An unanticipated consequence of the Arab Spring was violence against demonstrating women. Virginity tests, organized sexual harassment campaigns, and group rape were some of the outcomes. Instead of retreating, women fought back for their equality though “micro-rebellions” and individual acts of dissent. This talk focuses on bodily forms of protest. Examples include Aliaa El Mahdy, a student at the American University of Cairo, who posted a nude photo of herself opposing racism, sexism, sexual harassment and hypocrisy in Egypt. Amina Tyler, a 19-year-old Tunisian, wrote on her body, "My Body is My Own and Not the Source of Anyone's Honor" and posted it on Facebook. And Fadwa El Aroui, aged 21 and mother of two children, self-immolated in Casablanca. In addition, Zakia Salime will explore sensibilities, performances and gendered and sexualized spaces that emerged in North Africa since the uprisings.

Prof. Zakia Salime teaches globalization, social movements and gender studies in the Departments of Sociology and Women’s and Gender Studies at Rutgers University. She is the author of Between Feminism and Islam: Human Rights in Morocco and Sharia Law in Morocco (University of Minnesota Press 2011) and is editing a volume, with Frances Hasso, on Geographies of Gender in the Arab Revolutions.