

La rivista di Arablit

semestrale di letteratura e cultura araba moderna e contemporanea

Anno X, numero 20, dicembre 2020



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EXPRESSIONS OF RESISTANCE: “GOUD” AND STYLISTIC VARIATION IN MOROCCAN DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS

ROSA PENNISI*

This study aims to analyse the linguistic written practices of contributors to “Goud”, a Moroccan online newspaper, in the discourse on political resistance. The issue is observed in the perspective of the symbolic relation between the concept of Resistance and the tension of formal versus informal standardization process concerning Arabic fuṣṣḥā (standard variety) and dāriġah (Moroccan Arabic). Through the observation of a corpus of articles about the “20th February Movement”, the “Hirak Movement”, and the boycott campaigns, this study outlines the different expressions of resistance and the co-existing linguistic varieties to which “Goud” gives voice.

Introduction

In 2011, the protest movement referred to as “Arab Springs” crossed the Arab World (Faris 2012; Khader 2012). In Morocco, the movement was called *Ḥarakat ‘Iṣrān Fabrāyir*¹ (the “20th February Movement”; 20FebMo henceforward). There a heterogeneous group of young people and activists organized and gave rise to street demonstrations, which began on February 20th, 2011 in the major Moroccan cities, following the social protests erupted shortly before in Tunisia and Egypt (Igmene 2013; Naimi 2016; Desrues 2012; Bennani-Chraïbi; Jeghlaly 2012).

In Morocco, the distinctive trait of these movements concerns both the organization of the 20FebMo and their political and institutional results (Naimi 2016; Desrues 2012; Bennani-Chraïbi; Jeghlaly 2012). If the claims for greater equity and social justice against the precarious living conditions of the population and the complaints against political corruption simultaneously echoed in the other Arab countries, the Moroccan protests of the 20FebMo had also a considerable influence on the highest institutions of the

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¹ The present study shows written productions containing several items corresponding to the Moroccan colloquial variety, but also bivalent items, i.e. all those linguistic elements for which different pronunciations, belonging to different varieties (*fuṣṣḥā*, *dāriġah*, or mixed Arabic), correspond to a single graphic form; for those traits, it is not possible to establish unequivocally the corresponding phonological transcription. For this reason, most transcriptions rather report a graphemic transliteration in accordance with the editorial lines of the journal. Likewise, the colloquial elements have not been transcribed according to the norm in use in Arabic dialectology studies, except for the use of *schwa* in appropriate cases (i.e. CəC, or CəCC), and indicated in the footnotes.

State. Indeed, in July 2011 King Mohammed VI approved the text of the new Constitution², launching – symbolically at least – a strong message of openness and solidarity with his people.

Moreover, the 20FebMo grouped a heterogeneous set of personalities from different social and cultural backgrounds, without a defined and structured political leadership (Naimi 2016; Desrues 2012; Bennani-Chraïbi; Jeghlaly 2012). The movement voiced the demands regarding most citizens’ social needs, as well as the specific demands of well-defined social groups, as in the case of Berber activists. Both the lack of a well-structured political leadership and the progressive inclusion of minority political groups, caused the dispersion of the ideals originally supported by the movement, as well as its partial disintegration when some of the personalities that initially promoted its organization withdrew their support (Sakhi 2015).

The movement’s heterogeneity was reflected in its forms of expression. The oral and written slogans reproduced the Moroccan multilingual reality: the languages used were Arabic *fushà* (that in the present study will stand for the modern standard variety of Arabic), *dāriġah* (the Moroccan spoken oral variety), but also Amazigh, as well as French and English. Furthermore, from a linguistic point of view, the 2011 demonstrations in Morocco represented the historical moment in which the political discourse in *dāriġah*, conveyed by young people especially on the net, became more visible³. The colloquial variety far from replacing Arabic *fushà* in the formal expression of political discourse, nevertheless gained greater visibility even in contexts previously dominated by *fushà*, on social media and digital platforms.

The political and social reforms, following the 2011 constitutional reform, were not enough to satisfy social demands and improve the precarious conditions of the lower classes, especially in the Rif regions: in 2016, after

² The article 5 of the new Constitution (2011) describes the linguistic Moroccan situation, and institutionalizes the Amazigh language as an official language after Arabic language (Standard Arabic), https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Morocco_2011.pdf?lang=ar (last accessed 28/04/2018).

³ Independently from the 2011 demonstrations, the *dāriġah* promotion movement appears in the early 2000s in Morocco; as stated by Miller (2017: 97), Ahmed Benchemsi’s (Aḥmad Binšamsī) editorial, titled *Darija langue nationale* and published in the Moroccan francophone magazine “TelQuel” (2002), represents the «first public manifesto» of the *dāriġah* promotion movement. So, from the 2000s and beyond, *dāriġah* is increasingly gaining its place in public discourse through more or less formal/official domains: in the traditional and online press and in advertisings (see among others Aguadé 2006, 2012; Caubet; Miller 2016; Hoogland 2018; Hall 2015; Miller 2012, 2016, 2017), and finally in more or less spontaneous and/or artistic writings on digital platforms (Caubet et al. 2004; Caubet 2010, 2017a, 2017b, 2018). More details concerning the political discourse are found in the interview to Catherine Miller (Miller; Siino; Catusse 2016) and in Caubet; Miller (2016).

the gruesome incident which led to the death of Fikri Mouhcine (Fikrī Muḥsin), a fishmonger in Al Hoceima (al-Ḥusaymah), new waves of protests, named the “*Hirak* Movement”⁴ in the media, started spreading. The demonstrations triggered in Al Hoceima gave voice to the حكرة/حقرة *ḥukrah*⁵ feeling (*ḥogra* henceforward), i.e. the feeling of oppression shared by the middle and more precarious social classes. The *Hirak* Movement later resumed the peaceful struggle of resistance against the inequities and the contradictions of the political system.

