BEYOND THE ARAB UPRISINGS
rediscovering the MENA region
January 16-17, 2015

Università
Ca'Foscari
Venezia

SeSaMO

SOCIETÀ PER GLI STUDI SUL MEDIO ORIENTE
Italian Society for Middle Eastern Studies

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, MORNING

9.00 - 9.30

Aula Magna Silvio Trentin, Ca' Dolfin

OPENING REMARKS

Professor **MICHELE BUGLIESI**

Rector Magnificus, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Professor **ANNA CARDINALETTI**

Director, Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies

Professor **SUSANNA REGAZZONI**

Director, School of International Relations

Welcoming Address by the President of SeSaMO, Professor **MATTEO LEGRENZI**

9.30 - 11.00

Aula Magna Silvio Trentin, Ca' Dolfin

Keynote speech by Professor **EUGENE ROGAN**

Conflicting Agreements:

Wartime Partition Plans and the Postwar Disorder in the Middle East

Introduction by Prof. Matteo Legrenzi, Ca' Foscari University

 Eugene Rogan is the Director and a Fellow of the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. He took his B.A. in economics from Columbia, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Middle Eastern history from Harvard. He taught at Boston College and Sarah Lawrence College before taking up his post in Oxford in 1991, where he teaches the modern history of the Middle East. He is author of *The Arabs: A History* (New York: Basic Books, and London: Penguin Books, 2009), which is being translated in nine languages and was named one of the best books of 2009 by *The Economist, The Financial Times,* and *The Atlantic Monthly*. His earlier works include *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), for which he received the Albert Hourani Book Award of the Middle East Studies Association of North America and the Fuad Köprülü Prize of the Turkish Studies Association; *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge University Press, 2001, second edition 2007, with Avi Shlaim), which has been published in Arabic, French, Turkish and Italian editions; and *Outside In: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East* (I.B. Tauris, 2002). His latest book "The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East" will be published in February 2015.

PANEL 1 - THE END OF BORDERS

Friday 16, 11.15 – 13.00, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

Chair: Beatrice Nicolini

Paper Givers:

1. **Vittoria Gemelli (Catholic University of Milan): Inside political borders in the Horn of Africa: Statehood bubbles**

In the Horn of Africa, borders come from centuries of international political debate with, or even without, supposedly local authorities. The European colonial and pre-colonial experience in the Horn brought in this political panorama a need to adjust the political, social and geographic dimensions of statehood, so that they would coincide. The colonies in the periphery could only this way be recognised by the centre as dignified subjects, in contrast with the locally more diffuse power structures otherwise invisible to European eyes. Borders were not unknown to local populations before the arrival of the Europeans, but they followed the movements of the social compositions rather than demarcating the territoriality of a certain sovereignty. The distinction between regional actors is in fact primarily in the way power and borders are conceived, where Ethiopia shares a territorial vision with the western world. Therefore, when in presence of weak states with no or little national cohesion nor an effective control of their territory, such as Somalia, chronic issues recur in the application of dominium to a territory, as erroneously assimilated to a consistent people. However, these constant efforts to re-affirm this vision of statehood borders has deepened the fractures that already ran in the socially composite national people and did not let political and social unrest bring about a positive, constructive change inside these bubbles of statehood. In the whole region, it appears how the authorities still find it hard to establish a socially cohesive power able to overrule the transnationally built identities made of religious and ethnic characteristics, and continuously re-trace colonial borders in the absence of a coherent revision of the issue.

2. **Martino Sacchi (Catholic University of Milan): Piracy as a transnational threat in Horn of Africa**

The sea cannot be divided: it represents a link between different peoples much more than an obstacle. This is true for Indian Ocean, too: merchants, soldiers, sailors, fishermen, pilgrims have been sailing its waters for centuries and creating «cultural bindings» between East Africa and Southwestern Asia. But for the same reason any menace is

«transnational» at sea, because no ultimate shelter can be offered by political shields. Piracy is a typical transnational threat, because no ship running course in dangerous waters can be considered really safe from pirate attacks. In the 90s Somalia became a so called «failed state» after the fall of Siad Barre's regime: consequently, former fishermen and soldiers began to hunt vessels in the Gulf of Aden and along Somali coasts. International community largely underestimated this threat: only in 2005 the first anti-piracy mission («Mare sicuro») was organized by Marina Militare Italiana (the Italian Navy), subsequently followed by Eu's Atalanta (2008), Nato's Ocean Shield (2009) and CTF 151 (2009). Seafarers from more than 30 nations were involved in kidnapping and hijacking: in 2011, for instance, at least 140 Philippine and almost 100 Indian seamen were held as hostages. A dramatic decrease in piracy attacks was registered in 2013: however, Horn of Africa, Somalia and Indian Ocean are still far from safe. This paper aims to describe the following issues: a short history of the piracy in HOA; an analysis of the impact of piracy on seatrade; a description of the new forms of international collaboration against piracy

3. **Beatrice Nicolini (Catholic University of Milan): The Asian Presence in the Gulf: a global but not globalized cultural reality**

This paper will open the discussion on people from South Central Asia and their role in the Persian Gulf region and beyond during the 19th and 20th centuries. The major motivations to Asian movements were originated from environmental issues as well as from socio-economic conditions in their land. These conditions implied numerous consequences such as the expansion of lawless habits throughout their region, enslaving by external powerful groups, and the progressive creation of new roles in the Persian Gulf region such as the military one. Very little has been published about these socalled "diasporas communities". For a long time available literature, not generous at all on this particular topic, did portray the Asians as a monolithic group of people who migrated in search of a better life. Nevertheless, we would like to try to re-read the role of this Asian community and especially their migrations throughout the wider Persian Gulf region. Within this framework, the realities of terrain, climate and maritime connections and interconnections played a crucial influence on the construction of the Asian identity throughout contemporary history. This paper aims to focus on more than one littoral and more than one region, with the object of analyzing different perspectives both chronologically and methodologically. It should be noted at the outset that ethnocentric views–especially Eurocentric ones–have informed numerous studies for a long time, and sometimes still do. In this regard, most of western oriented strategic studies and analysis on the role of South Central Asian region and of their people throughout history did focus

on external menaces, interests and priorities. Therefore, the gradual creation of an 'empty space power' in this area often lead to wrong focuses on the processes of dominance; at the same time, numerous contemporary local and regional interpretations were too blinded by resentment, sorrow and injustice to offer lucid analysis. International, as well as regional policies that did ignore consistently both of these perspectives were, and probably will, destined to fail. Consequently, we believe that an inward looking to the region and to the, true, identity of Asian groups and tribes, essentially a cultural identity regardless of political boundaries, could ease new, and more empathic approaches to the study of their roles throughout the broader Persian Gulf region.

PANEL 2 - *OTHER SPRINGS*: **REDISCOVERING** *MIZRAHI* **CULTURES IN CONTEMPORARY ISRAEL**

Friday 16, 11.15 – 13.00, Sala Dorigo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Emanuela Trevisan Semi and and Yochai Oppenheimer

Discussant: Arturo Marzano (University of Pisa)

Paper Givers:

1. **Yochai Oppenheimer (Tel Aviv University): Do mizrahim write a minor literature?**

The first paper will ask how mizrahi fiction relates to ashkenazi Israeli fiction. Obviously, Israeli literature is the context from which mizrahi literature emerged, and from which it is nourished. However, the paper will suggest that mizrahi writing's distinctive character should not be overlooked, being not only a supplement to the standard literary corpus or more of the same, but also counter-hegemonic. Mizrahi fiction proves that a group of people who had been subaltern for decades can, in fact, produce a minor literature that engages in a bold critical dialogue with the hegemonic major literature, its language and its forms of discourse. From a preliminary survey of the various components belonging to what can be called mizrahi writing, one could then acknowledge the difference between the major Israeli literature and the minor mizrahi literature.

2. **Piera Rossetto (Ca' Foscari University, Venice/EHESS, Toulouse): Mizrahi fiction between past legacies and present issues**

This paper will consider the case of contemporary Jewish authors of Libyan descent in Israel to explore the understanding, appropriation or rejection of terms such as mizrahi and Arab Jew and of notions of heritage as they are reflected in their literary production. The texts will be considered against the background of the history of Israeli literature, mainly in the light of earlier stages of affirmation of these terms by mizrahi authors (e.g. the 1960s and 1970s works by Shimon Ballas).

3. **Emanuela Trevisan Semi (Ca' Foscari University, Venice): Morocco in the literary works of second and third-generation Israelis of Moroccan Jewish descent**

This paper will instead talk about the cultural and literary contribution of the second and third-generation of Israelis of Moroccan Jewish descent and the ways in which this led to broadening the spaces of Diasporic memory and how it changed the Israeli national master narrative.

4. **Dario Miccoli (LabexMed IREMAM/Aix-Marseille Université): A new wind? Young mizrahi intellectuals and activists between literature and politics**

Focusing on the activities of recently founded mizrahi cultural movements – such as Ruah Hadashah and 'Ars Poetiqah – and on the works of third-generation mizrahi intellectuals (e.g. Almog Behar), this paper will finally discuss how the Arab Spring and its complex legacies are being debated and imagined in today's Israel and to what extent this might signal the emergence of "a new wind" in the Israeli cultural landscape.

PANEL 3 - THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN UNDER HASSAN ROUHANI: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Friday 16, 11.15 – 13.00, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Shabnam Holliday and Haideh Moghissi

Discussant: Paola Rivetti (Dublin City University)

Paper Givers:

1. **Shabnam Holliday (Plymouth University), Comparing Rouhanism and Khatamism: discourses about democracy and dialogue among civilisation**

For Gramsci, hegemony is grounded in both domestic and international politics. Furthermore, there is a complex relationship between the domestic and international whereby 'national' politics and 'international' or 'world-wide' politics are dependent on each other. The nature of this complex relationship is revealed in Gramsci's discussion of 'relations of political forces' in 'The Modern Prince' (Gramsci 1971). There are a number of different levels including 'relations between international forces' and 'the objective levels in society'. Gramsci asks whether the 'international relations precede or follow … social relations'. His response is that there is no doubt: they follow (Gramsci 1971). This elaboration of hegemony is an interesting framework through which to examine the relationship between international and domestic politics in Iran. The aim of this paper is two-fold. Firstly, it will show that Rouhani's presidency in many respects represents a continuation of the ideals espoused in Khatami's presidency and by the Green Movement, and thus both and continuation and departure from Ahmadinejad's presidency. For instance, Rouhani's 'constructive engagement' whereby diplomacy 'means engaging with one's counterparts on an equal footing and mutual respect' (Rouhani 2013) reflects Khatami's 'dialogue among civilisations' and the aims outlined in The Citizenship Rights Charter reflect those of mardumsalari ('Iranian' democracy) and an Iranian civic national identity (see Holliday 2011). Secondly, the paper argues that the election of Rouhani and the fact that he was permitted to be a presidential candidate demonstrates a change in domestic politics, which in turn has also led to a change in international politics through the process of nuclear negotiations. Thus, as Gramsci suggests (noted above) there is a complex relationship between domestic and international politics, whereby the international follows the social.

**2.	Maaike Warnaar (Leiden University Institute for Area Studies, LIAS): Iran-Gulf relations under Rouhani: continuity and change.**

Relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Gulf monarchies have always been problematic. Despite common interests, GCC states have perceived Iran primarily as a threat to their strategic interest. This threat is often framed in terms of a sectarian Sunni vs Shi'a divide. Regional developments, including the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s and the domestic conflict in Iraq since 2003, have underlined these differences. The identification of an Iranian threat has aided political cooperation among the Gulf States as well as between these states and the United States. The Iranian regime, despite these realities, has tried to improve ties with the Gulf monarchies. In doing so, it has attempted to challenge notions of Iranian otherness, and emphasized common identities and interests. In recent years, a discourse of Sunni/Shi'a reconciliation was used actively by Iranian foreign policy makers in an attempt to create common ground between Iran and the GCC states. This attempt had mixed results under Ahmadinejad. (Warnaar 2013) Today, with the Syrian civil war, prospects of bridging the Sunni/Shi'a divide have become bleaker. Nevertheless, Iranian officials recently again downplayed Sunni/Shi'a differences in an attempt to reach out to the Gulf monarchies. How has this attempt been received among the Gulf states? What are the prospects of Iran-Gulf relations under Rouhani?

3. Luciano Zaccara (Qatar University): Continuity and change in Rouhani's Iran: Ahmadinejad's legacy.

One year after the victory of Hassan Rohani in the 11th presidential elections the regional scenario in the Middle East post Arab Spring has changed drastically. The main reason behind that change is the shift in the Iranian foreign policy implemented by the new Iranian president and its first immediate consequence: the resumption of direct conversations with the United States and the nuclear negotiations. This started to show some positive effects in the Iranian foreign trade damaged by the sanctions as well as a more confidence in the role that Iran could exert in the regional conflicts such as Syria. But, are the policies and discourse of Rohani so different than his predecessor Ahmadinejad? Is Rohani implementing a reform in the economic system? Is Rohani changing the relation between the police-state and the population? Or it is only a cosmetic change in order to convince the international community regarding his good will in implementing its requirements to release the freeze assets and lift the sanctions? Although one year is not enough to evaluate the performance of one president, it is possible to analize his discourse and the implementation of some of the promised measures during the brief campaign as well as its effects on the Iranian mood. This paper, based on fieldwork conducted in Iran in June 2013 and May 2014, is trying to elaborate a

preliminary balance of Rohani´s term, and to assess on the political, external and economic legacy of Ahmadinejad.

PANEL 4 - WHAT ECONOMIC CHANGES? THEORETICAL DEBATES AND ACTORS AT STAKE IN THE MENA REGION

Friday 16, 11.15 – 13.00, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Clara Capelli (Univesity of Pavia) and Massimiliano Trentin (University of Bologna)

Paper Givers:

1. **Clara Capelli (University of Pavia): Tunisia and Egypt: A real economic transition?**

Despite the demands for jobs, bread, and social justice echoing in the protest slogans of 2011, very little has been done so far both in Egypt and Tunisia. In many respects, the economic conditions have worsened: GDP growth is down, unemployment has been soaring, investments (particularly FDIs) are stagnant or even falling. Not only are both economies meeting people's needs to satisfy their claims, but the economic measures that have been adopted so far do not seem to envisage any significant change in the approach. First, the Egyptian and Tunisian dependence on donors' and international organizations' aid has stressed the importance on macroeconomic stability and tight control of the public deficit and debt, thus shrinking the countries' possibilities to implement large-scale strategies to promote employment and tackle poverty. Second, free-market policies referring to the Washington Consensus are still the core of the economic agendas of the countries at stake, despite being often blamed for the current economic problems they have been facing in the last decades. On the one hand, free market has traditionally been seen as a mechanism for corrupted elites to enrich themselves, so that the mask of privatization and liberalization concealed a system of kleptocracy/crony capitalism. On the other hand, both the Muslim Brotherhood and Ennahda made huge efforts to legitimize their image and get international support by portraying themselves as pro-market organizations. The aim of this paper is twofold. It will first assess the economic developments of both Egypt and Tunisia in light of the

measures undertaken and their effectiveness. Ultimately, it will try to discuss the approach of the main political actors involved in the transition of the two countries with respect to austerity, free-market policies and alternative views.

2. **Angela Joya (University of Oregon): Contesting the State: Elites, Workers and Peasants in Post Mubarak Egypt**

This paper examines the socio-economic policies implemented after the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak in 2011. The paper aims to investigate whether the neoliberal economic policies adopted in the 1990s and 2000s have remained in place or whether they have been revised since the uprisings. Adopting a political economy perspective, I will discuss the nature of the recent waves of contestation over the Egyptian state by various factions of the elite (i.e. the Brotherhood and the military), as well as workers and peasants. I examine the challenges that socio-economic groups and classes pose to the Egyptian state and how these challenges may open up space for renegotiating notions of citizenship pertaining to socioeconomic rights and the state's role in economy. A key theme of this paper is to explore how the policies adopted by the Egyptian elites in the post-revolutionary period have reshaped the legitimacy of the state in the eyes of its citizens. The research draws on open-source materials and scholarly publications as well as policy documents, the Egyptian constitutional debates since 2011 as well as fieldwork and interviews.

3. **Irene Costantini (University of Trento): Perspectives on economic dynamics in the Libyan transition**

The overthrow of the Qadhafi regime and the liberation of Libya proclaimed was welcomed as a new beginning for the country. This enthusiasm, shared by Libyans and the international community alike, spreads equally to the economic domain. Reflecting this widespread enthusiasm, the IMF noted in 2012 that "Libya's popular revolution of 2011 has unleashed the potential for more diverse and inclusive growth". Contrary to expectations, the Libyan transition soon derailed and revealed all the complexity of the state formation process. The economy has emerged as one of the conflicting issues in the Libyan transition, and economic dynamics have contributed to redesign the power struggle between entrenched groups in the transition. By investigating the dynamics that have occurred during the first three years of transition this paper questions the extent and the manner in which the limited internationally-led intervention in Libya has affected the economic transformation of the country and the "topography of power" that emerged in

relation to economic dynamics. By recognising the importance of tracing processes in historical and comparative terms, the paper makes extensive reference to the case of Iraq to analyse continuity and change in International Financial Institutions' agenda as well as the positioning of domestic economic actors in the transitions. In addressing these issues the paper focuses on and problematises the widely-held consensus that portrays the private sector as a policy solution to a vast range of challenges and as an "actor for change" in the Middle East and North Africa region.

4. **Farhad Nomani (American University of Paris) and Sohrab Behdad (Denison University): A Comparative Study of Class Reconfiguration in Iran and Turkey in the Era of Neo-liberalism**

This paper is a study of the reconfiguration of social classes in Iran and Turkey since the 1980s. In particular, we ask this question: How the internal and external forces of reform, political and economic crises, state's policies have affected the configuration of social classes in Turkey and Iran in the past three decades? These were the turbulent decades in which Iran experienced a post-revolutionary crisis, and Turkey, following a military coup, embarked upon an outward oriented neoliberal economic strategy. There is a dearth of empirical study about the pattern of change in the class structure of the Middle East societies, as their socio-economic structures have undergone some radical transformations in the past decades. This study is an attempt in overcoming this deficiency by focusing on the case of Iran and Turkey in their socio-economic and political context in the past decades. We propose to empirically verify the structure and the transformation of their respective class configurations within a comparative framework. The last three decades have been pivotal in the modern history of Iran and Turkey. These two predominantly Muslim, non-Arab Middle Eastern countries experienced an autocratic modernization-secularization transformation about the same time and in much similar patterns in the 1930s. They both have weathered, each in its own way, turbulent political conditions, shifting economic strategies in the post-war period, and deep political contestations, including differentiated democracies and Islamization of their politics, especially in the last three decades. Ironically, until 1980, they had been the two most secular states, among the Middle Eastern countries. In spite of many similarities, however, Turkey and Iran are different in many ways, in their historical heritage and in the path of capitalist socio-economic development that they have undertaken in the past decades. In our study of the comparative analysis of class reconfiguration in Iran and Turkey we will examine the development of their economies in terms of the deepening of capitalist relations of production in corresponding periods. The focus of our study is the impact of the discontinuous, turbulent economic development in these two economies on

the configuration of their social classes. The general framework of our class analysis is a structural conception of class influenced by Rosemary Crompton (1993), John Scott (1996), and Erik O. Wright (1997, 2001). We rely on the cross classification of data on occupational status-economic activities-occupational groups, collected in decennial national census in Iran and Turkey for the operationalization of class structures.

5. **Sarah Smierciak (Saint Anthony's College – University of Oxford): Weaving Networks of Exclusion: Business-State Relations and the Re-making of Egypt's Textile Sector**

Despite numerous surface-level changes in Egypt since 2011, many of the country's government officials and business elite remain. The role of persisting partnerships between these actors have great implications for average Egyptians' economic opportunities moving forward. This paper takes Egypt's textile and garment industry as a case study to examine how networks of businessmen and state actors—many of which were established during the IMF-led reforms of the 1990s and 2000s—continue to entrench economic exclusion following the January 25 Revolution. Specifically, this paper investigates negotiations surrounding the 2004 Qualified Industrial Zone (QIZ) trade agreement with the US and Israel, examining the networks created across traditional public-private and domestic-international divides. This paper argues that the policies and organizations resulting from these networks have restructured the textile sector in the interest of a select group of business elite, granting exclusive privileges such as access to export markets and policy making circles. Second, it argues that rather than promote development of the sector, the agreement has resulted in further deindustrialization, primarily through: 1) facilitating the capture of export markets by a few connected firms, and 2) promoting policy that favors trade over manufacturing— thus privileging large garment assemblers using high import content and with few interfirm linkages over textile producers far more integrated into the local economy. Through targeted interviews with state officials, business elite, and smaller firm owners, this paper aims to shed light on how networks of exclusion have been formed and formalized in the backdrop of neoliberal reforms, and how they continue to dictate participation in the Egyptian textile and garment sector to the present.

PANEL 5 - ORIGINES ET DÉVELOPPEMENTS DES SYSTÈMES PARTISANS DU MONDE ARABE: UNE PERSPECTIVE COMPARATIVE

Friday 16, 11.15 – 13.00, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Belkacem Benzenine (CRASC, Oran) and Clément Steuer (Institut oriental de l'Académie des sciences de République tchèque)

Paper Givers:

1. **Valeria Lussana (Università Cattolica di Milano): Les partis politiques syriens avant 1963**

La Syrie devient de facto indépendante en 1947, et depuis ce moment, les organisations politiques qui étaient présentes dans le pays peuvent enfin se transformer en véritables partis politiques. Si d'une part le pouvoir formel est maintenu par des familles notables, qui étaient déjà porteurs des intérêts français dans le période du mandat, de l'autre commence à émerger une certaine effervescence sociale qui favorise la diffusion des idéaux comme le socialisme et le nationalisme : dans la première catégorie rentrent organisations comme le Parti National et le Parti du Peuple, tandis que la seconde se réfère au Parti Populaire Syrien (PPS) d'Antoun Sadée et au Parti Communiste Syrien (PCS). Dans les années qui suivent immédiatement l'indépendance apparaissent sur la scène aussi le Parti Socialiste de Akram Hourani, une organisation révolutionnaire intéressé à défendre les intérêts des zone rurales, et les Frères Musulmans, qui bien que ne soient pas un parti politique stricto sensu, contribuent à mobiliser les masses et à se faire médiateurs des intérêts populaires. Mérite une mention spéciale le parti qui a le plus influencé l'histoire de la Syrie contemporaine, le parti Ba'th (Hizb Al-Ba'th Al-'Arabi Al-Isthiraki), fondé en 1947 par deux professeurs de Damas, Michel 'Aflaq et Salah Din Al-Bitar, et qui détient le pouvoir dans le pays depuis le 8 mars 1963.

2. **Nur Köprülü (Near East University Nicosie): Parties, Electoral Politics and the future of political reform in Jordan**

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan represents one of the hybrid regimes – between politics of elections and controlled-liberalization – in the Arab Middle East. Actually, the nascent history of the political parties and the multi-party system in Jordan dates back to Kingdom's independence years. Namely, the Ba'thist, Arab nationalist, leftist as well as Nasserist parties were all founded in the post-colonial era. Having felt the exigencies of the climax of Arabism and Nasserist camps, the Kingdom banned the political parties in

1957 until the inauguration of the National Charter in 1992. Thus between the years 1957 and 1992 the political parties and the opposition groups were deprived of political sphere to mobilize effectively with the exception of the Muslim Brotherhood Society (Ikhwan). Representing the most stable monarchies and regimes in the entire Middle East, Jordan has embarked on a process of political liberalization after 1989. The trend towards democratization or political reform process as a 'defensive' mechanism led to the emergence of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) which has been the key opposition party in Jordanian politics as well as the political wing of the Ikhwan.Thus, this paper aims to analyse the prospect of the trend toward democratization in the case of Jordan via referring to the nature and the role of political parties as well as the discussions on the 'controversial' electoral law which constantly dominates public debates in the country. In line with this aim, this paper will also examine the impact of the Arab upheavals/ revolts in restructuring the elections and political reform in the Kingdom in the post-2011 era.

