

# Annual Report 2021



**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 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.*









Beyrouth Street  
in the 50s, later  
becoming the location  
of the Orient-Institut.

# Contents

- OIB in numbers 6
- Director's Address 8
- Research Profile 14
- RESEARCH 18
  - HUMANS & OTHER HUMANS 20
  - HUMANS & THE ENVIRONMENT 42
  - HUMANS & THE DIVINE 50
  - HUMANS & THEIR PRODUCTIONS 60
- Cooperations & Third-party Funding 84
- RESEARCHERS 88

**PUBLICATIONS 105**

**OIB Publications 106   Publications of the Researchers 115**

**EVENTS 120**

**60th Jubilee of the OIB 122**

**Conference Reports 129   Public Research Seminars 140**

**Internal Colloquia 142   Presentations & Moderations 146**

**LIBRARY 150   TEAM 152   INTERNS 154   SCIENTIFIC BOARD 155**

**Imprint 160**



# OIB in numbers

## RESEARCH



26 RESEARCH PROJECTS

## SUPPORT



5 POSTDOCTORAL VISITING FELLOWS

9 DOCTORAL VISITING FELLOWS

4 RESEARCH RELIEF FELLOWS

4 INTERNS

## PUBLICATIONS



6 INSTITUTE 29 RESEARCHERS

## LIBRARY



> 140.000 VOLUMES

## EVENTS



3

CONFERENCES

2

WORKSHOPS

1

ROUND TABLE / PANEL DISCUSSION

5

SEMINARS

3

PUBLIC TALKS

25

COLLOQUIA

3

EXHIBITIONS

## SOCIAL MEDIA



5.172

FACEBOOK ABONNEMENTS

486

INSTAGRAM ABONNEMENTS

# *Director's Address*

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER





Writing this address in early 2022, in icy temperatures very unusual for Lebanon at this time of the year, feels just like continuing the rather dire reporting from last year when it comes to living conditions in the country. Since 2017, when I came to head OIB, living conditions have deteriorated steadily, first imperceptibly, then more and more dramatically.

It was in early November 2017 that then PM Saad Hariri could be seen on Saudi TV reading his resignation as prime minister of Lebanon. After this first public Lebanon-Saudi Arabia crisis of several, Gulf capital was withdrawn steadily from Lebanese banks, precipitating the currency crisis that led to the popular uprising two years later, in 2019. COVID-19 and the Beirut Harbor Explosion did their part to further aggravate the economic melt-down which now affects all walks of life.

The national currency devalued steadily over the last year, from 10.000 LL to the Dollar in March 2021 to 30.000 LL in December. Dollar reserves dwindled further, and a major fuel crisis ensued. People queued endlessly in long lines at gas stations and stopped using their cars, if at all possible. Whoever could work from home, did so. In August, an end to fuel subsidies was announced and gasoline reappeared at gas stations for high prices. The most severe crises turned out to be the shortage in electricity. In March 2021, the Turkish power company which had supplied electricity to Lebanon by power ships along the coast withdrew them after not having been paid in more than a year. The electricity crisis in the country soared. The long city tunnels of Beirut are without light, day and night which makes driving difficult. Beirut at night is utterly dark. Street lamps, in most living quarters, are switched off. In the old nightlife quarters of Hamra, Gemmayze, Mar Mikhael, lately Badaro there is a bit of light until midnight or so – then it becomes pitch-black. To walk without a flashlight is dangerous.

There have been 2 hours of "official" electricity provided by the state in 24 hours in Beirut throughout the last year. The rest has to be provided by "moteur", meaning by private Diesel generators – for those who can pay in Dollars. Electricity bills reach 500 Dollars and more per month, depending on the management and constituency of a given building, and some colleagues in the OIB have moved to other apartments for this reason. The number of amperes of one's apartment and how to get more of those amps has become general household talk. Some people install truck batteries, others buy camping equipment in order to tie them over the hours without electricity. A camping battery enables one to operate a lamp, a laptop and a mobile phone for a good amount of hours. The internet has been a problem already during these past 2 years,

now access is not available during the long electricity cuts, and if it is available, it is unstable. Also in this regard, people have to find solutions.

