflict justice model (Kastner 2015 b). This in turn has changed the significant actors working in the field of transitional justice. Initially dominated by professional international lawyers, it is now primarily influenced by human rights activists, diplomats, scholars, policymakers, donors, international organizations, and transnational non-

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governmental organizations, such as the ICTJ. These new and diverse actors in the field of post-conflict justice conceive the aims and mechanisms of transitional justice not primarily in retributive terms, that is to say, from a strictly criminal law and perpetrator oriented perspective, but also within more holistic cross-societal categories (Boraine 2006). This hybridization of the concept of transitional justice in the form of an increasing amalgamation of legal and social norms also explains the newly achieved recognition of victims' perspectives within the international criminal law system, as well as the redefined central role of victims within the framework of transitional justice policies (Bonacker & Safferling 2013). Indeed, one of the decisive new institutional elements of the transitional justice concept are truth and reconciliation commissions, where the central procedural focus of investigation no longer lies on the crimes committed by former perpetrators, but on the testimonials provided by the victims and the harm they endured (Kastner 2010). The severe and controversial socio-legal debates that accompanied the implementation of these victim oriented commissions as a non-judicial means of confronting the needs of post-conflict societies in transitional contexts have mirrored the dynamic, adaptive and hybrid nature of the normative concept of transitional justice in a very demonstrative manner. This is also one of the reasons why the enlarged normative concept is frequently criticized as having a corrosive effect on the international legal system's values rather than fostering universal principles (Hazan 2017). In particular, the controversial discussion on accountability as one of the key aspects of the international criminal legal justice system, which notably ensures that those responsible for massive crimes committed in the past are held accountable for their wrongdoings, as well as the continuing debate on non-Western notions of finding justice for past abuses that accompanied the installation of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission especially, strongly unsettled and rearranged the field of transitional justice studies (Teitel 2015). To take a case in point, during the suspense-packed course of the South African transition process, leading figures such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela emphasized the need for a genuinely African approach to transitional justice, primarily by focusing on social forgiveness and collective healing guided by a local justice concept called *Ubuntu* (An-Na'im 2013). They argued that a localized manifestation of transitional justice was very much needed in this context, since purely individual prosecutions along the lines of the Western conception of liberal legality would not generate the desired outcome for the entire society (Boraine 2006).

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The concept of *Ubuntu* ultimately did indeed have great influence on the societal, political and moral justification for the transitional justice process in post-apartheid South Africa, and was explicitly legally laid down in the first post-apartheid South African constitution of 1993, though the term itself does not appear in today's valid constitution (see Cornell & Muvangua 2012). Quite similar strategies of combining particular local notions of justice with the globally enacted strategies of the international criminal legal system, in the sense of combining locally legitimate rituals of justice and reconciliation with standardized elements of the global transitional justice model, were also carried out in other post-conflict African societies such as Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda (Lugano 2017). Have any similar genuinely regional approaches to transitional justice emerged from the post-revolution transitions in Arab countries?

Given the short period of time since the outbreak of the popular upheavals in the year 2011, it is surely too early to give any satisfactory answer regarding possible effects that these transitions might have on the normative concept of transitional justice. However, what can be said to date is that current endeavors in the MENA region to initiate politics of transitional justice have been largely shaped by the objective of establishing classical national retributive judicial institutions rather than by mechanisms derived from the global transitional justice model. Aside from some exceptions like the recently established truth commissions in Tunisia and the Kingdom of Morocco, most attempts, such as the trials against former President Mubarak in Egypt and other efforts made in Libya and Yemen, were in fact purely national retributive proceedings (Gephart, Sakrani & Hellmann 2015).

Following the so-called "Jasmine Revolution" or the "Sidi Bouzid Revolt", as it is referred to in the Arab world, the Truth and Dignity Commission in Tunisia was established by law in 2013 and formally launched in 2014 in order to investigate the systematic nature of human rights violations committed by the Tunisian state since 1955. The Commission was given a four-year mandate (2014 to 2018) with the possibility of a one-year extension. Its purpose is to use both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms. The Commission held its first public hearing in Tunis on 17 November 2016. Therefore, possible outcomes are as yet quite uncertain. The other exception is the Kingdom of Morocco with the implementation of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission on behalf of the present monarch Mohammed VI. Its aim was to address gross human rights violations committed during the so-called "Years of Lead" (1956 to 1999).

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However, this first attempt to transitional justice in the Arab-Islamic world, which was launched without the country having experienced a regime change or a revolution, was indeed initiated and realized as early as in 2004, long before the outbreak of the Arab uprisings (see Kastner 2015 a: 277-359).

Given the economic and financial distress and social instability of most of the post-revolution societies, the preference for classical national criminal trials rather than for alternative approaches according to the global transitional justice model might be simply the consequence of the persistence of the old regime's institutions (army, police, judiciary, etc.), or might be due to other particular reasons, like the need to correspond to international obligations (Safferling 2011; Fraihat 2016).

A vital factor that is shaping current socio-legal debates on transitional justice is the unique feature of the political, cultural and religious aspects of the MENA region. Compared, for example, to the transitions in Latin American societies starting in the early 1980 s, in which authoritarian regimes and bloody dictatorships were replaced by a political culture of liberal democracy, post-revolution Arab societies do not seem to share such a political consensus about the best way forward. In fact, the concept of liberal democracy seems to have lost its brilliance, and is no longer seen by a majority of the population as the only solution, but is rather regarded as part of a larger "neo-colonial" problem (An-Na'im 2013; Lugano 2017). This is paired with another unique pattern in the post-revolution Arab societies — notably the rise of so-called political Islam, a long and strongly suppressed religious political movement that is currently disrupting all societies in the Arab world. With the lack of a consensus about a common political strategy, it might also be difficult to define the specific goals of potential processes of transitional justice in post-"Arab Spring" countries. Therefore, possible alterations to the global transitional justice model emerging from the experiences in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings may not be based on liberal Western notions of justice but rather on genuine regional, cultural conditions, such as Islamic morality, Islamic ethics and Islamic law (Baxi 2015; Fraihat 2016). The resultant challenge for our present understanding of the global transitional justice model is then the question of how and to what extent a combination of these contradicting value systems would indeed be socially applicable. That is to say, how can a generally secular and democratically oriented notion of a genuine liberal transitional justice model indeed engage with some illiberal elements of so-called political Islam, for instance with regard to the rights of

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religious minorities and gender equality (An-Na'im 2013; Al-Azm 2015)? Though at this point one should also recall that neither religion in general, nor the contested category of *Sharia* in particular was originally behind the motives of the protest movements at the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, where there was, on the contrary, an urgent call for universal values and human rights. However, the unexpected collapse of a multitude of totalitarian Arab regimes only allowed the advent of what had been massively oppressed for decades by the former regimes of repression. This could also be an explanation for why there are so many references to *Sharia* in almost all the recently reformed and newly adopted constitutions in post-revolution Arab societies (Sakrani 2015). They show an increasing process of de-legitimization of secular concepts of justice and re-legitimization of illiberal elements and religion both as an instrument and as a central goal of politics, which is in fact criticized by local lawyers and human rights activists as well as socio-legal scholars from abroad (Gephart, Sakrani & Hellmann 2015; Fraihat 2016).

A further peculiarity of the transitions in the MENA region, which is regarded as a centric element that has to be taken into account for future attempts to transitional justice, is the attention being given to the issues of poverty and unemployment as well as corruption and other economic and financial wrongdoings committed during the former authoritarian and dictatorial regimes that drove the revolutions of the "Arab Spring" (Fischer & Swart 2014). This newly developed access point, which highlights economic injustice and economic problems as important challenges to transitional justice's aims of social peace and reconciliation, could serve as a source for innovative approaches to future attempts to transitional justice, since the conventional global model does indeed prioritize civil and political rights over other rights (Teitel 2015). Therefore, both legal academia and scholars from the social sciences are increasingly debating the need to expand the current liberal model of transitional justice in the direction of economic crimes, and therewith economic accountability, in order to be able to address the systematic nature of economic abuses and financial criminality. Though at this point one has to admit that current debates about the inclusion of economic and financial wrongdoings in the current international criminal legal system are nascent and are still to be elaborated (Jeßberger 2014).

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Conclusion and outlook

In this article, I have argued that transitional justice has become a global model for action in dealing with past systematic human rights violations. As a result of the differing social foundations and local contextualization of transitional justice that occurred in a multitude of countries in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania since the early 1980 s, the normative concept of transitional justice has undergone continuous change since its invention following the Second World War, evolving from an originally purely perpetrator oriented retributive legal instrument into a victim oriented restorative post-conflict justice model. The intense socio-legal debates that accompanied this transformation from an originally pure criminal law model into a more holistic tool that connects legal with social norms mirrored the very dynamic, adaptive and hybrid nature of the normative concept of transitional justice, which has evolved into a functionally specified global legal regime that I call Lex Transitus.

Legal academia and scholars from the social sciences are currently discussing two possible alterations to the present global model of transitional justice emerging from the "Arab Spring" experiences. One of these changes may be based on regional cultural factors, such as Islamic morality, Islamic ethics and Islamic law. This poses a potential challenge for the present liberal, secular and democracy oriented conception, insofar as it remains unclear how and to what extent a combination of these contradictory value systems, that is, combining locally legitimate notions of justice with standardized elements of the global transitional justice model, would be socially, politically and legally applicable. A second alteration emerging from the post-uprising transition policies already realized in some Arab countries could be the demand to include economic and financial crimes within the present normative concept of transitional justice. However, it remains to be seen whether these local solutions can or will in fact reconcile divided post-revolution societies in the MENA region and thus have any ability to inspire future attempts to transitional justice.

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8 Philosophy in Transition — Philosophy of Transition

Sarhan Dhouib

For Fradj Belhajamor, my fellow student, who was persecuted during his studies and who, after many years in German exile as a philosophy teacher, returned to Tunis and died on 28 October 2013, his first day of teaching.

The transformation of philosophy, as practiced or as it should be practiced in a situation of tumultuous change from dictatorship to a democratic society or post-dictatorship — as, for example, in Tunisia — occurs on multiple levels.

The liberation from authoritarian directives and fear-driven self-censorship offers us the chance to introduce themes into scholarly discussion, and therefore also into the field of philosophy, that reflect critically on contemporary society, social affairs and culture (Moser & Seidel 2016).[1] These topics include a discussion of experiences with injustice, human rights violations and limits to freedom of expression, for example, but also issues of transitional justice and the culture of remembrance. In post-dictatorial society, these issues prove to be particularly charged inasmuch as they can become an engine of social and political transformation (Dhouib 2012 b, 2014).

At the same time, the politico-societal protest movements of the "Arab Spring" are drawing the attention of European and North American philosophers, and offer them the opportunity to reflect on critical analysis, justice, freedom and humanism — as prominently shown by Alain Badiou (2011), Seyla Benhabib (2011), Judith Butler (2015) and Slavoj Žižek (2012), for example. Of particular to me personally, however, are the joint reflections by Arab and German philosophers made in the context of collaborative international projects and stimulated by the societal upheavals in various Arab states. I will address some of these below.

On another level, however, this transformation is also about developing a philosophy that can illuminate changes in contemporary philosophical models and guide intercultural and interdisciplinary exchange on a global

1 For a similar observation in the field of political science, see the contribution by Jan Claudius Völkel in this volume.

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level. Transcultural philosophizing in this way follows a universalistic approach, seeking strategies of universalization and interculturally recognized principles of validity. In this sense, this philosophizing is interested in the expansion of normative concepts, drawing from extra-European cultural spaces and their philosophical approaches. Moreover, the recognition of cultural diversity and a plurality of forms of knowledge is central to this philosophical perspective. The sensitivity toward differences — whether this be within a culture or between cultures — leads to the demand that philosophers contextualize their guiding experiences and questions more strongly, both temporally and spatially. A further consequence lies in the aspiration for increased participation by philosophers with varied life backgrounds in this discourse. Transculturality thus does not emerge from the primacy of one dominant discourse over the others, but is rather the result of patient and open communication as well as constant critical engagement with one another (Dhouib & Dübgen 2016; Triki 2011).

However, the transformation of philosophy also consists in the critique and modification of a historically informed philosophical practice and its institutions. One aim of the academic transformation toward more democratic structures and more accessible education overall is to combat cultural and intellectual poverty. The decentralization of academic structures to promote education in disadvantaged regions, thus opening up direct and affordable access to knowledge for the people who live there, is one means of realizing the right to education every human being deserves (El Khouni 2016).[2] The provision of support for the transformation of any scientific or scholarly practice, however, consists generally — and this applies worldwide — in the empowerment of young scholars as well as in intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Assuming a dual role as actor as well as observer, I would like to describe and reflect from an autobiographical perspective on specific events and projects in the context of the transformation of philosophy and philosophical practice in North Africa. I am concerned with the following questions, to which even today I have found no final answers: Can philosophy in an authoritarian state be understood as a form of resistance? What role can it take in a post-dictatorial society, and how can it contribute to soci-

2 For a discussion on the circulation of information and knowledge from a computer science point of view, see the contribution by Tobias Amft and Kalman Graffi in this volume.

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etal transformation? What institutional change must it go through itself, and what are the strengths of transcultural philosophizing?

Where there is power, resistance rises — Tunisia before the revolution

When I came to Germany in 2013 to do a doctoral dissertation on Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, I had studied in Tunisia and France, a path whose detours and difficulties were shaped by the power structures of the dictatorship under Tunisia's longtime ruler Ben Ali. Without doubt, even under Ben Ali, the Tunisian educational system figured among the Arab world's best; the state's propaganda carried constant reminders of this assessment. The country possesses hardly any natural resources, unlike other Arab countries. Oil flows from olive presses, not from oil derricks, and the education of its people is one of the country's most important resources — or so believed the country's founder, Habib Bourguiba (1903–2000), who created an institutional system based on that of France, which persisted structurally under his successor Ben Ali and remains in place today. One learns French as a second "mother tongue" in elementary school; at least in the 1980 s, mathematics, natural sciences, physics and French literature in the original French were taught in college-preparatory school. As in France, in the last year, before graduating with school qualifications that would enable them to attend university, students also studied the subject of philosophy. This amounted to a full eight hours per week if one had decided to pursue *Lettres* for one's qualification and four hours if a student had decided to focus on natural science, mathematics or technology. When I came to Germany, the land of poets and philosophers, it surprised me that many first-year philosophy students had not yet had any philosophy instruction. In Tunisia's college-preparatory schools, philosophy was taught across its entire global range, from the Greeks and classical Arab philosophy to the European Enlightenment thinkers and the postmodernists. Some of our teachers at the university promoted a philological approach, perhaps in order to impress us or make clear to us the great distance that we, mere students, had to traverse to attain the philosophical knowledge. This meant that, at best, one should also read the works being studied in their original languages. It was thus clear to me early on that if I seriously intended to engage with modern European thought, I would someday have to learn German.

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Tunisia's education structure had clear political dimensions. For example, under Ben Ali there was a university police force, called "University Security" (*al-amn al-ǧāmiʿī*), that observed and monitored intellectual activities at the university. Teachers and lecturers of all stripes were also spied on by colleagues and students; one thus had to pay careful attention to how criticism was formulated, to which subjects one taught in the classrooms, and to how one responded to questions — to the real questions, the intelligent questions, but also to the questions that served as traps. For example, once I was sitting on campus with some fellow students during a break following a lecture on Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx, continuing the debate we had begun in the class on the relationship between theory and practice. We were so engrossed in the discussion that we failed to notice the secret service employees, ears cocked, reporting everything immediately to their boss. Only a few minutes later, we were summoned by University Security and asked how we had arrived at such ideas. We were released with a warning about avoiding discussing such issues outside the seminar. We never learned what the consequences were for our professor.

One way of escaping the repressive system (and at the same time, a very good way of acquiring further training) was to continue one's studies overseas. France regularly provided highly sought-after scholarships for outstanding academic achievements. However, the Tunisian state was allowed to make the final selection of scholarship recipients, a process that typically took place on the basis of loyalty to the regime. Although I was head of my class in the philosophy department of the Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines at the University of Sfax, I had to finance my DEA studies at the Université Paris 1 Sorbonne in France by giving additional private lessons. Because I was not allowed to leave Tunisia for several months without losing my job as a teacher in a college-preparatory school, I bounced back and forth between my college-prep school in Djerba and my university studies in Paris for two years, with my school director always breathing down my neck. Unlike France, Germany chose its fellowship recipients on its own, using clear criteria. The transparent procedures practiced by Germany — by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Goethe Institute — changed my academic life. With there being no DAAD office in Tunisia, I had to go to the German embassy to apply for a fellowship to pursue my doctoral studies in Germany.

Those who went overseas were not completely free of the constant observation. The regime's ears were eavesdropping in Germany, too. Once, in October 2004 — this was during "campaign season" in Tunisia, and one

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of my former professors, Mohammed Ali Halouani, was running as an opposition candidate against Ben Ali — as I boarded a late-evening bus in Bremen, I was jostled by a Tunisian, apparently accidentally. We quickly fell into conversation about the upcoming election, and our conversation, in which I hardly got a word in edgewise, ended with his harsh condemnation of academics with political ambitions. Like Halouani, he said, they lacked any skills useful for governing. The Arab peoples, he concluded, had no need of a democracy of intellectuals, and needed to be governed with the stick (*bil ʿaṣā*). The overseas spying was one dimension of the secret service's program of intimidation. Sometimes you knew whom you were speaking with, but sometimes not.

Fellowships that had not been approved by the regime were suspect. In official political jargon, they were termed "illegal financing" from overseas, and this was often synonymous with treason. On this path abroad, many doors were opened and many doors closed. The day that I left Tunisia — Friday, 10 January 2003 — was a genuinely sad day. I still occasionally think back to the December 2002 farewell from one of my college-preparatory classes at the Houmt Souk high school in Djerba. The weather on that day was as gray as that which welcomed me in Germany, with the gloom that often weighs on the souls of Mediterranean natives in Germany. Some students felt my departure to be a betrayal of them, although they had a very good teacher on the horizon who would prepare them further for graduation. One young female student, the best of them, was both sad and angry. If our teacher goes, who will stay with us? Leaving is not a solution, she said. But I simply desperately wanted to get my doctorate.

Arriving means going beyond oneself

My move to Germany was a radical change of scene. When you work on German idealism as a Tunisian doctoral student, and dare to take your first steps into conferences and workshops, you very quickly find that not everyone is wholly receptive to your voice. To be sure, many Europeans work with a considerable sense of mission on all other possible cultures and languages; but does a Tunisian, an Arab who works on Schelling, have anything to say?

Challenged in part by colleagues at the University of Bremen who invited me to lectures, I only began to engage systematically with modern

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and contemporary Arabian philosophy, in parallel with my work on Schelling, in Germany. I have with great irritation noted the contention, which has been expressed to me ever since at conferences, but which also appears widely in secondary literature, that there has been no philosophy in Arab countries since Averroes (Ibn Rushd), a figure well known even in Europe, but who has been dead since 1198. In Germany, as in other European and North American countries, the focus of interest is commonly on Islamist and fundamentalist authors, such as Abul Ala Al-Mawdudi (Pakistan) and Sayyid Qutb (Egypt). Texts by critical modern Arab philosophers, such as Nassif Nassar (Lebanon), Georges Tarabichi (Syria), Fouad Zakariyya (Egypt), Fathi Triki (Tunisia) or Mohammed Mesbahi (Morocco), are rarely translated and are largely ignored. For my engagement with modern and contemporary Arab philosophy, the Institute for Philosophy at the University of Bremen was an island of attentiveness. A formative element of my scholarly training in Bremen (quite apart from the many conversations and discussions with colleagues) was my inclusion in various intercultural exchange projects, such as the interchange between the UNESCO chairs in philosophy in Bremen (Prof. Hans Jörg Sandkühler) and Tunis (Prof. Fathi Triki), but also Latin American philosopher Raúl Fornet-Betancourt's international network (Sandkühler & Triki 2002; Fornet-Betancourt 2007, 2011).

