

Annual Report 2018

OIB ORIENT
INSTITUT
BEIRUT
المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية



The Orient-Institut Beirut (OIB) is an independent academic research institute, part of the Max Weber Foundation and mainly funded through the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in Germany. It conducts interdisciplinary research on the Arab world and the region of the Middle East and North Africa at large. Its research community comprises long-term research associates from Germany and short-term visiting fellows from all over the world, who represent the major disciplines of the humanities and social sciences, including Islamic and Arab studies, history and anthropology of West Asia, as well as sociology and political sciences. The OIB is a long-standing partner of academic institutions in Lebanon and the region at large. It aims to foster academic relations across the MENA region and increasingly conducts its research in transregional perspectives.

One of the great academic treasures of the OIB is its public research library, which holds important collections of books, journals and newspapers. It comprises around 130.000 volumes relating to Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies in the broad sense. The OIB publishes two major book series and additional titles through extra series. The institute engages with a larger academic community through regular research seminars, lecture series, international conferences and workshops. Local and international partnerships are crucial in designing and funding the institute's projects. In particular, the OIB is at the forefront of facilitating research collaborations between institutions in the Arab world and institutions in Germany and Europe. It thereby seeks to encourage innovative academic perspectives on the region.

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Director's Address

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER



The OIB is looking back at a both fruitful and eventful year 2018. So is Lebanon at large. After the severe crisis of Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri's forced resignation while in Saudi-Arabia had been solved, preparations for the long awaited elections could resume, amidst a rather severe economic crisis, which prompted one out of three Lebanese to think about leaving the country, according to polls.

The parliamentary elections finally took place on 6 May 2018. This was the first legislative election held since 2009, after the poll had been postponed in 2013, 2014 and 2017 for different reasons. An electoral law adopted in 2017 introduced proportional representation in the country for the first time in history. Elections went smoothly, by and large, with a voter turnout of about 50 percent. Many women voters could be seen in the streets, and 111 female candidates out of a total of 976 were campaigning for seats amidst a number of challenges.

After 9 months of negotiations, a new national unity government was finally announced. The new government, headed by Prime Minister Saad Hariri, includes 30 ministers from most Lebanese political factions. For the first time in the Arab world the Ministry of the Interior went to a woman, Ms Raya Haffar El-Hassan. Within the realm of international politics, Lebanon saw two high profile political visits from Germany during the year. In January, President Steinmeier's visit marked the first state visit of a German head of state after Emperor Wilhelm II came in 1898.

Mr Steinmeier gave a lecture at the Lebanese University to students and faculty during his visit. He was accompanied by the DAAD president, Margret Wintermantel. Only 5 months later, Chancellor Merkel headed an economic delegation and was accompanied by members of the German parliament. Both visits show the importance Lebanon is given in German (and European) politics.

In terms of its scholarly and in-house activities, the OIB stepped up its efforts to devise new activities and projects. A prolonged discussion process among the long-term researchers of the OIB in the previous year had yielded the new broad research profile of "relations" in order to generate innovative research questions and fields among the institute's wider research community. Instead of adding up existent research topics into "clusters", this approach has the advantage of creating a common, rather broad discursive space, thereby giving researchers the chance to link their research in various ways to these broader fields of enquiry.

At the same time, the profile is also broad enough to simply house research projects and discuss them within wide parameters.

We divided the broader research profile of "relations" into the four sub-fields of "humans and their relations with other humans", "humans and their relations with the environment", "humans and their relations with their own productions", and "humans and their relations with the divine". These subfields allow for both a focused and wide-ranging conversation between the OIB's research community, which is made up of its very own researchers as well as its visiting fellows, and also some of the scholars giving public research seminars. At the same time, the mesh of the four subfields creates overlaps, thereby enabling dynamic links between the sub-themes of the larger research profile while creating new webs of enquiry. The graphic makes the approach and the various projects and overlaps visible (see p. 10).

Best exemplifying this new approach is perhaps the topic of "neighborhood–neighborliness" as the research topic of the year 2018, which generated its own activities and brought members of the OIB's research community into close contact and exchange. A group of several research associates, a visiting fellow, and the director travelled to the World Congress for Middle East Studies in Seville, to present their research within this framework (and, as an added bonus, to take the opportunity to inform participants of the Congress about the OIB's mission and scholarly work and meet up with the Institute's alumni). The neighborhood topic was taken further in the format of a Weber World Café later in the year in Berlin, city of "Kietzes", in cooperation with the Max Weber Foundation, the Zentrum Moderner Orient, and the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Combining the neighborhood perspective with the topic of reconstruction, a three-day international conference on *Reconstructing Neighborhoods of War* was held at the OIB. It brought together the OIB's research community and international presenters. The rather unusual combination of the two concepts, neighborhood and reconstruction, made for an interesting (inter)disciplinary mix of participants and generated quite some interest in Beirut, Lebanon and the region at large.

The neighborhood-neighborliness theme also attracted applications from international and regional scholars who brought their own research into this conversation. CHAFIKA OUAIL joined us from Algeria, working on a project called "neighborliness as a spiritual paradigm". SHERIF YOUNES from Cairo gave a talk on neighborly relations in the political thought of Gamal Abdel-Nasser. Interest in the neighborhood topic was so vivid that some activities (a conference with the University of Balamand, for example, and the Stiftungskonzferenz of the Max Weber Foundation) will carry over into the next year.

For its Cairo office, the OIB's research focus is "humans and their relations with the environment". A conference was organized on *Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage. Interdisciplinary approaches to nature and environmental history in Arabic and Islamic discourses*, financed and co-organized by the DAAD's Cosimena program. Co-operations with Egyptian universities are in the making.

This broad profile on "relations" and its four sub-fields thus created academically innovative and intellectually productive overlapping webs. All in all, a circle of resonating conversations and fields of enquiry provided an integrative framework and a chance for everybody to relate to the new research profile in different degrees of intensity.

In house, we also tried out new forms of working together, for example in a gardening event, where both researchers and all other staff members rolled up their sleeves to make the OIB's famous garden even more attractive by planting colorful flower pots. A little later in the year, we also had to redecorate the terrace and its gazebo, as the library's storage premises underneath the terrace had been penetrated by tree roots and water had leaked in. MONIQUE BELLAN and NIRVANA GHANDOUR helped the director in choosing a modern design that plays on older Arabesque patterns.

Before these works started, the OIB took the opportunity to organize a summer festival for soccer and world championship enthusiasts who first listened eagerly to a public talk about the history and politics of Beirut's very own Nejme football club (which was temporarily coached by a German trainer who attended the event). Among the new activity formats was a trip to Erfurt University by a group of the associate researchers from the OIB to take part in the first joint workshop with the Max-Weber Kolleg there.

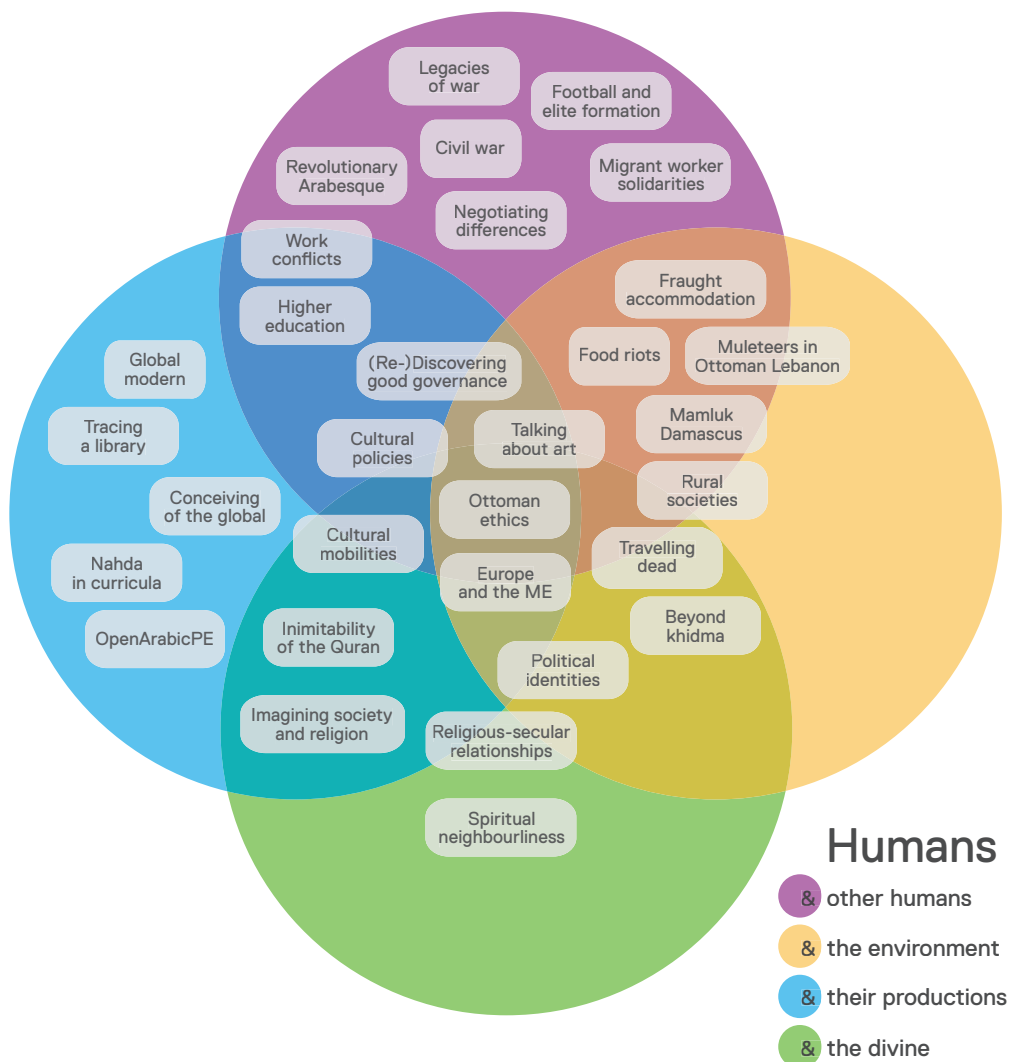
The OIB has long been an important partner on the Lebanese research scene. This role was further enhanced when it took the lead in cooperating with the DAAD and the Lebanese University in order to initiate a DAAD longterm lectureship position at the LU's Doctoral School for Humanities and Social Sciences, the first foreign position there, with an organizational connection to the OIB.

Together with the Arab Council of Social Sciences (ACSS), the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, and Lebanon Support (a local NGO), the OIB admits and welcomes the holder of a new postdoctoral fellowship to participate in its research community. Last but not least, we are proud to announce that our new research project, "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern students in the Eastern Block (1950s–1991)", which is part of a project of the Max Weber Foundation on "knowledge without borders", will receive generous funding from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and will begin in 2019. Hans Robert Roemer fellow OLGA NEFEDOVA and public lecture presenter ZAUR GASIMOV will bring their research to this project.

Two more applications were submitted in 2018 to funding agencies and we await their decisions.

Needless to say: None of all this would have been possible without the hard work of each and every member of the OIB throughout the year for which I am very thankful.

Birgit Schäbler



Graphic depicting research at the OIB within the research profile of relations.





Research

Research

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Humans & other humans

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Women in the Streets //

A Genealogy of Food Riots in the Middle East, 1734–1943

TILL GRALLERT

AUGUST 2014 – NOVEMBER 2020



In my last report I put forward the argument – based on long-term data sets of food riots and food prices across *Bilād al-Shām* – that food riots were neither particularly *riotous* nor predominantly concerned with *food*. Instead, the demand for bread had a largely symbolic value and protests shared *claims* and *forms* to an extent that allows us to speak of a shared and stable "repertoire of contention". Charles Tilly's idea of certain readily available routines allows us to make sense of the protestors' seemingly paradoxical choices: They protested despite the threat of violent retribution and addressed the ruling powers with the demand to (re-)assert their authority over the marketplace despite the authorities' apparent inability either to prevent protest or to enforce any meaningful price control. Protestors could resort to the repertoire of *food riots* in negotiations over political legitimacy *within* the existing political order based on the provision of *just rule* and *safety of life*.

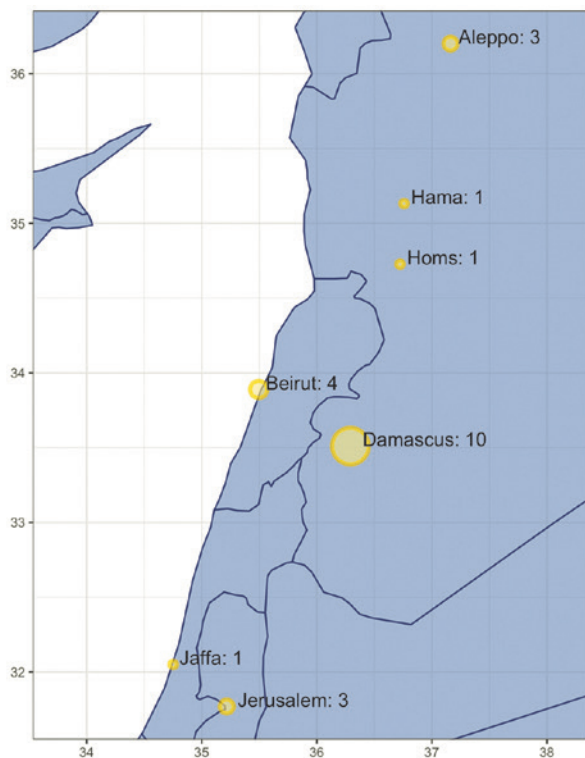
Taking a sample of twenty-three food riots in Ottoman *Bilād al-Shām* between 1855 and 1916 (see figure), this repertoire may be broken down into a sequence of events that occurred in three phases: a prologue of artificially high prices and "inspiring" events conducive to popular protest; the food riot itself that never lasted through the night but could be repeated over several days; and the immediate aftermath of less than a month during which the authorities tried to contain the anger through (largely symbolic) investigations and administrative measures.

In the following, I will focus on the prologue and its relevance for the legitimacy of protest. Prohibitive cereal prices were commonly portrayed as artificially high and they were blamed on greedy merchants seeking undue profits from export or hoarding, thus draining the local market. Newspapers went to some lengths to emphasise the sinister machinations of the grain merchants, addressing them as "hoarders" (*muḥtakirūn*) and the "lords of greed" (*arbāb al-maṭāmi'*) who conspired to form monopolies (*ista'thara*) and cartels (*i'taṣaba*). This kind of discourse had the important side effect, if not purpose, of justifying state intervention in the marketplace that was otherwise prohibited under Islamic law. Yet, the argument went, since the state was tasked with protecting a properly functioning market and the fair exchange of commodities that would result in a just price (together known as *ḥisba*), any unfair influence exerted by stockpiling merchants would legitimise and necessitate the setting of a price ceiling (*narkh*). Many sources emphasise that criticism of the merchants' illegal actions had

been raised through well-established channels such as petitions, before anything of a violent nature happened.

Protestors then made tactical decisions about the timing of a *food riot* proper – one that would ensure the high visibility of the protest, draw larger crowds of protestors, avoid violent retribution and cause maximum embarrassment to the authorities by clearly referencing the state's claim to legitimacy. People usually took to the streets on Fridays, when towns were crowded with worshippers and shoppers; in close temporal proximity to religious and state holidays, when towns were the stage for large, state-sponsored and affirmative public rituals that displayed a model *of* and *for* society, based on the Ottoman circle of justice and good governance; and after changes in administrative personnel, when a new governor (*mutaṣarrif*) or governor-general (*vali*) were not yet able to rely on local networks of support or command the full loyalty of the local garrison.

The common term used for reporting food riots in the press was the generic "incident" (*ḥāditha*). Only in the relatively rare instances of food riots turning violent did witnesses refer to a battle (*ma'raka*), such as the one in Aleppo in 1910, or even *thawra* (rebellion, revolt) and *fitna* (strife), as in Hama and Homs the same year. Those were loaded terms that clearly marked the events as illegitimate. However, Beirut's Lisān al-Ḥāl acknowledged that the violent food riot and looting in Homs was "a rebellion of empty stomachs" (*thawrat al-buṭūn al-fāghira*).



Map of food riots in Bilād al-Shām, 1855–1916.

TILL GRALLERT, CC BY-SA 4.0.

History Writing at Lebanese Universities //

Dynamics of connectivity under the impact of reform, innovation and political change

JONATHAN KRIENER

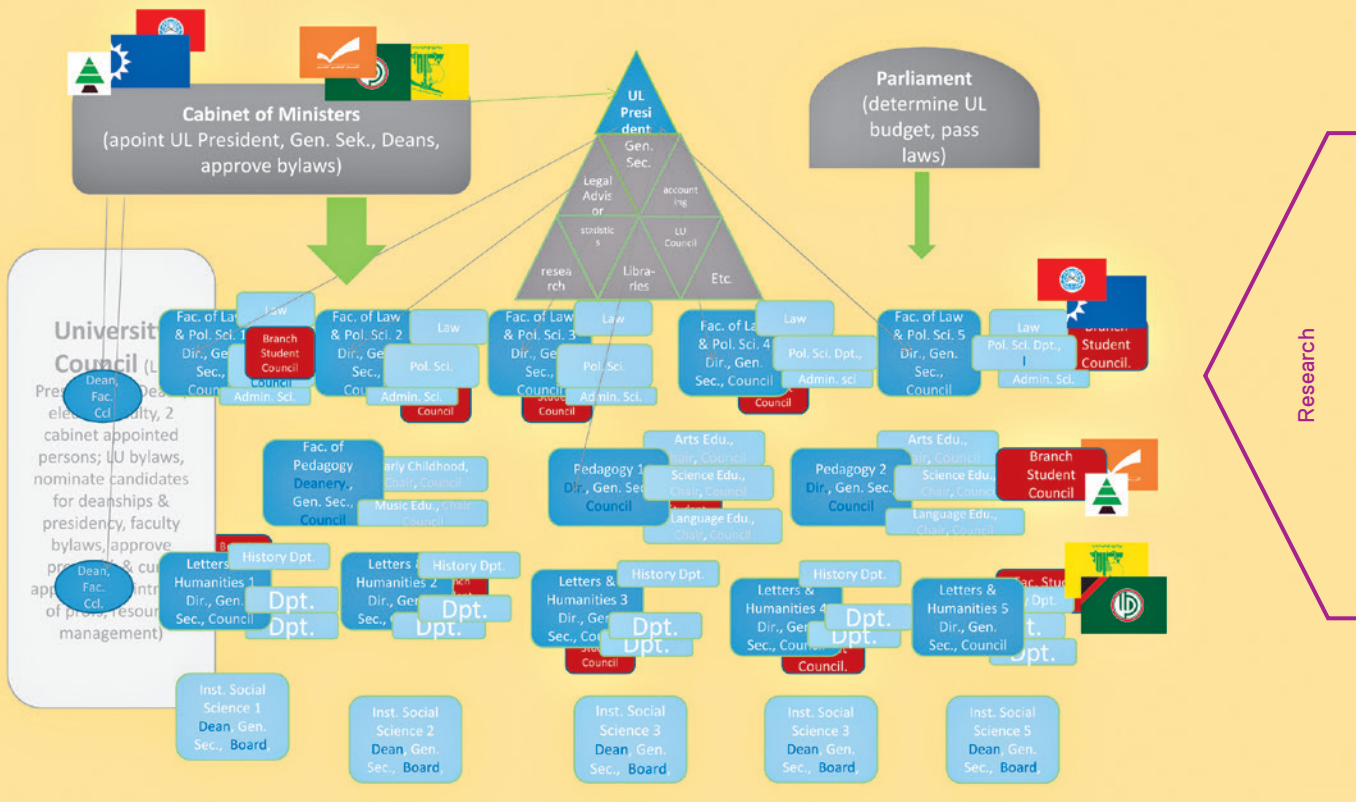
OCTOBER 2015 – SEPTEMBER 2018



Few institutions illustrate both the blessings and the curses of neighbourhood relations as clearly as the Lebanese University (UL): From its foundation in the 1950s, it was designed to become an alternative to Lebanon's upper-class universities of French and American sponsorship and to provide Lebanon with an elite of merit. Hence it was concentrated in Beirut, Lebanon's political and cultural capital. Over the decades, UL has increased considerably the upward social mobility of the Lebanese lower middle classes.

In the 1970s, the civil war prompted UL to branch out into many parts of Beirut and the Lebanese periphery. In that way, it became easily accessible for those living in smaller towns in the five governorates (*muḥāfaẓāt*) near one of its presently more than forty campuses. At the same time, for those studying at UL, its proximity to their homes has removed the incentive to move away from their family of origin and to get deeply involved with academic life and culture.

Moreover, UL's fragmentation also facilitated the quick and direct impact of clans (*'ashā'ir*), political parties and religious stakeholders on academic work and campus life. Academic self-administration, i.e. the university council and faculty councils, never fully recovered from the blow suffered by this fragmentation. Non-academic actors interfere with the distribution of resources and positions. Therefore, multiple articulations of enmeshment with the surroundings of each campus exist today, while the average student experiences relatively little social and cultural diversity on campus. The various campuses apply their particular socio-cultural parameters of teaching, academic (self-) restraint, distribution of resources etc. depending on the socio-cultural composition of their neighbourhood, which is reflected in the composition of their student body and faculty (see figure). As a consequence of Lebanon's broad socio-cultural diversity and socio-geographical fragmentation, teaching and exams, although following a central curriculum, are of widely different character depending on the branch in which they take place. Also, at least since the civil war, doctoral research is increasingly centred on parochial themes in local fields. These facts along with their costs and consequences have been frequently raised in the press and other media.



Governance structure of UL, 1992 to 2014. The graph represents only four out of 19 of UL's faculties with their respective branches: Law & Political Science, Pedagogy, Literature & Humanities, and the Institute of Social Science. The party flags on the right margin represent random composition of dominant political forces on a given branch campus, here *Future Movement* & PSP, *Katā'ib* & FPM, AMAL & Shia Islamists. In other branches composition can be different, e.g. Future Movement and AMAL and Shia Islamists, or only one dominant party.

©JONATHAN KRIENER

Although plans have been drafted to reunite UL, this is unlikely to happen because it would demand a reduction in the number of positions and resources on which a large number of individuals and networks rely. Some participants in the debate about reform have acknowledged this, and hence they argue that UL might fare better if its parts established themselves as independent institutions.

Europe and the Middle East

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER

SINCE OCTOBER 2017



Three research projects were generated within this framework during the last year. First, concerning my recent book *Moderne Muslime. Ernest Renan und die Geschichte der ersten Islamdebatte 1883*, which brought together the issues of 19th century transregional reform movements in the Muslim world/Islam and Orientalist discourses, an English translation of the book is in the making. A translation into Arabic was commissioned following the suggestions of colleagues after my inaugural public lecture given at the OIB. Most of the original texts of the book are not known at all in the Arab world. Apart from these projects, Ernest Renan and his exploits in Lebanon are still on the research agenda, as are global Islamic reform movements.

The second project concerns relations of knowledge and the space they create. It is well known that tens of thousands of students from the Middle East went to study in the former Eastern Bloc. The Eastern Bloc is a space created by a common ideology, an "ideoscape" (Appadurai). The project *Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc (1950s–1991)* traces and studies the complex relationships which were forged through the mobility/migration of students from the Middle East and North Africa to these countries (PPR, CSSR, GDR, USSR). These relationships have often been highly persistent, far beyond the end of the Cold War. The political topicality and high relevance of such a relationship is in some cases obvious today. With the opening of the archives in Russia and other countries of the former Eastern Bloc, research is now possible alongside private archives and oral history in the countries of the Middle East. An application was submitted as part of a larger research project of the Max Weber Foundation.

Third, the topic of neighborhood-neighborliness is an especially apt topic for the quarter in which the OIB is located, Zokak al-Blat, as well as for Beirut and Lebanon at large. Neighbourhood relations differ from other kinds of relations in that they are primarily defined by space. It is spatial closeness which defines neighbours and neighbourhoods. What is more, the spatial relation is more or less an enforced one – in most cases neighbours are not chosen but already there when people move and newly arrive. The concept of "neighborliness" captures both the social and the spatial aspect perfectly and has not been studied much. It can very fruitfully be analyzed in transregional and global perspectives, with a special focus on encounters with Europe.



Foreign Students
in Moscow in 1985.
Among them Talal
Al Nagar (b. 1964,
front row, far left),
student of the Vasily
Surikov Moscow State
Art Institute.

PERSONAL ARCHIVE
OF TALAL AL NAGAR.

