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TITOLO/TITLE: Red-lines: revolutionary knowledge and transformative action in the Trans-Mediterranean space (1950s-1970s)

DISCUSSANTS: ANDREA BRAZZODURO (UNIVERSITY OF NAPLES "L'ORIENTALE"), ROSSANA TUFARO (SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME)

ABSTRACT (1500 parole/words):

During the so-called 'long 1960s', against the backdrop of – among others – the consolidation of the Cold War order, Khrushchev's repression of the Hungarian revolution, the Suez War, and the explosion of decolonization and anti-imperialist liberation movements in the Global South, a global New Left emerged, succeeding to impress a permanent change on both the socio-political developments of the local arenas it acted into and the existing grammars of dissent. Within this 'movement of movements,' as the progressive convergence of the revolutionary inputs those movements stemmed from contributed to forging a global network of radical forces, the intense transnational circulation of texts and activists, ideologies, and experiences played a crucial role in shaping common ideational frames, agendas, and contentious strategies/practices. The Middle Eastern region represented in this sense no exception.

In 1954-64, for instance, the Algerian revolution against French colonialism made the North African country a fundamental landmark in the emerging geographies of Third World liberation. On another level, in the Arab Levant and the Gulf, starting from the mid-1960s, a new generation of activists and intellectuals started to grow out and split, seeking a radical re-foundation of the principles and strategies through which re-vivify the struggle for the radical emancipation of Arab societies. To trigger their dislocation intervened the bureaucratic and authoritarian turn taken by the existing radical organizations (Socialist, Communists, Arab Nationalists), the failure of UAR's experiment, and, above all, the loud Arab defeat of the June War. In their process of soul-searching, the horizon of their revolutionary imaginary shifted quickly from Cairo and Damascus to Havana and Hanoi, with Third-Worldism, Maoism, Eurocommunism, and Marxism-Leninism cleared of the Soviet doxa providing the new ideological framing for action. This led to the emergence of new radical and globally interconnected network of leftist vanguards which, from Algeria to Oman, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Kuwait, and Bahrein, played a leading role in the development of the social, political, and liberation struggles that defined the historical development of the MENA region for the following decades. Similarly, the same Arab revolutionary experiences significantly influenced the imaginary, thoughts, agendas, and practices of the radical New Lefts and liberation movements outside of the region. In both cases, the process of mutual influencing and cross-fertilization was

vehiculed by a variety of embodied practices of encounter and diffusion (cultural, political, individual, organizational, etc.) which produced equally embodied practices of struggle.

By bringing together original case-based studies from different polities and disciplinary vantage points, the following panel aims to enlarge the understanding of the forms and ways in which the circulation of revolutionary knowledge from/to the Arab region contributed to producing transformative action.

Mehdi Ben Barka: Bridging Liberation Movements Across Continents in the Early 1960s"

Laura Feliu Martínez, Senior Lecturer, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

This paper aims to analyze the transnational relations between liberation movements from different continents in the first half of the 1960s, using the Moroccan figure of Mehdi Ben Barka as a focal point. Identified as a rare "ethical prophet" invoking a collective ideal in Weberian terms, Ben Barka epitomizes the ideal of collective struggle from the peripheries of the international system. His tragic end enhances his symbolic role in the unequal fight of post-independence struggles.

Starting in 1957, Ben Barka embarked on an international journey, transitioning from anti-colonialism to anti-imperialism. He forged connections with leaders and movements beyond the Maghreb or Arab context. Ben Barka facilitated contacts between members of liberation movements from Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Cameroon, or Niger. Exiled between Paris and Geneva, he spent significant time in Algiers. The "Solidarity" network, created by Henri Curiel provided vital support for Ben Barka's work in France and Latin America and paved the way for the preparation of the Tricontinental Conference in 1966 in Cuba, aiming to unite Third World liberation movements against imperialism. Ben Barka's vision clashed with American imperialism, neocolonial capitalism, and the nationalist bourgeoisie leaders of the region.