Intercultural philosophizing starts from a position that people's language, thinking and even perceptions are culturally conditioned, and that values, concepts and norms cannot be considered independently of their concrete contexts because they derive their meaning only from this context. At the same time, dialogue on these concepts, values and norms, along with the struggle for a common basis and the issue of their universalizability, remains a task for the field of philosophy (Sandkühler & Triki 2002). In our philosophical encounters, we questioned and vigorously discussed the conditions of philosophy of a chaired life, views of humanity and the world, forms of the interpenetration of power and knowledge, and questions of human dignity (see, for example, Poulain, Sandkühler & Triki 2009).

Engaging intellectually with contemporary Arab philosophy under the auspices and modes of inquiry of intercultural philosophy became an important task for me, through which I removed myself from the trap of identity-related discourses. An intercultural approach seems to me fruitful for the transformation of philosophy, particularly in the Arab world. It is interesting that this access to my own philosophical tradition became

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available to me in Germany and Europe. One rediscovers oneself in the language and perspectives of others.

Several times I took the results of this UNESCO collaboration from Germany to Tunisia in the form of publication copies for my Tunisian colleagues. The customs officials asked me once, "What are these gray booklets?" "The main thing is they're not yellow booklets," I answered. The color yellow was used for religiously conservative books. "Nothing about human rights, is there?" one of them pressed further. "No, no, only about classical German philosophy. Kant and Hegel," I answered. The admiration that even this high-school graduate apparently showed for German philosophy protected me from him looking more deeply into the volumes' contents. I was allowed to pass.

"First comes Christmas, then comes New Years, and then the revolution."

The days of the early protests in the Arab countries in late 2010 were like a countdown whose results no one could predict. Many Tunisians sat feverishly in front of their computers and mobile phones and followed the news both day and night. This exceptional state was perhaps comparable to the late summer and autumn days of 1989 in Germany. At this time, I was working on an essay about the transculturality of human rights, which I wanted to submit to a Goethe Institute competition. Engaging critically with the two Maghreb philosophers Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri and Fathi Triki, I was examining the intercultural transfer of human rights and the potential of their transculturality with regard to articulating the conditions for their universalization (Dhouib 2013).

In Germany, there was hardly any reporting on the protests at this point. As I spoke with a friend about the events in Tunisia, and wondered out loud why the European media was reporting so little on these hot days in December, he answered with a self-mocking tone: "First comes Christmas, then comes New Years, and then we'll be able to talk about the revolution".

On a Monday, three days before the transfer of power in Tunisia in January 2011, I flew from Frankfurt via Paris to Rabat for a research project focusing on school textbooks. As I transferred at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport, I glanced at the headlines, and still remember that in France at this point the question being discussed was how Ben Ali could be militarily supported. A little later, as sympathies in Europe turned toward the

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Tunisian revolutionaries, the then French President Nicolas Sarkozy performed a 180-degree political about-face, with friends and allies becoming enemies. On my way back, the Libération newspaper carried a cover photo showing a young Tunisian woman holding up a poster reading *"Ben Ali dégage"* (Ben Ali resign!) (Libération 2011).

In Rabat, on 14 January, I met with a Moroccan colleague, an instructor and human rights activist, at a café in front of the Moroccan parliament building, in order to discuss the portrayal of human rights in Moroccan school textbooks and the role of civil society in supporting the implementation of a human rights culture. After we parted, my colleague went to the train station and there heard the most recent news. He immediately called me and congratulated me on a great event in my country: "*Ben Ali harab!*" (Ben Ali has fled). In a state of great joy and great confusion, I hunted for more information, for more people to talk to. I sent a few text messages to friends in Tunisia. In a small magazine kiosk on Avenue Mohammed V, I found a miniature black-and-white television. "I am Tunisian," I told the magazine seller, and asked whether I could watch the news with him. He looked at me and said, "How great that a poet can change the destiny of a people!" That was a "yes". Every Arab understands the allusion to the text of the Tunisian national anthem that was contained in this reply: "When the people will to live / Destiny must surely respond." In the weeks of the Arab uprising, this verse from the poem "The Will To Live" by Tunisian poet Abou El Kacem Chebbi (1909–1934) developed into a formula for liberation, and was repeated in slogans such as "The people's will" (*aš-šaʿb yurīd*) on demonstrators' signs in Tunis, Cairo, Tripoli and Damascus. At the first German–Arab conference that I organized immediately after the revolution, philosopher Mohammed Ali Halouani took this verse as an opportunity for reflection on freedom and the positive associations in the Arab context with the idea of a national people (Halouani 2012). This drew critical comments in a reply from the German perspective, as the concept of a national people is not entirely unproblematic in the context of Germany (Schmidt 2012).

As the German media were finally filled with news about the Arab uprisings, the DAAD advertised a number of exchange programs that were tailored to the "Arab Spring" states and were intended to support the process of scholarly transformation. With a few Arab DAAD fellows, primarily Egyptians, we participated in the Bonn discussion on the future design of DAAD funding for academic transformation in Egypt and Tunisia. A few of our suggestions were adopted and incorporated into the DAAD

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transformation program. In the context of this program, I was able to initiate and carry out two large exchange projects: initially, a series of four German–Arab conferences that took place in Tunis and Kassel between 2011 and 2014, and which addressed the issues of human rights, democracy, tolerance and justice.

Beginning in 2013, a research project followed on the issues of responsibility, justice and the culture of remembrance; the project was led by me until 2015, and primarily involved young Arab and German academics. The interdisciplinary and intercultural engagement with working through (*Aufarbeitung*) injustice under authoritarian states, as well as with the forms of speech and modes of silence under dictatorship, became important themes of academic reflection within our exchange project (Dhouib 2018 c). Without a detached analysis of the linguistic norms that shaped discourses under dictatorship, without a subtle decoding of the "public silence" (Meskini 2012), and without an examination of the subversive and counter-discourses, it becomes difficult to speak about democratization or to dream of a "humanistic democracy" (Said 2004; Turki 2016).

The relevance of a dual critique

A first conference took place in October 2011 in the Centre d´Art Vivant Zoubeir Turki, located in the Park Belvédère in Tunis. This was the first philosophical conference in Tunisia following the revolution. The Centre d´Art Vivant is an important site rich in memories for the generation of older Tunisian philosophy professors; the Club Taher Haddad, in which even Michel Foucault offered some of his Tunisian lectures, met here and a library that was an important point of contact for many Tunisian intellectuals, but which had been closed during the Ben Ali era, also stood here. The Centre d´Art Vivant is a site of resistance for the younger generation too. This was where the art of the revolution was exhibited, with young artists who were not only responding to the uprising, but who with their graffiti, posters and actions were themselves a part of the movement, a largely peaceful, angrily witty, creatively critical movement. We met surrounded by the art, a visual confrontation of philosophy with non-philosophy that continued with the graffiti on the way back to the hotel, and further on our way to the presentations. In addition to German colleagues, Algerian, Egyptian, Lebanese, Moroccan and Tunisian lecturers participated in the first meeting, some of whom also attended the following conferences

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(Dhouib 2012 a). The fear instilled under authoritarian states cannot be shaken off from one day to the next. This fear was not entirely gone; it expressed itself in hesitant answers, in cautious reticence, in the circumlocutions that required interpretation or the meaningful silence that was not difficult to interpret. Yet beside, between and above this fear, one could also sense the excitement, the joy in our own loud voices, and the enthusiasm in the discussions. To what degree do cultural identities and the cultural pluralism often associated with them stand in opposition to the transculturality of human rights? What are possible strategies for legitimizing human rights? How will the Arab and Islamic declarations of human rights, which were ratified by authoritarian states, be reflected in a post-dictatorial phase? Are human rights (including the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights) based on a particular view of human beings? A transcultural perspective on human rights is emerging — this became clear in the first conference's discussion on the issue of culture, identity and human rights from a transcultural perspective — initially through what Abdelkébir Khatibi (1938–2009) termed a "dual critique" (Khatibi 1983): The critique of the dogmatic tendencies in the Arab–Islamic cultural area, but also of the hegemonic structures of the "Western" states. For example, self-criticism from the Arab perspective emerges in the engagement with the Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) and the Arab Charter of Human Rights (2004), in which the tension between universality and particularity in the Islamic context, and between the recognition of cultural rights and the failures to institutionalize these rights, is examined (Serbagi 2012). However, it also appears from a "Western" perspective if it reflects on the political "betrayal" of the idea of the universality of human rights. Bremen philosopher Georg Mohr, for example, argues for a "properly understood universality", that is, for "non-colonial universality", in which the legitimization of hegemonic power politics becomes impossible (Mohr 2012).

In order to inspire the speakers from diverse cultures and disciplines to fruitful and constructive discussion, and call into question the rigid dividing lines between the "Arab world" and the "West" with regard to the universality of human rights, each presentation was followed by a short response in which the Arab and German participants could offer reciprocal comments on one another's contributions. The response was one element of a dialogic structure of collaboration, and additionally served to reveal another view on the issue being addressed. This dialogic structure is also intended to contribute to breaking down academic hierarchies in Germany

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and especially in Arab universities, and has established itself as a model for all subsequent conferences and for the publication of the presentations. Along this path of collaborative philosophizing, one challenge was communicating in different languages, and the continual efforts to calibrate the translation of thought and the thinking in translation.

What's the Arabic for "culture of remembrance" (Erinnerungskultur) and "working through the past" (Aufarbeitung)?

In the summer of 2012, I met with colleagues from the fields of German language and literature, philosophy, and sociology in the Café de Paris on Avenue Habib Bourguiba in Tunis for a joint brainstorming session, with the goal of developing a theme for an exchange project we wanted to submit to the DAAD. The topography of individual streets, the proximity or even the neighborhood of resistance and repression, of past and present, is a challenge both emotionally and intellectually. For example, across the street from Café de Paris is the Café l'Univers; in his time as a lecturer at the University of Tunis (1966–1967), Foucault regularly sat here with intellectuals and Tunisian students, who — like the philosophers Zeïneb Ben Saïd-Cherni and Fathi Triki — he had influenced (Ben Saïd-Cherni 2018; Triki 2008). Many even today still expressly regard themselves as his followers, continuing to pursue his discourse-analytical approach. Not far away, on the same street, stands the Tunisian Ministry of the Interior, in whose cellars intellectuals — women and men of all political orientations — were tortured. And finally, only a few hundred meters away from the Café de Paris are the DAAD offices, which were established in 2012 for the promotion of academic transformation in North Africa.

I threw the term "culture of remembrance" (*Erinnerungskultur*) into our brainstorming session, and we tried to translate it into Arabic. Like the concept of "working through the past" (*Aufarbeitung*), the word was very German, bound closely with the German language, culture and history both in subtle and less subtle ways. A literal translation, such as *ṯaqāfat aḏ-ḏākira*, makes little substantive sense, and so only a more or less circuitous description seemed suitable. At the same time, it was precisely this issue of remembrance culture and the question of working through injustice that was so virulent for the Arab world, which was on the way to becoming a post-dictatorial world, or so at least we hoped. The establishment of a democratic system is bound closely with working through expe-

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riences with injustice.[3] Numerous novels and testimonials composed in recent years, as well as in the preceding decades under the dictatorship, await contemplation by the scholarly world; such works include Cristal by Gilbert Naccache, *al-Qauqaʿa* (The Capsule, 2008) by Mustafa Khalifa, and *Bil-ḫalāṣ yā šabāb! 16 ʿāman fī suǧūn sūrīya* (On the deliverance! 16 years in the Syrian prisons, 2012) by Yassin Al-Hajj Salih. Even if the "culture of remembrance" and "working through" were not yet themes being addressed by Tunisian and Egyptian universities (in Morocco, the issues were already being discussed), they began to be so in the course of the authorized Responsibility, Justice and the Culture of Remembrance project — and not only in a cross-Arab comparative sense. In Tunis, but also in the rather more neglected province of Medenine in Tunisia's structurally disadvantaged south, workshops and seminars were carried out, a small amount of international research literature was acquired and made available to students, and in the German–Arab conferences we discussed issues including the differences between the German and Arab concepts of "working through the past" (Dhouib 2018 c). Given the political changes beginning in 2014, the thematization of specific experiences of injustice in Egypt was by contrast still possible only in mediated form, for example through the literary discussion of fictional texts. Unfortunately, some Egyptian colleagues were no longer able to participate in the project.

The discussion of director Hichem Ben Ammar's film Against Forgetting (*Gegen das Vergessen*) in the project's first workshop in Germany in 2013 served as prelude to a reflection on testimony and torture that continued over the course of the year. This documentary film on the history of torture and on the working through of Tunisia's past was created in the context of the *Contre l'oubli* — Project for Working through the Past in Tunisia led by cultural studies scholar Hamza Chourabi. The project was located at the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial. In this film, members of the leftist "Perspectives" movement were interviewed about their time in prison under Bourguiba, about torture and abuse, and about the importance of literature and communications between prisoners. The film also tells the story of a random meeting between a torturer and a torture victim following prison, and reflects on violence as an anthropological constant among human beings, as well as the (im)possibility of reconciliation and

3 For a discussion on the application of a transitional justice model to different countries, see the contribution by Fatima Kastner in this volume.

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reparation. Such topics were addressed incisively, for example, in Fathi Ben Haj Yahia's narrative about his prison experience (Ben Haj Yahia [Fr. trans. 2011]).

One of the prisons from the "dark years", formerly located near the "Faculty of 9 April" (Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales de Tunis), has been destroyed. Today only individual piles of rubble on a broad piece of ground can be seen. This site of torture and dehumanization and the site of free and humanistic education were located nearly side by side. The name "9 April", borne by both the prison and the college, recalls an important date in Tunisia's national history. The date 9 April 1938 marked a bloody event in the struggle for independence. It is an irony of history that this prison, which held the "freedom fighters" of that era even during the colonial period, persisted after independence in order to torture the new oppositional elite.

How should such a *lieu de mémoire* (site of memories) be handled? Should it be preserved, and if so, under what auspices? These are questions for which new answers must be found again and again. We — the German, Tunisian and Moroccan lecturers and students — had the opportunity in June 2014 to inspect the site with one of the film's witnesses, Ezzedine Hazgui. In his stories, the walls of this hated building rose from the ruins once again.

Philosophy and witness

As a Tunisian, one knew a great deal and suspected more; this was shown not least in the many whispered jokes in circulation under the dictatorship (Maataoui 2018). However, this circumstance has not been the subject of public reflection, and certainly not of scholarly contemplation. This is the threshold that must now be crossed. In the course of the project, a number of Tunisian philosophers such as Zeïneb Ben Saïd-Cherni and Salah Mosbah reported — for the first time in this public form — on their experiences in detention and in prison, and posed the question of whether and how testimony can be given. Numerous testimonials, as well as novels about prison experiences, have appeared in the Arabic-speaking world in recent years. Often, though not always, the testimony of Arab philosophers who underwent these experiences with their own bodies possesses a particular value. Not only is it descriptive and a document of injustice; their nuanced, conceptually exact reflections on injustice show the transi-

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tion from concrete experience to philosophy (Dhouib 2018 a). However, providing witness has proven to be a task that is complex, tedious and sometimes full of detours. To me, a short car trip with my former professor Fathi Triki serves as paradigmatic of the difficulty of speaking and, at the same time, the great need to speak of what has been experienced. Triki was my most important exchange-program partner in all my projects. I had asked him numerous times in Arabic whether he too had been imprisoned, but my questions were always brushed vaguely aside. "You know how it was...," (*māk taʿraf kifāš*) he responded in Tunisian dialect. What was I supposed to know, and why? Because I am Tunisian? At that traumatic time in his life, I probably wasn't even born yet. I felt that any further questions would be rude. Why couldn't I insist? As Triki drove my wife and me to our hotel in his car, we spoke in French, and he suddenly recounted a memory from prison directly, concisely and vividly that genuinely shocked us. Somewhat stunned, we said our goodbyes. What role is played by the language in which one communicates memories? To whom can one recount them, and when is the best moment to speak about them?[4]

The issue of compensation, raised in the context of the discussion on transitional justice and the work of the Tunisian Truth Commission, was rejected by all the philosophers interviewed in the project. Personal compensation was impossible, they said; however, anchoring the value of human beings and their fundamental rights in the still-to-be-written Tunisian constitution was the most important political response to the injustice experienced. This stance, which rejects material compensation, can also be found in the testimonies of the philosophers Zeïneb Ben Saïd-Cherni (Dübgen 2014) and Salah Mosbah, which are slated to appear in the German language in 2018 (Dhouib 2018 a). A portion of their reflections on the multifaceted nature of transitional justice was published in 2016 (Dhouib 2016).

Do women go to school in your country?

At the University of Bremen's Institute for Philosophy, I was once allowed to give a lecture on the status of philosophy in the Tunisian educational

4 See also the contribution in this volume by Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge on literary means of expressing emotions in these situations.

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system. After my presentation, a student asked whether women in Tunisia were allowed to go to school. I initially thought it was a joke. By contrast, my German host, who had some experience with German–Arab exchange programs, understood that it was not a joke, and answered in my place with a story. When he was at a conference in Tunisia, he and his German colleagues were asked: Where are your female German philosophers? Because at this meeting, all the participants on the German side were men, while the Tunisian contingent had many women as well (Ben Saïd-Cherni 2008).

Prejudices of this kind have also led me in my seminars on modern Arab–Islamic philosophy to begin with what I do not offer and what we will not do in the seminar: no research on terrorism or fundamentalism, although such phenomena can certainly be regarded from a philosophical perspective. Students' initial questions are of course strongly influenced by the media, and reflect what one finds in the press, on television and online about the Arab world.[5] But unfortunately, academic discourse also often suffers from this asymmetric attention. Instead of philosophers engaging with philosophers, focus is always placed on Islam or the political events in the Arab region. This became clear to me particularly in a conversation with Syrian philosopher Sadiq Jalal al-Azm, who died in exile in Berlin on 11 December 2016. In the summer of 2016, I had several conversations with him that touched me deeply. Sadiq, as he wanted to be called, sought to bring about societal, political and philosophical transformation in his critical works throughout his life (al-Azm 1968 [Engl. trans. 2011]; 1969 [Engl. trans. 2014]). Not only did he serve as an important point of orientation for an entire generation of Arab intellectuals as a philosopher, but also as an actor within civil society. In one of our conversations, he referred — not without bitterness — to the difficulties confronted by the Arab philosopher. While he worked under difficult political and academic conditions in his country, and thus frequently changed both physical locations and roles (as an academic, a public intellectual and a civil-society actor), in the "Western" context he was rarely in demand as a philosopher, but often instead as an "expert on Islam" or a "Middle East expert". "Expertise" on the "homo islamicus" was regularly expected from him. This is not only meant as a criticism of neoliberal language — a lan-

5 See the contribution in this volume by Carola Richter and Hanan Badr on the prevalence of colonial concepts about the Arab region in communication studies.

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guage in which cultures and people are treated as commodities, and a judgment on them in the form of "expertise" is possible according to market economy rules. Rather, the aim is also to inquire into the reasons why such a skewed perception, in which the voices of Arab philosophers are hardly to be heard, is continually reproduced.

Currently, there are still few annotated and scholarly translations of Arab philosophers. Instead of asking how certain themes are addressed by these philosophers, the question is posed: "What does Islam say about this?" In this way, fundamentalist and Islamist approaches are pushed to the foreground, while the Arab world's critical and enlightened philosophical approaches remain largely unknown. The "Philosophy in the Modern Middle East" (*Philosophie in der Nahöstlichen Moderne*) series, recently created by Anke von Kügelgen, seeks to resolve the above-mentioned asymmetric perception. The anthology *Toleranz und Intoleranz in der arabischen Moderne* (Tolerance and Intolerance in the Modern Arab World), which I am currently producing within the context of an AGYA tandem project, will appear in this series of volumes.

German–Arab exchange in times of political transformation not only enables us to think through questions of human rights, experiences with injustice and the culture of remembrance from a dual perspective, and to advance the idea of a transcultural philosophy. It also serves to dismantle prejudices and blinders. With the demand for a dual substantive critique comes the demand for a dual critique of philosophical practice, which also encompasses issues such as gender equality and the promotion of young talent. Dual critique means, for example, a (self-)critical look at scholarly infrastructure and practice in Arab countries, in which the achievement of equality, promotion of the young and decentralization remain critical tasks. It also includes a (self-)critical look at academic life in Europe and Germany, particularly with regard to the issues of equality of opportunity and support for young talent, as well as tolerance for an Arab world which, in its complexity, cannot be equated with Islamism.

