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CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds
Studies

28 June - 2 July 2021



Roundtable

Socio-political changes post-2011 in North Africa : Confrontation of models and diversity of national trajectories

Ten years after the «2011 Arab uprisings,» the geopolitical picture of North Africa (from Morocco to Egypt) presents very different configurations: negotiated political change in Morocco, a failed attempt to contain social unrest in Algeria, national dialogue and successful electoral processes in Tunisia, authoritarian restoration in Egypt, and civil war in Libya. These varied situations are closely linked to the mobilization of actors relying on unequal resources and differentiated logics of action. On the basis of recent research, this round-table will discuss the complex processes that contribute to the diversity of the trajectories followed by the countries of the region in the aftermath of the «Arab revolts». The following dimensions of will be explored: (i) The restructuring of the political space after the Arab revolts, characterized by the emergence, reactivation or exacerbation of different types of conflicts (ideological, social, memory related conflicts, etc.).), as well as new forms of political regulation (competitive elections, search for compromises, institutional arrangements and innovations, or use of force), (ii) actors' strategies and logics of action, in particular the way in which different categories of actors (institutions, associations, individuals) negotiate new positions in the political, social and economic space.

Responsible : Gobe Eric (CNRS/IREMAM)

Gilles Van Hamme (Université libre de Bruxelles)

Sociology of Islamism. The contribution of contextual and comparative analyses

The debate on the sociology of Islamism has been dominated by sometimes sterile oppositions between the proponents of an identity-based Islamism (Burgat) and the hypothesis of an alliance between the devout bourgeoisie and the popular classes that lost out on modernization (Kepel, Ayubi). The weakness of the empirical data and the unclear subject of study (militants, voters, activists?) largely explain the contradictory analyses. Starting from the hypothesis that any important political movement is able to penetrate different segments of society, although unevenly, this article proposes to show that the Islamist electorate relies on a different socio-geographic basis according to national contexts. In particular, we demonstrate that while Islamism was originally essentially a movement linked to certain fractions of the urban population, it has shown an uneven capacity to penetrate rural areas, as well as the various types of urban neighbourhoods. While in Morocco, electoral support for the Islamist party remained confined to urban areas, this is not the case in Egypt. In Tunisia, the Islamist party seems today to be better able to broaden its electoral base beyond urban areas. Such differences can only be interpreted with reference to the history of Islamist movements and their relations with the ruling powers.

Morgane Jouaret (Université de Bordeaux, Centre Émile Durkheim)

Analysis of memory expressions in the Algerian Hirak

If the protests in 2011 remained sectoral and limited to the capital, the social movement that spread across the country from February 2019 first supplanted the socio-political polarization, regional or ideological opposition to say «no» to the candidacy for a fifth term of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. Since 1962, engagement in the war of national liberation has been the main repertoire of social-political, economic and symbolic legitimization. Conversely, evoking other times in contemporary history, such as the Berber Spring of 1980, October 1988, the Black Spring of 2001 or the civil war, provokes tension, even more so in the public space. Yet, from the earliest days of the Hirak, references to memorial figures have been mobilized, both by the political and military powers and by the ordinary actors engaged in the hirak - placing the current mobilization within a broader temporality. Based on an ethnographic survey carried out in Algiers and Oran between 2015 and December 2019, this paper will focus on the way in which contemporary history has been mobilized by different categories of actors within the framework of the social movement. It will explore through which references the different categories of actors have positioned themselves throughout the Hirak, in order to highlight the various frames that give meaning to their commitment in the social movement.

