



# SWANA from below: living, enduring, and remembering its revolutions

November 30, December 1-2  
2022  
09:30 am - 07:00 pm



## PROGRAM

Time	Wednesday 30 Nov.		Thursday 1 Dec.		Friday 2 Dec.	
9:00	Arrival to Strozzi and Registration (Altana)		Free		Free	
9:30 - 10:00	Conference Introduction and Program (Altana)		Panel 4 Political Subjectivities and the "Private World" in Post-Revolutionary Contexts (Altana)		10:00 - 11:30 Panel 7 Repression and Everyday Resistance(s) (Altana)	
10:00 - 11:30	Keynotes: Prof. Leyla Dakhli " <i>Moving with the Revolutions of the Present. Dignity, Emotions, Temporalities</i> " and Prof. Zeynep Gambetti " <i>Resisting Neoliberal Authoritarianism in Turkey and Beyond</i> ", moderated by Sarah ElMasry and Maria Nicola Stragapede <a href="#">ONLINE Connection prior registration</a> (Altana)					
11:30 - 12:00	SNS Coffee Break		SNS Coffee Break		SNS Coffee Break	
12:00 - 13:30	Panel 1 Violent Experiences and Bottom-up Politics: Remembering, Feeling, and Making Sense of Violence and Repression (Altana)		Panel 5 Between Remembering and Forgetting: Artistic Practices of Post-Revolutions (Simone del Pollaiolo)	Panel 6 Revolutionary Resistance and Intellectual History (Altana)	Keynote: Prof. Donatella della Porta in conversation with Prof. Jack Goldstone " <i>Taking Stocks and Moving Forward: Revolution Studies and Social Movement Studies Contribution to our Understanding of Contentious Politics in the SWANA Region</i> " <a href="#">ONLINE Connection prior registration</a> (Altana)	
13:30 - 15:00	Lunch Break		Lunch Break		SNS Lunch	
15:00 - 16:30	Panel 2 Contentious Spaces: Revolutions in Squares, Neighborhoods and Cities (Altana)	Panel 3 Subversive Art: Embodying and Narrating Revolutionary Legacies (Simone del Pollaiolo)	Keynote: Prof. Asef Bayat " <i>Everyday Politics and Revolution</i> ", moderated by Prof. Donatella della Porta <a href="#">ONLINE Connection prior registration</a> (Altana)		Panel 8 Emotional Legacies and Affects in Collective Action (Simone del Pollaiolo)	Panel 9 Digital Practices and Movements (Altana)
16:30 - 17:00	DREAM Coffee Break		Break		DREAM Coffee Break	
17:00 - 18:45	DREAM Workshop: " Creativity and Research"		SNS Workshop: "Out of Academia"		DREAM Workshop: "Sensitive Fieldwork"	
19:00	SNS Welcome Cocktail "Apericena"		Free		Free	

# SWANA Conference Panel Composition

**First Day: Wednesday November 30th, 2022**

**12:00 - 13:30 - Panel 1 Violent Experiences and Bottom-up Politics: Remembering, Feeling, and Making Sense of Violence and Repression**

<b>Discussant: Chowra Makaremi - EHESS</b>			
1	Jannis Grimm	jannis.grimm@fu-berlin.de	INTERACT, Freie Universität Berlin
2	Vivienne Matthies-Boon	vivienne.matthies-boon@ru.nl	Radboud University
3	Miriam Zenobio	miriamzenobio@gmail.com	Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and University of Trento

**15:00 - 16:30 - Panel 2 Contentious Spaces: Revolutions in Squares, Neighbourhoods and Cities**

<b>Discussant: Dena Qaddumi - LSE</b>			
1	Munqeth Agha	munqeth.othmanagha@unitn.it	University of Trento
2	DoGukan Dere	dere.dogukan@yahoo.com	LSE - Sociology
3	ilkim karakus	ikarakus@g.harvard.edu	Harvard University

**15:00 - 16:30 - Panel 3 Subversive Art: Embodying and Narrating Revolutionary Legacies**

<b>Discussant: Anna Serlenga- Milano Mediterranean and Università Iuav, Venezia</b>			
1	Sophie Chamas	Sc118@soas.ac.uk	Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, University of London
2	Anne-Marie McManus,	mcan@trafo-berlin.de	Principal Investigator ERC Project
3	Khaled Barakeh (Co-author)		Artist/Activist (Co-author)

**17:00 - 18:45 "Creativity and Research" Workshop:** will be moderated by artists/researchers who will discuss and problematise issues pertaining to art and creative methods in research. to between who can share how they express political meanings through art. This introductory discussion could be followed by a group activity where participants can practically engage with some forms of artistic expression in their respective groups (one group could be collage, script, radio, photography...etc.). Lastly, this small activity can be followed by a discussion of these creative tools and how they can be used in research.

**Moderators:**

**Ophélie Mercier** - Ghent University - Centre Marc Bloch

**Dunia El Dahan** - L'École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS)

## Second Day: Thursday December 1st, 2022

### 09:30 - 11:30 - Panel 4 Political Subjectivities and the "Private World" in Post-Revolutionary Contexts

Discussant: Chaymaa Hassabo - French Institute of the Near East, Beirut			
1	Erminia Chiara Calabrese	erminia.calabrese@gmail.com	Université de Tarragona/Césor /EHESS
2	Michele Scala (co-author)	scala.miche@gmail.com	Sciences Po Lyon/CeSSRA-Beyrouth
3	Imane Benyoussef	imane.benyoussef.b@gmail.com	Hassan II University, Faculty of Humanities Ain Chock, Department of Social Sciences
4	Sarah ElMasry	sarah.elmasry@sns.it	Scuola Normale Superiore - COSMOS
5	Layla Baamara	layla.baamara@gmail.com	Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC) and DREAM

### 12:00 - 13:30 - Panel 5 Between Remembering and Forgetting: Artistic Practices of Post-Revolutions

Discussant: Sophie Chamas - SOAS			
1	Wini Omer	wini.omer@gmail.com	Farida Feminist Magazine
2	Reem Badr	reembadr@aucegypt.edu	American University in Cairo
3	Ophélie Mercier	Ophelie.mercier@ugent.be	Ghent University - Centre Marc Bloch

### 12:00 - 13:30 - Panel 6 Revolutionary Resistance and Intellectual History

Discussant: Zeynep Gambetti - Bogaziçi University			
1	Rossana Tufaro	rossana.tufaro@uniroma1.it	Italian Institute of Oriental Studies", Sapienza University of Rome
3	Candice Raymond	candice.ra@gmail.com	French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo), member of the ERC program DREAM
4	Jack McGinn	j.mcgin@lse.ac.uk	London School of Economics and Political Science

### 17:00 - 18:45 Intersection of Activism and Academia: Going beyond dichotomies

This is a workshop in which the intersection of activism and academia can be discussed. It will engage with themes about how to make research "political" or "public" outside academic circles and what are the limitations in doing so. How and when can academics put on their activist hats? Is a distance from activism needed sometimes? Is activism a necessary precondition for "academics" researching activism? Does activism help academics better disseminate their work outside academic circles? Does it alienate them further?