3. **Jean-Paul Burdy (Sciences Po Grenoble, Laboratoire GREMMO Lyon): Les partis politiques au Bahreïn, entre héritages des nationalismes arabes et de la révolution iranienne (1950-2014)**

Le paysage politique du Bahreïn s'est structuré dès les années 1950, sous forme de mouvements, de courants puis de partis, dont les évolutions suivent les phases de cette monarchie sunnite autoritaire à forte tradition de politisation et de contestation. Les années 1950-70 (Guerre froide, décolonisation), sont dominées par des mouvements nationalistes-arabes, marxistes et « laïques », contre lesquels le pouvoir encourage des groupes chiites concurrents entre eux (al-Dawa, Shirazi), qui insistent sur la légitimité religieuse et la guidance cléricale. Les Frères musulmans sont également présents. La révolution iranienne de 1979 marque un tournant majeur: déclin des mouvements « laïques », qui alimentent en militants des groupes chiites radicalisés inspirés de l'Iran; émergence d'une mouvance « hezbollah »; structuration politico-religieuse de la population chiite; encouragement du régime à l'organisation des sunnites. Le Printemps de la Perle de 2011 a profondément mobilisé, mais aussi clivé les partis et groupes, et les a radicalisés, avec des références confessionnelles accrues du côté des sunnites.

4. **Raquel Ojeda García (University of Granada): The institutionalization of the party system in an authoritarian regime: the Mauritanian case**

This paper departs from a question about the nature of the political regime: that is, whether Mauritania should be classified as an authoritarian state? In order to explore this we are going to examine one explanatory variable (which is one among others) that in the case of Mauritania has attracted little attention. Specifically our focus is going to be

Mauritania's party systems and their degree of institutionalization. The main indicators that we are going to analyze are: 1) the level of grassroots support for parties in Mauritanian society (the legitimacy of the parties), 2) the level of adhesion people feel to the leader and the role of the leader within the party, 3) the creation of new parties between elections (stability), 4) the degree of volatility, or the differences of electoral support between elections. Our starting premise is that representative democracy is established upon the structure of political parties. Following the analysis of the legislative elections in 2013 and their political context, we can state that Mauritania remains within the category of an 'authoritarian regime', given that its party systems have low levels of institutionalization and impede the production of true competition between parties.

13.00 - 14.00

LUNCH

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, AFTERNOON

PANEL 6 - WRITING THE ARAB MODERNITY: *GENRE,* WORLD VIEW, AND LITERARY CANON

Friday 16, 14 - 16, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Maria Elena Paniconi and Jolanda Guardi

Paper Givers:

SESSION ONE

1. **Lorenzo Casini (University of Messina): "Modernity" in the debate on Arab literary modernity**

Within the framework of the panel "Writing modernity", where the relationship between modernity, literary genres and the transformation of worldview in Arabic narrative is debated, this paper discusses the key notion of "modernity" and addresses the basic question: what do we mean with "modernity" when we assert the existence of an Arab literary modernity? During the last decades, under the influence of Postmodernism and Postcolonial Studies, modernity has been interpreted as an European/Western experience inextricably associated with eurocentrism and colonialism. This approach permeates, for example, the fifth chapter of the influential textbook of sociology Formations of Modernity (Stuart Hall, "The West and the Rest") where the narrative of Western civilization is described as part and parcel of the project of modernity. Moreover, the appropriation by Arab intellectuals of notions and concepts associated with modernity has been often seen as an act of surrender to European/Western cultural imperialism (see especially Culture and Imperialism by Edward Said but also, more recently, Hamid Dabashi's essay "For the Last Time Civilization"). This understanding of modernity has also informed recent studies on modern Arabic literature such as the books The Arabic Postcolonial Novel by Muhsin al-Musawi and Arabic Literature. Postmodern Perspective edited by Angelika Neuwith, Andreas Pflitsch and Barbara Winckler. In his introduction to the latter, Andreas Pflitsch has emphasized "the double game" of modernity, consisting of the overlapping presence within one concept of two referents of a different nature: on one hand a universal principle that designates a historical period and the contemporary age, and, on the other, a specific system; that is, the social, cultural, political and economic

development of the West. Inspired by the works on the European novel by Ian Watt and Franco Moretti, Modernità Arabe - that I co-authored with Maria Elena Paniconi and Lucia Sorbera - adopts a more universalistic understanding of modernity. It does not look at Arab modernity through a genealogic perspective, but understands it as the result of transformations taking place at different levels: social structure (as, for example, the increasing social mobility and the new role of youth), worldview (the crisis of Islamic reformism and the advent of nationalism as a hegemonic paradigm) and literary genres (the emergence of the novel). Yet it is also true that Modernità Arabe does not discuss openly the notion of modernity. What is specifically modern in the Arabic literary production of the nineteenth and twentieth century? What is the relationship between modernity and the establishment of the novel as a canonical genre? The present paper attempts to answer this question by examining some relevant examples of the Arabic literary production of the 19th and early 20th century (travel accounts, neo-maqàmàt, canonical novels) in the light of the theoretical understanding of modernity elaborated by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in their celebrated Empire. According to Hardt and Negri modernity was born divided: on the one side modernity consisted in the revolutionary discovery of "the plane of immanence", the idea that knowledge and creation belong to this world and only to this world. On the other side it consisted in a counterrevolution that aimed at re-introducing a new kind of transcendence in the social and cultural life of people with the aim of exercising forms of coercion and political control. The paper aims at identifying these two contrasting forces of modernity within the Arab literary texts that will be discussed.

2. **Jolanda Guardi (Universitat Rovira i Virgili): Re-assessing Arab Modernity: Aḥmad Riḍā Ḥūḥū and the Birth of Arabic Algerian Novel,**

Aim of this paper is to reassess the Algerian literary production into Arabic in the wider frame of Arab modernity. The main idea of my paper is that although set at the margins of the literary production in the Arab world, due to the French occupation which lasted until 1962, Algeria had nonetheless a cultural production in the Arabic language of its own which led to the birth of the modern and contemporary novel in this language. Identifying modernity in the work of Algerian writers does not mean, in my opinion, trying to set a binary opposition between tradition and modernity, as it is the case of most scholarship, but to dismantle this dichotomy to propose a nuanced reading where modernity is present inside the text as a space where different voices merge and produce ambiguity. This because usually modernity is associated with secularism, and - as Talal Asad has shown - this association has shifted in the context of postcolonial nation-state. As he puts it: "The secularization thesis in its entirety has always been at once descriptive and normative".

The prevailing of this thesis in most scholarship in the West (and the Rest) has clasped the study of Arab modernity into the border of a relation with West disregarding the job some writers did inside the traditional (religious) frame. In this context, "modernity has been confined to and associated with a specific time period, reflecting specific political and social struggles" and scholarship has traditionally ignored current literary production and bypassed texts. What I propose then, is a reading that overcomes binarism and turns itself to betweeness in order to rethink Arab modernity by identifying its production in writings, which entail texts usually barred from modernity's mainstream narrative, and displacing the West as the solely locus of modern inspiration. This seems to me especially necessary when approaching the study of Algerian Literature and eventually its path into modernity. The most frequent opinion among scholars is that the Algerian novel written in Arabic begins in 1962, after the independence from French occupation, and that Algerian writers are influenced by French modes of prose writing. This at least is what one can read in the very few scholarly contributions on the subject written in European languages. In my opinion, on the contrary, modernity in the Arabic language came as a result from an inner development of the narrative prose in the country and from a confrontation inner to the Arab world.

3. **Marco Lauri (University of Macerata): The Making of Utopia between "East" and "West": modernity, identity, continuity and rupture**

The paper analyzes some diachronical variations of utopian discourse in Arabic literature in their relationship to identity and modernity. While pre-Modern Arabic literary tradition does display a rich array of utopian features (Barbaro 2013) it does not appear to have ever developed a defined utopian literary genre as such. The beginnings of this genre in Arabic literature emerge in the Nahḍa period, through translations from Western languages (especially French): its first manifestation appear to be original re-elaborations of the varied and well-established Western paradigms (Deheuvels 1999). Thus, utopian thinking should be seen as a vehicle for the introduction of modernity into the Arabic literary world, while connecting to older Arabic traditions. This may have been the case for the seminal translation of Fénelon's Les Aventures de Télémaque by Rifāʻa Rāfiʻ al-Ṭahṭāwī. Utopian discourse normally operates at the junction of literature and social reflection; this makes its study especially significant to the investigation of the broader intellectual shifts it reflects and feeds into. In this framework, the paper will outline historically how some Arabic texts expressed utopian desires and concerns in their historical-intellectual context; these desires and concerns contribute to shape the wider landscape of Arabic literary modernity and are in turn shaped by it. Special attention will

be devoted to the historical transformations of utopian discourse as an ideal locus of "intercultural" encounter, and the questions of identity this encounters raise.

4. **Lucia Avallone (University of Bergamo): Narrativa realista egiziana e ruolo del vernacolo**

In una fase di complessiva trasformazione sociale, la narrativa egiziana moderna si sviluppa fornendo il proprio contributo alla costruzione della coscienza nazionale e sperimentando forme e modalità espressive innovative. Nella rappresentazione della verosimiglianza, cui mirano i narratori della prima metà del ventesimo secolo, alcune scelte linguistiche assumono un ruolo rilevante, poiché caratterizzano in modo realistico sia i dialoghi sia il discorso raccontato; prima con la Scuola Moderna degli anni '20, poi con il realismo sociale degli anni '50, il vernacolo egiziano è infatti elevato a lingua letteraria, valicando i limiti delle opere umoristiche e delle produzioni popolari di vario genere. La rappresentazione scritta della variazione linguistica ha così una sua funzione, non trascurabile, nell'evoluzione della letteratura nazionale egiziana, dal teatro alla poesia, dal giornalismo satirico alla narrativa. Alcune significative esperienze realizzate nei diversi generi letterari, in particolare nella scrittura drammaturgica e in quella giornalistica, indirettamente recano apporto all'elaborazione di romanzi e racconti i cui scopi realistici sono perfezionati, sul piano formale, proprio con il ricorso al vernacolo. Narratori entrati nel canone letterario e altri meno noti si confrontano col fenomeno diglottico, cercando di riprodurre nei loro romanzi e racconti la composita e instabile realtà dell'oralità; essi tendono a fornire un linguaggio coerente con i soggetti connessi all'identità nazionale, alle peculiarità culturali e alle ideologie che animano il risveglio politico dell'Egitto moderno. Questo paper prende in considerazione le scelte linguistiche di alcuni narratori egiziani moderni cercando di spiegarne gli scopi e i metodi in rapporto all'osservazione della realtà, alla sua rappresentazione e alle ideologie correnti.

SESSION TWO

Friday 16, 16.15 - 18, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

5. **Barbara Winckler (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster): Embarking upon a New Era through an Old Genre. Changes in Form and Function of Biographical Writing in the 19th Century**

Biography is probably one of the most durable genres in Arabic literature. Occurring in various forms and length and embedded in a wide array of works – not only in biographical dictionaries but also in annalistic histories, geographical dictionaries, travel books and literary works –, it is mainly considered a historical genre and closely connected to ḥadīth studies. In the second half of the 19th century, the period of the naḥḍa, commonly viewed as the 'Arab Renaissance' or the beginning of 'modernity', we witness the emergence of a new culture of debate, fostered by the nascent Arab press, especially by privately run magazines. In these magazines that are considered being both the driving force and the mirror of the transformation processes of their time, biographical essays became a primary ingredient, figuring not least as inspiring (or deterrent) example. This paper will discuss how biographical writing changed according to these new conditions and a changed world view. According to the editors' choice, some magazines portrayed mostly Western contemporary figures focusing on professions that had not been in the focus of interest before; others preferred figures from the Arab/Oriental past or from Antiquity. If we assume that biographical essays were seen as an essential factor in educating and mobilizing the audience (which, at that time, was not limited to readers), it is crucial to analyze who is portrayed, how the person is characterized and which details of his/her life are highlighted, which omitted. However, questions of style and the general approach to the portrayed person are no less important. The paper will thus examine the relationship between genre and worldview, between text and socio-political context.

6. **Marina Romano (Università di Napoli "L'Orientale"): Egyptian Political Memoires of the Liberal Age. Towards a new national History**

In the wake of the colonization waves and the anti-colonial movements occurred in the Middle East starting from the end of the 19th century, the Arab literary landscape witnessed the emergence of political memoirs. A fairly new genre, these texts were conceived as the depositories of the national histories belonging to the states emerged after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire that followed World War I. The aim of this paper is to examine the development of political memoirs in Egypt and their link with the claims made by the nationalist movement in the so-called Liberal Age (1923-1952). Space

will be given to the memoirs authored by the Egyptian upper class during or after the interwar period and depicting the political and cultural life of the country. Albeit with some variations, the purpose of these political memoirs was two-fold: first of all, rather than being a collection of memories on the author's private life, they were meant to serve as a warning to the future generations against the dangers arising from the lack of unity and patriotism in the Egyptian nation. Secondly, far from being an impartial account of events, they were designed to convey the authoritarian and paternalistic policies promoted by the cultural elites that rose to power during the period under study and represented most notably by the Wafd Party (ḥizb al-wafd) and the Liberal Constitutionalist Party (ḥizb al-aḥrār al-dustūriyyīn). The way the members of these political formations narrated the events was inevitably affected by their struggle to pursue a national identity able to deal with the colonial power, the country's cultural authenticity and the concept of modernity, alternatively identified in the Western cultural heritage or the scientific system of thought. Finally, this paper attempts an analysis of the intentions behind the production of these memoirs and of the way they depict, on one side, the history of the Egyptian nationalist movement and, on the other, the image of the ideal intellectual that is called to serve his own country. A review of a selected number of memoirs will be offered in order to answer the questions raised by this paper and to find some common features able to give a precise definition of this 'polygenre', located halfway between historiographical works and autobiographies in the narrow sense.

7. **Maria Elena Paniconi (University of Macerata): Autobiography, modernity and the aesthetic apprenticeship in the Egyptian experience**

At the beginning of the XX century, the "modern youth" became in Egypt more and more connoted from a social and a political point of view, as it was trying to conform its own allure to a new idea of manhood and to occupy specific areas of the urban space. Intellectuals, journalists, writers such as Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyed or Muhammad Ḥusayn Haykal represented in their newspapers articles, fictional writing and social portraits the making of this young elite. The young hero in his search for freedom from the modes of behavior and expectations of the "older generation" became an epitome of a new sensibility. An important contribution for the affirmation of a cultural idea of youth has been given also by the canonical, recognized, overwhelmingly male autobiographies of Egyptian intellectuals. This kind of autobiography worked as a mise en forme of a dominant narration, and it has been very important in endorsing the conviction that the aesthetic apprenticeship as an integrant part of the making of a modern subject. In my paper I will focus in particular on how the aesthetic apprenticeship has been considered

by a generation of modern Egyptian intellectuals as a fundamental step of their global education and cultural training.

8. **Alba Rosa Suriano (University of Catania): Between innovation and tradition: (re)building modern Egyptian Theatre**

In contemporary Egyptian cultural production, a multifaceted process of construction of national identity has been taking shape. Visual and literary expressions of "egyptianity" are part of an intellectual discourse on identity, based on the dialectic tradition/innovation. Concerning prose, recent studies about Egyptian literature have put in relation the three conceptual categories of nation, novel and modernity, assuming that nation and nationalism are both expressions of a time which can be defined "modern" (Casini, Paniconi, Sorbera 2013). At the beginning of the XXth century, due to the hegemonic role of European narrative realism, traditional forms of writing were left out, to be resumed after decolonization and with the definition of nasserist nationalist project. A similar process of recovery also took place in theater, particularly from the late 1950s on (Ruocco 2010).The writer and dramatist Yusuf Idris, in the introduction to al-Farafir, suggests that, by reworking pre-modern forms of representation like the samir, it is possible to lay the foundations of a specifically Egyptian – and Arab – theatre (Idris 1964), in contrast with the Italian theatre. The translation of European texts and their circulation influenced the Arab playwrights literary production. The texts themselves were drastically adapted into Arabic language and culture, to increase their empathy with the Arabic audience. The main purpose of this paper is to investigate whether and to what extent discourses on modernity can take shape in Egyptian theatre through the dialectics between tradition and innovation.

PANEL 7 - EXPERIMENTAL AND ALTERNATIVE URBANISM IN THE MENA REGION: BUILDING A CRITICAL AND "POLITICAL" RESEARCH ON THE "NEW" MODES OF MAKING THE CITY

Friday 16, 14 - 16, Sala Dorigo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Pierre-Arnaud Barthel and Valerie Clerc

Paper Givers:

1. **Youssef Diab (Université de Paris Est Marne la Vallée), Abboud Hajjar (architecte): La construction d'un cadre méthodologique renouvelé pour l'élaboration de projets urbains durables en Syrie : le cas d'Alep**

Après l'apparition de la première génération des projets urbains durables dans la région MENA, le développement et la proposition de stratégies et d'outils sont perçus, par les experts, comme une nécessité absolue pour faire évoluer la mise en oeuvre des pratiques du développement urbain durable. Cela se traduit par une volonté de renouveler l'action locale urbaine afin d'atteindre la ville durable. Dans cette perspective, cette analyse se focalise sur le développement d'une approche opérationnelle de conception et de mise en oeuvre de projets urbains permettant de porter une nouvelle réflexion sur la fabrication urbaine en Syrie, et surtout la ville d'Alep, terrain d'expérimentation de cette étude, qui est exposé aux inégalités socio-spatiales liées aux développement rapide et chaotique de quartiers précaires et/ou informels. En Syrie, l'enjeu du développement urbain durable s'est imposé, avant la guerre, dans les politiques publiques urbaines. Entre les années 2000 et 2011, l'Etat central et ses instances locales ont lancé plusieurs programmes et projets urbains dits pilotes, qui désigne une réflexion émergente en matières d'urbanisme alternatif, souvent en collaboration avec des bailleurs du fonds internationaux (Banque mondiale, Union européenne, etc.). L'objectif de notre communication est de présenter un cadre méthodologique pour la prise en compte des enjeux du développement urbain durable dans la conception de projets urbains à Alep avec une attention portée à la réduction des inégalités socio-spatiales et environnementales entre l'est et l'ouest de la ville. Il faut noter que la ville d'Alep depuis la guerre est scindée en deux parties : l'est est sous le contrôle de l'opposition, et l'ouest sous le contrôle de l'armée syrienne. Nous avons relevé que cette fracture de guerre recouvre les limites de l'écart social historique (Diab et Hajjar, 2014). Les approches françaises de quartiers durables ont constitué un cadre heuristique pour cette étude sans procéder à un transfert d'expériences totalement inopportunes et incohérentes avec le contexte local qui a bénéfici d'une analyse approfondie dans cette étude. A la suite de cette analyse, des propositions ont été

effectuées. Elles doivent permettre d'orienter les acteurs locaux de l'aménagement urbain (collectivité locales, bureau d'études, etc.) et d'accompagner la conception des projets urbains durables. Notre approche se situe à l'interface des problèmes génériques liés à l'environnement et la durabilité urbaine et des enjeux locaux spécifiques de la région d'Alep pour la phase post-guerre

2. **Pascale Philifert (Université Paris Ouest Nanterre) : Retour réflexif sur les professionnels de l'urbain face aux nouvelles modalités de fabrication de la ville au Maroc.**

Les démarches adoptées au Maroc pour fabriquer la ville autrement que par le passé n'en sont qu'à leurs débuts. Les professionnels de l'urbain sont confrontés à de nouveaux choix techniques et sociaux alors qu'ils mobilisent toujours, dans leur grande majorité, une pratique bureaucratique où dominent programmation surplombante, normes homogènes, faible méthodologie de projet, etc et que les acteurs professionnels restent pour partie contraints par des modèles hiérarchiques et peu démocratiques. Confrontés à l'urbanisme dit durable par exemple, qui orientent les pratiques et les discours tout en étant l'objet de traductions singulières, la reproduction mécaniste et a-critique des procédures urbaines, la légitimation d'un univers normatif et bureaucratique sont entamés. . Si les contraintes politiques sont importantes il n'en demeure pas moins que les professionnels « résistent » ou reproduisent des savoirs ou des modes d'action tant par habitudes que par habitus même si des infléchissements se font jour çà et là. Des tentatives de renouvellement des pratiques professionnelles ou des formes d'innovation dans les pratiques Entre formalisme et innovation, des prémices de changements dans les modes de faire se dessinent pourtant. Néanmoins, ces processus restent à interroger pour le Maroc, à la lumière des critiques dont les urbanistes font l'objet, portant sur les modèles défendus et les méthodes mises en oeuvre. Il s'agira ici d'éclairer ces tendances à partir d'exemples de projets (restructuration de quartiers informels ou planification plus globale) de comprendre les difficultés de leur mise en œuvre. En se fondant sur des travaux qui portent sur le Maroc, sans doute est-il intéressant de réinterroger la pertinence de ces acceptions à partir de quelques questions de portée générale : comment le champ professionnel se structure-t-il entre enjeux techniques et logiques politiques ? De qui ou de quoi ces acteurs sont-ils dépendants (du politique, du raisonnement technique, de la production de règles, de leur milieu social) ? En outre, considérant les transformations de l'action urbaine et ses influences internationales, quels renouvellements observe-t-on en matière d'urbanisme durable? Quels en ont été les effets sur le cadre d'exercice du métier d'urbaniste et sur ses manières de faire, sur les compétences et les cultures professionnelles ?

3. **Myriam Ababsa (Consultante et chercheure associée à l'Institut français du Proche-Orient Jordanie) : Naissance d'une conscience environnementale urbaine à Amman.**

Depuis que la première loi de protection de l'environnement a été promulguée en Jordanie en 2003 (loi n°1), plusieurs initiatives citoyennes se sont développées à Amman afin de développer des espaces verts, replanter des arbres, ramasser les détritus dans les forêts environnantes, encourager à la marche, etc. Elles paraissent anecdotiques tant les enjeux sont grands dans une ville où des taux de pollution de l'air deux fois supérieurs à ceux des villes européennes sont régulièrement mesurés. En 2006, le gouvernement a établi les limites acceptables d'émissions de gaz polluants de la part de l'industrie et des automobiles. Dès cette année, deux types d'essence sans plomb (90 ou 95) ont été introduits dans le pays, limitant considérablement la pollution automobile par le plomb. L'un des premiers défis concerne le développement des transports publics, et du projet phare de Rapid Bus Transit débuté en 2010, interrompu en 2011 pour allégation de corruption, mais redémarré poussivement en 2013. En concertation avec l'Agence française de développement, le ministère de l'environnement jordanien a entrepris un projet de mesure et de communication de la pollution de l'air sur des feux tricolores. C'est preuve d'ouverture de la part d'autorités qui communiquent peu sur les problèmes de protection de l'environnement. Dans la ville industrielle de Sahab, située au sud est d'Amman, des comités d'habitants se sont mobilisés pour que les industriels renouvellent les filtres à air de leurs cheminées d'usine. Mais ainsi que le révèle une enquête conduite en juillet 2012 sur un pannel de 100 résidants de Sahab, la conscience environnementale de la population jordanienne demeure encore très rudimentaire.

4. **Giulia Guadagnoli (urban planner, Beyruth): Small scale tactical interventions on the urban physical environment: case study on informality in Municipal Beirut.**

How do cities provide livable spaces for their users? How can users act in this regard? And how does sustainability matter for users' engagement in the production of urban form? Extensive walks around Beirut explored various sites, where small scale tactical interventions shape the physical environment, across the public private divide and along negotiable lines of agency and entitlement. Starting 2010, observations included up to 40 sites within Municipal Beirut. In 2014 in-depth ethnographic records for selected sites documented the social interactions behind the creation, preservation, modification or removal of these interventions. Some of them date back to the civil war. Others occurred during post-war reconstruction. Meanwhile, recurrent political instability and the inertia of mainstream urbanism jeopardize ongoing efforts to develop public policy and urban

governance. Informality constitutes a pervasive and persistent interference within the formal city, bypassing the binary opposition and the physical segregation which define informal settlements. The research investigates to which extent the observed interventions can inspire innovative approaches to the governance of cities. The analysis questions binaries such as formal and informal, top-down and bottom-up, use and value, ownership and property. It explores opportunities for radical innovation through dissemination and conceptualization of networks and assemblages. It encourages oblique forms of civic engagement, where, thinking with Lefebvre, spatial conceptions and perceptions could be reconciled with how spaces are lived, inhabited, and physically shaped, by users. For visual documentation see: http://photography.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/17982/dodging-city-archive_-beirut-chaptern

PANEL 8 - THE RISE OF THE GULF IN THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Friday 16, 14 - 16, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

Directors: Fred Lawson and Massimiliano Trentin

Chair: Duccio Basosi (University of Venice Ca' Foscari)

Discussant: Matteo Legrenzi (University of Venice Ca' Foscari)

Paper Givers:

1. **Massimiliano Trentin (University of Bologna): Wealth, Power and Crisis in the Middle East and North Africa. The 2000s compared to the 1970s**

The paper aims at reconstructing the set of processes of economic development that have featured the first decade of the XXI century in the Middle East and North Africa. On the one hand, growth, diversification of the economic international relations as well as the leading role played by the Gulf States while, on the other hand, structural vulnerability, unemployment and social polarization are some of the main macroeconomic trends which can be observed throughout the MENA countries. In order to better evaluate them, the paper will set first such processes in comparison with the modern economic history of the Middle East and North Africa, and the "long" 1970s in particular, secondly it will focus on

their interactions with current trends in international economics and politics and finally, it will assess the impact of the global crisis on the regional development. History and economics cannot explain by themselves the rise of social and political conflicts since late 2010: however, they can contribute to set out the context on which new political actors have emerged, the lines of fractures over which they, and their international partners, would position, as well as the huge challenges laying ahead for the future of the Middle East and North Africa

2. **Anja Zorob (Ruhr-Universitat Bochum): New Dimensions of Economic Relations between Rich and Poor States of the Middle East**

Economic relations between the rich and poor states of the Middle East have changed dramatically over the past five years. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Egypt and Tunisia enjoyed commercial and financial ties to the oil-producing states of the Gulf that approached complementarity. In exchange for investment capital from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, Egypt supplied skilled and unskilled labor and an assortment of manufactured goods. Similarly, Tunisia's ties to neighboring Algeria and Libya evidenced a substantial degree of reciprocity, which left the North African economies equally positioned relative to one another. This situation has been severely disrupted by the popular uprisings that occurred in Egypt and Tunisia during the winter of 2010-11. In the wake of these revolts, the poorer countries found themselves more dependent upon the richer Arab states than at any time since the early 1980s. The major components of such dependence can be illustrated through a survey of three key sectors of inter-Arab economic transactions: the flow of investment capital, patterns of labor migration and the regional trade in hydrocarbons. Trends in these three sectors now approximate the situation that was present in the region during the era described by the classic volume Rich and Poor States in the Middle East.