Negotiating Difference //

Contemporary theological approaches to religious diversity in Lebanon

STEFAN MANEVAL

OCTOBER 2017 – MARCH 2018



Lebanon's history of armed conflict and war between societal groups has prompted Christian and Muslim theologians alike to promote interreligious dialogue, reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. As collective identities in Lebanon are also defined in religious terms, theologians increasingly consider it their responsibility to counter the trend of using religious identities to construct and mobilise against an enemy. This endeavour entails a theological challenge as arguments for the acceptance of religious plurality must be grounded in, and derived from, one's own religious tradition. Yet, how can one believe in a certain truth that significantly informs one's own individual and collective identity without denying the validity of other systems of truth? And how can one be firm in one's own belief if there are other religions challenging it by offering different perspectives on the origins and destiny of the world, on right and wrong and the conditions of social life?

My research focuses on contemporary Lebanese Christian and Muslim attempts at answering these questions. At the core of these approaches there is more than a theological conundrum: While writing from different religious perspectives, the authors whose texts are investigated in this project share a concern for developing strategies for the acceptance of human difference. Their thoughts and views thus have a wider socio-political relevance.

Although prominent Lebanese theologians for more than three decades have published their thoughts on what is here referred to as the challenge of religious diversity, or the Theology of Religions, their approaches are largely unknown in the West. My project aims at closing this gap in research by analysing Sunni, Shii and various Christian approaches to religious diversity and acceptance of the "Other".

Notre-Dame du
Liban, Harissa,
2016.
The Marian
shrine of Our
Lady of Lebanon
is a pilgrimage
site and place
of worship for
Muslims and
Christians alike.
©STEFAN MANEVAL



Football, Contestation and Elite Formation in Beirut

MUZNA AL-MASRI

FEBRUARY – JULY



On 13 April 2010, the Cité Sportive in Beirut witnessed one of its most viewed televised, though poorly played matches. In an effort to demonstrate "national unity", Lebanese politicians of different political ranks and backgrounds played a thirty-minute friendly football match with the slogan "we are all one team". This took place on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the start of the fifteen-year Lebanese civil war. Yet in a stadium with the capacity to accommodate 40,000 spectators, only a few selected fellow politicians and a large number of media personnel were present at the match itself. The ban on spectators was not unique to this match as fans in Lebanon had been banned from attending most football matches between 2006 and 2010, after a series of clashes between supporters of different political groups. Particularly during that period, sport was an area of mobilisation for support of the same politicians who, in their match, claimed to be capable of overcoming their differences. In every respect, the match provided a caricature of the Lebanese political scene at the time; a private-sector sponsored media event in which cooperation and competition were performed by politicians simultaneously and contradictorily.

Like the politicians on the pitch, I approached sports via my interest in politics and I worked with the football community and, in particular, with the Nejme Sports Club. Nejme, the most popular football club in Lebanon and one of Beirut's oldest, was a stage on which Beirutis of various social classes and political interests interacted over an extended period of time. In the year 2003, it came under the patronage of the late Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, the "leader of the Sunna par excellence" in the post-war period (Abdel-Latif 2008), and it was later plagued by internal divisions that paralleled political crises at national level. During my fieldwork, the club's stadium was even used as the site for the declaration of the Hariri candidacy for the parliamentary election and the electoral list for Beirut's seats that he headed. My project seeks to understand, from within the Nejme community, elite formation and negotiation in post-war Lebanon, looking specifically at the model of an entrepreneurial elite which Hariri exemplified; at the large-scale performative use of wealth in politics, business and philanthropy which weds neoliberal economic policies to the myth of an ability to make dreams come true with the long established clientelistic and sectarian networks.



Graffiti at the entrance to Beirut's Municipal Stadium.

©MUZNA AL-MASRI

While a postdoctoral fellow at the OIB, I have drafted a book proposal and two of the book's chapters. I presented one of the chapters at the research forum of the Arab Council for Social Sciences in Amman, where I explored the role of the electoral process in projecting a sense of democratisation and in performing the bureaucratic state, while strengthening the clientelist habitus of the political elite, wherein electoral rallies and machines are an opportunity for the performative expenditure of money and the forging of sectarian political sentiment and a sense of community among supporters. I gave a public talk at the OIB entitled "Nejmeh, the Troubled Club: football and politics in Lebanon" which was followed by a viewing of the opening game of the FIFA World Cup. Following this talk I had the opportunity to engage with a broader public audience on the intersection of sports and politics, including writing an op-ed for the Lebanese daily L'Orient-Le Jour and giving media interviews to both BBC Arabic Television and L'Orient-Le Jour.

Recognition, Endurance, Flourishing //

Migrant worker solidarities and the creation of community in Lebanon

FUAD MUSALLAM

SEPTEMBER 2018 – MARCH 2019



The broad aim of my research project is to investigate the ways in which migrant workers in Lebanon cope collectively with their present conditions and attempt to create a better future for themselves. They do so in a context of almost no economic and social rights under Lebanese law and within a sponsorship system, the *kafāla*, that delegates care and surveillance from the state to individual employers. As it is, the few rights that migrant workers have are regularly violated, and this with impunity. Historically, migrant workers' social and communal relations have been based upon prior national, religious, kin or linguistic associations. In recent years, however, migrant workers in Lebanon have begun to create new forms of community that explicitly work across these boundaries. The Migrant Community Centres are one key example: run by migrant workers since 2011 alongside Lebanese activists, they constitute their own spaces in the city and promote the possibility of mutual aid and recognition.

If we seek to understand collective social and political organisation under enshrined norms and legal structures of inequality, we must do so by thinking about the spaces that can be kept open for effective action by the subjects of those unequal systems. In the past few years, a number of researchers have engaged in this kind of ethnographic, experiential and micro-level examination of migrant workers' social (and, sometimes, political) lives. Across the Middle East, the interactions under discussion are based on a prior national, kin or linguistic association, and the solidarities thus produced are located within the frame of a constant migratory cycle.

In contrast, the phenomena that I am currently researching in Lebanon appear to entail substantively new engagements that explicitly work across these boundaries, predicated on an experience of permanence in the host state. Importantly, the *kafāla* and broader structures of legal inequality – alongside an NGO sector primed to shine light on (female, domestic) workers – have been used by migrant workers to make space for their own forms of organisation. If states shift the burden of surveillance onto employers, then, potentially, this also allows workers to find sponsors who will permit greater latitude. Within such a context, migrant workers can in effect run spaces such as community centres using a proxy Lebanese or Western national's signature on official documents, or reside on their own and with their own families. Furthermore, such messiness affords the possibility of a form of permanent residence, often only semi-legal and always precarious. Based on my previous research and interactions with migrants at sites

My fellowship here at the OIB has allowed me to begin new fieldwork with migrant workers at the Community Centres, at cultural events, while they travel across the city and in their homes. Given the mixture of transience and precarious permanence that seems to mark migrant experience in Lebanon, I became interested in exploring the relationship of migrant workers to this recent history of community creation. To this end, I began preparations to help Migrant Community Centres archive their material history. These preparations have drawn on recent work on participatory archiving practices, alongside the example of a number of "living archives" of ongoing political projects that I was able to visit in the United Kingdom before taking up my fellowship. In collaboration with members, I will begin to work through the Centres's records in the new year. The immediate aim of this collaborative effort is to produce a display of "Key moments in the history of the MCC" from the perspective of those who set them up and use them, to be housed in one of the Centres.



Poster publicising International Domestic Workers Day 2018 on Hamra Street, a principle thoroughfare in Lebanon's capital, Beirut.

Revolutionary Arabesque //

Palestinian groups and the West German radical left, 1956–1982

JOSEPH BEN PRESTEL

OCTOBER 2017 – MARCH 2018



In the spring of 1970, *al-Ḥurriyya*, the Beirut-based periodical of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP), published on its front cover the picture of a pro-Palestinian demonstration in Heidelberg. Readers found a six-page article on the topic of "The West German Left and the Palestinian Resistance Movement" in the issue, highlighting particularly the cooperation between students in Heidelberg and the PDFLP. The article is part of a number of Palestinian publications that discussed the relations with leftist groups in the Federal Republic during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These texts, which appeared in various periodicals like *Shu'ūn Filastīniyya*, *al-Ḥurriyya* and *al-Hadaf*, not only offered insight into the trajectory of support for Palestinian groups in West Germany, but they also provided information on the specificities of Palestinian activities in the country – from German stereotypes about Palestinians to the social composition of the Palestinian diaspora in West Germany. Not least, these sources shed light on the increasing ties and exchanges between actors in places like Heidelberg and Beirut. The article in *al-Ḥurriyya* contained, for instance, an Arabic translation of a call for a pro-Palestinian demonstration that had appeared a few weeks earlier in *Rote Kommentare*, a publication of the German Socialist Student League's (SDS) branch in Heidelberg.

My research project *Revolutionary Arabesque: Palestinian Groups and the Radical Left in West Germany, 1956–1982* focuses on these ties and exchanges. It seeks to provide a new vista on West German–Palestinian relations through a combined study of German and Arabic-language archives. Palestinian groups play a prominent role in the historiography of the Federal Republic. From the travels of armed groups like the Red Army Faction to Palestinian camps in the Middle East to Palestinian–German friendship festivals at universities, historians have highlighted how the Israeli–Palestinian conflict affected West German history in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, however, historical research on this phenomenon has barely taken Arabic-language sources into account. By adding a new perspective from documents like the article in *al-Ḥurriyya*, my project probes how the particular focus of German national history has shaped findings about the history of West German–Palestinian relations.

As *Revolutionary Arabesque* moves beyond a national framework, the project aims at contributing to a burgeoning field of research that looks at Palestinian politics in the context of the rise of a new global left in the 1960s and early 1970s. Recent studies have stressed, for instance, the interactions between Palestinian groups and other "progressive" actors at the time, including the Black Panther Party, the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) or the Cuban government. By situating West German-Palestinian relations in this context, my project also examines the specificity of Palestinian politics in the Federal Republic. Which role did West Germany play within the worldwide rise of pro-Palestinian solidarity movements? How did Palestinian and West German actors relate activities in places like Heidelberg or Frankfurt to dynamics in Lebanon, France or the United States?

In order to answer these questions, *Revolutionary Arabesque* draws on a variety of published and unpublished sources in German and Arabic including periodicals, autobiographies, archival records as well as oral history interviews. My post-doctoral fellowship at the OIB made possible archival research in the holdings of the Institute for Palestine Studies, the OIB's library and the American University of Beirut.



Poster for a "Palestinian-German Friendship Festival" in West Berlin in 1975.

PALESTINE POSTER PROJECT/INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL HISTORY.

Legacies of War //

The transformation of the Lebanese Forces militia into a political party

PETER BLANK

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER



Continuing my research at the OIB and conducting interviews with former (including recent) members of the Lebanese Forces, during my recent stay I was especially interested in structural developments of the organisation, both during the civil war and in the post-war period, for which no official organisation charts existed. Because hierarchies are often not easily explained orally, interviewees were asked to draw an organigram of the group, locating the interviewee's position and showing the relations between different groups and individuals as well as chains of command at different levels of the hierarchy. This attempt proved to be fruitful as it helped interviewees to explain historical experiences by visualising personal memories; it also facilitated the interviewer's understanding. The charts drawn by each interviewee enabled the interviewer to track the structural developments of the organisation over several decades and helped me to analyse the transformation of the militia into a political party. It also facilitated the analysis of the relocation of power within the group, shifts in membership and recruitment as well as the tracing of individual biographies over specific time periods. Finally, it helped to uncover the structural legacy and continuity of the militia organisation in the contemporary Lebanese Forces party.

The main part of my field research was dedicated to conducting interviews with party members, former combatants, academics, journalists and activists. In the course of my two months' stay, I conducted more than thirty interviews that included the majority of the party's current leadership as well as many former leaders and high-ranking members of the civil war period. Most of the interviews were conducted in the predominantly Christian regions of Kesrwan, Metn, North Lebanon, East Beirut and Jezzine. A minor part of my field research was dedicated to collecting documents, newspaper articles and magazines published by the Lebanese Forces and other institutions in public libraries and private archives as well as undertaking participant observation of party gatherings and events.

The legacy of the war and official narrative by the Lebanese Forces, showing the founder of the Lebanese Forces ("the promise"), Bashir Gemayel, and today's president of the party, Samir Geagea ("the fulfillment").

JEITAWI, ACHRAFIEH, BEIRUT.



"This country isn't for us" // On the lives and livelihoods of Syrian *shabāb* in Lebanon's Beqaa valley

SAM DINGER

SEPTEMBER 2018 – APRIL 2019



My dissertation research project explores how – in practical, material and ethical terms – young Syrian men in Lebanon's Beqaa valley build and sustain lives under conditions of indefinite displacement. Syrian men have laboured in Lebanon for generations, but the ongoing civil war has radically altered the mobilities, life-course expectations and future horizons that once underpinned this migratory process. Based on the mundane realities and everyday dilemmas faced by Syrian men living in the central Beqaa, my research poses three sets of questions: First, how do young, male Syrians think about and secure income, shelter and mobility? How do networks of connection and exchange among and between Syrians and Lebanese – involving friends, acquaintances and kin as well as employers, landlords, neighbours and other intermediaries – shape practices of accommodation and exclusion? Second, how do these men imagine the present and future and practice friendship, love and intimacy in unsettled times? What forms of intimacy, solidarity and tension emerge in their social relationships? And third, how are residual elements of the past – both past lives in Syria and decades of labour migration and conflict in Lebanon – embedded in these practices of connection and embodied, actualised and re-signified in interaction? I am answering these questions through ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth biographical interviews with Syrian and Lebanese residents of the central Beqaa municipality of Taalabaya, supplemented with historical data from local Arabic-language newspaper archives based in Zahlé. During my stay at the OIB, I am completing the first seven months of fieldwork in what will ultimately be an eighteen-month ethnographic project. In dialogue with interdisciplinary literature on hospitality and humanitarianism, masculinity and marginality, and survival and urban life, my research aims to extend the study of displacement by considering how notions of hospitality and suspicion intersect – in specific lives, situations and interactions – with other practices and discourses of connection, including those of kinship, reciprocal help, obligation, patronage, profit-seeking and survival.

The Travelling Dead // Syrians in Lebanon and the political economy of a proper death

FOROOGH FARHANG

SEPTEMBER 2018 – FEBRUARY 2019



The seven years of Syrian civil war have seen a massive migration of Syrians fleeing to Lebanon from their hometowns. As the first refugee community in Lebanon with no formal camps and cemeteries, Syrians have faced increasingly stark challenges securing one of the scarce burial sites and holding a proper funeral for their dead. In my ongoing ethnographic fieldwork, I attempt to understand how Syrians negotiate proper burials for their loved ones and how, through these alternative modes of burial, new relations between communities are cultivated as well as a new understanding of life, future and belonging. How do alternative modes of burial cause a shift in Syrians' perceptions of community, homeland and belonging? What legal, socio-economic, political and religious factors shape the networks of Syrians' travelling dead within the borders of Lebanon and en route from Lebanon to Syria?

Seeking to answer these questions, I have been conducting multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in three main locations in Lebanon, namely Beirut, different towns and cities in the North Governorate, and Bar Elias in the East. Employing participant observation, semi-structured interviews and life histories, I have collected data from Syrians of both immigrant and refugee status, Lebanese locals and the staff and authorities of state and non-state organisations. I will complement these findings with the content analysis of archival and media documents. By observing the interactions between Lebanese and Syrians, and between the staff of state and non-state organisations and Syrians, I have further documented different temporary and long-term connections and networks shaped by the burial crisis. This information will be accompanied by observations on funerary practices, their religious and sectarian implications – and perhaps transgressions – and the modes of exchange and care that arise in the preservation of ritual aspects of proper burials. Through this focused methodological design, my study aims to provide a nuanced image of the relations, values and meanings that emerge in times of crisis and scarcity of resources.

An unknown Syrian refugee's grave plot in Bhannin, the North Governorate of Lebanon.

©FOROOGH FARHANG



Minority Communities in Times of Conflict // Civil war in Lebanon and Syria

SEAN LEE

SEPTEMBER 2018 – MARCH 2019



My dissertation research examines the group dynamics of minority populations during times of violent conflict. By undertaking a comparative analysis of case studies drawn from the conflicts in Lebanon and Syria, I investigate how and why minority groups decide to join a conflict, stay on the sidelines, go it alone or flee. The populations I am studying are Druze and Armenian communities in Lebanon and Druze and Kurdish communities in Syria. Through in-depth interviews, focus groups and archival data, I reconstruct the wartime histories of these minority communities and show the effects of pre-war communal institutions and wartime narratives. I find that these pre-war communal institutions help these groups act collectively in times of war as they structure the options available to them in navigating the conflict. I also find that wartime narratives of what the conflict is about and how minority communities fit (or do not fit) into the primary ruptures of the war influence how these communities perceive threat and navigate the conflict.

My time at the OIB has been spent consulting Lebanese newspaper archives from the mid-1970s in order to supplement focus group and interview data that I had collected previously, while working on other shorter projects. These include a book chapter on the tensions between democratic confederalism and state-building practices in Kurdish-controlled northern Syria and an analysis of the diffusion of the "war on terror" rhetoric in the international system based on an analysis of the discourse used by the Syrian government when referring to its opponents in the civil war.

Assessing Labour Arrangements in a Large Retail Chain in Lebanon //

Lebanese and migrant workers among free and unfree labour

MICHELE SCALA

OCTOBER 2017 – MAY 2018



Research

Labour market mobility is considered a main element in determining the degree of freedom/coercion of a working relationship (Moulier-Boutang 1999). Workers' freedom of movement within the labour market as opposed to relations of personal dependency possibly leading to various degrees of coercion including forced labour, is indeed among the pillars of the capitalist economy. The "precariat" itself, based on volatile employer–employee relations, appears nowadays as one extreme consequence of the enhanced flexibility requested by both private and public companies in order to compete in the global market (Standing 2014). In my enquiry, I investigate labour arrangements within a large retail chain operating in Lebanon to show how relations of personal dependency can serve the economic purposes of a multinational company better in a specific socio-political context. More precisely, through in-depth interviews and direct observation, I will show how flexible contracts and "just-in-time" daily and seasonal work that result in precarious social and economic working relationships can be arranged without allowing workers actual freedom of mobility within the labour market.

For Lebanese workers, the contractual arrangement is mostly of a precarious nature, with trial, interim and fixed-term contracts representing more than 60% of the contractual arrangements. Nevertheless, formally temporary contracts that lead to lower wages and restricted social protection services are mediated and obtained through political brokers to ensure the continuity of labour relations in the long term; they also offer free access to medical services through "*waṣṭa*" (string-pulling). Consequently, leaving a job is not only difficult due to a lack of opportunities for low-skilled workers, but also because it would entail the loss of certain privileges that came with the job.

For migrant workers, formally "selling" their labour to whomever and whenever is simply impossible because workers are inscribed in the *kafāla* system (sponsorship) that binds them to an individual employer. Hence, the available migrant labour force is outsourced either to sub-contracting companies or employed irregularly. Throughout my investigation, I will analyse and discuss how contractual flexibility through direct employment or outsourcing may be counterbalanced by personal ties of dependency that strongly limit labour mobility and workers' freedom of choice.

Humans & the environment

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Rural Societies in an Age of Urbanisation, 1550–1850

ASTRID MEIER

OCTOBER 2011 – MARCH 2018



What a pleasant retreat from the humidity and heat of a Lebanese summer day it is to sit beneath the trees of the *Mathanat al-Jawz* restaurant by an Ottoman watermill on the Walnut River (*Nahr al-Jawz*) in the village of Kaftoun in Northern Lebanon! While enjoying the view of the garden, the Ottoman bridge and the running water, one also appreciates the importance of this watercourse for the local people past and present. The availability of water or its absence has an impact not only on agriculture and the production of electricity, for which a new dam is being built further downstream, but also on many aspects of social life.

Even in eastern Germany where it often rains, the long drought of the summer of 2018 was a clear reminder that the use and management of water are social phenomena that go beyond mere technical control through the science of hydrology and hydraulic engineering. The relationship between water and society and water and state power have recently become the focus of a lively cross-disciplinary debate in which researchers from the natural and social sciences, the humanities and cultural studies participate. The "hydraulic landscapes" or waterscapes that come under investigation stretch across the nature-culture divide. Recently, such configurations have been addressed with the help of concepts such as the "hydro-social cycle" (Linton and Budds 2014) or "hydrosocial territories" (Menga and Swyngedouw 2018).

These concepts can be applied to the historic waterscapes of the Middle East. In contrast to the huge systems of the Nile and Mesopotamia, the human impact on the waterscapes of Syria and Lebanon is still seen through the eyes of hydraulic experts working for colonial regimes during the last century. Regarding the Orontes valley under mandatory rule, for instance, the French geographer Jacques Weulerssee stated in his influential book *Paysans de Syrie et du Proche-Orient* (1946) that he did not see any system at work in the water distribution that transcended mere neighbourly contacts at village level.

More recent approaches to the waterscapes of the Eastern Mediterranean will be discussed in a special issue scheduled for publication in the *Levant* journal in 2019, edited in collaboration with archaeologist Stephen McPhillips and anthropologist Annika Rabo. The papers gathered in this issue were presented at a workshop entitled "Cross-disciplinary approaches to the Hydraulic Landscapes of the Eastern Mediterranean, 1200–1900 CE" that was held at the OIB and the University of Balamand in April 2017.



Ottoman bridge over
the Nahr al-Jawz near
the Mathanat al-Jawz,
an Ottoman mill,
today a restaurant.

©ASTRID MEIER

This meeting was part of an international research project that brought together historians, archaeologists and anthropologists with the aim of investigating the economic, social and political life of rural communities in the Nahr al-Jawz valley throughout its long history to the present day.

A contrasting way of living in this water-rich environment is developed in a book project on the long history of the Syrian Steppe (*Bādiyat al-Shām*), provisionally entitled *Bedouin Syria*, co-authored by Johann Büssow (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum) and me. Our book considers the configurations of people, wealth and power in the region and traces their connections through space and time. We posit that the changes in livelihood, ways of life, social organisation and identity construction of Bedouin groups in many ways are paradigmatic for more general trends in Middle Eastern history.

Mamluk Damascus and its Hinterland //

Rural Economy and Urban Society

MATHIEU EYCHENNE

OCTOBER 2017 – MAY 2018



My project examines the crucial question of the interrelationship between a major Middle Eastern city, Damascus, and its surrounding countryside during the late Medieval period (thirteenth to sixteenth centuries). At that time, the economic prosperity of Damascus mainly stemmed from the agricultural fertility of the Ghuta. As the capital of the Syrian provinces of the Mamluk Sultanate, Damascus was also closely linked to its regional environment. A large part of rural tax income and agricultural products came from the most profitable areas of the province of Damascus (Hauran plateau, Beqaa valley, Hula valley, Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains etc.) and were channelled to the city for the main benefit of its political elite and its religious institutions.

Rural landholding was neither the preserve of the Mamluk military elite nor of the religious institutions, and both private property (*milk*) and pious endowment (*waqf*) were very widespread among the urban Damascene society. Merchants, craftsmen, administrators and scholars frequently owned and endowed plots of cultivated land, orchards and gardens. Based both on Arabic historical narratives and archival documents, my research explores various local (Damascus and its rural hinterland) and regional (Damascus and its province) socio-economic scales, focusing on two main questions: landholding (rural estates and pious endowments) and standards of living (agricultural production and prices).

The connection of the city of Damascus to its surrounding countryside is epitomised by the Umayyad Mosque, one of the principal drivers of economic life and its emblematic landmark. By the medieval period, the Umayyad Mosque had established a dense network of links with the city and the surrounding agricultural land that is extensively described in a unique early Ottoman legal document containing the authorised copy of a Mamluk act dated 1413. Within the framework of a collaborative project with Astrid Meier (OIB) and Élodie Vigouroux (Ifpo), the first months of my OIB fellowship were dedicated to finalising the edition and study of this new source for the urban and rural history of medieval Damascus. It resulted in a co-authored monograph entitled *Le waqf de la mosquée des Omeyyades de Damas. Le manuscrit ottoman d'un inventaire mamelouk établi en 816/1413* (Beyrouth-Damas, Presses de l'Ifpo), published in February 2018, with human, material and financial support from the OIB.

During the second part of my stay at the OIB (March to May 2018), my research focused on land property in Medieval Damascus and its surrounding countryside. I investigated early-Ottoman archival documents – specifically a *Tapu Tahrir Defter* (TTD no. 393), composed at the latest in 954/1547–1548 during the reign of Sultan Sulayman the First. As a starting point of a new piece of research, I concentrated on deciphering, reading and transcribing some of the 945 *waqf* summaries, both familial and institutional (*waqfs ahlī and khayrī*), as well as of the 456 private property acts (sing. *milk*) contained in the register.

