

Visiting Speaker Series

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies is
pleased to present a talk by esteemed academic

Dr Natasha Ezrow
University of Essex

"Coups Proofing and the Arab Spring"

Wednesday 12 October 2016, 5.15 pm

LT1, IAIS Building, Streatham Campus, Exeter EX4 4ND

Tea & Coffee to be served from 4.30 pm in the Common Room,
Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies.

All are welcome – no registration required.



Past studies have acknowledged that military professionalism has important implications for coup risk. Yet military professionalism may also be an important factor in explaining authoritarian breakdown, democratization, conflict and state failure.

In the case of the Arab Spring, the role of military professionalism is helpful in explaining the different paths that states took in the aftermath. While Tunisia's transition was by far the swiftest and smoothest, Libya and Yemen have fallen apart. Meanwhile, Egypt is still indirectly controlled by the military, while Syria continues to be engaged in a protracted civil war.

What explains this variation? Examining the role of military professionalism may offer some useful insights. Military professionalism is defined by

rigorous training requirements, clear internal chains of command, merit based promotions, sufficient budgets and centralised military command structures.

In addition to military professionalism, the civil-military balance, such as the extent to which the military is involved in entrepreneurial activities is another important factor. These factors both serve as indicators of how the military may react during a transition.

This lecture examines the role of the military during and after the transitions of the Arab Spring, by looking at the cases of Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Egypt and Syria to offer an explanation for why these states have taken different pathways.