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9 Communication Studies in Transformation — Self-Reflections on an Evolving Discipline in Times of Change

Carola Richter and Hanan Badr

Monday morning: You wake to the alarm clock set on your mobile phone. You get up to check the news posted by your overseas friends on Facebook before watching the latest world news on TV. On the way to work, you quickly use WhatsApp to tell your friend that you cannot make the meeting scheduled for that night, then read your local newspaper app on your tablet.

These daily actions describe ordinary media usage on an average day, and hint at the sweeping changes we have witnessed in our media use. Over the course of recent years, rapid developments in media technology have substantially changed our communication practices, and indeed are changing them still. Most likely, we continue to take actions fundamentally similar to those of generations before us — waking up, reading newspapers, connecting with friends — but we do these things in a different way, influenced by new technologies. This process is what communication scholars have termed *mediatization*, a term that refers to the incorporation of all kinds of new-media technologies into quotidian practices (Hepp & Krotz 2014).

The phenomenon of mediatization is taking place on a global scale and has been felt in every society. In particular, it has greatly facilitated the transnational transfer of concepts, products and content.[1] Hence, since the beginning of the digital era in the 1990 s, and even more so since the advent of Web 2.0 in the mid-2000 s, communication studies have started to shift their focus from the mass consumption of media to individualized forms of media production and use. However, mainstream studies on mediatization published in the leading journals in the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany have often eschewed dealing with political

1 For a perspective of computer sciences on this phenomenon, see the contribution by Tobias Amft and Kalman Graffi in this volume.

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content to an odd degree, as if the rise of new media had stripped the public of its political interests. Over the past decade, the majority of studies published have addressed issues such as how American college students share music files and cute cat pictures via social media, how women utilize cameras on their smartphones, or how school life is changing through mediatized day-to-day activities (e.g., Pettegrew & Day 2015; Hjorth 2014; Hepp & Krotz 2014). Moreover, communication studies in the area of new media have long concentrated heavily on researching "developed" societies in the northern hemisphere, such as Europe, North America, South Korea or Japan.

On the other hand, research on internet communication focusing on China, Africa and the Middle East over the past decade has often brought the political dimension to the forefront. In this case, the research has explored authoritarian regimes' regulation of the media, media usage by protest groups, exile-run media and so on. Communication studies have thus seemed to divide the mediatized world into quotidian practices in the "West" and political effects in the "rest".[2] It is interesting to observe how these two theoretical strands, which address the same global phenomenon, that is, mediatization, have shaped the development of communication studies in recent years. In particular, a rather techno-deterministic approach is evident that has reduced the countries of the "rest" to the status of receivers of Western technology yearning for freedom; at the same time, this discourse has essentialized the "West" as a homogeneous entity — which it certainly is not.

However, a review of the research findings produced within communication studies on media change and the transformation of communication seven years after the Arab uprisings reveals interesting developments. The previous period's wave of techno-deterministic euphoria has been countered by more cautious evaluations of media effects and interventions from social scientists hailing from different disciplines. In the following sections, we lay out the rationales behind these two different approaches by referring to mainstream communication studies literature of the last decade, as well as to our own work in the field, in which we have combined theories and models developed in the West with case studies examining Arab societies. Subsequently, we ask whether scholars located in the

2 Here we borrowed a phrase from Stuart Hall, who pointed out the academic world's construction of "the West and the Rest" with regard to power relations in 1992.

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Arab world can contribute to a reorientation within the field of communication studies and, if so, how they can achieve this. We conclude by stating that the Arab uprisings have indeed provided a major catalyst for rethinking the impact of media on political and social change within the field of communication studies.

The Arab world in focus

As Egyptian sociologist Mona Abaza argues, the Arab uprisings "have revived academic interest in the region in a clearly positive manner" (Abaza 2011). The events have raised scholarly awareness of the role of media and its connection to social and political change in a region that has long lacked such attention. However, with this attention, predefined concepts and externally imposed theories have also gained ground. Moreover, in shifting their research interests quickly, many media scholars have also become what Abaza terms "overnight Middle East experts". Scholars referred to the events in the Arab countries as long as they seemed to support particular approaches favored by academics, but stopped doing so as soon as their concepts proved no longer able to encompass the complexities of the interactions between the region's media, society and processes of transformation.

Iran's 2009 Green movement was the first event to stimulate communication scholars' research into the role of social media in political upheavals (Kamalipour 2010). Indeed, it seemed to be a wake-up call demanding closer scholarly attention to the political potential of social media. Later, the obvious role played by social media in the Arab uprisings significantly boosted research on media effects in communication studies. After 2011, the investigation of the role of communication within social networks and in the use of digital media more broadly became a focal point of research in relation to the Arab world. When some Egyptians went so far as to name newborn children "Facebook",[3] with many others exuberantly thanking social media, there was clearly something extraordinary going on.

3 See CNN, February 21, 2011, available on http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/meast/02/21/egypt.child.facebook/.

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With the aim of assessing the type of knowledge relating to the Arab uprisings actually produced by communication scholars, we analyzed all journal title entries in the time span from 2011 to early 2015 in the Web of Science Core Collection — thus, looking only at journals listed in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). Globally, this collection includes the most influential communication studies journals. Using the topical Boolean search terms "Arab spring OR Arab* OR Egypt OR Tunisia OR Libya OR Syria," we identified 148 original articles that referred to the media in the Arab world. Only 66 of the 148 articles actually dealt with an Arab country or local social phenomena; the majority of the articles (83) simply referred to the "Arab Spring" as a marker, symbol or cultural concept, while in fact investigating different topics such as Facebook use by young people in South Africa or the Occupy Wall Street movement. Often, the term "Arab Spring" acts as a specific imagined construct that is transported and reproduced in these research settings, leaving little room for investigation of the complex and structural factors behind the actual uprisings and the role of (social) media in them. Although the most simplistic causal explanations for the so-called Facebook revolution have today been strongly questioned by most researchers, the argument that the revolution was triggered by specific communication tools such as Twitter and Facebook continues to be accepted uncritically and reproduced through decontextualized references to the "Arab Spring" in cases when writers seek to highlight the political effects of the media. There has been little robust debate between those propounding a euphoric determinism for social media effects (most of whom can be found in the field of communication studies) and those (typically found in area studies) who are more suspicious of notions of social determinism and political economy (Badr 2015). The evident disconnect between communication studies and area studies, with some exceptions, helps explain the prevalence of this decontextualized reference to the "Arab Spring" in communication studies.

Of the remaining 66 articles which investigate the Arab media in depth, an overwhelming majority of 52 papers — or 79 percent — focus on information and communication technology (ICT) and new media, while only 14 — or 21 percent of the relevant literature — discuss other aspects of Arab media. This demonstrates how communication studies follow fashionable trends and immediately appealing catchwords. Recent research focusing on the Arab world in particular seems to be obsessed with ICT, neglecting the fact that television remains by far the most widely used medium in the Arab world, reaching almost every household (Dubai Press

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Club 2010). Even in Egypt, the most populous Arab country and one with a relatively advanced technical infrastructure, internet penetration had not exceeded 25 percent of the population in 2011, and rose after the events of the Arab uprisings only to about 32 percent in 2014.[4] In other countries, such as Syria, Libya or Yemen, which also witnessed uprisings, internet penetration rates were and remain far lower.

The return of the school of "massive effects"

In light of these imbalances, how can we explain the limited focus of the published communication studies research? One part of the explanation seems to be the scholarly uncertainty regarding how to grasp the new and developing phenomenon of mediatization. Indeed, all established explanations seem to be outdated. Danish scholar Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, for example, has summarized the debate over the subfield of political communication and its failed adaptation to what he termed "sociotechnological changes" (Nielsen 2014: 7). He criticizes the inability of communication studies to adapt to new circumstances that were evident even before the Arab uprisings, and which have largely been shaped by the worldwide explosion in internet use. The mediatization of nearly all aspects of life, accelerated by the increasing interactivity of internet functions — also known as Web 2.0 — certainly brought huge challenges for communication studies. Nielsen (2014: 6) describes, for example, how audiences are fragmenting (or perhaps can no longer even be described as audiences, since they produce content at the same time they consume it), how media organizations are changing, and how processes of individualization are taking place. Under these circumstances, he further argues, relying on what he calls "zombie concepts" — concepts such as agenda-setting or public opinion, or a focus on what the media do with people instead of what people do with the media — might put communication studies on the wrong track, thus rendering the discipline irrelevant at the very least.

Over the last decade, there has been growing sentiment among scholars that traditional US-inspired communication studies approaches, with their focus on media effects, might be missing the point of current develop-

4 According to International Telecommunication Union (ITU) statistics: http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/statistics/2015/Individuals_Internet_2000-2014.xls.

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ments (Lynch 2008). The result has been a steady growth in research borrowing from other social science disciplines, such as media analysis derived from cultural studies, or critical media studies inspired by the Frankfurt School (Punathambekar & Scannell 2013). Interestingly, however, the Arab uprisings have accelerated this shift, while at the same time reviving the almost-forgotten paradigms of modernization and technological determinism — paradigms that seemed to offer convenient explanations for complex realities because they had a long tradition in communication studies — despite the fact that these approaches have largely been discredited. As in the 1960 s, "massive effects" allegedly produced by the media are today being overemphasized, with researchers attributing new media with an overly influential role in triggering changes in human behavior, as well as in political and social structures. Marc Lynch diagnosed this trend before the uprisings, and concluded that, "as in the earlier generation of Western media-effects research, the absence of serious empirical research and undertheoretized causal mechanisms allow a politically convenient and superficially plausible 'massive effects' assumption to go largely unchallenged" (Lynch 2008: 18). This can be explained by a colonial legacy that shaped assumptions about the "rest", which was initially hidden behind benevolent rhetoric but which became clearer through the subsequent reliance on explanations citing the triumphant advance of Western technology in the Arab world. Indeed, this trend became clearly visible in media reports and academia during the Arab uprisings. In one of his TV interviews, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg even explained why social media platforms were so important to the entire world: "Here we use things like Facebook to share news and catch up with our friends, but there — they're gonna use it to decide what kind of government they want, to get access to health care for the first time ever, to connect with family hundreds of miles away that they haven't seen in decades. Getting access to the internet is a really big deal!"[5] Interestingly, he seemed to forget that "here" (in the United States) too, social media is used in political communication; indeed, political and societal changes are accelerated by particular patterns of media practice. Moreover, most of the people "there" (in the non-Western world) also use Facebook and other social media for entertainment and personal purposes, sharing information about football,

5 Mark Zuckerberg on CNN, August 21, 2013, available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8N3wGjiPYg.

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music and cute cats just like their Western counterparts (Wheeler 2005; Braune 2013).

The demystification of media technology has often been neglected by scholars. Larry Diamond, a well-known political scientist, coined the term "liberation technology", which he defines as "any form of information and communication technology (ICT) that can expand political, social and economic freedom" (Diamond 2010: 70). Similarly, the idea of having found a tool able to facilitate democratization processes has guided a considerable bulk of scholarly literature since 2011, particularly among publications dealing with the Arab uprisings. Badr (2015: 2–4) summarizes the main arguments in this strand of literature. In particular, she identifies a revival of the normative concept of a Habermasian public sphere. After having been widely discussed in Germany for 20 years, the concept of the public sphere appeared prominently in Anglo-Saxon scholarship only after Habermas' book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was translated into English in 1989. With the importance of social media in the Arab uprisings, the concept of the public sphere and its potential expansion due to technological innovation experienced a second revival. The dominant hypothesis here is that online media opened up an otherwise repressive and controlled public sphere. Specifically, the internet is seen as fertile ground for contestation mechanisms, where political and social actors can engage with one another to express contrasting and divergent views, thus forming counter-publics. This again, so the argument goes, facilitates inter-media agenda setting, that is, a spillover of themes from internet sources into the broader public: "Social media, therefore, break the monopoly of traditional elites and successfully put neglected topics on the media agenda" (Badr 2015: 3). It was hoped that these possibilities facilitated by technology would lead to newly empowered citizenry.

Challenging concepts

Beyond our review of the major communication studies journals, other perspectives in recent years have also sought to bear witness to the processes of social and political change in the Arab world, in China or Russia, and even in the West following events such as the NSA surveillance scandal. In contrast to what has been called the "utopian" perspective of social media effects, a "dystopian" counter-discourse has arisen. One of its most prominent proponents is Evgeny Morozov. He argues that digital media

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have primarily helped authoritarian institutions such as regime elites to find new and more effective ways of controlling and repressing their people (Morozov 2011). Developments in the Arab countries and elsewhere show that the internet also harbors the potential for information manipulation and government surveillance, and does not necessarily function as a liberation technology, as optimistically presumed (Badr 2015).

Similarly, other scholars explicitly referred to the Arab uprisings to indicate that the power of social media effects had been overestimated. Lynch (2013) spoke of a "Twitter devolution" and a "Tahrir bubble". If we embed this insight into a broader global context, the "normalization thesis" comes into play. According to this thesis, normalization processes happen through commercialization mechanisms, citizens' behavior and the procedures by which actors such as the state acquire new skills, thereby transferring offline power constellations to the online sphere (Anstead & Chadwick 2009). The innovation therefore becomes normalized.

The naïve expectation that the internet will become a platform for rational deliberation and idealistic inclusion needs to be viewed through this perspective. The current debate among European journalists on dealing with the flood of hate speech in online comment sections clearly illustrates how far online deliberations are from being rational or inclusive; on the contrary, they foster the growth of radical polarized positions within the political culture. South of the Mediterranean, in Egypt, we witnessed the emergence of Facebook as a real "battleground", pitting followers of different political positions against one another (Badr 2013). Thus, while a highly optimistic depiction of technology prevailed in communication studies shortly after the Arab uprisings, more nuanced perspectives on (social) media and its contexts emerged later, seeking to expand the understanding of the role of the media in social and political change beyond this initial techno-deterministic view. This development has relied on general shifts in the field of communication studies, which started with the advent of the internet but gained a new dynamism with the uprisings of 2011. To be sure, however, different approaches within communication studies — postcolonial vs. modernist, normative vs. descriptive, and quantitative vs. qualitative — all continue to coexist, each finding self-serving evidence in the Arab uprisings to legitimize their own findings.

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Arab inroads?

In the early 2000 s, various scholars at US universities — often those from an immigrant background — began pushing back against the blind application of Western theories in globalization research. As a part of this effort, they started a debate regarding the de-Westernization of media and communication studies (Curran & Park 2000). Since that time, the question of how "different conceptions about knowledge, humanity, identity, individualism and community" could help to "produce legitimate" knowledge about societies under investigation (Waisbord & Mellado 2014: 366) has come to the fore. In this light, our own questions in the context of the de-Westernization debate can be summarized as follows: Did the uprisings bring more attention to specifically Arab academic contributions to mainstream communication studies? And how can significant local inroads into communication studies be made possible?

To answer these questions, we investigated the background of the authors of the 66 journal articles mentioned above. Indeed, about a third were written by scholars with Arab names. However, most of those scholars were located abroad, and affiliated with US or British universities. Only six of the lead authors were actually affiliated with universities in the Arab world, with half of them working at American universities in the region. Previous investigations of knowledge production by Arab social scientists have also indicated that only a negligible number of contributions by local scholars are published in the widely read, high-impact journals. For example, Sari Hanafi and Rigas Arvanatis analyzed the social sciences' "politics of citation" (2016: 255) within the context of the Arab uprisings, and found an "evident hierarchy […] of knowledge production" (275), with the "highest level of legitimacy (and the highest citation factor)" accorded most commonly to those "from U.S. foreign-policy Ivy Leaguers". Only on the lower level of the hierarchy do they locate "peripheral knowledge producers" that "include Arabs writing from within the region, in Arabic" (2016: 276). We can draw similar conclusions from our investigation into high-impact communication studies journals: Arab media scholars do not participate in process of knowledge production in the field of communication studies unless they publish in English or out-

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side their region. Academic knowledge generated in Arabic remains largely unknown and disconnected from international research.[6]

At the same time, it is not clear whether local scholars would have come to different, more independent conclusions, as many of them are either involved in activism, and have thus endorsed the euphoric discourse of new media empowerment, or have been coopted to produce politically biased research. Furthermore, we also have to acknowledge local authors' tendency to refer to well-known Western markers and constructs that capture the readers' attention. Therefore, it comes as little surprise that 54 of the 66 articles analyzed refer explicitly to the "Arab Spring", the "revolution", the "revolt" or the "uprisings" in order to frame their findings. Even if their research took place well before the incidents, authors evidently sought to make their contributions more appealing by stating that what they analyzed "paved the way for the Egyptian revolution of January 2011" (El-Nawawy & Khamis 2014), for example, or referred to the uprisings in Egypt in order to pose the question: "Can Twitter usage promote social progress in Saudi Arabia?" (Chaudhry 2014).

However, as Mohammad Ayish — one of the closest observers of Arab media scholarship — and Harris Breslow have pointed out, the general problem is that the Anglo–American empirical and quantitative mass communication paradigm still dominates in the Arab world (Ayish & Breslow 2014: 59). Similarly, Walter Armbrust (2012: 48) detects a focus on the causal effect of new technology. In her review of audience studies carried out by Arab scholars, Noha Mellor even concludes that "Arab researchers here place themselves in a knowledge hierarchy above the subjects of their research, who are regarded as passive receivers of information, and potential victims of western propaganda" (2013: 212). Ayish and Breslow urge researchers to step back and abandon purely media-centric analysis, and to engage instead in interdisciplinary approaches that link communication research insights and techniques with those of neighboring disciplines. In this regard, Ayish and Breslow suggest three main areas of research interests: 1) the political economy of the media with regard to institutions, governance and information flows; 2) the increasing mobility of information flows and people within the media, and 3) the changing nature of the production of identity with regard to the media (Ayish & Breslow 2014: 57).

6 See the contributions in this volume by Florian Kohstall as well as Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge on a similar discussion on the (in)visibility of local knowledge.

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In fact, these recommendations accord with the current focus of critical communication studies in general (Punathambekar & Scannell 2013).

Accordingly, three research strands are needed in Arab media research. First, a more *cultural studies-oriented* approach needs to be developed. In the last decade, this approach has become more prominent, particularly in Great Britain but also in other European countries and the United States. Cultural studies analyze the complex relations of media and people by looking at the interrelatedness of production processes, media use and content. Although this research trend promises to offer better contextualized interpretations of social phenomena, it has not yet garnered numerous followers among local or foreign scholars doing research in the Arab world. There are few examples in Arab communication research departments of critical cultural studies focusing on class, race and gender in relation to the media. Enclaves do exist, but these are primarily in fields oriented toward arts, literature or anthropology. In this context, mediated forms of communication such as graffiti, music or slogans have been analyzed (see Aboubakr 2013). Lebanese–American scholar Marwan Kraidy, for instance, has focused on the "human body as medium in the digital age" (Kraidy 2013: 285), thus emphasizing the interrelatedness of production, usage and content offline and online. Moreover, Tarik Sabry (2011) has come up with an attempt to map "Arab cultural studies", identifying the most prominent media scholars of Arab origin. However, most of the scholars who propel this kind of research are based in the West, living and working in the United States or the United Kingdom. On the one hand, this indicates that concepts from abroad are being transferred to (or even sometimes imposed on) the Arab world. But on the other hand, those diasporic researchers of Arab descent are able to use their own biographies to build necessary geographical bridges, as well as the conceptual bridges between contextualized knowledge and innovative media studies. This potential means that Arab scholars in the West can also produce meaningful explanations regarding mediatization in an Arab context.

