



# States, Actors and Geopolitical Drivers in the Mediterranean

---

Perspectives on the New  
Centrality in a Changing Region

---

Edited by  
Francesca Maria Corrao · Riccardo Redaelli

palgrave  
macmillan

# States, Actors and Geopolitical Drivers in the Mediterranean

Francesca Maria Corrao · Riccardo Redaelli  
Editors

# States, Actors and Geopolitical Drivers in the Mediterranean

Perspectives on the New Centrality in a Changing  
Region

palgrave  
macmillan

*Editors*

Francesca Maria Corrao  
LUISS University of Rome  
Rome, Italy

Riccardo Redaelli  
Catholic University of the S. Heart  
Milan, Italy

ISBN 978-3-030-68999-5      ISBN 978-3-030-69000-7 (eBook)  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69000-7>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer  
Nature Switzerland AG 2021

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

## FOREWORD

This volume collects several and important contributions on the historical, cultural, social, economic, political, geo-strategic features of the Mediterranean area. The volume is the outcome of the research on the complex issues of the MENA (Middle Eastern and North African) Region that Francesca Corrao is conducting with high scientific expertise and deep intellectual commitment. A work that has enriched the academic community of the Luiss Political Science Department that I am directing, but also the larger European community of scholars working on the various aspects of the area, particularly on the relation between the MENA Region and Europe. Luiss University aims to become, thanks to scholars like Francesca Corrao, one of the privileged European academic sites for investigating, researching, discussing on the Mediterranean area's past, present and future. The volume is edited with the precious contribution of Riccardo Redaelli, Director of the Centre for Research on the Southern System and the Wider Mediterranean (CRiSSMA) at the Catholic University of the S. Heart of Milano, and it is recommended because of the breath of the contributions that are collected. I am aware that I will not make justice to the richness of those contributions highlighting some aspects that stroke my intellectual attention. Forgive me for doing that.

The volume discusses the cultural and religious features of the Mediterranean region, through an historical perspective focused on interchange of trade between the opposite sides of the Mediterranean that thrived despite frequent wars and conflicts, as well as epidemics that widened

the gap. It investigates the main causes that led to the Arab revolts, the ensuing civil wars and establishment of authoritarian regimes. There is no one single cause able to explain that outcome. Different components are considered at this regard, as lack of alternation in political power, economic investments that were inadequate for development, disregard for social welfare by domestic ruling elites, corruption, economic crisis, demographic growth, Europe's closure of access to economic migrants, failure of Western countries to support democratic movements. It is also discussed the features of the Arab Mediterranean Islam, showing its internally pluralism (Ultra-Conservative or Salafi Islam; Conservative or Orthodox Islam; Progressive or Critical Islam), a pluralism that has generated tensions and conflicts between the various components.

The volume considers the socio-economic situation of the MENA Region. A significant focus is on gender. In the MENA region, young women are more exposed than their counterparts to unemployment, underemployment or informal employment. The Arab uprisings have highlighted the precarious and marginalized situation of women and young people in the region. Evidence shows that reducing gender inequalities may help reduce the number of people suffering from hunger (e.g. favouring positive relation between micro-financing to women and improved economic growth). The youth's issue, too, is considered. MENA Region's countries are undergoing a phase of demographic transition (moving from high to low fertility and mortality rates) and have become particularly vulnerable to geopolitical instability. Indeed, the Arab uprisings have been triggered by a youth surplus. The 2008 economic crisis contributed to aggravating youth unemployment, providing further motivation for the explosion of protests. If the beginning of the century presented a demographic curve of prevailing instability in the MENA region, we should now worry about the demographic situation in sub-Saharan Africa.

The volume considers how internal difficulties to the MENA Region created opportunities for external intervention. Libya is a very crucial example. Following the recent energy discoveries in the Eastern Mediterranean, Libya has drifted to the centre of the geopolitical dynamics of the Mediterranean due to its geographical position. Regional and international powers extended their interests in the country. Russia, the Gulf monarchies and Turkey are now ready to divide up Libya to exert their influence. This would trigger a reaction by Italy because the latter would not accept a partition of Libya, not only for the economic interests of Italy

in the country but also because Italy fears that it could cause further instability. At the same time, the US does not want Russia to consolidate its power in the region. The Jazira region constitutes another example. Jazira, a region between Syria and Iraq, is Isis' bid for Syria. The reduced threat represented by the Islamic State temporarily set aside the quarrels among the major international actors over the Syrian battleground. The liberation of Mosul and Raqqa, the two capitals of the Islamic state, deprived Isis of its Syrian-Iraqi heartland. Yet, this change brought to the elimination of the Jaziran buffer zone and to the opening of a new phase of protracted instability and competition among international actors (e.g. Iraq, Kurds, Turkey, US). The unresolved Israel-Palestine conflict represents another example. Trump intervened, with his peace plan, for meeting all Israeli requests while ignoring requests from the Palestinians. The plan is unlikely to be implemented in near future; negotiation between the camps will not resume any time soon. However, the current impasse serves Israeli interests, jeopardizing instead Palestinian prospects. Meanwhile, Israel's policy of setting "facts on the grounds" allows it to gain ever increasing control over the West Bank.

The volume considers the role of other international actors. Qatar is one of them. Qatar has sub-contracted its policy in the Mediterranean area to Turkey, also because of the considerable strength of the Turkish army. Qatar shares with Turkey interests and goals, including the support of the Muslim Brotherhood. China, too, has become a significant actor in the area. China is playing a geo-economic role, combining both the commercial elements with the energy-related and infrastructure ones. China is pushing its economic and commercial interests, trying to remain as much as possible neutral vis-à-vis the plurality of political conflicts and sectarian crises. At the end of the day, China is already an economic giant in the Mediterranean, representing the second largest trading partner of the MENA countries after the European Union (EU).

