



**Oriental  
Institute**  
The Czech Academy  
of Sciences

## **Democracy in the Political Culture of the Middle East, Asia, and Russia**

Wednesday, September 16, 2015

9.00–15.30

Národní 3, Prague 1, room 206, The Czech Academy of Sciences

Organized by the Oriental Institute, The Czech Academy of Sciences

Partner Event of the 19th Forum 2000 Conference

### **Program**

8.30 – 9.00 *Registration, Coffee and Refreshments*

9.00 – 9.30 Welcoming Remarks

#### **9.30 – 11.00 Panel I. - Middle East**

Shadi Hamid: The Brookings Institution

[“Rethinking Islamism and Democracy after the Arab Uprisings”](#)

Gaétan du Roy: Université Catholique de Louvain Belgium. Clement Steuer: Oriental Institute CAS

[“The Conceptions of Democracy in Egypt during the Transitional Period \(2011–2013\)”](#)

Rukiye Tinas: Science Po/Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi

[“The National Political Culture: An Obstacle to the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey”](#)

11.00 – 11.30 *Coffee Break*

#### **11.30 – 13.00 Panel II. – Iran and Central Asia**

Naghmeh Sohrabi: Brandeis University, Crown Centre for Middle East Studies

[“What is My Vote? Electoral Practice and Democracy in Iran”](#)

Thomas Ruttig: Afghanistan Analysts Network

[“Afghans and Democracy: From Hope to Scepticisms”](#)

Vera Exnerova: Oriental Institute CAS

[“Understandings of Democracy in Uzbekistan”](#)

13.00 – 14.00 *Lunch*

14.00 – 15.30 **Panel III. – China and Russia**

Jie Lu: American University

“Democratic Conceptions and Regime Support among Chinese Citizens”

Ondrej Klimes: Oriental Institute CAS

“Uyghur Visions of Democracy and Righteous Governance”

Karel Svoboda: Charles University

“Russia: Can 'Managed Democracy' Be Called Democracy?”

### **Conference Topic:**

Democracy plays a crucial role in the efforts of the Western world to promote peace and stability and maintain international security. However, in recent years, countries such as China and Russia have explicitly offered an alternative model to Western democracy. Specifically, the political elites of these countries have pushed forward their own interpretation of democracy to the public, both domestically and internationally, one which builds on national cultural and political traditions and contradicts the claims for universality common in the West. The conceptualizations of democracy based on nationalist and anti-Western discourse often serve the purpose of legitimizing illiberal practices in these countries. Furthermore, non-universalistic discourses on democracy have become popular among diverse non-state actors, such as Islamic movements, non-formal authorities, or civil society across the Middle East and Central Asia. These developments have important implications for both the efforts aimed at the promotion of democracy and for the advance of democracy in general. On one hand, the way that people conceptualize democracy has a significant impact on the political processes in these countries and the prospects for democracy in the future. On the other hand, the Western governments, NGOs and academics often fail to address the intentions and actions of the political elites and non-state actors in relation to democracy or respond to them appropriately.

The conference will seek to address the question of democracy in the political culture of the Middle East and Asia. We are particularly interested in producing a comparative view on the subject and bringing together experts who address the issue from different points of view (states, political elites, opposition movements, non-state actors, civil society) and different cultural and political milieus.

### **Speakers' Profiles:**

**Shadi Hamid** is a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Center for Middle East Policy and the author of *Temptations of Power: Islamists and Illiberal Democracy in a New Middle East* (Oxford University Press), which was named a Foreign Affairs Best Book for 2014. An expert on Islamist movements, Hamid served as director of research at the Brookings Doha Center until January 2014. Prior to joining Brookings, he was director of research at the Project on Middle East



Democracy (POMED) and a Hewlett Fellow at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law. He is currently vice-chair of POMED's board of directors and a contributing writer to *The Atlantic*. Hamid received his B.S. and M.A. from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and his Ph.D. in political science from Oxford University.

**Clément Steuer** is a political scientist, research fellow at the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. His PhD thesis has been published in 2012 under the title *Le Wasat sous Moubarak*. He is currently working on the political party system in Egypt, and did several field trips in Egypt, especially during the elections, funded by the CEDEJ and the Région Rhône-Alpes. He edited a special issue of the CEDEJ journal, *Égypte Monde arabe*, published in 2013 under the title *Les élections de la révolution*.

