

## **EDUCATION**

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**- Oct 2013- Nov 2017**

**PhD in Comparative Politics of the Middle East, University of Leeds**

Award: Pass (19<sup>th</sup> March 2018)

Thesis: *From Diwaniyyat to Youth Societies: Informal Political Spaces and Contentious Politics in Kuwait and Bahrain.*

My doctoral research focuses on the relatively under-theorised notion of "informal" civil society and departs from extant scholarship on democratisation that has often dominated civil society discourse. I focus instead on civil society and the impact both traditional and emerging civic spaces could have on sectarian relations in the Gulf region, with an eye on two case studies - Kuwait and Bahrain.

**- Sept 2012- Sept 2013**

**MA (Taught) Religion & Political Life, University of Manchester**

Dissertation: *The social implications of religious sectarianism and how this influences attitudes and political affiliations in the cases of Syria and Bahrain.*

**- Sept 2009- Jul 2012**

**BA (Hons.) Study of Religions & Theology, University of Manchester**

## **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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Civil Society, Informal Spaces, Inter-Communal/Sectarian Relations, Identity Politics.

Intrigued by state-sponsored discourse on religion within the Gulf, my research seeks to examine how sectarian narratives are received at both the level of grass-roots activism and the state when instituting policies and measures that ultimately determine the trajectory of state-societal and inter-communal relations. I look to extend these observations beyond my chosen case studies.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**- August 2018 – Ongoing**

**Visiting Research Fellow, Department of Political Economy, King's College London**

**- Sept 2018 – Ongoing**

**Expert Witness Reporter and Document Authentication, HH Expert Consultancy**

**-Sept 2018 – Ongoing**

**Geo-Political Analyst (Gulf and MENA Specialist), Wikistrat Consultancy**

**- September 2019 – July 2020**

**Senior Teaching Fellow, *Department of Politics and International Studies, SOAS.***

**- Sept 2018 – May 2019**

**Teaching Fellow in Middle East Politics, *European and International Studies, King's College London***

**- Sep 2014 - Aug 2018**

**Senior Postgraduate Tutor, *Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds***

### **EXPERT WITNESS CONSULTANCY AND DOCUMENT AUTHENTICATION**

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- I provide expert consultancy services (e.g. Country Reports, Document Authentication etc.) for UK, US and European law firms on themes pertaining to my expertise which include Inter-Communal/Sectarian relations in the Middle East, International and State-Societal Relations, extensive experience and on the ground fieldwork with NGO's and Civil Society in the Gulf, Islamist Movements, Militia Groups and Radicalisation, Conflict and Peacebuilding, Religious and Ethnic Minorities, Geopolitical Trends and Regional Security, Diaspora and Refugees, Human Rights issues and modes of governance in the Middle East.
- I also provide document authentication services; I am a member of the National Handwriting Association (NHA) and the British Institute of Graphologists (BIG) and have verified documents by experience and am currently obtaining qualification and training with Reed Hayes and the Scientific Association of Forensic Examiners (SAFE) in the near future, as well as training with Foster + Freeman Forensic Webinars and the International Association of Scientists and Researchers (IASR).
- In my experience, I focus on handwriting, handwriting characteristics, tampering, alterations and translation experience. I have vast experience in seeing many criminal documents.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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- “Civic Space and Sectarianism in GCC States: Dynamics of ‘Informal’ Civil Society in Kuwait and Bahrain beyond State Institutions,” Fibiger, T and Hafidh, H in *Studies of Ethnicity and Nationalism* (SEN) Vol 19, Issue 1 (April 2019)
- “Transnational Securitization of Identity: Distinctions between Securitization and ‘Othering’ of Shias in Bahrain and Pakistan,” co-authored paper with Dr Maryyum Mehmood in *Global Discourse*, Vol 9, No 4, November 2019

## **WORK IN PROGRESS**

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- “Informal Civil Society and Sectarianism in Bahrain and Kuwait” – Book proposal accepted by Syracuse University Press after receiving keen interest from Series Editor Professor Fred Lawson.
- “The Processes of Conceptualising Hegemony: Observing US-Iran Diplomacy Through the Lens of Relationality” (In Preparation for *Middle East Critique*).

## **CONFERENCES & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

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- SEPAD – Sectarianism, Proxies and De-Sectarianisation Workshop at Lancaster University sponsored by Carnegie Corporation – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019.
- BRISMES – British Society for Middle East Studies. Panel: Sectarianism and Regime Trajectories after the Arab Uprisings. Paper – Fibiger, T and Hafidh, H on Civic Space and Sectarianism in GCC States: Dynamics of “Informal” Civil Society in Kuwait and Bahrain beyond State Institutions. Thursday 6th July 2017, University of Edinburgh.
- Aarhus University (Denmark) - Workshop on Sectarianism and Regime Formation.
- AIMES (Arabic, Islamic and Middle East Studies) Public Lecture - Informal Civil Society and Sectarian Relations in Bahrain.
- MESS (Middle East Studies Society) Public Lecture - Saudi-Iran Relations: Looking Beyond Sectarian Narratives.
- SOAS University Public lecture - ISIS and Extremism within the Context of GCC States.
- Chatham House – Workshop on Future Trends in the Gulf.
- Media appearances and comments featured in several news outlets including Al-Jazeera, Indus TV, RT and TRT World alongside other international news stations across the globe.

## **TEACHING COMMITMENTS**

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I regularly deliver lectures and seminars as course convener on a host of topics pertaining to Middle Eastern Studies and Comparative Politics from undergraduate to postgraduate level. I also supervise postgraduate dissertations.

6SSJM100 – Religion and Politics in the Middle East

7AAJM217 – Religion, Conflict and Peacebuilding

7AAJM206 – Islamist Movements: Jihad, Revolution and Consensus

MODL 1100 - Politics, Culture and Society

ARAB 1160 - Introduction to the Middle East: Politics, Culture and Religion

ARAB 2066 - Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

ARAB 2170/80 - Culture and Society in the Arab World

ARAB 2290/2310 - Modern Middle Eastern History

ARAB 3110 - Middle Eastern Politics: Regimes, Societies and Conflict

ARAB 5060M - Debating the Middle East: Islam, Politics and Culture

## **FUNDING**

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- LCS Bursary - £2,500 yearly for up to three years (Languages, Cultures and Societies at the University of Leeds) bursary to conduct PhD thesis.

- £300 funding from LCS to participate and work on SWAR (Sectarianism in the wake of Arab Revolts) workshop in Aarhus University, Denmark. Followed up by conference paper and peer-reviewed journal article.

## **SKILLS & LANGUAGES**

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- Proficient in using data analysis software: Microsoft (Word, Excel, Powerpoint etc.)

- Native: English & Arabic; Intermediate: French; Elementary: Farsi