The second underrepresented element of communication studies in the Arab region is the *political economy* of the media. Political economy refers to the interrelations between economic processes and specific political circumstances (see Richter & Gräf 2015). The term was coined by Marx in relation to his critique of modes of production in 18th century Europe. It experienced a later conceptual revival within the Frankfurt School founded by Adorno and Horkheimer, and was also adopted by left-wing scholars to criticize neoliberal policies and the deregulation of media re-

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forms. In non-democratic countries, mainstream communication researchers subscribed for a long time to the assumption that economic liberalization in the media sector would stimulate democratization. Given the lack of public service logic, the state media simply embodied the hegemony of the ruling class. Pluralism due to competition was envisaged as the main outcome of liberalization (Rozumilovicz 2002). However, the real outcome of the privatization of media markets in most Arab countries has in fact been to increase the influence of the ruling political regimes. Major media outlets such as TV stations were often sold to loyal business elites or simply newly founded by family members of the rulers (Richter & El Difraoui 2015: 12). While this is certainly of local importance, the observation also sheds light on the corporate globalization of the media: Alwaleed bin Talal, a Saudi prince, for example, is not only the owner of the most popular pan-Arab entertainment media conglomerates but is also a major shareholder in Twitter, while Egyptian Coptic billionaire Naguib Sawiris controls most of the telecommunications markets in Africa (Sakr 2013: 2295). To date, important questions regarding the political economy of the Arab media have been taken up only haphazardly by local scholars, while research on the issue has again been shaped by observers from abroad such as Naomi Sakr, Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen and Donatella della Ratta (2015), who recently published on Arab media moguls.

The last aspect of communication research we mention here deals with *methodological questions*. At the beginning of this article, we noted the criticisms of scholars seeking to detect causal relations between media and its effects, and specifically the impact of new media on political and social change. Influenced by political science and social movement research, communication studies have tried to illuminate these interactions using quantitative methods, for instance by measuring which audiences use what media, how often, for what purposes and with what effects. Others studying everyday-life activities related to the media and communication have often neglected to consider the potential of the media or media use to bring about social change, thus remaining simply descriptive in their studies. In general, both strands need to overcome their predefined limits; media use should always be linked to effects, but the assumption of causal mechanisms should be avoided. Therefore, in order to identify dynamics of change, future communication studies need to develop methods and theoretical models for the analysis of communication processes and media practices that avoid today's pitfalls. Challenging mainstream trends in cur-

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rent media studies also means shifting the scholarly focus toward underrepresented fields and approaches in the Arab region.

Perspectives

Finally, we conclude with a few words on how communication studies can benefit from knowledge production induced by the Arab uprisings. Our core argument in this article is that we need to focus less on technology and more on people-centered analyses of media practices. One could, for example, investigate how the journalistic profession is being transformed by the use of social media. Here, one could ask how exactly journalists apply social media in gathering news, and what this means for the profession's ethical standards. The notion of citizen journalism is also related; this phenomenon could be analyzed through participatory observation, for example, with the goal of establishing exactly how local communities in Cairo, Baghdad or Berlin utilize various media tools to articulate their political causes and problems.

This demands an approach in which communication researchers actively seek to integrate insights gained from other disciplines. At the same time, other disciplines that have acknowledged media as important spaces of action should be more open to engaging with the knowledge produced in the field of communication studies. In particular, scholars with a local knowledge of the culture and politics of the Arab region can build bridges between area studies and communication studies. The boom in "Arab Spring studies" has been noticeable in various disciplines, but invisible boundaries have evidently prevented core findings from being shared across neighboring social science fields. This needs to change!

Establishing stronger networks of interdisciplinary cooperation to enable better circulation of knowledge can also help in adapting seemingly universal concepts and models more meaningfully to local research phenomena. The account of Susan O'Rourke, a journalism instructor teaching in Oman, is quite telling in this regard. She tells of the difficulty of transferring an undergraduate journalism program from New Zealand to Oman: "Although the view was expressed in New Zealand that […] teaching materials should just 'be taken off the shelf', it quickly became apparent that this would not be possible and that much further contextualization to Omani society would be required", because in communication studies, "a complex interaction of culture, language (both visual and written), theory,

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intellectual freedom, creativity, imagination and personal opinion occurs" (O'Rourke 2011: 111). This observation demonstrates that the notion of universal journalistic practice, for example, has its limitations.

The production of more "legitimate" knowledge will also require exchanges during which scholars from different geographical and cultural backgrounds can learn from each other. In fact, one result of the Arab uprisings has been the creation of just such networks in communication studies, as the events showed the need to rely more heavily both on local and transcultural scientific knowledge in order to deepen the field's understanding.[7] This motivated partners around the world to engage more strongly with each other.

Both of the authors of this article are involved in various projects of this kind, one of them being the AREACORE network (www.areacore.org). AREACORE is an acronym for the Arab–European Association of Media and Communication Researchers. The network was founded as the result of an intensive summer school in Berlin in 2013. With funding provided by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), communication scholars from seven Arab countries and Germany were brought together to form an academic network; it has been growing ever since. As of 2016, the network consisted of 11 partner universities in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Oman, Yemen, Qatar, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Germany. In addition to the training courses focusing on adapting media concepts such as investigative journalism and data journalism to regional requirements, AREACORE launched two major projects aimed at producing sustainable knowledge shaped by this process of academic exchange. At the annual Media and Digital Literacy Academy in Beirut (MDLAB) summer school, about 50 students and scholars come together every year to reflect critically on various media artefacts and develop their own media production skills. The second major AREACORE project is an online platform for locally produced audiovisual lectures on media systems in each partner country.[8] This offers a global audience access to authentic knowledge regarding the specific characteristics of the individual societies and their media systems. However, these represent only a few steps on what will be a long road of mutual learning and cooperation between communication and media scholars.

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7 For a similar perspective on the benefits of intercultural cooperations, see the contribution by Sarhan Dhouib in this volume.

8 See http://www.areacore.org/ims.

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Conclusion

The major upheavals in the Arab countries certainly posed new questions for and gave new direction to the field of communication studies. While its research agenda opened up to include the Arab countries, technological determinism remained a major component in the interpretation of the events. A decontextualized perspective, focusing only on the media and excluding its interactions with society and politics, failed to provide answers to vital questions regarding the media and transformation. However, the construction of bridges between scholars in and outside the region promises to enrich the discipline, offer it fresh insights and widen the circle of internationally legitimate media studies knowledge.

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10 Webs of Change? The Transformation of Online Social Networks and Communication Infrastructures from a Technological Point of View

Tobias Amft and Kalman Graffi

Free speech is mankind's most valuable achievement. If not censored, it allows people all over the world to express their feelings, their thoughts and, most valuably, their knowledge. In the recent past, the internet has become the dominant communication channel by which information and data is exchanged. At any given moment, billions of bits and bytes are traveling around the earth at the speed of light. People are able to form groups and meet in virtual reality even when scattered around the globe. However, as technology has improved, authorities have increasingly felt the urge to monitor, censor or even prohibit communication via the internet, as the vast network allows information and ideologies to spread extraordinarily rapidly.[1]

From a computer scientist's point of view, the Egyptian upheavals were technologically the most interesting of the Arab uprisings. The Egyptian government managed to shut down the country's internet access (nearly) completely, with the intention of hindering the revolts' growth. Paradoxically, this decision may have even intensified the revolt, as it led to an effective communications blackout for more than 80 million people. As explained in Eaton (2013), participants in the demonstrations of January 25, 2011, mainly used Facebook (>85%) to organize and plan activities related to the revolts, as well as to inform Egyptians and the outside world about the ongoing events. Other internet-based services such as Twitter, Flickr and YouTube were used in a similar manner around that time (Mansour 2012). On January 25, 2011, the Egyptian government decided to block all access to Twitter, and the prohibition on Facebook followed one day later (Dainotti et al. 2011). Internet access more broadly was entirely shut down during the night of Thursday, January 27, with the block lasting

1 See the contribution by Carola Richter and Hanan Badr in this volume for a communication studies' perspective on these phenomena.

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through Friday, January 28. The Egyptian government instructed internet providers to shut down their services (Cowie 2011 a). On February 2, Egypt returned to the internet (Cowie 2011 b). According to Dainotti et al. (2011), Libya carried out a similar procedure around two weeks later, on February 18. While activists had previously suspected that their digital communications were being spied on, these steps indicated that even their connectivity itself was in danger.

In this article, we review the technology and infrastructure used for online social communication, and discuss the technological weaknesses that allow these networks to be spied on, censored and blocked, thus hindering the dissemination of information. We present the current state of technological developments within the computer science field, particularly focusing on tools for secure, anonymous and untraceable communication. We offer an evaluation of the degree to which the Arab uprisings affected academic thinking in the field of computer science, especially regarding topics such as privacy, anonymity, and security in networking and communications. We provide a brief overview of recent changes in academic thinking. Finally, we analyze and explain recent advancements in technology, and predict possible future trends in the areas of privacy, surveillance and censorship.

Computer science fields affected by the Arab uprisings

In the following section, we describe how internet services can be — and have been — blocked, and how the internet as a communication platform can be shut down by governments at will.

Researchers in computer science reflect on current events and sometimes include them in their research activities as case studies. Here, it is worthwhile discussing which fields in the computer science research sphere have been affected by the Arab uprisings. According to the German Research Association's (DFG) classification system, the field of computer science is clustered into eight subject areas, the most prominent being "theoretical computer science", "software engineering and programming languages" and "computer architecture and embedded systems".

These three subject areas investigate the basic foundational elements of computer science, including theory as well as the engineering aspects of software and hardware. The theoretical aspects of computer science are highly abstract and analytical, and often involve the simplification of prac-

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tical experience. The hardware-related subject area, which relates to computer architecture and embedded systems, aims to accelerate and improve hardware solutions over long-time scales. Software engineering and programming languages offer tools to fully harness the potential of the hardware, and to support ongoing trends such as parallelization, distributed computing, and device and technology-specific programming. These subject areas are therefore comparatively minimally affected by current events or singular use cases.

One further subject area is "information systems, process and knowledge management". This focuses on the application and integration of IT solutions in business processes, and focuses on long-term application scenarios. It is based on the assumption that computer science plays a vital role in business processes, and often also acts as an enabler or cost-saving measure for specific business cases.

Two subject areas that have attracted increasing interest in recent years, and which are relevant to the events of the Arab uprisings, are "massively parallel and data intensive systems" and "interactive and intelligent systems, image and language processing, computer graphics and visualization". Both of these fields are related to the identification, processing and interpretation of large amounts of data. This trend is known as "big data". Processing digital information, either from advertisements, metadata, social networks or communications, allows customers to be clustered, revenues to be increased thanks to improved advertising and recommendations, and the future behavior of customers to be predicted. The same concept of deep data analysis can be used to observe communication patterns on the internet, identify discussion and communication topics, and initiate reactions to them. For instance, the communications may be reported to a third party or blocked. Thanks to advancements in the area of data-intensive systems and data processing, more and more information can be obtained from a steadily growing amount of data sources. Thus, advancements in this field contributed to the surveillance of internet users in the Arab world during the Arab uprisings, as well as worldwide.

The two remaining subject areas comprise trends that support the flow of information and counteract surveillance and the control of communication. These are "security and dependability", and "operating, communication, database and distributed systems". The subject area of "security and dependability" aims at providing solutions to support the security goals of confidentiality, integrity, and authentication, as well as availability and privacy. Thus, progress in this field directly affects what data can be ob-

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tained from users against their will. Secure communication over the internet — that is, communication that is confidential and anonymous — would allow internet users to exchange their ideas freely. However, secure communication still leaves traces that allow for the identification and blocking of this communication.

Here, the subject area of "operating, communication, database and distributed systems" provides various solutions with which to overcome these threats. Specifically, in this article we elaborate on what research questions were identified in response to connectivity interruptions and observable communication trails during the Arab uprisings. In the field of communication and distributed systems, various approaches have emerged to obfuscate communication trails, to support anonymous communication, to hide communication patterns and even to avoid the internet in digital communication. Combined with security considerations, these novel distributed platforms promise to support digital communication that cannot be spied on, blocked or censored. In the following section, we describe the main principles and building blocks of the internet before presenting and discussing the advancements in computer science, specifically in the area of secure communications, that have been initiated thanks to observations made during and after the Arab uprisings.

A brief description of the internet

Before we describe the internet itself, we will first explain basic concepts of its technology. According to Kurose and Keith (2007), the internet is a computer network which connects billions of devices, such as PCs and smartphones, which we denote as hosts. Communication links and packet switches are used to interconnect those hosts physically. From another point of view, the internet is a complex infrastructure that offers various services. In order to combine the physical devices and to guarantee specific services, rules are needed that bring the internet's components to life.

Those rules, or more precisely protocols, define a communication structure that is followed by two or more devices (hosts and packet switches) in a network in order to exchange information. More specifically, protocols define actions and corresponding reactions that are performed upon events in the network — for example, upon the sending or receiving of a message. Access to the internet is typically granted by an organization we denote as an internet service provider (ISP).

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Two important protocols have to be discussed here in order to understand the delivery of data via the internet: the Internet Protocol (IP) and the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP). The Internet Protocol assigns addresses to computers in a network in order to enable data delivery, in the form of data packets, from a given source host to an arbitrary destination host.

Unfortunately, the Internet Protocol itself gives no guarantee that the packets traversing the internet will reach their destinations reliably. The purpose of the Transmission Control Protocol, which is often used in combination with the IP, is twofold. One purpose of the TCP is to secure the reliable delivery of packets between two communication hosts. Reliability in this context means that all packets are guaranteed to reach their destination and the order of data is preserved during delivery. For this reason, the TCP comprises different techniques that control the traversal through a network. The second purpose of the TCP is to identify and separate different applications running on a single host. For example, a user may be streaming music from an internet radio station while simultaneously retrieving the latest news from an online magazine, thus engaging in two different applications at the same time. Since the internet today consists of billions of connected devices, the task of finding the device associated with a given internet address is not an easy task. Rules have to be defined and followed in order to enable data to flow efficiently from a source computer to the correct destination. For a proper explanation, we here introduce the terms *forwarding* and *routing*. By *forwarding*, we mean the process that takes place when a single computer hands over incoming packets to another computer. *Routing* describes the whole process of finding a path from a given source computer to a desired destination, using a set of potential intermediary nodes that forward data packets to their final goal. Algorithms and rules that specify a forwarding strategy for participating devices are termed routing algorithms or routing protocols. A device that decides how to forward a given packet, on the other hand, is usually called a router.

The internet, which has become one of the most complex infrastructures humanity has ever created, today consists of many different devices, routers and routing protocols that in combination yield the great variety of services we use every day. Despite its complexity, the internet is made up of multiple smaller networks that are controlled and managed by different organizations, typically internet service providers, so that a certain hierarchy is formed. The parts of the internet managed by different organiza-

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tions are called autonomous systems. One indispensable protocol that connects all existing autonomous systems is the Border Gateway Protocol. One of the several tasks of this protocol is to announce an autonomous system's existence to other autonomous systems on the internet. Furthermore, the Border Gateway Protocol ensures that all autonomous systems on the internet know how to route messages to a specific autonomous system.

Technical possibilities of censoring communication on the internet

The Arab uprisings and the resulting blockade of the internet in Egypt and Libya prove that the surveillance and censorship of internet traffic are desirable goals for certain governments. During the Arab uprisings, these were elements of state campaigns to oppress certain groups of interest such as activists, insofar as the technology available at that time permitted. Technically, we can differentiate between two main types of attacks on the internet or network traffic in general. Passive attacks on network traffic allow an adversary to monitor communication without any interference that could be detected by a participant. As the word "passive" suggests, adversaries in this case do no more than "listen" to the forwarded data packets without changing their content. Active attacks, on the other hand, allow an adversary to read, manipulate, delete or even block the content of network traffic. Since secret surveillance of communication did not play a major role during the Arab uprisings (passive attacks alone are not sufficient to block a whole country's internet access), we will focus on active attacks on network traffic in the following discussion. These attacks share the common feature that they are at least partially noticeable to internet users. By "partially noticeable", we refer to the fact that the content of censored websites might be blocked. However, a user may only notice the absence of such content if she or he can compare a non-blocked version of the site as a reference. Next, we will present some commonly used techniques in active network attacks.

Search engine censorship

As a constantly growing system, the internet contains more than 46 billion sites, according to estimates from de Kunder (2015) in August 2015. How-

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ever, the number of websites any given person visits with any frequency is very small in comparison to the overall size of the internet. Much like a search catalog in an enormous library, a web search engine is a system, usually accessed via a web browser, that enables a user to search the World Wide Web for a given search term.

Normally, a search engine returns a sorted list of popular websites that contain the search term in any form. According to NetMarketShare (marketshare.hitslink.com), the most extensively used search engine is Google, with a market share of 70.2% in July 2015, followed by Bing (10.3%), Yahoo (9.5%) and Baidu (7.1%).

Search engine censorship is probably the simplest form of blocking access to websites. The normal procedure of a search engine is to start with a list of known websites, called seeds, and to follow all newly found hyperlinks in a recursive manner; this activity is called web crawling. All websites found by the web crawler are stored by the search engine provider in a database for later use. When a user initiates a search query, the search engine compares its index database with the given keyword(s) in order to identify matches between the search term and stored websites. A service provider may return all or no matching results to the user, and may filter some results out.

One example of the exclusion of search results in Germany and France is given in Zittrain and Edelman (2002). The authors studied internet filtering initiated by governments with the aim of restricting access to websites deemed illegal under local laws, for example those that offered anti-Semitic, Nazi-related or radical Islamic content. However, since the technique of search engine censorship is simple, bypassing this mechanism is also uncomplicated. A website that is well known to a person or a sympathizing group can be accessed directly without the use of a web search engine. Alternatively, other search engines can be used. Sometimes the use of a proxy server can help to circumvent local restrictions. We provide more details on proxy servers in the section on proxy routing.

Deep packet inspection

Actively hindering people from accessing specific sites on the internet is more costly than simply monitoring network traffic. The well-targeted filtering and surveillance of information traversing the internet requires access to the internet's infrastructure in order to carry out the attack. Dis-

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carding arbitrary packets or randomly distorting the global functionality of any service is no real benefit to an attacker, as this happens on a small scale in the network in any case. Large projects designed to engage in packet filtering (or any other similar projects) are only effective if they pursue a specific goal, with their intervention placed at the right location or advertised to the right group of people, thus ensuring they are on the main routes of the targeted data flow. Furthermore, potential attackers must have access to the parts of the network in which interventions are worthwhile. We take a closer look at how packets can be filtered and discarded in a network using the example of Tunisia, a country in which filtering and deep-packet inspection were present long before the Arab uprisings emerged (Wagner 2012).

In order to investigate packets in depth, a government must be capable of intervening in network traffic at specific, critical internet locations. For example, the Tunisian government had to engage in direct manipulation of the border gateway routers that run the Border Gateway Protocol.

At this point, we have to remember that the Border Gateway Protocol enables routing (the forwarding of packets) between different autonomous systems. The border gateway routers are best suited to monitoring connections between the national network, the Tunisian part of the internet, with the other networks and other parts of the internet. Among routers located at the border with other countries, selected internet gateways inside Tunisia are interesting targets for an attack. Internet gateways are typically locations or addresses in a network that offer access to the internet as a service to all participants in the network. In Ben Ali's Tunisia, the Tunisian Internet Agency (ATI) provided the gateway that served all Tunisian ISPs (OpenNet Initiative 2009). Since this agency was subject to the influence of the Ben Ali regime, it was the institution that intercepted network traffic.

At these gateways, it is theoretically possible to investigate packets that traverse the internet. Thus, packet filtering can be done very easily. Whenever an unencrypted packet traverses a gateway under surveillance, firewall-like programs search for specific keywords deemed suspicious by an inquisitive government in the passing data stream.