Muleteers as Bandits and Mutineers //

Global capital and social transformation in the Ottoman countryside

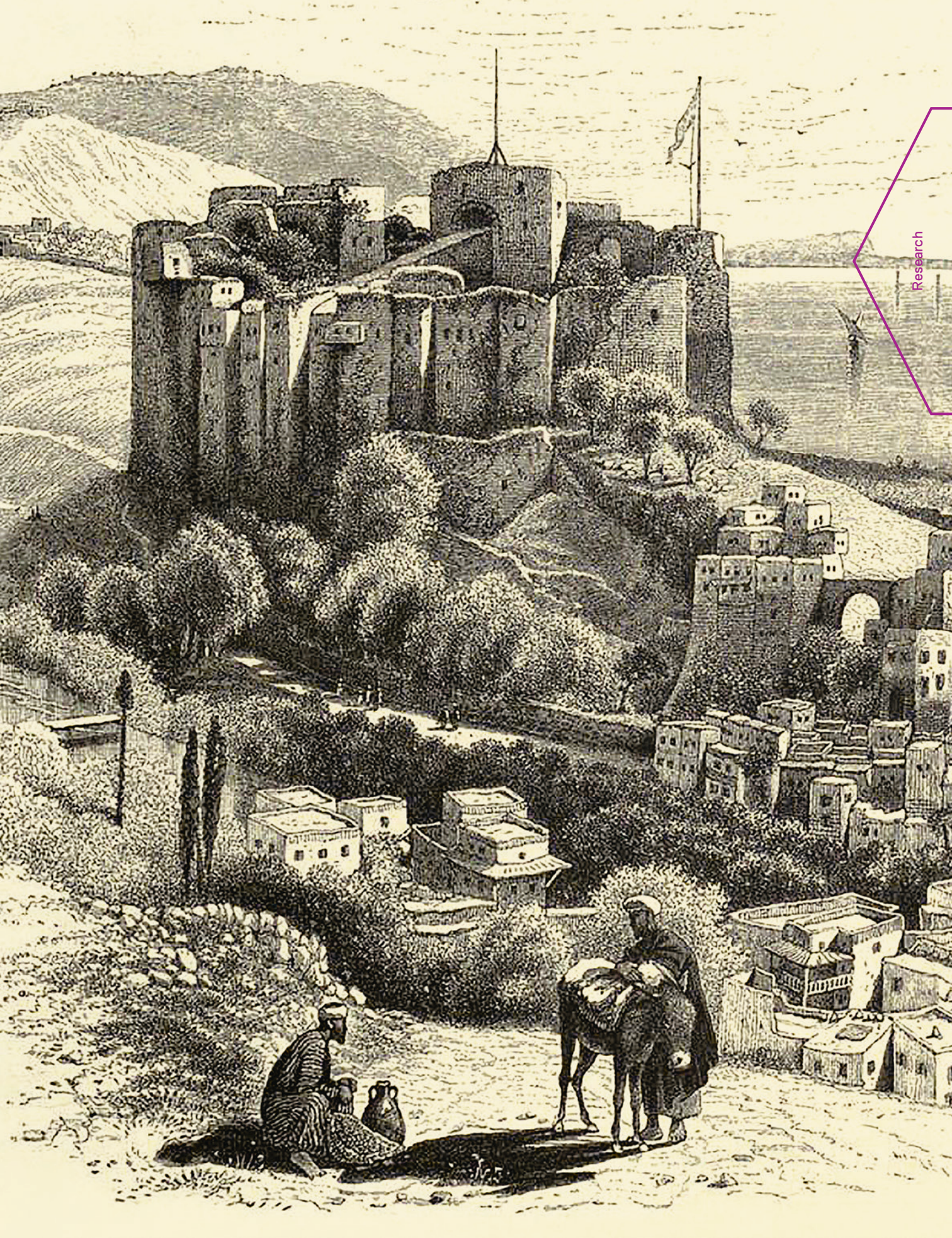
JOAN CHAKER

JANUARY – NOVEMBER



This is a study of the social transformation of the countryside as, throughout the nineteenth century, it joins the global market, told as a collective biography of the mule drivers of Ottoman Lebanon. The narrative follows these actors as they mobilise for peasant revolts, protesting the precariousness of livelihoods resulting from the commodification of land and labour. These revolts ultimately devolve into sectarian conflict. As of the 1860s, the muleteers turn to smuggling, which comes to be perceived by their communities as social banditry defending the peasantry against state taxation and capitalist exaction. Yet the smugglers accumulate wealth from such activities. Many come to own land and ultimately integrate into an emerging middle class. By the turn of the century, the sense of community that had supported peasant resistance was largely eroded, and technology had spelled the quasi-disappearance of the muleteers from the winding rural landscape. These actors, however, made a reappearance in the nascent literary genre of the novel. Their reappearance gives their story an epilogue and their historian a sense of the visceral angst that accompanied the crossover of rural communities into modern liberalism.

A PhD fellowship at the OIB has allowed me to spend time at the Maronite Patriarchate and at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, working on the archival records of the Catholic Church and the local administrations governing Mount Lebanon from the Double *Kaimakamlık* to the *Mutaşarrıfıyya*. Firmly based on documentary records and expanding the conventional archive to include folklore, oral history and fiction, this project pushes back against views of sectarianism as an essential feature of Lebanese society and instead ties it to a socio-economic transformation typical of the rise of global capitalism. Also, drawing parallels with conventional rural transport workers across the global South, from Chinese rickshaw pullers to Indian bullock-cart drivers and from Latin-American gauchos to Balkan cattle drovers, this project pushes back against histories of capitalism that define it in terms of liberal politics and a secular culture.



Humans & the divine

Balance as Justice //

An analysis of premodern ethics based on Qinālīzāde

'Alī Çelebī's Akhlāq-i 'Alāī 50

The History of the Inimitability of the Qur'ān (i'jāz al-qur'ān) //

Discussing the miracle of the Word of God in interreligious and transconfessional contexts in the early Abbasid empire 52

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Balance as Justice // An analysis of premodern ethics based on Qinālīzāde 'Alī Çelebī's *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī*

FATİH ERMIŞ

JULY 2018 – JUNE 2021



Qinālīzāde 'Alī Çelebī (1510–1572), perhaps the most influential moral philosopher in the history of the Ottoman Empire, wrote the *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī* between 1563 and 1565 while serving as chief judge in Damascus. Qinālīzāde follows the tradition of Ṭūsī and insofar, *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī* represents the last instalment in a series comprising *Akhlāq-i Nāşirī*, *Akhlāq-i Jalālī* and *Akhlāq-i Muḥsinī*. Qinālīzāde's contribution to this kind of literature lies less in a new approach than in his way of expressing his ideas.

As pointed out by other researchers, the *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī* was the most popular and widely discussed ethical work in the Ottoman Empire and it served as a basis for almost all textbooks on ethics until modern times. It is a masterpiece that is highly representative of the Ottoman spiritual world. In the introduction to his book, Qinālīzāde argues that earlier ethics literature had been Persian and should now be considered obsolete. He further maintains that he deliberately wrote his book in Turkish because he saw a great need for a Turkish ethics literature. *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī* eventually became the standard work of ethics in Ottoman madrasas.

In the premodern understanding, justice (*'adālat*) is equated with balance (*i'tidāl*). If an individual manages to follow the middle path between two extremes in terms of the three powers of the soul (desire, irascibility and reason), he/she achieves a balance in his/her soul. In this state, this individual is by definition a just human being. When every individual manages to achieve balance in his/her soul, justice influences the families, because just individuals form just families. A society made up of just families will form a just society and be governed by a just ruler. This "upward" justice also implies a "downward" justice: a society ruled by a just ruler will form just families, and just families will raise just individuals. This argumentation presupposes an organic concept of state and society, which was predominant in Qinālīzāde's analysis as well as in previous ethics literature.

With respect to the middle path, Qinālīzāde distinguishes between an absolute and a relative middle. The absolute middle is the arithmetic midpoint, in the same way that four is in the middle between two and six. This, however, is completely irrelevant to ethics. The relative midpoint is an essential instrument for the analysis of the human character. In this regard, virtues (which are the middle points between two extremes) are different for each individual. Moreover, virtues change at different stages of a human life in accordance with changing circumstances. A certain trait may be a virtue



This is the only drawing of Qīnālīzāde to hand. He is depicted as a teacher in a collection of biographies of poets from Qīnālīzāde's own time.

ʾĀSHIQ ʿCELEBĪ, MASHĀʾIR AL-SHUʾARĀ, FOL. 240A, TÜRKİYE YAZMA ESERLER KURUMU BAŞKANLIĞI, MİLLET KÜTÜPHANESİ, ALİ EMİRİ 772.

for one individual but a vice for another, or it may be a virtue for one individual at one stage of life but a vice at another. Qīnālīzāde here refers to the definition of justice as "putting everything in the right place". These right places (or the golden mean between two extremes) must be determined personally and in a dynamic process.

The reason why justice is the most honourable of virtues is the following: Justice is equated to equality, since it is the sum of the middle points which lie at an equal distance to both extremes. Qīnālīzāde interprets equality as two things essentially being one. Therefore, equality leads to unity (*waḥdat*), and unity is the most honourable attribute, because it points towards returning to the One (God).

The History of the Inimitability of the Qur'ān (i'jāz al-qur'ān) // Discussing the miracle of the Word of God in interreligious and transconfessional contexts in the early Abbasid empire

HANS-PETER PÖKEL

AUGUST 2014 – JUNE 2019



My project analyses the development of the conceptualisation of the Qur'ān as a miraculous expression and manifestation of the Word of God within the intellectual contexts of Muslim scholars in the Abbasid period during the formation of theological and philological disciplines of scholarly knowledge. It relates the early development of exegetical and philological disciplines around the Qur'ān as the foundational document of Muslim community into the broader context of interreligious debates with Arabic Christianity and the context of debates between different Muslim intellectual communities. My project focuses on the early history of the *inimitability of the Qur'ān* which became the later technical term for the theological and literary uniqueness of the Qur'ān in its specific Arabic expression. The initial idea of an inimitable scripture in Arabic language is found repeatedly in the Qur'ān itself (e.g. Q 17:88; 12:2), while an understanding of it as a miracle of divine origin is mainly the endeavor of Muslim theologians and philologists alike.

It seems, on the one hand, that the endeavor to legitimate the Qur'ān was an apology in response to polemical accusations from earlier monotheistic traditions. Since the Qur'ān denies any hint at miraculous signs (*āyāt/dalīl*) for the prophecy of Muḥammad, Muslim scholars considered the *Qur'ān itself* a miracle of divine origin (*mu'jiza*) in response to controversial Christian neglect of it as a revelation of divine origin. On the other hand, it seems that the argumentative development of this discourse was a necessary and successful attempt to locate the Qur'ān in a continuous chain of monotheistic traditions.

The history of the *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* is interesting insofar as Muslim scholars developed arguments as proof of the legitimacy of the Qur'ān as a holy scripture within the framework of the Abrahamic traditions. The main aim of arguing for an inimitable character of scripture was to present the Qur'ān as the most unique expression within the framework of the Arabic language. These intellectual endeavours were of central importance in the context of an emerging imperial ideology of the Abbasids, and they took place in a tense relationship to social, intellectual and political challenges at a time when the Qur'ān became a locus for public dispute, especially between the second/eighth and fourth/tenth centuries. While we can find the most elaborate "theory" on the inimitability of the Qur'ān in the works of philologist 'Abdalqadir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078) who could rely on a significant amount of scholarly debates, earlier Muslim scholars like al-Naẓẓām



Part of Qur'ān 12:2.

(d. between 220/835 and 230/845) or al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1031) had to reflect for themselves on the meaning of miracles and their applicability to the Qur'ān.

My project started with a specific focus on approaches to the Qur'ān by Abbāsīd scholars mainly from the centre of the Empire, with regard to interreligious cross-pollination. Of particular Christian interest was theology in the Arabic language since its argumentation adopted Muslim theological terminology. Further research has also shown that consideration of Islamic theology from a translocal perspective reveals some promising aspects: Early debates preserved in texts from the Ibāḍiyya on Muslim theology, *kalām*, have provided important ideas within the context of Mu'tazilite thought. Here, miracles are not debated in relation to scripture but mainly in relation to prophets.

Another point of interest concerning the inimitability of the Qur'ān in a broader spatio-temporal context are modern and contemporary Muslim discussions of the topic.

The concept of the *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* has transformed tremendously from the "classical" literary-aesthetic perception of the Qur'ān and its language into an understanding that includes the compatibility of scripture and science with regard to its content. Nevertheless, the perception of the Qur'ān as a lingual miracle has persisted insofar as it is no longer considered within the framework of its Arabic expression but rather as out-matching any human expression.

Imagining Society, Religion and Culture in the Nineteenth-Century Periodic Press in Beirut

MOHAMMAD MAGOUT

OCTOBER 2018 – AUGUST 2019



My research project examines discourses on religion and its relationship to other social spheres, institutions and concepts in the Arabic periodic press in Beirut in the late nineteenth century. Its focus is twofold as it is both on the *contents* of the press and its significance as a *modern medium of communication* that contributed to the formation of a transregional Arab public sphere in which new modes of social consciousness and imaginaries took shape. My project examines two local and two missionary periodicals: *al-Jinān* (founded by Butrus al-Bustani and edited by his son Salim), *Thamarāt al-Funūn* (the first private periodical issued by Muslims in the Arab world), *al-Bashīr* (issued by Jesuit missionaries) and *al-Nashra al-Usbū'iyya* (launched by American Protestant missionaries). It also deals with interactions between these periodicals and other contemporary periodicals in the region in order to provide a broader picture of the Arabic press during its early years. My study aims to contribute to the historicisation of conceptions of secularity in late Arab-Ottoman social thought in light of concrete social and political developments at local (Beirut, Mount Lebanon), regional (the province of Syria) and transregional (Ottoman, Mediterranean) levels.

Much previous research on secularity in late nineteenth-century Syria tended to focus on one dimension only: the relationship between a "Christian minority" on the one hand and a "Muslim majority" or an "Islamic state" (i.e. the Ottoman Empire) on the other (e.g., Fruma Zachs *The Making of a Syrian identity: Intellectuals and Merchants in Nineteenth Century Beirut*, 2005). Moreover, such research usually approaches the development of secularity from an instrumentalist perspective according to which secularity is an ideological *instrument* developed by a group of Christian intellectuals (such as the al-Bustanis) to ensure the survival and freedom of Christian subjects in a political and social context dominated by Islam. My research on Arabic periodicals from that period, however, shows that such a perspective is not only one-dimensional but also projects a "nationalist logic" (such as minority vs. majority) that is not consistent with contemporary political ideas. It demonstrates further that such an interpretation depends less on what was *actually* said by Christian intellectuals at the time and more on speculation as to their intentions.

Findings from my research thus far indicate that an important factor in the development of concepts of secularity in Ottoman Syria were social conflicts between the laity and the clergy, and between local clergy and foreign ecclesiastical authorities, within Christian communities. My findings also show that ideas of secularity were advocated not only by Christians but also by pro-Ottoman Muslims, e.g. the founders of *Thamarāt al-Funūn*, who, at least during its early years, called for unity on a non-religious basis. In contrast to this, ideas that religion should be the basis of the social and political order were mostly found in the Christian missionary press (especially Jesuit) rather than among Muslims. This is not to deny that many Muslims in Syria held traditional views about Islam being the framework for society and polity, but at that time, such voices were absent from the press. Hence, they failed to utilise an important instrument for shaping public opinion.

Later stages of my project will map the above-mentioned conceptual analysis of the contents of the press to the social and intellectual geography of the Arab East. By tracking networks of contributors, agents, subscribers etc., it should be possible to combine the two levels of research to produce a sociologically-informed analysis of the Arabic press in late nineteenth-century Beirut.



The title page of *al-Jinān* 1875 (12), of 15 June 1875. It includes the phrase *ḥubbu al-waṭan min al-imān* (loving one's homeland is an article of faith), which is attributed to the Prophet Mohammad.

Neighbourliness as a Spiritual Paradigm

CHAFIKA OUAIL

SEPTEMBER 2018 – AUGUST 2019



My project aims to analyse the concept of *neighbourliness* from a spiritual perspective in Islam by tracking its ontological principles and their philosophical perceptions in Sufism.

In its ontological conception, Arabic pre-Islamic society's concept of *muruwwa* meant a collection of the highest virtues that a noble must possess. Neighbourliness (*ḥusn al-jiwār*) is one of these virtues, and it is basically related to *muruwwa* which, etymologically, means the essence of being a "real human being" as a member of his or her community. This gives *neighbourliness* an ethical dimension that is related more or less to various modern ethico-philosophical concepts. *Neighbourliness* here invokes the duty of granting a moral commitment to protection and hospitality; somehow, in Goldziher's interpretation, it was a religious commitment, if religion may be understood as merely a deep ontological conviction.

From this ethical nature, Sufism developed a kind of holistic view (a worldview or *Weltanschauung*) that orients our existence towards a paradigm of perfection, called *al-insān al-kāmil* by Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240). The essence of this existence is, in fact, the individual's perception of the "self" and the "other" and their relationship. This implies understanding "otherness" as an open and creative potential of the self and our ties with it as an ontological consciousness. Thus, *neighbourliness* represents this interaction through a web of concepts in which *khilāfa* (vicegerency of God) and *amāna* (trust) are considered the most important.

In Sufism, *neighbourliness* is the existential zone in which the self is manifested as God's vicegerent (*khalīfat Allāh*), carrying His "trust" (*amāna*) as "its" responsibility to assure the continuity of life in its best way as a sustainable development (*'imānat al-arḍ*).

Here, the *khilāfa* is not the familiar politico-religious concept but a mere ontological conception of the human being as the disclosure of the Divine attributes and names which interact divinely so as to maintain the existence of the universe in the best possible way. The human being does not deserve this attribution merely by "existing" but by "being" or "acting" as such. Of all the creatures, the human being is the one chosen to maintain the harmony of the universe.

This leads to an understanding of *neighbourliness* in Sufism as an ethical and ontological responsibility towards the well-being of one's neighbour not in a spatial sense but more in an existential, non-conditioned sense. The interaction of these concepts is generated by free will (*ikhtiyār, ḥurriyya*), which implies that *neighbourliness* should be understood as an ontological commitment of hospitality of self and other toward God, by giving of one's own to the needy regardless of any other considerations, because this is what God does and this is what His vicegerent should do. Accordingly, as in Derrida's view, hospitality is unconditional since it is an act of love.

Human beings have to be constantly conscious of their responsibility and commitment by using the faculties bestowed upon them to fulfill this ontological task. These faculties allow them to distinguish between good and evil: the instinct (*fiṭra*), on the one hand, which is a genuine ontological gift, and the intellect (*'aql*), on the other, which is the constructed rational tool acquired by experience.

In my project, I address *neighbourliness* from a spiritual perspective. In fact, I argue that *neighbourliness* should be dealt with from a spiritual perspective.

A Post-secular Syrian Space?

AHMAD SUKKAR

SEPTEMBER 2018 – MARCH 2019



Posting a video on Facebook in which a jihadist father exhorts female children to perform terrorist attacks, Louay Hussein, co-founder of the Building the Syrian State Current, wrote, "If this video is genuine..., Islam is not a legal system for the state, but merely a religion for worshipping God in the mosque or at home. It is not a way to regulate relationships between people" (December 2016). The post received thousands of hits and many reactions and comments that ranged from strong support to harsh criticism with which Hussein engaged critically. This discussion on social media exemplifies the hot debate among Syrian intellectuals and the general public about the role of religion in building their state. Whether Hussein was talking about the demarcation of religious practices within the boundaries of mosque and house literally or metaphorically, his post stimulates questions about whether one's upbringing at home is separable from events in the street within the urban fabric of Middle Eastern cities like those of Syria that inherited a social fabric influenced by religion, especially Islam and Christianity. This discussion erupted following the Syrian uprising in March 2011, when Syrian activists were divided into camps of supporters and opponents of Syrian thinkers like Adonis, who wrote, "I will never agree to participate in a demonstration that comes out of a mosque" (al-Hayat, May 2011).

Much ink has been spilt over the confusion of secular principles with what actually happens (e.g. demonstrations originating in mosques), genuine religious ideals and the misuse of religion (e.g. terrorist acts as religious acts) within the architectural and urban space of the city. Reconciling civil rights with Islamist discourse in answer to the question of what the prospects are for a secure, stable, secular and democratic Syria, Nasser Rabbat, Director of the MIT Aga Khan Programme for Islamic Architecture, analysed five interrelated semantics of the Arabic word *madīna* – city, civilisation, religion, law, finance (Hudson Institute, September 2012). "Linguistically, connecting the notion of civil rights to those of religious laws and finance and ultimately civilization will allow a productive flow of significance between them and ultimately their mutual consolidation in the lived culture", he argued. He explained that this hopefully indicates the possibility of connecting them rather than keeping them in opposition, in order to create a reconciled form of Arab and Syrian civil rights. Indicating the importance of the creative teaching of democracy and civil rights at home in an approach that resonates with the more common religious language and continuing this education through all

academic levels, Nasser referred to *Guide to Citizenship*, an educational book by critic Hassan Abbas. Abbas cited the Islamic revivalist and Pan-Arab solidarity supporter 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī (d. 1902) who argued for the need to distinguish between religion and state (chapter on Secularism, 2016, p. 95). Nasser maintained that new efforts would be required to interpret from purely secular to religious language.

Tracing the ideals of early Syrian thinkers like al-Kawākibī, my research also discusses the attitudes of modern thinkers like Hussein and Adonis and builds on arguments and approaches of critics and academics like Abbas and Rabbat. Rethinking classical questions of the possibilities of reconciling the religious with the secular in the Syrian context, it focuses on how this could manifest itself within Syrian cultural and everyday space (home, mosque/church, street, neighbourhood, public square and city). It argues that reconciliation would be possible in a post-secularism in which "diverse religious, humanist and secularist positionalities" enter into genuine and comprehensive dialogue (Beaumont, *Transcending the Particular in Postsecular Cities*, 2010, p. 6; Beaumont and Baker, eds., *Postsecular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice*, 2011, p. 3).

Syrian League for
Citizenship's (Hassan
Abbas et al.) *Guide to
Citizenship*, 2005, p. 95.
In green, quotation
from al-Kawākibī
on religion and state
(*al-Muqattam*, August
1899).

"... Distinction must be made between religion and state, because this distinction is now a major requirement of the time and place, in which we live; if our common people do not recognise that, our elite will be in great danger. If you ask our common people today about this issue, you will see that they are convinced that no religion can survive without a state, and no state can survive without a religion and that they are interrelated and cannot be disunited. This is a clear mistake, because the purpose of the state and the end that a state seeks to realise in our time is a pure temporal end; it is to safeguard people's souls, honors and monies and enact fair laws for them, while the end of religion is the same regardless of time and place; it is the righteousness of people in the world on the hope of entering the paradises of blessing in the afterlife."

Abdel Rahman al Kawakebi

Practically, in the context of the dominant Islamic culture, the discord between secularism and religion occurs when Islam is intended to become the principle of state organisation, i.e. when it is viewed, not only as a religion, but as a religion and a state. The difference between two viewpoints in Islam can clearly be felt; the first -represented by Ali Abdel Raziq- believes in state secularism and independence from religion, while the second -represented by Yusuf al-Qaradawi- not only believes that state must be religious, but accuses of unbelief anyone who does not have the same belief (see the box below). We may notice here that Islam has a broad range of views; therefore, we may see currents that have no political concerns, such as most sophist schools, and radical currents that adopt the principle of "*hakimlaah*"* which refuses any temporal interference in government and legislation.

* It means that Allah is the Highest Governor, the Ruler and the Supreme legal authority.

Khidma Misfits // The discursive everydayness of Coptic Christians in Egypt

MINA IBRAHIM

JANUARY – NOVEMBER



My project is an ethnographic analysis of the "misfits" of the hegemonic tradition of *khidma* among Coptic Christians in Egypt. *Khidma* refers to a diverse collection of voluntary, yet necessary, practices and rituals that allow Coptic Christians to develop their Christian subjectivities, affects and sensibilities in a country with a Muslim majority. Due to what is known as the "Revival Movement" of the Coptic Orthodox Church since the mid-twentieth century, joining *khidma* has become a dominant everyday spiritual and political requirement for articulating the "perfect" image that defines what it means to be a Coptic Orthodox Christian in Egypt. During my fieldwork in 2017 and 2018, however, I became more closely acquainted with narratives and stories of atheist, queer, imprisoned and alcoholic Copts. The latter were among many other Copts of "weak" or "absent" faith, who felt disconnected from *khidma* and consequently from how and why the community demands its "Coptic rights". I noticed that such Copts do not care about their image in a predominantly Islamised state and society nor about international human rights and minority rights discourses and structures. In the mainstream perception of Coptic Christians' "visible" image, my interlocutors, because of their "wrongdoing", know that they are not "good" enough. Hence, they sometimes fight to change the mainstream description of *khidma* through discursive negotiations about what it should entail. At other times, they refuse to get involved in the debate altogether. In the latter context, I argue that my interlocutors represent the "misfits", who prefer to stay silent and "invisible" with respect to the circles of *khidma*. By taking these "misfits" as my point of departure to analyse and theorise what I call the multiple everydayness of "imperfect" Copts who simultaneously live "inside" and "outside" *khidma*, I aim to reflect the heterogeneous implications of living with(out) a tradition that assumes to represent and protect all aspects of a marginalised religious minority.