Soraya Rahem (Université de Tours, UMR 7324 CITERES)

Stakes and actors of the Libyan conflict: an approach via the diasporas established in Tunisia and Egypt

Based on the study of the Libyan diasporas established in Tunisia and Egypt, we propose to analyze the geopolitical dynamics affecting Libyan society, to better understand the stakes related to the conflict and to apprehend the specificity of Libya's trajectory since 2011. Far from representing a homogenous entity, these diasporas differ not only according to their participation - or not - in Muammar Gaddafi's regime, but also according to their involvement in the different stages of the conflict since 2011. The new migrations have each time reactivated debates, processes and modes of political organization within the diasporas and sometimes even fostered the emergence of new ideological interpretations of the conflict. This has resulted in transforming the lines of tension, conditioning possible negotiations and creating new networks of influence. Moreover, this heterogeneity makes it possible to identify the different political positions and ideological antagonisms that make up Libyan society. Through this approach, we will try to clarify the fundamental stakes of the Libyan conflict, both in its local dimension and in its regional aspect (political strategies of the host countries, interests of certain foreign actors, etc.). Our purpose is thus to highlight the way in which Libyan diasporas take part in these dynamics of regionalization of the conflict by being solicited both for security reasons (internal/external) but also in the name of regional struggles.

Aymen Belhadj (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, UMR 7533-LADYSS)

The construction of collective identities among young people in post-revolutionary Tunisia

This paper proposes a comparative analysis of the processes of identity structuring in juvenile mobilizations without formal organization in post-2011 Tunisia. It focuses more specifically on the mobilizations of unemployed youth and those of middleclass youth. Viewing the collective identities of the actors in these mobilizations as a process under permanent construction, the aim is to explore the ways in which individuals negotiate «identity frameworks» for their actions. The objective is to grasp how the «momentary» products of these negotiations manifest themselves in federative «we» and producers of belonging. The following questions are addressed. How does the short time of mobilization allow us to understand the logics of collective identity formation in non-standard collective actions? To what extent do the configurations of the networks of initiators of youth mobilizations constrain the trajectories of identity structuring of these movements? What are the differences and similarities between the movements of middle-class youth and those of unemployed youth? What avenues of comparative analysis can be uncovered between the conceptions of identity among the young protesters observed and those belonging to previous generations?

Bochra Kammarti (CNRS, UMR 7533-LADYSS)

The promotion of social institutions and economic practices with an Islamic reference in post-2011 Tunisia: challenges, conflicts and confrontation of models

The rise to power of Islamist parties in Tunisia has favored the drafting of laws seeking to reactivate social institutions of a religious character and the development of economic practices derived from the shari'a (Zakat, Wakf, Islamic finance). These projects give rise to conflicts within the political class and strong opposition from secular civil society. What are the political, economic and social stakes underlying the institutionalization of practices with a religious reference? What are the conflicts that emerge and the actors they mobilize, both defenders and opponents? What are the strategies deployed by the actors to legitimize their respective projects? Based on an analysis of the debates around draft laws, particularly parliamentary debates, as well as the controversies and mobilizations around the institutionalization of practices referring to the shari'a, this paper proposes to analyze the conflicting dynamics opposing different economic and societal models in Tunisia after 2011. It also seeks to identify the possible compromises to which the confrontations and legislative circumventions give rise that allow the establishment or reactivation of social institutions and economic practices referring to the shari'a. Finally, through the observation of the actors of this dynamic and their interrelationships, we also interrogate the process of renewal of economic and social «elites» after 2011.

Adrien Doron (Université Paul Valéry - Montpellier 3, UMR (5281) ART-Dev)

From informality to development: new actors' configurations in Tunisia's cross-border commercial spaces

Through the analysis of trade development projects on Tunisia's land borders, the paper questions the emergence of new configurations of actors operating in cross-border trade in the context of post-2011 upheavals. Neglected in development policies favouring coastal and urbanised areas, the Tunisian border regions have developed informal exchanges with neighbouring Algerian and Libyan markets, and even beyond, by articulating economic opportunities and bypassing customs barriers. In 2011, the change of regime has reshuffled the cards and the situation of the border populations has become more precarious, without calling into question the mechanisms of marginalisation or local development alternatives. However, field surveys conducted in Tunisia and Algeria reveal new configurations of actors seeking to develop exchanges or to capture their benefits. On the one hand, the State is initiating a change of paradigm which is taking the form of commercial projects aimed at developing border territories through trade. On the other hand, the populations of the border regions are developing a cross-border consumer space observed on both sides of the northern portion of the Tunisian-Algerian border. These two trends then reveal the ongoing repositioning of both institutional actors and actors of informal exchanges.