The work of Clayton, Murdoch & Watson (2006) describes in detail how TCP connections associated with specific keywords can be terminated by an attacker. As one example, China forces suspicious connections to close by answering queries with special TCP packets. In much the same manner as a normal firewall, which allows desired packets to be forward-

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ed while dropping undesired packets, any government — for instance, those in Tunisia or Egypt — is capable of controlling the forwarding mechanism of packets entering its national network. The government can decide whether to forward, observe or drop messages. If we take Tunisia as an example, the Tunisian Internet Agency was created in 1996 with the goal of controlling national network traffic, and was instructed to start the process of internet censorship in the country in 1997 (Wagner 2012).[2]

However, deep packet inspection techniques operate more subtly and unobtrusively than we might think. A normal user might blame lost content on technical problems that seem to originate with the browser or the internet service provider. Even trickier is when TCP connections are properly closed by the attacker, and the user receives nothing more than a notification that a technical problem has occurred. In such scenarios, it is not clear whether some third person blocked access to a service, or the service itself failed due to technical problems. Moreover, the Tunisian government, like others, already had the capability to analyze and filter specific URLs and emails under Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A telecommunications law passed in 1998 even allowed the Tunisian authorities to examine the content of personal email messages (OpenNet Initiative 2009). This goal can be accomplished with commercial filtering software that scans various websites or messages on the internet and searches them for specific keywords. Whenever those keywords are found on a website, queries to the website are detected with packet-filtering methods and blocked. Email messages that are not encrypted can be manipulated or censored after detection. This technique is often combined with IP address blocking. Well-known websites or web servers on the internet can be identified through their IP addresses. With the use of IP address blocking, connections to known addresses on the network are directly blocked. From a technical point of view, this kind of attack is a simple firewall setting that blocks the traffic to or from a specific IP address or whole address blocks.

2 See the contribution by Sarhan Dhouib in this volume on surveillance methods in Ben Ali's Tunisia that go beyond computer networks.

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Disconnection of networks

As noted above, the internet has grown to become a system connecting billions of devices. We have already discussed the Border Gateway Protocol, whose goal is to connect different autonomous systems and announce their existence to each other. In other words, the linkages between all the different autonomous systems form the internet as we know it. The Border Gateway Protocol — or rather, the routing entries in a border gateway router — are necessary for packets to find their way from their starting point to an arbitrary target on the internet.

In 2011, during the uprisings, the Egyptian government exploited the nature of the Border Gateway Protocol in order to stop some messages from leaving the country. Technically, the Egyptian government simply deleted the Border Gateway Protocol entries in the border gateway routers that connect Egypt to neighboring countries. After this had been done, packets addressed to any target outside Egypt were no longer able to find a path forward toward their destinations. Packets that reached a border gateway router responsible for the forwarding of the packet across national borders were simply lost, since border gateway routers without routing entries normally do not know how to forward incoming packets.

A more drastic method would be to disconnect border gateway routers from the physical network, or even to cut the cables connecting different devices. The drawback to this method is mainly the increased material costs. In any case, the deletion of routing entries at border gateway routers is enough to fulfil this purpose.

Solutions for combatting surveillance and censorship in general

While techniques for surveillance and censorship are numerous, so are techniques and technologies that allow these mechanisms to be bypassed. As long as there are multiple autonomous systems present on the internet, or at least multiple devices that do not belong to one organization, there will be a way to communicate unreservedly and freely. Here, we present an assorted collection of techniques that can be used to avoid both censorship driven by active attacks and surveillance carried out through passive network observation. These solutions originate from the computer science subject areas of “security and dependability” and “operating, communication, database and distributed systems”.

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Encryption

The wish to hide confidential information from prying eyes leads to the oldest known tool for thwarting surveillance: encryption. One of the first encryption algorithms known from historical records is the Caesar Cipher, invented by Julius Caesar, in which letters are simply shifted by a known number of positions in the alphabet. Subsequently, only those people who are privy to this secret are able to reconstruct the original plain text. Hence, communication partners always have to share a common secret, usually denoted as a key, to be able to encrypt and decrypt data. Encryption has remained a commonly used method for transferring information in an unreadable form to the present day. However, procedures have become increasingly advanced. Simple methods like the Caesar Cipher suffer from small key sets; today, smart algorithms are able to reconstruct the unencrypted plain text even without prior knowledge of the secret used to encrypt the information.

By contrast, modern encryption algorithms rely on more complex methods to translate plain text into cipher text. In theory, the reconstruction of the encrypted text would require an attacker to guess the correct key out of a very large pool of possible combinations. When a sufficiently large key is used, discovering it — and thus gaining access to the original message — would require billions of years of analysis using current hardware and software. Encryption in general can only be used to protect the content of communication from being seen by unauthorized persons — a property termed confidentiality. However, such methods are not enough alone to provide anonymity, privacy and security. Even with an encrypted message, attackers could still determine the identities of the communicating partners, and hinder them from exchanging further messages or initiating further actions online.

Proxy routing

Anonymity on the internet is usually implemented through proxy routing. The main goal of this technique is to prevent the true sender, receiver, or sender and receiver simultaneously from being identified by other participants in a network. This goal is achieved by forwarding messages to one or multiple relaying participants (proxies) in the network before they are sent on to a specified destination. Optionally, messages are often encrypt-

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ed. The strategy of routing messages via additional participants is necessary in order to conceal the full path a message is traveling, and thus also the origin and sometimes the final destination of a message as well.

The best known example in this field is the Tor project (torproject.org), which allows its users to contact (web) servers without revealing their own IP addresses or locations. Using Tor, requests for a website are routed through an encrypted connection and between several Tor servers before they reach the destination web server. The last participant in the message forwarding chain, called the exit node, makes the connection to the web server and requests the desired website. The website data is then passed all the way back to the initial requester. Although Tor is designed to provide a certain level of anonymity by concealing the user's address, the system is helpless against the manipulation or censorship of websites or other information on the destination server. However, the proxy routing method has the additional potential capability of allowing one to circumvent regional search engine restrictions, for example. If a proxy is used to forward messages and queries, a search engine will believe the request has originated at a location near the proxy. If the proxy is located in a region in which no restrictions are imposed on search results, it will be able to forward those results back to the original requester without any limitations, assuming the proxy itself is not malicious.

Decentralization of service provisioning

The Arab uprisings were characterized by the strong use of social media tools and familiar internet platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, to organize demonstrations, share informational content or simply criticize the government. Social media was also used to communicate with countries outside the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, and to exchange information with people living in other countries involved in the Arab uprisings (Howard et al. 2011). According to the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), information was disseminated more quickly over Facebook than over the Arab TV channel Al-Jazeera (Stepanova 2011).

As a response to the revolutionary movements in North Africa, the Egyptian government instructed mobile phone operators and internet service providers to suspend their services. As a result, users were cut off from most parts of the internet. Several governments had done this before;

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for example, Nepal cut off internet access entirely in 2005, as did Myanmar two years later in 2007 (Richtel 2011). The cases of Nepal, Myanmar and Egypt are rare examples that could be repeated any time, virtually anywhere. They show clearly that governments of countries with simple internet infrastructures are capable of stopping national internet traffic almost entirely. In such cases, most internet services and therefore social media tools are not reachable as the providers' servers are mostly located in the United States, as is the case for Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Yahoo.

Another problem arises with traditional client-server approaches: a lack of privacy and trust. Centralized servers constitute a single point of service provisioning, with all users acting as (passive) clients that simply use the service. These servers represent single points of failure, making it easy to intercept and manipulate the information they provide. The recent revelations regarding the US National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance programs offer evidence that major internet services such as Facebook, Yahoo and Twitter, all of which are based on this client-server architecture, are well suited to being spied on. Edward Snowden revealed how the NSA uses its PRISM program to investigate packets traversing the internet in 2013. The essential basis for this to happen is that almost all information about the users of these services is gathered centrally at the providers' servers. The providers are able to censor content and opinions, read private and confidential messages, modify or market user data, or shut off internet services in oppressive countries that want to reduce communication on specific topics, as was the case during the Arab uprisings. Although the majority of users remain unaware of the risks of using centralized online social networks, and ignore the possibility of their communications being manipulated or intercepted, for some users in the world it is crucial — or even vital — to have the opportunity to communicate and organize with friends in a secure, confidential and anonymous way.

Distributed social networks, on the other hand, work to alleviate the security and censorship risks posed by centralized online social networking sites. Two significant trends have emerged in the area of distributed social networking: private-server approaches and peer-to-peer (P2P) approaches. Under private-server approaches, users set up private web servers and connect them to create a distributed social network. With this approach, central storage points are eliminated, and control over the data being exchanged remains with the users or their friends. However, the risk of data misuse and censorship remains, as any of the participating web servers

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may be compromised or shut down. Diaspora (diasporafoundation.org) is one prominent example of the private-server approach. This project was initiated in 2010 by four New York University (NYU) students who wanted to create a Facebook-like network based on a decentralized structure in which control over user content would remain with the users themselves.

In contrast to the centralized server architecture, peer-to-peer-based online social networks, such as LibreSocial (libresocial.com), formerly known as LifeSocial (Graffi et al. 2010), began gaining prominence a few years ago. All participants in a peer-to-peer network essentially share equal rights and duties. User-related information is distributed among and hosted by all network participants in a decentralized manner, without the need for dedicated servers. The peer-to-peer architecture therefore enables data sharing or information dissemination even though the information is never stored on a central server. Users are expected to be active in the network only temporarily, and the functioning of the network does not rely on the assumption of any permanently online servers. While these research projects are quickly advancing, they have not yet yielded concrete final results.

Darknets: Anonymous communication with the help of peer-to-peer networks

Darknets are defined by Biddle et al. (2003) as content distribution networks in which resources and infrastructure are provided by their users, in a manner similar to peer-to-peer networks. Thus, content is introduced by network participants and is exchanged directly between users who are in contact with each other. In darknets, each node can be contacted only by a highly restricted set of trusted individuals. Strangers are not allowed to establish contact, as this would allow them to observe communication patterns and gather information that might be misused, such as what files were queried or served. Another characteristic of darknets is that single hosts cannot be found using regular internet tools, since they are connected to other members of the network in an arbitrary fashion without being registered in a search engine or any other central server. The advantages of private P2P networks, another term for darknets introduced by Rogers and Bhatti (2007), center on the high degree of anonymity and privacy provided. While the actions of people using regular social communication applications can be observed and traced back to individuals, users in private

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peer-to-peer networks communicate only with contacts that are assumed not to be tracing them. Security can be further enhanced through the use of encrypted communication between nodes.

The last few years have seen a growing need for anonymous communication. Three primary kinds of anonymous peer-to-peer networks have formed as a response. In the first category, communication paths inside the network are hidden from potential observers. One common approach to providing anonymity in these networks is to use multi-hop relaying. Under this model, individual nodes simply forward chunks of data without knowing the identity of the originator or the destination node. When a query is sent out, it leaves a trail that is used to send the requested data item in reverse, hop by hop, along the same path traveled by the initial request. In addition, communication is encrypted in order to provide confidentiality.

The second category is made up of group-based networks, in which all users in the network are assumed to be trusted. The network's users only remain anonymous to entities outside the network but not to those inside the network. These networks can only be trusted as much as each of their participating members. From a technical perspective, every individual member of the group is considered to be trustworthy, and communications are encrypted with a group key, thus preventing entities outside the network from gaining insight into interactions within the network.

Finally, in the third category of friend-to-friend networks, connections are established only with selected trusted friends, each of whom acts as trusted proxy routers for traffic from their other friends. While in group-based approaches, the whole group of participants is considered trustworthy and the goal is to preserve users' anonymity to potential outside attackers, in friend-to-friend peer-to-peer networks, only a few friends are trusted, while the other members in the broader network are not trusted. A simple approach to forming a friend-to-friend network is to connect only to trusted friends, thereby establishing an unstructured peer-to-peer network.

The use of encryption to hide message content, proxies to prevent communications from being traced to the senders or recipients, and decentralization to create self-operated and self-organizing communication networks are the primary viable ways of engaging in secure and private communication online. These approaches are typically less user-friendly than the more common centralized communication tools used widely on the internet. Encryption keys have to be managed, proxies operated, and complex protocols and the effects of these communications have to be con-

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trolled. However, since the technical security challenges of these solutions have for the most part been solved, the research community's focus is shifting toward creating more user-friendly versions of the tools.

Influence of the Arab uprisings on the computer science field

A sharp change in thinking within the field of academic computer science after the uprisings cannot be ascertained directly. Only selected subject areas within the academic computer science field have been affected by, or have themselves affected, the events of the Arab uprisings. Research on big data analysis has enabled communication patterns and topics in large networks to be identified, thus allowing surveillance-minded authorities to track down activists and limit the free flow of information. However, research in the area of security and communication systems reacted to the events by creating a set of solutions that will enable secure communications in the future. Although the immense communications collapse during the revolutionary protests in the Middle East and North Africa cannot be seen as having triggered a new era of technological thinking, the Arab uprisings do offer an illuminating example of small changes in the way the internet is being used today.

The Snowden affair in 2013, also known as the NSA scandal or the PRISM affair, probably had more impact on people in Europe and the United States than the Arab uprisings did. Following Snowden's revelations, people realized they had been systematically monitored by a foreign agency and government. The threat of surveillance thus moved closer. The way people regarded their privacy changed drastically. However, the technology used for communication purposes online still utilizes well-known architecture.

One explanation for the fact that mainstream computer science trends have not changed due to single incidents such as the Arab uprisings is that the political revolutions did not lead to a technical revolution. No surprising new technologies or systems emerged after the uprisings in North Africa. All the software and systems used or shut down during the Arab uprisings had been developed long before the civil riots began. In this case, a technical evolution seemed to precede the political revolution.

Social media and communication tools played a peculiar role during the Arab demonstrations. Many articles since have analyzed the use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter at that time, but few have

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analyzed the technology behind those systems. Without going too deeply into detail, we can say that social media platforms are mostly based on technologies that had already been widely used for many years before the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa took place. The most significant change in these systems has come as access to online social media has become easier and simpler over time. In contrast to decades past, smartphones, tablets and computers, combined with cheap and easy-to-use communication platforms, rule the internet today. Using the internet no longer requires special knowledge. Anyone able to read and write can post his or her thoughts online in a few seconds.

The protests and demonstrations during the Arab uprisings were not driven by social-media platforms themselves, but rather by their users. However, inexpensive and easy-to-use platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Google and YouTube are gaining increasing popularity among internet users. Those systems are open to all, and the more they are used, the more they become interesting to other users who want to express themselves.

In the previous chapter, we introduced techniques of engaging in secure and anonymous internet communication that are not provided by most online social networks today. We know from interviews with people in the Middle East and North Africa that state surveillance and censorship had begun years before the Arab uprisings started. To avoid being spied on by the government and being arrested for distributing censored content, some people in the region used secure communication tools that utilized some of the methods described above.

One of our anonymous interview partners described problems with tools such as Textsecure or Signal, which provide secure communication on smartphones, as follows:

> "I am a technologist, the problem is not with us; the problem is for the real people. They need easy-to-use solutions. And they come at times when things are urgent; they need solutions that work easily and out of the box. Although Textsecure is easy to use for us, it is difficult to use for others. I have written guides and manuals before, but there are many different challenges and situations; thus they are not always reusable" (interview by the authors).

Thus, it is evident that although technical solutions for avoiding security risks and massive censorship do exist, most people lack the knowledge that would allow them to use these techniques properly. Researchers are aware of this problem, and creating user-friendly expressions of these scientific solutions is becoming an increasingly important goal.

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The Arab uprisings illustrate that specific circumstances at a specific time and place may drive the use and popularity of social media tools. However, it is always the people using social platforms to express their feelings, post pictures and share emotions who define the platforms — not the other way round. The Arab uprisings may ultimately serve as an important catalyst that drives the development of free internet, free communication, and use of the tools necessary for these goals in the Middle East and North Africa. From a scientific point of view, however, the events in the MENA region have had comparatively little influence on academic research within the computer science field. Indeed, it can be observed that the use of technology and social media in the MENA region has been only a small part of a bigger process that might affect computer science and the natural sciences as a whole. An ever-increasing number of people around the world are affected by technology and find pleasure in its use. However, most users prefer tools that are easy to use, even if they are insecure. This ongoing change in the cost, usability and design of technical devices might ultimately produce research focusing on the interactions between complex technology and human beings.

Even outside the academic research sphere, there are many community-driven projects that focus on the challenge of creating communication systems resistant to surveillance. Many of these projects share source codes and ideas in an open fashion, with the aim of being fully transparent to all users and developers, and thus exposing potential mistakes and security issues before they become problematic. The more people inspect a project's source code, the more likely it is that security problems or vulnerabilities that compromise privacy will be detected and avoided. Similarly, an open-source project model makes it less likely that malicious code will be included, since users can inspect the code before its execution.

In the future, computer scientists will be more aware of the implications of their work. Therefore, computer science as an academic discipline might become increasingly interested in understanding changes in social media platforms and their underlying technologies. In general, all natural science fields might diverge into different areas of new expertise that overlap with existing fields. The reason is that various fields are growing at different rates, and the technology being used is becoming increasingly complex and implications have to be considered much earlier.

Although the uprisings in North Africa have had only a small impact within the computer-science field itself, they have helped stimulate and extend existing research efforts, primarily in the areas of security and

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communications. The effort to facilitate secure and private communication is a long-time area of research that is today being expanded thanks to real-life use and demands for better technology exposed by the MENA events. However, other technological areas have also been affected. For example, an article written by Kelev Leeraru (2011) describes how computational analysis could have been used to forecast the region's revolutions. Big data and computational analysis are up-and-coming research fields, in which the Arab uprisings could play an important role as a case study used to teach new self-learning analysis methods and machine-learning algorithms, with the aim of producing better predictions about political unrest in the future.

Instead of changing technology itself, political unrest such as the Arab uprisings changes the way technology is used both by civilian populations and political agencies and governments. The Arab uprisings clearly demonstrated that most regimes lacked and continue to lack broad knowledge about the internet and its underlying technology. Governments still have to learn about the relatively new media, and how to use the internet for their strategic purposes. Shutting down communications within a whole country and cutting off millions of people from the internet does not give the impression that the Egyptian government was prepared for such heavy use of modern communication platforms by its citizens. On the contrary, it seems that the governments in the region shut down all communication paths on the internet in an act of panic following the perception that they were quickly losing control of the situation.

The commercialization of the internet represents another immense problem that will likely persist. As long as large parts of the internet are maintained by organizations or companies subject to a given regime's control, it is likely that internet service providers will continue to be forced to block content or internet access. Current research trends such as peer-to-peer networks or darknets are still rarely used in practice. The distributed data structures offered by decentralized services offer privacy and efficiency advantages, but suffer on the other hand from a lack of central technical control, thus presenting challenges with regard to including new participants and maintaining technical quality levels. Similarly, the decentralized nature of peer-to-peer networks seems to frighten many companies and internet service providers from putting effort into their further development. In other words, most companies are not interested in maintaining systems that cannot be controlled, since their business models demand an emphasis on usability and practicability. However, the open-source community is

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working to address these drawbacks, in many cases without commercial exploitation as a primary goal. Nevertheless, financing these communities' work can be a challenge, a factor that once again returns us to the issue of commerce.

Conclusion

The techniques and systems for combatting surveillance and censorship that are described in this article were not developed out of an urgent necessity. Techniques and systems such as encryption, the Tor project and LibreSocial, as well as all the attacks we have described, were developed before the Arab uprisings began. Neither the methods used to block internet access, nor the solutions used to evade such blocks evolved during the uprisings. Rather, these events have been used within academia to highlight the relevance of previous research work in the context of new political events.

Complete national internet shutdowns had taken place before, in Myanmar in 2007 and in Nepal in 2005. Years after the events in the MENA region, other countries continue to block and monitor specific services on the internet. Turkish internet service providers, for example, still frequently block access to Twitter, Facebook and other social networks. On July 22, 2015, following a suicide attack in Suruc, Turkish ISPs blocked local access to the Twitter social-networking service.

Technology most directly affects the people using it. The truth is that all regions in the world are connected through the internet, and ideas find a way to flow even around blocks and censorship. Ideas might carry the spark of revolution as they help people imagine different, potentially better realities. As former Google CEO Eric Schmidt said in an interview with Jerome Taylor (2010): "The internet is the first thing that humanity has built that humanity doesn't understand, the largest experiment in anarchy that we have ever had." While information flows can be blocked, speakers punished and information falsified for a certain amount of time, technology progresses nevertheless, and new forms of secure communication will be developed. In the end, information will flow.

