



# Helga Baumgarten: Struggling for Democratic Space in an Authoritarian System The Case of the Palestinian West Bank After the Elections of 2006

Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019  
18:00 hrs c.t.  
in Kupferbau (HS 22), Hölderlinstraße 5

Hopes for a democratic transformation of the Palestinian political system, established under Israeli occupation in 1994, ran high. They broke down very quickly, not only as a result of the continued occupation, but also because of the internal conflict between the winner of the elections, Hamas, and the reluctant incumbent, Fatah. This presentation will analyze the ongoing struggle for democratic space despite this complex context. The focus will be on individual (and/or small group) efforts by parliamentarians and members of political organizations, journalists, human rights activists as well as lawyers and judges, actors on the level of local government, school-teachers, and finally student activists.

Professor Dr. Helga Baumgarten studied in Tuebingen, New York, London, Beirut and Goettingen and earned her PhD from the Free University of Berlin. She taught at AUB Beirut, at the University of Goettingen and at FU Berlin. In 2004, she was a fellow at the Austrian Institute for International Relations, Vienna. Presently, she teaches Political Science at Birzeit University. She has broadly published (in German, English, French and Arabic) on the Middle East conflict, on Palestinian Nationalism, on Political Islam and on the problem of transformations in the Arab region. Her last book in German is "Kampf um Palaestina: Was wollen Hamas und Fatah?" (Herder Verlag 2014).