Here comes the role of the EU discussed in the volume. Despite the considerable European investments made in the area, the EU has not been able to gain real, substantive political and economic leverage. The impact of EU policies remains limited and the EU is not perceived as a game changer by the countries in the region. The EU cooperation model does not have the flexibility necessary to diversify programs and interventions, in order to consider local population's needs or to promote bottom-up solutions to the region's problems or to bring more effective coordination to bear on issues like the migratory emergency and mobility. Nevertheless,

a more engaged role of the EU in the MENA Region appears existential for both, in the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy and the Refugee Compact. One has only to think to migration flows from the region and across it and directed to Europe. The case of Jordan is appropriately discussed in this volume. Jordan has become a migration hub in the Mediterranean. It hosts the greatest numbers of Palestinian refugees and it is the second recipient of Syrian refugees. Amman's economic system and domestic/foreign policy have changed over time alongside the flows and nature of the migration. Yet, the EU policies towards Jordan are timid, if not inattentive. In addition, think about the terrorist threat. Isis has not disappeared yet. The "post-territorial" phase of the organization is aiming at preserving its remaining resources and at creating the conditions to wage prolonged guerrilla warfare. The organization is in fact resilient due to the huge resources accumulated and the influence exerted over the region for more than five years. Finally, think about the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, with special reference to Tunisia. The economic crisis and the growing political crisis are seriously destabilizing Tunisia, jeopardizing the positive results achieved since 2011. The pandemic has represented a terrible challenge to the democratic and economic transition making its outcome even more uncertain.

In sum, the volume is a commendable example of scholarship aiming to understand one of the most complex area of the world. Let me congratulate all the contributors on the work done.

Rome, Italy  
October 2020

Sergio Fabbrini  
Dean, Political Science Department,  
Professor  
Political Science and International  
Relations; Intesa Sanpaolo Chair on  
European Governance



## INTRODUCTION

A Sea easy to navigate, with relatively calm waters, the Mediterranean has all the characteristics to favour travel, commerce, exchanges of ideas and people as well as projects of conquest and conflicts. Always shifting between peaceful interaction, interdependence, holistic perceptions and hostile antagonism between its competing shores, the Mediterranean for millennia represented the pivot of history between East and West.

For the French historian Jacques Le Goff, the beginning of the antagonism between East and West started with the conflict between Greeks and Persians. Instead, for the Syrian poet Adonis, the clash was also the reason for an engagement, and to explain it, he recalls the abduction of Europa, daughter of the King of Tyre, by Zeus who wants to rape her and she resists him; but then, having succeeded, he showers her with gifts and marries her to the King of Crete. Other historians posit the disputes of the Crusaders and the mixed fortunes in commercial relations between the Maritime Republics and the various Islamic powers among the causes of the current Mediterranean conflicts. The dynamics of power and the internal clashes of the governments of the opposite shores reverberated on the confrontations with the Other, the enemy, Christian for them and Muslim for us. The battle of Lepanto, though probably over-estimated, represented the epitome of the division of that sea between competing Eastern and Western spheres of influence.

To be sure, the Mediterranean, point of departure and arrival of the Silk Road, lost its centrality following the circumnavigation of Africa

(Bartolomeo Diaz, 1488), changing the route towards India, and with the discovery of America that diverted economic interests towards new horizons. As the great historian Fernand Braudel writes incisively, “the Mediterranean leaves History”.

For centuries, it has remained at the margins of the dominant geopolitical trends of the international system. The fall of the Ottoman Empire, with the consequent division into mandate areas (1919), and the birth of the Turkish Republic with the end of the Caliphate (1924), marked another crucial moment in the history of the Mediterranean; so the balances were broken and the European powers dominated without limits on the southern shore. However, the last wave of European colonial expansion and the process of decolonization which characterized the first half of the last century did not restore its centrality: despite its importance, the Mediterranean remained an object of international politics, never an independent actor. This ancillary condition was maintained throughout the Cold War period, when that basin simply represented the “southern flank of NATO”.

It is due to the changed geopolitical landscape of the post-bipolar world that the Mediterranean has rediscovered a new centrality, often as a centre of crises and a battlefield for proxy wars among regional and international powers: the rise of different movements of violent Islamic activism and of the global jihad ideology which undermined regional stability; the crisis of the post-First World War political system; the increase of polarization and sectarianism within the *dār al-Islām*; military adventures by the US and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan; the outbreak of multiple civil wars; amplified migration trends; and so on.

At the same time, the changes in the diffusion of power within the international system towards the Asian macro-continent, new commercial initiatives such as the Road and Belt Initiative and China’s growing role in the Mediterranean are forging a new centrality of the Mediterranean also from the geo-economic and maritime economy perspectives.

There are many hypotheses and theories, looking at that Basin either as a frontier or as a bridge: sometimes a *limes* or a *limen*, sometimes a common liquid space.<sup>1</sup> For Matvejević, the term Mediterranean is used to define and individualize those peculiarities that gather together the behaviours and qualities of its societies and territories, under the same common imagined prospective, without considering that contradictions exist inside every side of the Mediterranean and its other sides.<sup>2</sup>

The history of the Mediterranean is written from different and even contrasting views. Here we propose an Italian perspective, without the ambition to present the opinions of dozens of experts who have written on the subject, but to whom reference is made. We present the research of a group of scholars who have been working for years on the first-hand sources of the countries examined, and who met together during the Seminar on “Perspectives on the New Centrality of the Mediterranean. States, Actors and Geopolitical Drivers in a Changing Region”, held at LUISS University of Rome on 4 December 2019 and jointly organized by the Master MISLAM in Economy, Law and Institution of the MENA Countries and by the Centre for Research on the Southern System and the Wider Mediterranean (CRiSSMA), Catholic University of the S. Heart of Milan. The Italian view, unlike others, has the advantage of presenting a particular perspective because it is linked to the geographical position and the consequent and related historical and social conditioning of the peninsula. Italy is indeed one of the European countries most involved in the plurality of crises and transformations affecting this basin. And that is not only due to its geographic position at the centre of the Sea, but also to its deep relations with the southern shore throughout its long history.