Political Identity Construction and Islamist Hegemony

ANDREA JUD

SINCE OCTOBER 2016



Research

The opening of the political scene in Egypt after 2011 motivated several Islamist and Salafist groups to form parties and participate in electoral politics. This put them in a complex situation of cooperation and competition with one another. New possibilities for participation in the public sphere allowed them to launch their own media outlets and to express themselves more freely. At the same time, they found themselves constantly under pressure to re-articulate their identities in the uncertain political landscape after the fall of Mubarak. My project draws on three episodes between 2011 and 2013 that are meant to show the complexity of Islamist identity construction and the hegemonic struggles inside Islamism. In the run-up to the parliamentary elections of 2011/12, Islamists and Salafists found themselves in two competing electoral alliances after attempts to build a unifying coalition had failed. In the presidential election of 2012, several Islamist candidates sought to rally a broad spectrum of Egyptian society behind them. Balancing inclusiveness and authenticity, Islamist candidates not only presented themselves in their hegemonic campaigns but they also had to explain their relationship with one another. The parties and their mother organisations, on the other hand, were under pressure to justify supporting one candidate over another. After the ousting of president Morsi in 2013, the Islamist and Salafist movement found itself divided into two antagonistic camps. The discourse of those who supported Morsi centred around signifiers such as legitimacy, Islamic identity and the achievements of 2011, while, at the same time, it revealed its fragility by showing traces of the criticism and allegations against them, especially from within the Islamist and Salafist movement. Together, these phases paint a picture of a complex political movement and an understanding of "Islamism" as defined by political struggles in its specific contexts.

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Cultural Mobilities and Political Spaces //

Connecting Muslim shrine cities, 1400–1800

CHRISTOPHER BAHL

OCTOBER 2018 – SEPTEMBER 2021



While my doctoral research concentrated on the mobility of texts and manuscripts, my postdoctoral project will shift the focus to early modern shrines as places where mobilities intersect and communities are built through shared cultural practices and social interests. Shrines were (and are) an expression of Islamic piety and were visited by pilgrims from far and near. They became part of a diverse religious economy that served the personal needs of a local and transregional community. Recent scholarship has accumulated accounts of shrines from Anatolia to the South Asian subcontinent, enabling a kaleidoscopic view of Muslim piety. However, the complex relationships and exchanges that existed between these places of worship are rarely addressed, even though pilgrims and visitors to shrines often combined several places such as Medina, Najaf, Kerbala and Mashhad on one extended trip. The mobility of the pious and learned that kept shrine cities alive, fostered cultural connections and social networks between the different cities. By accommodating sociabilities of cultural exchange, shrine cities and their communities had the capacity to create scholarly mobilities and forge political networks. Our understanding of their concerted social, cultural and political significance can be enhanced by relating shrine cities through an interconnected framework and from a transregional perspective. By so doing, I bring my project into conversation with the larger research profile of the OIB on *relations*.

I intend to historicise the human movement between shrines to probe cultures of human mobilities, intellectual exchanges and forms of political association and community formation among interrelated shrine communities. A preliminary case study may serve to exemplify this. My doctoral research identified the little studied and politically marginalised group of *Ashrāf* ("descendants of the prophet") in the holy city of Medina on the Arabian Peninsula. Their religious leadership moved repeatedly between shrine cities and courts, thereby beginning to develop a truly transregional cultural profile during the sixteenth century that stretched to Iran and the South Asian subcontinent. Members of al-Sayyid Ibn Shadqam al-Madanī's family and lineage acted as political leaders of this community and custodians of the prophet's grave in Medina. Focussing on Ibn Shadqam's transoceanic endeavours from Medina in the Hijaz, to Ahmadnagar in India and Mashhad in Iran, will provide new perspectives on intellectual exchanges between shrine cities, forms of patronage and the transregional implications of community building among politically marginalised groups.



Shrine of Muhammad
Gisu Daraz in Gulbarga,
the Deccan, India.

©CHRISTOPHER BAHL

This case study will concentrate on how, during the sixteenth century, a group of *Ashrāf* from Medina used their charismatic descent, courtly patronage and scholarly prestige as they moved from shrine to shrine for intellectual and political ends. Empirically, my research will be based on their poetic, historical and genealogical writings as a lens through which to study knowledge formation between shrine cities. This also means going beyond the textual analysis of narrative texts. I will approach Ibn Shadqam's compositions by focusing on how such texts were written in a trans-regional, inter-shrine and court context so as to have a social and cultural effect. More importantly, the engagement of a larger readership with the manuscripts of these texts may be studied; how they were collected, inscribed with marginalia and further modified by copyists. The Shrine library in Mashhad and related scholarly collections offer a rich historical record of such cultural engagements. This will enable me to examine a long-term dialogue between Ibn Shadqam and other authors on the one hand, and readers of the larger Shī'ī community, among whom these texts allegedly circulated, on the other. By tracing "marginal conversations" about history, poetry and genealogy in manuscripts, it will be possible to analyse intellectual exchanges and forms of political association by mobile groups.

Talking about Art and Aesthetic Reflection in Egypt and Lebanon since the 1920s

MONIQUE BELLAN

APRIL 2013 – MARCH 2019



"Where do our arts stand with regard to the consciousness (*wa'ī*) that is blossoming in the Arab nation in this period? Can we hope for a positive evolution of our arts?" asks Souheil Idriss in his editorial article "*Naḥnu wa-l-fann*" ("Us and the Arts") in *al-Adāb*'s special issue of January 1956 on the arts. This article is part of the recent MoMA publication *Modern Art in the Arab World* of primary documents that have been translated into English. *Al-Adāb* was founded in 1952 by the Lebanese writer and journalist Souheil Idriss as a "monthly journal dedicated to the matters of thought". It is one of the most important periodicals in the Arab region and, since its beginning, has been dedicated to being "littérature engagée". *Al-Adāb* stood in stark contrast to the literary avant-garde journal *Shi'r* that was established by the poets Yusuf al-Khal and Adonis in 1957 to "save poetry from politics" as Mark D. Luce wrote.

The journal issue in question gathered a number of articles mainly dealing with the visual arts in different Arab countries alongside a few more theoretical contributions that are mostly translations. It also published a questionnaire that had previously been distributed among artists such as Mustafa Farroukh, César Gemayel (Lebanon), Hafidh Droubi, Jewad Selim (Iraq), Fateh al-Moudarres (Syria), Ramses Younan, Fouad Kamel, Hamed Abdallah (Egypt) and others. The questionnaire asked about the role of art and its impact on Arab society as well as the impact of Arab society on art. Idriss's investigative editorial article deals with the situation of the arts in the Arab nation (*al-waṭan al-'arabī*), which he depicts in a very pessimistic light. His approach closely links the artistic sensibility of peoples and their ability to build a civilisation as well as the viability of nations. He notices in all contemporary arts in the Arab world a lack of quality and professionalism as well as individuality and character. This leads him finally to a very culturalist and essentialist conclusion as he asks whether "we are maybe lacking an artistic sensibility" or whether the Arabs are just inept at producing aesthetic work. Idriss's comments give an idea of the degree of self-criticism and the lack of self-confidence prevalent at the time. The fact that this debate takes place in a monthly cultural journal is interesting insofar as it views art for its cultural value and its role in the community rather than for its aesthetic potential and its possible impact on the individual. From this perspective, art has a clear mission to support society on its way to a better future and, ultimately, to lead to the renaissance (*naḥḍa*) of the Arab civilisation.

The debates on art and authenticity reflect a moment in history where regions outside Europe that had long been under the political and cultural hegemony of the West, were trying to redefine and reconstruct their cultural and artistic identity. The stigma of merely copying Western art – coined as the *Picasso manqué syndrome* by Partha Mitter in his article "Decentering Modernism: Art History and Avant-Garde Art from the Periphery" – and the oftentimes self-pronounced verdict of a lack of properly modernist approaches in one's own artistic tradition created a feeling of inferiority. The questionnaire revealed the struggle and the self-questioning as well as possible solutions envisaged by the artists.

My research project on artistic discourses and aesthetic reflection scrutinises the emergence of an art system, and this debate on artistic practices in mid-twentieth century Mashreq and Maghreb is part of it.



Cover page
of *al-Adab*,
January 1956.
AL-ADAB.COM/
VOLUME/1956-V.04/01.

Open Arabic Periodical Editions (OpenArabicPE)

TILL GRALLERT

SINCE AUGUST 2015



The work on the digital editions of Muḥammad Kurd 'Alī's journal *al-Muqtabas* (Damascus and Cairo, 1906–18) and 'Abd al-Qādir al-Iskandarānī's journal *al-Ḥaqā'iq* (Damascus, 1910–12) continued within the framework of OpenArabicPE. Contributions from our interns Manzi Tanna-Händel, Xaver Kretzschmar, Klara Mayer, Tobias Sick and Hans Magne Jaatun allowed us to release a further four volumes. Readers can find a project description in the last annual report and I will focus here on the first foray into the analysis of our corpus. One of the driving research questions behind OpenArabicPE focuses on reconstructing the ideosphere of the late Ottoman and early Arabic press through establishing networks of authors and texts published and referenced in the periodicals. With regards to *al-Muqtabas* and *al-Ḥaqā'iq*, we ask: Who published what in late Ottoman Damascus? And what was read in late Ottoman Damascus?

As a bare minimum, any computational analysis of the global connections between authors, texts and periodicals as a venue for publication and review requires access to reliable standardised bibliographic metadata. Unfortunately, such data is practically non-existent at the level of articles beyond our own journal editions. But even so, the vast majority of articles would remain outside our analytical scope. Many publishers did not provide (meaningful) bylines and the majority of articles in journals and newspapers from Beirut, Cairo or Damascus did not credit their authors. One promising approach is to subject all articles in our corpus to stylometric analysis – a method that computes degrees of similarity by comparing lists of the most frequent words.

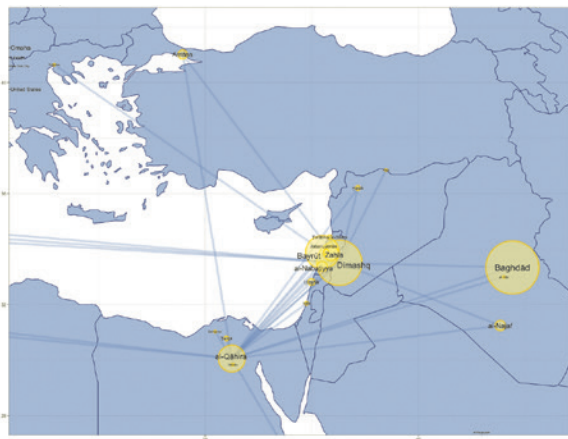
Presently we can identify only 126 named authors for *al-Muqtabas* and less than sixty for *al-Ḥaqā'iq*. A significant number appear with their initials only, particularly in *al-Ḥaqā'iq*, and all of them were men. Only fifty authors published more than one article in *al-Muqtabas*. The geographies of these networks, as recorded in the bylines, are telling (see figure): *al-Ḥaqā'iq*'s network was mainly restricted to the inland cities of Greater Syria while *al-Muqtabas* reached well beyond to Egypt, Iraq and even America, turning the proverb "Cairo writes, Beirut publishes and Baghdad reads" upside down, with Baghdad well ahead even of Damascus. Two of the four most prolific authors in *al-Muqtabas*, with more than ten bylines to their names, wrote from Baghdad:

Ma'rūf al-Ruṣāfī (twenty-four articles) and Buṭrus bin Jibrā'īl Yūsuf 'Awwād, using the pen name Sāṭisnā (fourteen). 'Īsā Iskandar al-Ma'lūf (twenty) filed his articles from across Mt. Lebanon and Yūsuf Jirjis Zakham (thirteen) from Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska, USA.

Only the fifth most prolific author was a native resident of Damascus: Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī (eight). The four men out of the five, for whom we can find biographical records, are in many respects exemplary of the modernising late Ottoman Empire and the Middle East: Coming from a variety of religious and social backgrounds – Greek Orthodox, Catholic and Sunnī Muslim, priest and leading Salafi thinker of the second generation, part-time officials, of simple means and members of the old elites, – they belonged to the same generation (born between the mid-1860s and mid-1870s), were highly mobile and well-travelled and had a good command of local as well as foreign languages.

The picture is different for *al-Ḥaqqā'iḳ*, which was repeatedly in conflict with *al-Muqtabas* over the latter's supposed moral laxity. Its most prolific contributors were Damascene Sunni religious scholars from notable families, many of whom were at least one generation older than its opponents, among them Ibrāhīm Mardam Bek, Muḥammad 'Ārif al-Munīr al-Ḥusaynī (b. 1847/48), Mukhtār al-Mu'ayyad (b. 1822) and Muḥammad al-Qāsimī (b. 1843), whose son Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī was among *al-Muqtabas*' contributors. Against this backdrop, the initial surprise at finding practically no overlap between the two networks of authors published in journals from the same city becomes less so.

al-Muqtabas



al-Ḥaqqā'iḳ



Locations in
bylines in
al-Muqtabas
and *al-Ḥaqqā'iḳ*.

TILL GRALLERT,
CC BY-SA 4.0.

Cultural Policies in Lebanon // Cultural institutions between state and society

NADIA VON MALTZAHN

FEBRUARY 2013 – MARCH 2020



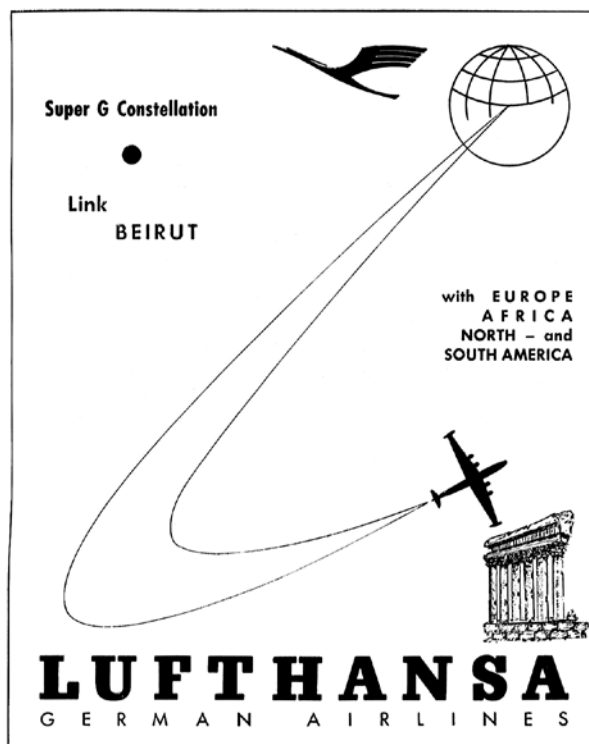
Founded in 1956, the Baalbek Festival was Lebanon's first international festival. Set in the Roman ruins of Baalbek, the festival turned the archaeological site into a site of consumption, where the cultural richness of the young republic was to be displayed and consumed. In the absence of a consensus on Lebanon's history, heritage sites become anchors for particular narratives of the country's history and celebrations of the present. The festival wanted to create a particular image of Lebanon through their programming: a nation uniting East and West, rich in culture and heritage, attracting some of the greatest international stars in music, theatre and dance. Performers included the New York Philharmonic, the Hamburg and Berlin Symphony Orchestras, the Berlin Philharmonic under Herbert von Karajan, the Royal Ballet with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev, the Bolshoi Ballet, Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davis and Umm Kulthum, to name but a few. The Lebanese Nights brought to fame some of the most popular Lebanese musicians, such as Fairouz, the Rahbani brothers and Sabah. Combining international and local performances, the festival committee wanted to portray Lebanon as "a Westward looking nation that had reclaimed its original Phoenician role as a cultivator of culture and civilization" (C. Stone, *Popular Culture and Nationalism in Lebanon: The Fairouz and Rahbani Nation*, 2008).

Tourism was at the centre of this mission to lead progress and civilisation. Initially focusing on the content of the festival and on advertising, the festival booklets started to include stories about Baalbek's history and the Holy Land in 1961 – in the spirit of the Orientalist travellers who had visited Baalbek. The following year, the booklet included drawings by well-known Lebanese painters of the first half of the twentieth century as well as contemporary painters such as Omar Onsi (1901–1969), Saliba Douaïhy (1915–1994), Moustafa Farroukh (1901–1957), Paul Guiragossian (1923–1993) and Juliana Seraphim (1934–2005). The idea was to underline the links between Orient and Occident by including passages by and about European travellers to Baalbek and to promote Lebanese culture by showcasing selected artists.

The festival organisers saw themselves as cultural ambassadors. As festival committee president Aimée Kettaneh stated in the 1961 festival booklet: "We don't try to become a comprehensive show of everything the artistic vocation can give. But we want to, to the extent possible to us, establish this pure link of 'cultural relations.'"

This is the double aim of Baalbek: Relations and Culture; we cannot conceive of one without the other". Baalbek here was synonymous with the festival, which, in turn, strove to represent relations with the world and present Lebanon as a cultured nation. President Camille Chamoun (1952–1958) presented Lebanon as a natural link between East and West, ideally suited to foster cultural relations. In the third festival booklet (1957), he emphasised that Lebanon as a maritime republic was a "natural stopover for airlines between Asia and Europe", and through its millennial and peaceful experience, was "full of promises for tomorrow's relationship between Orient and Occident". There was, of course, a strong economic incentive for tourism and building strong relations with the world. The festival programmes gave ample space to advertising, and big international companies often tailored their ads to include visual references to the Roman temples (see image). Baalbek the archaeological site – in particular the six remaining columns of the temple of Jupiter – had come to symbolise Lebanon as a nation; with the help of the Baalbek Festival, it was turned into a national brand. Looking at the agents, power dynamics and cultural policies of the Baalbek Festival, the appropriation of heritage as a tool for tourism and a source of national pride is the subject of an article currently under review. The Baalbek Festival is one of three cultural institutions – together with the Lebanese National Library and the Sursock Museum – that I take as case studies to examine the role of cultural institutions in Lebanon's public sphere, investigating the arenas in which frameworks are determined and policies made.

Lufthansa advertisements in the third Baalbek International Festival Booklet of 1957 depicting Baalbek's temple of Jupiter.



An Autograph Corpus from Sixteenth-Century Damascus

TORSTEN WOLLINA

MARCH 2014 – FEBRUARY 2019



Arabic manuscripts are fascinating. Not only are they the physical emanations of a long-lasting tradition of knowledge production containing narratives and arguments conceived centuries ago, but they also often carry traces of their own histories: how they moved from one owner to another, and who read them at what time and in which place.

My project explores these questions in the autograph manuscripts of the sixteenth-century Damascene scholar Muḥammad Ibn Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546). My aim is to unearth the history of this corpus from the current global distribution of his autograph manuscripts found today in libraries in Egypt, Germany, Lebanon, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Ireland and the United States. While some manuscripts endured the passage of time intact, others were repeatedly subjected to extractions and recomplings. Ibn Ṭūlūn employed several tools within his multi-text manuscripts (MTM) to perpetuate an authoritative reading of his manuscripts. Later owners, however, may have had different interests guiding their reading, and they even recompiled them in ways that reflected their own perspectives on Ibn Ṭūlūn's works. Thus, they changed the way in which succeeding generations would – or, rather, could – approach Ibn Ṭūlūn's corpus. The heyday of these efforts appears to have been the period between the late 1840s and the early 1900s, when the manuscript trade developed into a truly global enterprise.

One actor in all this who recently sparked my interest is 'Abd al-Salām b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shaṭṭī al-Ḥanbalī. He became the Imam for the Ḥanbalī community at the Umayyad Mosque in the 1860s and he owned a noteworthy manuscript collection. It included a small manuscript, presently in the Egyptian National Library, that contains four works by Ibn Ṭūlūn on twenty-two folios but lacks the contents statement typical of Ibn Ṭūlūn's own compilations. It is obvious from his manuscript notes that it was al-Shaṭṭī who compiled this manuscript.

The Shaṭṭīs were an important Damascene family during the nineteenth century. Al-Shaṭṭī was very diligent in documenting his engagement with MS 21201 bā'. Ownership notes identify the two manuscripts from which he compiled the MTM and he added a prominent title statement to the first part that gives the titles for both works (see facsimile). 'Abd al-Salām's recompilation creates an MTM entirely dedicated to devotional texts that address topics such as the location of Moses' grave (nos. 1, 4) or

Abraham's status as a monotheist (no. 2). The only text he seems to have read closely, however, is the third title, *Risāla fī khaṣā' iṣ al-dīk*, which is frequently annotated. 'Abd al-Salām's collection and compilation efforts in the mid-nineteenth century are relevant for our current understanding of the corpus of the sixteenth-century author Ibn Ṭūlūn. His recompilation created a book entirely dedicated to devotional topics, and he thus reimagined these four texts as part of a contemplative collection. Moreover, his recompilation gives not only a content-based order to those texts that they did not necessarily follow originally, but it also bestows upon them the status of "published" works, a status their author would never have dared claim for them. Viewed thus, the often elusive impact on the current state of Ibn Ṭūlūn's corpus that later readers, owners and librarians had, becomes more obviously apparent.

Title page of the first part of Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, MS 21021 bā'. In the centre: 'Abd al-Salām al-Shaṭṭī's title statement framed in red ink. On the top: an older title statement is visible for the first title in this part. On the left: a note identifies his uncle as the former owner. The text block is a note on ḥadīth transmission.



Lebanon in the Constellation of Modernist Tapestry

JESSICA GERSCHULTZ

MAY – JULY

Using a comparative, transregional framework, my second book, provisionally entitled *Fiber Art Constellations*, will be the first monograph to demonstrate the mooring of modern tapestry in the Arab world. Though still in its early stages of development, this book will be a feminist history and the first to examine artistic experimentation with tapestry across unexpected geographies, particularly in colonial localities formerly treated in art history as peripheral "craft" producing regions. While women in North Africa created modernist textiles in the early twentieth century, existing scholarship obscures their role and excludes numerous sites of tapestry production and trans-regional South-South exchanges. Yet by the mid-twentieth century, fibre artists circulated across the Arab world, Africa and elsewhere, promoting their work through exhibitions, establishing studios and art schools, and exchanging ideas, techniques, and materials. Research funded by a Hans-Robert Roemer Fellowship in May through July 2018 contributed to my critical re-mapping of fibre artists, concepts and objects by allowing me to identify and situate artists and sites of production in Lebanon, notably in Beirut, Ainab, Zouk Mikael, Faraya and Aley, for integration into this book project. Artists based in Lebanon transformed approaches to the fibre medium and collaborated across the boundaries of social class, gender and nationality; institutions such as the Sursock Museum and the Dar El Fan provided space for exhibitions and conferences. Furthermore, I drew important connections between Lebanese, Egyptian, Ethiopian, South African, French, Canadian and Polish artists and intellectuals that I will continue to examine as this research progresses.

During my time at the OIB I documented tapestries, studied artistic collaborations, traced endeavors linking tapestry with women's social uplift and recovered little known networks of exchange that illuminate a wider transregional configuration. Working primarily with private archives and personal collections, I traced correspondences, exhibitions and the exchange of tapestries and weaving technologies. With the assistance of Shadia Shaar and Nirvana Ghandour, I met elderly weavers of the former tapestry workshop in Ainab, known as the "Lebanese Aubusson", in which twenty women from the Shaar and Zeidan families translated the paintings of Lebanese artists into wool and engendered a space of creativity, independence and collaboration among women. Aref El Rayess's archives illustrate how the "Lebanese Aubusson" inspired him to attempt to found a tapestry workshop for marginalised women in Aley, while his

loom parts demonstrate the influence of the Egyptian architect and intellectual Ramses Wissa Wassef. I repeatedly encountered the influence of Wissa Wassef, whose weaving centre near Giza impacted artists and intellectuals from Lebanon to South Africa to France, yet has received little scholarly attention. Notably, Sami Karkabi, a Lebanese archaeologist and public intellectual who travelled frequently in Egypt and Ethiopia, sought to replicate Wissa Wassef's experiment in Faraya, where Karkabi commissioned an Ethiopian adolescent Dadi Muleta to weave mythological designs that were exhibited in the Sursock Museum, galleries and private homes (see image). These examples are but a few that point to a vibrant yet overlooked art history in the region, as tapestry's feminised, "ethnic" and commodity status imperiled its admission as "high art".