3. **Samuel E. Willner (University of Haifa): OPEC's Influence and Energy Security in the New Middle East: A Return to the late 1970s?**

Precisely how the pursuit of energy security influences relations between oil-rich and oil-poor states continues to puzzle scholars of international relations in the Middle East. At the same time, the position of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in regional affairs seems to be inordinately complex. The governments of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar have taken steps designed to maximize their respective oil revenues, while at the same time making a concerted effort to ensure the economic security of Arab oil-importing economies. These contradictory imperatives tamed the strategic ambitions of the richer Arab states during the late 1970s and early

1980s, along the lines predicted by game theory. It appears much less likely that events after the 2010-11 uprisings will work out in a similar way. Current trends in hydrocarbon production and marketing, in conjunction with the rise of alternative energy sources, have set the stage for heightened levels of irrationality and sub-optimality in regional oil markets, which threaten to generate unprecedented conflicts between the oil-producing and oil-importing economies of the Middle East.

4. **Robert Springborg (Naval Postgraduate School): Rich and Poor States in the Middle East Revisited**

In the essays that he composed for the volume Rich and Poor States in the Middle East, Malcolm Kerr laid out the strategic consequences of heightened economic dependence of the poorer countries, most notably Egypt, on the oil-producing Arab states of the Gulf. Such dependence greatly constrained that range of diplomatic choices that was open to the Egyptian leadership, and forced Cairo to pursue a more cautious and passive role in regional affairs than it had played in the early 1960s. Following the popular uprising of February 2011 that removed Husni Mubarak from power, Egypt once again finds itself at a marked disadvantage relative to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. It is crucial to explore the specific ways in which the return to asymmetrical interdependence in regional affairs is likely to shape the options available to post-Mubarak policy-makers in Cairo.

5. **Fred H. Lawson (Mills College): Interdependence and Regional Alignments among Rich and Poor States in the Middle East after the 2010-11 Uprisings**

During the late 1970s, economic relations exerted a direct impact on the pattern of alliances that took shape among the Arab states of the Middle East. In particular, the emergence of asymmetrical interdependence between Egypt and Syria on one hand and Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates on the other increased the tendency toward entrapment that is inherent in the alliance dilemma among all states in an anarchic arena. This paper analyzes the ways in which growing intra-regional economic interdependence during the 1980s encouraged alliance partners that found themselves in a disadvantageous position to launch foreign policy initiatives that pulled their patrons into unwanted crises. Such dynamics seem highly likely to re-emerge in the Middle East in the wake of the popular uprisings that swept across the region in the winter of 2010-11.

6. **Marina Calculli (American University of Beirut, AUB): From alignment-seeking to regional patronage: "Oil power" and Saudi policy toward Syria and Egypt in the 1970s and the 2000s**

The foreign policy of Saudi Arabia has witnessed an unprecedented shift after the Arab Uprisings of 2011, moving from a traditional keeper of the status quo into a seeker of regional hegemony. This paper aims at analysing and explaining which regional factors have enabled the kingdom to conduct a more assertive foreign policy. In so doing, the paper compares Saudi policy towards Egypt and Syria after the 1973 October War and after the Uprisings of 2010-11, while stressing the character of power differential between oil-rich and oil-poor countries over the two periods under consideration. Both periods are marked by a pick in oil prices, thus a budget surplus in the oil-rich countries, which enabled Saudi Arabia to increase its 'foreign aid' and use it as a foreign policy tool. The paper shows that, while after 1973 Saudi Arabia used its 'foreign aid leverage' to seek alignments and strengthen inter-state relations, in the post 2011 period the role of Saudi foreign funding became particularly crucial to strengthen transnational relations, at the societal level. Furthermore, the paper argues that, as socio-economic indicators in oil-poor countries ultimately weakened the domestic legitimacy of the regime in Egypt and Syria, eventually leading to the Arab Uprisings of 2011, patron-client ties between Saudi Arabia and societal groups in both countries, such as religious organizations or businessmen, expanded and intensified. These new developments show that Saudi Arabia has increased its capacity to mobilize/manipulate fragments of society in order to control or challenge the respective regimes, thereby strengthening its regional power which increasingly looks like a 'regional patronage'.

PANEL 9 - ARAB WOMEN AND MEDIA IN CHANGING LANDSCAPES: REALITIES AND CHALLENGES. GULF ARAB AND EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Friday 16, 14 - 16, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Annemarie Profanter and Elena Maestri

Discussant: Lubna Al-Kazi (Kuwait University)

Paper givers:

1. **Annemarie Profanter (Free University of Bolzano-Bozen, Italy): A filmic adventure: Women in polygynous marriages in Oman.**

This paper takes the audience on the adventurous journey of the making of a documentary on women's changing (?) roles in polygynous marital systems in the Sultanate of Oman. The vibrant and rapidly developing countries of the Arabian Peninsula present a visual mélange reflecting shifting marital confluences with strong Islamic polygyny. After the completion of an extensive quantitative and qualitative survey conducted over a 5 year period the author began to develop a visual ethnography that would offer a glimpse into an age old lifestyle and the reasons for its continuity and shifting pathways from an insiders' view with wives, children and husbands providing unique perspectives. There are many social stressors relating to marriage in general, i.e.: the need for females to be married -in order to procreate and be taken care of, to solidify tribal relations, and to take care of extended family members. These all relate to polygyny as well and are valid arguments to date. Through this medium women are granted the opportunity to give an insight into their lives, their changing state of education and the current economic climate. The method of visual ethnography can present alternative insights into intimate spaces and practices, familial traditions and emerging perspectives centered on an age old practice closely associated with both the region and Islam. This paper also highlights the difficulties in the making-off process which again gives insights in the complex relationship of media and the tribally structured society of Oman.

2. **Elena Maestri (Catholic University of Milan): Gulf-based Media and Women: a Shift to a Transcultural Dimension?**

This paper deals with the role that Arab women can assume in inter-cultural communication through the pan-Arab media in the Gulf. Improving media content and creating new educational platforms is a crucial aspect to be considered both with reference to the old media and to the new media, and with reference to the role GCC national women can play in this field, in order to find solutions to shared problems and challenges affecting our 'Wider Mediterranean'. Moving from a transnational to a transcultural media system means to create new educational platforms and to enhance social growth. A more dynamic female involvement in the Gulf-based pan-Arab media

sector and social media is analysed and seen as a great challenge and an extraordinary opportunity to transform long-term educational gains into real job opportunities for young women too. If properly managed within joint EU-GCC initiatives, such involvement might contribute effectively to countering stereotypes of both Arab and European women in our media, while opening up even the most conservative societies to the possibility to develop synergies to the benefit of future generations.

3. **Rafiah Al-Talei, Women and the Media: the Insight of an Omani Journalist.**

This paper offers the insight of a seasoned Omani journalist, a recognized expert on Arab journalism with in-depth global media contacts and resources, who is actually working for Sky News Arabia. This contribution aims to illustrate the cultural and religious circumstances Arab women, and most specifically Omani women are facing, and it explains how that is affecting their choice of career. Focusing on the growing role of religion in the media, this paper will try to measure how all that influences women's image, career and behavior towards the media. The analysis will be dealing on the relationship between women and media in three dimensions: first, woman as recipient of media contents: how she reacts to media contents? Is she an active recipient? Second, woman as journalist: is she a decision maker? How does she deal with women's issues? Does she have the choice of covering these issues? Third, the woman's image in the media: What is it like? What do women think about it? How is it possible to change negative images and dedicate positive images of women in the media?

4. **Sara Chehab (Deputy News Editor at Sky News Arabia, Abu Dhabi, UAE): The Role of Social Media in the Learning and Sharing of News: The Case of Emirati Women.**

This paper examines the extent to which Emirati women in the UAE use social networks, most notably Twitter and Facebook, to learn, share, and debate local and international news/current events from 2011 until today. Existing research on social media and UAE society is limited and focuses on both women and men. By measuring women's online presence and activism and if/how it relates to their acquisition of news, the project will survey around 200 women and will put forth original data that can contribute to the growing literature on gender and social media in the Arab Gulf context. The chapter will also answer other questions, such as: how much are UAE women interested, concerned, or eager to learn about news happening around them? Do they use social media to read news and learn or do they only use it for socialization and entertainment purposes? And are they active micro-bloggers or do they passively read updates without participating and giving their opinions? In a society deeply penetrated by Twitter and Facebook and where

women use social media more than men, it is important to look at the patterns, reasons, and modalities behind the use of social networks and what they are used for.

5. **Leena Maria Alyedreessy (Effat University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia): Social Media and Self-Esteem: the relationships between social media, social inclusion, imaginary audience and women's self-esteem.**

This paper considers that our self-esteem is largely dependent on external validation and social inclusion: high inclusion is related to high self-esteem whereas social isolation is related to lower levels of self-esteem. With our lives becoming virtual, forming links and networks within an internet society, the question arises how experiences of being included and acknowledged in this internet society relate to women's feelings of self-esteem. Our online lives seem to be essentially a parade of 'look at me!' behaviors manifested in the sharing of our intimate details, thoughts and ideas with the general public. One could argue that partaking with the online society is like talking to yourself yet talking to the whole world at the same time. This introduces the concept of Elkind & Bowen's (1979) imaginary audience: "The imaginary audience refers to an egocentric state where an individual imagines and believes that multitudes of people are enthusiastically listening to or watching him or her". In an environment as the Saudi one, where women traditionally have experienced limited opportunities for social inclusion, social media provide new ways of interaction and self-expression. Thus, this chapter investigates relationships between inclusion in social media, imaginary audiences and women's self-esteem.

PANEL 10 - LEBANON FACING THE ARAB UPRISINGS. BETWEEN INTERNAL CHALLENGES AND EXTERNAL CONSTRAINTS

Friday 16, 14 - 16, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Panel chairs: Rosita Di Peri and Daniel Meier

Discussant: Rosita Di Peri and Daniel Meier

Paper Givers:

1. **Lorenzo Trombetta (Chercheur indépendant, correspondant ANSA pour le Moyen Orient): Le Liban, entre révoltes arabes et conflit syrien : un exercice de flexibilité**

Since the beginning of the Syrian uprising in Spring 2011, the social, economic and political Lebanese landscape – described as one of the most unstable and fragile of the Middle East - has unexpectedly showed a great ability in absorbing the effects of the crisis. The massive influx of Syrian refugees and the prolonged status of war in Syria have indeed exacerbated the pre-existent domestic political and sectarian tensions in various Lebanese regions. But the country appears far from being on the brink of a new nationwide 'civil war'. This paper intends to discuss the exceptional flexibility of the Lebanese system in the light of its modern and contemporary history and to examine the crucial role played by local actors in the current transition.

2. **Francesco Mazzuccotelli (University of Pavia): Hezbollah and the 'Arab Spring': defining the discourse of al-mumana'a**

This essay analyzes how Hezbollah frames its reading of the 'Arab Spring' and the ongoing Syrian conflict within the lines of a global interpretation of regional politics. So, the Middle East is seen as the battleground between 'the American-Zionist axis' and its local proxies, on the one hand, and the 'axis of opposition and rejection' (al-mumana'a), on the other hand. According to Hezbollah's thought, the Arab uprisings should be assessed according to the role that they can play in the ongoing conflict between the 'logic of hegemony' of the American-Israeli policies in the region and the 'anti-imperialist resistance'. Therefore in this binary logic, the key element of evaluation is not democracy per se but the position of existing regimes and opposition movements vis-à-vis the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the US-Israeli plans in the Region.

3. **Vincent Geisser (CNRS, Institut français du Proche Orient de Beyrouth) : L'armée libanaise face aux « révolutions arabes » : un retour en grâce de l'institution militaire?**

If the Lebanese society seems to have been spared the wave effects of the protest movements in the Arab world, it has, however, suffered the brunt of the security and humanitarian fallout from the Syrian crisis to the point of feeding the spectrum a return to

civil war. Beyond their divisions, opinion leaders and political-religious organizations have widely used this anxiogenic context to reinforce their social control on the Lebanese people and preserve the confessional status quo of the Taef agreements, ruling out any possibility of in depth institutional reform. Thus, the "Arab revolutions" in general and the Syrian crisis in particular, is instrumentalized by dominant Lebanese political parties and movements parties (known as March 14 and March 8), hindering all possibilities of political change in the short to medium term. However, this "stability in instability" was made as the price of the rise of the security institutions, including the Lebanese army, which in addition to its regular mission of securing public space, is tending to be increasingly seen as a "key institution" of the Lebanese state, to the point of eclipsing the political and religious organizations. Benefiting from a widespread sentiment of confidence within the Lebanese citizens, the army tends to play a political role and to establish itself as a major player on the Lebanese political scene, forcing other elites (political, economic and confessional) to align with this "new unified security paradigm" of the Lebanese state.

4. **Myriam Catusse (CNRS/ IFPO) and Marie-Noëlle Abiyaghi (IFPO/Lebanon Support): Limits and potential of the "campaign for the downfall of the sectarian regime" in Lebanon (2011).**

Lebanon's consociational political system has been the object of many critiques at least since the beginning of the past century specifically denouncing what some scholars and activists have called "multi-party authoritarism". In the vein of the Arab revolutions in 2011, the streets of Beirut witnessed the largest mobilizations against sectarianism since the end of the civil war in 1990. The paper will explore the various dimensions of this movement putting in perspective the transnational "bricolage" or importation of slogans (isqât an-nithâm) while highlighting the local historicity of the movements' protagonists. The paper will also delve into an ethnographic study of the internal dynamics of the movement demonstrating the limits it carried from within. Based on a field research among these activists' circles during and in the aftermath of the mobilization, this contribution proposes an analysis on the transformations of the Lebanese "civil society" and specifically on the forms of non-confessional commitment in a context that is increasingly polarized by confessional and partisan identities. Moreover it will allow us to question the interdepencies and interactions between social movements and political parties. Finally, the paper will pose the question of the role Lebanese public institutions in shaping dissident activism and containing it.

5. **Daniel Meier (University of Grenoble) and Rosita Di Peri (University of Turin): The Sunni community in Lebanon: from "Harirism" to "sheikhism" and back.**

The Sunni community is one of the historic communities of Lebanon: it was the promoter, along with the Maronites, of the National Pact which marked the start of the First Republic; for decades, it has been at the heart of the Lebanese political game, as witnessed by its centrality in the National Pact and in the Ta'if agreements. However, after the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, an emblematic but highly controversial figure, the Sunni community seems to live – both politically and socially - in a limbo. The Sunni community seems to be not able to fill the political vacuum left by Rafiq Hariri and, at the same time, neither it seems to tolerate its slow marginalization within the country, also caused by the political rise of the Shiite community and of Hezbollah in particular. In this context, a new element inside the community seems to be represented by his search for consensus and legitimacy among radical Islamic groups, historically very far from the Sunni Islam. This turning point of the Sunni community, along with the increasingly evident economic, social and political crisis faced by the Hariri clan and fueled, to some extent, by the regional diffusion of such radical groups (Salafists in particular), it is something new that Sunnis in Lebanon have to face. Consequently, given this backdrop, the aim of this paper is to analyse the transformation of the Sunni community in the last ten years focusing, and specifically on two dimensions: from one side we will study the evolution inside the al-Mustaqbal party, showing their difficulties in planning new political strategies and also in maintaining a strong connection with the basis. In this frame a specific focus will be on the recent transformations inside the Hariri's family. From the other side, we will study the Sunni radical mobilization that started in Saida in 2011 around the popular Imam Sheikh Assir, gathering resentments towards the Shia Hizbullah leading party. For the first time in Sunni history in Lebanon, its mobilization strategy surprisingly adopted an attitude of minority. This radical form of expression revealed also a shift in the self-perception among Sunnis, a deep frustration and a feeling of resentment towards the powerful Hizbullah that tend to reveal the weakness of the Sunnis within the Lebanese political game.

6. **Are Knudsen (Chr. Michelsen Institute): Patrolling a Proxy-War: Soldiers, Citizens and Zu'ama in Syria Street, Tripoli.**

Tripoli is Lebanon's poorest and most unruly city. This paper analyses the country's deadliest proxy war, that between Bab al Tebbaneh (Sunni) and Jabal Mohsen (Alawite), two popular neighborhoods in downtown Tripoli. The hostilities between the two communities can be traced to vengeance massacres during the civil war. The simmering

conflict between them escalated following the Syrian troop withdrawal (2005) and erupted again in 2008 (Beirut clashes) and in the wake of the Syrian revolt (March 2011). The army is deployed in the Syria Street, separating the two neighborhoods. During conflict, the army also deploys inside the two communities to prevent the conflict from turning into a bloodbath. The Syrian revolt has magnified community tensions, with both groups supporting their co-religionists: the Alawites the Assad regime and the Sunnis the Syrian insurgents. In December 2012, the army sought to impose a new "Tripoli security plan", yet the conflict has continued to escalate, with Syria street the fault line between the country's rival blocs (March 8, March 14). The two communities are governed by local war-lords, communal leaders and local strong-men, connected to, and in some cases funded by, city dignitaries and notables (za'im, pl. zu'ama), as well as MPs and businessmen-turned-politicians and their benevolent societies. Tripoli is a strongly clientelist city, with political patrons controlling security, service provisions and access to public goods; water, electricity and jobs. The city's poverty and economic malaise makes political patronage all the more important. It has also strengthened the role of radical Islamists, who likewise increase their influence among the city's deprived youth. The paper is based on field visits and interviews in Tripoli, November 2013.

PANEL 11 - ELECTORAL FRAMEWORK AND PARTY SYSTEMS IN THE PERSIAN GULF AFTER THE ARAB SPRING

Friday 16, 16.15 - 18, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Luciano Zaccara (Qatar University) and and Paola Rivetti (Dublin City University)

Discussant: Luciano Zaccara and Paola Rivetti

Paper Givers:

1. **Kevan Harris (Princeton University): Partisans without Parties: A Movement-Centered Analysis of Iran's Post-Revolutionary Politics**

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a frustrating subject for social scientists. Each time we toss out an ideal-type in the hope of encapsulating the country's regime, political economy, or elite dynamics, contemporary events throw a spanner in the works. Instead of continually subjecting Iran to stretched and hyphenated concepts (e.g., semi-authoritarian), a more fruitful view might then focus on processes-in-motion and not end-states. In this paper I flip a common question about Iran on its head: Instead of lack of full democratization, why no Stalin in the Islamic Republic? That is, why has no single political-ideological faction ever monopolized control over the state apparatus? Though Khomeini was arguably the Lenin of the 1979 revolution, the Islamic Republic never produced a Stalin-type figure or party, or even a Mubarak. Fixating only on the world of elites and great men, a Persianized Sovietology of sorts, tells us little about why Iran's elite politics so often shifts so often and so unpredictably. Solely focusing at high politics in this manner, as Joel Migdal once wrote, is like "looking at a mousetrap without at all understanding the mouse". Instead, following Jack Goldstone and Chuck Tilly, I argue that a "movement-centered" perspective can shed more light on Iranian politics, and in doing so our contemporary theoretical toolkit on the broader middle east. Iran has partisans, but not parties. Thus existing theories of party dynamics – authoritarian or democratic – tend to obscure rather than elucidate. Instead, at various and recurring times in the post-revolutionary period, elite dynamics were influenced via socio-political movements in four different arenas: constitutional, ideological, economic, and popular. By expanding on these four arenas, I hope to shed light on the political processes ongoing in Iran today, from the 2009 green movement to the surprising 2013 election of Hassan Rouhani.

2. **Kübra Oğuz (Middle East Technical University, Ankara): Discussing the Relationship Between Social Mobilizations and Elections in the case of 2013 Presidential Elections in Iran**

Elections have a special place within the course of social mobilizations in the Islamic Republic of Iran. 1997 and 2009 Presidential elections are the most two apparent examples of the relationship between elections and social mobilizations in Iran. Elections do not only affect the factional politics, but they also have significant impact on street politics in Iran. On the one side, they trigger public interest on politics and even cause widespread protests as it did in 2009. But it is also argued that they may serve as a

mechanism to take public consent and marginalize the street as a political option. Instead of considering elections and social movements as two opposite margins, there is a need to understand the deep and complex relationship between them. For instance, elections contributed to the creation of new factions which influenced street politics in the end. Thus, Rouhani's election in 2013 is needed to be analyzed in terms of its effects and its position within social mobilizations in Iran. Especially after the Arab Uprisings which stand as a lively example of the tension between the bullet box and the street, the presidential elections of 2013 should be discussed within this framework. This paper aims at discussing the election of Rouhani in terms of the relationship between elections and social mobilizations within the context of the Arab Uprisings. This paper is going to argue that Rouhani's election has the potential to influence street politics as will be elaborated in the case of Green Movement, despite it functioned as a buffer that canalized public interest into the legal framework.

3. **Kristin Smith Diwan, (American University): Electoral Authoritarianism in the Gulf: the role of Municipal Councils**

The Arab uprisings of 2011 have brought the democratic demands of the Arab peoples to the forefront of Arab politics. In the past, Gulf rulers looking for ways to address the demands for more popular participation, turned to more local forms of governance. In the mid-1990's many Gulf states initiated elections for municipal councils; in the case of Saudi Arabia and Qatar these were the first public elective (or partially elective) bodies in these countries in the contemporary period, and were promoted as potential training grounds for democratic governance. These municipal councils have become elements of regime and opposition calculations as Gulf monarchs respond to the Arab spring. Saudi Arabia ended its delay of their second municipal council elections, originally scheduled for 2009, and carried out in September 2011. Qatar held their fourth municipal council elections in May 2011. Meanwhile Bahrain has wrestled with the independent activism of its existing elected councils, removing some councilors from their positions as punishment for their appeal to international rights organizations during the state crackdown on protestors. These actions again raise questions about the role and significance of municipal councils in the political evolution of Gulf monarchies. In this paper I take a comparative look at municipal councils in the Gulf with a view to understanding their relationship to national politics and to evaluating the claims about their role in democratic transition. I begin by providing an historical overview of municipal governance throughout the GCC states. I then draw upon field research conducted in two countries which instituted municipal elections in the past decade, Bahrain and Qatar, comparing their electoral practices - including gerrymandering, differing political rights for different categories of citizens, and

geographically phased polls – and their political significance. Finally, I discuss the likely future role of the municipal councils in the GCC states in light of the recent social and political transformations in the region, paying close attention to the pivotal state of Saudi Arabia.

4. **Hirotake Ishiguro (Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization): Signs of Emerging Party Politics? Consequence of Electoral Reform and its Effects on the Arab Spring in Kuwait**

This paper examines structural changes of Kuwait's parliamentary politics considering parliamentary bloc as a component of party system. Although political party has no legal status in Kuwait, Parliamentarians have developed "quasi-institutionalized party system" since resuming of National Assembly in 1992. Firstly, prominent figures of the opposition started to form political associations according their political ideals. Secondly, they organized parliamentary blocs involving independent members and operated them as a frame of electoral cooperation and parliamentary activities. Then, they led electoral reform in the assembly of 2003 and succeeded in passing the electoral reform bill after they formed coalition and won a majority of seats in the 2006 elections. It is significant that this electoral reform improved balance of social representation and vote-value disparity and restrained vote buying under the initiative of the opposition. The new electoral system expected more organized electoral campaign and further cohesion of parliamentary blocs however; all we saw afterward were fragmentation of parliamentary blocs and destabilized parliamentary politics. These phenomena were caused by following consequences of electoral reform. First, tribal politics was activated. Disparity of vote-value eased, peripheral-tribal districts contained the majority of voter. Tribal representatives gained predominance over urban-elite and separated from urban-elite oriented blocs. Second, popularity vote was exerted. Failed to form organizational cooperation especially in urban districts, it aroused more personal appeal to voters and led escalation of grill ministers. Being in Sharp conflict with the government, opposition started to reorganize and work on parliamentary government.