**Moderators: Rosa Burc** - Scuola Normale Superiore and COSMOS

**Sarah ElMasry** - Scuola Normale Superiore - COSMOS

**Maria Nicola Stragapede** - Scuola Normale Superiore - COSMOS

### Third Day: Friday December 2nd, 2022

#### 10:00 - 11:30 - Panel 7 Repression and Everyday Resistance(s)

Discussant: Rosa Burc - Scuola Normale Superiore			
1	Maryam Salehi	Salehi_Maryam@student.ceu.edu	Central European University
2	Ronay Bakan	rbakan1@jhu.edu	John Hopkins University
3	Kaouther Douzi	kaoutherdouzi@yahoo.fr	University of Liege and University of Tunis

#### 15:00 - 16:30 - Panel 8 Emotional Legacies and Affects in Collective Action

Discussant: Nermin Allam - Rutgers University			
1	Chaymaa Hassabo	chaymaahassabo@gmail.com	French Institute of the Near East based in Beirut and ERC LIVE-AR
2	Laura Ruiz de Elvira (Co-author)	laura.ruiz-de-elvira@ird.fr	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement and ERC LIVE-AR
3	Guldem Ozatagan	Guldem.Ozatagan@newcastle.ac.uk	Newcastle University
4	Maria Nicola Stragapede	marianicola.stragapede@sns.it	Scuola Normale Superiore and COSMOS

#### 15:00 - 16:30 - Panel 9 Digital Practices and Movement

Discussant: Donatella Della Ratta - John Cabot University			
1	Yasmeen Mekawy	yasmeen.mekawy@northwestern.edu	Northwestern University in Qatar
2	Alessandra Fredianelli	alessandra.fredianelli@edu.unige.it	Università degli Studi di Genova
3	Alice Mattoni	alice.mattoni@unibo.it	University of Bologna
4	Ester Sigillò (Co-author)	ester.sigillo@unibo.it	University of Bologna

#### 17:00 - 18:45 Sensitive fieldwork: Positionality, emotional impact and participative processes in research

This is a participatory workshop among the conference participants about how to face ethical challenges while researching sensitive topics. During the workshop participants will discuss in smaller groups in more personal and hands-on ways the challenges they faced during fieldwork and reflect on the process of establishing relationships with research participants and interlocutors and the possible coping strategies in challenging research environment (ex: authoritarian regimes, highly securitized regions and spaces, among others).

**Moderators: Dr. Leyla Dakhli** - The French Center for National Research – Centre Marc Bloc

**Panel 1 Violent experiences and bottom-up politics: remembering, feeling, and making sense of violence and repression**  
**Wednesday 30th November 2022 | 12:00 - 13:30 PM**  
**Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Chowra Makaremi, EHESS**

Political violence has been a concomitant feature of social transformation processes in West Asia and North Africa. Albeit not an integral part of contentious politics, armed conflict and repression often emerged from initially peaceful collective action. Accounts of the 2011 revolutions and more recent uprisings in the region echo conflict scholars who have highlighted the link between repression and oppositional violence and their relation to affective interactions on the micro-level. At the same time, both during and after the Arab uprisings, violent experiences from physical abuses at the hands of police forces to the suffering from structural violence and state neglect, through the moral outrage they generated, functioned as drivers of resistance themselves. Violence and repression have thus assumed a double role as both causes and consequences of contentious dynamics. Equally ambiguous is their socio-political, emotional and cultural impact. Embedded into resonant stories that traveled across borders and social strata, violent experiences have varyingly fed into fear and apathy or fueled resentment and anger, they have both informed and constrained new contestation processes. Up to date, narratives about violence and repression, and their affective shadows continue to shape the conditions of possibility for mobilization processes and political demands across the region. This panel interrogates these different roles and functions of violence narratives for bottom-up politics in the WANA region today. By adopting a fine-grained perspective on violence and repression as multidimensional culturally and emotionally mediated phenomena, the panel transcends the binary view of violence as either a driver or an outcome and supports an orientation towards the narratives by which civic actors make sense of violent experiences – as motives for mobilization, markers of identity, or sources of civic empowerment.

**Revolutionary burnout: exit, paralysis, maturation and the demobilization of mass protest in Lebanon**

*Dr. Jannis Grimm, INTERACT, Freie Universität Berlin, [jannis.grimm@fu-berlin.de](mailto:jannis.grimm@fu-berlin.de)*

A substantial share of studies assessing the outcome of the so-called Arab Spring has focused on the abilities and capacities of regimes to repress or coopt the various revolutionary movements and thus on structural conditions of and exogenous factors to social protest as the main explanatory variable for revolutionary failures in the Middle East and North Africa. Others have concentrated on movement internal factors on the meso-level, including ideological rifts and splits within the coalitions that toppled several assumed presidents-for-life in the region. They emphasize the centrality of inter and intraorganizational dynamics – often in response to restrictions of civic spaces or major repressive events – for revolutionary demobilization. By contrast, the less repression-linked dynamics of protest demobilization have remained largely understudied. A growing body of literature suggests that narratives of defeat, loss, and failure, stemming from complex personal meaning making

processes in response to specific key events are at the core of revolutionaries' decisions to demobilize or to recenter their engagement away from street politics. But these micro level dynamics are often black-boxed and pathologized as revolutionary trauma or depression. The present study aims to differentiate this picture based on evidence from the aftermath of the Lebanese Thawra of 2019. It contrasts with previous accounts of demobilization in the Arab world in two respects: first, by covering the remarkable case of a revolutionary fire that was not abruptly extinguished by state repression or a depletion of the grievances fueling it, but rather consumed itself slowly and steadily until effectively burning out; second, by exploring the relationship between shifts in the macrostructural environment of a revolutionary movement and the individualized feeling-thinking processes that mediated between the experiences of these shifts and strategic action choices on an organizational level. Drawing on a combination of protest event data and in-depth narrative interviews, I argue that complex multilevel dynamics produced an ambivalent climate among those involved in revolutionary mobilization and effected a "revolutionary burnout" which was marked by a combination of exit, disengagement, and deradicalization. The coaction of these three trends deepened rifts within Lebanon's revolutionary coalition, undermined efforts at street level activism, and channeled dissent into less disruptive forms of political activism. These findings problematize the narrow focus on repression as the primary explanation for why revolutions end and represent a step towards a more comprehensive theorization of demobilization.

### **Perpetually Teetering On the Brink of Non-Existence: Sisi's Politics of Death**

*Prof. Vivienne Matthies-Boon, Radboud University, [vivienne.matthies-boon@ru.nl](mailto:vivienne.matthies-boon@ru.nl)*

This contribution argues that the existential ground of Sisi's counter-revolutionary project in Egypt entails nothing less than a fear for life and a celebration of death. The fear of life is above all grounded in Sisi's perpetual fear of the return of the 18 days. This is a fear of life in that these 18 days were above all marked by a prefigurative manifestation of creative collective becoming, wherein the recognition of others as existential equals was precariously and temporarily established. Thus, utilizing on the Philosophy of Erich Fromm, I argue that this existential intersubjective parity was centred around biophilia: the love of life. Yet fearful that this love of life would challenge the military's – and particularly Sisi's – new political and economic gains, Sisi set out on a particularly vengeful path of destruction, entailing nothing less than Fromm's dystopic vision of necrophilia.

