Brief synopses of new Arabic-language publications


This volume covers the most important developments, within both international and regional frameworks, witnessed by the Arab region during 2015 as well as the first three months of 2016 in the spheres of politics and economics. Each volume in this series is published by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies for the purpose of recording developments in the Arab world and ways and means for dealing with them by Arab governments and societies.

The book is comprised of three parts. Part 1 consists of three chapters dealing with developments in the international order, its active forces and interactions between them as well as their repercussions on Arab countries. These include developments in Turkey and Iran with regard to their geostrategic proximity to the region, as well as reference to relations with Ethiopia and the overall ‘Arab order’ perspective on key issues and interactions as well as institutional performance including that of the League of Arab States.

Part 2 consists of three chapters focusing on internal political developments in the Arab countries as well as the most significant challenges facing the various regimes including developments in civil service institutions within them. This is in addition to developments connected to the Arab economies with regard to their structures as well as their average growth rates with reference to the economic and human costs of current conflicts and wars along with increased military spending.

Part 3 comprises five chapters covering important developments in the bloody and destructive conflict in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen as well as the Palestinian issue and the Arab–Israeli conflict.

The facts, analyses and informed opinions contained in the chapters of this volume point to the increasing dangers surrounding the Arab countries in confronting their governments. Many of these dangers emanate from within and are associated with the real possibility of a breakup or collapse of the state or central government. This is to say nothing of the political, social and economic crises becoming exacerbated, as witnessed by indicators of poverty, unemployment, inflation, budget deficits and the increasing resort to violence in daily life. Sources of danger are also external. Some of these take the form of ‘nationalization’ of foreign labour, given that foreign nationals are being granted citizenship privileges (in the Gulf), whereby they become integrated into the political framework and active members in decision-making that affect the future of the state. Other threats are to be found in the development of the roles of neighbouring nations as active players in Arab relations, to say nothing of Israeli encroachments and violations in the case of the ongoing expansion of settlements in Palestine and the use of various forms of oppression against the Palestinian people.

This book comprises a compendium of research articles about contemporary developments, events and problems encountered in the Palestinian case that explore the relevant cultural, political, economic and social dimensions of Palestinian reality.

The publication of this volume coincides with the escalation of events that have rocked the region since the outbreak of uprisings of the ‘Arab Spring’ that inundated the Arab political scene and automatically led to a regression in the prominence of place accorded to the Palestinian issue in the Arab psyche, resulting from Arab societies becoming embroiled in the conflagrations of their local issues and differences. This is while certain other Arab regimes succeeded in deflecting events and steering towards polarizations far removed from the Palestinian issue and the Arab–Israeli conflict towards ones predicated on feeding other divisions within the region, especially sectarian ones. These trends resulted in the marginalization of the Palestinian issue and its downgrading in both the Arab and international spheres.

The book has two main parts. Part 1 deals with the political–cultural dimensions of the Palestinian issue, including Palestinian identity, nationalist thought among Palestinian Arabs in Israel with the role of progressive nationalist movements on the rise, Palestinian political thought in Israel during the 1980s and 1990s, and the Palestinian–Israeli peace process, as well as the roots of Palestinian division over the issues and its development. Part 2 covers the socio-economic dimensions of the Palestinian issue including the educational and economic aspects of the Israeli initiative against occupied Jerusalem, and, in particular, the neo-liberal content of education and its effects in the context of the colonized Palestinian. In addition, the impact of neo-liberal policies is explored as well as the potential to resist them in the context of educating Palestinian students and, in particular, Palestinian refugee students residing in Lebanon as well the dimensions of cultural subordination during the period of the British Mandate over Palestine.


This book follows the uprisings of the ‘Arab Spring’ that erupted in Tunisia at the end of 2010, which spread to the streets of Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria and impelled millions of people to demand dignity, democracy and social justice, all of which excited expectations for change and replacement of the social and political dynamics throughout the region.

However, almost five years since these uprisings occurred, the author sees that various counter forces, including those of previous regimes as well as Islamic extremism have come to dominate the forces of opposition. The pendulum has swung back, once again, after the incapacity to redress the root social, economic and political causes of the uprisings. This is particularly the case with regard to the failure to overcome the chronic obstacle and solve the impasse of growth that impacts skyrocketing rates of unemployment, especially among the youth, which are both attributable to the failure of the neo-liberal model in the Arab region.