5. **Marc Valeri (University of Exeter): Electoral Politics in an Authoritarian Context: the Case of Bahrain**

Since 2011, the Kingdom of Bahrain has experienced one of the darkest periods of its history, marked by a massive crackdown on licensed and unlicensed opposition political societies and movements, and a structural division of the society probably unknown since the 1970s.In this context, this paper analyses the role held by the bicameral National Assembly (composed of a Council of Representatives, elected by universal suffrage for

four years from 2002, and a Consultative Council appointed by the King) in the post-2011 authoritarian system. In particular, it will pay special attention to the campaign, the participation and the outcomes of the Council of Representatives elections held in 2011 and 2014. This paper is based on the results of personal interviews and regular fieldworks in Bahrain since 2008.

PANEL 12 - THE ARAB WORLD AND SAHELIAN AFRICA: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AN EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP

Friday 16, 16.15 - 18, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Giorgio Musso and Raphaëlle Chevrillon-Guibert

Discussant: René Otayek (Sciences Po Bordeaux)

Paper Givers:

1. **Marisa Candotti (SOAS, London): Caravans of cloth: changing patterns of trade across the Sahara and the textile-led market economies of pre-colonial Central Sudan.**

During the nineteenth century, the consolidation of the Hausa states into the Sokoto Caliphate (Northern Nigeria) entailed major political, economic and demographic changes leading to market expansion and an unprecedented growth in the Hausa textile industry. Political and institutional changes played a central role in increasing trading expeditions and the immigration of foreign traders and weavers into Hausa towns which produced cloth. This paper suggests that changes in local political and commercial structures largely account for the Sokoto Caliphate's displacement of Borno as centre of textile production as well as entrepôt of trans-Saharan trade in the Central Sudan. The jihad that took place in 1804 had major repercussions on patterns of trade growth and consolidation of decentralized political authority in the Sokoto Caliphate, characterized by a confederation of emirates and coordinated by a common Caliph. Decentralized control produced an adaptively efficient set of institutions, borrowed from Islam and the commercial culture of North Africa, that promoted local trade and commercial infrastructure, attracting merchants from North Africa and the Sahara. This proved more

effective than the mechanism adopted in Borno, where a centralized political authority controlled and monopolized trans-Saharan trade. I also suggest that an efficient Caliphate's juridical system, enforcing commercial and credit arrangements, provided a safety for mobility of capital and practices of delegation of credit that lowered transaction costs and benefitted investment in the savanna from North African traders. This not only reinforced the interaction between long-distance trade and the economies of the Sub-Saharan savanna, but also permitted imports of low cost goods, including cotton cloths, by Saharan caravans as well as the export of Sudanese textiles over most of West Africa.

2. **Raphaëlle Chevrillon-Guibert (Université d'Auvergne, Centre Michel de l'Hospital): Les relations entre Afrique sahélienne et Monde arabe lues au prisme des activités de de grands commerçants soudanais**

Dans cette communication, je me propose de retracer l'itinéraire de grands commerçants sahéliens issus du Darfour et d'apprécier à leur lumière la façon dont s'élaborent les activités économiques de ces acteurs à travers le Sahel mais également, le pourtour méditerranéen, le Golfe et au-delà. Il s'agira de retracer la façon dont se tissent à plus ou moins long terme les relations économiques, apprécier les atouts mis en avant en fonction des contextes économiques et politiques. Nous relirons aussi leurs échecs qui éclairent également la façon dont s'articulent les stratégies des acteurs avec leurs multiples logiques d'action, leurs interdépendances, leurs réactions autonomes ou non, dans un système régional politique plus ou moins contraignant. Pour mener cette étude, je m'appuie sur de nombreux entretiens non directifs menés auprès d'entrepreneurs darfouriens et de personnels administratifs et politiques, essentiellement à Khartoum entre 2004 et 2014, mais également dans d'autres pays.

3. **Giorgio Musso (University of Genova): A dam for a dam? The Aswan High Dam and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam in comparative perspective**

The paper proposes a diachronic comparison between the building of the Aswan High Dam (AHD) in the 1960s and the current Ethiopian implementation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project on the Blue Nile. The latter has provoked a diplomatic crisis between Ethiopia and Egypt, with Cairo complaining about Addis Ababa's unilateralism in carrying on with a project that risks undermining Egypt "historic rights" over the Nile. On its side, Ethiopia contends that its right to develop its own natural resources cannot be held hostage to Egypt's veto, particularly after negotiations on the issue have been going on since 1997 under the aegis of the World Bank-sponsored Nile

Basin Initiative (NBI), whose draft Cooperative Framework Egypt (2010) has refused to sign up to now. The AHD and the GERD, although conceived and constructed fifty years apart, have been supported by political leaders on a similar political and economic ground. On the political side, they are part of a nation-building effort, translated into a nationalist discourse exploiting the struggle to "tame the river" to unite the nation behind a common cause. The huge economic and human effort needed to build a dam is portrayed as the only opportunity to generate a "leap forward" for the country's economic development, and therefore is framed in terms of national self-determination, not mere economic development. On the other side, the construction of the two dams has taken place within a completely different context, which partially explains why Ethiopia is finding it much harder to justify a unilateral action than did Egypt in the 1960s. When the AHD was projected, most of the countries lying upstream of Egypt were still under colonial domination, and Ethiopia didn't have enough diplomatic power to put Egypt's plans into discussion. Moreover, there was still no talking about water scarcity in central and southern Sudan, and even less in Ethiopia, while at the same time concerns regarding environmental degradation were much less felt at the national and international level. It is hoped that a full-fledged comparison between the two cases, using both primary archival sources as well as interviews conducted on the field, will help us to better understand the reasons behind the current struggle over the Nile. Egypt and Ethiopia's respective positions are rooted into deep-seated historical narratives about state-building and national identity, as well as into a contemporary developmental discourse which is often portrayed as a zero-sum game. The main political challenge of the Nile jigsaw is to reconcile the tendency towards unilateralism with the need of shared resource management. Its eventual solution – or its otherwise violent outcome - will provide valuable insight into an understanding of water management across the Sahara-Sahel region and maybe of other trans-boundary natural resources as well.

4. **Pauline Poupart (CERI/ Sciences-po Paris) : La Sonatrach au Mali et au Niger – l'expertise pétrolière comme outil de rayonnement régional de l'Algérie ?**

Cette contribution se propose d'étudier les relations de coopération établies entre l'Algérie, le Mali et le Niger par le biais de la Sonatrach (Société Nationale pour la Recherche, la Production, le Transport, la Transformation et la Commercialisation des Hydrocarbures) depuis 2005- date de l'obtention des premiers permis d'exploration au Niger- jusqu'à aujourd'hui. A travers les réalisations dans le domaine pétrolier de cette société (exploration, forage, exploitation), il s'agira d'évaluer la place que revêt le Sahel dans la politique économique régionale de l'Algérie et de mesurer son influence au Mali et au Niger.

L'analyse combinera à la fois l'échelle locale à travers les implantations de la Sonatrach et ses réalisations sur le terrain ; l'échelle nationale à partir des discours développés par les acteurs économiques et politiques maliens et nigériens ; et enfin l'échelle régionale par le biais des discours algériens et des stratégies fixées par l'entreprise. Les ressources pétrolières sont souvent présentées dans les analyses « sécuritaires » et «géopolitiques » comme étant l'une des causes principales de l'instabilité de la région sahélienne, et la source des rivalités entre « puissances » tant régionales (Libye avant 2011, Nigeria, Maroc) qu'extérieures (Chine, France, Etats-Unis). La contribution présentée ici a pour but d'essayer d'apporter des éléments concrets de coopération et d'échange afin de voir sur quelles réalités se fondent ces allégations. Enfin, en partant du cas de la Sonatrach, il s'agira de réfléchir à ce que la coopération économique régionale peut signifier entre les pays arabes d'Afrique du Nord et les pays du Sahel: Que peuvent-ils s'apporter ? Quelles sont leurs attentes ? Quels sont les canaux de coopération privilégiés ? Comment la concurrence est-elle gérée ? Quelle est la place du Sahel dans les stratégies d'influence et de rayonnement? Comment les acteurs économiques et politiques peuvent-ils faire face au contexte sécuritaire ?

PANEL 13 - THE INTEREST OF ANALYSING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES UNDER THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Friday 16, 16.15 - 18, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Raquel Ojeda García and Victoria Veguilla Del Moral

Discussant: Raquel Ojeda García and Victoria Veguilla Del Moral

Paper Givers:

1. **Miguel G. Guindo (Universidad de Jaén) and Susana Ruiz Seisdeos (Universidad de Jaén): Non state actors in the Sahel and Sahara regions: Destabilization and Challenges for the agenda of international Security**

In the last decade, the Sahel and West Africa, has joined with unflagging insistence on the international agenda by the appearance of two phenomena that affect the regional stability and international security: the more involved in the international drug trafficking on one hand, and their incorporation into the complex web of international terrorism. There are two factors that have marked this instability in the Sahel. First one is referred to the rise of radicalism not only in the countries of the Sahel, but across the Maghreb and West Africa. the Second one, the instability in the region, increased further by the outcomes of the Arabs Springs, have been helped by the significant increase in drug trafficking in many of these countries. This paper analyzes both phenomena, and the particular key role of the Sahrawi people and the Polisario Front in the securitization of the region, and the Sahrawi Polisario Front by fighting against Al Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb (AQIM) and the smuggling in the region. The Sahrawis have been historically a nomadic, aware of all the routes across the central Sahara. Lately, there have been numerous reports alleging the involvement of Sahrawis in drug trafficking, but also there are those who have collaborated with AQIM. Thus, the corrupting effects of drug money in the Sahel - Sahara region, is also evident in the recent arrest in Mali, for drug trafficking, six suspected members of the Polisario Front. If AQIM would achieves strengthen their alliance of convenience with the Polisario Front , a movement that has been fighting for the independence of Western Sahara since 1975 , the threat in the region could increase even further. In the debate of organized criminal activity in the Sahel and the growing reach of al- Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, regional and international security officials agree that urgent action is needed to address the potential conflict in Western Sahara, because it encourages the emergence of violent activities and drug trafficking favors . Any answer to the problem of insecurity in the Sahel must necessarily involve an alternative to conflict between Moroccan and Sahrawi.

2. **Angustias Parejo Fernández (Universidad de Granada) and Laura Feliu Martínez (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona): La réforme constitutionnelle au Maroc (2011): une politique publique réactive et préventive à la recherche de la légitimité d'un régime autoritaire**

La monarchie marocaine a développé dans ces dernières cinq décennies une capacité étonnante de faire des démarches et de répondre aux crises sociales et politiques avec le recours à la révision constitutionnelle. À ses mains, la réforme constitutionnelle, il acquiert le statut social d'une vraie politique publique réactive - préventive parfaitement

dessinée pour fortifier et pour récupérer sa légitimité. La récente réforme constitutionnelle du 1er Juillet 2011, bien que limitée dans sa portée, c'est l'un des résultats tangibles du printemps arabe au Maroc. L'objectif de cette communication est d'analyser dans ce contexte autoritaire les demandes et les propositions de réformes de la Constitution formulées sur des questions identitaires et régionales par certains acteurs politiques marocains selon leur position sur l'axe inclusion/exclusion du système. Le processus de révision de la Constitution et la célébration ultérieure d'un référendum sur le nouveau texte nous permet d'évaluer la continuité ou la transformation des arènes du consensus et du dissensus au Maroc et la perception de la légitimité / illégitimité du processus de réforme. Le but est de donner quelques clés pour expliquer la portée limitée de la réforme constitutionnelle: de la faiblesse de certains acteurs à la modération et la retenue de certains autres qui cherchent à influencer la redéfinition d'un nouveau pacte politique plus démocratique.

3. **Ángela Suárez Collado (Käte Hamburger Kolleg/ Centre for Global Cooperation Research- University of Duisburg-Essen) : 'Marocains d'ici et d'ailleurs': Moroccan State's Strategies and Policies to Manage Emigrants Abroad**

Morocco is one of the largest emigration countries in the world. Currently, Moroccan diaspora is estimated in 4 million persons, which constitutes a substantial proportion of population living overseas and having an important influence on Morocco's economic, social and political realms. As other diasporas, Moroccan community abroad generates different implications for home and host countries, which in both cases may fear the emergence of dual loyalties and alliances. Diasporas may mobilize to promote or defend the interests of their territories of origin in their host countries, but that does not mean that they are necessarily ambivalent and they may play an important role in challenging their homelands. This is why Morocco has been specially interest in maintaining relations with migrants living abroad through various strategies and institutions, such as through embassies and consulates, the implementation of specific ministerial programs, the creation of specific associations and organizations. Morocco's attitude and public management of migration and migrants has changed over the last years, especially after 2011 constitutional reform, which has opened a new migrant public policy which seeks to promote the inclusion of Moroccans abroad and encourage their participation in consultative institutions and mechanisms of good governance in Morocco. This paper aims to analyse what have been the motivations of the Moroccan migration public management in historical perspective, and the strategies implemented to reinforce the

state's legitimacy through the incorporation of Moroccan emigrants in the structure of public administration and in the construction of a new citizenship from abroad.

4. **Victoria Veguilla del Moral (Université Pablo de Olavide, Séville) : Action publique marocaine au Sahara occidental. Politiques d'ajustement dans un contexte social en mutation**

Notre proposition compte analyser la gestion marocaine du territoire et de la population du Sahara occidental durant les années 1990 et jusqu'au aujourd'hui. L'hypothèse générale que nous formulons est la suivante : l'action publique marocaine au Sahara occidental a pris compte du caractère minoritaire de la population autochtone de la région jusqu'à la moitié des années 2000. L'objectif étant la continuité des structures des pouvoirs locaux, les décisions ont porté sur les normes qui règlementent la compétition politique à Dakhla ou sur la distribution des biens collectifs par voie des structures tribales. Pourtant, il est possible aujourd'hui d'observer que les décisions dans ces domaines font l'objet d'un ajustement aux caractéristiques d'un contexte qui s'est complètement transformé. Ces ajustements obéiraient à des objectifs qui diffèrent à ceux qui ont dominé l'action publique mise en ouvre depuis que le Maroc gère le territoire disputé (1976). Les processus politiques qui ont été repérés au Maroc durant les quinze dernières années affectant à différentes arènes du politique (électorale, mobilisation, action publique...) ont des conséquences sur la gouvernance au Sahara occidental. Du même, la population cible des politiques mises en ouvre dans ce territoire semble s'élargir et incorporer de plus en plus à la population migrante et aux fils des migrants des années 1980 et 1990, une population mise à l'écart auparavant. Dakhla est la ville prioritaire de nos recherches. Pourtant, les événements ayant eu lieu à Laâyoune en octobre et novembre 2010 éclairent nos arguments et font le point sur certains processus qui peuvent être observés à Dakhla.

18.00 - 19.00

Aula Magna Silvio Trentin, Ca' Dolfin

Roundtable (in Italian):

MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES IN ITALY: JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES

19.00, Ca' Foscari

CONFERENCE DINNER AND CONCERT BY CA' FOSCARI JAZZ ORCHESTRA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, MORNING

9.00 - 10.30, Aula Magna Silvio Trentin, Ca' Dolfin

Keynote speech by Professor **NADJE AL-ALI**

Why Gender Matters: A Feminist Perspective on Protest, Political Transition and Violence in the Middle East

Introduction by Lucia Sorbera, The University of Sydney

Nadje Al-Ali is Professor of Gender Studies at the Center for Gender Studies, School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS). She graduated from the University of Arizona (BA), University of Cairo (MA) and received a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London in 1998. She is currently chairing the Centre for Gender Studies at SOAS and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA). She is also President of the Association of Middle East Women's Studies (AMEWS), and a member of the Feminist Review Collective.

She is the author of several publications, among which *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories From 1948 to the Present* (Zed Books, 2007) and *What Kind of Liberation? Women and the Occupation of Iraq* (co-authored with Nicola Pratt, University of California Press 2010).

Alongside her academic career, Nadje Al-Ali is a political activist and was a founder of the Iraqi British organisation Act Together: Women's Action for Iraq in 2000. She is also a member of the London branch of Women in Black, a worldwide network of women who are against war and violence.

PANEL 14 - A NEW WAVE? EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE YOUTH IN THE MENA REGION

Saturday 17, 10.30 - 12.45, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Bruno Lefort and Caroline Ronsin

Paper Givers:

1. **Caroline Ronsin (EUI) and Bruno Lefort (TAPRI – University of Tampere, Finland): The detours of politicization: a comparative analysis among students in Amman and Beirut"**

University settings in Beirut and Amman are characterized by their pluralistic nature. In both cities, the campuses are populated by a multiplicity of groups, whose presence strongly informs students' perception of the social reality as a fragmented horizon in which the issue of coexistence and the eventuality of conflict are pivotal. Starting from in-depth ethnographic observations of universities situated in Beirut and Amman, this paper aims at exploring the social production of boundaries in the everyday life of the students and the consequences of these processes of collective and personal identification in the politicization of the youth. In Beirut like in Amman, the experience of the other is pivotal in the awaking of a political consciousness. Hence, identity and politics remain inseparable.

2. **Sandra Nasser el-Dine (FIME, Amman, Jordan): Ammani youth experiences of courtship: a mismatch story?**

Gender relations are a recurring theme in representations of Arab/Muslim cultures. Yet youth everyday life experiences of gender relations are rarely addressed in research. Based on a meticulous ethnographic fieldwork the paper looks into the way Arab youth living in Amman experience pre-marital relationships. It explores how they position themselves in the local narratives of the "ideal relationship" and negotiate contradictory expectations stemming from different local and global discourses and normative frameworks. The co-existence of such antagonist inspirations not only impacts the social concord between genders, it also affects the stability of the entire social fabric once consolidated by the appliance to univocal practices and representations, opening unknown perspectives.

3. **Marion Slitine (Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France / IFPO, Palestine): Exploring the young artistic scene in Gaza : new forms of commitments?**

Since 2007, the youth in Gaza have been facing several political, economic and social challenges. Despite of this crisis, Gaza hosts a vibrant artistic scene, especially among the latest generation. However, this artistic landscape remains fragmented, revealing broader conflicts within the Palestinian society: young artists are caught between the heritage of the national pictural tradition and new aesthetics more connected to the international contemporary art. In other words, young artists balance between commitments to nationalistic if not islamist values one the one hand and more liberal and globalized issues on the other. The nature of the founding (mostly international) and the

arrival of a globalized art market have changed art practices and discourses of the artists who have to renegotiate their position within the society. Through a case study of several young artists who belongs to collectives of artists (two groups connected with the global contemporary art and international institutions in Gaza; and two others supported by Hamas governments or islamists' groups on a local ground), this paper explores the diversity of the artistic practices of the young generation of visual artists (photography, painting, sculpture, installation, video art). It focuses on the way the Gazan artists position themselves in the local issues and nationalistic discourses in the era of a cultural globalization. In particular, it analyzes how the meaning of "muqawama" (resistance) has changed among the new generation of artists and how that change might reveal new forms of engagements among the youth in Gaza.

4. **Katrine Scott (Lund University, Sweden): Everyday Student Lives in Urban Iraqi Kurdistan**

The Kurdistan Region in Iraq is undergoing massive transformations in the recent years with a tension between the historical legacy of a violent conflict and the emerging of a successful middle class in the larger cities with a consumer oriented lifestyle. Experiences of everyday student lives at higher education institutions are a central point of departure in order to understand social transformations in a post-conflict society. This paper draws on an ethnographic case study of two universities in the city of Sulaimani in Kurdistan: the private American University of Iraq, Sulaimani and the public University of Sulaimani. The focus of the paper is on students' everyday lives at the universities, exploring the strategies developed to adapt and succeed in a society (and in higher education) within a process of rapid and powerful social transformations in all areas of social life.

PANEL 15 - **CONSTRUCTING AND SUBVERTING GENDER NORMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: HISTORY, POLITICS AND NARRATIVES OF NON NORMATIVE SEXUALITIES**

Saturday 17, 10.30 - 12.45, Sala Dorigo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Lucia Sorbera and Serena Tolino

SESSION ONE

Who's Who: The construction and the subversion of the sexual norm in the classical sources

Chair: Lucia Sorbera

Discussant: Almut Höfert

Paper Givers:

1. **Ashraf Hassan (Università di Napoli L'Orientale): "Sex" in Arabic: Some Philological Insights**

This paper intends to investigate the philological approach to the term "sex" (ǧins) and other relating terms in Arabic: ḏakar, unṯā, ḫunṯā and ḫaṣiy (male, female, hermaphrodite and eunuch respectively). First, I will explain the etymology of the word ǧins, entered in Arabic from the Greek γένος in the 7th century, in its taxonomic use. The earliest vocabularies and the uses in literature tend to give the word the sense of "kind, type, class, species". It was actually confusing – and sometimes even synonymous – with the genuine Arabic lexeme nawʿ, which bears the same meanings. Then, thanks to Arabic philologists and linguists, the term ǧins assumed more meanings by calque from Greek, such as "origin, set, group and gender (in grammar)". The latter will develop later into "gender" in the meaning of "biological sex", and recently into "sex" in general. Afterwards, I will deal with the sexual categories: ḏakar (male, but also penis) and unṯā (female, but also testicle) as two poles of sexual dichotomy. In between these two poles, existed two intermediate categories, which display some ambiguity, i.e. ḫaṣiy (eunuch), a male person lacking one or more sexual organ (i.e. his ḏakar and/or unṯās); and ḫunṯā (hermaphrodite), a person who has the sexual organs of a ḏakar and an unṯā. On the one side, we have the ḏakar "male", perfectly represented by the erected ḏakar "penis": hard, strong, powerful, sharp, penetrating. On the other side, we have the counterpart, unṯā "female": soft, weak, powerless, keen, penetrable. Thus, for instance, a sharp edge sword is sayf ḏakar and a blunt one is sayf anīṯ. That explains the use of the word unṯā for "testicle", i.e. the soft part of the male sexual organs. it is clear that the "penis" is very much connected with power: therefore, I will focus on how linguistically the masculinity and the femininity of those individuals who were missing this element, or who also had a feminine organ, like the eunuch and the hermaphrodite, was understood, trying to shed light on a hypothetical scale of power, which can be visually represented as follows

ḏakar	*ḫaṣiy*	*ḫunṯā*	*unṯā*
MALE	CASTRATED	HERMAPHRODITE	FEMALE

2. Serena Tolino (University of Zurich): Masculinity and Femininity in the Medieval Islamic Discourse

In this paper I intend to focus on the definition of masculinity (ḏukūra) and femininity (unūṯa) in the medieval Arabic-Islamic discourse, in order to point out those characteristics which were considered to pertain respectively to the masculine and the feminine world. Indeed, if we agree on gender as being a historically and socially constructed concept, and if we agree on even sex being as such, then it's probably necessary to try to deconstruct the categories of female and male, and, to quote Joan Scott, to accept that "'man' and 'woman' are at once empty and overflowing categories. Empty because they have no ultimate, transcendent meaning. Overflowing because even when they appear to be fixed, they still contain within them alternative, denied, or suppressed definitions". How were this empty concepts "understood" within the Arabic medieval discourse? I will focus on different kinds of discourses: I will begin with the medical discourse, looking at medical authorities like al-Rāzī (865-930), Ibn Sīnā (980-1037), Ibn Rušd (1126-1198) and Ibn al-Nafīs (1213-1288), in order to understand what it meant in medicine to be a male or a female and what behavioral consequences did this have. Then, I will look at religious and legal texts to understand how the gender binary was constructed in these sources and what was considered to be the "normative" form of masculinity and femininity. Finally, I will try to give some inputs on those forms of masculinity and femininity that challenged the normative, like eunuchs, to point out what was the logic behind their categorization as pertaining whether to the masculine or to the feminine world, and how this was connected to power structures.