No other European country can boast a legacy of millennia of political, military, commercial, cultural and religious intercourses and cross-fertilization. Italy has interacted with and been influenced by the other side of the Mediterranean in the last thousand years even more than Greece, even though, like Greece, it has been exposed on three fronts. The Romans and the Phoenicians, as well as the various Muslim peoples, were followed by the merchants of the Maritime Republics living in Istanbul and Egyptian Alexandria. The artisans of the architectural renewal of the Ottoman capitals contributed to producing a particular osmotic relationship; as did the Italian economic emigrants in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, among them the families of the poets Ungaretti and Marinetti.

This interaction and inter-influence are ancient and the traces are evident in art, in popular traditions, in culture; we can recall the different Arab monuments of Palermo, the silk mantle of Roger II, the citrus groves, the Salerno school of medicine, the manuscripts with the translations of Averroes, the stories of the oral tradition of *Giufà*, the astronomical measurement tools kept at the Geographic Museum of Florence and much more. The transition from Islamic to Christian culture, thanks to the Normans, produced a cultural continuity different from what

happened in Spain where, despite the more lasting relationship with Muslims, Reconquista and overseas expansion caused a sudden and violent rupture.

For these and other considerations, Cassano speaks of the “meridian thought” as an essential feature of contemporary history, as is also highlighted by Massimo Mazzetti.<sup>3</sup> In synthesis, Galasso affirms that “the “Mediterranean” (...) is not an entity, but a historical, dynamic reality, with its continuity and its ruptures, with its specific characteristics and its openings, with its unity and its variety”<sup>4</sup>. The Mediterranean region, according to Bono, is a polycentric system whose legitimacy requires a sense of unity based on a shared history of clashes and integrations<sup>5</sup>.

However, we did not want to focus on a “localist” perspective of Italy and the Mediterranean. On the contrary, we wanted to address and depict the new centrality of this sea underlying its general trends and focusing on the most important crisis hotspots. In fact, in this book, there are almost no specific references to Italy and its role in the basin. In other words, this is not a book about Italy and the Mediterranean, rather a book about the transformations that are modifying the role and perspective of that sea, written by Italian authors. It aims to analyse this new, critical centrality in the global scenario and to uncover the interactions and intertwining of those trends and dynamics, offering a historically holistic perspective in order to understand the current geopolitical, social and economic challenges which involve the Mediterranean as well as the entire international system.

The volume, which represents the spin-off of the above-mentioned Seminar, is organized in two main sections, one devoted to the most important drivers and broadest issues and the second one focusing instead on single countries and geopolitical actors. In the first section (*The new centrality of the Mediterranean Basin: trends and dynamics*), Francesca Corrao (*Notes on a new reading of the Mediterranean: a history of trade, culture and wars*) frames the historical and cultural background of the relations between the northern and southern shores, with a long-term perspective. Then, Riccardo Redaelli (*A geo-historical compass for the “new Mediterranean”*) describes the geopolitical evolution since the twentieth century and the challenges that these transformations are posing to local actors. Umberto Triulzi (*An overview of the changed EU-MENA economic landscape: from cooperation to migration*) offers an interesting overview of the economic relations between the European Union and the MENA region, focusing on the variation of economic politics. The demographic

transformations and the geopolitical effects of the so-called youth bulge generation are analysed by Alfonso Giordano (*Youth bulge dynamics in the Mediterranean region: the geopolitical implications of human capital on security and stability*). Mohammad Hashas's chapter (*Arab Mediterranean Islam: intellectual and political trends*) provides a comprehensive representation of "Mediterranean Islam" and outlines the intertwining "territories" between theoretical and practical Islam of the most vital period of the twentieth century. Ersilia Francesca (*Gender and economics in Mediterranean: looking for new opportunities for North African women*) investigates the gender gap in North Africa in the economic sphere and the attempts to reduce it through specific women's empowerment policies. The last chapter of the first section, written by Cecilia Attanasio Ghezzi and Renzo Cavalieri (*Is the Mediterranean Sea still the mare nostrum? The Belt and Road Initiative and Chinese investments in the region*), deals with the growing Chinese presence in the Mediterranean and the potential long-term economic and geopolitical changes for power relations in the region.

The second section (*Hotspots of crisis and regional interferences in the Mediterranean*) tries to assess the situation in some of the Mediterranean countries involved in the waves of protests and uprisings of 2011–2012, also analysing the role of two "external" powers such as Turkey, extremely active in all the hotspots of crisis, and the Gulf monarchies. Gennaro Gervasio and Andrea Teti (*Ferocious and fragile: Egypt and the myth of "Authoritarian Stability"*) focus on Egypt, openly criticizing the cautious approach of the West towards authoritarian regimes in the region. The new, more aggressive posture by Turkey in the Mediterranean and its geopolitical projection are described by Lea Nocera (*Perspectives on the new centrality of the Mediterranean states. Actors and geopolitical drivers in a changing region*), while Andrea Plebani (*Periphery no more: the Jazirabetween local, regional and international dynamics*) devotes his essay to the tragic situation in the so-called Syria and the effects of the rise of radical jihadist movements for the "al-Jazira" region. Alessia Melcangi (*Chaos in the heart of the Mediterranean: the Libyan crisis after the fall of al-Qadhafi's Jamāhīriyya to the present war (2011–2020)*) offers a historical-political perspective for understanding the collapse of the Libyan state and the complex dynamics among the local, regional and international actors involved in that country. Renata Pepicelli (*The unfinished transition. The post-revolutionary path of Tunisia and the test of Covid-19. A historical and socio-economic perspective*) describes the limits of Tunisia's

“unfinished transition” and the risks for the stability of this North African country, while Arturo Marzano in his essay on *The Israeli-Palestinian Empasse* describes the complex political dynamics in the two camps, and how the growing polarization affects any prospect for the peace process. The section closes with an assessment of the role in the Mediterranean of the Arab Gulf monarchies by Odetta Pizzingrilli and Luigi Giorgi (*Mashreq monarchies’ role in the Mediterranean sea*).