The final result is the remnants of the previous regimes and the forces of Islamist extremism are engaged in a bloody conflict over power and are completely bereft of any shred of democracy, freedom, social justice or rule of law. Instead, a number of dictatorships came to prominence in the Arab region, much worse than what had come before them and coinciding with the eruption of other wars in Syria, Yemen and Libya where hundreds of thousands have been
killed and millions displaced. The author sees that the Arab region will not achieve stability so long as it does not witness genuine and radical social change led by progressive forces, which, as yet, remain marginalized, isolated and far removed from the political scene.


This work is based on the role of the intellectual endeavouring to seek enlightenment while respecting the epistemological criteria of knowledge, justice and beauty – that which he needs to be able to reconcile between himself and the respect of others and his right to criticize. This is in contradistinction to the stance of a propagandist who rejects criticism or constrains its utility to mask contradictions and hide flaws and errors while promoting autocracy and oppression and anything resembling it. Along these lines, the author presents a critical reading of the course of the communist movement with the goal of shedding a light on its shortcomings and avoiding future mistakes.

The author opts not to present himself as a propagandist but rather broaches the subject of the communist leaderships in Iraq by means of ‘self criticism’. He deals with their withdrawal and isolation from the masses and their receiving instructions from the international leadership of the communist party at the highest levels at the Center in addition to their endeavouring to adapt national interests to those of the Center. All this was without a popular base or connection to other popular or communist leaderships, leading to its attrition and its relations and goals not being regularized or systematized. This was to the extent that it precipitated the defection of a large number of its members to the liberal trend and the espousal of the values of the market, especially in the wake of the collapse of the former Soviet Union.

The book comprises five parts. Part 1 is devoted to a critical reading of the crisis of the communist intellectual, especially in his attempts to submit to the political as well as the relationship between the politics and the party as well as that between the party and the cultural. Part 2 deals with the position of the intellectual vis-à-vis ‘the other’ and concerns a comprehensive conceptual methodology and exclusive reasoning. Part 3 pertains to the doctrine of crisis through culture and the role of culture and the confusion of the relation to the political. Part 4 revolves around researches and lectures on the intellectual confronting the crisis of culture. Lastly, Part 5 presents four studies on the intellectual and the crisis of the national liberation movement, the intellectual and the Palestinian Intifada, the intellectual and the crisis of Marxism, and the intellectual and the concerns of communism and nationalism.


First published in 1970, this book is now in its sixth edition; and the discussions that still revolve around it attest to its continuing relevance. The introduction suggests that it will maintain its contemporaneity and its relevance, in the utilitarian sense, so long as the phenomenon of factionalism continues to dominate our social, cultural and political existence and so long as our history precludes effective integration in the period of scientific and secular modernity of vast horizons and opportunities.
This book served as a counterpoint to the view prevalent during the 1960s that the matter of factionalism was a Lebanese issue and was set up externally to cover capitalist policies and that it would disappear of a necessity once the movement of Arab Nationalism and socialist reform proved victorious. Such was true both with regard to its analysis of the phenomenon of factionalism as well as its criticism of it and recommendations for ways to overcome it. The contentions of the book have largely been vindicated by what the entire Arab region has experienced, with the case of Lebanon, in particular, being one of massive control of the phenomenon of factionalism over minds, policies, and the ongoing struggles and transformations. This is in addition to the questions it raises about the terrifying scenes we are witnessing today and the means for finding an exit.

It is from this perspective that the book can be situated at the heart of the battle and is useful from a number of angles for persons concerned about or who work in Lebanon and neighbouring regions who wish to bring about a society that transcends factionalism; one that could rightly be termed a ‘new society’.


This volume contains a collection of various texts culled from research, articles, opening addresses and books written by the author in addition to transcripts of television interviews and broadcasts in which he featured over recent years. These deal with various cases and issues of the Arab nation as well as its concerns, problems, and the threats and dangers it faces both at present and will likely continue in future, as well as the means for bringing about its awakening and unity. Among the overarching themes are Arab unity, democracy, independent growth, social justice, national and popular independence, and the renewal of Arab civilization.