I workshopped the book's emergent themes at the OIB Internal Colloquium in June and gave two public presentations in July. The first presentation centred on my research and collaboration with the Sursock Museum's head of collections Yasmine Chemali, who had recently installed a gallery devoted to Lebanese tapestries in the permanent collection. The second presentation situated two tapestries in the boutique hotel Beit El Tawlet in their larger historical framework, specifically linking the artworks to the decorative programme of Habib Bourguiba's presidential palace in Monastir, Tunisia. Finally, I incorporated my Hans-Robert Roemer Fellowship research in a public presentation I gave at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in October 2018.

Poster for 1974
Tapestry Exhi-
bition of Dadi
Muleta in Beirut.
PRIVATE ARCHIVES
OF SAMI KARKABI.



Move Over, Mona Lisa. Move Over, Jane Eyre

PEGGY LEVITT

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER

Cultural inequality is part and parcel of global political and economic inequality. Until we level the cultural playing field by making it more diverse and less stratified, we won't do better at addressing other pressing socio-economic challenges. My project explores the social, political and economic conditions and institutions that allow artists and writers from what have been culturally peripheral regions to gain greater global prominence. Using the cases of South Korea, Argentina and Lebanon, I explore what factors expand the global literary and artistic canons and how they vary across regions, time and genre. What are the economic, political and cultural conditions that make what I call scale shifting between the national, regional and global cultural fields possible?

These questions are important because according to the International Organization of Migration, one out of every seven people in the world today is an international or internal migrant. By force or by choice, with great success or great struggle, we are all global citizens now. But what is the cultural common ground that we share, who gets to decide and whose interests are being served?

These questions also matter because the "canon wars" are alive and well. "Jane Eyre" and "Mona Lisa" supporters argue that "great works" are above politics. They reflect timeless truths we all care about. Those who would replace Jane Austen and Leonardo Da Vinci with a more diverse group of artists from around the globe argue that the current list of "great works" does not reflect the multicultural, multi-religious world that we live in. Those in between say that canonical works must still be taught but in ways that bring out their biased assumptions. Either way, the outcome is not trivial. As Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates said about the Norton Anthology of African American Literature, "Once our anthology is published, no one will ever again be able to use unavailability of black texts as an excuse not to teach our literature. A well-marked anthology functions in the academy to create a tradition, as well as define and preserve it".

I believe we must go further. The availability of a broader array of cultural products is not enough to ensure their adoption and embrace. We also need to understand the political mechanisms, economic interests and power struggles that influence their inclusion or erasure.

During my stay as the 2018 Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow at the OIB, I interviewed artists, writers, publishers, critics, gallerists, patrons and museum professionals. I also visited book fairs, exhibitions, cultural events and reviewed relevant documents. In this short summary, I'll focus on what I've learned so far about the Lebanese literary world.

I argue that what we might call the Lebanese national literary field is fractured along linguistic lines (which generally means along cultural and religious lines as well) that, in turn, link national actors to literary fields beyond the nation in distinct ways. Creators scale up and scale down along different pathways depending upon whether they work from the English, Arabic or French language zone; whether they write from Lebanon or from somewhere in the Lebanese diaspora; and on how they position themselves and are positioned by others. These national zones connect in different ways to three distinct transregional literary fields, also defined by language and culture. They include an Arabic literary field encompassing readers, writers and publishers in the Middle East and the Gulf, Sub-Saharan Africa and their diasporas; their French-speaking counterparts in France, Canada and other former French colonies; and two English language transregions which sometimes intersect with each other: one encompassing the former British Commonwealth countries and the other including North American readers. It is also useful to distinguish between the different parts of the Arabophone and Francophone transregional fields according to their distance from Lebanon. In the Francophone case, the proximate zone includes French speakers in the Maghreb and more distant zones including French speakers in the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and France. In the Arabophone case, the proximate zone includes other countries in the Middle East and the Gulf and the distant zone includes Arabic speakers in Africa, Asia and Europe. The topographical properties of these fields, and the infra-structures from which they are made, strongly influence the scaling up and scaling down that occurs between them.

Art and Artists Crossing Borders // the early history of art education for Arab students in the Soviet Union between 1959 and 1979

OLGA NEFEDOVA

JANUARY – MARCH

Interest in different facets of contemporary Arab art has significantly increased during the past few decades. Although recent developments have played a key role in bringing contemporary Arab art into a wider focus, there remains a gap in the scholarly discussion of certain aspects. My research is dedicated to the new artistic practices and the art heritage of Arab artists who were graduates of the Vasily Surikov Moscow State Art Institute and Moscow State Stroganov Academy of Industrial and Applied Arts. To be precise, my research starts in 1959 with those artists who came as the first post-World War II students and ends in 1979; it includes only those students who eventually graduated or were postgraduate students during the same period. In the two decades considered here, there were students from Arab countries such as Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The phenomenon of students from the Arab world in the USSR is a part of history whose many topics invite various methodological approaches. Data collection for this project rests on two pillars: archival research and semi-structured interviews.

On the one hand, I conducted research on previously unpublished material from the archives of the Vasily Surikov Moscow State Academic Art Institute, the Moscow State Stroganov Academy of Industrial and Applied Arts, the archive of the Ministry of Culture of the USSR, the archive of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation as well as further material from the Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts and the State Archive of the Russian Federation. On the other hand, I relied on the support of artists and/or their relatives and friends, providing access to material from their meetings, interviews and correspondence. Information from large collections of press clippings from Soviet newspapers, journals and magazines from the 1950s to the 1980s is also included.

The Hans-Robert Roemer Fellowship at the OIB provided me with an opportunity to visit Beirut to work with the OIB library's rich collection of resources in addition to those of the AUB library and the library and archive of the Sursock Museum. The residency further allowed me to conduct a series of meetings and interviews with artists, artists' relatives, collectors and gallerists in Beirut. Newly-discovered information and data were instrumental in my research as they provided specific information that answered my research questions.

I encountered a few methodological difficulties that I would like to mention briefly. To start with, there are hardly any publications or articles, and academic research in the field of Arab artists in the USSR in foreign languages is almost non-existent. For this reason, oral sources are of major significance. In addition to this lack of written sources, the second difficulty is that many interviewees found it difficult to speak about their links to the USSR. However, conducting interviews with artists and their relatives and friends, I moved methodologically from political history towards cultural and social aspects. From the problems of adapting to the new environment that Arab students experienced to the troubles caused by cultural difference and Arab graduates' contacts with the USSR after completing their university studies and returning to their homeland, these stories expressed the interviewees' interpretations of those events and their significance. From this I gained an entirely new view of the social history of Arab students in communist countries. I conducted more than one interview with each participant. The descriptive validity of conversational interviews as well as their interpretative validity were enhanced by archival documents. The results of these interviews will allow me to identify patterns and variations among the collected observations and this, in turn, will enable me to establish the theoretical framework necessary to proceed to the next stage of my research.

Students of the Vasily Surikov Moscow State Art Institute in the workshop of Klavdiya Tutevol (1917–1980) in 1979. Next to Tutevol is Afifa Aleiby (b. 1952), the first Iraqi female students that studied art in the USSR.

PERSONAL ARCHIVE
OF AFIFA ALEIBY.



Modernity as Tradition // Hafidh Druby (1914–1991) and the institutionalisation of modern art in twentieth-century Baghdad

SARAH JOHNSON

JANUARY – APRIL



My dissertation examines how the artist Hafidh Druby (1914–1991) used the institutions of Euro-American art and art history to overcome colonial legacies and establish a uniquely Iraqi modern art based on the mastery of skills and the power of tradition. Druby was a pioneer and leader of the modern art movement in Iraq, but until now, his work has been poorly documented. It was essential for me to spend an extended period of time in the Middle East because Iraqi modern art is now scattered throughout private collections, which take time to access. During my stay in Beirut, I focused both on known collections of Druby's work and also on finding unknown private collections. The Dalloul Art Foundation holds a large collection of Druby paintings; importantly, many of these were purchased directly from the artist in Baghdad. The Sursock Museum houses information on an exhibition of Iraqi modern art which took place there in 1965. Saleh Barakat Gallery has a small but rare collection of books on Iraqi modern art. Besides these collections, I was able to locate several hitherto unknown private collections. The second part of my research took me to Amman, where there are several large private collections of Druby's paintings. In one of these collections, I discovered many sketches from Druby's studies in Rome in the late 1930s. I had previously assumed most of this material lost, and the discovery deepened my understanding of Druby's early development as an artist. As much of the Iraqi community in Amman continues to move back and forth between that city and Baghdad, I was also able to use my time there to learn about material surviving in Iraq. It was helpful that my stay at the Orient-Institut coincided with two other scholars working on modern art in Iraq. Our discussions and joint research visits provided my project with many new insights.

(Re-)Discovering Good Governance //

Perspectives and narratives of good governance in late medieval political discourse

JENNIFER VIEHL

FEBRUARY – APRIL



Research

Even though in the past few years there has been a growing interest in Islamic political thought, very little is known about the notion of governance in Islamic tradition. This is all the more surprising given that the authors of late medieval Islamic political advice literature appear to have had little difficulty in specifying the rules, policies and procedures of good governance.

My PhD project identifies Islamicate medieval perspectives and narratives that define and conceptualise governance – as distinct from rule – as an organising principle of political order. Rule and governance are here considered as two different, but interconnected, *modi operandi* of supreme political authority: While *rule* refers to all political actions that aim to produce and implement collectively binding decisions by means of force and coercion mostly associated with the ruler's discretion, governance relates to all steering activities tied to offices and power resources that regulate social interaction through norm-based corrective actions. One of the earliest examples of a systematic approach to governance is al-Māwardī's (d. 450/1058) *Qawānīn al-wizāra*. By using the office of the vizier as a point of departure for his analysis of political order, he elaborates governmental functions that seek to preserve the stability of the political order and to promote the well-being of all groups in society. The wise and proficient vizier appears as a recurrent topos in the sources and he can be seen as a placeholder to illustrate the benefits of good governance and used to discuss the implications of the policies of an unpredictable, irascible ruler. Nevertheless, good governance neither belongs solely to the domain of the vizier nor is it automatically related to it, as shown, e.g., by the Tlemcen ruler Abū Ḥammū II (d. 791/1389) in his *Wāsiṭat al-sulūk fī siyāsat al-mulūk*, written for his son as his successor in office. Although Abū Ḥammū states that viziers have more leeway to shape the political order and, thus, a good vizier is better than a good ruler, he exhorts his son to adhere to the principles of good governance and advises him on strategies for dealing with an inept, corrupt or tyrannical vizier.

My dissertation analyses discourses on good governance in a variety of Arabic sources of Middle Eastern, Andalusian and Maghrebinian provenance mainly from the eleventh to sixteenth centuries, including forgotten or lesser known works from that era. It addresses the multidimensional nature of *siyāsa* and *tadbīr* regarding rule and governance and contributes to an expanded terminology of political theory.

Nahḍa in Higher Education Curricula in Beirut and Damascus, c. 1866–1952

HANA SLEIMAN

OCTOBER 2017 – JULY 2018



The time I spent at the OIB over the course of 2018 was invaluable for the development of my dissertation project. The archival research conducted during my fellowship, the presentations at the Institute and the conversations with OIB's research staff and fellows all resulted in a re-assessment and reformulation of the questions asked in my initial dissertation proposal and produced a dissertation outline that is currently guiding my writing process.

My dissertation project studies the intellectual history of the modern Middle East, focusing on two generations of scholars and educational reformers in Beirut and the contest over higher education curricular reform in the early twentieth century.

I will focus on Constantine Zurayq, his mentors and his contemporaries, looking at their pedagogical and bureaucratic archive as a space for reading the history of ideas circulating at the time.

I am interested in expanding the archive of intellectual history beyond published monographs by looking at its operationalisation in pedagogy and institution building. I hope to show that situating ideas in their social, political and institutional context – and tracing their change as a result of being operationalised – is necessary for a project in intellectual history. My project treats pedagogy as the space where intellectual projects are transformed fundamentally by being caught in the tentacles of institutional and state bureaucracies, funding schemes and shifts in global trends of knowledge production.

My project also looks at the relationship between the liberal arts curriculum and the development of Arab liberal thought and the ensuing projects and visions of subject formation. It treats the modern university as an apparatus for constructing the knowledge basis of truth claims/national imaginaries and as an effective tool for cementing those claims and imaginaries into collective consciousness. The project also enquires into the way in which humanities and the liberal arts serve as especially fertile grounds for constructing this knowledge, thus allowing its use in projects of subject formation.

مضامین تربوی ثانی

ان الغایة التي يجب ان ينشدها المعلم ان
الآخرى في خلق المولود التربوي، ^{ثاني} ~~هو~~ ^{هو} تامين الجمع
ونموها ^{تثريتها}
الحياة التربوية تتوقف على ما يتوفر للمولود من مواد
والهن التربوي هو الرزق ^{المعيشي} الاولي لحقبة تربوية
ولسبة نمواته، المستند للتعاون مع مولده ^{ثاني} ~~في~~ ^{في} ~~تثريته~~
والله اعلم بالذي من هذا الدالين، ^{واثن} ~~وتسكن~~ ^{وتسكن} ~~الهدم~~

Cooperations & Third-party Funding

Third-party Funding

RESEARCH PROJECT *Cultural Policies in Lebanon*, funded by al-Mawred al-Thaqafy.
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE // 5–6 SEPTEMBER *Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Interdisciplinary approaches to nature and environmental history in Arabic and Islamic discourses*, funded and co-organized by Cosimena DAAD, Cairo (see p. 126).

Co-funding

PUBLICATION *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: Politics of Taste Making*, (BTS 132), funded by the OIB and the Volkswagen Foundation (see p. 112).

DAAD LONG-TERM LECTURESHIP In co-operation with DAAD and the Lebanese University (Doctoral School of Literature, Humanities and Social Sciences). The negotiations to establish the lectureship, which will be associated with the Orient-Institut Beirut, were also headed by the OIB.

BASSEM CHIT FELLOWSHIP FOR THE STUDY OF ACTIVISM Joint fellowship between the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), Lebanon Support (NGO), Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and OIB (funded by ACSS and RLS). The fellowship is held by Dr. Cynthia Azzam with a project entitled "Le paysage scolaire s'invente dans les proximités".

Researchers

Researcher's



**Amin
Alsaden**

Doctoral Fellow

AMIN ALSADEN is an independent scholar who focuses on the global exchanges of ideas and expertise across cultural boundaries. He is currently researching a pivotal juncture in post-World War II Baghdad, when the city became a locus of unprecedented encounters, contributing to the profound transformation of art and architecture globally while generating unique local movements. Amin holds a PhD and MA from Harvard University, an MArch from Princeton University, and a BArch from the American University of Sharjah. He defended his PhD while being a Visiting Doctoral Fellow at the OIB.



**Christopher
Bahl**

Research Associate

CHRISTOPHER BAHL joined the OIB in October 2018 after completing his PhD in History at SOAS, University of London. His doctoral thesis *Histories of Circulation – Sharing Arabic Manuscripts across the Western Indian Ocean, 1400–1700* studied the transregional circulation of Arabic manuscripts to argue that mobile scholars as well as shared cultural practices and corpora of Islamicate texts led to the cultural integration of the Western Indian Ocean in the early modern period. Christopher received an MA in Historical Research Methods from SOAS in 2014 after completing an MA in Islamic Studies and South Asian History at the University of Heidelberg in 2013. In 2010/11 he studied Arabic at the University of Damascus and Urdu at the Central University, Hyderabad, India. He is interested in the social and cultural histories of the wider Indian Ocean region in the early modern period, manuscript cultures and their circulation, and scholarly cultures and practices of history writing. His new postdoctoral project focuses on mobile protagonists in the Indian Ocean region in the early modern period and their practices of knowledge formation and community building in the context of shrine cities.



Monique Bellan

Research Associate

MONIQUE BELLAN joined the OIB as a research associate in 2013. She holds a PhD in Middle Eastern studies from Freie Universität Berlin and has previously worked as a research associate at the collaborative Aesthetic Experience and the Dissolution of Artistic Limits Research Centre at Freie Universität Berlin and at the Performing Arts Section of the Academy of Arts in Berlin. Monique is the author of *Dismember Re-member: Das anatomische Theater von Lina Saneh und Rabih Mroue* (Reichert, 2013) and, together with Nadia von Maltzahn, co-editor of *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: Politics of Taste Making* (Beiruter Texte und Studien 132, 2018). Focusing on the ways in which art is debated and discussed in various media since the early twentieth century, her current research project seeks to trace a discourse on aesthetic reflection. Part of her research is dedicated to artistic practices and the development of galleries in Lebanon since the 1960s. Monique's research interests include modern and contemporary art in Lebanon and Egypt, art theory, politics and aesthetics.



Peter Blank

Doctoral Fellow

PETER BLANK is a PhD candidate at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, where he works as a research assistant and lecturer at the Department of Oriental Studies. He holds an MA in Political Science and Islamic Studies from Friedrich-Schiller-Universität and he has also studied at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Rennes, France. Peter re-joined the OIB for the second part of his fellowship, after completing fieldwork while based at the OIB in 2016/17. He was a visiting researcher at the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut in 2018 and the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden, in 2016. He has worked with several political and academic organisations in Germany, Egypt and Lebanon. His research interests include war-to-peace transitions, political parties and power-sharing in divided societies, rebel governance and social change in civil wars.



Joan Chaker

Doctoral Fellow

JOAN CHAKER is a PhD candidate in the History Department at Harvard University. She received a BA in Economics and an MA in History from the American University of Beirut as well as an MSc in Economics from the London School of Economics. Her previous research focused on the Ottoman tobacco market. She is currently working on a study of the social transformation of the countryside as it joined the global market over the long nineteenth century, told as a collective biography of the mule drivers of Ottoman Lebanon. More generally, her research interests range over Ottoman history, global history, the history of capitalism and the constitutional law of money. In a previous incarnation, she worked as a money-markets trader in Amsterdam and London.



Sam Dinger

Doctoral Fellow

SAM DINGER is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at New York University. He received his MA in Sociology from NYU in 2017 and spent the 2017/18 academic year as a Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) Fellow at the American University in Cairo (AUC). His MA research focused on international and local NGOs in Lebanon and their divergent ways of reasoning about the materialities and temporalities of crisis. He is currently working on an ethnographic study of the municipality of Taalabaya in the central Beqaa valley where he is examining the practices and ethics of brokerage and exchange between Syrian and Lebanese residents with a particular focus on young Syrian men.



Fatih Ermiş

Research Associate

FATİH ERMIŞ joined the OIB as a research associate in 2018 and, together with Hans-Peter Pökel, is jointly responsible for the in-house production of *Bibliotheca Islamica* (BI). He received his doctorate from Universität Erfurt with a thesis entitled "Ottoman Economic Thinking before the 19th Century". He holds an MA in economic history from Marmara University and a BA in economics from Boğaziçi University, both in Istanbul. Before joining the OIB, he worked as a research assistant for the Chair of History of West Asia at Universität Erfurt and, most recently, as a post-doctoral associate at the Centre for Islamic Theology, Universität Tübingen. His main research interest is pre-modern Islamic intellectual history, with a particular focus on intellectual endeavours in Ottoman lands. His work is also concerned with economic, social, religious and literary writings as well as with Sufi thought. His research at the OIB focuses on a famous book of ethics, *Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī*, written in Damascus by the Ottoman scholar Qinālīzāde 'Alī Čelebī (1510–1572).



Mathieu Eychenne

Postdoctoral Fellow

MATHIEU EYCHENNE holds a PhD in History from the Aix-Marseille University, France (2007). He previously worked as a research associate at the French Institute of the Near East (Ifpo) in Damascus (2008–11) and Beirut (2011–13). He taught the history of the Medieval Middle East and North Africa at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris (2014/15) and was awarded a Junior Fellowship at the Annemarie Schimmel Kolleg at Universität Bonn in Germany in 2016/17. Since 2018 he is assistant professor (*maître de conférences*) at Paris Diderot University. His research interests include the social and economic history of medieval and early modern Bilād al-Shām, with a focus on Damascus and its province. His current research project at the OIB encompasses the interactions of Damascus with its rural hinterland, focusing on land property and pious endowments (*waqf*), rural economy (agricultural production and prices) and environmental issues (climate).



Foroogh Farhang

Doctoral Fellow

FOROOGH FARHANG is a PhD candidate in Cultural Anthropology at Northwestern University. She received her MA in Gender Studies from Central European University Budapest in 2014. Her Master's thesis focused on the visual representations of Shi'a saintly martyrs and the martyrs of the Iran-Iraq war in mural paintings in Tehran in post-revolutionary Iran. In her current dissertation project, she explores the political, economic and ethical dimensions of the quest of Syrians for a proper burial in Lebanon in the years following the 2011 mass migration of Syrians to that country. She looks at the ways in which the scarcity of burial spaces in Lebanon, in conjunction with increasing restrictions on crossing the Lebanon-Syria border, has mobilised legal and illegal networks of Syrians' travelling dead within the borders of Lebanon and en route from Lebanon to Syria.



Jessica Gerschultz

Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow

JESSICA GERSCHULTZ is an Assistant Professor in the Department of African and African-American Studies at the University of Kansas and a 2018 Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow at the OIB. She received her PhD in Art History from Emory University in 2012. Jessica's research interests include modernism in Africa and the Arab world, gender and materiality as well as feminist art histories. Her current book project centres on transregional networks of fibre artists and her research during the Hans-Robert Roemer Fellowship positioned Lebanese tapestry artists and sites of production in a wider historical framework.

Jessica was an American Council of Learned Societies Fellow in 2016 for the writing of her first book *Decorative Arts of the Tunisian École: Fabrications of Modernism, Gender, and Power* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019). In 2018 she published a chapter in *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: The Politics of Taste Making*, edited by Nadia von Maltzahn and Monique Bellan for *Beiruter Texte und Studien* (132). She also participated in the OIB's International Summer Academy on Language, Science and Aesthetics in 2014.



Till Grallert

Research Associate

TILL GRALLERT joined the OIB in 2014 (on parental leave August 2016–September 2017). His research and teaching focuses on the social and spatial history of late Ottoman cities, the socio-linguistics of early Arabic newspapers and digital humanities (DH) outside the global north. He completed his PhD at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies in 2014 with a thesis entitled "To Whom Belong the Streets? Property, Propriety, and Appropriation: The Production of Public Space in Late Ottoman Damascus, 1875–1914". Till's current research project aims at establishing a genealogy of urban food riots as a "repertoire of contention" (Tilly) and as genuine political negotiations of the social contract between the rulers and the ruled in the Eastern Mediterranean between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries. He is a co-organiser of the "Digital Humanities Institute – Beirut", the developer and a core contributor to "Project Jarā'id", an online chronology of Arabic periodicals before 1900, and he contributed to a recent collection on "Digital Humanities and Islamic & Middle East Studies" (ed. Elias Muhanna, 2016). Within the framework of his research project "Open Arabic Periodical Editions" (OpenArabicPE), Till works on open, collaborative and scholarly digital editions of early Arabic periodicals such as Muḥammad Kurd 'Alī's journal *al-Muqtabas* and 'Abd al-Qādir Iskandarānī's *al-Ḥaqā'iq*.



Mina Ibrahim

Doctoral Fellow

MINA IBRAHIM is a third-year PhD student at Justus-Liebig Universität and The International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC) in Gießen, Germany. His doctoral dissertation, "Parables of Khidma: The Everydayness of Christians in Egypt" ethnographically complicates the difficulties and the possibilities of living as a "good" Christian in Egypt. He researches academic and non-academic works about the lives of the Copts seeking "negated" and "rejected" spaces and contexts, attempting to question the absence of, and to find a place for, the "atheist" and "sinful" among the many other similar figures whose "weak/absent" faith excludes them from claiming a position within the largest Christian minority in the Middle East. In addition to working on his project, Mina contributes to the *Eshhad* online database that analyses the everydayness of sectarianism in Egypt and beyond (www.eshhad.org). Moreover, he has recently begun to contribute to the MENA Prison Forum project (www.menaprisonforum.org/) that is moderated by the non-profit organisation Umam Documentation and Research in Beirut, in cooperation with The Arab Fund for Arts & Culture (AFAC) and the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa).