3. **Hans-Peter Pökel (Orient Institut Beirut): Eunuchs and the construction of male sexualities in the works of al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869)**

Eunuchs have been widely spread in classical Islamic Culture. Due to their specific gender they have already been distinguished in late antiquity from women and men. As well as hermaphrodites, eunuchs have been regarded as a third category of gender, who were clearly differentiated from women and men. But while hermaphrodites have been born, eunuchs have been created intentionally. They had due to their specific gender sometimes important positions in 'Abbāsid society where they had been closely connected to the male domain of authority. The first description and discussion about their specific gender, as well as their sexuality, is maybe preserved in the works of the polyhistor al-Jāḥiẓ, who regards them as a counterpart of the virile man. By describing the bodily transformation of eunuchs, al-Jāḥiẓ discusses the instability of the male body which needs careful protection which is also discussed in medical accounts in late antique medical accounts. The paper will discuss the construction of masculinity and male

sexualities in the context of the Abbassid literature. A theoretical discussion with regard to the history (in general: Foucault 1976, Halperin 1990, Garton 2004 and with focus of the Arabic-Islamic culture: Massad 2008, Rouayheb 2005, Bauer 1998, Schmitt 2001-2002, Murray/Roscoe 1997) and the construction of non-normative male sexualities is also intended.

4. **Mirella Cassarino (University of Catania): Representations of the Human Body in the Kitāb al-aġānī**

In my presentation I intend to examine critically the representations of some figures of women in the Kitāb al-aġānī by Abū'l-Faraǧ al-Isfahānī (Kilpatrick, 2003; Myrne, 2010), a canonical work composed in the tenth century that collects the historical and literary memory of the Arabs following the structuring principles of the modes of the adab. From a methodological point of view, the research will be carried out using a gender-based approach (Butler, 1990; 2004) which, featuring a profoundly interdisciplinary bent, can prove to be extremely productive in interpreting the modes of sexualisation of some female, male and other figures (Cassarino, 2014 and Cassarino at press in the Proceedings of the XXVII UEAI Conference). Keeping well in mind the concept of literary imaginary and the processes of mythization to which figures who really existed have been subject to (such as al-Zabbā' o Zarqā' al-Yamāma), an attempt will be made to bring to light the complex mechanisms that determined social organization and cultural representations, especially in the passage from the pre-Islamic to the Islamic periods. Particular attention will be paid to the view of the body to understand, on the one hand, how the history that distinguishes it in space and in time is studded with a conception that oscillates between contempt and valorization (Le Goff, Truong, 2007) and, on the other hand, what role gender has played in the creation of some stereotypes relating to sexuality in the perception of alterity and in the dynamics of power.

5. **Johannes Thomann (University of Zurich): Mirroring the other gender: Women dressed as men (ghulāmiyyāt) in medieval Arabic literature**

Men performing femininity, the mukhannathūn ("effeminated men") played an important role in medieval Islamic societies. Less dominant was the role of their female counterparts, the ghulāmiyyāt ("young-men-like women"). They were described as women wearing men's cloths and having men-like haircut. Eventually they were made up with whiskers, and women of a manly body type with wide shoulders and narrow hips were preferred as ghulāmiyyāt. Their aim was to arouse same-sex desire in men, not by deceiving, but rather by performing masculinity. In historical sources ghulāmiyyāt were described as a real phenomenon in early Abbasid times, and they became a topic in

Arabic poetry. They represented a mirror image of the young ephebe as an object of desire for mature men. However, in Mamluk times a revival of the ghulāmiyyāt occured under different auspices. Young men began to abandon the turbans as their headgears and to wear Circassian caps. Women started to imitate them and to wear such caps too. This new unisex fashion breached the strict rules of traditional society according to which gender was marked by different colours and forms of costumes. Women dressed like men as a literary topic served a variety of strategies, since mirroring is a powerful and versatile narrative device.The motif of women enforcing their antagonists to look at them as if they were men was used in a subversive and utopian narrative mirroring a counter-image of Mamluk society, which was perceived by most people as violent, oppressive and corrupt.

PANEL 16 - THE ARAB SPRINGS AND THE WEST

Saturday 17, 10.30 - 12.45, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Domenico Copertino and Luca Nevola

Discussant: Jean-Louis Romanet Perroux (Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University)

Paper Givers:

1. **Billie Jeanne Brownlee (University of Exeter) and Maziyar Ghiabi (University of Oxford): Silent, passive and revolutionary: the 'Arab Spring' revisited**

Revolt can be won triumphantly or lost in the most catastrophic way (Jesi 2000). The 'Arab Spring', the popular revolts that have taken place since 2010, have yet not seen any winner or loser. Several scholars attempted to categorise the type of popular movement the 'Arab Spring' re-presented, whether a revolt, a revolution, a refo-lution (Bayat 2011) or else. What is certain, instead, is that the 'Arab Spring' contradicted previously assumed truths with regard to Arab exceptionalism by prefiguring the "entrance of the masses into the realm of rulership over their own destiny" (Trotsky 1930). Within the extensive literature produced on the 'Arab Spring', this paper presents two main objectives: firstly, it re-interprets the phenomenon went under the name of 'Arab Spring' (et simila) beyond the teleological path privileged hitherto by both orientalist commentators and orthodox scholars of revolutions. It locates, thus, the historical events within an area of investigation both local – as the 'Arab Spring' gained momentum within localised (non)movements (Bayat, 2009) which had been politically active well ahead of the mediatic events of 2010 – and global – as Arab protesters entered into a dialogical relationship with movements such as the 'Occupy', the 'No Global' and the Spanish Indignados. Secondly, the paper attempts to build a 'scholarship of silence' (Bayat 2014), by which what lies 'below the surface' of institutional and formal politics is scrutinised and given voice, as a form of popular or informal politics. The voices and actions of Arab civil society, it is argued, have had far-reaching political value, both as defiance of state power and as examples of everyday resistance (Scott 1990) prior to the revolutionary event; similarly, confrontational expressions of activism bear meaningful political value, despite their failure to achieve formalised objectives. They produce lasting, revolutionary political power. In formulating this scholarship of silence of the 'Arab Spring', the paper introduces the category of passive revolution as enunciated by Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci and takes into consideration several cases across the MENA region, with a particular focus Egypt and Syria.

2. **Paola Gandolfi (University of Bergamo): Which alterity? Which alternatives? Among imaginary, artistic production and "spaces for change" in Tunisia**

Starting by an ethnography in Tunisia, begun few years before the revolution and still on-going, this paper aims to analyse the artistic movements' creations, since they are exemplary contexts to observe the degree of maintenance of the "public space" and of "practices of participation". The aim is also to analyse which are the spaces, inside the society, that worked as "spaces for change" (and contributed to the revolutionary processes), especially observing the images and the representations of the other and of the West, within these spaces. Which creative re-appropriation of other images and other imaginary took part into the change dynamics? How did social networks and new media

contribute to develop an imaginary and to function as spaces where people were able to learn social (before than political) alternatives? As we know, some of the spaces where the youth gradually learnt "cultures for change" were those of the civil society. Yet, here, we would like to observe how even some original dynamics of artistic creations had already expanded, at a visual and at an imaginative way, narrative spaces able to propose "alternatives"(Gandolfi P., Rivolte in atto, Mimesis, Milano, 2012). Within this framework, on one hand, ethnographies are fundamental ways to comprehend the living experiences and the imaginary of the youth. On the other hand, contemporary artistic creations are able, sometimes, to narrate the living conditions of the society and to cultivate a new imaginary. Even if many Europeans used to know few of the philosophers, writers, video-artists, singers, poets, filmmakers, bloggers of the Arabic countries, the Arabs used to know them and they were nourished by their messages. The mobilisation of such local and diasporic imaginary made the "orientalist" and western theories gradually collapse. In-depth analyses of the daily cultural (and artistic) practices, both local and transnational, of the Tunisian youth suggests us a disruption of the theories of the so-called modernisation, "occidentalisation", euro-centrism, "choc of civilisation" and culturalism. Nowadays, such complexity of the reality make us question about the necessity of a new language and a new imaginary really able to describe such changes. In Europe, in Tunisia, elsewhere.

3. **Sherifa Zuhur (IMEISS) and Marlyn Tadros (Northeastern University): Looking at You: Egypt's Revolution and Conspiracy Theories**

Edward Said's concept of Orientalism focused more on the exploitation of the East by the West for the purpose of political power, rather than being a notion of 'inferiority/superiority' between East and West. Hassan Hanafi, among others, called for a 'science of occidentalism' to counter orientalist studies. However as Sadiq al-Azm noted, Said warned that the victims of Orientalism might impose its ontological bases upon themselves and upon others. After the January 25, 2011 revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood movement and its political party in Egypt downplayed its anti-western stance and proposed a commitment to madani (civil) values. Meanwhile, its salafist and other Islamist allies eschewed the values of secularism, and use anti-western tropes. The left charged the Muslim Brotherhood with furthering the process of Westernized neoliberalism. Former supporters of Mubarak accused the United States of a conspiracy to aid liberals and the Muslim Brotherhood. We ask what role Occidentalism plays in the construction of these differing versions of recent events. This paper will discuss how diverse actors used rhetoric based on these theories to mobilize support which reverberated widely due to social media. We will also explore the government's use of

this discourse at a time when it was challenged by Western and opposition media. We will explore attacks waged by certain actors on civil society, terming it 'Western pawns,' on Egypt's Copts as 'Western agents' and salafi actors, as "Saudi agents.' Throughout, one may perceive the uncertain basis of Occidentalism in the self-image and worldview of Egyptians.

4. **Luca Nevola (Università di Milano – Bicocca): Opposing the Great Satan: occidentalist narratives and the construction of selves in contemporary Yemen.**

The Houthi movement is well-known for its political motto, which famously begins with "God is great, death to America, death to Israel." This slogan first emerged in the wider framework of conferences held by Hussein Al-Houthi, right after the American intervention in Afghanistan. The shape of Al-Houthi's discourse was "occidentalist", in G. Baumann's sense: he used distorted, timeless and highly negative images of the West, as a means to criticize Yemeni society itself. His main antagonist, and the recipient of his critique, was the Yemeni government. Right after the 2011 uprising, Al-Houthi's political pamphlets gained a widespread audience, and his discourse was formalized in a disciplined program of ritualized actions and pedagogic efforts. Drawing on a long-term ethnographic fieldwork, this paper explores how al-Houthi's political discourse was received in a small village community of the Yemeni countryside. Focusing on the aftermath of the Arab Spring, it investigates the way traditional religious practices and identities were reshaped into politically significant acts. Furthermore, it considers how latent tensions related to traditional descent categories have found a channel of expression in the new language of political affiliation, splitting the village into opposed political factions: Houthis and Muslim Brothers (Islah). This paper presents two main objectives: firstly, bringing together the lived experience of social actors and broader historical processes, it explores how global events and main-stream political narratives have far-reaching consequences for the construction of local selves. Secondly, it discusses how occidentalist narratives emerge within local fields of struggle and are functional to local identity politics.

5. **Zabikhulla S. Saipov (University of Graz): Bringing Crescent Under Sway? - Mapping the Washington's Engagement with the Actors of the Arab-Muslim World**

It discusses the scope and form of American political, diplomatic, cultural, ideological influence on the state and non-state actors of the Arab-Muslim world especially in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. It constucts hypotheses that the U.S. foreign policy began to take Islamic factor into full consideration after the events of 9/11 that catalyzed special

foreign policy approaches toward Islam, Muslim communities and countries of the Muslim world. It examines the extent of employment of freedom of religion as an instrument of foreign policy tool and to what extent is 'Islam' really (not) viewed as the next "ism" in contemporary international relations [Djerejian 1995]. Drawing on existing theories and strategies of diplomacy it will examine the reasons/triggers that drew the U.S. involvement, current status and perspectives of this engagement in the long-run. It analyzes discourses in the U.S. foreign policy regarding overall perceptions of Islam (1), reformation and modernization of Islam (2) and democratization of the Muslim world (3). Those three aspects of the U.S. foreign policy have been chosen as they offer competing frameworks of conflict in projection of the U.S. interests in the Muslim world. The presentation probes whether by its proportion, magnitude and ambition the U.S. efforts vis-à-vis the Islamic activism could be compared with the British [Fromkin 2001] and Soviet [Keller 2001] policies in the Middle East and Central Asia respectively.

6. **Kumru Toktamis (Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY) : Shifting Images of the Representations of Muslim Women in the West and Negotiating the Thirds Space**

Representations of Muslim Women in the West have never been fixed; from 19th century Oriental Paintings -of de le Croix, Ingres and Gerome…- to 20th century media images (Theo Van Gogh, Horowitz), Muslim women has been depicted either as erotically lounging ladies or as misguided terrorists or submissive victims, all presumably capturing their putatively essential qualities. Visuality, as a means to bring discursive order to reality and to justify authority to establish the normal and the other, is a contested ground, and therefore fundamentally relational, political and ethical. Visuality operates as a way of maintaining a colonized environment that hardly allows to visualize/imagine a different reality. Yet, counter- visuality of the Muslim women as agents of social change during "Arab Spring" uprisings has been challenging the homogenizing gaze of the visualizing authority. The question is whether these images of Arab women taking part in the political upheavals and social turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa challenge the conventional and hegemonic constructs in the Western world. Based on the western media that represents diversity of women in the "Arab Spring" as artists, intellectuals, politicians, mothers, daughters and activists, this paper analyzes if and how women shape and shaped by times of social change and have impact on possible outcomes. My discussion explores how through counter-hegemonic representations, Muslim women have been "negotiating a third space" transcending the hegemonic discourses of colonial Orientalism (the essential other) and patriarchal Islamism (essentially defined by religion), as 21st century professionals, actors, athletes and activists. Growing out of a project with

undergraduate students, this presentation develops a relational approach to the issue through charting a path of action for the non-Muslim audiences and observers, incorporating ways to overcome stereotypes, tune in to diversity, be aware of integral projects of domination, seek commonalities between the experiences of Muslim and non-Muslim women, and look for intersections of political, economic and cultural power dynamics. The presentation incorporates student researches on Muslim standup comedians, Olympic athletes, visual artists and (social media) activists.

PANEL 17 - ETHNOGRAPHIES OF MOBILITY IN THE ARAB MIDDLE EAST AND IN ITALY

Saturday 17, 10.30 - 12.45, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Convenors: Daniele Cantini and Bruno Riccio

Chair: Ala al-Hamarneh

Discussant: Francesco Vacchiano (CIES, Lisbon)

Paper Givers:

1. **Laura Ferrero (Turin University): Egyptian migration to Italy: "bringing gender (and family) in"**

While other Arab countries (i.e. Morocco) are experiencing a progressive "feminization of migration", Egyptian Migration still remains a male dominated phenomena. Egyptian Migration to Italy is mostly a rural-urban flow and the collective orientation which create a shared vision of the migration phenomenon can be described as a "patriarchal culture of migration", that is an orientation which exclude women's autonomous movement. In addition to this, the big presence of young men in Turin and their experience of the arrival country through their presence in a mostly male-geography brings to a "feminization of Egypt/home". One of the main issue in the relation with the home country is that of transnational marriages, which migrants celebrate with women from the origin villages. From the women point of view, I call this marriage "marriage with the absent": choosing to marry a migrant is not only accepted but could possibly be desired in order to achieve economic security, to acquire social status and, especially for women from rural backgrounds, the only possibility to migrate without breaking the social norms and cultural requirements. For this reason, women mobility need to be read through the family lens. The same is true for the experience of women left behind, a still relevant category in Rural Egypt. Despite the flow of remittances and the investment in houses migration has not lead to a proliferation of nuclear houses. Women tend to live with their husband's families while their husbands are abroad and that is why family is the most important frame to explore both women mobility and immobility. Exploring the role of women and the relation between gender and mobility/immobility, the paper aims to bring gender and family at the core of the discussion about Egyptian migration.

2. **Laura Menin (University of Milano-Bicocca): "Rjjala ma tai-khafosh!/Men are not scared!": Gendered subjectivities, emotions and vocabularies of undocumented migration in the Tadla, Central**

This paper explores the social worlds and vocabularies of undocumented migration in the Tadla, a rural region in Central Morocco with tight transnational connections to Italy and Spain. Since the mid-1980s, migration to Southern Europe has become a characterising trait of the Tadla, opening up spaces for upward social mobility, renegotiation of local hierarchies and gendered subjectivities. In this rural region of Morocco, where migration is mainly a 'male affair', 'burning the borders' (l-hrag) is regarded as a risky adventure (mughamara) that many Moroccan youths undertake to pursue their aspiration "to build their future", as they put it. While considering carefully the implications of the emergence of EurAfrican border regimes, this paper aspires to capture the existential and material anxieties that pervade the youth's everyday lives in rural Morocco vis-à-vis the increased

illegalisation of migration and the effects of neo-liberal economy. First, I problematise the categories of 'legal' and 'illegal' migration, by tracing how these are displaced and reconfigured in everyday practices and discourses. Second, I explore the gendered subjectivities and emotions connected with the experience of "burning the borders" by focusing on the vicissitudes of Kamel, a young men who crossed the Strait of Gibraltar hidden under a coach. In order to grasp Kamel's experiences of illegal border crossing and the ways he deals with the unpredictability and clandestine migration, I draw attention to how ideas of 'risk', 'fear', 'gamble' and 'chance' became integral to social modalities of masculinity that are cultivated and performed at the margin of trajectories of adulthood from which Moroccan youths like Kamel feel they are excluded.

3. **Ronn Mueller (Martin-Luther-Universitaet Halle/Wittenberg): The European migration regime seen by Syrian refugees**

The paper takes expectations, strategies and experiences of Syrian refugees who entered the space of the European Union and the respective member states as a point of departure. These individual stories shed light on the contemporary European migration regime at work, which merges questions of migration and security. The securitization of migration is an ongoing global process of dehumanizing the majority of migrants. The attempt to produce, with regard to specific political agendas, order on the one side creates at the same time disorder on the other one, which is in itself ordered again. Striking examples are the European Union and surrounding countries with quite well developed migration economies. The case of Syrian refugees is interesting, because it shows how the European migration regime, designed to reject and exclude, deals with (sudden) political decisions to facilitate a specific category of migrants. The adjustments to this new situation even clearer reveal the inherent racist structure of the regime which the paper tries to depict.

4. **Daniele Cantini (MLU Halle and University of Modena and Reggio Emilia): Not-so-mobile, not-so-transnational migrants: a case study from Egypt**

In this paper I present the results of a research that I conducted in Tatoun, a village in the Fayoum Oasis known at the national level as one relevant 'sending village', and as such frequently mentioned in the mass-media for its peculiarity of having around one third of the male population living and working in Italy, and particularly in the city of Milan. Here I will analyze data gathered mainly throughout the year 2008, both in Cairo and in the village, where I returned in March 2010, in September 2011 and where I plan to return in autumn 2014, focusing on the effects of 20 years characterized by intensive migration to Italy. For the collection of data I relied on participant observation of the people's lives in

the village, semi-structured interviews both in Cairo and in Tatoun, and in one case on a focus group on long-time migrants and their experiences in the process of re-settling down in the village. The paper focuses on the ways in which (im)mobility is altering the structure and social life of the village, by discouraging regular activities for their perceived uselessness, with a visa to go to Italy as a new marker of social distinction and value. This is put in the background of Egyptian migration patterns, as I have explored in past researches. The discussion then focuses on the effect of mobility, namely on the returnees and their more or less "success stories". Theoretically, the paper deals with notions of stuckedness and citizenship, and address the changes that are occurring in the village after the 25 Jan. revolution.

5. **Caterina Giusa (Université Paris 13): Cross Mediterranean Migration after the Arab Uprisings: The European Response**

This paper analyses the policies of the EU and EU Member states in response to the increase in cross-Mediterranean irregular migration after the Arab Uprisings, with a particular focus on migration occurring in the strait of Sicily. It particularly addresses the question whether and how the European migration policies and narratives have changed after the Uprisings and which factors can explain these changes or the lack thereof. The analysis shows that, contrary to popular images, the trends and patterns of cross-Mediterranean irregular migration have not fundamentally changed as a result of the Uprisings. Instead of leading to a structural change in migration to Europe, the majority of the displacement that followed the Uprisings has taken place within the Middle East and North Africa region. The European narratives with regards to cross-Mediterranean irregular migration have revolved around a double discourse, which conveys a fear of an invasion on the one hand, and the humanitarian argument of saving lives at sea on the other. The European policy response to the Uprisings has been an increase of the intensity of border control as well as of their externalisation, exemplified by the European efforts to strengthen maritime surveillance operations and to re-propose the agreements to 'fight' irregular migration signed with the regimes to the new governments in North Africa. This paper therefore concludes that the European reaction to migration after the Arab Uprisings is a continuation of the previous trends towards more restrictive migration policies vis-à-vis "unwanted" migrants, rather than the sign of a new migratory approach to its Southern neighbours.

6. **Chiara Denaro (Università La Sapienza, Roma) - The Endless Flight of Syrian Refugees. Reflections on Italy as a Transit Space**

The conflict in Syria is still going on, and people are continuously forced to leave their homes and their country to keep their lives safe. According to the statistics published by UNHCR (July, 2014), since January 2011, more than 9,3 million Syrians have fled their homes: about 6,5 million are Internal Displaced Persons, and more than 2,9 million have been registered as Refugees. Only four percent of them, 123.600 people, have reached Europe to ask for asylum, and the major receiving countries have been Germany, Sweden, Bulgaria and the Netherlands. In the actual context of Mediterranean migration routes, which have been partly modified by the Syrian diaspora, Italy remains a strategic space: a place of arrival and departure, where the Greek, the Egyptian and the Libyan routes converge. Focusing on it we can note some significant changes concerning the "reception system" for asylum seekers reaching Europe by sea. First of all, after the two shipwrecks, on the 3rd and the 11th of October 2013, the Italian government tried to give a strong signal of "presence" with the implementation of the mission "Mare Nostrum". Secondly, even if in this case Italy did not declare a "state of emergency", the host system implemented during this period has been characterized by a high level of improvisation and the absence of long-term planning. One of the most relevant "spaces of improvisation" has been the application of the Dublin Regulation III, as the significant difference between the number of arrivals by sea and the number of asylum applications presented by Syrian refugees confirms. Starting from an analysis of contemporary migratory routes to Europe and focusing on the role of Italy in the Syrian refugees' escape across the Mediterranean, this work will proceed through an empirical research looking at two case studies, Catania and Milan. Through the use of semi-participant observation in these key-locations and through the realization of interviews with the actors involved in this process this work will try to photograph the Syrian refugees' transit through Italy, and to give some useful elements to understand the present.

PANEL 18 - BOUNDARIES AND IDENTITY SPACES IN THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST

Saturday 17, 10.30 - 12.45, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Marina Calculli and Daniel Meier

Discussant: Fred Lawson (Mills College)

Paper givers:

SESSION ONE

1. **Philippe Bourmaud (University of Lyon 3): Middle Eastern citizenships and choice across the border. An historical perspective**

« Useful citizenship » is a common notion in the Middle East, in order to describe the hierarchies among citizenships and the varying values of State protection that go along with them. Individual will try to get a more useful one through travels, marriage, or making use of historical circumstances that have made them able to be strategic about their citizenship. Palestinians are a salient feature of this, as they enjoy the least recognized citizenship in the region, for lack of a state to support their rights abroad. Moments in their lives such as studying, working abroad or marrying can be decisive on that account, and bring them over time a Middle Eastern citizenship or, most prized of all, a Western one. Those who can keep Jordanian citizenship will often enough lead a cross-border life to maintain this status. This paper will put this situation in historical perspective, going back to the foundational years of the Middle Eastern states, during the Interwar. During that period too, some people tried to get citizenships from abroad, or played on the new regional divides and the different citizenships across the territories under mandate to get the best possible legal protection. I will contend that this period was formative in establishing the notion that citizenship is something that you must strive to choose to protect your rights, and that national loyalty is used by the states as a tool to try and roll back trends to choose and change citizenship.

2. **Susanne Dahlgren (University of Helsinki): From Southern Identity Rallies to Neighbourhood Revolution Squares: Identities and Borders in Current South Arabia**

In the summer of 2007 a popular movement emerged in southern Yemen to address the grievances of southerners and eventually to demand re-establishment of the independent state that in 1990 merged with North Yemen to form Republic of Yemen. The background to southern dissent lies in 1994 war which established what many southerners consider as northern occupation. The story of Southern Movement (hirak) is the one of a marginalized partner in bad unity with supporters who no longer believe that the partnership can be repaired. According to local estimates, some 90 per cent of southern population now support the Southern Cause as the grievances are locally called. The fact that about 80 per cent of national oil wealth lies in the South gives a strong argument for secession. By the time of unification the North was the stronger party with natural

resources, industries and a six fold bigger population, in today's Yemen the economic stakes have been reversed. Only in terms of population the south is inferior, thus the need to close its borders from northern looting of land, jobs and natural resources. My paper is based on ethnographic field studies carried out in Yemen over the course of three years.