Considering this sociopolitical context, this study will focus on the analysis of linguistic and communicative strategies to express social and political resistance that emerge from public discourses in digital platforms around the 2016 protest movements in Morocco. The purpose of this study is to investigate new linguistic practices involving journalistic written production, starting from the assumption that spoken varieties used in writing represent *per se* a form of resistance in the context of formal communication. What are the languages and varieties that express and represent the voices of the struggle as well as the political and social demands? How is the political public discourse of social resistance articulated in the journalistic language of the online press? Do Arabic *fushḥā* and *dāriġah* meet or clash in the communication strategies of political discourses? Considering the triglossic⁶ reality of the Moroccan linguistic community – that is the relationship of continuity between Arabic *fushḥā*, *dāriġah*, and mixed varieties, from a side, and the functional distinction between written and oral languages, from the other side – which styles emerge in the narration of resistance on digital media? Finally, do discourses on social and political resistance reflect a change in language ideology and language attitudes?

In order to observe the language ideology conveyed by the public discourse on social resistance, the present work will present a case study focused on the linguistic practices observed in گود “Gūd” (Straight) – “Goud” henceforward)⁷ –, a Moroccan online newspaper. The study will focus on the analysis of a corpus of 15 articles, produced by three authors (5 articles per author) who regularly publish their ideas on current social and political is-

⁴ The name for this movement used in the Moroccan press in Arabic is *al-Ḥirāk al-Ša‘bī fī ‘l-Rīf*, “Rif People’s Movement”, or *Ḥirāk al-Rīf*, “Rif’s Movement” or “Riffian Movement”. In the francophone Moroccan press, as well as in the international media, the Rif’s Movement is referred to as “*Hirak* du Rif”. In the present article, the definition of “*Hirak* Movement” refers to the Riffian Movement.

⁵ The colloquial term *ḥogra* derives from the verb حقر *ḥaqqara* «to degrade, debase, humble, humiliate; to regard with contempt, despise, scorn, disdain» (Wehr 1976: 194).

⁶ Concerning the triglossic linguistic reality in Morocco, see Durand (2004) and Youssi (1983, 1995).

⁷ The name of the journal, referred throughout the present article as “Goud”, reproduces the transcription reported in the URL address of the newspaper’s website.

sues in the opinion column (this is the case of Hamid Zaid [Ḥāmid Zayd] and Mohammed Socrate [Muḥammad Suqrāt]) or in investigative reports (Younes Aftit [Yūnis Aftīt]).

This study does not intend to exhaustively define changes and evolutions of linguistic attitudes in Morocco, but rather proposes to present the increasingly visible tendencies of the use of *dāriġah* and mixed varieties in the formal written production of media communication, through the analysis of the debate rising from social events linked to the protest movements. From the observation of the corpus it can be noted that in “Goud” the expressions of resistance are conveyed using different styles and communicative strategies that reflect not only a particular use of Arabic *fušḥà* and *dāriġah*, but more importantly an interesting mixed use of both varieties.

The authors’ individual styles not only show different linguistic choices but also the stylistic variation emerging in the preference for one variety over the other or in the combination of both varieties in the same text. For instance, in “Goud”, despite the pro-*dāriġah* editorial lines, the standard variety is widely present especially when switching from more formal to less formal registers, exploiting the flexibility of Arabic *fušḥà*. At the same time, it is possible to appreciate a creative stylistic variation in *dāriġah* as well, with an extensive written use of plain *dāriġah* in combination with Middle (educated) *dāriġah*⁸, and/or with Arabic *fušḥà*.

In the first part of the present study, a brief contextualized introduction of the linguistic situation in Morocco will define the sociolinguistic differentiation between written and oral languages in the context of the triglossic continuum, where the mixed varieties of Arabic emerge; this introduction wishes to underline the symbolic relationship between the discourses on resistance and the issues related to the concept of informal codification of written *dāriġah*. In fact, from an ideological and symbolic point of view if writing in *dāriġah* could appear as a form of resistance in opposition to the ideological linguistic norm – that imposes the Arabic *fušḥà* as the only variety for written formal production – this symbolic association (resistance discourse/*dāriġah* variety) does not comply entirely with the actual linguistic practices of pro-*dāriġah* digital press. The second part of this work will focus on the presentation of the corpus and on the methodology used in the qualitative approach to the analysis; finally, results and comments on the stylistic variations will be defined in the third part.