***Sarah
Johnson***

Doctoral Fellow

SARAH C. JOHNSON is an art historian and a PhD candidate at Freie Universität Berlin, where she is completing a dissertation on the Iraqi modern artist Hafidh Druby (1914–1991). Previously she was a curator of Islamic Collections at the British Museum in London. She completed her MA in Islamic Art and Archaeology at the University of Oxford in 2014, and her undergraduate degree in Art and Archaeology at Princeton University in 2010.



Andrea Jud

OIB Cairo Office

ANDREA JUD has been working for the Cairo Office of the OIB since autumn 2016. She is a PhD candidate in Media and Communication Studies at Freie Universität Berlin and holds an MA in Political Science and Islamic Studies from Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. Her PhD project "Political identity construction and Islamist hegemony" traces how changes within Islamist groups in Egypt 2011–2013 are connected to their complex relationships with each other and questions Islamist hegemony as well as what it means for the concept of Islamism itself.



Jonathan Kriener

Research Associate

JONATHAN KRIENER was a PhD fellow at the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut in Essen, a visiting fellow at Marburg's Center for Near and Middle East Studies and a research fellow at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, at the OIB and at Universität Bochum before joining the OIB in October 2015. Jonathan graduated with a PhD in Oriental Studies from Universität Bochum in 2010. He taught courses about the twentieth-century histories of Lebanon, Israel and the Palestinians as well as recent Arab educational thought and reform at Universität Bochum and Universität Tübingen. His publications compare history, civics and religious instruction at Lebanese, Palestinian and Israeli schools and in higher education in Egypt and Lebanon. His current project is about academic history writing in Lebanon and combines his interest in academically-produced expressions of collective memory with that for institutional practices in the social sciences and humanities.



Sean Lee

Doctoral Fellow

SEAN LEE is a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at Northwestern University. His dissertation focuses on sectarian and ethnic minority communities in the Levant during times of civil war. Through interviews, focus groups and archival sources, he traces the decision-making processes of Armenian and Druze communities during the Lebanese civil war (1975–90) and Kurdish and Druze communities in the current conflict in Syria (2011 to the present). He received MA degrees from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales and from the Université de la Sorbonne-Nouvelle. He has carried out field research in Lebanon, Turkey, Tunisia, Germany and the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Peggy Levitt

Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow

PEGGY LEVITT is Chair of the Sociology Department and the Luella LaMer Slaner Professor in Latin American Studies at Wellesley College and co-Director of Harvard University's Politics and Social Change Workshop. She is also co-founder of the Global (De)Centre. Her most recent book, *Artifacts and Allegiances: How Museums Put the Nation and the World on Display*, was published by the University of California Press in July 2015.

Peggy has received Honorary Doctoral Degrees from the University of Helsinki (2017) and from Maastricht University (2014). She is currently a Robert Schuman Fellow at the European University Institute (2017–2019). She has held various visiting professorships, most recently at Queen Mary University of London, the Lebanese American University, the National University of Singapore, Oxford University and the American University of Cairo. Her books include *Religion on the Edge* (Oxford University Press, 2012), *God Needs No Passport* (New Press 2007), *The Transnational Studies Reader* (Routledge 2007), *The Changing Face of Home* (Russell Sage 2002) and *The Transnational Villagers* (UC Press, 2001).



Nadia von Maltzahn

Deputy Director (since April)

NADIA VON MALTZAHN has been deputy director of the OIB since April 2018, having joined the Institute as a research associate in 2013. She is the author of *The Syria-Iran Axis. Cultural Diplomacy and International Relations in the Middle East* (I.B. Tauris, 2013, 2015) and holds a DPhil and an MSt in Modern Middle Eastern Studies from St Antony's College, University of Oxford. She received her BA Honours in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies from King's College, Cambridge. Nadia co-edited *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: Politics of Taste Making* (Beiruter Texte und Studien 132, 2018), *Divercities: Competing narratives and urban practices in Beirut, Cairo and Tehran* (Orient-Institut Studies 3, 2015) and *Inverted Worlds: Cultural motion in the Arab region* (Orient-Institut Studies 2, 2013). In 2018, she acted as a reviewer for *META Middle East Topics & Arguments*. Her research interests include cultural policies, artistic practices and the circulation of knowledge. Her current research project at the OIB deals with cultural policies in Lebanon, looking in particular at cultural institutions and their role in the public sphere.



Mohammad Magout

Postdoctoral Fellow

MOHAMMAD MAGOUT was a senior researcher at The Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities Humanities Centre for Advanced Studies at Universität Leipzig before he joined the OIB. He completed his doctoral studies there in 2016 with a dissertation entitled "Between Religion and Culture: Academic Discourse and Religious Subjectivity at Two Nizari Ismaili Institutions for Islamic Studies in London", for which he was awarded the Katharina Windscheid Prize of the Research Academy Leipzig (2017). Mohammad holds an MA in Muslim Cultures (2010) from the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, Aga Khan University, London, where he wrote his thesis about heavy metal music in Syria, and a BSc in Mathematics from the University of Damascus (2006). His most recent publication entitled "Transnationalising Multiple Secularities: A Comparative Study of the Global Ismaili Community" will appear in Historical Social Research, Special Issue on "Muslim Secularities" (2019).

Mohammad blogs about his research and personal interests in www.ReligionCultureSociety.me and tweets excerpts from *al-Jinān* as [@aljinan1870](https://twitter.com/aljinan1870)



Stefan Maneval

Postdoctoral Fellow

STEFAN MANEVAL holds a PhD in Islamic Studies from Freie Universität Berlin. His PhD thesis on public and private spaces in the Saudi city of Jeddah in the twentieth century won the 2016 dissertation prize of the German Association of Middle Eastern Studies (DAVO). It will be published in book form by UCL Press in 2019. From October 2017 to March 2018 Stefan was a postdoctoral fellow at the OIB. He is currently based in Halle (Saale), working on his research project entitled "Negotiating Differences", for which he received a grant from the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). His publications include articles on contemporary Saudi society and politics, cultural heritage and the art scene in Saudi Arabia, social theory and material culture as well as a co-edited book on the diversity of Muslim everyday life (*Muslim Matter*, Berlin 2016).



Muzna al-Masri

Postdoctoral Fellow

MUZNA AL-MASRI is an independent consultant and researcher in the fields of conflict analysis and conflict sensitive aid. She holds a PhD in Anthropology from Goldsmiths, University of London and an MA in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding from the Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia. During her time as a postdoctoral fellow and based on her PhD thesis, she worked on a book manuscript that ethnographically explores the relationships between political elites and their constituencies, looking specifically at the emergence and production of the model of an "entrepreneurial elite" in post-war Lebanon. Before joining the OIB, she was a postdoctoral fellow with the Arab Council for the Social Sciences and affiliated with the Centre for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies at the American University of Beirut (AUB), and she has taught at AUB and Goldsmiths, University of London. Her research interests include political anthropology, elite politics and formation, everyday political practice, conflict and violence, the anthropology of aid and development, research methods and the anthropology of sports.



Astrid Meier

Deputy Director (until March)

ASTRID MEIER joined the OIB in October 2013 as deputy director. A historian by training, she holds a PhD from the University of Zurich, Switzerland (1994). She worked as a research assistant at the History Department of the same university (2006–11) and lectured at the universities of Zurich, Basel, Bern and St. Gallen. From 2011 to 2013, she was Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies at Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg, to where she returned as Professor of Islamic Studies in April 2018.

Her research interests include the social and cultural history of the Middle East in the early-modern period; theory and practice of Islamic law; famines, hunger and food systems; and environmental history. Astrid Meier is a member of the scientific boards of the journals *Comparativ* (Leipzig) and *Annales islamologiques* (Cairo). In early 2018, she acted as a reviewer for *Annales islamologiques*.



Fuad Musallam

Postdoctoral Fellow

FUAD MUSALLAM is a political anthropologist who specialises in the study of activism, labour and subjectivity, particularly as they relate to the making of community and the political imagination. For his PhD at the London School of Economics (completed in 2017), he conducted fieldwork in Lebanon between 2013 and 2014. In particular, he investigated what drove young people to struggle for change and how, in the face of failure to effect it, activists have come to reorient themselves, understanding the possibility of worthwhile action in the future. His current project tracks community building among migrant workers in Lebanon, particularly through their voluntary associations. During his time at the OIB, he has begun new fieldwork with migrant workers in Beirut to explore possible forms of participatory research practice.



Olga Nefedova

Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow

OLGA NEFEDOVA is an art historian and former director of the Orientalist Museum in Doha, Qatar. She has worked for many years with private and government collections and museums in the Far East, South Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf countries. Her projects include the following international exhibitions and publications: "The Art and Life of Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737)", "A Journey into the World of the Ottomans" (2010), "Bartholomäus Schachman (1559–1614): The Art of Travel" (2012) and "Heritage of Art Diplomacy: Memoirs of an Ambassador" (2013). Olga is one of the organisers of the "Orientality" series of international biannual conferences (launched at Pembroke College, Cambridge University, 2013). Presently she is an Associate Professor at the National Research University HSE, Moscow. Her current research project "Art and Artists Crossing Borders: The Early History of Art Education for Arab Students in the Soviet Union between 1959 and 1979" focuses on the early history of art education of students from Arab countries in the USSR. Parts of this research have been presented at international conferences and public seminars such as The Arts in Society (American University, Paris, 2017); World Congress of Middle Eastern Studies (University of Seville, 2018); and Cultural Diplomacy of Socialism in the 20th Century: Institutions, Actors, Discourses (Deutsches Historisches Institut, Moscow, 2019).



Chafika Ouail

Postdoctoral Fellow

CHAFIKA OUAIL is a revisionist philosopher and a scholar in Islamic spirituality and theology; she is also a poet. She holds a PhD in Arabic Language and Literature from the American University in Beirut. Her work is concerned with revisiting the concepts and narrative of the Arabic and Islamic tradition by employing a multidisciplinary approach. During a postdoctoral fellowship at the Arab Council for the Social Sciences, she studied the *crowd* in the Islamic tradition. At the OIB, she studies the concept of *neighbourliness* as a spiritual paradigm. To this end, she tracks from a philosophical perspective the shift of this concept from the pre-Islamic era to the Sufi vision.

Chafika served as assistant editor of *al-Abḥāth* and has been chosen to lead the editorial board of the forthcoming issue of *Maghārib*. She has published on a wide range of topics, including the making of the historical Sufi dictionary; the dilemma of Sufism between translating the experience and translating the language; an onto-semantic reading as a new approach to interpret the Sufi texts; ethics in the Qur'an between philosophy and spirituality; and the making of the crowd (*jumhūr*) in the Islamic tradition.



Hans-Peter Pökel

Research Associate

HANS-PETER PÖKEL joined the OIB in 2014. He previously taught Classical Arabic Literature and Early Islamic History at Freie Universität Berlin and he was a research associate at the *Epistemes in motion* Research Centre. In his PhD he studied eunuchs in the works of al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869) within the cultural context of the Abbāsīd period.

His current project analyses theological questions concerning divine speech in classical Arabic literature within its inter-religious context during the Abbāsīd period. It investigates the negotiation, production and transmission of theological knowledge in the Abbāsīd period and its entanglement with interreligious and transconfessional discussions within Muslim communities. The project focuses on debates and anecdotes about the Qur'ān concerning its inimitability (*i'jāz al-qur'ān*) and its transformation in modernity and includes discussions about its translatability from a historical and comparative perspective.

Peter's further research interests include anthropological questions, gender studies, the history of sexualities and emotions as well as conceptions of the human body in the field of Classical Arabic literature.



Joseph Ben Prestel

Postdoctoral Fellow

JOSEPH BEN PRESTEL is a research associate and lecturer in Modern History at Freie Universität Berlin. During the 2018/19 academic year, he is a Fung Global Fellow at Princeton University. He received his PhD in Modern History from Freie Universität Berlin in 2015. Prestel is the author of *Emotional Cities: Debates on Urban Change in Berlin and Cairo, 1860–1910* (OUP, 2017). From October 2017 to March 2018, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the OIB, where he worked on his current project *Revolutionary Arabesque: Palestinian Groups and the West German Radical Left, 1956–1982*.



Michele Scala

Doctoral Fellow

MICHELE SCALA is a PhD candidate at Aix-Marseille Université and an independent consultant specialising in labour migration. During his fellowship at the OIB, he organised the "At the margins of wage labour?" seminar series revolving around the labour conditions of Lebanese and migrant workers excluded from any form of legal and social protection. In his thesis, he analyses contemporary forms of labour relations, focusing on the role of patron-client ties in labour contexts in which there is little, or no, labour protection.

His latest publication is "De l'injustice à l'action? La mobilisation des travailleurs de Spinneys au Liban", in A. Allal et al., *Quand l'industrie proteste. Fondement moraux des insoumissions ouvrières*, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018. Together with Amin Allal (CNRS) and Élisabeth Longuenesse (CNRS), he currently coordinates a special issue on "Situations de travail et mobilisations ouvrières en Méditerranée" for the *Confluences Méditerranée* review to be published in 2019.



Birgit Schäbler

Director

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER has by now completed her first full year as director of the OIB. Since 2002, she holds the only chair of Middle Eastern History in Germany at Universität Erfurt. Between 1997 and 2002 she held fellowships at Duke University and Harvard University and was a professor of Middle Eastern History in Georgia, USA before returning to Germany. She studied History, Islamic Studies and Political Science at Universität Würzburg, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and the University of Berkeley, USA and was a member of one of the first fellowship programs of the DFG at Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg where she received her PhD.

At Universität Erfurt she founded the first trans-regional research platform in Germany, in 2008. She was a fellow at the Max-Weber-Kolleg and at her university elected to the academic senate. For some years she also headed the history department. She has been a member of various boards and an evaluator for numerous academic funding agencies. She also served internationally with accreditation agencies. Her research interests currently include the relations between Area History (Middle Eastern History) and Global History, between the Middle East, Islam, and Europe, and the research paradigm of "relations" in general, as well as the history of Orientalism and Oriental Studies in Germany and beyond. She also writes on postcolonialism and the question of alterity in Middle Eastern societies and Islam from the nineteenth century to the present.



Hana Sleiman

Doctoral Fellow

HANA SLEIMAN is an archivist and a PhD student in History at the University of Cambridge. Her doctoral research is concerned with the intellectual history of the modern Middle East, focusing on two generations of scholars and educational reformers in Beirut and Damascus, and the contest over higher education curricular reform in the early twentieth century. After receiving her MA in Middle Eastern Studies from Columbia University in 2013, she worked as a Special Collections Librarian at the Archives of the American University of Beirut, where she co-led the Palestinian Oral History Archive. Her archival work focuses on devising open tools and methodologies for ephemera and oral history archives. She is currently collaborating on building the open source MASRAD:platform for Oral History. In the past, she has consulted with the Archive of the Missing and Disappeared in Lebanon, the Syrian Oral History Archive and the Institute for Palestine Studies Library. In 2016 she co-curated *Sea of Stories: Voyages of the Palestinian Archives*, exhibited in Qalandiya International.



*Ahmad
Sukkar*

Postdoctoral Fellow

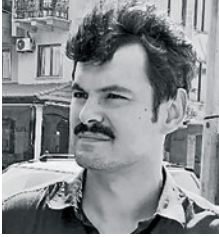
AHMAD SUKKAR joined the OIB after a Mellon postdoctoral fellowship at the American University of Beirut. He is a former visiting lecturer at the Department of Architecture at the University of Cambridge and a former research fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. He completed his PhD with a thesis in architecture and a Master's degree in Humanities and Cultural Studies at the London Consortium (University of London in collaboration with the Architectural Association). He received an MA in Architecture and Urbanism from the Architectural Association. Ahmad holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Architectural Design and a BA in Architecture from the University of Damascus. He has worked at leading architectural offices in the UK and the Middle East, including Zaha Hadid Architects. His work, which has received several international awards and prizes, examines the interaction between architecture and culture in connection with design, heritage and identity in the Middle East, with a focus on urban conflict, reconstruction and development in Syria.



Jennifer Viehl

Doctoral Fellow

JENNIFER VIEHL is a political scientist and a PhD candidate in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg working on a critical examination of the discourses on good governance in late medieval Arabic political advice literature. She holds an MA in Islamic Studies and Political Science from Goethe-Universität Frankfurt. She worked as a research assistant on a project on late medieval Islamic political thought, funded by the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung and hosted by the OIB between 2012 and 2015. Jennifer's research is located at the intersection of the history of political ideas, political theory and Islamic studies and it centres around the history of Islamic political thought and methodological problems of political theory.



Torsten Wollina

Research Associate

TORSTEN WOLLINA joined the OIB in 2014 and has since been responsible for the institute's BTS series. He studied at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, and received his PhD from Freie Universität Berlin with the support of the Anne Marie Schimmel Kolleg at Universität Bonn. He has also worked at the Georg-Eckert-Institut in Braunschweig.

Torsten's research interests include the social and economic history of the Levant, book history, manuscript studies and network approaches. These interests come together in his recently published article "Between Beirut, Cairo, and Damascus: Al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf and the Sufi/Scholar Dichotomy in the Late Mamluk Period (1480s–1510s)" (*Mamlūk Studies Review* 20 (2017)).

The same year, he organised panels on book history at conferences in Beirut in May and in Jena, Germany in September. He has done review work for I. B. Tauris and the journal *Mamlūk Studies Review*. During the winter semester Torsten taught a course on "Social Networks in Mamluk Society" at Universität Leipzig ["Gesellschaft im Mamlukensultanat (1250–1517): Einführung in Geschichte und soziale Netzwerke"]. He writes about most of his activities in his blog Damascus Anecdotes (theCamel.hypotheses.org).

Affiliated Researchers and their Projects

JAN DANIEL Charles University, Prague, Department of International Relations. *Hybrid Revolutionary Actors in World Politics: ISIS and its impact on international order* // MAY – AUGUST

GEBHARD FARTACEK / LORENZ NIGST Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna, Audiovisual Research and Documentation. *Death & Life: Local Conceptions of Reincarnation among the Druzes in the Middle East* // SEPTEMBER 2017 – AUGUST 2018

IRIS FRAUENEDER University of Zurich, Ibero-Romance Literature. *Absent Images. Filmic, curatorial and institutional confrontations with the unavailability of audiovisual heritage in Lebanon* // JANUARY – FEBRUARY

LILIANA GÓMEZ-POPESCU University of Zurich, Ibero-Romance Literature. *Literature and Art in the Court: Testimonial re-telling and dissonant narratives in the Global South* // JANUARY – JULY

JOHANNA KÜHN Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Institut für Ethnologie und Ethnologische Sammlung. *Private Pieties. Mundane Islam and New Forms of Muslim Religiosity: Impact on Contemporary Social and Political Dynamics (ERC 693457)* // AUGUST 2017 – JANUARY 2018

SIMONA LOI Ca' Foscari University, Venice, Department of Asian and North African Studies. *The Everyday Geographies of Beirut's 'Āshūrā' Between Religious Intimacy and Geopolitics: body, performativity, and contested spaces* // SEPTEMBER 2017 – AUGUST 2018

HARALD VIERSEN Philipps-Universität Marburg, Centrum für Nah- und Mittelost-Studien. *Authenticity (aṣāla) in Contemporary Arab Thought* // JANUARY – JUNE

TÜLAY YÜREKLI Adnan Menderes University, Aydın, Faculty of Arts and Sciences. *The analysis of the waqfiya belonging to Mamluk Soltan Shahban's mother* // NOVEMBER – DECEMBER

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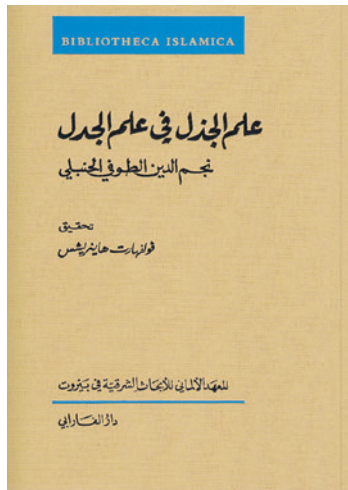
Bibliotheca Islamica



Bibliotheca Islamica (BI) is the OIB's platform for the critical edition of mainly Arabic, but also Persian and Turkish manuscripts. The series dates back to 1929, when Hellmut Ritter edited the *Kitāb maqālāt al-islamiyyīn wa-ikhtilāf al-muṣallīn* of Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ash'arī, a seminal text on dogmatic positions in the early Islamic period. Since then, the OIB has published close to sixty titles in this series. Among the most prominent are the 30-volume biographical lexicon *Kitāb al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* (BI 6) by Ṣalāh al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aibak al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363) and the monumental history of Egypt and the Syrian lands entitled *Badā'i' al-zuhūr fī waqā'i' al-duhūr* by Ibn Iyās (d. 1448/1524) (BI 5). Both editions have recently been completed with the publication of extensive and detailed indexes.

The OIB is adopting an open-access policy. New publications of the BI series are made available in electronic format (PDF), without an embargo period. All published titles of the series (even those that are out of print) can be displayed page per page or downloaded in their entirety in a PDF format from the OIB's website via the links to the MENAdoc repository, hosted by the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt in Halle.

Two new volumes that were out of print were re-published in 2018. In 2019, we anticipate the publication of the notes of the sixteenth-century Aleppan weaver Kamāl al-Dīn al-Hā'ik (BI 59) as well as the publication of volume 4.3 of al-Baladhurī (BI 28) and the second volume of al-Ṣafadī's *Kitāb al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt*, a re-edition based on four new manuscripts. The publication team (academic editor Barraq Zakariya, publication consultant Bettina Fischer-Genz and research associates Fatih Ermiş and Hans-Peter Pökel) also worked on the *Kitāb al-Akilla* (BI 60) and the *Kitāb Khāṣṣ al-Khāṣṣ* by Abū Manṣūr al-Tha'libī (BI 61), both forthcoming.



Beirut 2018
313 pp. Arabic/German
ISBN: 9783879976621

'Alam al-jadhal fī 'ilm al-jadal gives an impressive overview of theological and juridical knowledge in the eighth/fourteenth century. Dispute and "jadal", the technique of debating, which is one of the most important pillars of Islamic law (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), is well applied by al-Ṭūfī. He reconsidered the state of the *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* of his time that would become structured and organised into eighty branches only some generations later by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. In the Qur'ān itself, dispute (*jadal*) plays an important role in relation to religious communities in the contextual environment of the first listeners to the Qur'ān during the lifetime of the prophet Muḥammad. Apologetic and even polemical disputes about religious and theological matters in themselves form an integral part of Qur'ānic discourse in the multireligious environment that al-Ṭūfī rediscovers and redefines for his own time. By providing a deep insight into the theological and juridical knowledge of different discursive traditions, al-Ṭūfī also explains the practice and technique of debating within an Arabic and Islamic framework.

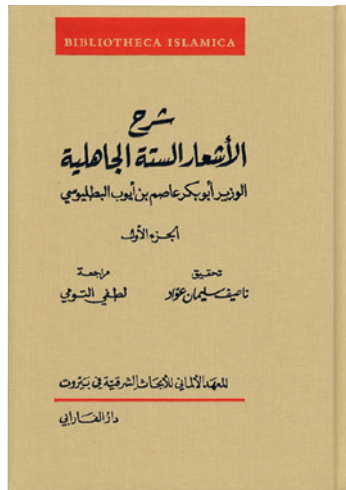
NAJM AL-DĪN AL-ṬŪFĪ AL-ḤANBALĪ (d. 716/1316) was one of the most important theologians and Ḥadīth scholars of his time. Due to his theological and juridical views that represented alternative Ḥanbalī approaches to Islamic jurisprudence and Qur'ānic sciences, al-Ṭūfī during his lifetime was often misunderstood and accused of being a Shī'ī scholar. Unlike his contemporary Ibn Ṭaimiyya, al-Ṭūfī unfortunately remains less well known in both scholarship and Muslim discourses.

The book is a reprint of the 1987 edition by the late Wolfhart Heinrichs, distinguished James Richard Jewett professor of Arabic at Harvard who died in 2014.

Sharḥ al-Ash'ār al-Sitta al-Jāhiliyya Commentary on a Collection of Pre-Islamic Poetry

Abū Bakr 'Āṣim b. Ayyūb al-Baṭalyawsī

Edited by Lotfi Toumi / Nasif Sulaiman Auwad



Beirut 2018

2 volumes

vol. 1: 415 pp. Arabic

vol. 2: 716 pp. Arabic

ISBN: 9783879976614

Sharḥ al-Ash'ār al-Sitta al-Jāhiliyya is an extensive philological commentary on the poetry anthologies of six of the most famous ancient Arabian poets in pre- and early Islamic times.

