

Section 6 – Partecipazione e movimenti sociali

Panel 5. Migrants and Movements: the Reshaping of National and Transnational Identities in the MENA Countries.

Chairs: Giuseppe Acconcia e Michela Mercuri

By adopting migration studies, politics and historiography of various migrant and diasporic communities in North Africa and the Middle East, the panel aims to discuss the role that migrations played in the formation of transnational identities, security and social movements in modern and contemporary MENA countries. While forms of nativism, populism and the polarization between secular and Islamist affiliations are shaping the debate around National identity in those countries, the panel' participants will think critically about the genealogies of MENA countries' identities, as a diverse matrix of positive and negative relations of identity and differences determined by specific local and global political and historical backgrounds.

By critically discussing notions of cosmopolitanism, minorities and 'cultural authenticity' in the MENA region, identity politics in Libya, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Tunisia, in the colonial and post-colonial age, will be disentangled. Did concepts of class, race and gender forged the ways in which citizens in the MENA countries and local diasporic communities in this region defined themselves and their mutual relationship? How the so called 'Arab Spring' reshaped MENA citizens' identities, and through which means, within a local and a geopolitical context? With interdisciplinary approaches and methods in exploring the impressive complexity of the multifaceted migratory narratives, we try to re-conceptualize the history of inter-communal relations in post-war times in a different manner compared to the often misused cultural 'mosaic' model. Broadening the perspective and addressing in more general terms the implications of the findings on migration studies in North Africa and the Middle East, attention will be given also to transnational and trans-local identities, spatial and social reconfigurations of MENA migrants communities in Europe.

The panel will be held in English. We proposed an edited collection of the papers as a special issue of the scholarly review *Franco Angeli, Storia Contemporanea*. Contacts have been established already to discuss the matter with the editorial board.