

XVI Convegno SeSaMO

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SOCIETÀ PER GLI STUDI SUL MEDIO ORIENTE

TITOLO/TITLE: Circulation of Ideas, Practices, and Knowledge in and across *Peripheral Islam*

PROPONENTE/I – PROPONENT/s: NICOLA DI MAURO E CHIARA ANNA CASCINO

ABSTRACT (1500 parole/words):

Islamic expressions have crossed MENA borders for centuries, building historic religious traditions in other places or creating newer communities, such as in Western Europe. Religious ideas and practices have migrated, often taking new forms in dialogue with existing substrates. However, this exchange should not be seen as unilateral, i.e. from a centre (the MENA region) to a periphery, since the transmission and circulation of Islam has been multilateral. Many religious expressions that have marked the evolution of contemporary Islam have originated outside the birthplaces of the religion or, more generally, outside the traditional centres and majority currents. With this in mind, the panel aims to explore practices, ideas and affiliations in the alleged peripheral Islam.

Besides the classic division between Centre and Periphery, the analysis of circulation and dissemination of ideas, practises, and knowledge triggered by religious actors (i.e. individuals, institutions, and organizations – Green 2020) could stretch and reshape theoretical and concrete rigid boundaries. The so-called West has been and continues to be considered the Centre of a capitalist world system, as per the theory of Wallerstein, which is also acknowledged as such by at least part of Muslim communities (Ramadan 2006). The MENA region is the primary production centre of Islamic ideas, practices, and knowledge. However, their supposed peripheries have contributed and are contributing to the production and the re-elaboration of these ideas, resulting in the expansion and restructuring of political, spatial, and religious scopes. Thus, it is reasonable to consider that polycentrism exists instead of a rigid separation between the Centre and Periphery. For instance, polycentrism can also be seen when considering religious authority. Within the Islamic religion, religious authority is a complex process involving individuals, but also institutions, historical events, media and modes of dissemination (Sunier-Buskens 2022). It is a negotiation conditioned by time, space and the actors involved. It creates a circulation of ideas and practices that does not run along a centre-periphery axis but implies a circularity.

What kind of “peripheral” Islam do we want to discuss? We highly encourage papers that discuss, problematize, and redefine 1. geographical peripheries, which therefore include Islamic religious expressions that occur outside the MENA region; 2. political-religious peripheries that include Islamist or religiously inspired political and social movements that suffer from isolation or exclusion; 3. socio-economic peripheries, including the North-South, urban-rural, class or gender divide; 4. doctrinal peripheries involving minority religious communities or religious groups that are underrepresented.

Green Nile. (2020). *Global Islam. A very short introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Ramadan Tariq. (2006). *L'Islam in Occidente, La costruzione di una nuova identità musulmana*, Milano: Rizzoli.

Sunier Thijl, Buskens Leon. (2022). “Authoritative Landscapes: The Making of Islamic Authority among Muslims in Europe: An Introduction”. *Journal of Muslims in Europe*, 11, 1-19.

PROFILO ACCADEMICO DEL/DELLA/DEI/DELLE PROPONENTE/I – SHORT BIO OF PROPONENTS

Nicola Di Mauro earned his PhD at the Department of Asia, Africa and Mediterranean Studies of the University of Naples "L'Orientale" where he is currently a post-doc researcher. His research deals with Islam in contemporary Italy; it has a specific focus on Islam in Naples and Islam in the South of the country. He is Adjunct Professor of Human Rights related to migration and religious freedom at the John Felice Rome Center, Loyola University of Chicago.

Chiara Anna Cascino obtained her PhD at the Department of Asia, Africa and Mediterranean Studies of the University of Naples "L'Orientale". She is currently a post-doc researcher at the Department of Human Sciences of the University of Verona. She is also adjunct professor at the University of Naples "Federico II" and the University of Bari "Aldo Moro". Her research interests include Muslim minorities in Italy, Islamic da'wah, Jurisprudence of Muslim minorities in Europe.

INDIRIZZO/I EMAIL/EMAIL ADDRESSES:

nicola.dimauro@unior.it

chiaracascino@gmail.com