1. *Conventionalization of Colloquial Varieties in Written Practices*

The standardization process of a linguistic variety, i.e. «the selection, codi-

⁸ According to Youssi (1992), in oral formal interaction people can use an educated register he defines Modern Moroccan Darija (AMM); see also Meiseles (1980) concerning educated Arabic.

fiction, acceptance, and elaboration of a linguistic norm» (Haugen 1966: 922), is relevant to the issue dealt with in the present study to the extent that, in the Moroccan Arabic-speaking context (as well as in other Arab countries and other diglossic / triglossic language communities), the difference between written and oral languages reflects not only the distance between the official language (formal/written) and the spoken language (informal/oral), but also a whole series of linguistic ideologies which stigmatize dialectal varieties⁹. In the Moroccan context, recent studies, as for instance the FAFO survey (Kebede; Kindt 2016), showed that in the last twenty years *dāriġah* has appeared as a written language, in various more or less formal domains (Caubet 2004, 2012; Benítez Fernández 2006; Langone 2008b; Hoogland 2013) such as in literature, in public spaces, like advertising billboards, as well as in the press (Miller 2012, 2016, 2017; Caubet 2017a-b, 2018; Langone 2003; Brigui 2016; Elinson 2013; Hall 2015; Hoogland 2018). The increasing use of *dāriġah* in this type of production between the early 2000s – when, a little later, the cultural movement of the *Nayda* (*Nāyḍah*, waking up or standing up in Moroccan Arabic) would characterize the new Moroccan artistic and musical scene (Caubet 2010; Langone 2008a) – and 2011, until 2016 has often been accompanied and supported by various actors and public figures who advocated for the promotion of *dāriġah*. They often supported initiatives aimed at institutionalizing *dāriġah* by advocating reforms in the field of language policies in favour of the institutionalization of the use of *dāriġah* in formal contexts, such as in the school system¹⁰.

In the perspective of linguistic ideologies, the passage from oral to written *dāriġah*, is undoubtedly an interesting and sensitive phenomenon, since it symbolically equates to the “prestigious” transfer of the “dialectal variety” to the

⁹ For more details on issues related to the linguistic ideology with respect to the *fushā/‘āmmiyyah* dichotomy see Suleiman ([1996] 2013); Haeri (2000, 2003); Eisele (2003); Mejdell (2008).

¹⁰ The *dāriġah* promotion movement is heterogeneous and incorporates personalities from different backgrounds: journalists – e.g. Ahmed Benchemsi, Driss Ksikes (Idrīs Ksīkis), Ahmed Najim (Aḥmad Naġīm), all former journalists in “Nichane” (cf. footnote 15); scholars – see for example Abderrahim Youssi (‘Abd al-Raḥīm Yūsī), Khalil Mgharfaoui (Ḥalīl Mġarfāwī), Abdellah Chekayri (‘Abd Allāh al-Šakayrī); simple individuals who promote *dāriġah* through its use in cultural productions, such as music, poetry, slam poetry, blog etc. (see Caubet 2017b, 2018 and Miller 2016); and public figures such as Noureddine Ayouch (Nūr al-Dīn ‘Ayūš), publicist and member of the Higher Council for Education in Morocco, who through his *Zakoura Foundation* promoted several scientific initiatives (see for instance the international conference *La langue, Les Langues* organized in 2010 [Miller 2016]). He also supports the *Markaz Tanmiyat al-Dāriġah Zakūrah*, the “*Zakoura Center for the Promotion of Dāriġah*”, that published the first monolingual dictionary of *Dāriġah* (Məġarfāwī; Mabūr; Šakayrī 2017) and more recently the first *Dāriġah* handbook (al-Madlāwī 2019).

rank of “language”. In fact, as Haugen claimed, spoken languages «are subject to regular and inexorable linguistic change», whereas written languages «establish models across time and space» (Haugen 1966: 929). This statement underlines that the transfer from oral to written variety means codifying the oral variety as well as stabilizing it or normalizing it¹¹; such standardization process could therefore favour its formal institutionalization, which might be met with strong ideological opposition and find numerous ideological constraints (see Eisele 2003, for example, concerning insights about the perception of language among speakers/writers in the Muslim-Arab community).

However, it must be emphasized that the transition to written *dāriġah* does not fully reflect the dynamics of the standardization process in terms of institutional formalization or formal standardization, i.e. “standardization from above”, given that from a sociolinguistic point of view *dāriġah*, as a written language, is not fully accepted by the Moroccan linguistic community, much less by the institutions. According to Haugen (1966), as previously mentioned, a stage in the standardization process is the “selection” of a linguistic variety. With respect to Moroccan *dāriġah*, it should be underlined that an important diatopic variation exists throughout the country, and for this reason the selection of a single variety of *dāriġah* as a standard variety is not evenly accepted across the country¹². It is otherwise possible to observe the phenomenon of informal standardization or conventionalization of written *dāriġah*, as explained by Caubet (2017a). In other words, *dāriġah* has undergone the process of informal codification, or “standardization from below” thanks to the common and shared practices of its users who taught themselves how to read and write in *dāriġah*, first using *e-darija*¹³ and then the Arabic script, not only for private and informal interactions, but also in literary production and cultural disseminations (Caubet 2018). Therefore, the development of *dāriġah* informal codification symbolically represents an act of resistance, compared to the traditional practices of (standard) Arabic written productions.

However, in the context of this study, it should be emphasized that the protest movements of the Arab Springs as well as all the claims for civil rights and individual freedom occurred in the recent years emerged at the same time as the pro-*dāriġah* movements, in the wave of the new socio-

¹¹ See also Goody (2000).

¹² The publication of the *Zakoura* Dictionary (cf. footnote 10) was highly criticized by public opinion. Insights on the limits of the *dāriġah* standardization of the *Zakoura* project were discussed by the author during the 13th AIDA International conference (10-13 June 2019 Kutaisi, Georgia); see also Pennisi (2020).