Drawing on activists' lifestories, I argue that the point of Sisi's accelerated politics of death was not only to kill – to reduce the number of critical agents on Egypt's streets – but rather above all, to shift the existential structure of being away from potentiality towards impossibility. The point was to situate activists perpetually on the brink of non-existence, where if not dead, they would be unable to move forwards or backwards: they would be reduced to a deadly life.

Miriam Zenobio, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and University of Trento ,

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Protests erupted in southern Israel's Negev/Naqab region in mid-January 2022 (Harel 2022). Bedouin residents revolted against the Jewish tree planting tradition of Tu-Bishvat (Berdugo 2021; Braverman 2008; 2009). The event was organized by KKL – the Jewish National Fund – within the broader scope of the project led by the quasi-governmental organization to afforest the Negev desert (Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael - Jewish National Fund 2013). The Bedouin population contends that the area destined to tree planting is not desert at all, but rather agricultural land belonging to the Al-Atrash family and the homonymous non-recognized settlement (Hawari 2022). Right-wing politicians have been pushing the event ahead notwithstanding wide calls to call it off to avert the possible fall of the newly elected government, made possible by the support of the Arab Party Ra'am, whose constituency is mainly to be found among Negev/Naqab's Bedouin population (Yefet 2022). My research is concerned with disentangling the last wave of protests from a posthuman perspective to security (Eroukhmanoff and Herker 2017; Braidotti 2018; Bignall and Rigney 2019). The aim is to inquire about the more-than-human dimensions of the struggle in the Negev/Naqab and the ways technologies of surveillance are appropriated by the protesters to enhance their resistance alongside the environment itself whose sensorial experience is aestheticized through common investigative tools such as ground truth (Weizman 2020; Fuller and Weizman 2021). Besides, my paper will highlight how these dynamics differentiate the last generation of Negev/Naqab activists with traditional patterns of resistance in the region (Tatour 2019). What has changed since the Prawer Plan? What has not since the Unity Intifada? In order to tentatively answer these questions, I will adopt a transdisciplinary approach drawing from critical security studies, ecology and investigative aesthetics. My results will be corroborated by semi-structured interviews conducted on the field with activists, scholars and researchers from the Negev/Naqab.

**Panel 2 Contentious Spaces: Revolutions in Squares,  
Neighborhoods, and Cities**  
**Wednesday 30th November 2022 | 15:00 - 16:30 PM**  
**Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Dena Qaddumi, LSE**

**The Urban Basis of Political Division in Syria Abstract**

*Munqeth Othman Agha, University of Trento, [munqeth.othmanagha@unitn.it](mailto:munqeth.othmanagha@unitn.it)*

Unlike other popular uprisings that occupy central squares as in Egypt and Tunisia, the Syrian uprising took place mainly within inner streets and neighbourhood squares, magnifying the role of micro-urban and social settings in shaping local mobilisation and resistance tactics. Activists were able to mobilise within their inner family, neighbourhood and friendship circles. This research aims to deconstruct the relationship between the local urban environment, social structures, and human agency. It attempts to explain the different outcomes of mobilisation dynamics in two Syrian cities (Dara'a and Deir-ez-Zor), considering the pre-conflict socio-spatial structures as an analytical departure point. The research claims that the different ways people interacted with their surrounding urban and socio-political structures across neighbourhoods led to heterogeneous outcomes with respect to their ability to protest, sustain protesting, and transfer that eventually into a territorial control. A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches (mixed methods) is utilised, including socio-spatial mapping followed up by in-depth semi-structured interviews in order to understand the dynamics of mobilisation and resistance. Explaining the place-specific outcomes of the interaction between the site and the event is done through the explaining-outcomes process tracing model. The main argument is that during each phase of the uprising, multiple neighbourhoods were included or excluded according to the compatibility of their place-specific characteristics with the dynamics of the ongoing phase. During the protest phase, neighbourhoods that are located far away from security branches, social ties are stronger, and streets are narrower and taking irregular forms, have been more successful in organising and enduring protests over a longer period of time. Mechanisms and tools utilised by the state to repress the protests have been also influenced by urban and demographic settings. Neighbourhoods with lower strategic location for the state, having a smaller number of state's institutions, irregular urban typology, denser social ties (harder to penetrate), and less reliance economically on the state (services and employment) have been more capable of resisting the regime and sustaining activism. Eventually, neighbourhoods that had a higher ability to mobilise, sustain mobilisation and resist the regime's repression attracted activists from other neighbourhoods and sheltered defected soldiers who created local resistance cells. They effectively gained territorial control later.

**The Role of Spatial Interventions for the Making of Long-Lasting  
Counter-Subjectivities: Examples from 1 Mayıs, Küçük Armutlu, and the  
Gezi Uprising**

*DOĞUKAN DERE, London School of Economics and Political Science, Sociology,  
[dere.dogukan@yahoo.com](mailto:dere.dogukan@yahoo.com)*

Since the millennium, various metropolises of the SWANA region witnessed major uprisings with an unprecedented level of collective mobilization. One of the most prominent uprisings was the Gezi Uprising in Turkey. The emergent solidarity became successful in terms of consolidating the Gezi Park area as a public park at the expense of the planned rent-seeking and symbolic-laden transformation of Taksim Square. Yet, this

emergent solidarity could not evolve into a long-lasting collective revolutionary subjectivity. As highlighted by the famous quotation of Lefebvre (1991)<sup>1</sup>, the production of their own spatialities is a must for the transformation of temporal emergent solidarities towards permanent insurgent subjectivities. As this lack appears a crucial problem of Gezi Park and various other recent mass mobilizations in the SWANA region, our question is: How can we do that? What kind of spatial productions, reproductions, and interventions reinforce -or undermine the potential processes of forming revolutionary collective memories, identities, and subjectivities. In this attempt, I will benefit from the experiences of similar transformation processes in gecekondu<sup>2</sup> neighborhoods. These informally settled poor urban neighborhoods have been hotbeds of emergent solidarities and, in some cases, long-lasting insurgent memories and subjectivities across the SWANA region since the second half of the 20th century. 1 Mayıs and Küçük Armutlu are two of the most prominent examples of such trajectories in the socio-political history of Turkey. In this paper, I will compare the spatial legacies of these two neighborhoods and the Gezi Uprising in order to discuss how different kinds of spatial (re)productions and interventions affect the very rare making of long-lasting collective subjectivities out of relatively frequent emergent solidarities.

## **Nostalgia and Revolutionary Politics in Istanbul, Turkey**

*Ilkim karakus, Harvard University, [ikarakus@g.harvard.edu](mailto:ikarakus@g.harvard.edu)*

This paper explores spatial nostalgia and revolutionary politics in Candere—a pseudonym for an urban margin in Istanbul, Turkey. Established as an informal, working-class neighborhood in the 1970s, Candere is one of Istanbul's hotspots for revolutionary activism. With the increasingly authoritarian and violent rule of President Erdogan, however, armored police patrol vehicles [akreps] are part of daily life in this neighborhood that once was known as an “emancipated zone,” where police forces would not dare enter. Despite exacerbating conditions of infrastructural deprivation, state surveillance, police brutality, and unemployment, residents of Candere still use “revolutionary” as an ethical compass to govern the present as well as the futures it might lead to. Yearning for a future that once was possible, but seems no longer tenable, and stuck in the present with a nostalgic commitment to a revolutionized future, residents of Candere employ two temporal reasonings with distinct priorities: one primarily concerned with abiding by “revolutionary” morality in the present, the other oriented towards a distant, emancipated future. But under conditions of urban marginalization, the expectations of present and future do not always easily overlap. Drawing on an ethnography of local mobilization in the neighborhood, this paper asks: How do these co-existing temporal orientations—of revolutionizing the present and of the revolutionary telos— constitute political life in Candere?

