Young Syrian men in Cairo have held various roles since their arrival in Egypt in 2012/2013 following the Syrian uprising. They were refugees, sons, brothers, part of the ‘young’ generation, in one way grown-ups with increased responsibilities, but simultaneously not yet uncontested adult men in the traditional Syrian sense. Drawing on ethnographic research conducted in 2014/2015 in Cairo, I discuss how young men from Syria made sense of their forced displacement and the various roles they held. They faced challenges in the Egyptian labour market and when trying to get married. Furthermore, young men had to come to terms with the fact that concerns about their safety were among the main reasons why their families decided to leave Syria. In this seminar, I suggest that coming of age in the context of forced displacement is not a linear process from one coherent, holistic life stage to the next. Rather, being a young, displaced man from Syria means walking a blurry, partial and unstable path into adulthood.

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