



Call for Papers for an Academic Workshop:

DIASPORAS AND CHALLENGES TO STATEHOOD IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Organized by Dr. Maria Koinova, Reader in International Relations
on 28-29 September, 2017 at Warwick University as part of the larger ERC Project
conference "Diasporas and Contested Sovereignty: Lessons Learned about
Transnational Diaspora Mobilizations in Europe"

The Middle East and North Africa have witnessed numerous conflicts, international interventions, attempts at liberalization during the Arab uprisings, consolidation of authoritarian regimes, conflict-generated migration, and growth of non-state actors seeking to develop alternative political orders. Diasporas have played an important role in these processes by supporting or challenging regimes and state institutions, participating in state-building and economic development, and rendering financial and emotional support to families, religious institutions, and political causes, among others.

This workshop seeks to consolidate a scholarly discussion about the role of diasporas linked to the Middle East and North Africa from the Global North and South, and to move on from initial consideration of diasporas as simply conflict or peace actors. It will look into broader conflict and postconflict dynamics, where a variety of domestic and international actors influence political processes, and endorse or challenge weak states, their governance or international recognition. The workshop seeks to address the following questions: When do diasporas mobilize with their loyalties towards sectarian or nationalist factions, and when do they do so on the basis of citizenship and cosmopolitan ideas? When and how do they seek transitional justice for past atrocities and what is the role of trauma for their mobilizations? How do original home-states in the Middle East and North Africa and non-state actors operating on their territories reach out to diasporas abroad? When do diasporas sympathize with their causes or when do they oppose them? What is the role of self-interest of diaspora entrepreneurs vs. collective interests? What is the impact of gender and race? How do contexts of host-states and spaces within and beyond them, as well as liberal and non-liberal regimes shape diaspora mobilizations?

Between 2012-2017 researchers within the ERC Project "Diasporas and Contested Sovereignty" have studied the Iraqi, Kurdish and Palestinian diasporas in Europe. Discussions and previous workshops with collaborators have brought also important dynamics related to the Egyptian, Jewish, Lebanese, Syrian, and Turkish among other diasporas. This workshop seeks to deepen and expand those conversations.

If you are interested to participate, please send a paper abstract of max. 300 words by 10 July, 2017 to Dr. Maria Koinova at m.koinova@warwick.ac.uk. The abstract needs to address: the research question, central hypothesis/argument, theoretical framework in which the research is embedded, methodology and empirical cases. The organizers will decide over the selected abstracts by 15 July, 2017. Limited financial support will be available. Selected papers will be invited for a special journal issue to be submitted to an ISI-ranked journal.