

Shared Alter-Resistance Circulation of Alternative Models, Objects and Practices in the Middle East and beyond

May 2nd, 2023, 9:30 am - 06:30 pm

(Istanbul time UCT/GMT +3)

followed by

**Round Table : Civil mobilizations in response to the
February 2023 earthquakes**

06:30 pm - 08:00 pm

(Istanbul time UCT/GMT +3), Turkish/English

*Conference and Round Table organised in the frame of the
ANR Research Program : Alter-Citizens in the Middle East.
Inventing Resistance in Times of Violence (IMAGIN-E)*

Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes (IFEA), ground floor room
& on line on Zoom

DETAILED PROGRAM OF THE CONFERENCE

9h30 - 10h00 - **Opening Remarks** (in French)

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah (CNRS-CéSor/EHESS) and **Bénédicte Florin** (Université de Tours/CITERES-EMAM)

10:00 am - 12:30 am - **Session 1. Thoughts of Resistance and Shared Urban Alternatives**
(in French and English)

Moderated by : **Athina Arampatzi** (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)
et **Simone Spera** (Université Paris Nanterre - LESC)

Agathe Fautras (Sorbonne Université - Médiations / IFEA), **Circulations and Appropriations of Anarchist Practices in Urban Movements in Istanbul. The Case of the Gezi Uprising and After-Gezi Initiatives**

This presentation starts from an observation: the influence of anarchist thought is little questioned in the study of contemporary social movements that nevertheless mobilize organizational practices such as direct democracy, autonomy and horizontality. This is the case of communities of action created in Istanbul after the 2013 Gezi uprising which are contesting the neoliberal and authoritarian production of urban space. The ethnography conducted with these communities and their activists allows us to revisit the emergence of anarchism in Turkey in the 1980s, its diffusion in the 2000s urban movements and its organic links with the 2013 Gezi uprising. As a symbolic center of the uprising, Gezi Park has been the stage for anarchist practices that do not necessarily identify themselves as such; they spread into after-Gezi initiatives and beyond, being subject to local re-appropriations and interpretations, shaping today's social movements.

Buket Türkmen (EHESS-CETOBaC), **From Gezi's Urban Uprisings to a discreet opposition in Turkey**

To discuss the possibility of resistance and mobilization under authoritarian regimes where processes of de-democratization are increasingly prevalent, we need to look at mobilizations beyond direct protests, adopting a more open definition of mobilizations. In Turkey, opposition to the neo-populist authoritarian regime has been led by various actors since the 2010s: a series of protests led to the Gezi Revolt in 2013, which had multiple repercussions in the political sphere in the period that followed. Direct protests were suppressed by the successive states of emergency implemented as part of security measures against terrorism, attempted coups, the war in Syria, and pandemic-related health measures. These consecutive regimes of exception have long-lasting effects, causing a de-democratization, further increased by the economic crisis. Yet, resistance continues in the form of what I call discreet mobilizations organized in neighborhood networks and food networks. In my talk, I will examine the continuities and ruptures between these mobilizations and those of Gezi.

11:00 am - 11:15 am - Coffee Break

Gülçin Erdi (CNRS-CITERES/IFEA), **A Resistant Alternative to the Designed Urban Space : Self-Organized Informal Neighborhoods in Ankara.**

Urbanization in Turkey has been marked by the absence of social housing policies. This absence has led to significant difficulties for rural populations who arrived en masse in cities from the 1950s onwards, and who had to mobilize all their skills and networks to meet their housing needs. These migrants resorted to informal constructions called gecekondu. The term gecekondu reflects the speed and clandestine nature of the operation. During the 1950s, gecekondu neighborhoods became essential elements of the urbanization process. Some of them are the result of political initiatives wishing to propose an alternative urban functioning. In my presentation, I will discuss their past and present place and role in Turkish urbanization, and I will analyze how they constitute niches of resistance in a massive urbanization imposed from the top and based on profit accumulation.

12:30 pm - 02:00 pm - Lunch break

02:00 pm - 03:45 pm - **Session 2 : Seeds as Issues of Resistance, Local Sovereignty, and Knowledge (in French)**

Moderated by : **Stéphanie Latte Abdallah** (CNRS/CéSor-EHESS)

Birgit Müller (LAP/LAIOS-EHESS), **Impoverishing through seeds: Local food Sovereignty and Plant Breeding Strategies in Nicaragua (online)**

For centuries, explorers, settlers, and slaves have carried nutritious plants from continent to continent, where they slowly adapted to local climatic conditions, diverse soils, and local farming practices. However, since the second half of the 20th century, three-quarters of this agricultural biodiversity has been lost. Development agencies, plantation systems, and monoculture have favored pure lineages selected to respond efficiently to artificial fertilizers. Modern selection has not only led to a drastic reduction in genetic diversity, but it is also reinforced by plant variety rights, which require farmers to buy new seeds every year. In this paper, I will explore in a village in Nicaragua what high-potential varieties of corn introduced from outside are doing to local food sovereignty and how they interact with locally adapted population varieties.

