

## ***Section 8 – Relazioni internazionali***

### **Panel 2. Proxy wars and the reshaping of regional order.**

**Chairs: Ruth Hanau Santini, Daniela Huber**

Civil wars can morph into proxy wars once powerful competing external actors, be they regional or international, are “invited in” by local proxies and can so advance their political agendas on the local, regional and international level. These local conflicts, in other words, become part of a larger political struggle, where the stakes are higher than the end result of the initial conflict itself. By so doing, they not only become more difficult to solve, but also impact on the relations between powerful actors and regional order.

Proxy wars have been a constant of cold war dynamics. While the end of the Cold War terminated many civil wars across the world (Hironaka 2005; Kanet 2006), or led to a significant reduction in their number in some regions, as in Latin America (Castaneda 1993; Chernick 1996) and Southeast Asia (Findlay 1996), this was not the case in Eurasia (Evangelista 1996; Zurcher 2007) and sub-Saharan Africa, (Stedman 1996; Young 2006).

For instance, in the Middle East and North Africa, where during the 1950s-1960s Arab Cold War (Kerr 1967) the civil war in Yemen (1962-1968) turned into a proxy war, there has been a resurgence of these conflicts since 2011. The civil wars in Syria, Yemen, Libya, to a different extent and with different modalities and protagonists display traits of proxy wars, epitomized by the financial and/or military engagement of external state and non-state actors in support of local forces. How do civil wars, turned into proxy wars, impact or even shape the regional order?

We are looking for papers, either empirically or theoretically, exploring the following aspects and dimensions of proxy wars and orders across regions:

- What are the triggers for the transformation of civil wars into different kinds of proxy wars?
- How do Principal-Agent dynamics change across time in proxy wars (increase in Agents’ autonomy, agents’ fragmentation, Principal’s changes in strategies/interests)?
- When do proxy wars modify the global power structure?
- In which cases are proxy wars able to alter the regional power structure?