## Panel 3 Subversive Art: Embodying and Narrating Revolutionary Legacies

Wednesday 30th November 2022 | 15:00 - 16:30 PM

Room: Simone del Pollaiuolo

**Discussant: Anna Serlenga - Milano Mediterranean and Università Iuav, Venezia**

### Feeling Backwards: Militant Cinema and the Political Uncanny

*Sophie Chamas, Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, University of London,  
[Sc118@soas.ac.uk](mailto:Sc118@soas.ac.uk)*

This paper analyses the documentary film *A Feeling Greater than Love*, by Mary Jirmanus Saba, which explores two forgotten strikes from Lebanon's past. Engaging with the content of the film and the filmmaker's own commentary on it, I attempt to think through the affective labour this cinematic text is carrying out, and its potential effects on Lebanese and Middle Eastern viewers in a present moment felt by many to be devoid of revolutionary potential. I ask what Saba's return to forgotten moments of transformative possibility is productive of. I argue that rather than attempting to get us to think with and contemplate the present efficacy of strategies and tactics from a bygone pre-civil war moment, her film attempts to provoke an affective response. This response is not imagined to be a melancholic or nostalgic one. Rather, I argue that the film attempts to provoke the uncanny – a sense of the past in the present and the present in the past, and time as a loop. I think with the potentiality of this feeling of discomfiting identification with the past for those attempting to organise politically in the present, of documentary as mirror effect, of feeling the past not so much as ghost but a shadow. I argue that the film inspires a sense of indebtedness to the forgotten revolutionaries and unfinished revolts of the past, and I think through the potentiality of debt and indebtedness to the social reproduction of political and social movements in the region.

### Embodying Memories of Protest in the MUTE Installation: Collaboration and Translation.

*Anne-Marie McManus, Forum Transregionale Studien and Khaled Barakeh, activist-artist,  
[mcan@trafo-berlin.de](mailto:mcan@trafo-berlin.de) & [khaled@coculture.de](mailto:khaled@coculture.de)*

This presentation reflects on an ongoing collaboration between Khaled Barakeh, an activist-artist from Syria who is based in Berlin, and Anne-Marie McManus, a literary scholar based in Berlin, around the following projects: n Barakeh's MUTE installation, which was first exhibited outside the Koblenz Higher Court in summer 2020; n Design of Necessity, Barakeh's installation on siege and survival in Syria in Copenhagen, Denmark, on which McManus curated readings of contemporary prison narratives in June 2022. MUTE comprises the faceless figures of 49 anonymous protestors, dressed in the clothing of ordinary Syrians living in the diaspora. Barakeh's installation sought to embody the memory of 2011's peaceful protests in a new context: the German state's historic trial of Syrian regime officials for crimes against humanity. In the past two years, MUTE has had multiple lives, becoming an artistic platform linked to Design of Necessity, World Refugee Day in Denmark, and Roskilde Music Festival. McManus came to the project in early 2022, first co-authoring with Barakeh a theatrical-academic text on MUTE in an edited volume on the trial and its meanings, and subsequently collaborating on the Design of Necessity exhibition. Our work also continually negotiates the framing of MUTE and its unfolding meanings (e.g., through press releases and explanatory texts). These negotiations often reveal tensions between lived memories of protest in Syrian

communities and European institutional understandings of Syrians' status as refugees. The presentation introduces the layered, pluralistic memory of everyday protest that MUTE enlivens in the aftermath of 2011. In the European diaspora, this memory takes on new valences, with Barakeh's work opening platforms for Syrian activists and individuals to come together and express not only a sense of their past, but to enact its potential meanings in the present: demanding justice from a German court that did not translate its proceedings into Arabic, for example, or summoning experiences of incarceration and siege to denounce Syria as an unsafe place for forced repatriation. Finally, the presentation reflects on the necessities, possibilities, and ethics of collaborations across the academic, artistic, and activist spheres in relation to Syria and its contemporary diaspora.

**Panel 4 Political Subjectivities and the "Private World" in  
Post-Revolutionary Contexts  
Thursday 1st December 2022 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM  
Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Dr. Chaymaa Hassabo, French Institute of the Near East based in Beirut**

**Thawra in the everyday lives. Ethnographies of the 17 October revolt in Lebanon**

*Michele Scala – Sciences Po Lyon/CeSSRA-Beyrouth*

*Erminia Chiara Calabrese - Université de Tarragona/Césor /EHESS*

Since the 17th of October of 2019, against the backdrop of a grave economic crisis that could be defined as one of the three most severe in the world since the middle of the 19th century (WB 2021), Lebanon experienced an unprecedented protest movement, both in terms of its geographical scope and its social composition, and calling into question the entire political order. By refuting any teleological temptation or "illusion" (Dobry 2007, Bennani-Chraïbi and Fillieule 2012), and by extending the work around a processual analysis of revolutionary movements in the Arab worlds, this proposal intends to offer a change of focus on the protest phenomena that have been of interest in the region for the past decade. Starting from the October 2019 movement in Lebanon, which has passed into common speech with the term *thawra* (revolution), this paper questions what an extra-ordinary collective event does to the ordinary relationship to politics in the arenas of contestation within political parties and the world of work. By ordinary relationship to politics we mean, with François Buton, 'the daily, and therefore largely routine, instituted relationships that individuals have [...] with politics' (Buton, 2016, p.160). By reversing the perspective, the aim of this paper is to question what the revolt signified and produced within the 'private world' (Schwartz, 2012) of activists and workers, rather than questioning, as many of the works have done, what produced it. We will question how the October 2019 revolt impacted on the collective and individual trajectories of workers and activists. Drawing from Julie Pagis work on May '68 in France, this contribution aims to understand, using ethnographic methods (conversations, interviews and observations), the dynamics of the encounter between ordinary time and the 'critical moment' (Bourdieu, 1984), by articulating 'what happens upstream of the crisis and what is played out during the course of the events' (Pagis, 2014, p. 22), based on actors who were involved in the crisis, with varying degrees of exposure to the event, more or less intense, more or less repeated and regular and coming from different social background.