Francesca M. Corrao  
Riccardo Redaelli

## NOTES

1. Cook, M. (Apr. 1999) Mediterranean Thinking; From Nitizen to Medizen, *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, n. 2, Oceans Connect, American Geographical Society. Luiss University organized a conference on 2004 discussing on the plurality of Mediterranean view, see Aymard, M., Barberini, G., Maffettone, S. (2004) *Il Mediterraneo: ancora Mare Nostrum?* Rome: Luiss University Press. Naples University l’Orientale has also dedicated many conferences and studies to the subject; see also Gillespie, R., Volpi, F. (2017) *Routledge Handbook of Mediterranean Politics*, Routledge; Litsas, S.N., Tziampiris A. (2016) *The Eastern Mediterranean in Transition: Multipolarity, Politics and Power (The International Political Economy of New Regionalisms Series)*. Routledge.
2. Matvejević, P. (2008) The Mediterranean and Europe. Quaderns de la Mediterrània, n.10. Barcellona, IEMed: 128
3. Cassano, F. (2003) *Il pensiero meridiano* Bari-Rome: Laterza; Mazzetti, M. (1969) *L’accelerazione storica come carattere della storia contemporanea*. Rome: Armando Editore.
4. Galasso, G. (2007) *Il Mediterraneo: un nesso totale tra natura e storia*, Mediterranea Ricerche storiche, anno IV: 20.
5. Bono, S. (2008) *Un altro Mediterraneo. Una storia comune tra scontri e integrazione*. Rome: Salerno.

# CONTENTS

<b>The New Centrality of the Mediterranean Basin: Trends and Dynamics</b>	
<b>Notes on a New Reading of the Mediterranean: A History of Trade, Culture and Wars</b>	<b>3</b>
Francesca Maria Corrao	
<b>A Geo-Historical Compass for the ‘New Mediterranean’</b>	<b>45</b>
Riccardo Redaelli	
<b>An Overview of the Changed EU-MENA Economic Landscape: From Cooperation to Migration</b>	<b>69</b>
Umberto Triulzi	
<b>Youth Bulge Dynamics in the Mediterranean Region: The Geopolitical Implications of Human Capital on Security and Stability</b>	<b>107</b>
Alfonso Giordano	
<b>Arab Mediterranean Islam: Intellectual and Political Trends</b>	<b>129</b>
Mohammed Hashas	
<b>Gender and Economics in Mediterranean: Looking for New Opportunities for North African Women</b>	<b>157</b>
Ersilia Francesca	

<b>Is the Mediterranean Sea Still the Mare Nostrum? The Belt and Road Initiative and Chinese Investments in the Region</b>	175
Cecilia Attanasio Ghezzi and Renzo Cavalieri	
<b>Hotspots of Crisis and Regional Interferences in the Mediterranean</b>	
<b>Ferocious and Fragile: Egypt and the Myth of ‘Authoritarian Stability’</b>	203
Gennaro Gervasio and Andrea Teti	
<b>Perspectives on the New Centrality of the Mediterranean States: The Role of Turkey in a Changing Region</b>	219
Lea Nocera	
<b>Periphery No More: The Jazira Between Local, Regional and International Dynamics</b>	237
Andrea Plebani	
<b>Chaos in the Heart of The Mediterranean: The Libyan Crisis After the Fall of Al-Qadhafi’s Jamāhīriyya (2011–2021)</b>	251
Alessia Melcangi	
<b>The Unfinished Transition. The Post-revolutionary Path of Tunisia and the Test of Covid19. A Historical and Socio-Economic Perspective</b>	275
Renata Pepicelli	
<b>The Israeli–Palestinian Impasse</b>	295
Arturo Marzano	
<b>Mashreq Monarchies’ Role in the Mediterranean Sea</b>	317
Odetta Pizzingrilli and Luigi Giorgi	
<b>Index</b>	343



## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**Cecilia Attanasio Ghezzi** is a journalist specialized in China-related topics. She graduated in Oriental Studies in Rome and published extensively on contemporary Chinese politics and society. The main focus of her research is the Chinese People's Liberation Army and its role in the Xi Jinping Era. Currently, she holds a research grant of Ca' Foscari University focused on Chinese Investment in Italy, and the BRI.

**Renzo Cavalieri** is Associate Professor of International Business Law and East Asian Law at the University of Venice "Ca' Foscari" and head of the China desk of the largest Italian law firm, BonelliErede. In the recent past, he served also as Adjunct Professor of Chinese Law at the Pontifical Lateran University (Rome) (2012–2016) and as Professorial Research Associate at the School of Oriental and African Studies (London) (2010–2016). His research is mainly concentrated on the development of Chinese legal institutions, in particular in the field of international trade and investment law, but he has worked also on research projects related to China's constitutional framework and legal theory and to Chinese political and social matters. By a professional viewpoint, he is active in assisting Italian companies in China/Asia-related transactions as well as Chinese companies in their projects in Italy.

