The Arab Spring of 2011 was but the beginning of a long-term revolutionary process, rendered much more complicated than other revolutionary processes by specific socio-political features -- rentierism and patrimonialism -- of the dominant Arab state system. Another complicating specific feature is the fact that counter-revolution in the Arab region is two-pronged: the revolutionary process confronts not only the established regimes, but also their Islamic fundamentalist contenders. These peculiarities, combined with the intrinsic weakness of progressives in the region, provide the main explanation for the shift from the initial revolutionary phase to the ongoing counter-revolutionary phase that started in 2013. The various dynamics of this shift will be assessed in the light of the particular conditions that prevail in the different key theaters of the 2011 uprising. The region will find no new stability as long as no solution emerges for the explosive socio-economic factors behind the Arab Spring.

Gilbert Achcar
(SOAS, University of London)
Tuesday, November 8th
5:00 pm
HSSB 4020

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Gilbert Achcar grew up in Lebanon, researched and taught in Beirut, Paris and Berlin, and is currently, since 2007, Professor of Development Studies and International Relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London). His many books include: The Clash of Barbarisms: The Making of the New World Disorder, published in 15 languages; Perilous Power: The Middle East and U.S. Foreign Policy, co-authored with Noam Chomsky; the critically acclaimed The Arabs and the Holocaust: The Arab-Israeli War of Narratives; Marxism, Orientalism, Cosmopolitanism; The People Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising, and most recently Morbid Symptoms: Relapse in the Arab Uprising.