**New Social Movements in Morocco: Journey of activists**

*Imane Benyoussef - Hassan II University, Faculty of Humanities Ain Chock, Department of Social Sciences*

It is known that the Arab Spring inspired several actions across the Arab world that attempted to bring about change in political systems. In that way, Morocco witnessed different uprisings including the movement of February 20th 2011, the Hirak in 2016 and the Boycott campaign in 2018. Several studies have focused on the political and social reasons that lead to activism, others studied the consequences of social movements on societies, while others have looked in depth at the different profiles of revolutionaries, leaders and actors of several movements throughout history. In a more recent context, we decided to continue these studies by working with various activists of the above-mentioned uprisings in Morocco and trace their paths from childhood with the aim

of trying to understand how their social backgrounds influenced the process of joining a movement and how their lives changed after those protests. To do this, we adopted an individualistic approach to study closely the journeys and the rationality of the different actors before they adopted the militant path and how they evolved after the protests. Using qualitative methodology, we led biographic interviews with eighteen activists from the 20th February Movement of different social categories and political affiliations. We decided to present these different paths highlighting the key elements that kindled activism and how the latter evolved throughout the different stages of their lives: childhood, teenage years and young adulthood (between 18 -24 y.o., then 25- 37 y.o.). Several similarities were noticed in these activists' early paths despite the various orientations they have adopted afterwards: the institutions they have been through, religious affiliation /beliefs, indignation, quest for identity, discovering philosophical readings that helped interpreting social and political events, taking part in movements for the first time which helped intensifying their feelings of acting in real life as militants etc.

### **Revolutionary Chronicles: Women participants bearing the brunt of the Egyptian Revolution**

*Sarah ElMasry, Scuola Normale Superiore, sarah.elmasry@sns.it*

Revolutionary times are messy. They are often marked by violent political and social upheavals that intervene in the lives of revolutionaries and ordinary participants alike. Egypt's revolutionary episode in 2011 was no exception; its "Midan moments" functioned as "transformative" events that upended the private lives of its participants (Ayata & Harders 2019). Against this backdrop, this paper uses life history interviews to sketch the trajectories of participation of three non-activist women, from their foray into politics to disengagement. It parses their biographies and traces the roots of their resistant subjectivities underlining how the revolutionary times came to catalyze their transformation, but also cast shadows on their private lives. Enmeshed in their revolutionary chronicles were traumatic moments of gendered violence from sexual assaults to domestic violence experienced firsthand or witnessed from afar. The echoes of these personal and public violent episodes continue to "reverberate" throughout the private sphere of these women shaping their feminine subjectivities and post-revolutionary paths and choices (Neveu & Fuilliue 2019). The paper argues that revolutionary times interlaced with personal temporalities has produced long term biographical consequences that, at times, scarred the affective ties these women have, but also empowered them to negotiate their boundaries while still living in Egypt.

### **"Change Algeria, change your life". The effects of mobilizations on the paths of three activists (2011-2021)**

*Layla Baamara - Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain (IRMC) and member of the ERC-DREAM*

In this contribution, I question the relationship between two significant protest mobilizations experienced by three individuals and the personal changes in their life paths observed during and between these two events. In 2011, Lina, Nassim and Youssef were students in Algiers and actively participated in the protest movements. They were between 19 and 24 years old and came from working or middle-class backgrounds. The intense and daily participation in the protests represents an unprecedented experience for these three young students. When I met and followed them in 2011, they presented their experience as exceptional both in terms of belief in the possibility of change and their collective and individual practices. After the mobilizations fizzled out, all three continued their protest engagement at the university or in other activist structures (feminist association, neighbourhood, opposition political party) and on Facebook, with more or less intensity. In 2019, the popular uprising in Algeria, as sudden as it was massive, disrupted their lives once again. The high-intensity mobilizations of 2011 and 2019 bracket a decade in the lives of these three activists.

How did these two intense and disruptive moments transform their lives? Beyond the activists' commitments, the longitudinal research through biographical interviews invites us to explore what types of effects these events produce in the private spheres of the individuals' lives. By comparing these three paths, I question how the events of 2011 and 2019 have affected friendships, professional trajectories and family situations. I then explore the traces that mobilizations leave in private life or, instead, how mobilizations also take shape in the intimacy of individuals.

**Panel 5 Between Remembering and Forgetting: Artistic Practices of Post-Revolutions**  
**Thursday 1st December 2022 | 12:00 - 13:30 PM**  
**Room: Simone del Pollaiuolo**

**Discussant: Sophie Chamas, Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, University of London**

**Revolution's Field Notes: On the Sudanese revolution and its micro dynamics**

*Wini Omer - Farida Feminist Magazine*

On my last visit to Southern Kordofan, while I was lounging in the centre of the city, Kadugli, I noticed graffiti on a wall near the market. The drawings are portraits of Al-Faki Ali Al-Mirawi, Youssef Koha, Ali Abdel-Latif, and other features bearing the face of John Garang. Those are political leaders linked to the long struggle of the Nuba people against historical cultural and political oppression. These graffiti act as political statements. The previous regime of the Islamist had always worked to exile and separate the people of the Nuba Mountains from it.

This was a very inspiring moment for me, a moment in which I understood how the revolution has liberated people to reclaim their collective memory and histories. It also reflects the aesthetics of the revolution, where being used to restore the sense of collective identities, that have been marginalized. December revolution introduced graffiti as part of the daily life. political statements in every corner, for people to reclaim their own narratives.

The major transformations in the public sphere during and following the first phase of the Sudanese revolution (December 2018- April 2019) and the second phase of the revolution (October 2021- up to date), can be traced in many different levels.

This ethnographic autobiography captures some of the transformations and trends that occurred on the micro-level: the emerging artistic practices, emotions, and collective expressions that appear in different sites as part of/led by the revolution, the changing relationships with the sites of memory; the right to the city and the new political imaginaries that emerged during more of 20 sit-ins organized and led by the local communities to push for their local agenda during 2020 and 2021; the political emotions; songs, poems and music as part of the protests.

The paper aims also at building conceptual frameworks around these practices to better understand them and their transformative nature.

**Narratives of a Genre: Poetry Under Duress**

*Reem Hatem Badr - American University in Cairo*

Egyptian colloquial poetry has historically been conceived of, by practitioners and onlookers alike, as a politically committed, subversive, resistant practice. Through ethnographic entanglements with the genre's practitioners and its poems, this paper aims to explore how this poetry struggles to inhabit the realities of post-revolutionary Egypt, marked as it is with the failure of the political as such.

Colloquial poetry in the years following 2013 is marked by duress, I argue. Examining the poets' narratives of the genre and how they came to be part of it tells of a temporal response to this duress, a stepping out of time, a retreat to the past in the face of an uninhabitable present. This makes for an aging genre, marked by nostalgia, having given up its capacity to change, to move, to act. This temporal retreat, however, necessitates a denial of the poetry that continues to be written, and of whole strands of poetry, particularly commercial ones that have declared themselves personal and

apolitical. Looking at these dismissed strands tells of a different retreat, a retreat from the public into the intimate, an abandonment of the political.

This retreat is also never complete. Built on a denial of violence irrevocably witnessed, of the essential publicness of colloquial poetry, this strand of poetry is just as stuck. Rather than temporal stuckness, its stuckness is affective, shown in its bizarre valorization of melancholia, *nakad*, and its derision of other shades of feeling.

Looking at Egyptian colloquial poetry attempts at retreat reflect a wider disillusionment with 'resistance', and hints at the ways in which the political is being refused, negotiated, and reconfigured in contemporary Egypt.

