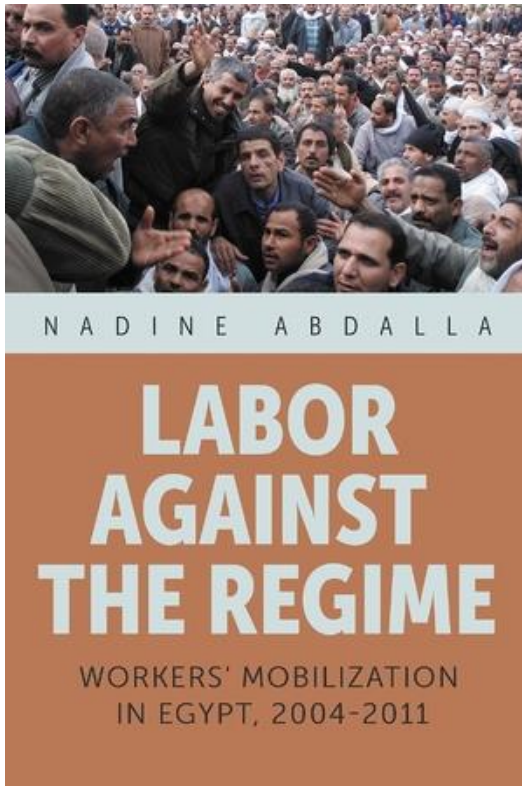




CEDEJ Tuesday seminar

June 3, 2025 at 2pm

***Labor Against the Regime: Workers
Mobilizations in Egypt (2004 – 2011)***



By Nadine Abdalla

How do worker movements emerge and evolve under authoritarian regimes? What enables labor activists to overcome constraints and win concessions, and

what leads to demobilization? This research provides an inside look at two of Egypt's most significant worker protest movements in the years preceding the 2011 Arab uprisings. Through a fine-grained analysis of the labor movement at the Misr Spinning and Weaving Company in Al-Mahalla Al-Kubra and the State Employees Movement of the Real Estate Tax Collectors, *Labor Against the Regime* reveals the pivotal role played by activist leaders in shaping a movement's trajectory. Drawing on extensive fieldwork, interviews, and primary sources, this research traces how these movements overcame ing odds to first take shape, achieve socio-economic demands, and ultimately challenge the Mubarak regime's corporatist control over labor relations. The book explores how activist leaders' personal backgrounds, careers, and embeddedness within movements conditioned their choices—ultimately steering protests down different pathways of contestation and institutionalization. As one of the first book-length studies to comparatively analyze Egypt's labor activism before and after the Arab Spring, *Labor Against the Regime* provides vital insights into the changing relationship

between workers, social movements, and the pre-uprising political order.

Nadine Abdalla is an Assistant Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology (SEA) at the American University in Cairo (AUC). In 2015/16, she was a EUME Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics at the Freie Universität of Berlin. In 2006, she received her MA in International Relations from Sciences-Po Paris in France; and in 2014, she received her PhD in Political Science from Sciences-Po Grenoble, with highest honors and committee praise (Très honorable avec félicitation du jury). Her research interests include contentious politics and social movements, specifically labor and youth movements, state-society relations, local politics, and the dynamics of bottom-up approaches to democracy within the MENA region, with a particular emphasis on Egypt. Nadine's influence extends beyond academia, as she is an accomplished writer who regularly pens a weekly column for the Egyptian daily *Al-Masry Al-Youm*. Her expertise has also been featured in several articles published in other prominent Egyptian newspapers.