It was composed by the Andalusian scholar 'Āṣim b. Ayyūb al-Baṭalyawsī (d. 494/1100) and became a widely available book on prestigious ancient Arabic poetry. Al-Baṭalyawsī witnessed the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate in al-Andalus and the emergence of the *mulūk al-ṭawā'if* who governed al-Andalus temporarily from al-Baṭalyaws, their political and cultural centre. At the end of the fifth/eleventh century, they were succeeded by the Almoravids (*al-murābiṭūn*).

From the early Abbasid period, an attempt to understand the language of the pre- and early Islamic poets was a major concern for Arab philologists and commentators on Arabic philology and the Qur'ān. Al-Baṭalyawsī's philological commentary became well known in al-Andalus and the Islamic West, and to this day may be considered one of the most important commentary works on ancient Arabic poetry.

AL-BAṬALYAWSĪ composed his work in two volumes: he commented on the poetry of Imru' al-Qais, al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī and 'Alqama b. 'Abada in the first volume and, in the second, he annotated the poetry of Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā, Ṭarafa b. al-'Abd and 'Antara b. Shaddād. The book is a reprint of the first edition by Nasif Sulaiman Auwad and Lotfi Toumi who has continued and completed the second volume.

NASIF SULAIMAN Auwad is Professor of Arabic Literature in Jordan. LOTFI TOUMI is a researcher in Islamic Studies at the University of Kiel, Germany.

Beiruter Texte und Studien

BTS

Beiruter Texte und Studien (BTS) is the OIB's peer-reviewed book series that publishes research on the arts, history, society and culture of the Middle East. It serves as a platform for innovative research from across the world. Since its inception in 1964, more than 130 books have been published in this series. Two new volumes were added in 2018. A full list of the series' titles can be found on the OIB website. Open Access to an annually growing number of volumes is provided via a link to the MENAdoc repository. Preparations are under way to offer faster open access to all newly-published books and provide BTS with greater visibility among the international academic community. This will enhance the role of BTS as a series that offers cutting-edge research on the Middle East, past and present.

Orient-Institut Studies

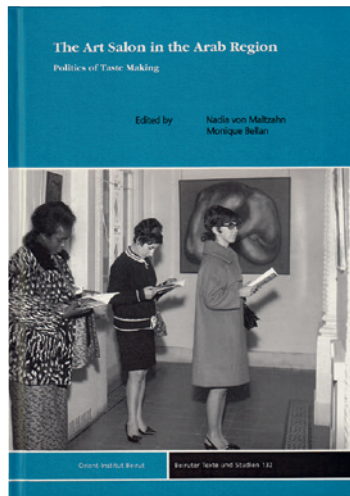
OIS

Orient-Institut Studies (OIS) combines regional and transregional perspectives in Middle Eastern and other Area and Global Studies. OIS is a digital-only publication hosted by perspectivia.net. The digital format facilitates the integration of images and diverse audio-visual material. Its open-access policy makes OIS particularly accessible.

BTS 132

The Art Salon in the Arab Region. Politics of Taste Making

Edited by Nadia von Maltzahn / Monique Bellan



Beirut 2018
310 pp. English
ISBN: 9783956505270

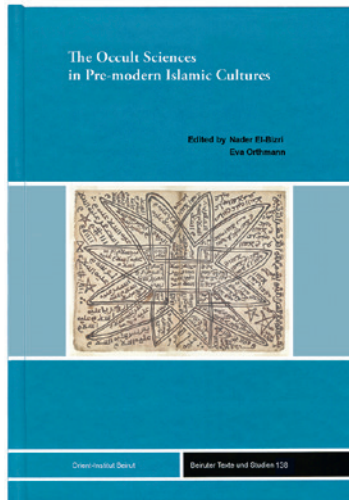
This volume discusses the emergence and role of the art salon in the Arab region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focussing on Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq. Institutional forms of exhibiting and teaching art emerged in the Middle East and North Africa in late colonial and early post-colonial contexts. The book examines how the salon had an impact on the formation of taste and on debates on art and discusses the transfers and cultural interactions between the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. Following the institutional model of the Paris salons, art salons emerged in Algiers, Tunis and Cairo starting in the late 1880s. In Beirut, the salon tradition reached its peak only after independence in the mid-twentieth century. Baghdad never had a formal salon, but alternative spaces and exhibition formats developed in Iraq from the late 1940s onwards. As in Paris, the salons in the region often defined the criteria of artistic production and public taste. The impact of the salon also lay in its ability to convey particular values, attitudes and aspirations. At the same time, the values and attitudes promoted by the salon – as well as the salon itself – were often subject to debate, which led to the creation of counter-salons or alternative exhibition practices. The art salon helps us understand changes in the art systems of these countries, including the development of art schools, exhibition spaces and artist societies, and gives insight into the power dynamics at play. It also highlights networks and circulations between the Arab region and Europe.

NADIA VON MALTZAHN is the Deputy Director of the OIB since April 2018. MONIQUE BELLAN is a Research Associate at the OIB. Both are interested in artistic practices and the circulation of knowledge.

BTS 138

The Occult Sciences in Premodern Islamic Cultures

Edited by Nader El-Bizri / Eva Orthmann



Beirut 2018
264 pp. English
ISBN: 9783956502910

This volume examines the occult sciences and their context within the body of scientific knowledge in premodern Islamic cultures. The chapters explore the relationships between the phenomena of nature and the supernatural arcana as accounted for in arithmology, physiognomy, astrology, divination, geomancy, lettrism, alchemy, magic and gnosis. The spectrum of analytic approaches in the studies in the chapters of this volume varies in terms of its methodological directives in historiography, philology and epistemology. Cumulatively, however, they reveal the complex nuances of thought that situated occultist practice within the sphere of science in the premodern Islamic milieu.

NADER EL-BIZRI is Professor of Philosophy and Civilization Studies at the American University of Beirut. He previously taught at the Universities of Cambridge, Nottingham and Lincoln, in addition to holding research affiliations at The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. He specialises in Arabic Sciences and Philosophy, Phenomenology and Architectural Humanities. He has received various international awards and honours in recognition of his work.

EVA ORTHMANN has been Professor of Islamic Studies at Universität Bonn since 2007. She received her MA in Islamic and Iranian Studies from Universität Tübingen in 1995 and her PhD from Universität Halle in 2000. She was an Assistant Professor at the Oriental Institute at Universität Zürich, before becoming a visiting research scholar at the department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University. Her work focuses mainly on the history of astrology in the Islamic world as well as on Indo-Iranian studies.

Other Publications (Extra Series)



Extra Series

The OIB also supports the publication of various texts connected with the Institute's work. These include publications of monographs, conference proceedings and other manuscripts, at times jointly published with other publishing houses. Two forthcoming Arabic publications are expected for 2019, one on the reception of the Frankfurt School in Egypt and the Third World. The other publication provides insight into different aspects of cultural policies in Lebanon and is produced in collaboration with Al Mawred Al Thaqafy, the regional NGO.

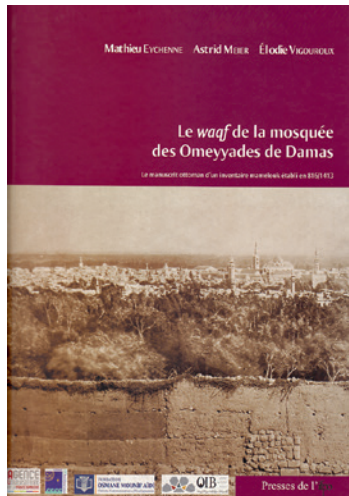
OIB Extra Series

Le waqf de la mosquée des Omeyyades de Damas.

Le manuscrit ottoman d'un inventaire mamelouk établi en 816/1413

Edited and introduced by

Mathieu Eychenne / Astrid Meier / Elodie Vigouroux



*Institut français du Proche-Orient in
collaboration with the OIB and others
Beirut/Damascus 2018
744 pp. Arabic/French
ISBN: 9786144325452*

The Umayyad Mosque of Damascus was both the emblematic monument of the city and a principal driver of its economic life. By the end of the medieval period, it had established a dense network of links with the city and the surrounding agricultural lands. The manuscript which this volume presents was written in 1518, two years after the Ottoman conquest of *Bilād al-Shām*. It contains a list of the urban and rural properties belonging to the *waqf* of the Mosque, established in 1413.

In addition to the edition and translation of this inventory, the authors propose a new study of the topography and toponymy of the city and the Ghouta, its surrounding oasis, shortly after its occupation by the troops of Timur Lang in 1401. They provide an analysis of Mamluk and Ottoman notarial and juridical practices and, by examining the geographical distribution of the landed properties, they delve into the implications of the symbiotic relationship between Damascus and its rural territories. The manuscript published here renders accessible to a wider audience a major source for the first time.

Publications of the Researchers



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CHRISTOPHER BAHL

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WITH ASTRID MEIER AND ÉLODIE VIGOUROUX

***Le financement de la mosquée des Omeyyades et le statut de ses biens*, pp. 305–309.**

WITH ÉLODIE VIGOUROUX

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Conference Reports

Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage // Interdisciplinary approaches to nature and environmental history in Arabic and Islamic discourses

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Cairo

5–6 September

Coordination: Hans-Peter Pökel /

Birgit Schäbler / Andrea Jud (OIB)

Studying the relation of humans with their environment is part of the newly initiated research profile of the OIB that analyses the nature of relations and the basic concept of relations as such. In order to discuss and reflect critically on environmental approaches in Arabic and Islamic discourses, the OIB and its Cairo Office organised an international conference on Arabic and Islamic knowledge of nature and the environment in cooperation with the Cultural Heritage Cluster of COSIMENA at the DAAD Regional Office Cairo. The conference focused on the close relationship between human beings and their natural environment and elaborated on the knowledge of, and practices towards, nature in Arabic and Islamic thought.

The consideration of Arabic heritage and Islamic religious tradition was stimulated by some scholarly approaches in Western societies in the 1960s. Considering European societies, the arguments of historian Lynn White (1907–1987) have shown in a remarkable manner that interpretations of holy scriptures can have a tremendous effect on how humans understand themselves and their environment.

The aim of the conference was to elaborate approaches to nature and environmental protection from an interdisciplinary perspective with a focus on Egypt, which is a particularly apt place since it features some of the longest-standing efforts within the realm of bio-consciousness in the Arab world. The interdisciplinary approach connected environmental history as a young academic discipline with Natural Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences and specifically Arabic and Islamic Studies.

The intensive academic exchange has proved enriching for discussing the complexity of the dynamics between humans and their natural environment. It has shown that ecology and nature preservation is not a uniquely Western approach. Local communities in the Middle East have their own rich heritage of practices and knowledge of nature that need to be tapped. In future, the OIB will pursue this topic further.

Photo below from left to right:
Stephan Seidlmayer, Friederike
Seyfried, Moawiyah Ibrahim
Yousef, Birgit Schäßler, Monica
Hanna, Tarek Tawfik.

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Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/ Interdisciplinary Knowledges

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Erfurt, Max-Weber-Kolleg

18–20 June

In June, the OIB and the Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies (MWK) at Universität Erfurt organised a joint workshop in Erfurt. Entitled "Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledges", the workshop offered researchers of both institutions an opportunity to debate aspects of their research projects in an open setting. At the heart of the discussion was the interplay between area studies and disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives. After an introduction by BIRGIT SCHÄBLER / OIB AND HARTMUT ROSA / MWK, OIB researchers (MONIQUE BELLAN, TILL GRALLERT, NADIA VON MALTZAHN, FOUAD GEHAD MAREI AND HANS-PETER PÖKEL) alternated with MWK researchers (GUNNAR FOLKE SCHUPPERT, ANDREAS PETTENKOFER AND JUTTA VINZENT) in discussing their work that ranged from governance and cultural policies, art and aesthetic reflection, food riots and egalitarian recognition struggles to emotions and pop cultures as well as transconfessional contexts. The workshop highlighted the importance of debating this kind of work in a non-regional context. It was the first in a series of joint events between the OIB and the Max Weber Centre.



Participants of the
workshop at the Max-
Weber-Kolleg, Erfurt.
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Arab-German Young Researchers Exchange // Cultural policy and cultural mediation in transforming societies

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Beirut

18–24 October

23 October at the OIB

Funded by the DAAD

Funded by the DAAD, the OIB partnered in the Arab-German Young Researchers Exchange "Cultural Policy and Cultural Mediation in Transforming Societies", organised by Universität Hildesheim (Department of Cultural Policy, UNESCO Chair Cultural Policy for the Arts in Development) and the Lebanese University (Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines-1-Beirut) from 18 to 24 October 2018. The OIB provided the venue for one of the days. It started with Nadia von Maltzahn's lecture on the relationship of Lebanese artists and cultural players with state institutions, focusing on the role of the ministry of culture. She argued that artists and intellectuals look for state support of culture in Lebanon as long as the state does not interfere with their artistic freedom and showed that this search was connected to the idea of citizenship and cultural rights. Von Maltzahn interrogated the formulation of cultural policies in Lebanon by highlighting the debates around the establishment of a ministry of culture in Lebanon in the early 1970s and 1990s. The ensuing discussions continued in two sessions with parallel workshops on the following topics: "Researching cultural policies: Achievements and challenges in Lebanon" (NADIA VON MALTZAHN / OIB AND MEIKE LETTAU / HILDESHEIM), "Art and marginalised communities" (HICHAM KAYED / AL-JANA), "Film and Politics: The correlation of the moving image and the world it documents" (VERA KLOCKE / HILDESHEIM) and "Theatre and Politics: Strategies for the inclusion of refugees in German Theatres" (DOROTHEA LÜBBE / HILDESHEIM). The exchange brought together students from Morocco, Tunisia, Iraq, Lebanon and Germany to brainstorm concepts and ideas and provide insights into how cultural policies and mediation are shaped in different countries.



Participants of
the workshop in
the OIB garden.
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Unicode and Computer Typography for Arabic Text // Digital Humanities potentially on quicksand

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

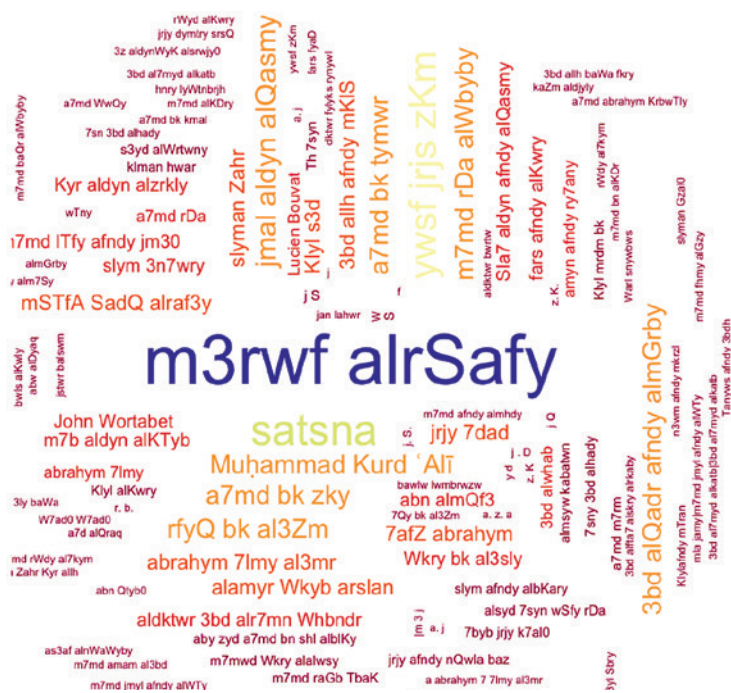
Beirut, OIB

2 October

For this one-day workshop, Thomas Milo, linguist and typographer from Amsterdam, focused on the political nature and the everyday consequences of the writing tools at our command.

Character encoding and the concepts and politics behind it are at the basis of our interaction with computers (which ultimately store bits and not letters). If one needs more than a basic collection of Latin characters, one will nowadays always pick unicode for character encoding. As such, this is a great improvement over the not so distant era of competing encoding standards. Most of us remember the dread and anguish of opening files containing Arabic text – either in Arabic script if it was supported or in Latin transcription with diacritics – on a different machine or with software different from the one it had been written with.

Yet, unicode is not just a standard for character encoding, such as utf-8, utf-16, utf-32 etc., but also an industry consortium incorporated in Silicon Valley whose full (voting) members are almost exclusively major American computer companies such as Adobe, Apple, Google, Facebook, IBM, Microsoft, Netflix, Oracle and Shopify. This has severe consequences: on the upside, unicode support is nowadays almost universal, from the World Wide Web to operating systems; on the downside, the vast majority of the non-English speaking world has absolutely no say in how their languages can be written and stored on a computer. Milo succinctly argued that consequently, unicode is woefully inadequate for capturing historic and contemporary writing practices for languages using variations of Arabic script. First, there are multiple codepoints for the same grapheme in different language-script combinations (Arabic, Persian, Urdu etc.). Milo showed us at least thirty-two different but graphemically identical encodings for *makiyya*. Second, there are no options for orthographically correct encodings of local preferences, such as the Egyptian preference for omitting the dots underneath final *yā's* that leads people to opt for final *alif maqṣūras*. Both of these issues are highly relevant for universal search, and current out-of-the-box software does not address them (for instance through normalisation).



Wordclouds of Arabic names demonstrating limited support for rendering Arabic script on current Apple computers. On the left, letters are not connected and wrongly sorted from right-to-left. One work-around, using computational transcription into Latin script, is shown on the right.

TILL GRALLERT, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Events

Third, many real-world variations, both in manuscripts and printed works, cannot be digitally captured at all. One cannot record ambiguity through the *rasm*, for example, which, however, is crucial to Quranic studies.

Milo's strategy for overcoming the shortcomings of the current encoding landscape is threefold. It involves conceptual proposals to base the encoding of Arabic script(s) on archigraphemes and the typography on script grammars, sample implementations developed by his company DecoType for the Muscat Mushaf, and advocacy.

Reconstructing Neighborhoods of War

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Beirut, OIB

29 November–1 December

Beirut, Lebanon, a country with a recent history of conflict and a complex experience of post-war reconstruction of which there has been considerable criticism, was an apt place to hold this conference. It brought together two concepts: the concept of neighborhood and the concept of reconstruction. Sociological, anthropological, historical, and political science approaches met those who dealt concretely with architecture, city planning, and even technical aspects of reconstruction. Old hands with the professional experience of a lifetime discussed with young activists who take great interest in an active role in reconstructing their cities.

At a time of intense debate on urban conflict and reconstruction in war-torn Middle Eastern countries, the conference was wisely planned to be not merely about the history of conflict in war-torn cities that has led to the need for their reconstruction, nor simply about the formalities of post-war reconstruction. Instead, it focused on the level of the neighbourhood within these cities and discussed people-centred and bottom-up approaches to post-war reconstruction. Comparing different cities that had similar experiences of post-war reconstruction, the twenty papers that were presented in nine panels during the three days of the conference discussed what could be learned from similar neighbourhoods.

The cities and towns in question were Aleppo, Baghdad, Beirut, Berlin, Bint Jbeil, Damascus, Dresden, Hiroshima, Homs, Khorramshahr, Mosul and Warsaw. Participants and attendees from Beirut were struck at how similar experiences could turn out to be in very different city settings.

In the night preceding the opening of the conference, the research theme of 'relations' in the form of 'neighbourhoods' was introduced through Marwan Rechmaoui's artistic view of the neighbourhoods of Beirut, which he based on archival research, thematizing contested identity constructions, the social and cultural production coming out of them, and the Lebanese post-war fabric of urbanisation.

Entitled 'Lessons for the Present and the Future', the last round of the conference included an open discussion between the director, the participants, and the audience about the global and critical perspective of reconstructions.



Participants of
Reconstructing
Neighborhoods
conference.

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It was clear that throughout the world, but especially in the Middle East, reconstruction encounters political and ideological challenges that require creative and sophisticated approaches to overcome them. There were calls for more use of the artistic aspects that appeared in several papers to show the positive initiatives of participatory reconstruction throughout the Middle East that needs to be supported. The aim was to facilitate the integration of these initiatives within the political structures by raising questions and conducting research about how to empower people to become integral parts of decision-making. Several papers made it clear that this is not impossible on the ground, since local stakeholders and the neighbors in a given neighborhood can find ways to negotiate, especially if the neighborhoods in question are not part of central, politically sensitive districts in a capital.

A CONFERENCE REVIEW BY AHMAD SUKKAR, POSTDOCTORAL VISITING FELLOW AT THE OIB, WILL APPEAR IN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE, FORTHCOMING. SEVERAL PARAGRAPHS ARE TAKEN FROM THIS REVIEW.

Public Research Seminars

20 FEBRUARY Birgit Schäbler (OIB): *When Relations turn Sour. Ernest Renan and the Islam Debate of 1883 as a Moment of Disentanglement between the Middle East and Europe*

1 MARCH Zaur Gasimov (OI ISTANBUL): *Between Intelligence and Knowledge Transfer. Soviet-Arab Relations Reconsidered*

8 MARCH Josph Ben Prestel (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Emotional Cities. Debates on Urban Change in Berlin and Cairo, 1860–1910*

22 MARCH Eileen Cooper (LONDON): *In Conversation with... EILEEN COOPER*

30 APRIL Élisabeth Longuenesse (UNIVERSITÉ VERSAILLES SAINT QUENTIN-EN-YVELINES): *Migrant Labour and the Structure of the Labour Market in Lebanon*

3 MAY Sherif Younis (HELWAN UNIVERSITY CAIRO):
الرؤية الناصرية لعلاقات الجيرة مع البلدان العربية المشرقية، بين التصوّرَيْن القومي والاستراتيجي

31 MAY Celeste Gianni (AL FURQAN ISLAMIC HERITAGE FOUNDATION / SOAS): *Fantasia of the Library. Cataloguing and Classifying in late Ottoman Libraries*

7 JUNE Guillaume de Vaulx d'Arcy (IFPO): *Friendship between natural enemies: The ambitious fraternity of the 'Ikhwān al-ṣafā' (third/ninth century)*

14 JUNE Muzna al-Masri (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Nejmeh, the Troubled Club. Football and Politics in Lebanon*

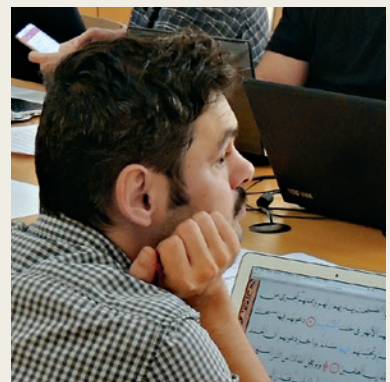
20 SEPTEMBER Nadje Al-Ali (SOAS LONDON): *Why Gender Matters. Feminist Approaches to Violence, Authoritarianism and Resistance*

27 SEPTEMBER Bernd Erbel (CAIRO/BERLIN): *Neighbourliness in Cairo: Living in the Yacoubian Building*

25 OCTOBER Philip Widmann (BERLIN): *Roads to the Ruins. Documentary Research Practices of Loss and Presence*

14 NOVEMBER // CELLO AND OUD IN CONCERT Mounir Mahmalat & Ziad El Ahmadi: *Contrasting Classical European and Oriental Music. What makes their experience different?*

13 DECEMBER Abdelkader Al Ghouz (Bonn): *Text, Context and Paratext: 'Maṭāli' al-Anẓār Sharḥ Ṭawāli' al-Anwār' as a Case Study*





Internal Colloquia

18 JANUARY Johanna Kühn (OIB AFFILIATED RESEARCHER): *Contemporary Forms of Muslim Religiosity among Young People in Beirut*

25 JANUARY Simona Loi (OIB AFFILIATED RESEARCHER): *Beirut: the everyday geographies of Ashura between religious intimacy and affective geopolitics*

1 FEBRUARY Atef Botros al-Attar (PHILIPPS UNIVERSITÄT MARBURG): *'On the Ruins of History' – A Walter Benjamin Moment in Arab Thought?*

8 FEBRUARY Hana Sleiman (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Nahḍa in Higher Education Curricula in Beirut and Damascus: Project Overview and Initial Findings*

1 MARCH Olga Nefedova (HANS-ROBERT ROEMER FELLOW): *Connecting Art Histories: The early history of art education of Arab students in the USSR, 1950–80s*

15 MARCH Sarah Johnson (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Hafidh Druby and realisms in Iraqi Modern Art*

29 MARCH Estrella Samba Campos (UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS): *'Ilm in transition: religious knowledge in adab frameworks*

5 APRIL Mina Ibrahim (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Imperfect Victims: Toward an Ethnographic Study of the Negated Copts*

12 APRIL Joan Chaker (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *A case for the history of the muleteers of Ottoman Lebanon*

19 APRIL Amin Alsaden (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Conceiving the Global in Baghdad*

26 APRIL Mathieu Eychenne (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Mamluk Damascus and its Countryside: Urban Society and Rural Economy*

3 MAY Harald Viersen (OIB AFFILIATED RESEARCHER): *The Meanings of aşāla: A reassessment of authenticity discourse in the Arab world*

10 MAY Michele Scala (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Waṣṭa as a Means – Ethnographic findings from Spinneys and Electricité du Liban workers's mobilization*

17 MAY Abbas Assi (LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY): *The Salafists in Lebanon: The Prospects of their Political Role*

24 MAY Muzna al-Masri (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Football, Contestation & Elite Formation in Beirut*

31 MAY Jessica Gerschultz (HANS-ROBERT ROEMER FELLOW): *Lebanon and the Constellation of Modernist Tapestry*

7 JUNE Jan Daniel (OIB AFFILIATED RESEARCHER): *Hybrid Revolutionary Actors in World Politics: ISIS and its impact on international order*

13 SEPTEMBER Torsten Wollina (OIB RESEARCH ASSOCIATE): *'Surrogate Family' and the Transmission of Knowledge*

27 SEPTEMBER Hana Sleiman (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *An Intellectual History of a Milieu: Pedagogy and subject formation in Beirut, 1920–1956*

4 OCTOBER Sean Lee (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Theorizing Minority Communities in Times of Conflict: Civil War in Lebanon and Syria*

18 OCTOBER Till Grallert (OIB RESEARCH ASSOCIATE): *Digital Humanities at OIB and in the region: challenges and chances outside the global north*

25 OCTOBER Fuad Musallam (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Recognition, Endurance, Flourishing: Migrant worker solidarities and the creation of community in Lebanon*

1 NOVEMBER Joan Chaker (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Muleteers as Bandits and Mutineers: Global Capital and Social Transformation in Ottoman Lebanon*

8 NOVEMBER Peggy Levitt (HANS-ROBERT ROEMER FELLOW): *Move Over, Mona Lisa. Move Over, Jane Eyre: Righting Cultural Wrongs from Beirut, Buenos Aires, and Seoul*

20 NOVEMBER Chafika Ouail (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Neighbourliness as a Spiritual Paradigm*

6 DECEMBER Mina Ibrahim (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Nodes of Khidma: The Discursive Everydayness of Coptic Christians' Lives*

Cairo

Research Seminars

22 JANUARY Dr. Liza M. Franke (UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN, ERC PROJECT "PRIVATE PIETIES"), *Inside out: Muslim religious identities – perspectives from Alexandria*, discussant: Dr. Randa Aboubakr, Cairo University

25 JUNE Mina Ibrahim (JUSTUS-LIEBIG UNIVERSITÄT GIESSEN, THE INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF CULTURE / GCSC), *The ruse of perfection. Stories about Coptic Christians' (In-)Visibility*, discussant: Dr. Hanan Sabea, American University in Cairo (AUC)

5–6 SEPTEMBER Conference *Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Nature and Environmental History in Arabic and Islamic Discourses*, in cooperation with COSIMENA at the DAAD regional office Cairo

14 NOVEMBER Christian AchRAINER (PHILIPPS-UNIVERSITÄT MARBURG), *How the global, regional, and domestic environments shape Egyptian foreign policy*, discussant: Dr. Riham Bahi, Cairo University

Presentation & Moderation

7 MAY Prof. Dr. Birgit Schäßler (OIB), *What is Cultural Heritage?*, panel discussion at the opening of the COSIMENA Cultural Heritage Cluster Conference

Presentations & Moderations

CHRISTOPHER BAHL

"Arabic histories across the early modern Western Indian Ocean, 1400–1700", at the Comparative Histories of Asia Seminar at the Institute of Historical Research (IHR), University of London, LONDON // 24 JANUARY.

