

Silvana A. Toska

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EMPLOYMENT

Davidson College

Assistant Professor, Political Science 2016-

EDUCATION

Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Ph.D., Department of Government 2016 (expected)
 M.A. Government 2011
 Major Field: International Relations; Minor Field: Comparative Politics

Oxford University

M.Sc. African Studies 2008

Georgetown University

M.A. Arab Studies 2005

University of Pennsylvania

B.A. (with distinction) 2003
 Majors: Political Science, French; Minor: African Studies

DISSERTATION

Title: “Rebels Without Borders: Examining the Spread and Success of Rebel Movements”

Committee: Peter Katzenstein (chair), Jonathan Kirshner, Michael Hudson, Richard Bensel

Summary: What explains the spread of rebellion from one country to another? And why do only some succeed in overthrowing their regimes? To date, our theories of the causes and spread of rebellion have focused either on individual rebellions or specific instances of diffusion; as a result, we have no generalized explanation of when and why rebellions are most likely to spread from one location to another or why only some succeed in overthrowing the regime. This project attempts to answer both questions. In answer to the first, I argue that the spread of rebellion is linked to the degree of shared identity between countries: the closer the identity of any two countries, the greater the likelihood that rebellion will spread between them. This linkage is activated when a rebellion in one country triggers cognitive and emotional mechanisms in potential rebels in another country. The latter are more receptive if there are domestic opportunity structures characterized by autonomous organizations within a relatively vibrant civil society that reinforce emulation of the original rebellion. In answer to the second question, I argue that two factors affect the likelihood of rebellions to overthrow their regimes: a) a rebellion in an identity neighbor, which weakens the regime by creating loyalty shifts within its ranks while empowering rebel movements in the home country, and b) the size and nature of the opposition. I test this argument using a new dataset of all rebel movements between 1945-2013, content analysis of data collected from Twitter during the first six months of the Arab Uprisings, and extensive field research and interviews with 184 political actors in Egypt, Yemen, and Syria. My mixed method framework combines crossnational regression and content analysis

with in-depth qualitative analysis of key cases of rebellions and revolutions. Evidence from all three investigations suggests that the spread and success of rebellion is strongly associated with shared identity, opportunity structures, and the nature of the opposition; little or no support is found for other accounts of the spread of rebellion.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Exchange Scholar, Department of Government, Harvard University, 2011-2012

IQMR: The Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research, June 2012

ICPSR: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, June-July 2010

Visiting Graduate Student in Jewish and Islamic Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006-2007

PUBLICATIONS

The Multiple Scripts of the Arab Uprisings, in Dan Edelstein & Keith Baker, eds. *Scripting Revolutions*, Stanford University Press, 2015

Contextualizing Social Media: Protest Mobilization in the Age of Twitter, in Fahed Yahya Al Sumait et al., eds. *The Arab Uprisings One Year Later: Examining the Possibilities and Risks*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2015

WORKING PAPERS

Rebels without Borders: Examining the Spread of Rebel Movements (*job market paper*)

Why Rebellions Succeed

The Nature of the Revolutionary Movement Determines Revolutionary Outcomes

Revolution and War: Reconsidering the Causes

The Impact of Movement Cohesion on Success: Evidence from Twitter (with Michael Macy and Isabel Klouman)

Islam versus Islamism: Revising Approaches to the Question of Female Empowerment

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

[Has Saudi Arabia Already Won its Yemen War?](#) *Monkey Cage/The Washington Post*, May 2015

[Shifting Balances of Power in Yemen's Crisis](#), *Monkey Cage/The Washington Post*, October 2014

[Why We Should no Longer Trust the Words 'Free and Fair'](#) *Foreign Policy*, September 2013

[Building a Yemeni State While Losing a Nation](#) *Foreign Policy*, October 2012

Reprinted in "Yemen's National Dialogue", *Project on Middle East Political Science: Briefing nr 19*, March 2013

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social Movements

Contentious Politics

Diffusion and Change in World Politics

International Relations of the Middle East

Political Islam
African Politics

PROSPECTIVE COURSE OFFERINGS

Introduction to International Relations (UG/G)
Introduction to Comparative Politics (UG/G)
Middle East Politics (UG/G)
International Security (UG/G)
Social Movements and Contentious Politics (UG/G)
Islamic Political Thought (UG/G)
African Politics (UG)
Political Violence (UG/G)
Research Design (UG/G)
Introduction to Quantitative Methods (UG)

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, HONORS

The George Kahin McT Prize, for the dissertation research in the areas of international relations and foreign policy studies judged to hold the greatest promise as a contribution to the discipline, Department of Government, Cornell University 2012

LaFeber Prize for Teaching Excellence, awarded annually to one graduate student with the best teaching record, Department of Government, Cornell University 2012

POMEPS: Project on Middle East Political Science, Research Travel Grant, Summer 2012