**Francesca Maria Corrao** is Full Professor of Arabic Culture and Language at the Faculty of Political Science in LUISS University of Rome,

and Director of MISLAM Program (Master in Economics and Institutions of Islamic Countries) of the School of Government at the same university. She is Professor at University of Naples “L’Orientale” (1996–2011) and Visiting Professor at the École Pratique des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (2007), at Fudan University (Shanghai, 2017), Science Pò (Menton 2017/19), Cairo, Beirut, Amman, Cambridge and Oxford. The main focus of her scholarly activity is on Arabic and Islamic Culture and History, Mediterranean Studies. She chairs the Scientific Committee of the Fondazione Orestiadi in Gibellina (Sicily); Overseas Research member of the Institute of Oriental Studies (Soka University, Tokyo); Member of the European Union of Arabist and Islamist (UEAI), the Scientific Council of the Cortile dei Gentili (Pontifical Council for Culture, Vatican), International Affairs Institute IAI-Rome, the European Teachers of Modern Arabic Literature (EMTAR). She is Member of the Editorial Board of the open access e-journal titled, *Arabic and World Literature: Comparative and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*; Member of the Scientific committee of the Journals: *Rivista Africa e Orienti*, *Semicerchio*, *ARABLIT*, *Journal of Arabic Literature*, *Itinerari Di Culture—Collana di Studi e di ricerche lingue, linguaggi e Culture migranti*, *Dialoghi Mediterranei*, open access e-journal of the Istituto Euro-Arabo. Among her books: *I cavalieri, le dame e i deserti. Storia della poesia araba* (2020); *In guerra non mi cercate. Poesia araba delle rivoluzioni e oltre*, with O. Capezio, E. Chiti e S. Sibilio (2018); *L’Islam non è terrorismo*, with L. Violante (2018); *Islam, State and Modernity. Mohammed Abed Al-Jabri and the Future of the Arab World*, with Z. Eyadat and M. Hashas (2017); *Islam, religion and Politics* (2017); *Le Rivoluzioni Arabe. La transizione Mediterranea*, (2011); *Costruire la democrazia: un progetto mediterraneo*, with S. Maffettone (2008); *Le opinioni e l’informazione nei Paesi arabo-islamici dopo l’11 settembre*, ed. Corrao, (2003); *Poeti Arabi di Sicilia* (1987, 2002); *Giufà il furbo, lo sciocco, il saggio* (1991, 2001); *La rinascita islamica* (1985).

**Ersilia Francesca** is Associate Professor of Islamic History at University of Naples “L’Orientale”, dep. Asia Africa and Mediterranean, where she teaches courses on Gender Studies in Islamic Context (MA) and on Contemporary History of Economics in Middle East and North Africa (MA). She is Director and Chief Editor of the scientific journal *Studi Magrebini*. In 2015, she was Visiting Scholar at SOAS (London)—school of law—and in 2018, she was Directrice d’Études at École Pratique des

Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses (Paris). The main focus of her scholarly activity is on the origins and the development of the Ibadi school of law and its relationship to the Sunni schools in the early centuries of Islam. Moving from her interest in Islamic law, she started to research also in gender studies and in history of Islamic economics. On this subject, she published in 2013 a book titled *Economia, religione e morale nel mondo islamico* (Carocci, Roma 2013). Among her recent publications on Ibadism, there are: «Law and Politics in the Early Ibādī Communities: Abū ‘Ubayda al-Tamīmī’s Risāla to Abū ‘l-Khaṭṭāb al-Ma‘āfirī», in Cyrille Aillet (ed.), *L’ibadisme dans les sociétés de l’islam médiéval. Modèles et interactions*, De Gruyter, Berlin/Boston 2018; «Self-defining through Faith: the walāya and barā’a dynamics among the early Ibādīs», in Camilla Adang, Hassan Ansari, Maribel Fierro, Sabine Schmidtke (eds.), *Accusations of unbelief in Islam: A diachronic perspective on takfir*, Brill, Leiden 2015; «The Concept of Sunna in the Ibādī School», in Adis Duderija (ed.), *The Sunna and its Status in Islamic Law. The Search for a Sound Hadith*, Palgrave MacMillan: New York 2015 (ottobre), chap. 5; «Generosity versus Avarice in Medieval Islam», in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, volume 42 (2015).

**Gennaro Gervasio** A graduate of University of Naples ‘L’Orientale’, Gennaro Gervasio is currently Associate Professor in *History and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* at University Roma Tre’s Department of Humanities in Italy. Prior to that, he has worked at the University of Bristol (UK), the British University in Egypt and Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, where he was Director of the Centre of Middle East and North African Studies (2009/11). His research interests include secularism and Marxism in the Arab world, the political role of Arab intellectuals, and civic activism and social movements in the Arab World (especially Egypt and Morocco). Among his most recent publications, he has co-edited the volume *Informal Power in the Middle East: Hidden Geographies* (London: Routledge, 2014 & 2016) and is currently co-editing a Special Issue on “Gramsci and the Uprisings in North Africa”.

**Alfonso Giordano** is Associate Professor (national scientific habilitation as full professor) of Economic and Political Geography at the Niccolò Cusano University in Rome and Adjunct Professor of Political Geography at the LUISS University in Rome. In addition, he is Director of the “Anna Lindh Chair in Euro-Mediterranean Studies” at the University

of Salerno and Head of international relations at the Italian Geographical Society in Rome. He has been an Affiliate Researcher at the Institute of European Studies, Free University of Brussels and national expert in the Research Group on “Options for the Greater Middle East” coordinated by the Institute for Security Studies of the European Union in Paris. Mr. Giordano worked as scientific expert at the Permanent Representation of Italy to the European Union and served at the Council of the European Union. His main fields of research concern international migration and the interactions between demographic dynamics and geopolitical implications.