This paper won the award of the Doctoral Prize Competition Presentation.

"Sharing Practices of Manuscript Transmission: A Transoceanic Community reading Arabic Grammar Works", at the final symposium of the DYNTRAN-project: Dynamics of Transmission: Families, Authority and Knowledge in the Early Modern Middle East (15th–17th centuries), Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, PARIS // 7 MARCH.

"The Royal Library of Bijapur as a cultural entrepôt", at the World History Workshop Graduate Conference on Texts in Motion: Materiality, Mobility, and Archiving in World History, St John's College, CAMBRIDGE // 12 MAY.

"Reading Arabic grammar works from Istanbul to Bijapur: Shared practices of manuscript circulations", at the Cambridge-Oxford-SOAS Workshop on Ottoman Studies, St John's College, CAMBRIDGE // 1 JUNE.

"A Prosopography in Circulation: Scribal Travails and Arabic Manuscript Cultures in Early Modern South Asia", at the workshop on Colophons and Scribal Cultures across the Early Modern World, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, LONDON // 2 JULY.

"A Shared Arabic Historiography of the Early Modern Western Indian Ocean", at the 25th European Conference on South Asian Studies, PARIS // 25 JULY.

"Studying Arabic Philology in 17th century South Asia – The circulation of 'commonplace notebooks'", at the workshop on Social Codicology, organised by the Freie Universität Berlin and NIMAR (Nederlands Instituut Marokko), RABAT // 9 OCTOBER.

MONIQUE BELLAN

Guest lecture **"Talking about Art and Aesthetic Reflection in Lebanon and Egypt since the 1920s"**, as part of the workshop Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledge, Max-Weber-Kolleg, ERFURT // 18 JUNE.

"Neighbourhood as a Concept and Analytical Approach: CONTACT Art Gallery in Beirut in the early 1970s", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 16–22 JULY.

"Reflecting on Art and Authenticity in Lebanon in the 1950s: The case of al-Adāb journal", at the 29th Conference of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants (UEAI): Conflict and Coexistence, MÜNSTER // 10–14 SEPTEMBER.

JOAN CHAKER

"Overstepping Boundaries: Assessing Legal and Moral Contingency in Lebanese History", at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), SAN ANTONIO // 16 NOVEMBER.

SAM DINGER

"Interviewing in Uncertain Times: Between Sociology and Oral History", at the American University in Cairo (AUC), Annual Excellence in University Research, Entrepreneurship and Creative Achievement (EURECA) Conference (talk delivered in Arabic), CAIRO // 21–24 APRIL.

"Beyond Emergency: Temporalities of Humanitarian Response in Lebanon", at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA), PHILADELPHIA // 11–14 AUGUST.

"Beyond Emergency: Temporalities of Humanitarian Response in Lebanon", at the 16th Annual NYLON Conference, BERLIN // 14–16 NOVEMBER.

FATİH ERMIŞ

"Why does the Circle of Justice not Continue Perpetually?", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 16–20 JULY.

Panel chair of **"Panel 5: Syria"**, at the conference Reconstructing Neighborhoods of War, OIB, BEIRUT // 29 NOVEMBER–1 DECEMBER.

TILL GRALLERT

Workshop **"Textual Analysis Using Stylometry"**, American University of Beirut (AUB), BEIRUT // 24–25 APRIL.

Guest lecture **"Food riots as part of a repertoire of contention in late Ottoman Greater Syria"**, as part of the workshop Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Inter-disciplinary Knowledge, Max-Weber-Kolleg, ERFURT // 18–20 JUNE.

"Catch me if you can! Attempts to track networks of authors and publication reviews in the wasteland of 'digitised' Arabic periodicals from the Ottoman Empire", at Turkologentag 2018, BAMBERG // 19–21 SEPTEMBER.

"Digital Humanities at the OIB and in the region: challenges and chances outside the global north", OIB, BEIRUT // 18 OCTOBER.

"Open Arabic Periodical Editions: a framework for bootstrapped scholarly editions outside the global north", at the Akademie Colloquium Whither Islamicate Digital Humanities? Analytics, Tools, Corpora, AMSTERDAM // 13–15 DECEMBER.

MINA IBRAHIM

"My Parish, My Coffeehouse: The Making of a Christian Space in Egypt", at the International Graduate Center for the Study of Culture (GCSC), Justus Liebig Universität, GIESSEN // 24 MAY.

"Imperfect Victims: Toward an Ethnographic Study of the Negated Copts", at the School of Social Sciences, Sapienza University, ROME // 16 SEPTEMBER.

"Minority Rights Activist? The Academic Study of Queer, Atheist, and Imprisoned Coptic Christians", at the School of Sociology & Social Policy, University of Leeds, LEEDS // 26 OCTOBER.

"De-Victimizing Emancipation: The Afterlife of Coptic Christians' Crisis", at the Center for Near & Middle Eastern Studies (CNMS), Phillips Universität, MARBURG // 16 NOVEMBER.

JONATHAN KRIENER

"When Crisis Promotes Proximity: how the Lebanese University was moved into its neighborhoods", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 18 JULY.

SEAN LEE

"Minority Agency: Ethnic Institutions & Conflict Narratives in Syria and Lebanon", at the International Conference on Middle Eastern and North African Studies: Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the MENA, MARRAKESH // 11 MARCH.

"Minority Group Strategies in Times of Conflict", at the International Studies Association, SAN FRANCISCO // 6 APRIL.

"The Evolution of Rojava: Nation and State Building in Wartime Syria", at the Serbest Kurdish Studies Conference, Buffett Institute for Global Studies, EVANSTON // 2 JUNE.

"Rojava: Tensions between Democratic Confederalism and State-Building in Northern Syria", at the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES), AUB, BEIRUT // 8 NOVEMBER.

MOHAMMAD MAGOUT

"Social Imaginaries in the Early Arabic Press in Beirut: The Case of al-Jinān (1870–1886)", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 16–20 JULY.

"The Articulation of Confessional Relations in the Early Arabic Press in Beirut", at the workshop Conceptualizing Sectarianization: Perspectives on the Dynamics of Ethno-Religious Difference in Studying the Middle East and North Africa, BERN // 6–8 SEPTEMBER.

"Discourses on Religion in the Early Arabic Press in Beirut", at the conference
Secularities – Patterns of Distinction, Paths of Differentiation, LEIPZIG // 4–6 OCTOBER.

NADIA VON MALTZAHN

Guest lecture **"Cultural Policies in Lebanon: Cultural institutions between state and society"**, as part of the workshop Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledge, Max-Weber-Kolleg, ERFURT // 18–21 JUNE.

"Archivisme as a local disease or communicating the National Library project", at the conference Performing Human Rights: Contested Amnesia and Historical Justice in Latin America and the Middle East, ZÜRICH // 28–29 JUNE.

"Beirut's Sursock Museum within and beyond its Neighbourhood", as part of the panel Neighbourliness: Neighbourhood relations in Beirut and Beyond, at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 16–20 JULY.

"The Museum as a Platform for Emancipation? Women artists in Beirut's Sursock Museum", at the Etel Adnan Symposium 'The Arab Apocalypse': Art, Abstraction and Activism in the Middle East, Zentrum Paul Klee, BERN // 27–28 SEPTEMBER.

"Lebanese Cultural Players and Authority: Ministry of Culture or No Ministry of Culture?", lecture at the Arab-German Young Researchers Exchange "Cultural Policy & Cultural Mediation in Transforming Societies", BEIRUT // 18–24 OCTOBER.

"Researching Cultural Policies: Achievements and challenges in Lebanon", workshop at the Arab-German Young Researchers Exchange Cultural Policy & Cultural Mediation in Transforming Societies, BEIRUT // 18– 24 OCTOBER.

STEFAN MANEVAL

Panel (Organizer/Chair) **"Interreligious Dialogue in the Middle East, Past and Present"**, at the 25th DAVO Congress, Goethe-Universität, FRANKFURT AM MAIN // 4–6 OCTOBER.

"Theological Approaches to Interreligious Dialogue from Post-Civil War Lebanon", at the 25th DAVO Congress, Goethe-Universität, FRANKFURT AM MAIN // 4–6 OCTOBER.

"Counterpublics in Saudi Shopping Centres, Beach Resorts, and Gated Communities", at the 25th DAVO Congress, Goethe-Universität, FRANKFURT AM MAIN // 4–6 OCTOBER.

MUZNA AL-MASRI

"Blue fingers: The Performance of Power and Loyalty in Lebanese Elections", at the Third Research Forum of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences (ACSS), AMMAN // 3–7 APRIL.

"Football and Politics: Nejme the Troubled Champion", OIB, BEIRUT // 14 JUNE.
"Programming for youth in Tripoli: Is building resilience enough?", at the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations School (MOST School) on 'Urban Inclusion', BEIRUT // 28–30 NOVEMBER.

ASTRID MEIER

"Family Connectivities. Mobility, Stability and Continuity in Ottoman Syria and Beyond", at the DYNTRAN symposium Dynamics of Transmission: Families, Authority and Knowledge in the Early Modern Middle East (15th–17th centuries), Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, PARIS // 7 MARCH.
"Rural Societies in an 'Economy of Rights'", at the workshop Histories of Economy in the Middle East, University of California, SANTA BARBARA // 18 MAY.
"Land und Stadt im modernen Syrien: Geschichte einer zunehmenden Spaltung?" part of the panel Die Geschichte nah-östlicher Gesellschaften zwischen politischen Einheitsansprüchen und gesellschaftlichen Spaltungen: Syrien und der Libanon, at 52. Deutscher Historikertag, MÜNSTER // 26 SEPTEMBER.
"Sharia Courts and Urban Governance in 18th and 19th Century Bilad al-Sham. Conceptual thoughts on a case study of an urban institution in transformation", at the workshop From the Household to the Wider World. Urban Governance in Late Ottoman Bilad al-Sham, Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, BERLIN // 2 OCTOBER.
"Ländliche Gesellschaften in der nahöstlichen Geschichte", at Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Regionalstudien, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, HALLE // 21 NOVEMBER.

FUAD MUSALLAM

"Between secular cosmopolitanism and being an activist", at Mobilisations in the Age of the Arab Uprisings, AUB, BEIRUT // 26 JANUARY.

CHAFIKA OUAIL

"The Theological Debate in the Early Maghrebi/Andalusian Exegesis of Qur'ān", at the 4th International Symposium: Muslim Efforts on The Qur'ān in the First Three Centuries of Islam, ANKARA // 19–21 OCTOBER.
"The Dialectic Body-Emotions in the Islamic Theology", AGYA International Bilingual Summer School, Emotions That Matter: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Feelings, Affects, and Body in Arabic Culture, RABAT // 1–3 NOVEMBER.
"The Sufi Texts in Dilemma: Between the Translation of the Language and the Translation of the Experience", The 5th International Conference on Translation and the Problematics of Cross-cultural Understanding, DOHA // 12–13 DECEMBER.

HANS-PETER PÖKEL

"Intellectual Encounters on the Inimitability of the Qur'ān in the Context of Mu'tazilī Thought", at the Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society, PITTSBURGH // 17 MARCH.

Guest lecture **"The Inimitability of the Qur'ān (i'jāz al-Qur'ān) in Transconfessional Contexts of the Early Abbāsīd Period"**, as part of the workshop Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledge, Max-Weber-Kolleg, ERFURT // 20 JUNE.

"Indecency and Disgust as Rhetorical Tools in Abbasid Polemics", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 17 JULY.

"The Inimitability of the Qur'ān (i'jāz al-Qur'ān) in Its Historical Contexts", Co-organized panel with Amidu Sanni, at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 20 JULY.

"Discussing the Qur'ān as a Miracle: the Inimitability of the Qur'ān in the Context of Mu'tazilī Ideas", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 20 JULY.

"The Concept of 'Nature' in Classical Arabic and Islamic Thought", at COSIMENA conference on Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage, CAIRO // 5 SEPTEMBER.

Panel chair **"Beirut's Neighborhoods"** at the conference Reconstructing Neighborhoods of War, BEIRUT // 1 DECEMBER.

JOSEPH BEN PRESTEL

"Global Palestine in Cold War Germany, 1967–1979", at the conference Transnational relations between Eastern Europe/USSR and the Middle East: The Cold War in the Twentieth Century, University of Geneva, GENEVA // 23 FEBRUARY.

"Suburban Productivity: The Reform of Male Bodies in Cairo's New Neighborhoods, 1890s–1930s", at WOCMES 2018, SEVILLE // 19 JULY.

"In- and Outside German History or a Palestinian Story of the Federal Republic", at the workshop The Middle East in the 1980s, Freie Universität, BERLIN // 30 JULY.

"Exploring Intersections of Urban History and Global History", roundtable discussion organized at the European Association for Urban History (EAUH) Conference, ROME // 30 AUGUST.

"Degrees of Separation: Islam and the West German Radical Left in the 1970s", at the workshop 'Islam' as an Epistemic Field. Imperial Entanglements and Orientalism in the German-Speaking World since 1870, Zentrum Moderner Orient, BERLIN // 12 OCTOBER.

"Activism on the Move: Palestinian Migration and the Solidarity Movement in West Germany, 1956–1972", at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), SAN ANTONIO // 18 NOVEMBER.

MICHELE SCALA

WITH S. AGOSTA **"Migrazione, servitù per debito, lavoro minorile: fragole libanesi, famiglie siriane"**, at the international colloquium Lavoro libero e non libero, Società italiana di Storia del lavoro (SisLav), TURIN // 20–22 SEPTEMBER.

"Competitività e dipendenza personale nella grande distribuzione off-shore in Libano", at the international colloquium Lavoro libero e non libero, Società italiana di Storia del lavoro (SisLav), TURIN // 20–22 SEPTEMBER.

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER

Roundtable discussion **"Germany in the Middle East: The impact of science diplomacy"**, Saint Joseph University, BEIRUT // 15 FEBRUARY

"When Relations turn Sour. Ernest Renan and the Islam Debate of 1883 as a Moment of Disentanglement between the Middle East and Europe", inaugural public lecture held at the OIB, BEIRUT // 20 FEBRUARY

Panel discussion **"The state of knowledge society in Lebanon – prospects for joint knowledge production between Lebanon and Germany"**, a science lecture by CNRS-L and DAAD, BEIRUT // 2 MARCH

Panel discussion **"What is Cultural Heritage? What does it include, constitute and how is it perceived in and beyond the region?"**, at the conference Agenda of the Cultural Heritage Cluster, CAIRO // 7–9 MAY

WITH HARTMUT ROSA **"Introduction"**, at the workshop Area Knowledges and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledges (Birgit Schäbler on Area Knowledges and Hartmut Rosa on Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Knowledges), Max-Weber-Kolleg, ERFURT // 18–21 JUNE

"Introduction", to the panel Neighbourliness: Neighbourhood relations in Beirut and beyond, WOCMES, SEVILLE // 18 JULY

"Introduction" / "Conclusion", at the Conference Knowledge of Nature and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Interdisciplinary approaches to nature and environmental history in Arabic and Islamic discourses, funded and co-organised by Cosimena DAAD, CAIRO // 5 SEPTEMBER

"Wie gespalten sind nah-östliche Gesellschaften? Uneinigkeit in der internationalen Geschichtsforschung", chair of panel Die Geschichte nah-östlicher Gesellschaften zwischen politischen Einheitsansprüchen und gesellschaftlichen Spaltungen: Syrien und der Libanon in der Zeitgeschichte, at 52. Deutscher Historikertag, MÜNSTER // 26 SEPTEMBER

"Areas, Disciplines, and 'Small Subjects': Endangered Species?" at the interdisciplinary international workshop The Area Studies Controversy Revisited, AUB, BEIRUT // 29–30 SEPTEMBER.

"Introduction", Kick-Off Workshop Relations in the Ideoscape, FRANKFURT // 13 NOVEMBER

"Introduction" / "Conclusion", international workshop Reconstructing Neighborhoods of War, OIB, BEIRUT // 29 NOVEMBER.

AHMAD SUKKAR

"Syria's Reconstruction", Syria Workshop Panel 10: Reconstruction in Syria: Post Agreement Planning or Pre-agreement Condition? and Who will Pay the Bill for Reconstruction?, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, AUB, BEIRUT // 4 MAY.

"Reconstruction in Syria", with Bassel Kaghadou and Rabie Nasser, workshop, moderator: Rana Metri, Issam Fares Institute, AUB, BEIRUT // 9 MAY.

"Taught Abroad: Syrian Urban Conflict and Reconstruction in Higher Education", public lecture, Centre for Arts and Humanities, AUB, BEIRUT // 24 MAY.

"Envisioning Post-Conflict Realities: Challenges for Teaching Syria's Reconstruction", Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, AUB, BEIRUT // 11 JUNE.

"Vitruvius and the Way his Books Shed Light on Architecture Production Today", **"Renaissance Architecture and its Influence on Modern Architecture"**, lectures, history and theories of architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Azm University, TRIPOLI // 25–27 SEPTEMBER.

JENNIFER VIEHL

"Combining authority with submission: the perils of the vizier's office in political advice literature: al-Māwardī, Pseudo-Tha'ālabī and Ibn al-Khatīb (eleventh to fourteenth century)", at the workshop Les miroirs aux Princes médiévaux entre art de gouverner et art de soumettre, IFPO, BEIRUT // 25 APRIL.

TORSTEN WOLLINA

"Was bleibt erhalten? Das Schicksal der Stiftungsbibliothek eines Damaszener Gelehrten aus dem 16. Jahrhundert", Universität Erfurt, ERFURT // 18 JUNE.

"Beyond the colophon: Alternative strategies of certifying recompiled manuscripts", at the workshop Colophons and Scribal Cultures across the Early Modern World, LONDON // 2 JULY.

"What constitutes a book? Considerations on two Ibn Ṭūlūn autograph manuscripts", at the workshop Social Codicology: The Multiple Lives of Texts in Muslim Societies, RABAT // 9 OCTOBER.

Library

The Library serves the research needs of OIB researchers but is in addition also upon registration open to a broader community of visiting and Lebanese scholars.

The collection boasts over 130.000 volumes in the fields of Middle Eastern studies, Arabic language and literature, and a special collection about our host country, Lebanon. Islamic religion and philosophy and the history of Eastern Christianity are naturally special foci of the library as well as Levantine journals and newspapers. In tradition and support of the OIB publication series *Bibliotheca Islamica* we continue to enrich our already substantial collection of scholarly editions of classical literature of the Arab world. The library acquires more than 2.000 books annually and subscribes to the most important journals in our fields of research. The predominant language of our acquisitions is Arabic with ca. 60%, followed by English, French and German.

Our reading rooms are open 44 hours per week and are equipped with wireless access to the internet as well as a high-end book and a microfilm reader/scanner. We offer 21 study desks to our readers with daylight reading lamps, electric outlets and in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. We further aim to assist scholars from abroad upon their requests and are continuing to build resources for researcher in the years to come. Because of the increased visibility of our, in some parts unique, holdings we have throughout the year received 33 requests for document delivery in electronic format even though we do not formally offer or advertise such services. We are also continuing to assist scholars in Germany with book purchases in Lebanon.

The Library is advancing in the areas of digital collections and cooperation with other libraries as well. Together with our partner libraries within the Max Weber Foundation, we are preparing for a shared Digital Library. Meanwhile the library is optimising the yet still small range of electronic material and ease access to them via IP recognition. We are providing onsite access to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* online as well as an increasing number of additional relevant databases. For example, we are collaborating with the German Special information Service (FID) Near East in Halle to offer access to the database *Almanhal*, which contains ca. 2.000 ebooks mainly in Arabic.



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Imprint

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PRINT
Arab Scientific Publishers SARL

CREDITS PHOTOS
Cover illustration and pages
2/3, 12/13, 124, 163
The OIB's neighbourhood in Zokak el-Blat, 2019
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The Orient-Institut (OIB) is an academic hub in central Beirut. It was designed to foster German research on and throughout the region. The OIB has come to benefit from the advantages of Lebanon's unique position as an intellectual centre in the Arab world. As the only German research institute devoted to Arabic and Islamic Studies based in the Arab Middle East, the OIB has helped to train generations of German scholars who specialised in the region. Since 2010 the OIB maintains an office in Cairo to strengthen academic collaboration and research across the MENA region.

In 1961 the German Oriental Society (Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft), an academic association founded in 1845 to promote the study of the languages and cultures of the 'Orient', established the OIB as a base for German oriental studies abroad. The institute gained legal recognition from the Lebanese government in 1963 and moved to its present premises in the former Villa Maud Farajallah, in the Zokak al-Blat quarter, near downtown Beirut. Even during the most turbulent periods of Lebanese history academic activities at the institute continued, although in 1987 the German staff were evacuated to Istanbul temporarily. The directorate and some of the research staff returned to Beirut in 1994, but as a result of the evacuation the institute developed into a bilocal entity, with branches in both Istanbul (OII) and Beirut (OIB).

The Istanbul branch became an independent institute in 2009. In 2003 the OIB joined the other German Humanities Institutes Abroad in a foundation named Max Weber Foundation in 2012. The Max Weber Foundation is a publicly regulated body funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

Max Weber Stiftung

Orient-Institut Beirut