¹³ Caubet (2018) defines *e-darija* as the Moroccan Arabic language written in a mix of Latin letters and numbers for transposing phonetic Arabic sounds through digital supports until technological advancements allowed to use Arabic script (see also Caubet 2004, 2012). According to Caubet (2017a, 2017b) the choice of Arabic script for writing Moroccan Arabic underlines an informal transfer to literacy in *dāriġah*; see also Caubet 2018.

political climate of openness that Morocco began to experience with the rise to the throne of Muḥammad VI (July 1999). The two phenomena are only symbolically connected, and this analogy does not necessarily reflect the whole reality of linguistic practices. However, the use of *dāriġah*, as well as its mixed use with standard Arabic in written production, is a phenomenon that has become highly widespread and more visible in online public spaces.

For this reason, the spread of these new trends (i.e. colloquial varieties in written productions), in a linguistic perspective, affects the domain of mixed varieties of Arabic, including several features of Middle Arabic (see Lentin 1997, 2008; Larcher 2001; Mejdell 2006; Doss 2008; Holes 2008). In fact, the linguistic variation – i.e. divergence from standard, and morphosyntactic variability in spoken/written middle varieties – implies both a stylistic variation and the emergence of new trends in opposition to the traditional standard writing practices, leading to mixed styles, as already pointed out by Mejdell (2006) for the formal (oral) communicative situation in Egypt. What is remarkable in Morocco concerns the spread of mixed varieties in written production, usually employed in oral (formal/educated) communications, as the case of the *Arabe Moderne Marocain* (AMM), Modern Moroccan Arabic, described by Youssi (1992) as the spoken middle (educated) variety of Moroccan Arabic.

The following analysis focusses on a case study of the expressions of resistance in mixed styles emerging in the opinion articles of the Moroccan electronic newspaper “Goud” in order to observe this growing writing trend in which authors use different varieties, i.e. *fushà* in formal and informal registers, as well as *dāriġah*, not only in AMM but also in plain *dāriġah*, in the formal context of media communication.

2. “Goud” and Stylistic Variation

“Goud” is a Moroccan online newspaper¹⁴ created by Ahmed Najim, its current editorial director, on February 14th, 2011, six days before the event organized by the 20FebMo in Morocco. In an interview¹⁵, held on April 30th, 2018 in Casablanca, he stated that “Goud” represents his ideal of an independent and secularist digital newspaper. It acts also as a continuation of “Nichane”¹⁶, a weekly magazine widely read by Moroccans. Ahmed Najim

¹⁴ See the presentation web page on “Goud”, <https://www.Goud.ma/منحن/> (last accessed 13/09/2019).

¹⁵ Ahmed Najim released the interview to the author. The complete interview is available in Pennisi Rosa, 2020, *Arabe Mixte 2.0: la variation syntaxique et stylistique dans les journaux numériques marocains (janvier-décembre 2016)*, PhD dissertation, Ca’ Foscari University and Aix-Marseille Université, (December 14th 2020), pp. 294-327.

¹⁶ “Nichane” (نيشان, “Nīšān”, Straight) was a Moroccan weekly magazine created in 2006 by Ahmed Benchemsi, editorial director, and Driss Ksikes, editorial chief director. It was considered the first magazine in *dāriġah* because Moroccan Ar-

added that “Goud” features a greater presence of *dāriġah* and faster news. The free contributions from some former “Nichane” journalists and the advertising revenue made possible the launch of “Goud”. Today “Goud” has an editorial board of 9 journalists and collaborators, most of them under 40. It is a generalist newspaper with a special focus on topics closely related with Moroccan society. The newspaper addresses all Moroccan cultural and social classes, i.e. elite, middle-low classes, youngster, politicians, secularists, Islamists, and Moroccans living abroad. The clearly defined editorial line especially concerns the language choice: *dāriġah* is used across all topics. Concerning the choice to use *dāriġah*, during the same interview, Ahmed Najim claimed that he considers *dāriġah* to be the most efficient language for communication through media and press. These are the reasons why “Goud” represents one of the contemporary editorial experiences giving place to plural linguistic forms of expression. It represents an experimental laboratory to observe contemporary language practices.

The 15 selected articles were taken from the opinions’ column in “Goud” and dealt with popular resistance, and more specifically the demonstrations triggered in the Rif area, namely the *Hirak* Movement, occurred in 2016. In particular, the corpus includes 5 articles by Hamid Zaid, a satirical journalist¹⁷, 5 articles by Mohammed Socrate, a former militant of the 20FebMo and blogger¹⁸, and 5 articles by Younes Aftit, “Goud” chief editor and investigative reporter¹⁹. The three authors express their ideals and feelings on social and political issues using different communicative strategies and languages: while Hamid Zaid and Yunis Aftit write mainly in *fushà*, Socrate mostly uses *dāriġah*. Nevertheless, mixed varieties of Arabic language emerge from their practices. Among all the

Arabic was extensively used, though only for cover headers and articles’ titles. Because of its editorial line and the sensitive topics treated, it came to a final closure in 2010 after two legal proceedings involving first Driss Ksikes and Sanaa El Aji (Sanā’ al-‘Āġī, former journalist) – for the publication of a feature on the jokes circulating in Moroccan society – and then Ahmed Benchemsi, who published an irreverent editorial he directly addressed to the King using *dāriġah*. These events caused a vivacious debate in public opinion that led to a latent campaign of boycott by the sponsors, which ended with an economic crisis to the detriment of the magazine. For more details see Langone (2003, 2016), Benítez Fernández (2010), Miller (2012), Aguadé (2006, 2012), Hall (2015), Hoogland (2018).