### **« Stranger making » : Embodied arts practices as new forms of political mobilization in exile Case study of Egyptian artists in Berlin.**

*Ophélie Mercier - Ghent University – Belgium Centre Marc Bloch - Germany*

After Abdel Fattah El Sissi came to power in 2013, the strengthening of censorship, new laws on foreign funding, as well as pressure on some cultural organizations have taken their toll on the cultural effervescence that followed the revolutionary momentum initiated in 2011. As a result, many artists are moving outside the national borders, some as a result of pressure from the state, others following opportunities provided by previously established international networks, and others joining a partner settled in Europe. For most, these different aspects are intertwined.

This paper proposes to examine how the imaginaries and subjectivities of Egyptian artists that emerged following their participation in the Egyptian revolutionary event are transformed in the migratory context. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted during 6 months in Berlin, this paper analyzes the life trajectories of Egyptian artists (re)settled and/or exiled in Berlin as well as their artistic productions. This work shows that the revolutionary experience does not necessarily lead to political mobilisation according to conventional forms, but rather allows for a form of sensitivity and reflexivity towards the experience of exile that finds an echo in decolonial movements and queer activism.

Following Sara Ahmed who considers the process of exploring new representations of the body as the politics of 'stranger making', this proposal will show how bodies become foreign, how they become visible and different (Ahmed, 2012). This theoretical framework through a bodily approach allows us to show how Egyptian artists define themselves in this otherness/strangeness in their new context of installation and how this becomes the object of a political and artistic engagement in exile.

This engagement can then take different forms: either through the productions and creations of artistic works that embody these political reflections, or through the places and spaces in which their works are presented or by engaging in collectives mobilized around queer and/or decolonial issues.

These forms of mobilization in exile are not specific to Egyptian artists. They find in these spaces common causes that are the transnational echoes of the revolutionary movements that took place in the SWANA region and more generally in the countries of the Global South. These encounters between intellectuals from the South allow for the creation of connections and forms of politicization through which issues related to labellisation and categorization encountered in Europe are discussed.

**Panel 6 Revolutionary resistance and intellectual history**  
**Thursday 1st December 2022 | 12:00 - 13:30 PM**  
**Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Zeynap Gambetti - Bogaziçi University**

**Kfar Rumman, 1973: tobacco growers and the radicalization of peasant conflict in the Lebanese 'long-1960s'**

*Rossana Tufaro, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department "Italian Institute of Oriental Studies", Sapienza University of Rome, rossana.tufaro@uniroma1.it*

From the late 1960s up to the outbreak of the Civil War (1975-1990), Lebanon experienced the widest and most longstanding wave of social conflict in its post-colonial history. Amid this unprecedented upsurge, combative peasant movements emerged and activated from the deep north to the deepest south, becoming an integral part of the process of transgressive activation of subaltern groups upon which the domestic dynamics leading up to the Civil War sedimented and found expression. Among them, a prominent position was occupied soon by the tobacco growers of South Lebanon, whose mobilization for better purchase prices and licensing policies turned quickly into a broad-based accusation act against the organic relation between political and economic power defining the form and the nature of the Lebanese state. In their politicization, a prominent role was played by the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) which, especially after the Third Congress of 1972, put the agrarian question to the core of its militant agenda.

Based on documentary and ethnographic research, the following paper aims at retrieve the forgotten history of South Lebanon's rural revolts, disentangling the complex dialectics between structural triggers, state repression, and the new commitment to direct action by the Lebanese Marxist Lefts in the shadow of the Global 1960s, reserving a special attention to the so-called "Kfar Rumman massacre" of January 1973, and its radicalizing role. In so doing, the paper will also attempt to open a 'distant dialogue' between past and present for, as much as the town represented the core of tobacco struggles in the 1960-70s, it has also represented the most prominent Southern node of the Lebanese Uprising of 2019. How many legacies of that past have informed Kfar Rumman's contentious present?

**« Knowledge practices within the Palestinian Revolution: The PLO Research Center as a collective intellectual (1965-1982) »**

*Candice RAYMOND, PhD in History, researcher at the French Institute for the Near East (Ifpo), member of the ERC program DREAM, Institut français du Proche-Orient (Ifpo) candice.ra@gmail.com / c.raymond@ifporient.org*

In early 1965, while the Palestinian armed groups were launching the struggle for the liberation of Palestine, soon to be called "the Palestinian Revolution", the newly created Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) established in Beirut a research center dedicated to the study of the Palestinian question and the Arab Israeli conflict. Mobilizing a number of Palestinian, Lebanese and, more broadly, Arab researchers and authors, present in Lebanon or contributing from abroad, the Research Center developed a significant editorial production while investing in an intense work of documentation and archiving, until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 put a stop to its activities through looting and bombing.

My presentation will review the history of the PLO Research Center between 1965 and 1982, and its attempt to institutionalize a field of research on Palestine and Israel, at the crossroads of the academic and political fields, based on a socially shared belief in the emancipatory potential of knowledge within a liberation movement. By crossing archival material, printed sources and interviews, my research questions the social profiles and works of the researchers and writers involved with the Center, the material and epistemic organization of its research infrastructure (research departments, archives and library, publication series), and the configuration of the social networks formed through its various activities, in order to bring out the specific articulations of this field of research in Palestinian and Israeli studies conducted from Beirut. The study of the PLO Research Center practices in matter of knowledge production and dissemination will disclose the modalities of its inclusion in the Palestinian Revolution through intellectual work that was organically linked to militant mobilizations. My hypothesis here is that the PLO Research Center should be seen not as a mere organ or think tank of the PLO, but as a true "collective intellectual" (Bourdieu) of the Revolution that merged a scientific ethos typical of this generation of militant intellectuals with the imaginary of the *fidâ'i*.

**'Mobilising Factors in the Early Syrian Revolution: The role of the Rural, Myths, and the Marginalised'**

*Jack McGinn, London School of Economics and Political Science , [j.mcgin@lse.ac.uk](mailto:j.mcgin@lse.ac.uk)*

The Syrian Revolution was an unusual uprising, even within the region, given its spread from the rural periphery to the urban centre, which is the reverse of the norm, its horizontal or 'leaderless' characteristics, with few party structures or traditional models of leadership emerging, and the way the revolt spread and remained coordinated in a local or 'nodal' fashion, with many simultaneous episodes of revolt remaining small-scale, distinct, yet connected. This paper explores the role of myth and local tradition in propelling and fashioning the uprising, particularly in the rural areas from whence it came. Early sites of revolutionary activity like Dera'a and Rif Dimashq had embedded memories of revolt dating back as far as the anti-colonial uprising of 1925–27, led by the Druze Sultan Pasha al-Atrash. Based upon qualitative interviews with participants, now based in Jordan, this piece looks at the mobilising power of myths and the resulting character of the rural revolution in 2011

**Panel 7 Repression and Everyday Resistance(s)**  
**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 | 10:00 - 11:30 AM**  
**Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Rosa Burc - Scuola Normale Superiore and COSMOS**

**I wanted to have a “normal” life: bootleg alcohol production and resistance in Iran**

*Maryam Salehi, Central European University, [Salehi\\_Maryam@student.ceu.edu](mailto:Salehi_Maryam@student.ceu.edu)*

