

Call for Papers META #6

Editors: Felix Lang, Malcolm Théoleyre

Publication date: Spring 2016

The Rebel

The peer-reviewed online journal “Middle East – Topics & Arguments” (META) is calling for submissions for its next issue, which will be entitled “The Rebel”.

Over-thrower of old orders, the rebel stands out as a positive and romanticized figure of European political *avant-garde*. As Tunis’s and Cairo’s youth took to the streets to challenge the Ben Ali and Moubarak regimes, they were rapidly framed in European representations, seen as leading their own “springtime of the people”.

However, the analogy seemed inoperative as soon as *Daesh* emerged as a dominant offspring of the Syrian rebellion: religious conservatism, war crimes, and rhetoric of hate appeared incompatible with the European representation of the rebel. This begs the question: what does actually separate the *Daesh* rebel from the Free Syrian Army rebel; the Daraa rebel from the Tahrir rebel; the European rebel from the Middle Eastern rebel? This leads us to the more delicate question of the line to be drawn between the *rebel* and the *terrorist*.

Answering these questions, one is faced with a triple difficulty: first, defining and redefining the rebel in Middle Eastern context is necessary not only to rid the rebel from his aura of prestige, but also in order to grasp the understanding that the Middle Eastern rebel has of herself/himself: what word, what semantic field, and what historical reference does the rebel manipulate so as to build a self-representation? How is the figure of the rebel related to notions of masculinity? What role do visual culture, literature and art play in constructing the figure of the rebel? Second, it is necessary to draw the contours of the rebel’s social environment: what economic conditions, what place, what network, what cultural background will cause one to *go rebel*, and what kind of rebel will one become? Third, it is important to identify the rebel’s instruments and material means: how does the access to social networks create a certain type of rebel? What of the access to arms, or the issue of logistics: where does the rebel eat, sleep and find shelter? From street to *rif*, what spaces does s/he use?

From *Urabi* to *Al-Baghdadi*, from the Kurdish Peshmerga to the Zionist Hagana' and the Berber movements, from Lawrence of Arabia to the 'Jihadi Brides': through the figure of the rebel this issue aims to grasp an understanding of the Middle East rebellions other than through a large format lens. We call for articles from a broad array of disciplines including political science, sociology, anthropology, literature studies, cultural studies, media studies, linguistics, history and economics which deal with the rebel as an actor and figure of the cultural imaginary.

Most articles of “Middle East – Topics & Arguments” are published in the FOCUS section. Submissions relate to the issue’s focus topic and reflect original research. Articles in this section are typically between 2,800 to 4,600 words. In addition to papers for the main section, we call for contributions for META’s special sections:

The CLOSE UP section features a short written portrait of a person who has a special relation to the issue’s main topic, e.g. a researcher who has constitutively contributed to the field. It links that person’s biography with their contribution to the field. Article length is 1,500 to 3,000 words.

For the present issue, we would also invite papers focusing on individual "rebels", contemporary or historical.

The META section also relates to the issue's focus topic, with the papers in "meta" discussing the main topic from a theory-centered perspective. Regional scope is not limited to the Middle East, but may also consider theoretical approaches involving other world regions. Article length is 2,800 to 4,600 words.

For this section, we would like to encourage papers which deal with the semantic field of the rebel as a term and its equivalents in the languages of the Middle East. What are the different aspects gathered under the term 'rebel'? Which are the words used to convey these different shades of meaning in Arabic and/or Farsi, Tamazight, Kurdish, Hebrew? What is their history?

The ANTI/THESIS section juxtaposes two rivaling positions that highlight different lines of argument, pros and cons, and/or competing narratives. These can be presented either by one author together, or by two different authors in two different articles. Article length for each paper is 1,500-3,000 words.

All articles that fall into the general framework of the journal, but do not relate to the special topic "The Rebel", will be taken into consideration for the OFF TOPIC section.

Prior to developing a complete manuscript, authors are asked to submit an abstract (300 words max.), a short CV (150 words max.) and 3-5 key bibliographic sources. Please clearly indicate the research question, the method to be used, and the empirical material your research will be based on. **Papers are accepted in English and French.**

The editors will make a preliminary decision regarding the topic's relevance to the journal's aims and scope and will provide suggestions for developing the manuscript. Please consult our website for further information about the journal's concept, sections, and [authors' guidelines](#).

The deadline for abstract submissions is 31 May, 2015.

The deadline for article submissions is 30 September, 2015.

Proposals and manuscripts and other editorial correspondence should be sent to:
submissions6@meta-journal.net