¹⁷ Hamid Zaid’s selected articles, as well as the articles of the other two journalists, are indicated with the initials of his name and surname, in ascending order (number 1, 2, etc.), and the date of publication, as follows: HZ1 31th October 2016, HZ2 20th May 2017, HZ3 5th June 2017, HZ4 12th June 2017, HZ5 11th May 2018.

¹⁸ Hence, Mohammed Socrate’s selected articles are MS1 30th October 2016, MS2 1st November 2016, MS3 5th November 2016, MS4 20th February 2017, MS5 24th May 2017.

¹⁹ Younes Aftit’s selected articles are YA1 3rd November 2016, YA2 29th May 2017, YA3 4th June 2017, YA4 24th June 2017, YA5 11th July 2017.

articles, common topics are the failure of the 20FebMo, the solidarity with the demonstrations of *Hirak* Movement, the critical approaches to the boycott campaign, and their personal expressions of *hogra* feeling.

In order to identify how these journalists write about resistance, the frequency of *fushà*, *dāriḡah* and bivalent elements was first checked in their articles in order to gather an idea of the distribution of the different varieties. The distinction between varieties remains fuzzy. Where *fushà* elements are clearly distinguishable, bivalent items are not. Thus, items of bivalent value have been interpreted according to their syntactical construction and lexical context. Syntactical constructions with *dāriḡah* items usually showed more bivalent lexical elements. Then, a comparison between the linguistic choice and the topics it presented was performed, and the stylistic variation that emerged from their different practices and communicative strategies was observed.

3. Analysis and Results

Fushà is the most widely used language throughout the articles in the corpus. This is true for the articles written by Socrate as well: the language of his five texts include *fushà* elements (42%), *dāriḡah* items (25%) and bivalent ones (33%). Hamid Zaid writes in *fushà* only, while the language of Yunis Aftit comes mostly from *fushà* (90%), with very few *dāriḡah* expressions (6% of *dāriḡah* items and 4% of bivalent ones)²⁰.

This kind of linguistic variation reflects a stylistic variation, based on the different expressive strategies used to express the *hogra* feeling. In the following example (1) Hamid Zaid uses sarcasm as communicative strategy:

- (1) عادي. عادي. عادي
وطبيعي. طبيعي جدا ما حدث في الحسيمة.
ففي أمريكا يقتل السود رميا بالرصاص.
وفي أمريكا أكبر الديمقراطيات في العالم يقتل رجال الأمن السود.
كما قال سعد الدين العثماني، رئيس المجلس الوطني لحزب العدالة والتنمية، في تصريح لموقع
"فبراير"
وقبله قال رئيس الحكومة السيد عبد الإله بنكيران: "إنه لا معنى للاحتجاج"
وطبيعي.
طبيعي جدا، جدا.
و علينا ألا ننساق خلف العاطفة، كما ذكرنا بذلك نفس سعد الدين العثماني.

‘Ādī. ‘Ādī. / Wa ṭabī‘ī. Ṭabī‘ī ḡidd^m mā ḥadaṭ fī ‘l-Ḥusaymah. / Fa-fī Amrīkā
yaqtul al-sūd ramīyy^m bi ‘l-raṣāṣ. / Wa fī Amrīkā akbar al-dīmuqrāṭīyyāt fī
‘l-‘ālam yaqtul riḡāl al-aman al-sūd / kamā qāla Sa‘d al-Dīn al-‘Uṭmānī,

²⁰ These data were obtained through a morphosyntactic and lexical analysis of the texts. All the lexical items (including titles and excluding journalists' names) were counted per word (including prepositions) and divided into the three categories (*fushà*, *dāriḡah* and bivalent), in order to proceed with the statistics on the total occurrences within the corpus.

ra'īs al-mağlis al-waṭanī li-Ḥizb al-'Adālah wa 'l-Tanmiyah, fī taṣrīḥ li-mawqī' "Fibrāyir" / wa qablahu qāla ra'īs al-ḥukūmah al-Sayyid 'Abd Allāh Binkīrān: Inna-hu lā ma'nā li 'l-iḥtiğāğ / wa ṭabī'ī. / Ṭabī'ī ġidd^{an}, ġidd^{an}. / Wa 'alaynā allā nansāq ḥalf al-'āṭifah, kamā ḍakaranā bi-dālik naḥṣ Sa'd al-Dīn al-'Uṭmānī.

Ordinary, ordinary. / Natural. It is very natural what happened in Hoceima. / In America blacks are killed by shooting on them. In America, the greatest democracy in the world, security men kill blacks. / As Saad el Din el Othmani, president of the national council of Justice and Development Party, said to the “Febrayr” website. / And before him the president of the government Mr. Abdelilah Benkirane: The protests do not make sense. / The fact is ordinary. Very ordinary. / Natural. / Very natural, very. / We must not submit to sensitivity. As Saad el Din el Othmani reminded us²¹. [HZ1, 31/10/2016]

In (1), the effect of sarcasm is produced by applying rhetorical devices, such as redundancy and repetitions, to *fushḥā*, and creating something of a poem in prose. Thus, the narration conveys Zaid’s criticism, his frustration and his *hogra* feeling against el Othmani (al-Uṭmānī) and Benkirane (Binkīrān) in a very effective way.

Benkirane had tried to belittle the protests by comparing the Moroccan incident with the situation in the US, where, according to him, discriminations are more frequent and more violent. Benkirane’s point of view about the death of Mouhcine²² reflects his dismissive attitude towards the news. From a linguistic point view, the example (1) shows that the *fushḥā* variety can be used very effectively in satirical writings²³.