3. **Véronique Bontemps (CNRS, France): (Il)legitimate violence, identity spaces and dignity during the crossing of Allenby Bridge**

In this communication I will address the question of boundaries, identity spaces and security between Palestine and Jordan, by focusing on the experience of crossing the Allenby Bridge. This passage is also called 'Jisr al-malik Hussein' – King Hussein Bridge – by the Jordanians and 'ma'abar al-Karama' – Dignity crossing – by the Palestinian Authority, and connects the West Bank to the state of Jordan. More precisely, 'the Bridge' is today, for Palestinians, their only way out of (or into) the West Bank. They cross if for many reasons: to see their family counterparts in Jordan; to get married; to get treatment; to go on holidays or to take the plane from Amman's International Airport. Yet this crossing represents a very long and uneasy journey, where passengers have to go through several (and asymmetrical) controls imposed by Palestinians, Jordanians and Israeli authorities. This paper will discuss the kind of control exerted on Palestinian passengers in this border zone and its connections with security issues, through the question of 'legitimate violence' (Weber). I will first take a historical perspective in order to show how the configuration of this border zone, along with its controls and restrictions, was shaped by the current conflicts and 'political situation' on the ground. Second, I will focus on the crossing itself as experienced today by Palestinians, and the various feelings of (il)legitimacy they express when talking about it. I will argue that these feelings of '(il)legitimacy' concern the violence exerted on them at the Bridge, thus questioning the 'security reasons' alleged by Israeli authorities. More profoundly, I contend that these feelings also have to do with the representations they form about the identities of the spaces they cross, as much as their right to move in 'dignity'.

4. **Julio Moreno Cirujano (Leiden University): "Identity and Integration of Syrian refugees in Jordan"**

According to the UNHCR, there are approximately 600,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, of which only one fifth is in Zaatari refugee camp.1 The relationship between the Syrian population and the local society has grown tense to the point that some reactive discourses appeared in mid- 2013. The major complaints are based on the impact that the Syrian population had on the Jordanian economy, which allegedly produced a rapid inflation harming the local lower classes. In addition, the revocation of state-sponsored

financial aid for fuels and other primary consumptions, raised the social discomfort with the newly arrived refugees. The aim of the proposed paper is a comparative analysis between the socio-economic situation and identity discourses in order to reveal the impact that the economic discontent of local society has on the construction and reconstruction of collective identitites leading to marginality. Besides the malaise that this segregation represents for the refugee population, it could as well reinforce certain discourses of community construction and a reinterpretation of "Syrian-ness." The proposed research will be carried out in collaboration with "Identity Center" in Amman and other local NGO's covering refugee matters with an extensive experience on the field. The anthropological approach will be specially useful to analyse the discourses on identity construction. The central questions guiding the research are: To what extent is economy central for the appearance of reactive discourses? What is the impact that this discourse has on the reshaping of both Jordanian and Syrian collective identity?

5. **Marina Calculli (Issam Fares Institute, American University of Beirut): From non-bordered space to 'ghetto': Arsal and the re-shaping of the Syrian-Lebanese border**

Arsal is a village at the border between Lebanon and Syria that has historically taken different shapes by virtue of its geographical position. On the one hand, the central government in Beirut has neglected Arsal while – at the same time – reaping profits from the exportation of its agricultural production. On the other hand, the actual absence of a border with Syria, as well as the formal and informal economic exchanges, societal and familiar linkages with the Qalamun region of Syria, have exacerbated the fluid identity of Arsal. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the politicization and securitization of this disputed territory and its impact on State sovereignty. By critically scrutinizing notions of 'sovereignty', the paper, first, analyses the transformation of Arsal in the wake of the post-2011 flux of refugees from Syria, as well as the connection between some of its social groups and the rebels as well as some jihadi groups that have operated in Syria since 2011. It secondly explores the recent return of the State to Arsal, with the Army surrounding its territory in order to contain and neutralize external security threats. The paper shows how the politicization of the Arsal territory by both outside actors and the Lebanese State, has de facto transformed Arsal from a non-bordered area into a ghetto, thereby leading to a redefinition of the Syrian-Lebanese border.

6. **Valeria Ruggiu (University of Cagliari): Tribal identity in times of peril**

The aim of this paper is to explore to what extent tribalism in Jordan acts as an identity source and on the contrary to what extent it is politicized and instrumentalized to protect

economic and social benefits. Starting from the definition of tribalism given by the present literature around the topic I would explain what tribalism means according to Ibn Khaldoun concept of 'asabiyya. Consequently, I would investigate what tribalism is in present Jordan and if there is any remaining from Khaldoun concept still alive in the Kingdom. Necessarily, I would then clarify tribalism peculiar relation with the regime and the Hashemite family. I would then describe how East Bankers reacted to challenges from the Palestian population since 1948 until nowadays. In particular, the present days situation would show how the delicate equilibrium among East Bankers and Palestinians is deeply decisive in regards to Jordan response to the actual regional crisis. Examples analysed would include Jordanian policy towards Syrian refugees of Palestinian origin and the 2010 powerful stance of Jordan's military veterans on the alleged possibility of a definitive settlement of the Palestinian refugees in the Kingdom. I would then try to understand if there is a Jordanian identity or if perhaps it would be better to differentiate between Jordanian national identity and Jordanian identity. Accordingly, my conclusions would highlight how difficult is to separate tribal identity from the burden of meanings related to it and how this is critical and delicate in rapport with the biggest half of the apple, that is to say the Palestinians.

13.00 - 14.30

Aula Magna Silvio Trentin, Ca' Dolfin

SeSaMO BUSINESS MEETING/ASSEMBLEA DEI SOCI (IN ITALIAN)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, AFTERNOON

PANEL 15 (Session 2) - CONSTRUCTING AND SUBVERTING GENDER NORMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: HISTORY, POLITICS AND NARRATIVES OF NON NORMATIVE SEXUALITIES

Saturday 17, 14.45 - 16.45, Sala Dorigo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Lucia Sorbera and Serena Tolino

SESSION TWO

Authoritarianism, conflict and new challenges to heteronormativity: the political construction of body and sexuality in the Middle East

Chair: Serena Tolino

Discussant: Jolanda Guardi

Paper Givers:

1. **Achim Rohde (Marbourg University): Restoring the honour of the nation: Gendered violence and the state in Iraq before and after 2003**

In recent years reports have periodically surfaced in the international media on murderous campaigns in post-Saddam Iraq conducted by Islamist militias with ties to the Iraqi government targeting alleged gays and young people associated with the emo-subculture. This paper discusses these events in a broader historical context and suggests that they form part of an established pattern of gender based violence applied by former and current ruling elites as part of an attempt to enforce a specific set of gender norms in society that is centred on heroic military masculinity and patriarchal family values. This process dates back to the 1980s, when the Iran-Iraq war marked the transformation of

Iraq from a developmental and corporatist to a national security state. War-making and militarism, later on accompanied by the UN sanctions, helped establish a specific culture of authoritarian governmentality under emergence conditions, which, despite the exchange of ruling elites in Iraq since the invasion of 2003, remains in place until today. These practices will be discussed against the background of evidence pointing to the perseverance (at least until now!) and/or growing visibility of gendered subjectivities in Iraq all through these decades that do not conform to the normative models promoted by the state or ruling elites.

2. **Martina Censi (University of Macerata): Embodied subjectivities in contemporary Syrian women's novels: is difference revolutionary?**

Body and sexuality are at the core of contemporary Syrian women's novels. Contemporary Syrian women novelists show a growing interest in the dimension of sexuality, focusing not only on representation of femininity, but also on masculinity. This paper aims at analysing a selection of the most recent Syrian novels written by women, exploring their role in the processes of gender construction, and its political connotations. The novels analysed are: Rā'iḥat al-qirfa (2008) by Samar Yazbik, Ḥurrās al-hawā' (2009) by Rūzā Yāsīn Ḥasan, and Banāt al-barārī (2011) by Mahā Ḥasan. In doing so, it will tackle a series of key theoretical questions: how do authors like Samar Yazbik, Rūzā Yāsīn Ḥasan and Mahā Ḥasan can be situated in the constructivist/essentialist debate? May European constructivist/essentialist debate be considered as a suitable methodological approach to analyse literary productions which originate in a non-European socio-cultural context? The attention that the above mentioned authors pay to women bodies' difference suggests their distance from the idea of a performed sexual identity, as theorised by Judith Butler. Theories of difference, as they have been elaborated by Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray and Rosi Braidotti, seem to be more useful in understanding these texts. Women novelists claim the body, which is no longer spoken by "the other" through a phallocentric language, but is rather organized through a language rooted in female difference. Samar Yazbik, Rūzā Yāsīn Ḥasan, and Mahā Ḥasan use the language as a means to claim women's difference, which becomes the metaphor for individual difference. Actually we do not remark a deconstruction of the heterosexual model. Nevertheless, the emphasis on difference leads to the global questioning of normative strategies of subjectivation. The characters in these authors' novels are embodied subjects: their bodies are the location of the anatomic, social and symbolic dimensions of the individual. Through their novels, these authors question different sources of power – politics, religion, family, kinship – which affect the processes of

subjectivation in their country, including the sociocultural process which lead to the 2011's uprising.

3. **Francesca Biancani (Università di Bologna): Policing 'Suspect' Femininities in Colonial Cairo, 1920-1939**

As Fischer Tinè pointed out, "poor whites or 'low Europeans', as they were called in contemporary administrative discourse, generally represented a serious menace to the legitimacy of colonial rule'. […] According to ethnic or 'civilisational' criteria, the groups in question were part of the ruling race and yet they figured among the 'depressed and downtrodden' in terms of class and hence of economic and political power" (Fischer Tinè, 2003, p.164-5) This was all the more true for sex workers, as sex and gender constituted powerful facets of the bio-political power which became a distinctive feature of late Victorian empire and gender specific bourgeois roles and notions of decorum were adopted as standard of civilization and racial superiority. While professional sex workers were considered as socially dangerous and disruptive in the metropolitan context as well, in the colony their existence was even more problematic, as constantly calling into question notion of race purity and superiority the Imperial enterprise increasingly came to repose on towards the end of the Nineteenth Century. The embarrass felt by imperial authorities and middle class reformers for the presence of such liminal characters, unaccompanied women roaming the world in search of a living, was but the imperial dimension of the veritable social hysteria which originated around the so-called "White-Slave Trade", the symptom of a more profound social and political crisis. After a brief analysis of the emergence of metropolitan obsession around the so-called "White Slave", this paper will explore the colonial dimension of social purity, to show how a specific category of subaltern social actors, foreign prostitutes and 'fallen' women in Cairo, came to play a very important role in the preservation of besieged category of colonizers' racial and civilizational superiority, through the creation of a specific apparatus of coercion, control and, possibly, regeneration managed by British social purity and feminist movements – namely the NVA – National Vigilance Association and the AMSH, Association for Moral and Social Hygiene – in Cairo between the I and the II World War.

4. **Chiara Diana (IREMAM - Aix-Marseille Université): Gendering education in twentieth century Egypt. A study on the construction of sexual norms in Egyptian Schools**

Since the 19th – 20th centuries, education contributes to define women's role in the Egyptian society. In 1973, on the occasion of the centenary of the first state Egyptian girls' school, the Madrasa al-Saniyya, President Sadat highlighted Egyptian women's

contributions to the development of the nation and their presence in important fields such as scientific research, industry, agriculture, medicine, law, education and so on. This suggested a substantial investment by the Government on women's education. However, at the present times, education for girls is still considered as a quantitatively and qualitatively unresolved issue. While considerable quantitative progresses have been achieved, a gender gap in enrolment in early childhood and basic education still exists, as not all Egyptian children have access to education equally. In order to fill it, new compensation forms of schools (one-classroom schools, community schools, and small schools) are implemented since the 1980s-1990s aimed at offering the opportunity to young girls to attend school mainly in rural areas. Besides this kind of schools, a number of educational reforms are realized in Egypt since the 2000s for the assessment of quality of educational output by gender. These reforms aim at expanding early childhood education programmes stressing gender equality, raising the quality of basic education improving physical and emotional environments, which ensure girl-friendliness, and at setting up girl-friendly schools, which incorporate programmes supporting different roles for girls and boys and training teachers in gender sensitivity. In the framework of sociological theories which consider the school as a place of socialization (E. Durkheim, B. Lahire) and social reproduction (P. Bourdieu, J.-C. Passeron), but also as a place of reinforcement of gender difference -alongside the family milieu- (Gianini Belotti E., Boissieu D. de, Mosconi N.), I will briefly explore if and how the Egyptian school institution has contributed to form a gender-based education in modern times, if a female culture school exists and if it leads to a specific construction of gender in the Egyptian society, and how it relates to power relationships I will also seek to analyse in which way and by which educational tools and practices the present Egyptian school institution can create social gender-related paradigms and it can guarantee gender equality, as it is recommended by agenda of international organizations. To do that, I will explore the official literature of Egyptian government on education reforms from the 1970s until nowadays. I will also analyse discourses on education and gender spread by international organizations, as UNESCO and UNICEF, as well as practical tools for teacher training in early childhood and basic education.

5. **Federica Fedeli (Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa): New practices in defense of street mothers in Cairo. The case of the Ngo Qaryat al-amal**

This paper aims at analyzing the new discourse produced by one of the oldest and the most famous Egyptian Ngo, Qaryat al-amal, which I define Muslim and not Islamic, as I will ar-gue, working with young Muslim street mothers in Cairo, an issue particularly relevant for a discussion of the social construction of gender within traditional societies.

These young women are generally considered outside from the society, since they suffer from moral preju-dices addressed to those who break social norms. The sin committed by these girls is the one of unlawful relations, from which many illegitimate children are born. In order to stand for the rights of those women and reintroduce them into the society, the Ngo follows new practices, non traditional, as they are defined by the members of the NGO, producing a new philosophical and theological discourse, which offers new insights on the existence of non-official dynamics within the Egyptian society.

6. **Aymon Kreil (URPP Asia and Europe, University of Zurich): Masturbation in between Religious and Science: Conciliating Discourses on Truth in an Egyptian Counselling Centre**

This contribution addresses the epistemological issues raised by masturbation for the women of a Cairene counselling centre close to the former reformist wing of the Muslim Brothers. During the sex education classes which they are providing to the visitors of the centre, they face a dilemma when it comes to this topic, as prevalent opinions on masturbation in Egypt consider it as forbidden by God and harmful for the mind and body alike. Therefore, many stories found in psychology and sexology manuals or on talk-shows bear witness of culpability feelings and a deep anxiety caused by masturbation. However, as most of the scientific texts used by the counsellors are translated from English, they are aware of the near universality of the practice, both among men and women. As they intend to produce a truth that is equally convincing from an Islamic and a scientific point of view, they have to find ways to establish a compromise between these two distinct realms of expertise. To this aim, they first try to recast categories: the forbidding and the psychological harms of masturbation are carried over to what they call "addiction to masturbation" and not to its occasional practice. Further, in an effort to avoid people to reject all religious guidance at once because they see themselves as already lost, the counsellors insist on a pedagogy stating that faulty behaviours can be rectified. To build a relation of trust based on a non-judgmental attitude and evocations of a common belonging to humankind are described as the best way to help a person out of sin. In this context, humanity is defined accordingly to two different scopes of reference: therapeutically, vulnerability gets emphasis as a common feature of humankind; religiously, it is the positive essence which God allotted to His creatures (fitra) which is put forward. Hence, running against dichotomies opposing an Islamic sense of virtue and Western secularism, this case study allows us to grasp complex strategies trying to conciliate in a unique apparatus ethical commitments, the multifarious discourses on truth, and the drives of desire.

PANEL 18 (Session 2) - BOUNDARIES AND IDENTITY SPACES IN THE CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST

Saturday 17, 14.45 - 16.45, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Marina Calculli and Daniel Meier

Discussant: Fred Lawson (Mills College)

Paper givers:

SESSION TWO

1. **Laurence Deschamps-Laporte, Magdalen College (University of Oxford): The Identity of Egyptian Salafis: An Analysis of the Fatwas of the Da'wa Salafiyya**

This paper analyzes the history and identity of the Da'wa Salafiyya (the Salafi Call), currently Egypt's most influential Salafi organization and founding body of the Al Nour Party. It attempts to explain how a group of men from Alexandria, made up primarily of medical doctors, became widely recognized and respected as a legitimate voice of Islam. I argue that the leaders of the Da'wa Salafiyya have gained authority by decontextualizing powerful symbols, controversial stories and evocative terms from Islamic history, and utilizing them to advance their strategic aims, such as gaining influence, building political support and competing with the Muslim Brotherhood. I refer to this complex process as the "functionalization of Islamic stories". This process is especially noticeable in the fatwas they pronounce. As such I depict the Da'wa Salafiyya's identity by analyzing in detail some of the most significant fatwas they have published over the last few years, in particular the recent fatwas in support of Abdul Fattah al Sisi. My research illustrates Salafis' creative engagement with Islamic textual tradition aimed at projecting a puritanical identity and differentiating themselves from their Islamist competitors in urban Egypt. It also shows how the organization has altered its interpretation of its main corpus of religious sources to justify its deeper social involvement and intensified political activities after the fall of Mubarak. This research is primarily based on extensive fieldwork in Egypt between 2012 and 2014.

2. **Giancarlo Casà (University of Pavia): New Sources on the Massacres in Diyarbakır, 1894–1897**

Within the framework of an ongoing PhD research project, this paper intends to investigate the role of France and Great Britain during the massacres perpetrated against the Armenian population in the Ottoman vilayet of Diyarbakır between 1894 and 1897. After a general overview about the conditions of Armenian Ottoman subjects in the Asian provinces of the Empire, the paper will provide an analysis of the Hamidian-era massacres through an investigation of memoirs and diplomatic sources of French and British vice-consuls, in their correspondence with major political and religious personalities in Constantinople and in Western Europe.

3. **Francesco Mazzucotelli (University of Pavia): A Patriarch in Paris: The Role of Maronite Patriarch Elias Howayek at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference**

The end of the Ottoman "long peace" (Akarli 1993) in Mount Lebanon and the transition to the French Mandate has been largely scrutinized in all its institutional and ideological dimensions (Firro 2003; Kaufman 2004; Chalabi 2006). This paper intends to emphasize the role of Maronite Patriarch Elias Howayek as the forefronte bearer of the notion of an autonomous "Greater Lebanon" under French mandatory protection, in particular in his role of head of the Lebanese delegation at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference (Zamir 1985). Howayek's role and ideas were arguably the result of ideas of Lebanese separatism that had emerged during the late Ottoman domination (Sassine 1979), but were far from being the only possible outcome of the end of the mutaṣarrifiyya regime. Even the role of the Maronite Patriarch as de facto political and symbolical leader, which would cast a spell on the subsequent developments in Lebanon and created a system predicated on Maronite hegemony, was far from inevitable if one looks at the more nuanced role played by the Maronite Church and its clergy in the previous decades. This paper will shed light to the personality of Elias Howayek and his milieu through memoirs and local sources, and will try to assess the reasons that can explain his ascendancy.

4. **Giulia Daniele (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy and University of Exeter): Women's Political Activism In The Divided City Of Jerusalem: Reflecting On Feasible Alternatives Beyond The Current Impasse**

The paper proposal I submit for your consideration is principally founded on the theoretical analysis and the fieldwork evaluation reported on in my Ph.D. dissertation, which has just been published by Routledge in the form of a book entitled Women, Reconciliation and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Road Not Yet Taken. My paper deals with the complex reality of Jerusalem, which has been increasingly considered as the central core of tensions among the contrasting ethno-national and religious narrative identities, particularly related to the escalation of diverse forms of boundaries. In detail,

this paper proposal focuses on the status of 'in-between' of the most contested neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, Sheikh Jarrah. Since the late 1990s Palestinian residents have faced up against Israeli Jewish settlers who have started to occupy Palestinian houses and buildings in order to increase their presence and their control all over the territory as much as possible: as a result of such a plan, any future prospect of sharing Jerusalem has been made unachievable. In recent years, Sheikh Jarrah - along with other similar contexts nearby such as Silwan and several villages across the West Bank - has become one of the most well-known symbols of popular resistance in the land of Palestine. Such a struggle, including both Palestinian women from the neighbourhood who have organised themselves into the Women's Forum and Israeli women activists involved with the Solidarity Movement, represents one of the few remaining attempts able to challenge the status quo and to strengthen the importance of women's role in civil disobedience and non-violent actions.

PANEL 19 - PUBLIC POLICING THE MIDDLE EAST: EXPLORING THE MICRO-FOUNDATIONS OF REGIME PERSISTENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD

Saturday 17, 14.45 - 16.45, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Steven Heydemann and Frédéric Vairel

Discussant: Laura Guazzone (University La Sapienza Rome)

Paper Givers:

SESSION ONE

1. **Ruth Hanau Santini (Università L'Orientale Napoli and SAIS Europe): North Africa 3 years on: weaker states, stronger societies?**

A crucial prism to look at quickly changing Maghreb countries is analyzing State-society relations through a dynamic and critical approach, such as that of citizenship studies. The focus on these relations as a power struggle between pro and anti-status quo actors, between competing interests and norms allows for a complex and nuanced representation of changing notions and practices of rights, their definition and their perception. Despite commonly held assumptions, in post-revolutionary context one rarely finds eagerness to promote deep changes in political structures composition and modus operandi. Continuity of standard operating procedures however, far from being purely a necessity to keep the political system afloat, can hide and help the reconfiguration of old elites and of pre-revolutionary authoritarian modes of governance. Structures, in other words, still matter greatly in changing and in flux political contexts, but they have to face pressures from new forms of agency, empowered by successful mobilization. Despite possible democratic backsliding, namely, contentious politics, once unleashed as during revolutionary times, is hard to constrain once and for all. The threat of protest actions remains a watchdog against complete reversal of the political order, unless most members of these counter-elites are co-opted by the new regime. What successful protests traditionally accomplish is to publicly expose the expectations-capability gap of the regime in power, the extent of the broken promises upon which the legitimacy of this regimes rested. Such a public acknowledgement is not rapidly forgotten and can remain as a powerful message expressing distrust to the new elites in power. If turning towards hybrid or authoritarian modes of governance, these new elites could rely on the strengthening of administrative and coercive structures, rather than on building the state and making it a strong one. This distinction by Nazih Ayubi might help us shed light on the different trajectories and outcomes of the Egyptian and Tunisian transition, and offer us an indication of which strategies by external actors could prove detrimental and counter-productive.

2. **André Bank (GIGA Hamburg) and Mirjam Edel (U of Tübingen): Authoritarian Regime Learning and its Structural Limits in the Middle East**

The popular uprisings that spread across many Arab countries in 2010/11 underline that oppositional activists learned from and cooperated with each other, with protest repertoires quickly diffusing across national boundaries. While studies on the international diffusion, learning and cooperation of oppositional activities have become widespread in recent years, a comparable research agenda analyzing the dynamics of cross-border diffusion, learning and cooperation of authoritarian regime practices is still in its infancy. The paper aims at contributing to the emerging research field of authoritarian regime

learning. Drawing on Jack Levy's broad definition of learning as "change of beliefs, skills, or procedures based on the observation and interpretation of experience", we concentrate on learning and its effects on policy change in the context of regime crises. We suggest a three-step model for analysis: After examining whether regime learning has actually taken place (1), we trace whether learning has transformed into policy change (2). We then study whether such learning-induced policy change can be considered 'effective' as measured against the guiding leitmotif of authoritarian regime survival (3). Applying the model to the diverse cases of Jordan and Syria post-2010, we hold that the impact of structural constraints – both as constraints between learning and policy change (step 1 to 2) as well as between policy change and effectiveness (step 2 to 3) – remains crucial in any more agency-oriented study of authoritarian learning. The paper concludes with a discussion on the promises as well as potential, mostly methodological challenges of studying regime learning.

3. **Steven Heydemann (U.S. Institute of Peace): Mass Politics and the Future of Authoritarian Governance in the Arab World**

This paper will explore reconfigurations of authoritarian governance in the Arab World following the resurgence of mass politics beginning in 2011. At first, the Arab uprisings seemed to bring the Arab world's authoritarian exceptionalism to an end. From the vantage point of mid-2014, the political gains of the uprisings are far more elusive. With the possible exception of Tunisia, democratic transitions have stalled or been repressed, mass politics has effectively been contained, and authoritarian leaders have regained the initiative. In the case of Syria, the violence unleashed against peaceful protesters by the regime of Bashar al-Assad has shattered the stability of the state order in the Levant and facilitated the rise of violent sectarian extremism. This paper will argue that the reassertion of authoritarianism since 2012 did not come about simply because authoritarian elites in the Middle East did more of the same, only better. Rather, to reestablish their control over newly mobilized societies authoritarian regimes made important, and in some cases potentially transformative, changes in their policies and their tactics. What is emerging as these changes take hold are two distinctive modes of authoritarian governance, both more exclusionary, repressive, and sectarian than their predecessors. The paper will outline the emergence and trajectory of these processes of authoritarian reconfiguration, provide empirical support for the claim that these adaptations in authoritarian governance are taking place, and draw conclusions concerning the likely path ahead for state-society relations in the Arab world.

