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**Revolutionary Moments – Reactionary Processes:  
A Feminist Reflection on Protest, Mobilization and Change  
in the Middle East**

This talk will reflect on the gendered processes and outcomes linked to what has been coined “the Arab Spring”. Historically and cross culturally, women’s contributions to and participation in revolutions and revolutionary processes have frequently been side-lined in their aftermath: struggles for the “common good of all” are being privileged over women’s specific demands and interests. We have seen instances of marginalization of feminist demands, particularly in the Egyptian context. But what are the strategies and choices of feminists in the region in the current political moment? How have different historical trajectories affected the social and political spaces available for those local actors mobilizing for women’s rights? My paper will specifically focus on the tensions and contradictions emerging between revolutionary moments and processes that involve the making of new masculinities and femininities grounded in principles of dignity, justice and equality and the counter-revolutionary actions and backlashes that construct rigid notions of ‘cultural authenticity’, gender-based honour and militarised masculinities.