**Luigi Giorgi** is Research Fellow (Department of Political Science, Luiss University) and Ph.D. Candidate (Department of History, Cultural Heritage, Education and Society, Tor Vergata University of Rome) in History of Islamic Countries. His research interests include history, politics and economics of the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and socio-political mobilizations in the region. He is currently developing a research on the history of bilateral and multilateral relations among the Gulf States and on the role of media in the political mobilizations of contemporary Bahrain. He gained work and research experiences in Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq and Tunisia. Publication: *Sīdī Būzīd e la rivoluzione ripudiata*, 209–214. *Limes*, rivista italiana di geopolitica, VIII:2015 (09/2015).

**Mohammed Hashas** is currently an affiliated Research Fellow at Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin, and a non-Resident Research Fellow at the Center for Islam in the Contemporary World at Shenandoah University in Virginia, US. He is also a Faculty Member (*docente a contratto*) at Luiss Guido Carli University of Rome. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Theory from LUISS (2013). His research areas are Contemporary Arab-Islamic Thought, European Islamic Thought, and Islamic Ethics. He was previously a Research Fellow at Babylon Center for the Study of the Multicultural Society in Tilburg, the Netherlands, at the Center for European Islamic Thought at the University of Copenhagen, a Visiting Research Fellow at Oxford Center for Islamic Studies, and a Senior Research Fellow at La Pira Research Center on the History and Sciences of Islam in Palermo. Hashas has authored *The Idea of European Islam* (2019), *Intercultural Geopoetics* (2017), and led the edition of *Islam, State, and Modernity* (2018), *Imams in Western Europe* (2018), *Islamic Ethics and the Trusteeship Paradigm* (2021), and *Pluralism in Islamic Contexts* (2021). His papers have appeared with the Journal of

Muslims of Europe, Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, the Journal of Studia Islamica, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, and Oriente Moderno.

**Arturo Marzano** (Rome, 1973) is Associate Professor of History of the Middle East in the Department of Civilization and Forms of Knowledge, University of Pisa. He got his Ph.D. in Contemporary History at the Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa, and has been Post-doc Research Fellow at the International Institute for Holocaust Research–Yad Vashem, Jerusalem; Senior Research Fellow at the Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris 2); Marie Curie Fellow at the European University Institute; Visiting Researcher at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and at the American University Beirut. His research mainly deals with history of Judaism, Zionism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the relationship between Italy and the Middle East in the XX century. Among his main publications, there are the volumes *Una terra per rinascere. Gli ebrei italiani e l'immigrazione in Palestina prima della guerra (1920–1940)* [A land to be born again: The Italian Jews and Their Migration to Palestine before the War (1920–1940)], Milano, 2003; *Onde fasciste. La propaganda araba di Radio Bari (1934–1943)* [Fascist Waves. Radio Bari's Arab Propaganda (1934–1943)], Roma 2015; *Storia dei sionismi. Lo stato degli ebrei da Herzl a oggi* [History of Zionisms. The State of the Jews from Herzl to nowadays], Roma 2017.

**Alessia Melcangi** is Tenure Track Assistant Professor of History of North Africa and the Middle East and of Globalization and International Relations in the Department of Social and Economic Sciences of La Sapienza University of Rome. She collaborates with the Centre of Research on the Southern System and the Wider Mediterranean (CRiSSMA—Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan) and she is faculty member of the Master in “Migrazione e Sviluppo—Migration and Development”, Department of Social Sciences and Economics (DiSSE), Sapienza University, of the “Master in Middle Eastern Studies”—MIMES, Graduate School of Economics and International Relations (ASERI), Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan and member of the scientific committee of ReaCT—Osservatorio sul Radicalismo e il Contrasto al Terrorismo. Her researches are mainly focused on the Contemporary history of North Africa; geopolitics and international relations in the Euro-Mediterranean area; ethno-religious minorities (in particular

the Copts and the Berbers); identity dynamics and dynamics of polarization in the contemporary Middle East; political and social issues in contemporary Egypt and Libya. Regarding these issues, she has published several monographs, peer review articles in Italian or international Journals, papers in edited works and policy papers. Her last monographs are: Melcangi A., *Statualità e minoranze: meccanismi di resistenza e integrazione in Medio Oriente. Il caso dei cristiani copti in Egitto* (Ledizioni, Milano 2018); Melcangi A., *I copti nell'Egitto di Nasser. Tra politica e religione (1952–1970)* (Carocci, Roma 2017). She also has co-edited the volume *North African Societies After the Arab Spring: Between Democracy and Islamic Awakening* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne 2016).

**Lea Nocera** is Tenure Track Assistant Professor in Turkish Language and Literature at University of Naples L'Orientale. Scholar in Turkish Studies she also teaches subjects related to politics and society of contemporary Turkey. She was Visiting Research Fellow at the ZMO in Berlin and at the Türkei-Europa-Zentrum in Hamburg. Her research interests on Turkey include social and cultural history, gender studies, urban transformations and social movements. As Turkey expert, she regularly collaborates with prominent Italian newspapers and magazines publishing on current affairs. Her Ph.D. dissertation on Turkish female migration in West Germany was awarded the First Prize “Pieroni Bortolotti” of the Italian Association of Women Historians. Among her publications: *“Manikürlü Eller Almanya’da Elektrik Bobini Saracak”: Toplumsal Cinsiyet Perspektifinden Batı Almanya’ya Türk Göçü (1961–1984)*, *The Gülen Media Empire* (Arab Media Report/Reset, 2015) as editor, *The Turkish touch. Neo-ottoman Hegemony and Turkish Television in the Middle East* (Arab Media Report/Reset, 2014; as co-author); *#Gezipark. Coordinate di una rivolta* (Alegre, 2013), *La Turchia contemporanea. Dalla repubblica kemalista al governo dell'Akp 3* (Carocci, 2011). She also authored several articles in Italian and international academic journals. In 2017, she founded *Kaleydoskop.it* an online magazine on Turkish cultural and social issues.