SESSION TWO

Saturday 17, 17 - 19, Sala Archivio Ca' Foscari

4. **Marc Valeri (University of Exeter): Testing the Strategies of Legitimation in the Gulf: Bahrain, Oman and the 'Arab Spring'**

Since 2011, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Sultanate of Oman have been the Gulf monarchies where expressions of social discontent have been more vocal. Unsurprisingly, the authorities of these two states, with more limited oil resources than their neighbours, face greater difficulties to propose a new social contract replacing the old patrimonial model based on the clientelist distribution of the rent which presided over the stability of these regimes for decades. The 'Arab Spring' mobilizations have not, it is true, led to formal political change in Bahrain and Oman, but they nevertheless have had a profound and lasting impact on the political legitimacy of these authoritarian regimes. This paper analyses, in a comparative perspective, the non-coercive strategies implemented in Bahrain and Oman since the end of the 1990s to consolidate the current political order and to address internal challenges in order to survive. It will pay special attention to the impact of the 'Arab Spring' protests, i.e. to what these events reveal of the internal political mechanisms of these regimes and of the efficiency of legitimation strategies used up until 2011. This paper is based on the results of personal interviews with political, economic and social actors conducted in Oman since 2003 and in Bahrain since 2008, including regular fieldworks since Spring 2011.

5. **Florian Kohstall (Freie Universität Berlin Cairo Office): Conferencing Change? International Cooperation in Higher Education after the Arab Uprisings**

It is widely accepted that authoritarian regimes are often very flexible in adjusting to international norms without necessarily giving up their grip on society. The transfer of norms and policy instrument does not only proceed in one direction, where Western democracies and international organisations such as the World Bank are the diffusers. Authoritarian regimes also do learn from each other. Against this backdrop it is particularly interesting to ask how policy transfer operates: Who are the actors engaging in policy-transfer, what are the loci where transfer takes place and which are the instruments used to facilitate this transfer. Higher education is an interesting area to observe the dynamics of policy transfer in the Middle East and North Africa. While most countries have implemented several measures to integrate the international knowledge economy, they

often did so very selectively. My paper analysis different forms of internationalisation in higher education and askes how international cooperation in this field could survive the political turmoil since the Arab uprisings. In Egypt, for example, the cooperation with international donors in the field of higher education has proven extremely stable despite the on-going political crisis since 2011. Notwithstanding the fierce campaigns against international interference, cooperation on the policy level remained rather intact. Sometimes, it has even been extended to overcome disputes in other areas of cooperation. In my paper I will review different donor programs in the field of higher education put in place in order to underpin the transformation process in countries affected by the uprising. I mainly draw on documents and ethnographic observations from conferences and workshops held in Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen since 2011 in order to illustrate how cooperation programs have been negotiated between domestic and international actors. These observations enable us to understand how policy networks have been reactivated and how these networks facilitate policy transfer. I argue that internationalisation in higher education is a continuous process of exchange of different actors (involving agents of international organisations, domestic policy-makers, academics and bureaucrats and including the exchange of social capital, personal benefits and policy tools). While these processes of exchange may contribute to policy change, they also contribute to stabilise the cooperation in a particular policy area and may inhibit change in the political arena.

6. **Frédéric Vairel (University of Ottawa): Following the Path to Avoid Pitfalls? How Midterm and Short term Authoritarian Adjustment Allowed the Moroccan Regime to Handle the Wave**

In order to understand how the Moroccan regime, we do not need to mobilize the official discourse of a "Moroccan specificity". My explanation explores the timing and the policy mix (mid-term reforms begun in the 1990s and shorter-term political decisions in the wake of the 2011 uprisings). If Mohamed VI avoided the Ben Ali, Mubarak or Kaddafi's situation whose discourses fueled popular mobilizations it is because his announcements were not like pulling a rabbit out of the hat. The authoritarian reform begun in the 1990s gave them a sort of sincerity. Like in Hirschman's tunnel, Moroccans had the impression that their fate was improving or at least could be improved. In addition, there was a link between March 2011 institutional announcements (the Economic and Social Council, the constitutional reform) and past reforms. Short term adjustments need also to be

considered. The expansion of the Compensation Fund, jobs promises to unemployed graduates, and a mix of toleration, repression and containment of street mobilization helped to avoid a Tunisian (or Egyptian, Yemeni…) scenario where naked repression, and void political discourse fueled street protests and moved away elites from the Presidential Palace. One needs also to consider the "street side" when it comes to understand how the regime handled the wave. During the 2011 spring protests the Moroccan contentious space did not break with its self-limiting characteristics and security forces relied on field-proven crowd management tactics which avoided producing "martyrs" which ignited protests elsewhere.

7. **Philippe Droz-Vincent (Sciences-Po Grenoble): Authoritarian Restructuring and the Fragmented State**

In line with the panel's outline, I will try to understand regimes' responses and restructuring after they encountered the "stress test" of mass uprisings/mobilizations. My case study will be Egypt (and perhaps add Tunisia ????), based on my fieldwork in Egypt (to be continued in September 2014) and Tunisia and my parallel work on the military. An authoritarian regime is an equilibrium based on a winning coalition whose support is essential for the incumbents to remain in power - as was felt at his expenses by Mubarak himself when the military opted out and refused to repress on his behalf. The whole authoritarian system is buttressed by coercion and repression, a topic that will not be of direct interest here. Authoritarian regimes are also based on a mixture of hypocrite "appearances" in public spaces (to make people "act as if") and the manipulation of contradictions by those in top power positions as a way to survive and stay in power, by dint of limited political openings, truncated economic openings (infitah, called "privatizations" in official talks at a time of economic globalization and triumph of capitalist models in the 2000s), short of any real liberalization, and tolerance for a kind of "social pluralism from below". And the whole system is given sense by the essential role of the executive plus the covering role of the state apparatus (cf the importance of the state, with the works of J Migdal in hindsight). In 2011, there was a complete unravelling of those authoritarian systems of power/regimes. My point of departure will be the resulting fragmented state. First I'm interested in the process of unraveling. After 2011, the end-result was a fragmented state, not a "fragmented order", namely a powerful executive apparatus manipulating the contradictions of a given polity (cf Springborg, 1989), but a fragmented state under the pressure of a new level of politics, street politics (to borrow this expression from Iran), an unorganized level whose sense of anger, betrayal and dispossession can at some turning points fuel huge mobilizations. As a consequence, different state institutions have autonomized themselves (to be worked further…) with the

absence of a strong executive giving sense to the whole system of authoritarian rule: the judges, the press, the police, the bureaucracy… and of course the elephant in the game, the military. Then I'm interested in restructuring. Talks of a "deep state" (to borrow the Turkish model of the so-called derin devlet or parallel devlet) try to take account of a reality (a kind of alliances of the "fouloul", the remnants of the Mubarak regime within some state institutions) but they are overstated or far-fetched: some state institutions are very conservative indeed (in the first place the Ministry of Interior), but they have not developed together a sense of coherence around a given project. Such state institutions have been gravitating around the military, hence reinforcing the latter's role as the "holder of the balance". And the military has gained a legitimacy of its own, with the essential role of the department of morale affairs of the Egyptian armed forces, along with strong repression of independent voices and in the media, as exemplified by the constitutional referendum campaign in January 2014 and the renewed era of military populism in favor of General (now Marshal) Al-Sissi and his election as president in June 2014. But is it the restructuring of a regime ? of what kind? I will use debates on hybrid regimes, hyphenated authoritarianism (is the concept of hybrid regimes useful here?) and especially, V. Bunce on subversive institutions and try to generate some models of regime unraveling and regime restructuring based on the inductive method taking as a first step research based on what is going on on the ground….

PANEL 20 - ARAB SENSITIVITIES AFTER THE UPRISINGS. ARAB ART AND ITS PERCEPTION OF REALITY: CHANGES AND INNOVATIONS

Saturday 17, 14.45 - 16.45, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

Chairs: Francesco De Angelis (University of Milan)

Discussant: Paola Viviani (Seconda Università di Napoli – University of Naples)

Paper givers:

SESSION ONE

1. Arturo Monaco (La Sapienza Università di Roma): 'al-Sa'b al-Suri Wa'id': Syrian Artists and Intellectuals against Sectarianism

More than three years of war and the Syrian people have found themselves divided not merely in supporters and opponents to Assad's regime, but even further split up into sectarian factions on the basis of their religious beliefs or ethnic belonging. Or at least this is what people are being forced to believe in order to see the fragmentation of the country as the only reasonable solution. Yet, not everyone is silent. Syrian artists, intellectuals and youths from civil society, regardless of religion or ethnicity, are raising their voices to warn the people of Syria and tell them that they are one people, made up of different colors, but still one. And they are doing so by using whatever means they can in a time of war: books, comics, blogs, social networks, the radio, magazines, paintings, music. The writers Samar Yazbik, Ḫālid Ḫalīfah, Luqmān Dayrkī, Ġayāṯ al-Maḏūn, Zakariyyā Tāmir are some of the brave voices which are trying to react to the fragmentation of the Syrian people, giving them reasons for staying united and building a new concept of citizenship. The present contribution shall introduce the attempts made by the intellectuals mentioned above, together with the important efforts of two Syrian radios, SouriaLi and Yāsmīn al-Šām, and finally those of two Facebook pages, Comic4Syria and Ana irt minhon, Su biddak ta'mal?, which aim to fight sectarianism, the former through comics, the latter through humor.

2. Fatima Sai (Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"): The Limits of Representation and the Transformation of Aesthetics in Syrian Artistic and Social Discourse

The conflict that followed the uprising movement in Syria is the second deadliest since World War II. As Susan Sontag wrote: «In an era of information, overload battles and massacres filmed as they unfold have been a routine ingredient of the ceaseless flow of domestic, small-screen entertainment. The ultra-familiar, ultra-celebrated image —of an agony, of ruin— is an unavoidable feature of our camera-mediated knowledge of war». Much has been said about the role of the new generation media in the Arab Spring in general, but in the Syrian scenario, their use has acquired a specific stance, being soon reduced to a mere echo of the testimonies of a rough, unfiltered horror, generating and reproducing a huge amount of material circulating and reaching an extremely wide audience. «Pictures of hellish events – indeed – seem more authentic when they don't

have the look that comes from being 'properly' lighted and composed, because the photographer either is an amateur or —just as serviceable— has adopted one of several familiar anti-art styles». On the other hand it is also true that creativity of Syrian literature and art in general has increased exponentially during the last years. A common feature in this production is a continuous reproposition of an impasse in the ability of individuals, when confronted by this unspeakable, enormous, collective tragedy, to express their feelings. This contribution intends to investigate how the role of artists, writers, intellectuals, changes when violence and its exposure exceed the limit of imagination while the ability to represent them withdraws and reality starts spilling out without any filters.

3. Ada Barbaro (La Sapienza Università di Roma): The Very Short Story in the Time of Revolution: al-Mihmāz and the Syrian author Zakariyyā Tāmir

Many scholars have already analyzed the impact of social media on the so-called "Arab spring". The tide of mass protests that swept through the Middle East in early 2011 has highlighted the distinct role of modern information-communication technologies (ICT). From a literary point of view, the "Arab spring" has inevitably marked the birth of a new model of writing, characterized by a more plural, global and immediate way of expression that could be identified as another form of Humanism 2.0. In this context, the Syrian author Zakariyyā Tāmir has been giving his contribution to the emergence of a new form of literary production since January 2012, when he decided to venture into "Facebook". He created a page titled al-Mihmāz (The Spur) where he began posting daily texts, joining the Syrian Revolution in an innovative way. The paper will propose the analysis of a selection of both short stories and daily comments that the well-known writer has been posting on his page, with a focus on his choice of language and themes, as a response to the events that are destroying his country.

SESSION TWO

Saturday 17, 17 - 19, Sala Berengo Ca' Foscari

1. Alessandro Buontempo (La Sapienza Università di Roma): The Egyptian Revolution and its Discontent: al-Ṭābūr by Basmah Abd al-Azīz and al-Tamāsīḥ by Yūsuf Raḫā

This paper is focuses on some of the peculiar ways through which Egyptian literature has been confronting the aftermath of the Arab Spring. While a relevant trend has been documentary, other works have striven to find different perspectives. The two novels I will discuss here, al-Abur (The Queue, 2013) by Basmah 'Abd al-'Azīz and al-Tamāsī (The Crocodiles, 2013) by Yūsuf Raḫā, divert their attention from the events that have been forging the post-Mubarak turbulent years. The former retraces the seeds of Taḥrīr's Revolution back in 1997, by following the experiences of a peculiar group of poets, al-Tamasi, which was born the same day a leading Egyptian activist committed suicide. The latter is set in an authoritarian Egypt, in a dystopian present/near future, in which the lives of citizens are controlled by a sinister centralizing authority named al-Bawwābah (the Gate). These novels offer bitter visions of a doomed revolution, by producing a counter-narrative in an attempt to dismantle the revolutionary rhetoric with which the new rulers have been acclaimed. On another level of analysis, they seem not content with mere representation, but unsettle generic boundaries while seeking both rupture and continuity with the narrative modes and strategies characterizing earlier and contemporary generations of writers. At the same time, they investigate the relationship between text and narrated reality, which appears instable and almost cryptic. While it may be too early to identify the features of a post-revolutionary Egyptian fiction, by analysing these two novels this essay intends to contribute to the development of a framework for reading Arabic and Egyptian literature in the present context.

2. Francesco De Angelis (Università degli Studi di Milano): "Tūk tūk": Humour and Dialect to Analyse and Overcome the Post-Revolutionary Crisis?

The Egyptians are well known for having a propensity for irony and sarcasm, and indeed it is no accident that they are also famous as awlād al-nuktah. But Egyptian humour, displayed in magazines, comics and popular stories, is never without significance. It offers an important occasion for reflection and criticism. It comes to create, through irony, a moment of sympathy amongst subjects afflicted by the same sufferings. Humour almost takes on a therapeutic function. This accounts for the abundance of jokes circulating after periods of crisis, and it is in this sense that al-nuktah (intended as a time for irony) is an indicator of the Alah (situation) of the country. An Arab saying sounds, more or less, like this: «Situations of great suffering call for laughter». Thus irony seems to be the psychological unlocking of repressed anxieties. It makes it possible to exploit whatever amount of ridicule there is in the enemy that is the object of humour. It is the only time during which subjects and authorities come face to face. But humour can never become a remedy. It usually adds nothing more to what the listeners already know. It is an ephemeral escape from a situation from which there is no escape. In the conviction that

revolutions, very much like irony, speak the language of the people, the ʿāmmiyyah, we believe that the Egyptian riots which began on 25th January 2011 are no exception. Regarding which, "Tūk tūk", a comic by Muḥammad al-Šinnāwī, certainly stands out amid other satiric publications. Issued every three months, it was first published on the 9th January 2011, literally the eve of the riot of the Egyptian people. Does this publication confirm the theory, already advanced on other occasions, that movements immediately preceding, or coming just after popular riots are characterised by a proliferation of publications indialect and with ironic overtones? Could "Tūk tūk" represent a display of the fears of common people, like some satirical magazines published in the late 19th and early 20th century? Does "Tūk tūk" reflect a new perception of reality surrounding the less privileged classes of Egypt?

3. Elvira Diana (Università di Chieti-Pescara): Siǧniyyāt (Prison Sketches) by Libyan Writer ʿUmar Abū al-Qāsim al-Kiklī: the First Example of Prison Autobiography Published in Libya

During Gaddafi's regime the repressive practices against littérateurs involved in political opposition were not limited to the isolation or the banning of their literary production, but rather, extended to torture and imprisonment or even political assasination. If under Gaddafi literary works committed to freedom and human rights had to be published outside Libya, or had to make use of ġumū (ambiguity), ramziyyah (symbolism) or muwārāh (dissimulation), after February 17th, 2011 the relation between writers and authorities has changed. Thus Libyan writers have started talking about their experiences in Gaddafi's prison in literary works they have been able to publish, for the first time, at home. This paper will examine Siǧniyyāt (Prison Sketches, 2012) by ʿUmar Abū al- Qāsim al-Kiklī, a collection of "very short stories" considered by someone to be the first testament of political imprisonment in Gaddafi's Libya.

4. Maria Cristina Dozio (Università degli Studi di Milano): Rebellion Between the Public and the Private Sphere: ʿAlāʾ al-Aswānī's Nādī al-sayyārāt

During the past three years, socio-political changes in Egypt have been determined by and – at the same time – have contributed to forge a new sensitivity, which has been expressed in various forms of art such as cinema, graffiti, music and literature. In the realm of fiction, various genres (diaries, blogs and popular literature) have contributed to a renewal of the field. This contribution analyses ʿAlāʾ al-Aswānī's Nādī al-sayyārāt (2013) as an example of this revolutionary sensitivity in fiction. The author depicts everyday life and inter-class relations at the Cairo Automobile Club in the Forties to create an allegory of contemporary society. Overtly denouncing social injustice and the network of power is

something certainly not new to al-Aswānī's books. However, in his latest novel he examines the process of developing a revolutionary spirit and the personal choice of taking action, with all the difficulties this implies. The analysis will be focused on the way the text intertwines the representation of rebellion in the public and the private sphere. This aspect will be seen in particular through two male figures (father and son) and two female characters. The use of time and space as meaningful narrative strategies will also be taken into consideration. Finally, this text shall be compared to al-Aswānī's earlier production and his activity as social commentator, the aim of this study being to see if there are any major innovations in content and form.

PANEL 21 - "PRINTEMPS ARABE": POURQUOI L'EFFET DOMINO N'A T-IL PAS EU LIEU?

Saturday 17, 14.45 - 16.45, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Pierre Blanc and René Otayek

Paper Givers:

1. **René Otayek (Sciences Po Bordeaux) et Pierre Blanc (Sciences Po Bordeaux): «Printemps arabe»: pourquoi l'effet domino n'a-t-il pas eu lieu ? Quelques pistes d'analyse**

L'euphorie que le « Printemps arabe » avait soulevée semble aujourd'hui être totalement retombée, sous l'effet conjugué de la contre-révolution (Egypte, Bahrein), des interventions étrangères aux conséquences mal anticipées et maîtrisées (Libye) ou de l'exacerbation des assabiyyat communautaires (Syrie, Irak). Seule la Tunisie semble être engagée dans une transition politique qui, bien qu'encore incertaine, paraît apaisée. Comment expliquer cette évolution, en s'écartant des présupposés culturalistes et essentialistes ? Comment analyser cette résilience des autoritarismes arabes ? Comment comprendre le fait que plusieurs pays arabes sont restés à l'écart de cette vague démocratique ou ont réussi à désamorcer les revendications auxquelles ils ont été confrontés ? Il est certes trop tôt pour tirer des conclusions définitives, d'autant qu'on est encore dans des configurations très fluides et que des évolutions imprévues restent possibles. Il est toutefois possible de formuler quelques pistes d'analyse sous forme d'hypothèses et de questions 1)De quel poids a pesé la rente (pétrolière, gazière, géopolitique, stratégique) dans ces stratégies de survie politique ? Et d'abord, les Etats rentiers (Algérie, Arabie saoudite, etc.) ont-ils mieux résisté que les autres (Maroc, Syrie, etc.) ? La distinction entre Etats rentiers et Etats non rentiers est-elle d'une absolue pertinence ? Plus généralement, quel a été l'impact de la « question sociale » dans les soulèvements arabes ? Et comment les pouvoirs autoritaires l'ont-ils affrontée ? 2) Les sources de légitimité (symbolique et charismatique) permettent-elles d'éclairer les différences de trajectoires entre Etats arabes ? Plus précisément, peut-on dire que les régimes monarchiques ont mieux résisté à la contestation démocratique que les régimes républicains, et, si oui, comment l'expliquer ? 3) L'épuisement du modèle autoritaire arabe (l'obéissance en échange de quelques éléments de welfare state de moins en moins évidents dans des sociétés en crise) et qui fut à l'origine de la chute des régimes de Ben Ali et de Moubarak n'est-il pas aussi la conséquence d'un déficit du politique ? Consubstantielle à l'autoritarisme, la dépolitisation, et donc le retrait du politique comme principe régulateur des relations entre l'Etat et la société, n'a-t-elle pas engagé, de longue date, un processus de « délitement de la Cité » que les pouvoirs autoritaires sont en mesure d'instrumentaliser pour durer, en délégitimant toute offre politique concurrente ? 4) La contestation politique a-t-elle, faute de canaux institutionnels d'expression, favorisé la fragmentation communautariste ? Les idéologies séculières du nationalisme radical (panarabisme, pansyrianisme, etc.) n'ont-elles été que de brèves parenthèses historiques aujourd'hui refermées par une sorte de « retour du refoulé », soit le réveil des assabiyyat communautaires, tel qu'il s'incarnerait en Irak, en Syrie, au Liban et même en Egypte et en Libye ? Autrement dit, les identités jouent-elles contre la démocratie ? 5) L'intime articulation entre géopolitique interne (au sein d'un même Etat) et géopolitique externe (régionale), observable notamment au Moyen-Orient mais aussi, avec ses particularités, au Maghreb, participe-t-elle aussi de la logique autoritaire en ce qu'elle constitue une

ressource stratégique pour les pouvoirs en place et pour leurs oppositions (conflit syrien, crise irakienne, et leur extension à l'ensemble de la région) ? La rhétorique de la stabilité ne prend-t-elle pas le pas sur « l'enjeu démocratique », avec l'aval des grandes puissances régionales et internationales?

2. **Luigi Achilli (IFPO, Amman): The deep play: ethnicity, the Hashemite monarchy and the Arab Spring in Jordan**

Despite the escalation of protest that led many demonstrators to demand the abdication of King Abdullah II and the end of the Hashemite hegemony in the winter of 2013, the Arab Spring in Jordan has failed to produce a massive political upheaval seen elsewhere in the region. Commentators and scholars hold accountable for this outcome the Jordanian security forces' deftness to curb the revolts, Washington and its allies' role in preserving the country as a safe zone, the widespread fear amongst Jordanians that the bloodbath in Syria could happen also in their country, and the fragmentation of Jordanian politics along ethnic fault lines. In particular, the absence of cross-cutting alliances capable of generating a sustained protest as those seen elsewhere in the Arab world is often explained with the political disengagement of the largely Palestinian population of North Jordan. This is certainly true. A puzzling absence of political participation has characterized the daily life of many young men living in the Palestinian refugee camps over the past years. This absence is all the more striking if we think that Palestinian refugee camps have historically been bastions of political resistance and unrest. But why those who are widely imagined as the embodiment of anti-government sentiments have displayed an unexpected tolerance for the status quo in a time of widespread malcontent against the crown? A popular explanation beyond the demise of the protests in Jordan points at the lack of a Jordanian national belonging amongst Palestinian refugees that would leave them unconcerned with any political change in the country. While I do believe that the ethnic dimension of the Arab Spring in the country has seriously jeopardized its extent, I claim that refugees' de-politicization is not explained with an alleged unconcern for a Jordanian internal affair. On the contrary, I consider that refugees' disengagement from the Arab Spring wells up from their anchorage in the national project that was put in motion by the Hashemites with the creation of the Kingdom of Jordan. Taking as starting-point the resilience of the regime in contemporary Jordan, this paper will investigate how the Hashemites have strategically cultivated the East Bank/Palestinian divide, Palestinian refugees' responses to this divisive discourse, and the change that the Arab Spring has elicited in this discourse.