Remains the problem of heating and hot water in icy temperatures. Houses are usually badly isolated and have stone floors – the temperatures inside without heating are very low. Just about everybody is an expert now on the electricity circles of their apartment and the respective fuses. To have a shower means to switch off almost everything except the hot water fuse, and then quickly to switch this one off and turn on the fuse for heating a room, in order not to catch cold when coming out of the shower. In many cases only one or two rooms per flat can be heated thus. Sometimes electricity breaks down completely during the operation and one has to wait until it comes back. Sometimes only the central fuse of the apartment is down and one has to call the concierge to put it up again. All in all a major logistic operation, especially for families. New apartments usually depend wholly on electricity, older ones still have "sobias", small oil heaters usually in the middle of a room, where families huddle together in jackets and blankets. (I am aware that many of my Lebanese colleagues and friends might not really want to see this general misery in print as it paints such a bleak picture of their country. Yet, I think it is important to let the world know under what circumstances people still manage to live and function. The overall situation is often described as "worse than in the civil war").

In some areas of Beirut and elsewhere there has not been electricity by the state for a year now, and the poor have no money to heat with Diesel-driven generators. For them the situation is just dismal.

The OIB is a haven of security in this situation as it has its own generators, needed to stabilize the temperature in our book depositories. Electricity goes down multiple times each day, but quickly comes back. Monthly bills for diesel are sky-rocketing, but at least we can keep working. And in 2021 we finally installed solar energy on the roof!

Connected to the electricity crisis is of course a clean water crisis and a food crisis – water needs to be pumped up to roofs, drinking water needs to be bought all along (it costs 6 times as much now than before the crisis), and the irregular electricity supply means that cooling chains are instable. Dairy products and meat have to be consumed with great caution, and food poisonings are frequent, even among OIB staff. Hospitals have suffered tremendously from the electricity crisis and everything that comes with it. Bakeries have struggled to keep working, and the queues in front of them get ever longer. Schools struggle, too.

Corona cases stood at over 4000 per day at the beginning of the year, and a prolonged lock-down was ordered which lasted until the end of February. For the first time, Corona-protesters took to the streets, but these were people whose livelihood was now acutely threatened, after two years of crisis. Hundreds were wounded, casualties ensued.

In February 2021, the judge who had been appointed to investigate the explosion of August 4, 2020 in Beirut's harbor was dismissed by a court after two ministers he had charged and summoned had filed a complaint against him. A day later newly appointed

judge Tarek Bitar followed suit in leading the investigation. He went on to charge and summon senior political and security officials for questioning which annoyed the political establishment and led to campaigns against him, which turned violent later in the year.

In the same month prominent Shia intellectual and Hizbollah critic Lokman Slim, married to Monika Borgmann and founder of the NGO UMAM, with whom a number of German institutions and individuals cooperated over the years, including the OIB, was assassinated. Until today the assassins have not been brought to justice. An international investigation is underway.

In summer, UN estimates claimed that over 75 percent of Lebanese households face severe food shortages. Given the devaluation of the Lira, the dramatic fall of wages and rise of prices, families have to spend five times the minimum wage just on food.

At the same time, high end restaurants which stayed in business (a lot of restaurants closed down) are full, and luxury cars like Lamborghinis, Ferraris and huge SUVs can be seen parked in front of them.

In August, fighting over fuel resulted in three deaths at gas stations, and a fuel tank explosion in the North of the country cost the lives of over 30 people, wounding over 70. Gunfire rocked Beirut in October, in the area where the Lebanese civil war first erupted in 1975, on a frontline between two city quarters, Ain al-Roummaneh and Chiyah, where rivaling militias (Forces Libanaises on the one side, and Amal and Hizbollah on the other) are strong. An initially non-violent demonstration, organized by Amal and Hizbollah against judge Tarek Bitar and his summoning of officials over negligence in the harbor blast was met with sniper fire from the windows of adjacent residential buildings, filmed by a German film team who happened to be on the spot. In the ensuing clashes, 8 people were killed and over 30 wounded. One woman, a mother of several children, was hit by a bullet while working at a window in her kitchen and died. It was the same location where during the popular movement in 2019 mothers from both sides had staged a women's march to prevent their sons from fighting. Sadly, this time they were not there.

