

Institute Seminar Series – Special Session:

Isa Blumi: “War in the Larger Region and the Future of Arabia: Making Sense of the Chaos.”

Tuesday 21st November – 12:00, Fairbank Library

Drawing from a detailed study of the origins of conflict in South Arabia since the 1990s and its global implications, the following presentation hopes to offer a larger reflection on how events shall unfold as a consequence. While not an immediate cause of violence in the larger region, events in South Arabia, and by extension the Horn of Africa, need to be put into its larger context as we move beyond analysis of the events around 2011 (the Arab Spring) to appreciate adaptive measures have been taken. Indeed, drawing links that extend for decades in the past, and offering predictions of how events may unfold in the future, the proposed lecture attempts to upset much of the conventional wisdom about violence in the larger world. In such a challenge, the analytical tools available to scholars (and policy-makers) focused on the larger Middle East/Islamic World, will be equally questioned. Perhaps, in the end, this lecture helps bring a new set of paradigms through which we study the future of the Arabian Peninsula, as a unit of (rather than separated from) the larger world, a perspective that necessarily requires understanding chaos is not entirely beyond the measure of utility to transnational interests nor the capacity of local agents to manipulate for hitherto ignored constituencies.



Isa Blumi is Associate Professor in the Department of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Turkish Studies at Stockholm University.

He is the author of, among others, *Ottoman Refugees 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial Setting* (Bloomsbury, 2013), *Chaos in Yemen: Societal Collapse and the New Authoritarianism* (Routledge, 2012), *Reinstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities 1800-1912* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), and *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire: A Comparative Social and Political History of Albania and Yemen 1878-1918* (Isis Press, 2010).

His last book, coming out in early 2018, is titled *Destroying Yemen: What Chaos in Arabia Tells Us About the World* and is published by the University of California Press.