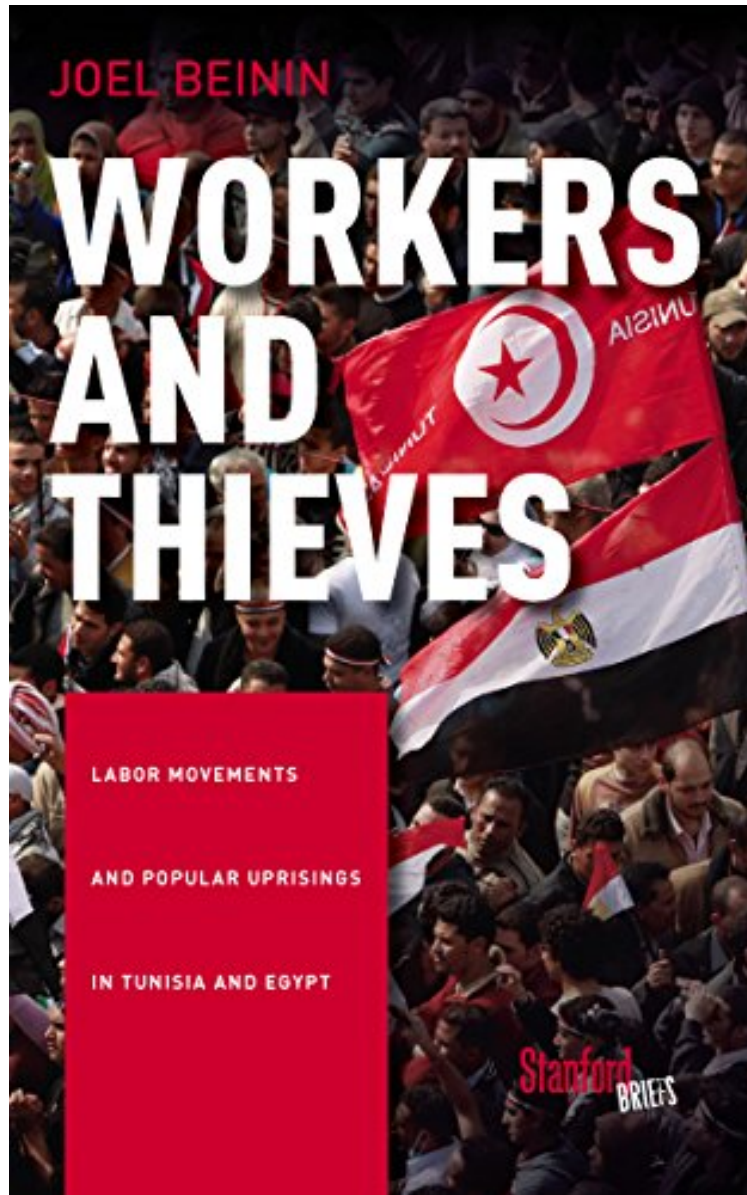


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Workers and Thieves: Labor Movements and Popular Uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt

Joel Beinin

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Joel Beinin : Workers and Thieves: Labor Movements and Popular Uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Workers and Thieves: Labor Movements and Popular Uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt:

Since the 1990s, the Middle East has experienced an upsurge of wildcat strikes, sit-ins, and workers' demonstrations. Well before people gathered in Tahrir Square to demand the ouster of Hosni Mubarak, workers had formed one of the largest oppositional movements to authoritarian rule in Egypt. In Tunisia, years prior to the 2011 Arab uprisings, the unemployed chanted in protest, "A job is a right, you pack of thieves!" Despite this history, most observers have failed to acknowledge the importance of workers in the social ferment preceding the removal of Egyptian and Tunisian autocrats and in the political realignments after their demise. In *Workers and Thieves*, Joel Beinin corrects this by surveying the efforts and impacts of the workers' movements in Egypt and Tunisia since the 1970s. He argues that the 2011 uprisings in these countries—and, importantly, their vastly different outcomes—are best understood within the context of these repeated mobilizations of workers and the unemployed over recent decades.

"We know the 'thieves' who plundered Tunisia and Egypt, but few have considered the role of the workers to understand why these countries led the Arab Spring in 2011. Joel Beinin offers this necessary perspective, highlighting in this truly readable and most useful account the clash of workers and thieves that shaped Tunisia's and Egypt's recent history and will determine their future." (Gilbert Achcar author of *The People Want: A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising*) "While the crucial role played by workers in Egypt and Tunisia has been woefully overlooked by much of the media and think tank scholarship, Joel Beinin traces the rich and complex history of labor movements and their pivotal role in ongoing struggles for change. To fully understand the forces at play in the turbulent political and social landscapes of Egypt and Tunisia, *Workers and Thieves* is an invaluable book." (Sharif Abdel Kouddous *Democracy Now!* and *The Nation Institute*) About the Author Joel Beinin is the Donald J. McLachlan Professor of History at Stanford University. He has written or edited ten books, most recently *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*, co-edited with Frédéric Vairel (Stanford, 2013) and *The Struggle for Worker Rights in Egypt* (2010). His articles have been published in leading scholarly journals, as well as *The Nation*, *Middle East Report*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, and others.