



INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL STUDIES GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Fall 2017 Faculty Speaker Series

Date: **Thursday**, September 28

Time: **12 noon to 1:30pm**

Place: **Burns Hall 2118**

“We wanted to be free”: Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently and the Progressive Resistance against Assad, ISIL, and Imperialism in Syria

By

Abdalaziz Alhamza & Walaa Altahhan

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently

Abdalaziz Alhamza and Walaa Altahhan, activist/journalists opposed to Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad’s regime and members of Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS), will talk about their experiences publishing first-hand accounts, videos and photos of life and war crimes in Raqqa, Syria. Reporting under intensely violent circumstances – at least 14 people in (or thought to be in) RBSS have been executed by Islamic State in the Levant (ISIL) – Alhamza and Altahhan will talk about RBSS’s smuggling out of unfiltered information about life under the Assad government’s bombing, *de facto* ISIL rule, and large-scale civilian casualties caused by separate Russian and US-led airstrikes. For this work, Alhamza and Altahhan, along with all members of RBSS, were awarded the International Press Freedom Award in 2015, from the Committee to Protect Journalists. In this talk, they will reflect on how events in Syria are caught in the crosshairs of competing geo-political interests, propaganda from numerous powerful actors, and the global rise of Islamophobia wherein members of the progressive opposition in Syria are portrayed as “terrorists” by Syria’s Assad, Russia’s Putin and US President Trump. In the process, they will reflect on their transformation from university students to globally recognized journalists engaged in some of the most dangerous work in the world.

Please Also Attend: Fall 2017 Capstone Forum

Details to be announced.

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