

XIV Convegno SeSaMO

PERCORSI DI RESISTENZA IN MEDIO ORIENTE E NORD AFRICA

Università degli Studi di Torino

31 gennaio – 2 febbraio 2019



SOCIETÀ PER GLI STUDI SUL MEDIO ORIENTE

TITOLO: Language(s) of resistance in the Arab world

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ABSTRACT:

The Arabic language has always battled to survive in multilingual contexts -suffice it to think about peripheral Arabic dialects (Versteegh 2014) - or during military and linguistic colonizations (Grandguillaume 1983, Tigrizi 2004, Shaaban 2008). In this latter context, because of its importance in asserting identity, *fushḥā*, was used as a means of resistance to occupation (Morsly 1997, Hamdy 2017) and as a symbol of supranational unity; thus, dialectal variation was perceived as a threat (Miller 2003). As seen for different contexts, the effort for decolonization dwells in a linguistic, discursive space in which language becomes a political grammar of social oppression and resistance (Graves 1998).

More recently, especially since the Arab Spring, Neo-Arabic vernaculars have begun to represent the new symbol of resistance, power and identity (Bassiouney 2012, Mazraani 2009, Suleiman 2003) and the expression of various forms of resistance (Bayat 2010): independent press, cinema, theatre, information websites, cartoons, street art, music and novels are adopting *lahǧa* as a universal language, the carrier of a nation's cultural heritage (Boucherit 1997) and nationalist feelings and the emblem of social struggle (Mazraani 2008). In this respect, we can also analyse different artistic and literary languages used by intellectuals to express the feelings of *al-muqāwama* and to represent a different vision of the social and political reality.

Papers analysing linguistic issues, linked to the trajectories of resistance and the usage of ancient and contemporary Arab vernaculars as a means of resistance, as well as papers, analysing the use of different literary and artistic languages of resistance, are welcome.

PROFILO ACCADEMICO DEL/DELLA/DEI/DELLE PROPONENTE/I:

Cristina La Rosa is Assistant Professor of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Catania. Her research focuses on the History of Arabic language (Sicilian Arabic in a comparative approach with Andalusī and Maltese Arabic), Arabic Grammatical Tradition, Maghribi dialectology (Tunisian dialect) and Political Discourse Analysis.

Alba Rosa Suriano is Tenure Track Assistant Professor in Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Catania. Her field of research is the contemporary and modern Arabic theatre, with particular concern to Egyptian theatre during the 19th and 20th centuries and its relation with governmental politics.