A different communicative strategy can be observed in the mixed style used by Mohammed Socrate, as shown in the example (2) below:

(2) لا أخاي ، مكتعرفوناش حيث سحقتونا طحنتونا حتى ما بقيناش كايينين بلا ماهية محدد ، بلا كينونة بلا روح ، حنا غي أرقام ، فالإحصاء وأرقام فصندوق الانتخابات ، وأرقام عند مديرية الضرائب ، وأرقام عند شركات استغلال الماء والكهرباء ، وحنا غي خوشيش فالسيببارات ، وغي بوزبال فالتيارات ، وغي حشرات فالإدارة ، حنا مكايينينش²⁴.

²¹ The texts in Arabic were translated into English by the author.

²² Mouhcine was the fishmonger who died in Al Hoceima in the garbage truck where he was trying to recover his goods, that the authorities had confiscated. This was the emotional event that sparked the *Hirak* Movement.

²³ Contemporary satirical productions usually show an extensive use of colloquial varieties, especially in caricatures, not only in Moroccan newspapers, but also in the press of other Arab countries. In this case, it is remarkable that the *fushḥā* variety is used as the medium of a “literary genre” (i.e. satire), through a “poetical” structure (i.e. poems in prose).

²⁴ *Dāriğah* items are in bold, bivalent elements are underlined, and the regular font is used for *fushḥā* items.

Lā ahāy, ma-ka-t'arfū-nā-š hīl sahaqtū-nā ṭahantū-nā hattà mā-bqīnā-š kāynīn bi-lā māhiyyah muḥaddad, bi-lā kaynūnah bi-lā rūh, ḥnā gī arqām, f 'l-iḥšā' wa arqām f-šundūq al-intihābāt, wa arqām 'inda mudīriyyat al-darā'ib, wa arqām 'inda šarikāt istiḡlāl al-mā' wa 'l-kahrabā', wa ḥnā gī ḥūšbīs f 'l-sbūārāt, wa gī būz bāl ḥašarāt f 'l-idārah, ḥnā ma-kāynīn-š²⁵.

No brothers, *you don't know us*, because *you have crushed us*, *you have shattered us*, so that *we are not alive anymore*, without a precise essence, without an entity, without a soul, *we are only numbers*, in statistics and numbers in the ballot boxes, numbers at the financial department, numbers at the water and electricity suppliers, *we are only miserable in hospital*, *only trash in the fields*, *only insects in the administration*, *we are non-existent*. [MS3, 05/11/2016]

In this extract, Socrate alternates *dāriḡah* expressions with *fushà* or bivalent elements. The distribution of varieties throughout the sentences emphasizes specific parts of discourse. In particular, Socrate uses *dāriḡah* morphosyntactic constructions, such as verbal negation (i.e. مكترع فوناش *ma-ka-t'arfū-nā-š* “you don't know us”), *dāriḡah* personal pronouns (i.e. حنا *ḥnā* “we”), prepositions (i.e. غي *gī* “only”), and a few slang words in *dāriḡah* (i.e. خوشيش *ḥūšbīs* “miserable” and بوزبال *būz bāl* “trash”) when speaking in the first-plural person: in this case he is identifying with the Moroccan people. This mechanism creates an intimate literary strategy that expresses the common *hogra* feeling, the disappointment caused by the defeat of the 20FebMo, and the concern for the future of *Hirak* Movement.

A similar practice can also be observed in Younes Aftit. Although he usually uses *fushà*, he adjusts his register according to the degree of objectivity of his writing: the more subjective his point of view is, the more informal his style, as in the example (3) below:

(3) قطعت المكالمة وفتحت الفايبيوك، إنه بضح بمحسن فكري، من هو محسن هذا، آآآآ كم هو متعب أن تعمل ليوم كامل وحين ترغب في الراحة لساعة أو ساعتين يأتيك البلاء من حيث لا تحتسب.

Qaṭa 't al-mukāmalah wa fataḥt al-fāyṣbūk, inna-hu yaḍiḡḡ bi-Muḥsin Fikrī, man huwa Muḥsin ḥāḍā, āāāāh kam huwa mut 'ib an ta 'mal li-yawm kāmil wa ḥīn tarḡab fī 'l-rāḡah li-sā 'ah aw sā 'atayn ya 'tik al-balā' min ḥaytu lā taḥtasib.

I closed the call and I opened Facebook, Mouhcine Fikri makes clamour, who is this Mouhcine? Aaaaaaaah how much tired you are for having

²⁵ This sample contains several items corresponding to *dāriḡah* and bivalent items, for instance حيث whose standard pronunciation should be *ḥaytu*. It should be noted that this item occurs in a morphosyntactic environment composed of structures clearly in *dāriḡah*; for this reason it is not possible to clearly establish its transcription (see also بلا *bi-lā* vs *blā*, حتى *hattà* vs *ḥattà*, and so on).

been working for a whole day and when you want to rest for an hour or two, here it is, the scourge that you did not count. [YA1, 03/11/2016]

In (3) Younes Aftit uses an informal and personal style that is remarkable for the use of interjections (i.e. *āh*), but also for the use of the second-singular person (i.e. no plural persons, see *ta‘mal* “you [2nd s.] work”, or *targab*, “you [2nd s.] want”, and the second-singular person of the suffix pronoun in a deictic function (i.e. *ya‘tik* “it comes to you”). All these features are typical of an informal context, closer to oral communication, but he does so using *fushà*.