**Renata Pepicelli** is Associate Professor of “History of Islamic countries” and “Islamic Studies” at the Department of Civilization and Forms of Knowledge of the University of Pisa. Her research interests include social and cultural contemporary history of North Africa, gender issues, youth, Islamic thought and movements, Islam in Europe. Her main case studies

are Tunisia and Morocco. Among her recent publications: “Gihad e donne: evoluzioni storiche e risignificazioni sematiche e teologiche in età contemporanea” in Manduchi, Melis, Gihad. Definizioni e riletture di un termine abusato, Mondadori, 2019; “From «hero» to «zero»: rethinking youth in post-revolutionary Tunisia. A focus on family, state and public discourse”. In L. Queirolo Palmas, L. Stagi (eds), “Winou el shabab. Images of transformations between the two shores of the Mediterranean”, GUP, Genova, 2018, pp. 56–80; Being young and post-feminist in Morocco: the emerging of a new women’s activism, in A.M. Di Tolla—E. Francesca (eds.), Emerging Actors in Post- Revolutionary North Africa. Gender Mobility and Social Activism, vol. 1, “Studi Magrebini”, N. S. Vol. XIV/2016, Università di Napoli “L’Orientale”, Napoli 2017, pp.419–446; Rethinking Gender in Arab nationalism: women and the politics of modernity in the making of nation-states. Cases from Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria in “Oriente Moderno”, numero monografico dedicato a “Arab nationalism(s) in the Twentieth Century” a cura di Massimo Campanini, Vol. 97, Issue 1, 2017, pp. 201–219. Among her books: “Il velo nell’Islam. Storia, politica, estetica” (“The veil in Islam. History, politics, aesthetics”), Rome, 2012; “Femminismo islamico. Corano, diritti, riforme” (“Islamic feminism. Quran, rights, reforms”), Rome, 2010 (new edition is forthcoming, spring 2020); “2010, un nuovo ordine mediterraneo?” (“2010, a new Mediterranean order?”), Messina, 2004. Pisa University.

**Odetta Pizzingrilli** is a Post-Ph.D Research Fellow in History of Islamic Countries in the Department of Political Science at LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome and Adjunct Professor of Arabic Culture and Literature in the Humanities Department of the University of Macerata and of Arabic Language in the Political Sciences Department of Federico II University (Naples).

Her research focuses on: nation-/state-building process of the Arab states, national identity formation, legitimacy foundation of the MENA region governments, the concept of hybrid sovereignty, minorities and minoritization processes. She gained research experiences in Syria, Jordan and Kuwait while working on her Ph.D. project “State and Legitimacy within an Arab-Muslim context. Understanding the identity criteria in Jordan and Kuwait”. Among her publications: Pizzingrilli, O. *Circasians: An Identity in Exile. The Case of Jordan, a Minority at the*

*Royal Palace*, 159–186. Studi Magrebini, XVI:2018. (02/2019); Pizzingrilli, O. “Transnational identity and Circassians in contemporary Jordan (1991–2018)” in Maggiolini, P. & Ouahes, I. (ed.) *Minorities and State-Building in the Middle East: The Case of Jordan*. Palgrave Macmillan, London (10/2020); Pizzingrilli, O. Translation of the novel *Shajarat al-bu’s* (1944) by Taha Husayn, Istituto per l’Oriente Carlo Alfonso Nallino (To be published in 2022).

**Andrea Plebani** is Research Fellow at the Catholic University of the S. Heart and Associate Fellow at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies. His research focuses on socio-political and security issues related to the broader Middle East as well as on the evolution of the Islamist galaxy. Among his publications: Andrea Plebani, *La terra dei due fiumi allo specchio. Visioni alternative di Iraq dalla tarda epoca ottomana all’avvento dello “Stato Islamico”* (The Land of the Two Rivers in the Mirror. Alternative Visions of Iraq from the Late Ottoman Era to the “Islamic State”), Rubbettino editore, 2018; Andrea Plebani (ed.), *After Mosul: Re-Inventing Iraq*, Ledizioni LediPublishing, 2017; Andrea Plebani, *Jihadismo globale. Strategie del terrore tra Oriente e Occidente* (Global Jihadism. Strategies of Terror between East and West), Giunti, 2016; Andrea Plebani (ed.), *New (and Old) Patterns of Jihadism: al-Qa’ida, the Islamic State and beyond*, Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale, 2014; Andrea Plebani—Omar Al-Ubaydli (eds), *GCC Relations with post-War Iraq: A Strategic Perspective*, Gulf Research Center, 2014; Andrea Plebani—Riccardo Redaelli, *L’Iraq contemporaneo* (Contemporary Iraq), Carocci, 2013.

**Riccardo Redaelli** is the Director of the Center for Research on the South and the Wider Mediterranean System (CRiSSMA) and Director of the Master in Middle Eastern Studies (MIMES) of the Catholic University of the S. Heart (Milano of the Catholic University of the S. Heart, Milano (Italy), and Full Professor of “Geopolitics”, “History of Asia” and “Post Conflict and Emergency Management”. He is a Member of the “Observatory on Religious Minorities in the World and the Respect for Religious Freedom” of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since 2004, he has coordinated several Track-2 programs sponsored by the



Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Middle Eastern region (especially in Iraq and Libya) on national reconciliation and international cooperation in the education sector. He published more than 100 monographs, edited books, essays and articles on the history and contemporary politics of the Middle East (see the complete list of his publications is available at the following link: <https://docenti.unicatt.it/ppd2/it/#/backoffice/it/docenti/05078/riccardo-redaelli/pubblicazioni>). Among his latest publications: (ed), *Mediterraneo 2035: la trasformazione degli scenari geopolitici* (2018); *The Osmotic Path: The PMU and the Iraqi State* (2018); *The Broken Mirror: How the Contemporary Jihadist. Narrative is Re-Shaping the Classical Doctrine of Jihad* (2016); *Islamismo e democrazia* (2015); *L'Iraq contemporaneo* (with Andrea Plebani) (2013); *L'Iran contemporaneo* (2011).