With the 1979 revolution and establishment of the Islamic Republic in Iran, many elements were pushed back from the public space into the private. The alternative opinions, ideas, and representations were expelled from the public space. But many practices of everyday life, prohibited legally, continued their existence in a disguised way. Alcohol was not an exception. After the revolution, the alcohol-producing companies, were closed and alcohol became rare. During the Pahlavi period, drinking alcohol had been an ordinary activity for the ones who were interested, but when alcohol was criminalized, it was not ordinary, “normal”, or easily accessible to consume anymore. This study takes alcohol production in the context of post-revolutionary Iran as a heuristic to enquire into the ways people in Iran has dealt with the invasive power of the state. Due to its aim to create an Islamic and “pious society”, the state had imposed a wide variety of moral codes forcibly to the society. The state aimed at building a correlation between the public and private space. I argue that groups of people, namely [illegal] alcohol producers, have questioned this complementary of public and private space that the state was trying to enforce. In order to challenge this, people employed practices that can be thought of as resistance. Through an ethnographic approach I am trying to elaborate on the [illegal] practices of alcohol producers. I seek answer to if one can think of alcohol production as people’s desire to break this complementary of public and private spaces and to have a “normal” life? Is it an act of resistance to have a “normal” life at least in private? And what does it divulge about the nature of political power in Iran?

**Counterinsurgent Urbanism: Weaponizing Land and Heritage in the Kurdish Region of Turkey**

*Ronay Bakan, Johns Hopkins University, [rbakan1@jhu.edu](mailto:rbakan1@jhu.edu)*

Suruçi, the historical city center of Diyarbakır, was the epicenters of the conflict between the Turkish security forces and the Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement (YDG-H), an armed, urban, Kurdish youth organization allied with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), following the end of peace talks in 2015. The United Nations reported that 103 days of military engagements that included the use of heavy weaponry on populated areas led to killings, torture, violence against women, displacements, disappearances, and destruction of homes and cultural monuments. However, the district’s destruction persisted in the conflict’s aftermath. Following the cessation of hostilities in March 2016, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) government declared urgent expropriation decrees across the region including Suruçi. The state’s new security agenda in the wake of urban war centered urban development and building new residential areas in the conflict-affected districts and cities of the region where people can reside “in humane conditions”. In a similar vein, in Suruçi, instead of providing a path for return for the residents, the government included building up the touristic potential of the district as a key part of its security agenda in the aftermath of urban warfare. Drawing on an ethnographic fieldwork in Suruçi, I trace how the state conceives “spaces of insurgency” and employs counterinsurgent urbanism as a future-oriented action to prevent spectral

insurgencies by intervening in the environment of insurgent formation. In doing so, I aim to bring forth the contradictions between state's conception of "geographies of insurgency" and everyday spaces of collective action, which are undergirded by place-based collective identity and relations of trust and solidarity among ordinary residents.

### **Walking from Bouziane to Tunis. The performance of the bodies on the protest walks in Tunisia's post-revolution.**

*Kaouther Douzi - University of Liege – Belgium and University of Tunis, Tunisia*

After a few days from January 14, 2011, seven demonstrators from Bouziane who participated in the days of the revolution discussed among themselves how to make their protests "visible" to the authorities. They decided to walk from Bouziane to the capital Tunis (about 402 km). When they started walking, they noticed some people in the café who laughed about their idea. They continued their walk. Their numbers are increasing in every village and town they pass through. And they were joined by demonstrators from other cities. They would then be the first group of the famous sit-in in the kasbah place in Tunis. And it would be one of the main sit-ins of post-revolution Tunisia. In this proposal, I suggest revisiting that walk to rethink about it from the narratives of the protesters who participated in the kasbah 1 sit-in. I propose discussing the walk as a body performance in the context of the Tunisian revolution. I will apply a qualitative approach to understand this way of protesting. I will try to understand that walking from the interviews I conducted with some participants of this walk and such protesters in Kasbah 1. I will also use the phenomenological approach to understand the performance of those bodies and their feelings, dreams, and worldview. I attempt to understand the connection of these bodies and their intersection with time and space through that walk. We seek to understand the process of this trajectory and how it was constructed. Improvisation was a significant feature of this walk. Sharing, patience, and enthusiasm were animated by a sense of "ability to do" in that period. For this reason, it would be interesting to consider how the protesters remembered this walk to understand the position of this protest walk in the sit-in of Kasbah 1 (and later Kasbah 2) in the context of post-revolution Tunisia.

**Panel 8 Emotional Legacies and Affects in Collective Action**  
**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 | 15:00 - 16:30 PM**  
**Room: Simone del Pollaiuolo**

**Discussant: Dr. Nermin Allam, Assistant Professor of Politics at Rutgers University**

**The emotional legacies of the 2011 Syrian and Egyptian revolutions (Co-authored)**

*Laura Ruiz de Elvira - permanent researcher at the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD) and ERC LIVE-AR*

*Chaymaa Hassabo - Research Associate at the French Institute of the Near East based in Beirut and ERC LIVE-AR*

The sociology of political emotions has undergone a revival over the last twenty years: while some authors evoke the idea of an emotional turn (Plamper, 2009), others highlight the emergence of new “emotional movements” (Walgrave and Verhulst, 2006) and call for an exploration of the emotional dynamics that arise from interactions and conflicts among political factions and individuals (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta, 2001). While these works have frequently focused on the affects and emotions as they unfold in and during collective action, we know less about the “emotional legacies” of activism, understood here as “the emotional residue that emerges from the remembered past, including regret, pride, resentment, nostalgia, and tiredness” (Nussio, 2012). We propose to contribute to this understudied topic by providing some responses to the following questions: How do participants in extraordinary events such as revolutions recall these moments? How do they experience the aftermath of these disruptive processes emotionally? Which affects and emotions do they mobilize when remembering these groundbreaking times? In order to do so, we aim at studying, from a Syrian-Egyptian comparative perspective and a micro-level approach, the “emotional legacies” of revolutionary activism which, as some works have started to show, have entailed a multitude of ambivalent emotions (Kortam, 2017; El- Chazli, 2020a; Ruiz de Elvira, 2021) – such as sadness, despair, hate, fear, happiness, joy, psychological calm, and brotherhood – but they have also given rise to affective ruptures. Do Syrian and Egyptian revolutionaries express feelings of regret, shame or resentment when recalling their past revolutionary experience? Or, on the contrary, do they rather underline positive feelings and emotions? How do the “politics of disappointment” (Allam, 2015) unfold in the two cases? Can we observe common trends despite the differences between the two revolutionary processes and their political aftermaths? We will rely on biographical material collected in Lebanon, Turkey (for the Syrian case) and Egypt between 2014 and 2022, as well as on data from digital social networks (Facebook and Twitter).