**Gaétan du Roy** is a post-doctoral researcher at the FNRS (the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research). In 2014, he obtained a PhD at Louvain-la-Neuve university, after an extensive fieldwork partly funded by the French research centre in Egypt (CEDEJ). His doctoral study was about the uses of tradition, and the resources of an individual redemption theology within the charismatic tendency of the Orthodox Coptic religion. This research relied on a study of a place of worship and of the history of the priest who created it in the garbage collectors neighbourhood of the Muqattam.

**Rukiye Tinas** is assistant professor at the Political Science and Public Administration department, Eskisehir Osmangazi University (Turkey). She taught until September 2015 at Sciences Po Lyon in France. Her research focuses on the Middle East region and especially on Turkey. She is a member of the Administration Board of the Research Union on the Middle East (Cercle des Chercheurs sur le Moyen-Orient) in Paris and Research associate at the European Institute for Research on Mediterranean and Euro-Arab Cooperation (MEDEA) in Brussels. At the same time, she is a visiting Assistant Professor at Galatasaray University in Istanbul and a member of the Triangle Laboratory (Action, Discourse, Political and Economic Thought) of Lyon.

**Naghmeb Sohrabi** is the Charles (Corky) Goodman Professor of Middle East History and the Associate Director for Research at the Crown Center for Middle East Studies. She is the author of the book *Taken for Wonder: Nineteenth Century Travel Accounts from Iran to Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2012) and numerous articles on Iranian history and culture. She is the 2014 recipient of a Mellon New Directions Fellowship, and is currently researching a book on the experience of the 1979 revolution in Iran. Her courses include the history of modern Middle East and modern Iran, Nationalism in the Middle East, and The Event in History. In addition, she oversees the publication of the *Crown Center's Middle East Briefs*, and the *Crown Working Papers*.

**Thomas Ruttig** is a founder, co-director and senior analyst of the Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN), an independent think tank based in Kabul and Berlin. He graduated in Afghan Studies from Humboldt University (Berlin) and speaks both Pashto and Dari fluently. Starting in 1983, he has spent more than ten years in Afghanistan and Pakistan, most of it from 2000 onwards: as a political affairs officer and head of various offices for the UNSMA and UNAMA missions, deputy to the EU Special Representative and as a councillor at the German Embassy. Since 2006, he is a freelance political analyst and consultant, a visiting fellow at SWP Berlin and with AAN since 2009.

**Věra Exnerová** is Research Fellow at the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Her regional expertise focuses on Central Asia and Afghanistan and local views on Islam, politics, and democracy. She was visiting fellow at Institut Français d'Etudes sur l'Asie Centrale, Harvard University and Moscow State University. In 2007-2008 she lived and worked in Afghanistan. Her recent publications include "Radical Islam From Below: The Mujaddidiya and Hizb-ut-Tahrir in the Ferghana Valley" In Pauline Jones Luong, Islam, *Society and Politics in Central Asia*. University of Pittsburgh Press 2016.

**Jie Lu** is Associate Professor of Government at American University. He studies local governance, the political economy of institutional change, public opinion, and political participation. His regional expertise focuses on the Greater China Region and East Asia. His work has appeared in *Comparative Political Studies*, *Comparative Politics*, *Political Psychology*, *Politics & Society*, *Political Communication*, *Journal of Democracy*, and other journals. He is the author of *Varieties of Governance in China: Migration and Institutional Change in Chinese Villages* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015).

**Ondřej Klimeš** is Research Fellow at the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. His expertise focuses on Uyghur national identity and nationalism in Republican Xinjiang. He published a monograph *Struggle by the Pen: The Uyghur Discourse of Nation and Nationalism, c. 1900–1949* (Brill, 2015). He is currently focusing on contemporary politics of the People's Republic of China and Xinjiang.

**Karel Svoboda** teaches at the Institute of International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences of the Charles University. His main areas of interest are Russian politics and transformation processes in Eastern and Central Europe. During the academic year 2012/2013, he was a Fulbright Teaching Fellow at the University of Rochester, New York, US. His recent publications include "Cooperation or Dependency? The Shift in Relations between Belarus and Russia in 2006" In Karasek T. *European Union in a New Security Environment*, Prague 2006, pp. 87-110.

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If you are interested in attending the conference, **please register** via e-mail address [kubalek@orient.cas.cz](mailto:kubalek@orient.cas.cz). Registration is open until Monday, *September 14, 2015*.



**Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Czech Republic**