On the political front, Saad Hariri resigned one more time in July 2021 after failing to form a government during the past 9 months. He had returned as PM after Hasan Diab's government of technocrats had stepped down over the Beirut harbor explosion – for which it was much less responsible than previous governments, since it had been in office for less than a year and was mainly preoccupied with successfully fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, until the blast hit. Then millionaire Hariri was followed by billionaire and former PM Najib Mikati who formed a new government under president Michel Aoun on September 10, consisting of 24 ministers in the Cabinet – after a deadlock of 13 months. Expectations of reform from this government were low.

On the regional level the rift between Lebanon and the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia, widened, when videos of Lebanese information minister George Kordahi's comments on the war in Yemen were circulated. He said the Iran-aligned Houthis were defending themselves against external aggression – thereby drawing ire from Saudi-Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain and Yemen who all recalled their envoys from Beirut



and banished Lebanese ambassadors. Saudi-Arabia banned Lebanese imports into the kingdom, after it had already declared an indefinite ban on all Lebanese products, especially agricultural ones, after 5 million pills of Captagon had been discovered earlier in the year in a shipment of pomegranates at Jeddah port. All of this was another heavy blow on Lebanon's ailing economy. The minister resigned before French president Macron visited Saudi Arabia to discuss the diplomatic crisis and defuse the tensions between Lebanon and the kingdom. With regard to Lebanon's political elite Western governments continued to demand reforms.

In December Lebanon's first sexual harassment trial was scheduled, against a film director. A law had been passed in 2020. Yet, the trial had to be postponed since court employees went on strike.

By the end of 2021, over 70.000 of the country's best and brightest had left Lebanon, seeking security and better chances abroad. Emigration is ongoing. Every week somebody says good-bye, leaving family and friends behind. Departments at universities are depopulating with professors and students leaving the country.

During this rather bleak year, the OIB kept working steadily. The major repair works of the havoc that the harbor explosion had wrecked on the OIB villa were finished in January 2021. The year started off with an international workshop on "Diffracting the Mediterranean. Rethinking infrastructural environments beyond human scale". The workshop had to be held online as Lebanon was under lock-down. Further online events were a workshop on the "Role of new and social media in managing crises in post-2019 Lebanon", an online discussion with Maryam al-Ali on her book in OIB's BTS series *Akh-bār Khadīja Bint Khuwaylid fī-l-Maṣādir al-Islāmiyya: Abniyyat al-sard wa-l-dhākira wa-l-tārīkh* (The Reports of Khadīja bt. Khuwaylid in Islamic Sources: Structures of narration, memory, and history) as well as an online discussion with Sarah El Bulbeisi on her newly published book *Taboo, Trauma, and Identity: Subject constructions of Palestinians in Germany and Switzerland, 1960–2015*.

Thankfully, later in the year discussion panels could be organized in person outside, on OIB's useful terrace. "Arabic as a Living Language: Challenges and Horizons" took place in September with AUB professor Mahmoud al-Batal and OIB research affiliate Abdallah Soufan. A public film screening could also take place in person: The second evasion, organized by Ettijahat.

The project "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s to 1991" geared up its activities after the COVID-19 pandemic had consigned it to home office almost right from its start. A whole 10 days of science communication outreach events, funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) took place in June in Berlin, the former divided front-city of the Cold War, under the title "From Cairo to Carl-Marx-City: Studying during the Cold War". The program consisted of a photo exhibition in the GDR Museum, two public panel discussions (available on Youtube), and a three-day film festival at the Arsenal Cinema in Berlin in October. The exhibition was shown in Beirut and Warsaw, too. In July, a workshop of the international research group, which had to be postponed the previous year due to COVID-19, was

held at the University of Sofia on the invitation of the Seminar for Arabic and Semitic Studies there. The members of the research group, who had not seen each other for more than a year, discussed their projects lively and enthusiastically – the long missed personal contact released a lot of creativity.

