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The Arab Spring and the Geopolitics of the Middle East: Emerging Security Threats and Revolutionary Change

Amr Yossef
Independent Scholar

and

Joseph R. Cerami
Senior Lecturer, Bush School of Government, Texas, USA
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Preface

This monograph highlights a renewed emphasis in international affairs on regional studies and geopolitics. The co-authors provide an assessment for academic and professional audiences engaged in studying and policymaking in light of the revolutionary changes in the politics and security of the Middle East and North Africa. The monograph explores the Arab Spring revolutions – in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria – and the security implications that lay at the temporal and special intersection of internal and regional dimensions of each case study. The consequences of the Arab Spring affected security in the Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa regions that led to direct outside military interventions, either directly or indirectly, in addition to the intensive political and security engagement with all four countries. We analyze how these threats emerged, their current status, and how best to deal with them. For example, how can current governments, facing “failed, failing and fragile” states, establish effective institutions to restore state authority and push socio-economic development, all within the democratization process? How should the US, EU and NATO’s policies be updated to adjust for new socio-political phenomena and threats in Mediterranean security?

Notwithstanding the entrenched lack of democracy and societal (ethnic, tribal, religious, etc.) in the region, we believe these were not the principal causes for the collapse the region is facing since the Arab Spring. Instead, we argue that it was the state failure/weakness that is the cause – the original sin – and consequently redemption should be
state building. Unlike conventional, widespread wisdom on state building in the recent literature, this book advances the argument that skilled leadership and independence bureaucracy are keys to the solution no less than the central role of the United States and the European Union.
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About the Authors

Amr Yossef is an independent scholar based in Cairo, Egypt. He holds a PhD in International Studies from the University of Trento, Italy in 2009. In the framework of his doctoral research, he has been a visiting scholar at the Bush School of Government, Texas A&M University, and the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Columbia University. He was also a post-doctoral fellow at the Taub Center for Israel Studies, New York University (2011–2012). Yossef has previously taught at the American University in Cairo and at NYU. His publications have appeared in the European Political Science, Digest of Middle East Studies, and Journal of Strategic Studies.

Joseph R. Cerami, joined the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University in August 2001. He teaches leadership and national security studies in the Master’s Program in International Affairs. He was appointed as the founding director of the Bush School’s Public Service Leadership Program in 2002. Cerami taught previously at the US Military Academy at West Point, and at the US Army War College, where he served as the chair of the Department of National Security and Strategy. His book, Leadership and Policy Innovations – From Clinton to Bush: Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was published in 2013. In January 2016, Cerami will join the University of St. Thomas in Houston, as the Burnett Family Distinguished Chair in Leadership, and a director of the new University Center for Ethical Leadership.