When expressing objectivity, even though concerning the results of his personal interpretations of his investigation about the death of Mouhcine, his style is more formal, as in the following example:

(4) وأستطيع القول الآن بأن التغاضي عن هذا الصيد غير القانوني لم يكن مجانا، ولو كان كذلك لم
حجزت سلع محسن لوحده.

Wa astaṭī‘ al-qawl al-ān bi-anna al-taḡāḏī ‘an hādā al-ṣayd ḡayr al-qānūnī lam yakun maḡān^m, wa law kāna ka-ḏālik lam haḡazat sila‘ Muḡsin li-waḥḏi-hi.

I can now say that ignoring this illegal fishing did not come without a price, and even if it was not the case, Mouhcine should not have had to pay this price alone. [YA1 03/11/2016]

Although here Younes Aftit is using the first-person, he is reporting objective events in a formal style that reflects the structures of Standard Arabic.

Moreover, the conditional sentence expressing impossibility (*law kāna ka-ḏālik lam haḡazat* “and even if it was not the case, [Mouhcine] should not have had to pay”), without any prepositions between protasis and apodosis reflects contemporary practices of simplification of journalese writing²⁶.

From a linguistic point of view, it is possible to claim that *dāriḡah* and *fushà* are used to express different emotional meanings. Younes Aftit, who usually expresses himself in *fushà*, uses *dāriḡah* to emphasize anger and to advocate for human rights when he is addressing the authorities directly, as in the following example (5) where he disapproved of a video which showed Zefzafi (al-Zafzāfi), the spokesperson of the *Hirak* Movement, detained in prison in very poor conditions:

(5) وفي الاخير بغيت نقول للمسؤول لي دار هاد الخطوة، عندك الزهر الحكومة لي كتحكم فيك
بشكل مباشر معوقة، حقايش كون كانت حكومة ديال بصرح كان أول حاجة يدبرها وزير العدل
هي الامر بنقل الزفزافي لسجن آخر والقضاء يبديل الناس لي كيديرو معاه التحقيق، ولكن
مادارت حتى حاجة من هادشي.

²⁶ Also note the use of the particle *lam* as the negation for a verb with suffixal conjugation (*al-māḏī*), which is a feature of mixed varieties of Arabic in written production. Concerning conditional sentences in modern Arabic productions see Sartori (2019).

Wa jī 'l-aḥīr bġīt nqūl li 'l-mas'ūl lī dār hād al-ḥuṭwah, 'inda-ka al-zahr al-ḥukūmah lī ka-tḥəkm fī-ka bi-šakl mubāšir mu'avwiqah, ḥaqqāš kūn kānat ḥukūmah dyāl b-šahḥ kān awwal ḥāġah yadīru-hā wazīr al-'adl hiya al-amr bi-naql al-Zafzāfī li-siġn āḥar wa 'l-quḍāh yubaddil al-nās lī ka-ydīrū ma 'a-hu al-tahqīq, wa lākin mā-dārt ḥattā ḥāġah min hādšī²⁷.

And finally, *I want to say to the official who did it, you are in a cast iron, the government that judges you directly is stonewalling, whatever good government, would have a minister of justice that, first of all, must order to move Zefzafi to another prison, instead the judges remove people who do investigations with him, but nothing has been done for this.* [YA5, 11/07/2017]

As shown in the example (5), the use of *dāriġah* underlines the key passages which address the authorities directly; more specifically, Younes Aftit uses the first-person narration: in this case he is emphasizing his anger at the justice system, and demanding the defence of human rights (see his complaint about the lack of human respect towards the prisoner).

On the contrary, Socrate, as already shown, usually writes in *dāriġah* to identify with the Moroccan people and uses the 1st plural person for narration. Therefore, as opposed to Younes Aftit, when addressing Islamist parties, he uses different communicative strategies than Younis Aftit's ones, as shown in the following examples, (6) and (7):

(6) لا أحد يجادل في أحقية المغاربة فالمطالبة بحقوقهم سواء فالريف أو فزحليكة.

Lā aḥad yuġādil fī aḥaqqiyyat al-maġāribah f' l-muṭālibah bi-ḥuqūqi-him siwā' f' l-Rīf aw f-Ziḥīlikah.

Nobody quarrels with the right of the Moroccans to claim their rights in the Rif or Ezzhliga. [MS5, 24/05/2017]

(7) مكنديروش شي حاجة غلط ، هادي ماشي فتنة هادا وعي شعبي كبير وتنامي وعرف بلي أنه بصح كاينة رغبة حقيقية للإصلاح من طرف السلطة العليا بالبلاد.

Ma-ka-ndīrū-š šī ḥāġah ġalṭ, hādī māšī fitnah hādā wa 'y ša 'bī kabir wa tanāmā wa 'araf bəllī anna-hu b-šahḥ kāynah raġbah ḥaqqiyyah li 'l-išlāḥ min ṭaraf al-sulṭah al-'aliyya bi 'l-bilād²⁸.

We're not doing anything wrong; this is not a fitnah, this is a great popular awareness that has developed, and that knows that really, there is a real desire for reform from the supreme authority in the country. [MS5, 24/05/2017]

²⁷ Note bivalent items, for instance بشكل *bi-šakl* vs *b-šakl*, or *dāriġah* constructions for relative clauses as in هاد الخطوة *lī dār hād al-ḥuṭwah*, etc.

²⁸ Note also in this sample the bivalent items occurring in morphosyntactic environments, for instance غلط *ġalṭ* vs *ġalṭ*.