**Remaining Political Subjects: Peace Activism, Ethics and Care**

*Guldem Ozatagan, Newcastle University*

This paper directs its attention to the activism of a group of academics in Turkey, now known as Academics for Peace (AfP), who contested the armed clashes in Turkey’s mostly Kurdish populated Southeastern cities and demanded peace for all by signing a petition in 2016. The paper investigates processes of AfPs’ political subjectification by specifically exploring two questions. First, how various forms of criminalisation, stigmatisation and securitisation affected the political subjectivity of AfP activists at a more personal level. Second, through which practices, AfP activists traversed differences in subject positions and maintained themselves and remained political subjects. In exploring these questions, the paper builds on Pulido’s (2003) conceptual distinction between ‘interior life of politics’ and ‘exterior life of politics’ and on the literature of the ethics and politics of care. While the AfP’s activism represented in the public sphere; that

is its 'exterior life of politics', have attracted widespread attention, what has yet to receive attention is the ways in which ethical and moral imperatives constitute their political subjectivities. Drawing on 50 semi-structured interviews carried out in 2018-2019 as part of an extensive research undertaken at the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey in 2017-2019 with 248 AfP activists, the paper suggests that it is the ethical, moral, and emotional aspects constitutive of 'internal life of politics' which traversed differences in AfP activists' subject positions and maintained their political subjectivities.

## **Getting Political through Silence: How the Unsaid Cultivated Politics under Ben Ali**

Maria Nicola Stragapede, *Scuola Normale Superiore and COSMOS*

*"The political component was more or less absent, it existed only in the songs that we listened to, it existed in some books or in relation to the Palestinian cause, but not in relation to Tunisia"* [life-history, recorded, Paris, 18 June 2021] a young Tunisian militant of the *Watad* remembers, while explaining to me how she used to think about politics before 2011. Coming from a once engaged family, belonging to the strong Leftist movements of the '60s and '70s under Bourguiba, she joined the *Watad* [Leftist party coming from a Marxist-Leninist and pan-Arabist tradition] only after the 2011 uprisings, when the verbalisation of politics became possible in the public space. This experience was common for many Leftist militants of her generation. In some occasions referring to themselves as "children of Ben Ali" for their almost *forced* de-politicisation, as the repression and corruption under Ben Ali's regime mounted and the Left of the '60s and '70s retreated to itself, these militants could build their political socialisation otherwise, often passing through friendships, some engaged teachers, a politicised family member, and often books, loaned music cassettes, some first discoveries of internet through *proxy*. The so-called "opening" of the public space after 2011 made it then possible the expression of this political quest taking shape between the lines, one that brought these militants to the 2011-2013 period of enthusiasm and the disenchantment it brought with itself afterwards. Through the analysis, this paper helps to complexify the literature on political socialisation through the lens of silence, as well as to shed light on those processes of subjective transformations that have been put aside in the analysis of the Tunisian Left and its role in the political landscape of the country.

**Panel 9 Digital Practices**  
**Friday 2nd December 2022 | 15.00 - 16.30 PM**  
**Room: Altana Hall**

**Discussant: Donatella Della Ratta, Associate Professor of Communications and Media Studies, John Cabot University**

**Hope, Despair, and Nostalgia in Post-Revolutionary Media in Egypt**

*Yasmeen Mekawy - Northwestern University in Qatar -  
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This paper analyzes the affective dynamics of post-revolutionary representations of the 2011 Egyptian uprising in music videos, television series, novels, social media, and film. I examine depictions that center on the utopian moments of collective joy of protest, as well as more somber portrayals that challenge a romanticized view of resistance by dwelling on the defeat, despair, and devastating repercussions of the uprising. I argue that while such media can evoke both hope and hopelessness, both kinds of representations counter the state's erasure of the revolution in public space as well as its resignification of the uprising as a criminal conspiracy in pro-regime media. However, nostalgic depictions also contribute to the construction of the revolution as an object or scene of what Lauren Berlant calls "cruel optimism," in which the loss of the object is unbearable because the attachment is itself bound up with "the subject's sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world." The nostalgia evoked in pro-revolutionary media thus has an ambivalent political effect: on the one hand, it relegates to the revolution to the past, a moment in history that has passed and cannot be recovered. Nonetheless, despite the current repressive climate, the enduring attachment to and representation of the revolution as an authentic moment of national unity and self-determination preserves the collective memory of the revolution as a possible future basis for resistance. This paper draws on interpretive analysis of media texts as well as interviews conducted with participants of the revolution in its aftermath

**Arab protests and archiving processes: the case of 858 An Archive of Resistance.**

*Alessandra Fredianelli, Università degli Studi di Genova, [alessandra.fredianelli@edu.unige.it](mailto:alessandra.fredianelli@edu.unige.it)*

This paper considers the protests started in 2010 in several countries in North Africa and Middle East, which were among the first global movements to make extensive use of digital technologies. Images played a central role in this context, indeed videos and photographs taken by protesters initially contributed to the spread of the uprisings, while in the following periods were used for different purposes, including witnessing the abuses of governments and law enforcement and preserving the memory of the revolution from the perspective of the protesters. This second phase saw the rising of digital archives, created by local groups of activists and artists, which gather the visual materials produced by protesters, e.g.: 858 An Archive of Resistance; Bak.ma; Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution; Syrian Archive; Vox Populi. This paper focuses on 858 An Archive of Resistance as a case study, a digital archive founded in 2018 by the collective of artists and activists Mosireen, which collects videos and photographs taken by protesters during the Egyptian revolution started in 2011. The study will concern both the process of making the archive and the visual legacy of the materials it collects. Both elements highlight the central role of it as a source for the analysis of protests from the perspective of the activists. Furthermore, a comparison between 858 An Archive of Resistance and the archives mentioned above will point out the common needs from

which they arose. The aim of this article is to reflect on two main issues: the possibilities of preserving the memory of Arab protests through a questioning of the archive as an institution, and the reading of the archiving practices as acts of resistance to official narratives about the uprisings.

### **Unpacking the transnational dimension of anti-regime movements: The case of HIRAK from the local to the global.**

*Ester Sigillò, University of Bologna, [ester.sigillo@unibo.it](mailto:ester.sigillo@unibo.it)*

*Alice Mattoni, University of Bologna, [alice.mattoni@unibo.it](mailto:alice.mattoni@unibo.it)*

Drawing on the case of the HIRAK movement born in Algeria in 2019, this paper casts light on the mechanisms of transformation of the anti-regime movement at the transnational level. Based on a qualitative case-study research design, the paper address the HIRAK movement from the perspective of its participants, exploring it through in-depth interviews with activists, online participant observation of movements' meetings, and documents produced by movement organizations involved in the protests. More specifically, the paper unpacks the transformative dynamics of the movement when it bypasses its context of origins regarding three main dimensions, all supported through a wide range of digital media: framing processes, organizational patterns, and repertoire of contention. Then, the article looks at the effects of such changes against a background of high political conflict and harsh repression. Findings show that digital media supporting transnational activism have four main effects and an impact on how activists sustain their mobilizations over time, both transnationally and domestically. First, they mix up the sociopolitical cleavages of the country of origin by facilitating the hybridization of repertoires of contention at a global level. Second, they contribute to politicizing specific issues by escalating the levels of contention in the country of origins, as it happens with the issue of political corruption. Third, they foster communication with other diasporic groups and, as such, they favor transversal solidarities among activists situated in different countries across the world. Fourth, they allow new measures of regime's transnational digital surveillance, hence putting activists at risk of repression also beyond the domestic level of contention. Conclusions reflects further on how these four effects have, in turn, an impact on activists' participation in the movement both at the transnational and domestic level to unveil the linkages between the meso- and micro-level of contention in the HIRAK movement.