3. **Mohamed-Ali Adraoui (EUI): Coûts et avantages d'une révolution. Une vision utilitaire des «printemps arabes» : la perception de la géopolitique arabe**

comme justification du conservatisme. Le cas du Maroc. La crainte du pire comme ressource politique

Présentant de nombreuses caractéristiques communes avec la Tunisie et l'Egypte (chômage, inégalités, présence de mouvements islamistes, contestations…), la société marocaine présente le « potentiel révolutionnaire » pour rejoindre la liste des pays ayant connu des bouleversements majeurs étant allés jusqu'au renversement de dirigeants autocrates établis à la tête de plusieurs Etats. Néanmoins, l'analyse de la situation marocaine amène à considérer la force de la peur d'une situation encore plus néfaste pour la population que le sort espéré par certains de l'engagement dans un processus révolutionnaire. Autrement formulé, la prise en compte de l'affect populaire et de la crainte d'un « scénario » du pire est incontournable dans l'examen des différentes stratégies menées après le départ de la vague révolutionnaire initiée dans la Tunisie voisine. Emerge alors une question centrale. Les stratégies conservatrices insistant sur « la crainte du pire » sont-elles spontanées et principalement enracinées dans la population devenant ainsi un fait social incontournable au sens de Durkheim ? Ou bien, convient-il d'analyser les différentes politiques étatiques menées dans le but d'instituer les acteurs au pouvoir comme les détenteurs d'une « légitimité du moins pire » renforçant ainsi une lecture des « printemps arabes » en termes clairement utilitaires ? En des termes plus philosophiques, alors qu'en Tunisie par exemple, la logique « lockienne » semble l'avoir emporter (aspiration à l'égalité et à la justice), doit-on voir le cas marocain comme l'illustration d'une primauté « hobbesienne » au sein de laquelle des aspirations identiques ont trouvé à être (un temps ?) limitées en échange d'une sécurité physique et psychologique sur laquelle le régime a su mener une stratégie de désamorçage des velléités révolutionnaires pourtant largement présentes? Cette contribution s'appuie sur plusieurs séjours de recherche menés au Maroc entre 2011 et 2014. A intervalles réguliers, nous nous sommes rendus dans ce pays dans le but de mener des travaux de terrain à Casablanca et de tenter de saisir l'impact psychologique, social, discursif, symbolique et politique des évènements se déroulant dans certains pays proches.

4. **Mauro Saccol (University of Genoa): Egypt and the "Arab Spring": a counter-domino effect?**

The wave of demonstrations that characterized the Arab world in 2011, despite initial similarities, led to different results, and the expected domino effect did not take place. Of particular interest is the Egyptian case where, after the fall of Mubarak that prospected a democratic transition, authoritarianism has come back. In order to find the reasons to explain such a result, this paper will take into consideration three elements. The first one is legitimacy, which in Egypt has a strong military component, but at the same time is

based on economic factors, such as obedience in exchange for welfare state elements, as well on religious ones. Second, the lack of political culture and political participation, due to a long history of authoritarianism that goes back to the Pharaohs, mixed with social and religious traditions and fuelled by mistrust in politics. Furthermore, this factor is strictly related with the previous one, as people did not engage in politics if sufficient goods and services were provided. The third component is represented by the regional context – devoid of democracies and, at the same time, characterized by hostility between some countries – that, as happened in Europe after the Second World War and the Cold War, plays a substantial role in shaping transitions. The Gulf monarchies, in this case, affected considerably the Egyptian outcome. By combining these three components, therefore, the paper tries to give an explanation of the peculiarities of the Egyptian transition, which seems to have undergone a counter-domino effect.

5. **Nabil Beyhum (ENSAPVS-EVCAU, Paris) : La crise du modèle d'Etat-nation et la destruction des cultures urbaines et des infrastructures des villes comme deuxième étape des printemps arabes**

L'histoire du Moyen-Orient a peut-être besoin d'être réécrite depuis quelques années, non seulement parce que les frontières entre Etats sont remises en question par les derniers événements en Syrie et en Irak, mais aussi parce que l'efficacité des systèmes politiques locaux organisés autour d'un modèle d'Etat-Nation à frontières stables devient douteuse. Les villes de ces espaces nationaux, après avoir été marginalisées par les systèmes politiques, en sont redevenues des théâtres voire des acteurs significatifs pendant les deux premières années du printemps arabes, pour redevenir la proie de mouvements destructeurs, bien plus violents en apparence que les Etats-nations, qui font des villes et des cultures urbaines l'objectif principal à détruire. Certes cet ébranlement des certitudes peut se retrouver dans l'histoire contemporaine des Etats-nations africains du sud du Sahel, similaire en de nombreux points sur la question de la pertinence de l'Etat-nation, mais sans avoir atteint le paroxysme de la deuxième étape, celle de la destruction des villes et des cultures urbaines. Pendant une période de quelques décennies, les états de la région issus des indépendances, se sont organisés autour de noyaux durs appartenant à l'armée et propageant des idées nationalistes. Ces Etats-nations, souvent en devenir, concevaient l'autoritarisme comme un prolongement du devoir d'obéissance et d'adhésion militaire dans des sociétés qu'elles unifiaient sur un mode jacobin classique. Leurs principales réalisations ont été les réformes agraires qui ont mis un terme aux règnes des grands propriétaires fonciers et l'intégration des masses rurales « dé-paysannées » et gonflant les faubourgs des villes dans l'appareil d'état à travers des effectifs pléthoriques. En ce sens, tout en étant autoritaires, ces régimes étaient loin de

manquer d'une base sociale large. Si ces régimes ont pu stabiliser leurs systèmes politiques c'est aussi en grande partie grâce à une rente pétrolière indirecte constituée par les apports de milliers d'émigrés dans les pays du Golfe du pétrole : égyptiens, palestiniens, libanais, syriens, yéménites ou irakiens se sont retrouvés ainsi pourvoyeurs de fonds pour les populations restées au pays. Une des dimensions de la première période des printemps arabes est le retour parfois brusqué de cette main d'œuvre dans les différents pays au lendemain de la contraction des économies pétrolières, nombre d'émigrés de retour au pays ne retrouvant pas la place qu'ils souhaitaient. Par ailleurs, et de façon assez générale, les villes secondes, et non pas secondaires, se sont retrouvées marginalisées par des Etats centralisateurs, ce fut le cas pour Alexandrie, Alep, Benghazi, Tripoli (Liban), et bien d'autres, ou transformées profondément par les afflux ruraux. Les élites urbaines renaissantes ont elles aussi été parties prenantes de cette mobilisation. C'est pourquoi ce que nous considérons ici comme étant la première étape du mouvement arabe a été caractérisé principalement par le renouveau symbolique, politique et social des villes et de leurs cultures. Cependant, le piétinement observé au Yémen, en Egypte, en Syrie, ou même en Irak et au Liban, (on peut jusqu'à un certain point y rattacher le Soudan et la Somalie) est l'œuvre d'une double évolution : d'un côté le repli des pouvoirs sur une base sociale plus étroite (à l'exception notable de l'Egypte) constituée essentiellement de fractions tribales, confessionnelles ou ethniques, réduisant l'impact des Etats centralisateurs qu'ils prônaient et, d'un autre côté, l'incapacité des forces contestatrices à fédérer un projet au niveau national, en ne présentant que des fronts éparpillés, marqués par un régionalisme mal défini. Cet affaissement des projets d'Etats-nations, du côté des Etats et du côté des révolutionnaires, est la conséquence principale de l'impasse politique, du « pat » atteint par les équilibres des rapports de force et l'impossibilité de trancher dans le sens des pouvoirs d'Etat ou des révolutions, le modèle d'Etat-Nation appelant justement à trancher entre forces sociales en compétitions (tribus en Lybie et au Yémen, communautés en Syrie, ethnies et sectes en Irak, et mme entre regroupements nationaux avec ou sans Etat en Palestine. La seconde étape des printemps arabes nous amène donc à une situation de guerre civile longue dynamitant les frontières et détruisant les espaces de neutralité, de voisinage multiforme, d'échanges dans la diversité. On a ainsi assisté à un effacement des frontières par l'intrusion de forces militaires appartenant à d'autres espaces nationaux (Israël, Iran, voire Turquie), par la circulation de financements trans-frontaliers (saoudiens ou qataris), à l'émergence de forces jihadistes dont la plus « efficace » a été celle qui a eu la position la plus en pointe dans le rejet des frontières, enfin, à l'influence croisée d'alliances internationales (Russie-Iran, Etats-unis-Europe). La segmentation qui en a résulté s'est accrue posant la question de la viabilité du modèle de l'Etat-nation et ouvrant la voie à un questionnement sur les niveaux de souveraineté de chaque entité politique (le Kurdistan), de ses

capacités à maintenir sa cohésion (Yémen ou Irak, Soudan ou Liban), de ses espaces de pertinence (exemple du Hizbollah intervenant en Syrie), des projets impériaux auxquels elles peuvent donner prise (cf. le projet iranien), des réactions anarchisantes qui peuvent lui faire pièce (cf. le Daechisatan). Mais l'effacement des frontières dans les pratiques et les flux militaires et dans les références symboliques et idéologiques, s'est accompagné de la ré-émergence des villes comme abcès de fixation, et non plus comme acteurs ou simples théâtres. Alep détruit, Mossoul décapité, Tripoli en Lybie déchiré, Damas encerclé, Lattaquieh soumis, Gaza city objectif militaire, tout contribue à faire surgir un nouveau paradigme de la ville comme abcès de fixation des combats, on pense à une multitude de mini-Stalingrads, s'il n'y avait par ailleurs une volonté qui affleure de détruire l'urbain et ses cultures où la proximité est nécessairement co-existence. Etonnamment, après un conflit politique, puis des guerres sociales, nous en sommes aujourd'hui face à une situation de guerre d'extermination de cultures urbaines portant l'acceptation des différences. Ce ne sont pas seulement des guerres aux minorités qui apparaissent mais des guerres d'assujettissement des populations, y compris majoritaires, par des idéologies totalitaires. Ne pas le voir, ne pas le prendre en compte dans les analyses, interdit de saisir la dimension totalitaire des mouvements « takfiristes » ou de façon strictement parallèle des mouvements para-militaires issus des anciens régimes, dans leur guerre de destruction des villes. L'extraordinaire capacité de ces mouvements à s'aliéner les populations les plus diverses dépasse de loin leurs capacités à terroriser qui leur avait ouvert la porte des villes dans une première étape. L'effritement des Etats-nations et la destruction des villes auxquels on assiste actuellement est-il parti pour durer ou doit-on y voir un préalable nécessaire à l'édification d'autres systèmes politiques ? Peut-on espérer une résilience des Etats-nations en question à travers une résurgence de l'autoritarisme, ou est-il trop tard ? Doit-on croire à une possible fédération des forces démocratiques restaurant une souveraineté étatique à base sociale large et partagée ? Doit-on imaginer, après une longue période de recherche de formes politiques de stabilisation, l'émergence d'une nouvelle donne permettant aux villes de s'appuyer sur des réseaux impériaux ou proto-impériaux qui leur permettent de se refaire, de se reconstruire, de se redéfinir ? Autant de scénarios qui n'ont pas nécessairement vocation à triompher partout mais qui peuvent se retrouver en concurrence d'un ensemble géo-politique à l'autre.

PANEL 22 - CO-IRIS: ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON THEORY AND PRAXIS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Saturday 17, 17 - 19, Aula 1 Ca' Dolfin

Chair: Raffaele Mauriello

Discussant: Nassef Manabiland Adiong

Paper Givers:

1. **Deina Abdelkader (University of Massachusetts Lowell and Harvard University): A Global International Relations Theory: The Contemporary Role of Religion and the Imperative to Transcend the Westphalian Episteme**

The epistemology of current international relations theory is built on the assumption of the sovereignty of nation states and more importantly on the notions attributed to the nation-state as a rational actor and an actor that largely exists due to the constant hyperactive pursuit, possession, and application of power. This paper utilizes an alternative view based on the Episteme of the Islamic concept of public welfare. The paper will therefore compare and contrast the two concepts of Realism and Public Welfare in pursuit of a more inclusive international relations theory.

2. **Mohammed Hashas (LUISS Guido Carli University of Rome): Taha Abderrahmane's Concept of the "Awakened Youth" for the Building of a "Living Nationhood"**

This paper is based on the work of the Moroccan philosopher Taha Abderrahmane (b. 1944), a leading logician and ethicist in the Arab-Islamic world. Because the context of writing this article is the events of the so-called "Arab Spring," I introduce Abderrahmane's concept of the "awakened youth" (al futuwwa al muntafiḍa) as the highest stage of "ethical renewal" in Arab philosophy, in the new philosophical paradigm of Abderrahmane. That is, ethics become the vital axis on which renewal in the Arab world can be based for the formation of modern nation states that are rooted in their references in the Arab (and Islamic) tradition. The concept used to refer to this nation state is "living nationhood" (al qawmiyya al hayya). The required renewal is double: philosophical and political. I refer to it as "double awakening." Based on Abderrahmane's philosophical framework, and in light of the ongoing events of the Arab Spring, this article argues that the double awakening

aspired for (philosophical and political) is not reached yet, which means that the concept of the "awakened youth" cannot apply yet to the "youth awakenings" that have fuelled the Arab Spring. To explain the concept of the "awakened youth" I have to go through a number of stages so as to clearly situate it in the general philosophy of Abderrahmane. I proceed as follows. First, I introduce Abderrahmane's view of the task of philosophy, or what I refer to here as the "localization" and "politicization" of philosophy. I refer to his ideas of "the Arab right to philosophical difference." Second, this section moves to politicize this call through the need for a "political awakening" (qawma siyāsiyya). I introduce the concept of the "living nationhood" (al qawmiyya al ḥayya) as the aspired for form of the nation state that is modern but also rooted in Arab (and Islamic) values. I refer to its features and the strategic plans to concretize it. Third, I briefly refer to Islamic ethics as a passage to the realization of the "living nationhood." Fourth, I introduce the concept of the "awakened youth" (al futuwa al muntafiḍa) and its task of endorsing a double awakening, the philosophic and the political, fuelled with the characteristics of the Arabic living nation and Islamic ethics. Ultimately, I take the Moroccan context as a case study for closing remarks where I try to match Abderrahmane's concepts with the political realities in the country.

3. **Behlül Özkan (Marmara University): Beyond "Strategic Depth:" Sources of Davutoğlu's Pan-Islamist Foreign Policy**

Over the past decade, Turkey's foreign policy has been synonymus with the name Ahmet Davutoğlu and his doctrine "Strategic Depth." In 2010 and 2011, Davutoğlu was on Foreign Policy Magazine's list of the Top 100 Global Thinkers "for being the brains behind Turkey's global reawakening" and for "build[ing] Turkey into a regional powerhouse." With the Arab Spring, Davutoğlu has become one of the most influential politicians in the Middle East. Although there has been great popular interest in Davutoğlu, his foreign policy vision has not been the subject of serious scholarly criticism. Other than a couple of journalistic articles, there are few serious academic studies about Davutoğlu's foreign policy. The present study seeks to examine the theoretical and ideological sources of Davutoğlu's foreign policy and argues that as an academician Davutoğlu devised a pan-islamist foreign policy for Turkey in hundreds of articles he published between 1986 and 2002. Throughout his writings he argued that the end of the Cold War provided Turkey a historic opportunity to become a global power, if it followed an expansionist foreign policy based on Islamist ideology. Accordingly, Turkey should define a new "Lebensraum" and dominate its hinterlands, namely the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus. As an academician, Davutoğlu had the chance to turn his pan-islamist vision into reality when he started working as foreign policy advisor to the ruling Justice and Development Party, a

position which he held from 2002 to 2009. Since 2009 he has been Turkey's foreign minister. Therefore, this article not only analyzes Davutoğlu's theory and ideology, but also his political performance as a foreign minister with a special emphasis on Turkey's foreign policy in the Arab Spring.

4. **José Vericat (Oxford University): Dissecting Various Religious Ideological Trends within Hamas**

This paper aims to explore a set of religious ideological trends that have influenced Hamas. The Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement is most often portrayed as a monolithic whole. Hamas is, however, the product of a complex set of intellectuals' tendencies. These derive from its mother organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the different schools of thought therein, as well as from the debates and developments among Islamic movements more broadly in different countries across the Middle East. I aim to guide this discussion with reference to specific Hamas ideologues by taking a close look at their writings. In the process, I would like to identify various ideological forces that coexist within the movement, ranging from those that take social justice as their baseline to the ones that lean more towards Salafi and Jihadist movements.

PANEL 23 - CREATIVE RESISTANCE AND TRANSNATIONAL POLITICAL COUNTER-CULTURE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY "GRIND"

Saturday 17, 17 - 19, Aula 2 Ca' Dolfin

Chairs: Donatella Della Ratta and Sune Haugbolle

Discussant: Donatella Della Ratta and Sune Haugbolle

Paper Givers:

1. **Sune Haugbolle (University of Roskilde): New Left formations in Lebanon after the Revolution (that never was)**

In the turmoil of the Arab uprisings, a large number of new groups have emerged identifying themselves as left (yasar), socialist or communist. Some were initiators of the uprisings, while others have been formed in the following period. While some observers reject the New Left formations as marginal and lacking a social base, many others accept their impact but have a hard time making sense of them. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Lebanon, this paper attempts to make sense of the ideological transformations taking place in the aftermath of the uprisings by combining ethnography in a national setting with analysis of transnational activism. In Lebanon, as in most Arab countries, the nebulous New Left consists of a number of small groups, collectives and parties, such as al-muntada al-ishtiraki, some with a significant media platform. They date back to anti-war and anti-globalisation protest movements in the early 2000s. Although they failed to replicate the Arab uprisings in Lebanon, they have been deeply influenced by them. Networks that existed before 2011, particularly currents of international revolutionary socialists who distance themselves from what they see as the 'Old Left' of sclerotic communist and socialist parties, have been strengthened by a common, yet widely differentiated experience with revolution. They ferment many different forms of intellectual, artistic, and political organization and conversations that cross national boundaries. Contrary to the popular notion that the Arab uprisings 'failed,' these new left groups exemplify the political openings and innovations that have also resulted from revolutionary practice. The paper analyses how activists learn from each other, in meetings and in joint publications such as the journal al-thawra al-da'ima and al-manshour, and how they develop their ideological positions in reaction to the varied revolutionary experience. Through analyses of their debates and writings on the Syrian war, mobilization, globalization, sectarianism and gender since 2011, the paper argues that the New Left represents a 'vernacular sociology' rooted in revolutionary practice that often passes under the radar of local as well as international social scientists.

2. **Donatella Della Ratta (University of Copenhagen): Fear and Loathing On The Internet: The Paradoxes Of Syrian Networked Activism In The Revolutionary "Grind"**

Three years after the outbreak of the protest movement in March 2011, Syria has gone from an information black hole to being one of the biggest YouTube video producers in the world. New publications, radio stations, independent news agencies are operating both from inside the country and from abroad; producing a variety of content, from news items to creative material. Yet, despite having brought to the surface a vibrant culture of creative resistance, these grassroots media seem not to have generated either new publics or counter-narratives that are powerful enough to make the regime`s argument of

a foreign conspiracy threatening the country`s stability look outdated or simply phony. By looking at practices of Syrian networked activism – and at regime`s strategies to counterbalance it–, this paper reflects critically on protests movements that employ networked communication technologies as a mobilization and information tool with the ultimate goal of toppling an authoritarian regime. It asks why, also communication wise, the Syrian regime seems to hold sway; while citizen media and user-generated content, initially praised as expressions of a civil society forum, are generating confusion and chaos. These issues are discussed within the theoretical framework of "communicative capitalism" (Dean, 2009). Although having been developed in the context of neoliberal democracies, I argue that this theory can result useful in shedding light on some of "the conditions for sustaining neoliberal autocracy" (Wedeen, 2013) in Syria. The paper shows how, by drawing from experiences of networked activism and citizen journalism, the Syrian regime was able to turn the fantasies of "abundance, participation and wholeness" (Dean, 2009) embedded within the narrative of Internet-generated media into fears of chaos, paranoia, conspiracy, and fragmentation. At the same time, the regime has employed more traditional "forms of market-oriented language", such as advertising and TV drama, to produce fantasies of "multicultural accommodation, domestic security, and a sovereign national identity" (Wedeen, 2013) upon which building a novel idea of "watan" (homeland) as an antidote to those very fears. The paper concludes that, in the context of the Syrian uprising, an extensive use of networked communication technologies has paradoxically resulted in strengthening authoritarian rule. Finally, it aims at opening up to a further critical reflection on networks as political technologies, and politics as shaped by networked communication.

3. **Mark Levine (University of California Irvine): Too Many Axes to Grind. Doing Revolutionary Music in Counter-Revolutionary Times.**

It has become a commonplace to the point of cliche to argue that the uprisings that collectively referred to as the "Arab Spring" were defined by music. Music of a variety of pedigrees--hiphop, rock, and more traditionally Arab--helped bring out and keep millions of protesters in the streets. In the process, they drove several leaders from power and others to the point of genocide to remain in their presidential palaces. Scholars and journalists of all stripes descended upon the midans and coffeehouses of the Arab world to soak up and comment upon the music that so animated the region-wide protests during their first year. But few if any stuck around to examine how the music, and the musicians who wrote and performed it, managed to continue once the squares were empty and the people either pacified or actively turned against their former revolutionary heroes. This

paper picks up where most scholarship on the music of the Arab uprisings, including the first phase on my own research, leaves off--that moment when the crowds go home, and even turn on the voices who previously were the soundtrack to the most liminal moment of their lives. What happens when the legions in Tahrir Square not only "no longer know" who Ramy Essam is, but want to attack him? How does Morocco's most famous rapper, L'7a9ed (El Haqed, the Enraged One), deal with the fact that any time he leaves the house he's likely to be set upon by pro-royalty activists and then charrged with assaulting police? Can counter-revolution become a source of inspiration for artists the way the liminal public and aesthetic space of the period that produced the initial protests led them to produce such memorable art in response. I explore these dynamics through a combined reading of Marcuses notion of repressive tolerance, the debate between Adorno and Benjamin over the "aura" of artistic proection in an era of mechanical adn commodified--and now today, digital and uncommodified--artistic production, and giorgio agamben's notion of the state of exception, and the role of art in dismantling it.

4. **Enrico De Angelis (Cedej Cairo): A new generation of digital intermediaries in the Arab World: the case of Mosireen and Syria Untold**

The increasing penetration of networked communication in the Arab world has profoundly changed the ways knowledge is produced and distributed. According to many new media theorists, new media flatten the transaction costs of producing contents and enable actors with scarce resources to express their voice in the public sphere. In so doing, new media would provide an essential tool for subaltern actors to promote their instances and challenge dominant discourses. However, the alleged democratizing effect of new media communication are today subject to intense scrutiny. Commercialization and media concentration have put into question the use of social media platforms as tools for democratization. The colonization of the web by government institutions, parties, and traditional actors represents another threat. Finally, the utopia of a space in which everyone can equally express himself gives the way to shaping new hierarchies of visibility and power, and closed communities of like-minded people. Adopting a critical approach to Internet studies, the paper discusses the role of new media as tools of subaltern actors empowerment. It claims that a new generation of intermediaries is needed in order to creatively reinvent new media practices and use them for purposes such as equality and democratization. In particular, the case studies of media collective Mosireen in Egypt and web aggregator SyriaUntold in Syria will be examined as experiments aiming at rethinking media practices through a subaltern approach. Despite the contradictions and the challenges that these projects encounter, they are evidence of

local actors attempting at finding solutions to the above mentioned problems, and at creating innovative and autonomous forms of media intermediation.

5. **Miriyam Aouragh (University of Westminister): 'Lil ayaam rasas 'awtani': Moroccan activism remembered and preserved online - renegotiated and prolonged offline**

Numerous publications have engaged with the important relation between politics and mediation in the Middle East in the recent years; however little is known about Morocco, which in fact had among the highest penetration rates in the Arab world. Throughout 2011 and 2012 the country was swept by popular protests in the major cities and also smaller towns spreading across the vast space of the country, the beginning of what is popularly known as the 20 February movement. The internet has provided marginalized communities (e.g. Amazigh, unemployed 'Mo3atalin' groups), unions and political organizations (Al Nahjd al-Demoqrati, Al Monadila) and critical online reporters (Mamfakinch, Lakoum) a space to articulate their demands and alternatives. The internet allowed them to interact with other Arab revolutionaries in Tunisia, Egypt or Lebanon; and to efficiently coordinate their efforts with the wider protest movement. But we cannot understand the implications of new forms of creative resistance and organizing without zooming out and reinterpreting these changes within the particular political realities of the country. Morocco is seen as a stable monarchy, ruled by the regime known as makhzan through a combination of consent and coercion that has for decades managed to nurture a politics of cooptation. These realities prevented new social movements from reaching a tipping point and made many consider that the best alternative is 'evolution not revolution'. Nevertheless, new forms of mediation have offered activists the needles to snap the nationalistic bubbles and the demoralizing adagios. Social media and Youtube helped activists reach wider audiences. Equally important, yet often overlooked: it has made it possible for freshly politicized (often non-organized) youths such as the radicalising high school students of haraka talamidia, to find them in turn. This is a section of society already inhibiting the social spaces of the internet as part of their own. The paper will first sketch the sociological (geographic and linguistic fragmentation), cultural (myths of the monarchy) and political (legacy anti-left oppression and co-optation) barriers that impede collective struggle. Then through ethnographic case studies and interviews, it will highlight how the 20Feb movement manages and struggles to, against all these odds, agitate and organize.