



## Lecture

### ***Middle Eastern Conspiracy Theories: What lies beneath?***

Dr Matthew Gray (Australian National University)

**Monday, 26 September 2011 at 6 pm**

**Lecture Abstract:** Conspiracy theories are common in the Middle East, whether they are trying to explain local politics, international intrigue, or the details of globalization, economics, or cultural change. They cover seemingly everything: Arab-Israeli dynamics, US foreign policy, 9/11, even the 1997 deaths of Lady Diana and Dodi al-Fayed or shark attacks in the Red Sea. But what do they say about politics, and to what extent are they informed - even created by - the region's political dynamics? That is the subject of this talk, which will look at the major sources of conspiracy theories in the Middle East, drawing on examples to show how conspiracy theories are actually an important tool of political language, and certainly much more than just fallacious argument or disillusioned rants.

**Biography:** Matthew Gray is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, where he specialized in Middle Eastern politics and political economy. He is the author of 'Conspiracy Theories in the Arab World: Sources and Politics' (Routledge, 2010). In the second half of 2011 he is on sabbatical, based in Amman researching and writing a book on the political economy and development model of Qatar.

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