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11 The Damage Done: The "Arab Spring", Cultural Heritage and Archaeologists at Risk

Ammar Abdulrahman

The spread of radical organizations such as Al-Qaida, Al-Nusra and the Islamic State (Daesh) throughout the Middle East poses a clear threat to our cultural heritage. Deemed "idolatrous" by these organizations, many cultural artifacts that predate Islam have been destroyed or are targeted for destruction. This war against cultural memory began in 2001, when the Taliban demolished a Buddha statue in Afghanistan in a highly publicized explosion. More recently, Daesh publicly ordered the demolition of Raqqa's Lion sculptures, and radicals in Iraq explicitly targeted ancient Assyrian artifacts in the Mosul Museum, publishing a video of their destruction online in 2015. Subject to targeted bombings and deliberate bulldozing at the hands of Daesh, much of the archaeological site of Nimrud — the location of the ancient Assyrian city of Kalhu with its palaces and sphinx-adorned temples — were also destroyed in 2015. The world's most renowned ancient city, Palmyra, was the site of deliberate obliteration as Daesh systematically destroyed its art and architecture — publicly. Having survived centuries of shifting power dynamics, wars and religious battles, the loss of these cultural artifacts is unprecedented.

Cultural heritage in areas of violent struggle involving radical Islamist groups[1] has been utterly abandoned to fate. The fate of these precious antiquities is not limited to destruction. Indeed, many artifacts are smuggled into the black market, where they yield high returns used to finance the radical groups' military campaigns. There are cases of organized crime networks being involved in illegal archaeological digs (e.g., Mari/Tell Hariri) or the raiding of facilities storing antiquities (e.g., Heraqla). And many of those desperate to survive the crushing economic impact of ongoing conflict have taken advantage of the lack of protection and surveil-

1 This was, for example, discussed at the 2016 UNESCO conference in Berlin, as well as in statements by its Director-General, Irina Bokova. See: http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1338/; http://www.unesco.org/new/en/safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage/; http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1495/.

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lance in broad areas along the Turkish and Iraqi borders. Most of the artifacts illicitly traded find their way into markets in European and other Western countries.

This archaeological massacre is taking place in plain view of all civilized societies. International organizations tasked with the protection of cultural heritage, such as UNESCO, ICOMOS and ICOM[2], have limited their response to denunciations. Political leaders in Western countries have provided no meaningful response. The global archaeology community thus faces massive challenges in stopping the destruction of sites of cultural heritage and their artifacts throughout the Middle East. Focusing on Syria as a case study, I explore these challenges and what's at stake for our shared cultural heritage and the field of archaeology specifically here.

Syria — cultural heritage for humankind

Since the 18th century, the Middle East has attracted Western archaeologists, adventurers and missionaries alike. Thanks to the discovery of a wealth of ancient sites, archaeologists began organizing missions to explore the area in earnest (Mithen 2006: 40 f). The geographical area currently comprising Syria quickly became a focal point of archaeological study as archaeologists sought to identify the cradle of human civilization and explore its relation to modern human culture. This archaelogical research — which includes the excavation, identification, classification and preservation of this heritage — has been a major contribution to humankind.

Humans have inhabited Syria for more than one million years. The territory witnessed the earliest passage of prehistoric man, Homo erectus, from Africa to Europe. Moreover, the Dederiyeh site in northwestern Syria was home to an important branch of the so-called Neanderthal man, which later developed into Homo sapiens. Around 10,000 BC, a number of small groups settled in the Euphrates valley, where they pioneered agriculture (Moore et al. 2000) by planting seeds, domesticating animals and building homes.

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2 Abbreviations: UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) and ICOM (The International Council of Museums).

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By 4000 BC several major cities began to emerge in the Jazira region in northeastern Syria, including Habuba Kabira on the Euphrates river (Strommenger 1980) and Hamukar. As these transit and trading hubs began to accumulate wealth, their inhabitants erected large monuments marking their power but also to serve as housing for their ever-increasing populations. During this period, we also see the development of iconography and the shift toward cuneiform writing as key intellectual innovations.

An urban culture emerged in the Early Bronze Age, when much of northern Syria was under the control of the city of Ebla, until its defeat by Sargon, the king of Akkad (Frayne 2008). Its language, Eblaite, is considered the second earliest confirmed Semitic language (after Akkadian). Today, the site is most famous for the Ebla tablets, an archive of around 20,000 cuneiform tablets dating to around 2350 BC. Written in both Sumerian and Eblaite using Sumerian cuneiform, the archive has allowed for a better understanding of the Sumerian language (Matthiae 2013: 37). This is also where the oldest discovered bilingual dictionaries have been discovered, which enabled scribes in Mesopotamia and Syria to understand each other.

During the Middle Bronze Age, these urban centers gradually formed the nuclei of small states, in particular Aleppo (ancient Yamahad, see Abdulrahman 2009), Mumbaqat (ancient Ekalte), Jarablus (ancient Carchemish) and Mishrife (ancient Qatna). Thanks to the thousands of cuneiform script tablets that have survived to date, we have documentation of daily life in these states, including the details of highly-developed social relations and regulations. These tablets have also given us insight into the kingdom's foreign and local relations, helping us, for instance, to trace back the roots of complex relations between increasingly bureaucratic states and pastoralist populations. As a center of trade and hegemonic state, the city of Mari (modern day Tell Hariri) played a key role throughout the second and third millennium BC, a fact well-documented by the archive of thousands of tablets found there (Parrot 1953). An archive of more than 25,000 tablets from the period have survived documenting details regarding the kingdom, its customs, and the names of people who lived during that time. More than 3,000 of the tablets are letters documenting their social customs, events, and interactions. The remaining tablets document administrative, economic and judicial matters in the city. According to André Parrot (1953), the discovery of these tablets in the 20th century has prompted a complete revision of the historical record of the

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ancient Near East and provided more than 500 new location names, enough to redraw the geographical map of the ancient world.

As towns and other cities serving as power centers, i.e., Alalach, Emar (modern-day Tell Meskene), Ekalte (Mubaqat), Qatna and Ugarit emerged across Syria in 2000 BC, intellectual life and the product of its labors flourished. The architecture of houses and palaces was perfected and multiple-storeyed temples were decorated with paintings, sculptures and statues of humans (goddesses) and animals. Around 1400 BC we see scribes in Ugarit advancing written communication by using letters that correspond to sounds in what appears to be the invention of a Ugaritic alphabet. Inscribed on clay tablets and cuneiform in appearance (i.e., impressed in clay with the end of a stylus), the Ugaritic alphabet bears no relation to Mesopotamian cuneiform symbols. While the letters show little or no formal similarity, the standard letter order (preserved in the Latin alphabet as A, B, C, D, etc.) shows strong similarities between the Phoenician and Ugaritic alphabets, suggesting that these two systems were not wholly independent inventions. These were later transferred to Greece, providing the role model for many other alphabets.

During 1000 BC, seafaring peoples invaded Syria and destroyed most of the cities and empires, particularly those along the coast. New city states, such as Sam'al (Zincirli), Tell Tayinat, Gindaros (Kunalua), and Til Barsip (Tell Ahmar), emerged in their place (Bunnens 1997; Orthmann et al. 2013). Expanding the reach of their administration into outlying areas, these city states developed extensive administrative, military and economic systems. These developments brought about a resurgence in architectural art in the form of palaces, city walls and monumental buildings that were adorned with massive gates and stone sculptures.

In short, modern-day Syria has been a site of trade and cultural exchange since humankind began engaging in such activities. Excavation sites throughout the country have yielded innumerable artifacts of this cultural heritage. Urban centers such as Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Bosracan, marked by a multiculturalism that has embraced a variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds, have featured sound city planning in which diverse inhabitants have lived in harmony — until recently.

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The threat to artifacts

As we enter 2017, much of Syria has been twisted by the destruction of war. This devastation, inflicted by a variety of actors, has created immense damage to the shared cultural heritage entrusted to the Syrian people. Few would dispute the catastrophe underway regarding Syria's archaeological sites. Unauthorized excavations, plundering, and trafficking of stolen cultural artifacts in Syria is an acute and escalating problem that threatens our cultural heritage as the number of objects lost or destroyed grows day by day.

As the Syrian crisis broke in 2011, the number of archaeological activities in the country dropped dramatically. Most foreign missions have since been terminated, though the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission in the Marqab citadel has continued. National missions are confined to the governorates not subject to imminent threat, which primarily includes those located along the coast and in the south (Sweeda) as well as in rural areas surrounding Damascus (e.g., Latakiya, Tartus, Homs and Hama). Excavations and research conducted in these areas are carried out on behalf of Syria's Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums in Syria (DGAM), which is charged with safeguarding and restoring all antiquities in Syria and putting them on public display. For many years, there have also been foreign missions in Syria from various institutes and universities; there were nearly 70 such missions operating in 2011. These missions normally partnered with the DGAM with regard to excavation, restoration and academic publishing.

Currently, there are only five excavation sites in the country still underway. Archaeological activity in the country is primarily focused on preserving and restoring monuments that have been damaged in the conflict. All of these activities are financed by the DGAM, in a few cases in collaboration with UNESCO. These efforts to preserve and restore monuments have been undertaken by DGAM experts with the support of university students. From the start of the conflict, the DGAM has pursued a non-partisan policy in its attempts to shield cultural heritage sites from damage.

Although the sources of damage are diverse, looting poses the greatest threat to the country's cultural heritage. Looting is rampant and carried out by actors from many sides of the conflict, though there are three key types with specific motives:

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1. Locals who live in lawless areas. Desperate for income in the absence of gainful employment, these individuals dig in archaeological sites and sell looted artifacts to private speculators.
2. Members of organized crime networks. These individuals engage in illicit digging and smuggling for their own gain/profit.
3. Islamist extremists seeking to eradicate any trace of the "idolatrous" past. Daesh and Al-Nusra are the key actors here, though Daesh represents the biggest threat because it controls more than 2,000 archaeological sites in Syria (and twice as many in Iraq).

The connection between organized crime networks and religious extremist organizations in this area must be noted, as Daesh is involved in the looting of antiquities principally to finance its military activities. There have been occasional reports of cooperative looting agreements between Daesh and Al-Nusra (Syrian Arab Republic — Ministry of Culture. Directorate-General of Antiquities & Museums 2015 b and 2016 a).

After seven years of ongoing conflict in Syria, which is now the third largest market for illegal cultural goods worldwide (United Nations 2014), it is difficult to single out one factor behind the destruction of archeological sites. Indeed, various factors have become intertwined and are now fostering each other. The following examples illustrate the extent of the damage done.

Due to its location near the Turkish border, *Aleppo* has served as an important frontier city for various factions in the current conflict. Having taken refuge in historical buildings, souks and mosques, Al-Nusra fighters have used these structures to deter Syrian armed forces from entering the area. Al-Nusra fighters have also been accused of blowing up the minaret of the Umayyad mosque and of stealing all the manuscripts which were stored in this mosque (Syrian Arab Republic — Ministry of Culture. Directorate-General of Antiquities & Museums 2016 b). A devastating fire in 2012 gutted the city's vast labyrinthine souk. Also, the exceptional Aleppo Citadel was partially ravaged by bombings which damaged the passageway leading to the entrance of the citadel.

Located in southwest Syria, *Bosra* is the country's second UNESCO heritage site. As a prosperous provincial capital under the Romans, Bosra remained administratively important throughout the Islamic era. Located at the frontline between Al-Nusra and the Syrian army, Bosra has been subject to repeated clashes and bombings that have destroyed or damaged traditional houses as well as the Mabrak Al-Naqa monument and the Fa-

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timid mosque. The militias of Al-Nusra took control of the city. By early 2017, the extent of the destruction inflicted remained unclear. Many Syrian archaeologists are still deeply worried about the status of the city's Roman theater, considered to be the most significant theater in Syria.

Apamea, which is not under the Syrian government's administrative control, ranks as one of the sites most affected due to ongoing illegal digging operations in the east, northeast and west of the city. Most of the looters are interested in tombs and mosaics. Recently, with the help of several academic institutions including the British Museum and in cooperation with Google Earth (see Trafficking Culture. Researching the global traffic in looted cultural objects n.d.), satellite images were taken of various sites in the city, showing massive damage. Many artifacts have clearly been transported out of the country. Indeed, many of the mosaics seized on Lebanon's black market in 2013 and 2014 have been traced back to Apamea. The neighboring Al-Madiq Citadel, which was built during Muslim rule in the 12th century, was also damaged by heavy clashes between the Syrian army and armed groups (mostly from Al-Nusra, who entrenched themselves in the citadel).

Among international observers, the destruction of the ancient city of *Palmyra* is the most well-known. After Daesh invaded the site, Palmyra faced an unknown future. The damage inflicted by Daesh to Palmyra can be termed an assault not only on the cultural heritage of Syrians, but on human civilization more generally. The DGAM has received eyewitness accounts of Daesh's systematic destruction of the site's key monuments (Danti & Prescott 2014). In addition, the Baal-Shamin Temple, the sanctuary of the Bel Temple and six tower tombs have also been demolished (Danti et al. 2015). Witnesses also informed the DGAM that Daesh militants destroyed the Arch of Triumph on Sunday, October 4, 2015. When reports were confirmed that Daesh had set up explosives around several historical monuments in the city, the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums announced:

> "We feel frustrated as we see the failure of the international community in achieving the UN resolution #2199, issued in February 2015, stating "that countries ensure that their nationals and those in their territories not make assets or economic resources available to ISIL[3] and related terrorist groups" and "Condemning the destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria, parti-

3 Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

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> cularly by ISIL and the Al-Nusrah Front". Our call a few days ago to the international community to stop ISIL's progress towards Palmyra was ignored. As in other conflicted areas, i.e. in Idlib and Bosra, we count on the local community and political figures to neutralize[4] the ancient city and its museum, in the hope that they can stop these fanatic groups, who only believe in killing, robbery and destruction. Our solidarity goes to the city, its citizens and the local staff members of DGAM, who have defended their heritage during the last 4 years with all their abilities. We call all national Syrians for solidarity and unity for the sake of heritage protection against these barbaric attacks." (Syrian Arab Republic — Ministry of Culture. Directorate-General of Antiquities & Museums 2015 a)

Thanks to the devotion of DGAM staff members and the cooperation of the related local authorities, hundreds of Palmyrean statues and museum objects have been transferred to safe locations outside the city. Tragically, Daesh did not hesitate to kill archaeologist Khalid Al-Asaad. The DGAM commemorated him with these words:

> "It is with great sorrow we announce the murder of our colleague, the well-known archaeologist Khalid Al-Asaad (former Director of the Palmyra Antiquities department) who was beheaded by the terrorist members of ISIS today, Tuesday the 18th of August 2015. According to reports, his body was crucified on the Palmyrean columns (which he himself had restored) in the centre of Palmyra, after being beheaded in the museum's courtyard. Mr. Asaad started his career at DGAM in 1963 as a Director of Palmyra Antiquities, he was an inspirational and dedicated professional who was committed to DGAM even after his retirement." (Syrian Arab Republic — Ministry of Culture. Directorate-General of Antiquities & Museums 2015 c)

Since reclaiming the territory including Palmyra in late 2016, Daesh has called for the destruction of monuments, rendering the future of the town and its archaeological sites unclear.

In general, the armed conflicts in the Arab world have had a devastating impact on the field of archaeology. They have tremendously reduced or prevented excavation activities outright on many sites. This is true not only for Syria; we can also see this in Iraq, especially in areas such as Nimrud, and in the Sinai in Egypt, where fighting between militants and the Egyptian army continues. In addition, Libya has witnessed the complete abandonment of excavations due to the unstable situation. Within Syria, since the beginning of the crisis the field of archaeology has been heavily disrupted.

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4 The term "neutralize" here refers to the idea that these sites be protected as neutral territory.

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Impact on the field of archaeology

This has mainly been due to security concerns, which resulted in the abandonment of the most important sites of Dora Europos and Terqa in Mari (in the east), the sites of Ebla and Tell Afis in the Idlib region (in the west), and the sites of Jarablus and Tell Amarna in the Aleppo district. The archaeological missions engaged in these sites tried to direct the world's attention to these priceless, historically unique places in order to prevent their damage and destruction. These efforts highlighted the unique value of Syrian cultural heritage to the rest of the world and how important and urgent it is to protect and safeguard this heritage.

Because radical groups have threatened and even killed archaeologists like Khalid Al-Asaad, an increasing number of professors and archaeological scholars have been unable to pursue their work. Many have left the country; some have remained in Syria and are in safe areas protected from confrontations with the militants but isolated from the main sites. The number of enrolled students across all fields of study has fallen dramatically since 2011 (by more than 75%), even though academic programs have continued at all universities except Idlib and Deir ez-Zor. Students have suffered from the unstable situation and their mobility is restricted due to road checkpoints. Moreover, radical groups often consider students to be allies of the official government.[5]

In this context, it is important to note that all foreign archaeological institutes in Damascus have closed, including the American Centre for Culture in Damascus, Institut Français du Proche-Orient (Ifpo), the German Archaeological Institute in Damascus (DAI), the Danish Cultural Centre and the Italian Cultural Institute. All of these institutes offered essential resources for students and senior scholars. All excavation activities carried out by or in collaboration with foreign institutions have been postponed indefinitely.

The unstable situation has also prevented routine but urgently needed restorations to several monuments, including Hosn Suleiman in the coastal mountains (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut 2001) and Al-Rahba citadel in Deir ez-Zor. Indeed, ongoing conservation work in archaeological sites in areas of conflict has been abandoned. The museums in these

5 For a description of the students' situation in political science in Egypt see the contribution by Jan Claudius Völkel in this volume.

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unsafe areas have been emptied of their holdings, with the archaeological artifacts transported to secure locations. In addition, burglar alarms were installed in some museums and fortresses, and the number of guards and patrols has been increased.

In the midst of this devastating situation, local communities have also taken measures to guard against the destruction of their heritage. While there are locals among the fighters and looters, archaeological authorities have worked for decades to build an understanding of the value of the cultural heritage in these communities. Often, this effort has been thwarted by the dire conditions inflicted by the crisis. However, in a few cases we have witnessed collaborative and individual efforts to safeguard Syria's cultural heritage. In 2012, local elites in Idlib, for example, demanded that all military units (radical groups in particular) keep archaeological sites and museums out of the battle zone and refrain from using these sites as shields or fortifications. Such intervention was successful with regard to the Ma'arra Mosaic museum: When militants tried to take control of it, the museum's curator immediately asked the local community, his relatives, and friends to encircle the museum and prevent them from entering or taking any action that could damage the museum. Moreover, in Wadi Barada in the countryside about 45 km northwest of Damascus — which is not under the control of the government — locals discovered a large piece of a mosaic dating back to the Roman period. These locals contacted the DGAM and reached an agreement allowing DGAM experts to remove the mosaic and store it in a warehouse. The DGAM awarded these locals with a prize for their demonstration of civic commitment.

At the same time, archaeologists have had to expand their outreach. The DGAM held a workshop in Damascus titled "Fighting against illicit trafficking of cultural property: capacity-building and awareness-raising" in 2013. The workshop brought together ministry and government authorities involved in the protection of Syrian cultural property to discuss the problem of antiquities smuggling with NGOs, members of the local community, scholars, artists and authors. In 2014, more than 4,000 archaeological artifacts were returned to the DGAM — including three busts from Palmyra dated from 200 AD — that had been confiscated by police, customs agents and the governorates.

The scourge of looting and smuggling also means that Syrian archaeologists must solicit the assistance of international actors beyond the world of scholarship. The DGAM is increasingly coordinating with INTERPOL

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and the World Customs Organization.[6] This collaboration is carried forward by sending reports and photos of what has been lost as well as what is found in neighboring countries and believed to be of Syrian origin. This cooperation with INTERPOL and the Lebanese Directorate General of Antiquities has been somewhat successful in fighting the trafficking of Syrian antiquities. For example, in 2014, 18 Syrian mosaic panels were confiscated at the Lebanese borders and 73 Syrian artifacts smuggled into Lebanon to be sold by antique dealers were confiscated.

