

Personal Invitation

The German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) in cooperation with
Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) and the Berlin Graduate School
Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS) invites you to a Panel Discussion

**In Search of Saudi Arabia –
A Rock in a Stormy Sea? Saudi Arabia and the Arab Spring**

Thursday, June 13th, 2013, 6:30 – 8:00pm

German Council on Foreign Relations, Rauchstraße 17, 10787 Berlin

Welcome: **Paul Freiherr von Maltzahn**
Secretary General, German Council on Foreign Relations

Keynote: *Multiple Attempts to Make Sense:
Modesty in Short Supply when Trying to Understand Saudi Arabia*

Paul Aarts
Senior lecturer in International Relations, University of Amsterdam

*Saudi Arabia and the Arab Uprisings:
Counter-Revolution, Sectarianism and the New Saudi Foreign Policy*

Toby Matthiesen
Research Fellow in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Pembroke College,
University of Cambridge, and a Research Officer at the London
School of Economics and Political Science

Abu Bakir Bagader
Professor Emeritus in Sociology at King Abd al-Aziz University,
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Sebastian Maisel
Assistant professor for Arabic & Middle Eastern Studies at
Grand Valley State University, USA

Moderation: **Gudrun Krämer**
Professor; Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, Free University Berlin

Since 2011 the Arab world is facing tremendous changes. However, the Arab Gulf states and particularly the kingdom of Saudi Arabia appear rather unaffected by the so-called 'Arab Spring'. However, social and economic grievances have been voiced. Notably Saudi internet and youth forums critically discuss the country's macroeconomic realities, such as the high unemployment rate among Saudi youth and the presence of millions of guest workers. Also the heavy reliance on the oil wealth and its uneven distribution elicits criticism.

The event is part of the international graduate student workshop "In Search of the Kingdom – Emerging Scholarship on Saudi Arabia: From the First Saudi State to the Present" (Berlin, June 12-14) jointly organized by the doctoral students from Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) and the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS). This initiative aims at creating an interdisciplinary platform for a substantial, academic debate allowing new perspectives on Saudi Arabia.

The event will be held in English. The panel discussion will be followed by a reception. We kindly ask you to R.S.V.P. before Wednesday, June 12, 2013 to Ms. Yulia Loeva (fax: 030 25 42 31 91, loeva@dgap.org).

Sincerely yours,



Paul Freiherr von Maltzahn



Paul Aarts is a senior lecturer in International Relations at the Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam. He developed the ‘Zeytun Academic Exchange’ program with academic institutes in the Middle East and North Africa. Amongst his publications are *Saudi Arabia in the Balance. Political Economy, Society, Foreign Affairs*, New York University Press 2006, edited with Gerd Nonneman; *From Resilience to Revolt. Making Sense of the Arab Spring*, Clingendael 2012 and *Civil Society in Syria and Iran. Activism in Authoritarian Contexts*, Lynne Rienner 2013, edited with Francesco Cavatorta.

Toby Matthiesen is a Research Fellow in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, and a Research Officer at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Dr Matthiesen has been working on a research project that looks at how the Arab uprisings affected the Gulf states, particularly Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and how these states responded to protests both at home and in the wider Arab world. The findings of this research project are published by Stanford University Press in June 2013 as *Sectarian Gulf: Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and the Arab Spring That Wasn't*.

Abu Bakir Bagader is Professor Emeritus in Sociology at King Abd al-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia with long standing experience in the fields of arts and culture. Amongst his numerous publications in the field of sociology are *Youth in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* (in Arabic, Riyadh 2005) and, with Soraya al-Turki, *Jidda, Mother of Prosperity and Misery*, Cairo 2006). Among his works on literature should be mentioned *Par-delà les dunes: Anthologie de la littérature saoudienne moderne*, Paris L’Harmattan 2009 and *Voices of change: Short Stories by Saudi Arabian Women Writers*, Boulder Colorado edited with Ava Molnar Heinrichsdorff and Deborah S Akers.

Sebastian Maisel is assistant professor for Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies at Grand Valley State University, USA. His research focus is on social transformation among rural communities and minority groups, for which he conducted field work among the Bedouin tribes Saudi Arabia as in *Das Gewohnheitsrecht Der Beduinen: Der Stellenwert Von Urf in Den Rechtsvorstellungen Tribaler Gruppen Im Norden Der Arabischen Halbinsel*, Leipziger Beiträge zur Orientforschung vol. 18, 2006 and co-authored with John A. Shoup *Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Arab States Today: An Encyclopedia of Life in the Arab States*, Westport 2009.

Gudrun Krämer, Professor of Islamic Studies. She is the director of the Institut of Islamic Studies, as well as of the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies (BGSMS), both at Freie Universität Berlin. She is a member of the Berlin Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and an executive editor of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam Three*.

Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Auswärtige Politik e.V.
Frau Yulia Loeva
Rauchstraße 17
10787 Berlin

Please fill out this form in case you would like to attend this event
(030 / 25 42 31-91, loeva@dgap.org)

Panel Discussion “IN SEARCH OF SAUDI ARABIA”

Thursday, June 13th, 2013 at 6.30 pm, at the DGAP

I will participate

My address has changed

Surname, Name

Position

Organization

Address

Tel./Fax

E-Mail

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