

Transition, State of exception or Exceptional states: Constitutional Challenges in the MENA region

November 24th 2023 – 3-6 PM

Sciences Po Paris, room 907, 9 rue de la chaise 75007 Paris

Organized by Sciences Po Law School, the Constitutional Studies Center at An-Najah National University, Palestine, and the *Société française de philosophie politique et juridique* (SFPJ)

Join us for a discussion between law and politics, where experts will be addressing issues of transition and states of exception, and the interplay between the ruled and the rulers in the Middle East and North-Africa (MENA region). A major focus will be the interdisciplinary work of S. Alsarghali, S. Mabon, A. Ruished (eds), [States of Exception or Exceptional States—Law, Politics and Giorgio Agamben in the Middle East](#), I.B. Tauris/Bloomsbury, 2022.

In the shadowed interstices of power and authority, the “state of exception”, as conceptualized by Giorgio Agamben, emerges as a liminal space where governance detours from the normative path, suspending legal protections. Like a landscape, it is a terrain where the colonial constructs of “othering” find fertile ground. Within this domain, individuals become mere life forms—bereft of political value, rendered voiceless. Channeling Edward Said's eloquent critique of imperialist narratives, one could argue that the state of exception allows for the perpetual marginalization of the subaltern, where their stories are silenced, their identities overshadowed, and their rights negated. It's a space of both Agamben's juridical ambiguities and Said's cultural dislocations.

Program

I. State of Exception and the Constitutional Dilemmas in Constitutional Design

Guillaume Tusseau: Professor of Public Law, Sciences Po Paris, Member of the Institut universitaire de France

Eleonora Bottini: Professor of Public Law at the University of Caen Normandy and Martin-Flynn Global Law Professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law

II. States of Exception or Exceptional States: Law, Politics in the Middle East

Simon Mabon, Professor of International Politics, Director of SEPAD (the Sectarianism, Proxies, and De-Sectarianization Project), Lancaster University

Sanaa Alsarghali: Assistant Professor of Constitutional and director of the Constitutional Studies Center, An-Najah National University

Nathan J. Brown: Professor of political science and international affairs at George Washington University

III. *Transition, State of Exception, and in between: Theory, Practice, and Courts' Roles*

Christina Murray: Senior member of the Mediation Support Standby Team of the United Nations' Department of Political Affairs

Zaid Al Ali: Senior Program Manager in Constitution-Building in the Africa and West Asia region at IDEA international