Archaeologists must also act as lobbyists for their causes. On July 3, 2013, the DGAM called upon international organizations, members and heads of foreign archaeological missions, archaeologists, and intellectuals worldwide to act together in establishing efficient mechanisms able to deter those involved in the destruction, looting and smuggling of antiquities from continuing such activities. The DGAM has also asked UNESCO to pressure neighboring countries to reinforce security measures, improve the monitoring of borders and thereby fight the trafficking of archaeological property, and to combat illegal excavation activities within their own borders.

It has become clear that concrete action is urgently needed to safeguard our shared cultural heritage. The DGAM has tried to make this clear to its partner institutions. The responses from international organizations such as UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS and INTERPOL have been mostly positive. They have, in particular, offered guidance on strategies for preservation and restoration under the difficult circumstances. In a promising move, the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin (DAI) has offered to work in direct cooperation with Syrian experts and concerned specialists at the DGAM through the *Stunde Null* (Zero Hour) projects. The idea behind this effort has been to set up a database of all archaeological sites in Syria that will facilitate restoration and rehabilitation work once such activities can be resumed. In this context, UNESCO held an international conference in July 2016, in cooperation with the DAI, on safeguarding the cultural heritage of Syria.

6 See the contribution of Fatima Kastner in this volume on other forms of international co-operation in fighting human rights violations.

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The future of Syrian archaeology

Syrian archaeologists currently living abroad can support students of archaeology inside Syria through their academic networks and thereby help establish the next generation of experts. In addition, networks of local and foreign experts must be maintained. In November 2016, with the support of the Arab–German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA), a workshop on Maaloula, an archaeological site in the rural area outside of Damascus, was held in the German city of Tübingen. This workshop brought together archaeologists from the DGAM, a local expert from Maaloula, and experts in restoration and cultural heritage from various European universities and institutions. During the workshop, a productive arrangement was agreed upon to help locals in Maaloula rebuild their homes. Furthermore, the University of Heidelberg agreed to aid the reopening of the Aramaic institution in Maaloula in order to resume teaching this ancient language (which is still spoken in the area).

We must also be aware of the most recent developments on the ground and adapt our strategies accordingly. While, for example, Daesh was expelled from Palmyra by the Syrian army in 2016, the site fell back into their hands only a few months later and the fate of Palmyra's historical monuments is as uncertain as ever.

A final point relates to the reconstruction of Syrian cultural heritage once fighting has ceased. The shared cultural legacy embodied in these artifacts must be made clear to all parties affected by the current conflict if the preservation of cultural heritage is to succeed in peacetime (Cunliffe et al. 2016). Heritage authorities must be enabled to complete the infrastructure and to stop all kinds of criminality. After all, Syrian cultural heritage is much more than a local issue; as a global matter, it concerns all of humanity.

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12 Transformations and Continuities. Some general Reflections

Hans Jörg Sandkühler

Germany underwent four radical transformations in the 20th century — after 1919 and the fall of the empire, after 1933 and the Nazis' usurpation of power, after the total defeat of 1945, and after 1989 and the unification of the two German states. Born in 1940, I have experienced the resistance of the old and the ambivalence of the new: In societal processes, there is never the "zero hour" one dreams of that relieves one of the burdens of the past. Transformations are prepared slowly; they become apparent without initially being recognized as such by those involved; they break out seemingly as suddenly as a natural event; yet they prove to be enduring, tenacious struggles between the new one hopes for and what has survived of the old.

The German and French universities at which I have studied since 1960 have not been "new" or transformed universities; my areas of study, philosophy and jurisprudence, were not "new" or transformed fields. The *habitus* of professors were often the *habitus* of authoritarian personalities who did not dare openly to defend the old, who concealed their own histories of complicity with the old system, who remained silent regarding their sense of guilt, and for whom recalling those times was treacherous. Precisely this is the norm in times of transformation. Was no one ever a supporter of the emperor, nobody a Nazi, nobody a Stalinist... and nobody an opportunist?

Societal normality and the stability and dynamics of convictions

Every society develops its own *normality*. In this normality, collective social and political options become individual convictions, and from these *convictions* follow adaptation and affirmation or refusal and resistance. "Transformation" does not only mean the transition from bad to good, but also a partially forced, partially unimposed change in public and private normality. So, for example, the transformation of the Weimar Republic into the "Third Reich" attests to the fact that — like other transformations

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— transitions from one normality to another normality — such as that from the socialist or communist progressive movement to the reactionary National Socialist protest against modern capitalist society — are fluid. In times of radical upheaval — not only in 1933, but also 1919, 1945 and 1989, and now 2011 — something manifests that is too often neglected in the historiography of mentalities: the dynamics and the stability of convictions. Convictions can survive crises, remaining stable under changed cognitive and social conditions. Convictions can change in special ways during crises, shifting their contents as if from plus to minus, but retaining their function and operations; structurally, the habits of conviction remain unchanged, determining theorems about reality and conduct through propositional attitudes. A conviction defines the sphere of what can be seen; this sphere of perception produces a common style of thought. Not only does this field of perception limit the scope of knowledge; ignorance also shapes the prevailing style of thought.

Philosophy of coexistence — cooperation without hegemony

My experiences with Islamic Arab countries and with Arab universities have come since 1998, primarily in Tunisia, and to a lesser extent in Algeria and Morocco. From 2000 to 2011, the UNESCO Chair for Philosophy at the University of Tunis cooperated with the Center for the Philosophical Foundations of the Sciences that I run at the University of Bremen along with the German section on "Human Rights and Cultures" at the European UNESCO Chair of Philosophy/Paris, which I founded on behalf of UNESCO, in the form of an annual French-language symposium that alternated between Tunis and Bremen — a collaborative project that took place under conditions of dictatorship in Tunisia, but which was nevertheless an outstanding example of cooperation with Arab partners, whose critical spirit enabled collaboration in full freedom. The main emphasis was on problems of legal and state philosophy and ethics in a world of cultural diversity; problems such as political integration in a post-national era; the rule of law; democracy and justice; and human rights and tolerance. A second focus was on issues of communication and transculturality under conditions of globalization.

In 2001, the second colloquium took place in Tunis under the heading "The Stranger and Justice". It was officially opened by the minister for education and science. For the German participants, one element of this was

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a shock: Before the minister's speech, the police expelled the students from the lecture hall. Following the ban on the "Ligue tunisienne des droits de l'homme", the Bremen delegation used this occasion to plead for greater respect for human rights in Tunisia. This provoked objections, and some understandable allusion to the disregard for Palestinian rights and the humiliations of the Arab world. It again became clear how inappropriately ideological today's Western political rhetoric is when sweeping references to *the* Arab world and Arab fundamentalism are made. Taking stock of this tremendously fruitful project, in which young scholars from Algeria were also involved, I would say cooperative initiatives of this kind can prepare the terrain for open, prejudice-free mutual learning, unencumbered by hegemonic claims; yet it is also certain that transcultural, interdisciplinary cooperation requires perseverance.[1] For the Germans, the presentations of their Arab colleagues on the traditions of Islam and Islamic philosophy, as well as on current problems, were extremely informative. For their own part, they were themselves able to contribute to deepening the understanding of the significance of democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. To me, the degree to which religion gained in importance in these years, particularly among young women, was striking, highlighted by the increasing prominence of the headscarf. A vehement protest rose from among their ranks when, while giving a lecture in Tunis, I criticized the Islamic and Arab declarations of human rights as the declarations of authoritarian states. Without meaning to, I had wounded religious sensibilities.

Hopes dashed by the state have focused on the renewal of a religion abused and distorted under dictatorships, on the renewal of an authentic form of Islam, on a daily religion that desires justice and peace, does not stand in the way of cultural and political pluralism,[2] and is compatible

1 The Franco–German series of books published by Triki and Sandkühler, *Philosopher le vivre-ensemble*, became a means of ensuring continuity; see the following volumes: Triki & Sandkühler (2002, 2003, 2004) and Poulain, Sandkühler & Triki (2009, 2010).

2 The problem of political pluralism, which is crucial for future development in the Arab countries, is also addressed by Florian Kohstall in this volume: "In Morocco, party pluralism and civil society were able to provide a filter to channel social demands and implement reform policies more effectively, while Mubarak's dependence on single-party rule through the National Democratic Party (NDP) limited the regime's reform flexibility […]. These were important findings for the uprisings that occurred later".

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with democracy. Verse 256 of the second sura of the *Quran* reads: "There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion". It should not be forgotten that, particularly in Algeria, mosques were a place of solidarity-driven social help for the poor, and that the justice no longer to be expected from the state could be spoken of by the clergy, the imams.

This is the horizon on which it is clearly becoming apparent why the Arab uprisings were shaped by an ordinary form of Islam rather than by Islamism. Fathi Triki (2011: 12 f.) says this about the Tunisian revolution: "Not only was it never led by a religious or non-religious elite — it also did not tolerate a single word from the language of the fundamentalist identity delusion. The revolutionary people thought of nothing more than freedom and dignity. In this case, the variability of identity shifted the path in the direction of a new tendency, toward a path that claims its share in universality."

On the other hand, the finding by Fatima Kastner in this volume is unambiguous: "At this point one should also recall that neither religion in general, nor the contested category of *Sharia* in particular was originally behind the motives of the protest movements at the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, where there was on the contrary an urgent call for universal values and human rights".[3] In this context, the question raised in this volume by Sarhan Dhouib is very important: "To what degree do cultural identities and the cultural pluralism often associated with them stand in opposition to the transculturality of human rights?".

Transformation, injustice and justice: The example of Germany

Transformations do not *per se* have a vector toward the good; they are not *a priori* progressive. A fundamental reason for the dialectic between the intended new and the nearly unavoidable continuity of the old lies in the following: In the society to be transformed, no new personnel fall from the heavens. Teachers, judges, military staffers and so on are taken from the old totalitarian system, because it is impossible to conjure an unencumbered democracy from out of a test tube.

3 I am still of the opinion that the problematic of religion — mind you, of Islam as a symbolic form, not of political Islamism — deserved more attention in this book.

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It is thus all the more important that those who have suffered and whose dignity and rights have been violated do not give up their remembrances. And yet the remembrance of those who have suffered can be blocked by the perpetrators. This is exactly what happened in Germany, where there was little public interest in pursuing the perpetrators for quite a long time, and it was often the perpetrators themselves who were responsible for the prosecution of the crimes. There were too many perpetrators. The majority of German society was intertwined far too broadly with National Socialism to be able to effect a transformation from injustice to justice under its own power. This lack was compensated for by the victorious Allies, particularly through the Nuremberg trials.

After terror-based systems and dictatorships, after wars and revolutions, all societies face the moral and legal issue of how to deal with those who, as yet unpunished, have committed crimes under conditions of state terror. This is the context in which it becomes clear: *Justice emerges from the experience of injustice* (Sandkühler 2015 a, 2013). One is confronted with an alternative: *justice or legal certainty.* Three alternatives are available to solve the problem of practicing justice while guaranteeing legal certainty: (A) prosecution through a suspension of the principle of non-retroactivity *nulla poena sine lege,* as per the international criminal law developed after 1945; (B) amnesty laws, like those adopted in 1949 and 1954 in Germany with the goal of ending denazification and integrating the Nazi perpetrators into society, in large part through a questionable appeal to the principle of non-retroactivity; and (C) truth-and-reconciliation commissions such as that in South Africa after the end of apartheid, which leave confessed perpetrators unprosecuted at the expense of the victims' need for justice.

(A) In modern legal culture, the problem of legal certainty finds an apparently clear answer: *nulla poena sine lege*. The guarantee function of criminal law incorporates four normative premises: (i) the requirement of certainty within the criminal law (*nulla poena sine lege certa*), (ii) the prohibition of analogy *(nulla poena sine lege stricta)*, (iii) the prohibition of applying common law to the offender's detriment *(nulla poena sine lege scripta)*, and (iv), the principle of non-retroactivity *(nulla poena sine lege praevia)*. The prohibition on retroactivity is considered to be a basic principle of justice. However, this is not always the case. In the example of West Germany's history following the terror of National Socialism, it was clearly necessary — and clear why this was so — to exceed the *bounds of the prohibition on retroactivity* for reasons of justice. The protected legal

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interest of "no punishment without a law in place at the time of the deed" becomes questionable if it serves to protect the perpetrator and injure the victim once again. This example also shows how the alternative "justice or legal certainty" overlaps with another alternative: legality or expediency.

The Nuremberg trials, which were carried out from 1945 to 1949 against the chief war criminals and other figures from the National Socialist era who bore responsibility for the crimes committed — such as judges, doctors, diplomats and functionaries within the terroristic administration — as well as other trials carried out after 1945 by the allied military courts against those responsible for crimes in concentration camps,[4] made legal history; they revolutionized international law and international criminal law.[5] For the first time, neither national laws nor state immunity offered absolute protection from prosecution. The fundamental judicial right of non-retroactivity was set aside for certain crimes, especially for *crimes against humanity*.

In the Nuremberg judgment, it was stated: "It was urged on behalf of the defendants that a fundamental principle of all law — international and domestic — is that there can be no punishment of crime without a pre-existing law. 'Nullum crimen sine lege, nulla poena sine lege.' […] In the first place, it must be to be observed that the maxim 'nullum crimen sine lege' is not a limitation of sovereignty, but is in general a principle of justice. To assert that it is unjust to punish those who in defiance of treaties and assurances have attacked neighboring states without warning is obvi-

4 After the main trial, 12 additional large trials against Nazi war criminals took place in front of American military courts. A total of 185 people were charged, including 39 doctors and judges (cases I and III), 56 members of the SS and the police forces (cases IV, VIII and IX), 42 industrialists and executives (cases V, VI and X), 26 military leaders (cases VII and XII), and 22 ministers and high-ranking government figures (cases II and XI).

5 Constitutional and international law expert Hermann Jahrreiß declared in Nuremberg: "Insofar as the statute supports all of this with its provisions, it fundamentally lays down new law, if, with the Lord British Chief Prosecutor, one measures it against existing international law. That, which – coming from Europe – was ultimately adopted across the entire world, and is called international law, is in its essence a legal system for orderly coexistence, coordination, and sovereign associations of autonomous entities. If we measure the provisions of the statute against this legal system, it must be said that the provisions of the statute negate the foundations of this law, that they anticipate the legal system of a world state. They are revolutionary. Perhaps they belong in hope and yearning to the people of the future" (Jahrreiß 2004: 521).

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ously untrue, for in such circumstances the attacker must know that he is doing wrong, and so far from it being unjust to punish him, it would be unjust if his wrong were allowed to go unpunished" (Jahrreiß 2004: 244 f.).

After 1945, the goal was, as stated by the military government's Law No. 1, the "elimination of the core ideological components through legislation in the form of open catalogs, expandable at any time" and the "control of justice-system personnel who, from practical considerations, are not wholly replaceable, through the commitment to a new system of values" (Stolleis 1994: 252) in order to "eliminate from German law and administration within the occupied territory the policies and doctrines of the National Socialist Party, and to restore to the German people the rule of justice and equality before the law" (Military Government-Germany, law No. 1 1948: 42).

Yet as long as there was little consciousness of guilt within the German population after 1945, as long as repression reigned instead, and as long as the democracy imported by the victorious powers was largely a *democracy without democrats*, the political and judicial systems could feign blindness with regard to the prosecution of Nazi perpetrators. Especially within the judicial system, perpetrators remained not only undetected, but many were assimilated into the new legal system. Even 20 years after the war's end, for example, 55 percent of the leading Ministry of Justice personnel were former members of the Nazi party.

In addition to the indifference of large portions of the population, reasons of Cold War expediency also contributed to hindering the new democratic beginning. In the interests of integrating the young Federal Republic of Germany into the West, and given the plans for its rearmament, the US High Commissioner for West Germany J.J. McCloy reduced numerous penalties in 1951, partially at the urging of the Adenauer government; most of those sentenced in the Nuremberg follow-up trials were released from prison by 1955.[6] In addition, the prosecution of Nazi crimes met with fierce resistance in West Germany independently of reasons of political expediency. For example, the Adenauer government decided in 1952 to abrogate the article of the European Human Rights Convention that en-

6 By 2005, a total of 172,000 investigative procedures had been carried out, producing 17,000 indictments and 15,000 trials. The result was 5,000 acquittals, 2,000 discontinuances and only 6,600 convictions (Perels 2013: 38.).

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abled the prosecution of Nazi crimes from an international-law perspective.

As after the end of other dictatorships, the post-1945 period was an era of exculpatory legends. People maintained: "Not the judicial system, but rather the legislator alone forsook the banner of the law" (Schmidt 1947: 231). Perpetrators often met with more understanding than their victims: Many of those who bore responsibility for the injustice in the political and judicial systems were rehabilitated within the context of the judicial policy (Stolleis 1994) that was now being carried out. This made possible the fact that of the 69 justices of the Federal Supreme Court (BGH), 27 had belonged to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). "Of the remaining 42 federal justices [...] 11 must be categorized as Nazi judiciary-system criminals" (Schumann 2008: 193). It was not by chance that the BGH ruled in 1956: "In a time in which it was incessantly hammered home to the population that law is what the Führer dictates, it is possible that judges and prosecutors also succumbed to the legal thinking of the time". It was also no coincidence that — with the exception of a few members of summary courts active in the last days of the Nazi regime — no Nazi judge was given a criminal sentence. The ideology of the Nazis had taken root in the convictions of many legal professionals.

In Germany, it was only in 1998, or 43 years after the end of National Socialism, that an "Act to Annul the Unlawful Criminal Verdicts of the National Socialists" was passed. The following conclusion can be drawn from such experiences: *After revolutions, the repeal of previous injustices will take at least a generation; hopes for quick successes are illusory.*

(B) The second variant of dealing with crimes is amnesty laws, as were adopted in Germany in 1949 and 1954 with the goal of ending denazification and integrating National Socialist perpetrators into society, in large part through a questionable reliance on the principle of non-retroactivity. In the three western zones, there were more than 2.5 million Germans whose trials had been decided in civilian denazification courts by 31 December 1949, with the following rulings: 54 percent were deemed to be no more than "followers", 34.6% had their proceedings dismissed, 0.6% were recognized as opponents of National Socialism, and 1.4% were deemed primary perpetrators or incriminated persons. On 4 April 1951, with only two abstentions, the German Bundestag passed the "Law for the Regulation of the Legal Status of Persons Falling under Article 131 of the Basic Law". This enabled reentry into the civil service except for people categorized in Group 1 (primary perpetrators) and 2 (incriminated persons).

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(C) The third variant for addressing injustice and the implementation of "*transitional justice*" (see Fatima Kastner's contribution in this volume) is that of truth-and-reconciliation commissions. These have the problematic goal of demanding on pragmatic political grounds that victims forgive and reconcile with the perpetrators, for example through the *Ubuntu* strategy in South Africa following the end of apartheid (Tutu 2000; Koné 2010, 2011). I regard this path as being very problematic, because it guarantees fair treatment to the perpetrators rather than to the victims, and produces impunity without atonement. The United Nations' Human Rights Council, in its Resolution 9/10 of 28 September 2009 on truth-and-reconciliation commissions, also noted that the reconciliation processes should not preclude the possibility of criminal proceedings. The Council "*emphasizes* the importance of a comprehensive approach to transitional justice, incorporating the full range of judicial and non-judicial measures, including, among others, individual prosecutions, reparations, truth-seeking, institutional reform, vetting of public employees and officials, or an appropriately conceived combination thereof, in order to, inter alia, ensure accountability, serve justice, provide remedies to victims, promote healing and reconciliation, establish independent oversight of the security system and restore confidence in the institutions of the State and promote the rule of law in accordance with international human rights law". It also highlights the point "that truth-seeking processes […] can *complement* judicial processes". The Human Rights Council "*stresses* the need within a sustainable transitional justice strategy to develop national prosecutorial capacities that are based on a clear commitment to combat impunity, to take into account the victim's perspective and to ensure compliance with human rights obligations concerning fair trials" (Human Rights Council 2009: 4). And it "*reaffirms* the responsibility of States to comply with their relevant obligations to prosecute those responsible for gross violations of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law constituting crimes under international law" with a view *to ending impunity* (ibid: 4).

