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CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds
Studies

28 June - 2 July 2021



Panel 76

Partisan Interrelationships in North Africa

The Arab Spring of 2011, and the political opening that followed in several countries, led to a renewed interest in political parties in this part of the world. If certain political families (Islamists, left, «young people of the revolution») have been the object of more attention than others (liberals, «counter-revolutionaries», Arab nationalists, regionalists, ecologists), little research was dedicated to the relations between political families.

However, the decade that is coming to an end has been very rich in terms of alliance reversal, a priori «unnatural» coalitions and more or less stable hybridizations. This process of rapid recomposition and instability of political alliances which spares no country in North Africa forces us to rethink our analysis on political Islam, Arab socialism, or even liberal nationalism. How does this process affect relations between activists on the ground? What effects does it have on the internal cohesion of different parties? How are alliance reversals justified on an ideological level, and what models are put forward to legitimize them? What compromises are negotiated between different political forces, particularly in terms of political programs and, where applicable, public policies?

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Program

Benzenine Belkacem (CRASC)

Islamist parties and inter-party relations during the Hirak

The objective of this communication is to question the issues related to the positions taken by Islamist parties during the political protest movement, the hirak.

Our work starts from the premise that Islamist parties focused their mobilization more on the question of identity than on political change. The hirak was an opportunity for Islamist parties to project an image of openness on the society's demands by joining the initiatives of civil society and the opposition.

The positions of these parties must be understood in the light of the evolution of the political situation and the questions that rose (elections, place of the army, the constitution, place of religion, etc.). They are in part a reflection of the political divisions which characterize the partisan field. How much does ideology count in taking positions when it comes to a large political protest movement? How are Islamist parties structured within their «bloc»? What is the ideal dimension of their political positioning?

It is to these questions that our communication aims to answer by drawing on the forms of mobilization of Islamist parties, their speeches, internal relations (between Islamists), relations with other so-called democratic (or secular) parties.

Dris Cherif (Algiers National School of Journalism and Information Sciences)

The Hirak without political parties: the sources of disjunction

In Algeria, the lack of leadership that can act as an interface between the Hirak and the regime raises the nagging question of the role of political parties, in the first place those of the opposition, as a mobilizing and structuring actor of this popular movement. Indeed, opposition parties have been unable to legitimize as intermediaries capable of uniting the expectations of the popular movement, but also to be accepted by the Hirak. Moreover, the fact that the opposition parties show an inability to organize and coordinate is in fact a marker of the representativeness crisis in Algeria. Moreover, the 2019 presidential elections brought to light the fragility of some parties.

The purpose of this communication is to analyze precisely the crisis of political parties in Algeria in the light of the popular uprising of February 22, 2019. We will study the following: the inability of political parties to emerge as an interface between the people and the political power (what are the reasons?); their inability to pose as an alternative (problem of political offer? internal problems or problems related to the obstacles posed by the political regime?), and finally their inability to create interfaces among themselves (what is the influence of ideological divisions ?)

Ben Rebah Maher (CNRS, Ladyss UMR 7533)

Cleavages and reorganization of the partisan field in North Africa (in Tunisia) since 2001: towards a classification

Since 2011, the partisan field is changing in the countries of Arab Spring. The traditional cleavages such as «left-right», «secular-Islamist» or rather conservative-progressive cleavages are not entirely adequate to classify political parties. In order to propose an appropriate classification, we have built a hierarchical reading grid in three levels. We identified the main items series such as the conception of the state, justice and liberties, the management of the environment and natural resources, and the development policy. These items were organized into sub-themes and basic elements.

In addition to this theoretical framework, we have collected the measures of the implementation of these ideological orientations. We have also collected the vote in parliament on bills that we considered divisive. This intervention benefited from the support of the European Research Council, Horizon 2020 Program, ERC TARICA project convention n ° 695674.

Munteanu Anca (University of Grenoble, Cerdap 2)

Government coalitions in North Africa: the limits of broadening the social base of regimes

Since 2011, in Morocco and Tunisia, Islamist parties have participated in majority coalitions bringing together multiple political groups. In Egypt, on the other hand, the Islamists were ousted from power in 2013, and have almost disappeared from parliament except for a few deputies from the Nour party. The June 30 Coalition nonetheless brought together beyond the other structural cleavages of the Egyptian political landscape: socialists and liberals, revolutionaries and supporters of the Mubarak regime.

In all three cases, we can thus observe a broadening of the social base of the regimes in the direction of elites stemming from the oppositions. Moreover, in all three cases, the fact that these coalitions unite across social cleavages weakens the parties that take part in them, placing them at odds with their social bases, creating opportunities for both internal oppositions to these parties, as for new actors seeking to dispute their voters. In this context, the observation of the weakness of the Arab parties - established in the years 1980-1990 - must be re-examined in the light of these new explanatory causes. This intervention benefited from the support of the European Research Council, Horizon 2020 Program, ERC TARICA project convention n ° 695674.