

# OVERCOMING SECTARIAN FAULTLINES AFTER THE ARAB UPRISINGS

## SOURCES, SYMPTOMS AND SOLUTIONS

**FEBRUARY 22 - 12:30PM - 2:00PM**

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The collapse of regimes in wake of the Arab Spring was followed by a sectarian aftershock. How can we account for this upsurge? Some ascribe sectarian conflict to primordial and ostensibly inextricable, sociological roots. Others pin the blame on external, (neo)colonial actors pursuing a “divide and rule” strategy. What historical evidence supports these narratives? Is sectarianism (tā’ifiya) really the product of external interventionism or inborn instincts? Or is it a byproduct of the Arab states’ leveraging of tribal and religious communalisms? How have states inside and outside of the region instrumentalised or contained the spread of sectarianism and what strategies can be pursued in the future to stem the contagion? Tracing the trajectory of sectarian discourse from its origins to the present day, this special volume weighs the indigenous and extraneous factors which have shaped sectarianism.

Dr. Farha is in Australia to report on the culmination of a Qatar National Priorities Research Grant 6-028-5-006 awarded to Shahram Akbarzadeh of Deakin University and Mark Farha of Georgetown University, the February 2016 edition of the *Journal Muslim World* gathers contributions from leading scholars of the Middle East who seek to examine the historical origins, political instrumentalizations and potential solutions to the region’s sectarian strife.

**Meeting Room 3, Deakin University Melbourne City Centre, Level 3, 550 Bourke St, Melbourne**