Kenza Asfahi (Bordeaux University, Émile Durkheim Center), **Seeds and local knowledge conservation and preservation in the context of cannabis legalization in Morocco (online)**

Local knowledge regarding the cultivation and processing of cannabis has been greatly hybridized by internationalization and North/South circulation, especially what relates to seeds. Today, this knowledge is confronted with unprecedented formalized knowledge within the framework of a new market, as Morocco has legalized cannabis for therapeutic and industrial use. This intervention highlights the stakes of conserving and preserving local seeds and knowledge in a new context where most illegal practices will continue.

03:45 pm - 04:00 pm - Coffee Break

04:00 pm - 05:45 pm - **Session 3 : Circulation, Waste's Social Life and Political Significance of Informal Recycling Practices**

Moderated by : **Bénédicte Florin** (Université de Tours - CITERES/EMAM)

Irem Nihan Balci (ENS-Lyon - Triangle), **Defending their Place in the City: Resistance Strategies of Waste Pickers in Istanbul**

Based on an ethnographic survey conducted with informal waste workers in Istanbul between May and September 2019, this presentation will focus on identifying the internal dynamics of the recycling industry. It will follow the circulation of recyclable waste from one actor and place to another, and examine the individual and collective resistance strategies of waste pickers to defend and legitimize their place in the urban space.

Emmanuelle Durand (IRIS-EHESS), **Flow and Backflow of Secondhand Clothing in Lebanon: Circulatory Dimension and Resistant Potential in the working and consumption practices of used clothing**

While Lebanon occupies a relatively minor position within the global secondhand clothing economy, it plays a dual role in the regional second-hand market. On the one hand, it represents a growing market for final consumption and, on the other hand, it constitutes a «warehouse state» (Abimbola, 2012), i.e., a country that allows, through its counter economy (Tarrus, 1995), the redistribution and routing of used textile merchandise to neighboring countries such as Syria, Jordan, Iraq or Iran. Based on the results of an ethnographic study conducted in Beirut, Tripoli, and Brussels between January 2018 and May 2022, as part of a PhD in Anthropology, and through the description of the tribulations of bales of used clothing identified on Beirut's stalls, this communication will focus on the Lebanese thrift industry in order to outline the networks of places and links involved in the supply chain of this used merchandise. This brief anthropology of the circulations of textile waste will allow me to sketch the social arrangements and spatial orderings on which globalized trade circulations are based, revealing an international division of labor, but also a hierarchical organization structured - socially and morally - around the relationships of status groups, nationality and gender. Ultimately, taking the circulatory dimension of used textile material seriously will offer a fertile horizon for complexifying the analysis of the alternative, even resistant, potential of textile reuse practices and, thus, reflecting on the plurality of engagement regimes and discursive registers mobilized - from intimate narratives to political staging through identity positioning - around these practices in times of deep crisis.

05:45 pm - 06:30 pm - Coffee Break

06:30 pm - 08:00 pm - **Round Table : Civil mobilizations in response to the February 2023 earthquakes** (Turkish/English)

Organizers and Moderators :

Sibel Akyildiz (École Polytechnique of Tours, research associate at IFEA)

Eva Bernard (Sciences Po Aix, Mesopolhis (AMU/CNRS), research associate at IFEA)

Agathe Fautras (Sorbonne Université - Médiations, research associate at IFEA)

Speakers :

Mahalle Afet Gönüllüleri Acil Müdahale Derneği (Neighborhood volunteers specializing in emergency response to disasters) & **Validebağ Savunması** (Association for the Defense of the Validebağ wood)

Mor Dayanışma (Purple Solidarity), feminist organization

Speakers

Athina Arampatzi is an HFRI Postdoctoral Research Fellow (PI) at the Dept. of Spatial Planning and Development, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She received her PhD degree in Social Geography at the University of Leeds, UK and holds an MSc in Urban Sociology (University of Amsterdam) and a MA in Architecture (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki). Athina's work engages with social innovation, urban governance, solidarity and social movements. Athina has published in international academic journals, such as *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *Social Movement Studies* and *Urban Studies*.

Simone Spera is a PhD student in Anthropology at the LESC (Laboratoire d'Ethnologie et Sociologie Comparative - UMR 7186), Paris Nanterre University. His research interests focus on the circulation and experimentation of ideas and practices of radical democracy in the Mediterranean region. His master's degree in Ethnology and Social Anthropology at EHESS analyzed the solidarity initiatives in support of migrants of the anarchist and anti-authoritarian movement in Athens, and the implementation of their ideologies in the management of housing squats. In his current PhD dissertation, Simone Spera is reconstructing the tradition of emancipatory pedagogies in Lebanon between the 1960s and the 2020s, ranging from adult literacy programmes with Paulo Freire's method to present-day forest and democratic schools. His research tackles the utopian and creative dimension of these educational projects, which have been hampered as much as triggered by the economic crises and political violence punctuating the country's history.

