

S W E D I S H  
COLLEGIUM  
*for* ADVANCED STUDY

Lectures

## SAÏD AMIR ARJOMAND

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*The Distinctive Pattern of Revolution in the Islamicate Civilization*

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## WANG HUI

Short-term Visitor, SCAS.

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*The Beginning of the Century:  
A Reconsideration of the 20th Century in Chinese/Global History*

Thursday, 18 May, 4:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall  
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala

This is an event of the Karlgren-Eisenstadt Programme.

The lectures will be followed by a reception. Prior registration is required.  
Please contact [rsvp@swedishcollegium.se](mailto:rsvp@swedishcollegium.se) no later than 15 May to sign up for the event.



#### ABOUT SAÏD AMIR ARJOMAND

Saïd Amir Arjomand (Ph.D, University of Chicago, 1980) is Distinguished Service Professor of Sociology and Director of the Stony Brook Institute for Global Studies. He is the founder and president of the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies, and editor of its interdisciplinary organ, *Journal of Persianate Studies*. He has published extensively in the humanities and social sciences journals, and is the author and editor of several books, including *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890* (1984; new ed. 2010); *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (1988), and, most recently, *The Rule of Law, Islam and Constitutional Politics in Egypt and Iran* (with Nathan J. Brown, 2013); *Worlds of Difference* (with Elisa P. Reis, 2013); *Social Theory and Regional Studies in the Global Age* (2014); and *The Arab Revolution of 2011: A Comparative Perspective* (2015).

#### ABSTRACT

The most recent or “third generation” theories of revolution focus on the collapse of the state as a major cause of the revolution. This analysis rests on a logical confusion in that state collapse is in no way proven or measured independently of the occurrence of revolution, and should therefore be part of the definition of revolution and not one of its causes. In the typology of revolutions offered in my forthcoming book, what I call the Tocquevillian Type seeks to capture the distinctive pattern of modern Western revolutions that entail the collapse of the state at the center of the political *ancien régime*. In the same work, I offer the Khaldunian Type of Integrative Revolution, as the ideal type of the pattern of revolutionary transformation marked by the rise and fall of dynastic states that was discovered by Ibn Khaldun in the context of the interaction between the urban centers and the nomadic periphery as the two components of the distinctively dual pattern of the Islamicate civilization. The typology of Eastern and Western revolution, offered by Samuel Huntington over half a century ago, in fact highlighted the pattern explained by Ibn Khaldun, whose model fits well the cycles of nomadic state formation in China, Huntington’s basis for his typology. In this presentation, I focus on millennial motive not favored by Ibn Khaldun, or for that matter by contemporary sociological theories of revolution, as the key element in an endemic culture of insurgency that, when implanted in the tinder bed of the liminal spaces between the desert and the sown, engenders sparks that set fires of rebellion occasionally inflaming and destroying state centers of imperial regimes.

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#### ABOUT WANG HUI

Wang Hui is Professor of both Literature and History at Tsinghua University, and Director of the Tsinghua Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences. He studied Lu Xun and literary history under the guidance of Professor Tang Tao, a famous literary historian and one of Lu Xun’s students. In 1988, he received his PhD from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). In 2002, he moved from CASS to Tsinghua University. During 1996-2007, he organized a series of intellectual discussions in China as the chief editor of *Dushu Magazine*, the most influential intellectual journal in China. He has published extensively on Chinese intellectual history and literature, and is engaged in debates on historical and contemporary issues. Many of his books have been translated into English, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, German, Slovenian etc.. The English translations include *China’s Twentieth Century* (2015); *China from Empire to Nation-State* (2014); *The Politics of Imagining Asia* (2010); *The End of the Revolution* (2009) and *China’s New Order* (2003). His four-volume work *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* (2004) is considered one of the most important contributions to the Chinese academic world in the last twenty years. Wang Hui has received several awards, including the 2013 Luca Pacioli Award.

#### ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the 20th century, the alien idea of century replaced other traditional concepts of chronology in China and reshaped Chinese idea of time. Following the application of 20th century in Chinese context, other related concepts such as 19th century, 18th century and their sequence emerged as derivatives of 20th century. Before 1900, the concept of century had never been discussed in this sense in China and never used as the self-consciousness of our era. The notion of century is closely connected with the 20th century, its distinction from past eras being not just a simple temporal demarcation but an understanding of singular propensity of the time, which render the history of the others into a history of one’s own, while situating it within history in toto for explanation and identification. This is the birth of global synchronicity in the history of China. How did intellectuals theorized the idea of 20th century in early years of last century? This talk will examine the birth of the notion of the 20th century in China from an intellectual history perspective and analyze its particular position in the history of China from the perspectives of time (history), space, self-identification, social ideal and etc.