**Andrea Teti** is Associate Professor of International Relations at the University of Aberdeen, Associate Editor of *Middle East Critique*, Trustee of the British Society for Middle East Studies, and co-founder and of the Critical Middle East Studies group. Previously, he was Visiting Professor at the universities of Bologna (2020), Cagliari (2018), Ghent (2017/18) and Amsterdam (2015), and he was Principal Investigator for the EU-funded Arab Transformations Project (2015–2016). He was co-editor with Gennaro Gervasio and Luca Anceschi of *Informal Power in the Greater Middle East* (2014) and lead author of *The Arab Uprisings in Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia* (2018) and of *Democratization Against Democracy: How EU Policy Fails the Middle East* (2020). He has also published several articles on EU policy in the Middle East, on conceptions of democracy, on Michel Foucault and on the production of knowledge about the “Middle East” in Social Science.

**Umberto Triulzi** is Full Professor of Economic Policy at the Sapienza University of Rome where he has been, from 2009 to 2011, Head of the Department of Economic and Social Sciences and from 2013 to 2016 Director of the Master Migration and Development. In the last years, he has coordinated many projects in the areas of Monitoring Water Policies (European Commission, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, World Bank, UNDESA), Finance for Development (UNIDO), SME Internationalization (Confindustria, Italian Foreign Trade Institute), Economics of Crime (Ministry of Interior). He published more than 90 monographs, edited books and articles in the fields of Economic and Regional

Development, European Economic and Monetary Integration, International Economics and Oil Price Dynamics. Among his recent Books: *From the Common Market to Euro* (1999); *International Economics*, with V. Del Punta (2001); *International Economic Policy*, with P. Montalbano (2006); *International Economic Policy. Interdependence, Institutions and Global Governance*, with P. Montalbano (2012); *The Economic Policies of the European Union* (2010, 2016). Recent articles: “Crimes against humanity and migration flows: the Role of International Institutions and of Civil Society”, in *Conflitti, Vittime Civili e Diritto Internazionale*, 2017; “The Ethics of Labour and the Role of Finance in the Economy in Democracy, Institutions, Ethics of Public Service”, Editoriale Scientifica, Naples, 2018; “From the Complexity of finance to a proposal for real economy growth”, *Centro Studi in Intelligence Economica e Security Management*, Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata, Roma, 2018; “Democracy and Growth”, with G. Leonetti, Eurilink University Press, Bari, 2019; “Geofinance Between Market Dynamics And Political Strategies”, with F. Sergiani, in *Geoprogress Journal*, december 2019; “Ethics and Economics in the World of Globalized Finance”, *Journal of Contemporary Management Issues*, n°2/2020; “The Smuggling of Migrants: A Legislative Proposal”, with E. Cannizzaro, M.T. Trapasso, P. Bronzo, E. Cimiotta, *Cassazione Penale*, fascicolo 9, 2020.

# LIST OF FIGURES

## Youth Bulge Dynamics in the Mediterranean Region: The Geopolitical Implications of Human Capital on Security and Stability

Fig. 1	Under 30 percentages in the world ( <i>Source</i> Population Reference Bureau by <i>New York Times</i> [Sengupta, 2016])	116
Fig. 2	The youth bulge and children bulge in the world ( <i>Source</i> Euromonitor International, 2013)	117
Fig. 3	Median age in the MENA countries (left); Youth percentage of the total working-age population (right) ( <i>Source</i> Roudi, F. (2011). <i>Youth population &amp; employment in the Middle East &amp; North Africa: Opportunity or challenge</i> . Population Reference Bureau)	118
Fig. 4	Youth unemployment in some MENA countries ( <i>Source</i> Paasonen, K., & Urdal, H. (2016). <i>Youth bulges, exclusion and instability: The role of youth in the Arab Spring</i> . Peace Research Institute Oslo)	119
Fig. 5	Percentage of over-65 in MENA region, 1950–2100 ( <i>Source</i> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2017). <i>World population prospects: The 2017 revision</i> . UNDESA)	120
Fig. 6	Youth bulge in some countries of the MENA region, 1950–2050 ( <i>Source</i> Paasonen [2016])	121

**Gender and Economics in Mediterranean: Looking for  
New Opportunities for North African Women**

Fig. 1 Women's participation in the labor force in North Africa  
(*Source* ILO database)

159

# The New Centrality of the Mediterranean Basin: Trends and Dynamics



# Notes on a New Reading of the Mediterranean: A History of Trade, Culture and Wars

*Francesca Maria Corrao*

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Notes for Rereading the History of the Mediterranean: After the Discovery of the Americas .....	10
3	Reform and Culture in Contemporary Islam .....	19
4	Reformism Between Innovation and Tradition-Imitation .....	23
	Bibliography .....	38

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Mediterranean represented for millennia the pivot of history between East and West with its endless shifting from peaceful interaction, interdependence and holistic perceptions to hostile antagonism between its competing shores. According to Ferdinand Braudel, the history of the Mediterranean has been defined starting from its rich environment, its peoples and above all its endless conflicts (Braudel, 1972).

---

F. M. Corrao (✉)

Department of Political Science, LUISS University, Rome, Italy

e-mail: [fcorrao@luiss.it](mailto:fcorrao@luiss.it)

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature  
Switzerland AG 2021

F. M. Corrao and R. Redaelli (eds.), *States, Actors and Geopolitical  
Drivers in the Mediterranean*,

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69000-7\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69000-7_1)