

14<sup>th</sup> SeSaMO Conference  
**PATHS OF RESISTANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

University of Turin (Italy)

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SOCIETÀ PER GLI STUDI SUL MEDIO ORIENTE

**TITLE: “Resistance is Life”. Paths of resistance in Kurdish arts and literature.**

**CONVENOR(S):** - Farangis Ghaderi  
- Francesco Marilungo

**ABSTRACT:**

The catastrophic consequences of the creation of the Middle East with no country for Kurds continue to present. As a minority divided among four nation-states (Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria) Kurds have been subjected to various degrees of political and cultural suppression, at times amounting to genocide. “Berxwedan jiyan e” goes a widespread saying in Kurdish: “resistance is life”. Indeed, for the Kurds throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, existence has been oftentimes ensured only by an act of resistance. Kurdish language and culture have been at the core of Kurdish resistance movements and the very site of struggle. At times the very act of writing in Kurdish has been in itself an act of resistance. As well as subverting and challenging the dominant discourses, Kurdish cultural production has been the site of creating and communicating alternative discourses. Artistic production has been, and continues to be, an effective means of constructing a national identity as well as a powerful source of mobilisation.

In this panel we welcome papers studying the close relation of Kurdish political and cultural resistance and Kurdish cultural production as an arena of resistance against the hegemonic powers. We welcome papers on Kurdish literature, theatre, cinema, and visual arts from all parts of Kurdistan and the diaspora, in order to give a broad overview of how cultural practices are mobilised today in Kurdistan as a means of resistance.

**CONVENOR’S ACADEMIC PROFILE:**

Dr **Farangis Ghaderi** completed her PhD in Kurdish Studies from the University of Exeter in 2016. She has since worked as a research fellow and tutor in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter. Her doctoral research examined the development of modern Kurdish poetry and the relation of poetics and politics.

Dr **Francesco Marilungo** completed his PhD in Kurdish Studies at the University of Exeter. His doctoral research focused on the literary urban space of Diyarbakır, the Kurdish largest city in Turkey, through a comparative analysis of Kurdish and Turkish literary sources. While completing his PhD, he was appointed by an Italian NGO to coordinate and monitor cooperation and development projects in the Kurdish regions of Iraq and Syria.