Therefore, Socrate expresses himself in *fušḥà* using the third person (6) when addressing the authorities (the Islamist parties in this case) and here the choice of the standard variety produces irony, especially because he shifts to *dāriḡah* in the first-plural person immediately after (7) when he claims fundamental rights underlining feelings of anger.

The last remark concerns script choices. All three authors use the Arabic script; nevertheless, occurrences of *e-darija* sporadically appear, as for example in the article YA3 by Younis Aftit, where he reports a *dāriḡah* expression used by a *Hirak* demonstrator in front of the judge who condemned him for separatism. The judge did not understand the expression that after that episode became widespread in all the country through a hashtag on Twitter and Facebook. Younis Aftit tries to explain the meaning of the expression in the following example (8):

(8) حين تجد أن منطقة بأكملها يستحيل أن تجد فيها عائلة ليس بها على الأقل مريض واحد
بالسرطان وأقرب مستشفى للتشخيص والعلاج يبعد بخمسمائة كيلومتر فإن جملة pik y'a
Waldi هي المناسبة.

حين تعلم أن المدينة ليس بها سينما ولا مسرح ولا مكتبة ولا دار للشباب فإنك مرة أخرى أمام
جملة pik y'a Waldi.

*Ḥīna taḡid anna minṭaqat^{an} bi-akmali-hā yastaḥīl an taḡid fī-hā 'ā'ilat^{an}
laysa bi-hā 'alā al-aqall marīd wāḥid bi 'l-saraṭān wa aqrab mustašfā li
'l-tašḥīš wa 'l-'ilāḡ yab'ad bi-ḥamsimi'at kilūmitr fa-inna ḡumlat pik y'a
Waldi hiya al-munāsibah.*

*Ḥīna ta'lam anna al-madīnah laysa bi-hā sīnimā wa lā masrah, wa lā makta-
bah, wa lā dār li 'l-šabāb fa-inna-ka marrah uḡrā amāma ḡumlat pik y'a
Waldi.*

When you see that in your area it's impossible to find a family in which there is not at least one cancer patient and the nearest hospital for diagnosis and treatment is 500 kilometers away, the sentence pik y'a Waldi is appropriate.

When you know that in the city there is not a single cinema, nor a theatre, nor a library or a house for the young you find yourself once again in front of the sentence pik y'a Waldi. [YA3 04/06/2017]

The expression, meaning “Come on!”, is written in Latin script in order to isolate it, and to highlight its bitter irony. Empathetically, this expression brings together Rif people by taunting the authorities. Resistance, once again, is expressed through the *hogra* feeling, which is conveyed through sarcasm and irony.

Conclusions

The present study shows that the expressions of resistance towards current political and social events in Morocco, emerging from “Goud”, vary mainly according to the language varieties and the individual communication strategies. *Fuṣḥà*, *dāriġah*, and mixed varieties coexist in “Goud”. The language choice is undoubtedly an individual and ideological preference of the authors, and each of them adopts different written practices in order to express their common *hogra* feeling through various modalities. The plurality of styles emerging from their writing can be separated into the categories of formal/informal or rational/sensational styles. These styles or registers serve the same purposes through different manifestations. For example, if Hamid Zaid generally uses *fuṣḥà* in satirical “literary” forms, Mohammed Socrate prefers *dāriġah* when sharing his feeling of belonging to the Moroccan people, whereas when addressing power and authorities, he usually switches to *fuṣḥà*. This kind of distance/proximity strategy in functional communication is underlined also in Socrate’s peculiar use of 1st versus 2nd or 3rd plural persons: his discourses in 1st plural person (often in *dāriġah*) underline (ideological) proximity to Moroccan people, the contrary is true when he uses 2nd or 3rd plural persons which express distance from authorities and consequent proximity to Moroccans. The opposite strategy in language variety choice is used by Younes Aftit, who prefers to use *dāriġah* when expressing his anger addressing authorities, while generally he uses *fuṣḥà* in a variety of styles ranging from formal to informal.

The most important aspect to consider is the emergence of mixed styles in “Goud”. As shown throughout the analysis, lexical *fuṣḥà* items are often mixed with *dāriġah* morphosyntactic constructions; the combination of the two varieties outlines both the presence of fuzzy morphosyntactic structures and the realization of mixed styles which display, as shown, several communicative functions. These peculiar linguistic choices influence the written practices of those who, like Socrate, claim to write in *dāriġah* only. In other words, a text that is supposedly entirely written in *dāriġah* inevitably shows *fuṣḥà* elements. This is equally due to the diglossic/triglossic continuum of the Arabic language and to the stylistic and communicative purposes of the authors. What is remarkable, however, is the ongoing development of “destandardisation”, i.e. «a development [...] where the validity of the standard is significantly challenged, in practice, as the sole variety for (public) written purposes» (Mejdell 2017: 70). Although *dāriġah* does not enjoy a prestigious linguistic status, nor it is commonly accepted as a potential standard (official) language, its “resistance” in the formal context of written online press is a growing phenomenon which needs deeper investigation. It is also thanks to editorial experiences such as “Goud”, that *dāriġah* undertook (and under-

takes) the process of informal codification (see conventionalization or “standardization from below”) through its extensive written use.

In conclusion, political and social expressions of resistance vehiculated in the analysed corpus, through the *hogra* feeling, gain communicative power with the combination of the two varieties. The increasingly visible presence of *dāriġah* and mixed forms of Arabic in (more or less) formal written production, such as online newspapers, could lead to a deeper consideration of social and political discourses, namely the way the public discourse reflects a (conscious/unconscious) change in language ideology and linguistic attitudes.

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