Bluestone Fellowship, Reppy Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, 2011-2012

Summer Language Training Grant for study in Syria, School of Graduate Studies, Cornell University, 2011

Director's Fellow, Reppy Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, 2010-2011

Training Grant, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Department of Government, Cornell University, 2010

Sage Fellowship, Department of Government, Cornell University, 2008-2009

Summer Language Training Grant for study in Syria, School of Graduate Studies, Cornell University, 2009

Clarendon (Full) Scholarship, Exeter College, Oxford University, 2007-2008

African Studies Research Grant for research in Sudan, Oxford University, 2008

Rothberg (Full) Scholarship, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2006-2007

Full Merit Scholarship, Georgetown University, 2003-2005

Research Fellowship, Ministry of Higher Education, Saudi Arabia, Fall 2004

Benjamin Franklin Scholar, University of Pennsylvania, 1999-2003

Full Scholarship, University of Pennsylvania, 1999-2003

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Revolution and War: Reconsidering the Causes, American Political Science Association, September 2014

Rebels without Borders, American University in Cairo, Department of Political Science, May 2013

The Impact of Twitter in the Middle East Revolutions, Arab Spring Conference, National University of Singapore, May 2012

Domino Theory of Revolutions, Harvard Comparative Politics Workshop, November 2011; International Relations Workshop, February 2012

The Political Economy of Trash, American Political Science Association, September 2011

Submission as Authentic Consciousness, American Political Science Association, September 2010

Islam versus Islamism: Revising Approaches to the Question of Female Empowerment, Harvard Comparative Politics Workshop, March 2012; Mid-West Political Science Association, April 2010; American Political Science Association, September 2011

A Need for Disclosure: Foreign Aid, Investment and Trade in Resource Rich Countries, Tax Justice Africa Conference-Nairobi, March 2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Introduction to Comparative Politics, American University in Cairo, Fall 2015

Introduction to International Relations, American University in Cairo, Spring 2016

Teaching Assistant, Cornell University

Total Average Student Evaluations Score: 4.78/5

Politics of the 70s Film, Professor Jonathan Kirshner (2011)

Introduction to International Relations, Professor Jonathan Kirshner (2009); Professor Peter Katzenstein, *Head Teaching Assistant* (2010); Professor Jonathan Kirshner *Head Teaching Assistant* (2014)

Weapons of Mass Destruction, Professor Sarah Kreps (2010)

Lecturer, University of New York, Tirana

Introduction to International Relations (2005)

Politics of Africa (2005)

Comparative Politics of the Middle East (2006)

The Arab-Israeli Conflict (2006)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sahel Analyst, Freedom House, 2011- present

Research and write annual country evaluations for six countries (CAR, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger).

Research Analyst, Open Society Foundation, Albania, 2012- May 2014

Research and write reports on elections, political reform, and progress toward European Union membership.

FOREIGN AFFILIATIONS & RESEARCH PROGRAMS

American University in Cairo, Visiting Researcher, Summer 2011 and 2012-2014

University of Damascus, Summer Language Program, Damascus, Syria, 2009

King Saud University, Master's Thesis Research, Fall Semester, Riyadh, SA, 2004

Yemen Language Center, Advanced Summer Arabic Courses, Sana'a, Yemen, 2004

Universite de Paris I - Sorbonne, Fall Semester Abroad, Paris, France, 2001
Universite Gaston-Berger, Spring Semester Abroad, St. Louis, Senegal, 2001
University of Da Nang, Summer Study Abroad, Da Nang, Vietnam, 2000

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH SKILLS

Languages

Fluent: Albanian (native), English, French, Italian
Advanced: Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish
Elementary: Hebrew, Wolof, Turkish, Vietnamese

Software & Programming: Stata, R, CATA

Field Research

Egypt (August 2012- August 2014); Yemen (August 2013); Lebanon (December 2011- January 2012); Egypt (June-August 2011); Syria (June-August 2009); Sudan (April- March 2008); Saudi Arabia (September-December 2004); Yemen (June-August 2004); Senegal (January-June 2001).

REFERENCES

Peter J. Katzenstein (Dissertation chair), Department of Government, Cornell University, Tel: (607) 255-6257, Email: pjk2@cornell.edu

Jonathan D. Kirshner, Department of Government, Cornell University, Tel: (607) 255-4120, Email: jdk5@cornell.edu

Michael Hudson, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, Tel: (202) 687-5648, Email: HUDSONM@georgetown.edu

Richard Bensel, Department of Government, Cornell University, Tel: (607) 255-6763, Email: rfb2@cornell.edu

DEPARTMENT CONTACT

Tina M. Slater, Job Placement Coordinator, Department of Government, Cornell University, 214 White Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853, Tel: (607) 255-3567, Fax: (607) 255-4530, Email: tms2@cornell.edu