Agathe Fautras is a Ph.D candidate in Geography at Sorbonne University. She is based in Istanbul as an associated researcher at the French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA), where she has been co-directing the Urban Observatory of Istanbul for 3 years (2018, 2019 and 2022). Her thesis deals with the recomposition of the activist space after the 2013 Gezi uprisings, with a focus on Istanbul. Her areas of research are social geography, neoliberal urban production and the spatial dimension of social movements. She is part of the ANR projects Spacepol and IMAGIN-E (2022-2026).

Graduated from Marmara University, Department of Political Science, **Buket Türkmen** obtained her Master's degree in Sociology at the EHESS in 1996 and defended her doctoral thesis in Sociology in 2001. She worked at the Department of Sociology of Galatasaray University where she researched and taught on social movements, the public sphere and Islamic actors, gender, new social movements, postcolonial studies, identities, and social inequalities. In 2017, she left Galatasaray and started working in France as a researcher and teacher in various institutions such as the University of Bordeaux, the Institute for Advanced Studies in Paris (Eurias researcher), and the University of Paris Nanterre. She is a member of the editorial board of the journal *Les Cahiers du Cedref*, and of the working group on «Social Movements in the Age of Globalization» at the College of Global Studies (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme - FMSH). She is currently working as an associate researcher at the Center for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan, and Central Asian Studies (CETOBaC).

Gülçin Erdi is a CNRS researcher (HDR) assigned to the French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA) in Istanbul and also a member of UMR CITERES. She is currently the PI of the ANR project entitled «Space and Politics in the Capital Cities (SPACEPOL)». Her research topics include the political and symbolic production of cities, informal urbanization, historical sociology of cities, as well as urban mobilizations around the right to the city and spatial justice. She recently co-authored with Y. Sentürk, *Identity, Justice and Resistances in the Neoliberal City* (Palgrave Macmillan 2017) and «Space, Identity and Environment in a Local Resistance: The Case of Hasankeyf in Turkey, *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer*, 284(2), 2022.

Stéphanie Latte Abdallah is a historian and political anthropologist at the CNRS (CéSor-EHESS), specialized in the Middle East and Arab societies. She has worked on the history of Palestinian refugees, gender, and feminisms. She develops alternative writing forms in dialogue with social sciences and notably co-directed the documentary film *Inner Mapping* (Palestine, France, 51', 2017). Recently, her research has focused on borders, confinement and prisons in Palestine/Israel. Her current work deals with emerging citizen mobilizations related to alternative economies, autonomy, ecology, and concrete utopias in Palestine, Lebanon, and more broadly in the Middle East. She is the PI of the ANR IMAGIN-E research program (Alter-Citizens in the Middle East: Inventing Resistances in Times of Violence) (2022-2025). Her two latest books are *A History of Confinement in Palestine. The Prison Web* (Palgrave Macmillan 2022) and *Des morts en guerre. Rétention des corps et figures du martyr en Palestine* (Karthala 2022).

Birgit Müller is a research director at LAP-LAIOS, CNRS and a professor at EHESS in Paris. Her current research focuses on how farmers, soils, and seeds evolve in the new global contexts of climate-smart agriculture.

Kenza Asfahi is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Bordeaux and a researcher at the Emile Durkheim Center (CNRS). Her research focuses on how deviant actors construct norms and regulations in the world of drugs, particularly cannabis. She is currently interested in the socio-economic construction of cannabis markets, the production and circulation of knowledge and seeds, and the ecological issues surrounding legal and illegal cannabis markets.

Bénédicte Florin is an associate professor of geography at the University of Tours and a researcher at EMAM (Arab World and Mediterranean Team, UMR CITERES). Her work focuses on the Arab world and, in particular, in Cairo, on residential mobilities and citizenship in low-income neighborhoods. Since 2007, her research interest has been focusing on waste pickers and recyclers, waste management systems and public service in Egypt, Morocco, and Turkey, and from 2016, in the Paris region. Belonging to the field of human and social geography, her approach is qualitative, based on interviews and field observations. Member of the Urban Societies and Waste Research Network, she has collaborated on several artistic exhibitions on this theme.

Irem Nihan Balci holds a PhD in sociology and is an associated member at the Triangle laboratory. Her Ph.D. Thesis, defended in 2022 at ENS de Lyon, focuses on the working conditions of informal waste workers in Istanbul, and on the ethnic divides and internal stratifications of the recycling sector.

Emmanuelle Durand holds a PhD in Anthropology from EHESS. Starting from objects/waste, her research investigates daily work and consumption practices, from the intimate to the political scale. Defended in 2022, her thesis focuses on the circulations, trade, and consumption of used clothing in Beirut and Tripoli (Lebanon), where she conducted an ethnography with merchants between 2018 and 2022. Since 2023, she has been conducting postdoctoral research on the relationship that people experiencing homelessness, exile, and/or precariousness have with textiles in Île-de-France (supported by the French Red Cross Foundation). Through various forms (texts, photographs, films, and textile cartographies), her work questions the possible forms of dialogue between anthropological approach and artistic practice. The idea of the political gesture through art and research thus runs through her questioning. She is currently working on her first documentary short film project, supported by the SCAM and the Pays de la Loire region.