The research group was also prominently represented at the Max Weber Foundation's overall conference on the entire project of "Knowledge Unbound: Internationalisation, Networking, Innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung". The conference was organized by OIB's project coordinator Ala al-Hamarneh; the OIB research group and its director featured in four of nine panels.

Three new colleagues joined the ranks of OIB – Thomas Würtz as new vice director, Ahmed Abd-Elsalam and Christian Thuselt as new research affiliates.

The 60th anniversary of the founding of the OIB in 1961 had originally been planned for May 2021. Given the global situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was decided to move the two-day Jubilee event to the end of the year, in the hope that the pandemic would have subsided by then. The appearance of the Omikron mutant dashed this hope, but the two days of workshops, panel discussions, festive speeches and honorings took place from December 2nd to 4th, mostly outside again on the OIB terrace and in the garden.

The whole OIB team, not only the researchers, was present and enjoyed the occasion. Prominent speakers, including the ambassadors of Lebanon in Berlin and of Germany in Beirut, the president of the German Orientalist Society Stefan Weninger, as well as two former directors, Stefan Wild and Angelika Neuwirth, and AUB's Sari Hanafi, took part in the festivities, as did Sophia Grotzfeld, Michael Borgolte, Gudrun Krämer, Mouhanad Khorchide, Dina El Omari, Hans-Hinrich Biesterfeld, Peter Heine, Tilman Seidensticker and Dirk Hartwig. Topics ranged from the famous dictionary of Hans Wehr to the "Surplus of Quranic Studies" and "Islamic Studies and Islamic Theology in Germany: Disciplinary Boundaries and Epistemologies". Earliest and contemporary friends and supporters of the OIB, active at present, were honored – Asad Khairallah, Michel Geha, Ridwan El-Sayyid, Abdel-Raouf Sinno and Souad Slim. We are glad that we could honor Michel Geha, who was a cornucopia of delightful tales of the earliest days of OIB, before he passed away, sadly, shortly afterwards.

The director herself was honored, too, by OIB's research associates and visiting fellows – and very touched.

In addition to the academic program a photo exhibition took the numerous visitors, including several members of BTS and BI editorial boards, back to the 1960s, the founding days of the institute. Rare books of OIB's special collections were on display, too.

The year ended festively.

I wholeheartedly thank the extended OIB family – staff, associate researchers, visiting fellows and the international research group – for making 2021 another fruitful year, with a number of highlights throughout and at the end, and for remaining steadfast and up-beat despite the difficult situation.

*Birgit Schäßler*

# *Research Profile*

In 2017/2018 current director Birgit Schäbler established in a discussion process with OIB's then resident researchers the new broad profile of "Relations" at the OIB in order to generate innovative research questions and sub-fields within the institute's community of resident researchers, visiting fellows and other affiliates and partners. The 5-year program of "Relations" and its four subfields was designed also to provide a broad framework which enables researchers to position themselves within its overlapping webs and conversations within OIB's research community and engage with the research profile in varying degrees of intensity. The profile attracted interesting research projects over the years from scholars from East and West and from varying disciplinary backgrounds. It is, indeed, the interdisciplinary set-up of the OIB which allows for a research profile like this.

While questions of entanglement, connectivity and interrelatedness in the moves of people, goods and ideas have been on the international research agenda for several years now, especially in transnational and transregional frameworks, the nature of the relations established within these moves has been neglected. Yet, broadly speaking, the basic concept of relations lies at the heart of just about any human social activity. We focus on four different fields of relations: between HUMANS themselves, between humans and their PRODUCTIONS, between humans and their ENVIRONMENT, and between humans and the DIVINE.

Human-human relations can be inter-personal on the micro-level of analysis, they can be inter-social on the meso-level and they can be inter-national or inter-regional on the macro-level of analysis. On the micro-level relationships of kinship, friendship and neighbourhood are in our research focus. How do such relationships work and how can we analyse them? Kinship relations, for example, can no longer be looked at solely through the lens of genetics. Friendship is not solely an emotional relation of pure voluntariness. Both are in many ways imagined and constructed.

