CFP (edited volume): Generations of Dissent: Cultural Production and the State in the Middle East and North Africa

Discussion published by R. Shareah Taleghani on Saturday, September 9, 2017
Decades before the Arab Spring, intellectuals, writers, and artists have challenged the status-quo of authoritarian systems in Iran, Egypt, Tunisia, and elsewhere. At the same time, state agents and cultural institutions have attempted to dictate and limit the terms of literary, artistic, and intellectual engagement not only through sponsorship and patronage but also censorship, and other directly repressive acts such as surveillance, detention and forced exile.

The volume uses the following guiding questions as a launching point to interrogate varying artistic sites of dissent. How and to what effect do writers and intellectuals engage in acts of opposition that work against the politics of a given state both directly and indirectly? How does their work to challenge the politics of authoritarianism both individually and collectively? What types of aesthetic interventions can we read in the works of cultural producers that contravene the directives of authoritarianisms under which they live? How are such aesthetic interventions transformed in a revolutionary context? How do writers’ and intellectuals’ engagements with the state challenge traditional concepts of authority, authoritarianism, and authorship? Simultaneously, how do writers and intellectuals negotiate with the issues of state co-option of dissidence and critique, state patronage, state propaganda, and state censorship?

We are soliciting abstracts for essays exploring these and related questions for an edited collection that will center around the relationship between dissidence, cultural production, and the state in the Middle East and North Africa in the 20th and 21st century. We are especially interested in essays examining Iranian, Kurdish, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Turkish cultural production and/or intellectual movements. Abstracts should be no longer than 500 words. Please email abstracts to R. Shareah Taleghani (rtaleghani@qc.cuny.edu) or Alexa Firat (afirat@temple.edu) by September 30, 2017. If selected for the volume, final essays will be due for submission December 1, 2017.

Related date:
September 30, 2017