In the collections contained in the book, Haseeb takes up the Israeli wars against Lebanon and Gaza and the development of situations in Iraq and in Arab reality through its interaction with regional and international changes.

Perhaps, among the most prominent of the texts are those that deal with objective criteria defined and laid out by the author for the success of any popular mobilization or revolutionary uprising in the Arab countries over the last five years. Among these, he singles out four factors crucial to the success of any uprising: (1) breaking the barrier of fear of regimes; (2) ensuring that any uprising be peaceful and non-violent in nature; (3) ensuring that any movement provides a minimum level of social cohesion and mutual sentiments towards Arab unity; and (4), the neutral position of the army or its positive predisposition vis-à-vis any popular/civil insurrection. In the light of these criteria, the author provides an analytical tool for discerning the reasons for the success or failure of the uprisings of the ‘Arab Spring’. He undertakes an assessment of each *intifada* on the basis of these four criteria; and the selected criteria affirm that the developments in these correlate to the degrees to which each of these was met. As for those uprisings that satisfied all four criteria, they can be judged as ‘successful’, whereas those which met most of them were accorded partial success. Uprising that did not meet these four criteria to any significant degree were not destined for success.

This book discusses the phenomenon of terrorism in Iraq, its causes and possible solutions, the failure of the Iraqi political class, which came to power in the wake of the American invasion of the country in 2003, to construct a modern state, put an end to the violence or combat terrorism. This was in addition to its failure to deal with the formation of a viable infrastructure for exercising political authority through setting-up a nation-state far removed from Iraqi sectarian and factional divisions.

The book emphasizes the importance of dealing with the failures of the American invasion of Iraq by inciting civil strife, breaking up the territorial integrity of the country as well as spreading administrative and financial corruption and utter chaos.

The book is comprised of six chapters. The first deals with the rubric of terrorism and the relevant terminology and concepts associated with the term. Chapter 2 deals with the phenomenon of terrorism and its goals, while chapter 3 covers different levels of terrorism and their effects within Iraq. Chapter 4 endeavours to expose the repercussions of regional and international terrorism; and chapter 5 examines terrorist organizations and the techniques they have employed to penetrate Iraqi defences. The final chapter assesses the chaos among particular institutions, offices and organizations resulting from terrorism in a post-Da’sh (ISIS) Iraq along with the necessity for all sides concerned to confront terrorism and curtail its criminal activities in the country.


As noted in the introduction of this book, the state of salafism or takfiri salafism is not a new phenomenon within the Arab region. However, with its spread and adoption of a terrorist orientation along the lines witnessed over the last decade, following the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the subsequent wave of uprisings during the ‘Arab Spring’ as well as the challenges and collapses they spawned, takfiri salafism has taken on a new dimension. The collapse of the Iraqi state in the wake of the American invasion provided fertile ground for jihadist salafism among a new generation that is different in its recruitment and mobilization than what had come before and in the determination of its priorities and stolid confrontation of groups within Arab society instead of confronting the United States.

The intifadas of the ‘Arab Spring’ spilled over into some of the countries in a way that permitted them to preserve their unity and the centrality of the state, as was the case with Tunisia and Egypt, but which, in other countries, fomented the decline of the unity of the state and its centrality along with the loss of its authority in wide sectors of the countries, such as transpired in Syria, Libya and Yemen. With this and along with the conflation of the salafist-takfiri role and its influence, the Arab region entered into a new historical phase that witnessed the disappearance of most of the general slogans and public concerns that had prevailed in most Arab countries during the previous era of the central Arab nation-states.

The book has eight chapters. The first presents the inception of the organization of the so-called ‘Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant’ – Da’sh (ISIS/ISIL) along with the Arab, regional and international circumstances that factored in the rise of this organization. The second
chapter deals with the terrorist threats by Da’sh to the nation-state, while the third researches the roots of terrorist practices in the region. The fourth chapter deals with the question of the legacy and problems of jihadists linked to the thought of Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) and jihadist salafism. The fifth chapter discusses ideas for confronting the practices of terrorist organizations by working to establish a state of law, justice and growth alongside security measures. The sixth chapter examines the Alexandria salaﬁst da’wah (propagation/call) organization in Egypt, while the seventh covers Gulf salaﬁst in the light of ongoing Arab transformations. The eighth chapter is concerned with ways for crystallizing a cultural strategy to confront the takfiri situation.

