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SOCIETÀ PER GLI STUDI SUL MEDIO ORIENTE

**TITOLO/TITLE:** The time and space of “transnational ad-hocracy” in the SWANA region

**PROPONENTE/I – PROPONENT/S:** CHIARA MARITATO, UNIVERSITY OF TURIN, ROSITA DI PERI, UNIVERSITY OF TURIN

**ABSTRACT (1500 parole/words):**

Elaborated in studies of bureaucracy and public policy as either an intentional institutional set-up or an unintentional outcome of policy implementation (Miller 1986), “ad-hocracy” appears particularly useful in framing the growing reliance on flexibility, pragmatism and informality as a ruling technique. According to Natter, “ad-hocracy can be an intentionally ambiguous governance strategy to secure state power.” Moreover, it speaks to those measures that at various levels reflect the flexibility of executive politics; the pragmatism of exemption regimes; and the informality of case-by-case arrangements (Natter 2023).

Recently, scholars have employed the notion of ad-hocracy to investigate states’ margins of manoeuvre in navigating domestic and foreign policy interests, multilevel migration governance as well as measures that at various levels are taken when identity becomes temporarily dominant (or marginal) in political decision-making processes. Concepts like Egypt’s “policy of ambivalence” towards refugees (Norman 2017) or Jordan’s and Lebanon’s “politics of uncertainty” over Syrian and Palestinian refugees (Nassar and Stel 2019), Turkey’s “informal tolerance” of irregularized migrants (Karadağ and Sert 2023) clearly illuminate this process. Beyond migration studies, the literature has investigated how governance is exerted outside states’ territories towards the domestic abroad (Adamson 2012; Bauböck 2010; Varadarajan 2010; Ragazzi 2009). In this vein, transnational ad-hocratic governance is thus a lens to assess ad hoc institutions, agencies, policies, cultural diplomacy and bureaucratic apparatuses through which nation-states maintain and enhance political, economic, and identity ties with diasporas and kin communities (Waterbury 2020; Gamlen 2014).

The panel aims to explore the many facets and challenges that the transnational ad-hocratic governance poses in the SWANA region. In doing so, the concept of ad-hocracy will be stretched and used to frame many different debates in time and space crossing the study of the region. How and to what extent transnational ad-hocratic governance impacts communities and groups at national and non-national level? Is transnational ad-hocracy a “technique” able shaping identities and borders’ control? How national policies and local strategies are used to substantiate (or contrast) the transnational ad-hocratic governance?

We welcome papers with theoretical contribution as well as original empirical data informed by the methodological and multidisciplinary challenges to this debate covering (e.g.):

- transnational ad-hocratic governance and its role in shaping identities across history in the region;
- the role of minorities, kin communities and diasporic groups in contrasting or including transnational ad-hocratic practices (and policies);
- transnational ad-hocracy vs. states’ ad-hocracy;
- the role of transnational networks in shaping transnational ad-hocracy;
- transnational ad-hocracy and cultural diplomacy tools;
- the foreign policy implication of the transnational ad-hocracy;
- transnational ad-hocracy and migration processes.

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## PROFILO ACCADEMICO DEL/DELLA/DEI/DELLE PROPONENTE/I – SHORT BIO OF PROPONENTS

Rosita Di Peri is associate professor at the Department of Culture, Politics and Society at the University of Turin, Italy where she teaches 'Politics, Institutions and Cultures of Middle East' and 'Mashrek Politics and Institutions'. She is part of the Phd program in Social and Political Change. Her research interests focus on democracy and authoritarianism in the Middle East with a particular attention on Lebanon. Recently she investigated the nexus between power, space and identity in the Mediterranean region with particular interest on borders. She authored two books (*Il Libano contemporaneo*, Carocci, Roma 2017 and *Guida alla Politica Medio Orientale con Francesco Mazzucotelli*) and co-edited several books and Special Issues. In 2023 she co-edited (with Daniel Meier) the book "Mediterranean in dis/order. Space, Power and Identity" for The University of Michigan Press.

Chiara Maritato is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society at the University of Turin. She holds a MSCA "Seal of Excellence" grant for the ROADSIDE project investigating the multilevel governance of transit migration in partnership with the Istanbul Bilgi University European Institute. Her research interests include "transit" migrations and border management, transnational religious actors and diaspora communities, religion and gender issues in contemporary Turkey. Her latest publications are: "Pastor of a Dispersed Flock: Diyanet officers and Turkey's art of governing its diaspora" *Italian Political Science Review*, "Turkey as the 'liberator' of Muslims in Europe: The circulation of Islamophobia as a political remittance" *Partecipazione e Conflitto*, "Claiming for Moral Superiority while Bargaining with Mobility. Turkey-EU Migration Diplomacy in the post-2016 Euro-Mediterranean space" *De Europa*.

## INDIRIZZO/I EMAIL/EMAIL ADDRESSES:

Rosita Di Peri: [rosita.diperi@unito.it](mailto:rosita.diperi@unito.it)

Chiara Maritato: [chiara.maritato@unito.it](mailto:chiara.maritato@unito.it)