Getting round the Iron Curtain : Transnational Revolutionary Networks and Militant Circulations between North Africa and the European Continent (1950-64)

Nicola Lamri, University of Bologna

In the last few decades, historians have begun to rethink the period of the Cold War in the light of the emergence of the Third World. Far from representing an era of crystallization of the confrontation between the USSR and the US, the 1950s would represent a period of accumulation of new political energies coming from the southern hemisphere. In particular, the Mediterranean region emerged as a space of contamination between different political cultures. This contributed to the disruption of the bipolar order inherited from the Second World War. In this paper, we will try to analyze the networks that took shape in the 1950s and 1960s in the shadow of the Communist parties orphaned by the Comintern. The "Groupe de Rome" of the Egyptian communist Henri Curiel, the transnational structures created by the Algerian National Liberation Front to escape the siege of the French authorities, the mediatory activity of the Italian-Tunisian communists, or the Third Worldist networks of the "Solidarity" Groupe during the 1960s. From below, the activity of some

militants and intellectuals close to the anti-fascist and anti-colonialist cause rewrote the categories of political confrontation and redefined its coordinates in the midst of the Cold War.

Kôji Wakamatsu, Masao Adachi and Palestinian liberation cinema

Thomas Richard, University of Lille

Known for his work as a revolutionary director in Japan, with films ranging from pornography to Mishima's failed coup, Kôji Wakamatsu was also one of the most prominent directors to come to the Middle East during the 70s to develop links between anti-imperialist parties around the world. Together with Masao Adachi, he directed in 1971 *Sekigun PFLP declaration of war*, a semi-clandestine movie, funded by the PFLP, with the goal of freeing Palestine and leading the anti-imperialist struggle. In this film, they link the Palestinian struggle with that of the Japanese far-left. This film appears as both a transnational object, and as a revolutionary film. Our aim is to understand the part played by this film in the development of the Palestinian identity on screen at the height of its anti-imperialist struggle. This period was also marked by the development of transnational revolutionary movements, with the presence of Japanese volunteers who joined the Palestinian factions. It was also a time during which film directors intended to develop a revolutionary cinema (Dreyer 2013), and we would like to compare their work with the parallel endeavour taken by Jean-Luc Godard with *Here and elsewhere*.

The Limits of Post-1967 Arab Internationalism: Relations between the Algerian State and the Arab New Left through the Lens of Algerian Radical Leftists in Exile

Lorenzo Scala, Sapienza University of Rome

The Algerian War of National Liberation (1954-1962) marked a significant shift in global politics, ending over a century of settler colonialism and paving the way for an independent Algeria. This newfound independence brought Algeria into the forefront of anti-colonial activism. Internally, Algeria pursued state-socialism, implementing policies like nationalizations and agrarian reforms while at the same time being politically dominated by a coalition of military men and technocrats. The latter character were criticized by many left-wing Algerian militants of that time, which led to the repression of different domestic leftist movements. At the same time, radical Arab organizations in the post-1967 era often tempered their criticism of the Algerian regime, given the caliber of its international activism, its material support for revolutionary causes in the Arab world and elsewhere, and the "posthumous" nature of its socialist experiment compared to the failure of the Nasserian paradigm. This paper examines the press of Algerian leftist groups in 1970s Europe, such as El Oumami and Tribune algérienne, analyzing their views on Algerian state's internationalism and interactions with the Arab New Left. It highlights the tensions between the revolutionary objectives of the Algerian militants opposed to the Algerian state, the state-building purposes of the latter, and the interests of Arab radical organizations aligning with the Algerian regime. Through this analysis, the paper aims to understand the complex dynamics among Algerian opposition, the state, and the Arab New Left across geographical and ideological lines, shedding light on overlooked challenges faced by Algerian militants.

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

Andrea Brazzoduro Andrea Brazzoduro is assistant professor at the University of Naples L'Orientale, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities where he teaches Social History. Andrea is also associate member at the Faculty of History, University of Oxford and Maison française d'Oxford. He is a historian of modern Europe and the world, specialized on France and the Mediterranean, with a particular interest in decolonization, and the relationships between France, Algeria, and Italy.

Rossana Tufaro is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Contemporary History of the Middle East at Sapienza, University of Rome, Department Italian Institute of Oriental Studies. Her research interests and specializations are the labor history of the Arab Levant, and the history of the Arab Lefts, with a specific focus on Lebanon and the 'long 1960s'.

INDIRIZZO/I EMAIL/EMAIL ADDRESSES: andrea.brazzoduro@unior.it; rossana.tufaro@uniroma1.it