Justice, democracy and the rule of law

Criminal trials or reconciliation commissions after the "Arab Spring"? In contemporary Arab societies, it appears there is no "political consensus about the best way forward" (Fatima Kastner in this volume) The finding that — as Fatima Kastner observes — "the concept of liberal democracy

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seems to have lost its brilliance, and it is no longer seen by a majority of the population as the only solution, but is rather regarded as part of a larger 'neo-colonial' problem" is particularly dramatic.

Tunisian constitutional scholar Ben Achour writes: "We have also understood that the legend of democracy, imported from the West, is dead. It was nothing but a lie circulated by all heads of state and government in the interests of the dictatorship, spread also by our Western friends in order to convince us that democracy is the privilege of the universe's beautiful noble nations, while for us dictatorship is better, as it gives us our daily bread. However, the country ultimately had neither a right to bread nor to freedom. The people rejected such lessons, and the idea of democracy thus received its honor and social dignity through the Tunisian people" (Ben Achour 2012).

Contemporary Western democracy undercuts its opportunities; it depends on conditions — equality under the law, freedom, justice and legality — that it increasingly fails to fulfill. Yet the human claim to dignity and equality is the foundation of democracy, and democracy must and can effect the protection of dignity and equality. That this can *de facto* only be achieved to a limited extent cannot mean that one should refrain from taking on this task. One insight is particularly important in this regard: *The way in which democracy guarantees dignity and equality of treatment is rooted not in popular sovereignty, but rather in the rule of law.* This rule is founded not on the strength of the strongest, nor in the opportunities afforded by a "free play of forces". The law is founded rather on a hierarchy of dynamic principles. We develop the law in our historical realization of ourselves as ends in ourselves. The dynamics of the principles are revealed in the historical differentiation of the principle of equality under the law as a human right: The normative concept of equality today includes the prohibition of de facto social inequality, discrimination against women and discrimination against foreigners, as well as the requirements of equal treatment, equal opportunity and equal distribution; material equality; the prohibition of arbitrariness; the prohibition of unconstitutional discrimination; and equal treatment in the legislative sphere.

If it is true "that current endeavors in the MENA region to initiate politics of transitional justice have been largely shaped by the objective of establishing classical national retributive judicial institutions rather than by mechanisms derived from the global transitional justice model" (Fatima Kastner in this volume), this could be due to two factors: (i) mistrust in the local ability to engage in mediation, or (ii) the desire to punish crimes. Fa-

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tima Kastner also identifies a third plausible factor: "simply the consequence of the persistence of the old regime's institutions (army, police, judiciary, etc.)". This argues that the restrained attitude toward non-judicial handing of the past is rooted in the fact that the "bitter hunger for justice and a better life" is linked with the hope — as yet unfulfilled outside of Tunisia — for a legal and constitutional democratic state.[7] This is attested to by Sarhan Dhouib's contribution in this volume, for example: "The issue of compensation, raised in the context of the discussion on transitional justice and the work of the Tunisian Truth Commission, was rejected by all philosophers interviewed in the project. Personal compensation was impossible, they said; however, anchoring the value of human beings and their fundamental rights in the still-to-be-written Tunisian constitution was the most important political response to the injustice experienced" (see also Dhouib, 2016).

Irrespective of which path is selected, an important problem remains to be solved with regard to following the "call for universal values and human rights", as noted by Fatima Kastner: While "the conventional global model is indeed prioritizing civil and political rights over other rights", economic, social and cultural rights, which have not to date been viewed under the *jus cogens* as belonging to the minimal set of human rights, must be given greater consideration in the end.

However, the establishment of a rule of law that guarantees these human rights faces major problems of more than a purely political nature. It cannot be overlooked that most Islamic Arab countries feature dense interweaving of Quranic precepts, Arab common law, Roman and other legal system elements, and elements of European law imported during the colo-

7 In his contribution to this volume, Jan Claudius Völkel observes with regard to Egypt: "Hence, many students and professors have lost the enthusiasm for the subject initially shown during the 2011 events, and are afraid to defend their opinions in public. Under these conditions, it will be difficult or impossible to establish a competitive and fruitful coexistence between state officials and critical social scientists – a crucial goal if Egypt were working seriously to deepen its democracy". Fatima Kastner states: "In the case of the post-"Arab Spring" societies, some former government leaders did indeed fall and new executive powers took their place, but overall, the hopes and dreams of most of the protesters did not came true. In fact some turned into true nightmares as documented by the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Syrians and other refugees from the MENA region to Northern Europe, fleeing the deadly threats of civil war, systematic terrorism and inhuman life conditions in their own countries".

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nial era. Nor can the conflict between norms — between the commitment to the *Quran* on the one hand, and to the United Nations Charter on the other — be dismissed. The majority of Islamic states have signed the UN Charter, and are thus committed to two contradictory systems of norms: one system that guarantees its citizens freedoms, and *Sharia*, which limits these freedoms.

Ideas, norms and concepts diffused in a context of mutual exchange

In the same way that this volume takes a transcultural perspective, the *Transformation Working Group of the Arab–German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities* (AGYA) poses the question of "how ideas, norms and concepts are diffused in a context of mutual exchange, and how scientific relations between Europe and the MENA region can be improved". This is an important and welcome initiative. This book, which reflects on transformations in scholarly disciplines, is of equally great importance for the Middle East and North Africa and for Europe, as much due to Fatima Kastner and Sarhan Dhouib's fundamental reflections on legal philosophy and philosophy as to the studies on specific consequences of the revolutionary developments for political science, literature, communications studies, informatics and archaeology.

In his contribution to this volume, Sarhan Dhouib identifies the motive for this initiative, the strength of which lies in large part in the fact that the authors from different Arab and European academic cultures have an equal chance to have their say: "The liberation from authoritarian directives and fear-driven self-censorship offers us the chance to introduce themes into the scholarly discussion […] that reflect critically on contemporary society, social affairs and culture. These topics include the discussion of experiences with injustice, human rights violations and the limits of freedom of expression, for example, but also issues of transitional justice and the culture of remembrance. In post-dictatorial society, these issues prove to be particularly charged inasmuch as they can become an engine of social and political transformation". What is key for Dhouib is "the recognition of cultural diversity and a plurality of forms of knowledge […]. The sensitivity to differences — whether this be within a culture or between cultures — leads to the demand that philosophers contextualize their guiding experiences and questions more strongly, both temporally and spatially. […] Transculturality thus does not emerge from the primacy

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of one dominant discourse over the others, but is rather the result of patient and open communication as well as constant critical engagement with one another". Especially under the current conditions of risky renationalization, this transcultural, transnational and transdisciplinary communication is essential.

The recognition of cultural diversity (without concessions to ethnic pluralism) and of epistemic and political pluralism is of crucial importance. "Pluralism" is the term for the attitude that it is more reasonable or sensible to embrace a heterogeneity, multiplicity and diversity of principles regarding what exists in the world, as well as toward epistemological and moral attitudes toward reality, than to believe in the homogeneity and unity of a world governed by a single substance or single unique principle, as asserted by ontological monism. From this mindset, with the recognition of de facto plurality in contrast to uniform compulsion, follows respect for diversity, difference and dissidence. One has to learn to resist the ravenous hunger for a *single* truth, and learn to deal with the problem of relativism without making concessions to an "anything goes" resignation. One then realizes that the pluralism of relations to reality in knowledge, in emotions, in value judgments and in modes of behavior is not a failing, but rather a form of human freedom. Freedom is not the same as chaos; it is not license for arbitrariness. Thinking and acting from a perspective of pluralism means presenting *truths in comparison*. From this emerge principles of a transformation without hegemonic claims — for example, those of Europe with regard to Arab societies; among these principles is what Sarhan Dhouib calls the "dual critique": "the critique of the dogmatic tendencies in the Arab–Islamic cultural area, but also of the hegemonic structures of the 'Western' states".

What is experimented with in thought, and remains a preliminary truth, must be accepted as a risk. There is no prescribed path. There is no such thing when dealing with truths. The contextuality of cultures of knowledge, which is tied to the diversity of cultures themselves, produces modest truth claims. Because of their individual particularities, cultures of knowledge are distinct ensembles of epistemic and practical contexts of representation. They shape the emergence and dynamics of knowledge, and claims to validity and standards for the justification of knowledge are articulated within their frameworks. In them are embedded a certain set of epistemic habits, certain kinds of evidence, perspectives and world-view-dependent presuppositions, convictions, semiotic conventions, conceptions regarding possible epistemic objectives, questions that are deemed

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useful or not along with their corresponding solutions, culturally specific practices and techniques, and the values, norms and rules recognized within such a context. However, there is one required path under the law — not the law per se, but the law in whose center stands the norms of respect for human dignity and human rights. *The contextuality of cultures of knowledge associated with cultural diversity does not justify legal relativism.* The legal system — insofar as it is a just legal system — sets limits to the free play allowed to relativity by means of legality with legitimacy.

The law and democracy are based on a hierarchy of principles whose basis is *human dignity* (Sandkühler 2015 b). To be sure, "human dignity" is a legal term that — like all legal terms — is subject to interpretation due to its abstract nature and openness; yet the fact that it is interpretable takes nothing away from its de facto function as a cornerstone of the constitution. Beyond dignity is only injury — this is what democrats under the rule of law think. They know they can reciprocally only demand consent to a social and state order under a certain condition; this condition is that the legal and state order grants certain minimal guarantees of dignity: (i) the security of life and the freedom from existential worry are guaranteed; (ii) gender, race, language and social origin, even if causes of de facto inequality, are not also grounds for normative inequality; (iii) the autonomous individual can act freely in the context of the fundamental rights to free development of the personality; equal treatment of different convictions, religious and political beliefs; the freedom of conscience and religion; and other basic rights; (iv) the rule of law serves as protection against the arbitrary use of force; and (v) the fundamental rights to life and physical integrity are respected.

If these fundamental rights are violated, resistance is legitimate. The creeping process of the surrender of fundamental rights, observable today, goes hand in hand with the privatization of the public spaces of democracy and the retreat of the social state and rule of law that is driven economically by neoliberalism and politically by conservatism.

From the perspective of the right to dissent, human rights law must be further developed, while at the same time respecting all freedom of self-determination, a condition that is consistent with the respect for others. From this follows the necessity of a *neutral* conception of the law. From this demand for neutrality, it does not follow that the conception of the law must be *value*-neutral; rather, it must correspond to the moral intuitions and value judgments shared by the majority of the people, who can distinguish between right and wrong.

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A law committed to justice demands the inclusion of difference and respects the freedom of alterity. Therefore, international human rights law is taking on ever greater importance. Its positive legal norms are the mirror of a universalizable and universalized moral system; it combines in itself the moral intuitions that bring about the broadest possible consensus in the contemporary world. This legal system, which is at the same time a moral system, draws its transculturally universal grounds for validity from the fact that it is neutral toward ideologies, world views, religions, and any subjective or particular preferences derived from these. Spontaneous moral solidarity cannot be expected given the human "unsociable sociability" of which Kant speaks, or under the conditions of an unjust world order. What can be realistically expected, and is at least already partially realized in international law, is the *juridical cosmopolitanism of human-rights law*.

A conclusion

This law can only be realized following revolutionary upheavals if the transformation of the states into *states under the rule of law* succeeds. This not only means that law and statutory order prevail, but also that societies develop on the basis of the guarantee of fundamental rights and human rights, characterized by their openness to alternatives and the mutual recognition of people's legitimate needs and freedoms. Even for states that have *de facto* returned to a state of dictatorship, this is the only perspective.

After the injustice — as shown by the heterogeneous and perspectively diverse developments in the Middle East and in Arab States — there is certainly no panacea for handling the crimes committed under the dictatorships, which are being addressed by governments today to only a marginal extent if at all. However, four minimal principles can be identified, without which there can be no solution to the problem: (i) the prohibition on retroactivity is a legal interest that must be protected; it should be suspended only for the crimes identified in the Nuremberg principles or in the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court. (ii) The only possible basis for dealing with injustice justly is the democratic state under the rule of law, with its justice system bound tightly by the strictures of law and statutory order. (iii) The normative basis for the judgment of injustice cannot be found in private morals and private conceptions of justice; rather, it

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inheres in the positive legal norms of respect for human dignity and human rights, the *jus cogens,* and international criminal law as standards of criminal prosecution. (iv) After dictatorships, an essential task for all state institutions and civil society rests in the clarification of the legitimacy of criminal law norms, and in the formation of a moral consciousness among individuals that enables them to recognize guilt and distinguish between right and wrong, between justice and injustice, and between perpetrators and victims, and allow them to administer a just punishment on perpetrators in order to prevent injuring the victims anew.

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Abstracts

3 Middle East Studies and Academic Cooperation in the Wake of the Arab Uprisings
Florian Kohstall

The Arab uprisings represented a watershed event for Middle East studies. They have allowed us to reflect critically not only on our own scholarly output, but also on the relations between foreign and local scholars, and on appropriate formats for academic cooperation. In this article, I explore some of the new research trends that have emerged since the uprisings. While current circumstances in the region have left the discipline in a fragile and fragmented position, it is important to remember the vivid debates of 2011 and 2012, with the aim of building on them for future cooperative projects. Reviewing the research literature from this period, I identify the need for more comparative analyses in the field of Middle East studies, as well as for greater inclusion of local scholarship.

4 Political Science in Egypt: Talkin' Bout a Revolution
Jan Claudius Völkel

This article describes the experiences of a long-term political science lecturer for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) who started teaching Euro-Mediterranean Studies at Cairo University's prestigious Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS) in February 2013. Though the political science field — like all social sciences — has been subject to increasing pressure by the Egyptian authorities, particularly since the military coup in summer 2013, the author has continued to receive considerable positive responses from students seriously interested in analyses of the European Union, political developments in the Middle East and North Africa, and relations between the two regions. However, the fundamental differences in how political science is understood in Egypt and in Europe, especially in Germany since 1945, has led to some significant challenges: While in Egypt, political science is primarily used to educate future members of the public administration and the state institutions,

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less emphasis is placed on critical thinking and the value of developing an independent perspective on narrated truths. In consequence, students and colleagues who dare to criticize the government or its actions risk exposing themselves to legal consequences, rather than being able to expect academic rewards for advancing the quality of Egyptian political science. Hence, many students and professors have lost the enthusiasm for the subject they initially showed during the 2011 events, and are afraid to defend their opinions in public. Under these conditions, it will be difficult or impossible to establish competitive and fruitful coexistence between state officials and critical social scientists — a crucial goal if Egypt were working seriously to deepen its democracy.

5 Opening Up the Text: Arabic Literary Studies on the Move
Barbara Winckler and Christian Junge

The uprisings associated with the "Arab Spring" since 2010 have had a multifaceted impact on the field of Arabic literary studies in general and in Germany in particular. The political protests in the Arab world evolved along with a "cultural revolution" that sees literature and art as tools of the "new political". In consequence, Arabic literary studies have begun revisiting the relationship between literature and society, thereby "opening up" the concept of the traditional literary text. Scholars of Arabic literature are now eager to study new text forms such as blogs, graffiti and slogans and explore the sociopolitical conditions of texts and the sociocultural practices of writing. However, this opening up is by no means limited to academic research in Arabic literary studies. Indeed, practices of networking, language instruction and societal commitment throughout the discipline are opening up. Strengthening collaborative research efforts among scholars based in the West and the Arab world, teaching Arabic as a modern language of communication and knowledge production, and demonstrating societal commitment in the growing presence of Arab refugees and migrants in Germany, the field of Arabic literary studies is on the move.

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6 An Uprising in Teaching Arabic Language
Bilal Orfali, Rana Siblini and Maha Houssami

The Arab uprisings that began in 2010 brought change not only to Arabs, but also to the study of their language. Traditional textbooks used to teach Arabic as a foreign language were of little help in understanding the colloquial speech and slang of the angry protesters demanding the fall of various regimes. Arabic left the elite *majlis* (literary salon) to dwell in the public *maydan* (square). Certainly, travel to the region became more difficult and at times dangerous, although it has become increasingly important to learn the language in the social and cultural setting where it is actually used. Lebanon became an unlikely shelter for students who had been studying in Egypt and Syria. New teaching methods necessitated the abandonment of the glamour of classical Arabic and efforts to blend Modern Standard Arabic with its dialects, a phenomenon that has become increasingly visible in the media and in literature. Students in intensive Arabic summer programs, such as the program of the American University of Beirut, were required to leave their traditional classrooms in order to mingle and communicate with native speakers, refugees and disadvantaged groups in the streets. This shift has left its mark on the curriculum, in part through an increase in the use of pop songs, slogans and talk shows as classroom teaching materials.

7 Justice in Transformation:
Rethinking Theory and Practice of the Global Transitional Justice Model
Fatima Kastner

This article aims to investigate whether and to what extent the policies of transitions initiated in post-revolution societies in the aftermath of the so-called "Arab Spring" have affected the academic socio-legal discourse on transitional justice. Starting with a brief history of transitional justice as a normative concept, this contribution then presents the standard tools of transitional justice that had been developed for transitioning societies in order to address systematic violations of human rights perpetrated by former dictatorial or authoritarian regimes. In addition to strict retributive instruments like ad-hoc international and hybrid criminal tribunals, further elements of the present global transitional justice model include restorative and restitutive mechanisms such as commissions of inquiry, truth and

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reconciliation commissions, lustration policies, reparations programs, and memorials. Socio-legal debates on transitional justice usually focus exactly on these standardized elements of transitional justice, weighing up the pros and cons of various measures to address a violent past as a means of promoting lasting peace and processes of democratization and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Current scholarly discussions regarding the Arab uprisings seem to follow that general line of human rights discourse. Yet, given both the cultural particularities of the region as well as the systematic nature of economic wrongdoings committed in many pre-revolution societies, there is a strong demand to widen the present, rather liberal, understanding of transitional justice both in the direction of local notions of justice as well as economic accountability.

8 Philosophy in Transition — Philosophy of Transition
Sarhan Dhouib

In his dual role as actor and observer, the author of this article reflects on specific events, projects and issues in philosophy and philosophical practice in the wake of the uprisings in North Africa from an autobiographical perspective. In doing so, he asks whether philosophy in an authoritarian state can be understood as a form of resistance, and seeks to define the role that it should take in a post-dictatorial society. Can philosophy contribute to societal transformation, and what institutional transformations must it go through itself? The article advocates the renewal of philosophy as a transcultural project.

9 Communication Studies in Transformation —
Self-Reflections on an Evolving Discipline in Times of Change
Carola Richter and Hanan Badr

In this article, we review the scientific knowledge produced in communication studies of media change and the transformation of communication after the Arab uprisings. We critically examine the wave of techno-deterministic euphoria in the mainstream communication studies literature of the last decade, contrasting it with more cautious evaluations of media effects. Furthermore, we ask whether scholars located in the Arab world can contribute to a reorientation of communication studies, and if so, how they

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can achieve this. We conclude by stating that the Arab uprisings were indeed a major catalyst for rethinking the impact of the media on political and social change within the field of communication studies.

10 Webs of Change? The Transformation of Online Social Networks and Communication Infrastructures from a Technological Point of View
Tobias Amft and Kalman Graffi

Online social networks and online real-time communication tools have gained significant popularity in the last few years. During the Arab uprisings they emerged as one of the main tools for exchanging ideas and for organizing activities. In this article, we review the technology and infrastructures of online social communication, as well as the weaknesses that rendered it susceptible to spying, censorship and blocks. We additionally highlight current research trends, examining how these obstacles can be overcome. Specifically, we present networking technologies that provide tools which enable users to make their communication resilient, secure and impossible to track. Thus, we investigate social communication during but also beyond the Arab uprisings from the perspective of computer science, and combine the resulting insights with current developments in this discipline.

11 The Damage Done: The "Arab Spring", Cultural Heritage and Archaeologists at Risk
Ammar Abdulrahman

The Arab uprisings have not only affected the politics of Middle Eastern and North African countries. Instability and militant power struggles are also endangering the preservation of the cultural heritage in these regions. The field of archaeology faces tremendous challenges to safeguard valuable artifacts from historical eras, particularly in Syria, but also in Iraq, Egypt and Libya. The author argues that the cultural heritage of this region is much more than a local issue — as a global matter, it concerns all of humanity.

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