The infernos of Yemen, eyewitness accounts from within: From the collapse of the state of South Yemen to the collapse of the state, by Khayr Allah Khayr Allah, Cairo, Dar al-‘Arab li-l-nashr wa al-Tawzi’; and Beirut, al-Dar al-arabi li-l-Uluum-Naashirun, 2016, 482 pp., ISBN 9786140118775

The author of this book, who is among the most prominent observers and followers of events in Yemen, sheds a light on the crucial events and history of contemporary Yemen. These include the collapse of the state of South Yemen, the period of Yemeni union beginning in 1990, the summer war of 1994 and the coup against the regime of former Yemeni President ‘Ali ‘Abdullah Saleh in 2011, followed by the rise of the Huthis, and the collapse of the interim period that was followed by the coup against Yemeni President ‘Abed Rabbuh Mansour Hadi.

The author presents the infighting that occurred between the comrades of the Yemeni Socialist Party in Aden in January 1986 in dealing with the events that preceded the collapse of the state of South Yemen. He also focuses on the personality of ‘Ali ‘Abdullah Saleh who ruled Yemen for 33 years and who was able to achieve unity in 1990. Saleh was continually searching for internal balances and dynamics that would allow him to maintain control from his position as president of the republic and head of the most powerful political party – the People’s General Conference. The author deals with the alliance that persisted between Saleh and the Islamists of al-Tajammu’ al-Yamani li-l-Islah (the Yemeni Alliance for Reform) before the summer war of 1994 that ended with the defeat of the initiative to secede, led by the Socialist Party under the leadership of Saleem al-Biyd. The same alliance was suspended with the struggle between Saleh and the Islamists after 1994, when Saleh was searching for a means to confront the Muslim Brotherhood. Saleh played a prominent role in the rise to prominence of the Huthis in northern Yemen, before he conducted six wars against them, beginning in 2004, at a time when the plan to hand over authority to his son, Major Ahmad, was in the offing.

The author does not neglect the role of ‘Abd al-Karim al-Irani who worked from the outset of the 1970s in high offices within Yemen and played a pivotal role in defending the ‘legitimacy’ of the institutions of the state in Yemen, up to the point of the interim period that failed to achieve security according to the directives of the national dialogue.


The author of this book reminds us that the Turkish system can be counted as one of the modern political systems precipitated by the First World War. It is a system the establishment
of which coincided with that of the modern Turkish state, which proceeded according to the 'Western' vision of Mustafa Kamal Attaturk without considering the orientations of the Turkish people who had embraced an Islamic civilization, culture and credo for more than six centuries under the aegis of the Ottoman state. This regime has been well known for its extreme secularism and lack of tolerance for religion in public aspects and spheres of the state. This has been made possible through the vigilance of the army and its legacy in addition to the absence of effective foreign policy in the regional and international spheres.

After coming to power, the Turkish Justice and Growth Party, as a result of the efforts and historical gains made by the Islamic movement, restored Turkey's place by making it follow a new course of foreign policy. Important changes took place in the nature of the system, and this research seeks to identify and study them.

From this standpoint, the study covers the origins of the Turkish political system and the phase of its development, its functional structure, its roots and its credo. The development of the Islamic movement in Turkey is also analyzed, along with the role of the military establishment as a primary variable within the Turkish political system. The study goes on to assess the effect of the rise to power of the Justice and Growth Party on the nature of the political system, its role and functions, and the changes that have occurred to it in both the domestic and external arenas.

The study seeks to penetrate the cloud of obscurity surrounding the ability of the party to reconcile between its Islamic roots as the bearer of the Ottoman cultural legacy and its success in ruling a state predicated on extreme secularism, as well as the extent of its ability to introduce reforms to 'Kemalist principles' and the secular institutions that underpin the political regime.

The book draws a number of conclusions, the most important of which is that the arrival of the Justice and Growth Party to power constitutes a point of transformation in the history of the Turkish political system and, furthermore, that its view of Turkey and its function is the essential engine that drives all the changes transpiring in the Turkish political order across all the various spheres.