Looking at the human connectivity between state and society, and the quality of relations between state actors and society actors as well as intra-society relations (labour relations, gender relations, generational relations) is of particular importance. Therefore, within the theme of relations between humans and their productions, we focus on relations between media and the public, between the wide field of scholarly, artistic and literary production and their reception in different groups and media.

The relations between societies and their natural environments encompass also the anthropogenic changes to it, in nature as well as through architecture and archaeological heritage. Here interdisciplinary environmental and landscape studies can open up new research fields. When looking at relations between humans and the divine, the focus is on the human production of theological and religious knowledge also in its encounter and competition with philosophy.



On the macro-level the relations between the Middle East and other world regions (Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas) raise theoretical questions which can only be answered by consulting the theories and approaches of a number of disciplines (International Relations, History, Sociology, Psychology), but also Islamic Middle Eastern and other Area Studies. This also entails the problematic of disciplinary knowledge and area knowledge. This broad profile on "relations" and its four sub-fields thus created academically innovative and intellectually productive overlapping webs and conversations within the OIB's research community. Please see the graphic for an overview of our research projects this year within the thematic subfields.

## Humans





Former owner  
of the Orient-  
Institut's property,  
Maud Farjallah,  
and British  
officials, 1963.



# Research

## Research

Humans & other humans	20
Humans & the environment	42
Humans & the divine	50
Humans & their productions	60
Cooperations & Third-party Funding	84



# *Humans & other humans*

**Europe and the Middle East 22**

**Research Group Relations in the Ideoscape //**

Middle Eastern students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950's–1991 24

**The Lebanese Popular Movement of 2019 //**

Perspectives from within 26

**Crisis and Aspiration among Sudanese Migrant Workers in Beirut 28**

**Future Spaces //**

Concepts of political order in Iraq since 2003 30

**Living in Liminality** 32

**Security as Everyday Affect //**

The mediation of militarised bodies on Iranian social media 34

**The Social and Political History of Saida, 1958–1975** 36

**Sovereignty // Egypt and Qatar in hierarchy** 38

**Women's Decisions, Experiences and Access to Safe Abortion Care //**

Accounts from women in Lebanon 40

# Europe and the Middle East

**BIRGIT SCHÄBLER**

NOVEMBER 2017 – OCTOBER 2022

The overall research topic covers various projects on the relations between the Middle East and Europe, mainly in the field of knowledge relationships.

One project is my book in German on *Modern Muslims. Ernest Renan and the History of the First Islam Debate 1883*, which brought together the arguments of 19th century transregional reform movements in the Muslim world/Islam and Orientalist discourses which are both part and parcel of global modernity. Most of the original texts of the book are not known, or only partially known, in the Arab world.

The translation into Arabic, which was suggested to me by colleagues in Lebanon after my inaugural public lecture given at the OIB, is finished. The Arabic version appears in 2022 as volume 63 within Bibliotheca Islamica.

The English version is almost finished. Apart from these projects, Ernest Renan is still on the research agenda, as are global Islamic reform movements and European Orientalisms.

Middle Eastern-Eastern European Knowledge Relations in a wider sense are at the heart of the international research group "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s–1991" (which is part of the larger project "Knowledge Unbound" within the MWS, funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research.) It is the "recipients" of mostly academic, but also non-academic knowledge, namely students from the Middle East, and their relations to professors, fellow students, and the larger society around them which are at the core of the project. The resulting knowledge production coming out of these – and other – intellectual-social-cultural and political encounters are all in turn part of the socialist ideoscape – the elaboration of which is my research interest.



# Research Group

## Relations in the Ideoscape // Middle Eastern students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950's–1991

**BIRGIT SCHÄBLER**

2019 – 2022

OIB's international research group "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s–1991" is part of the larger project "Knowledge Unbound" within the MWS, funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research. The research group is led by Birgit Schäßler and coordinated by Ala al-Hamarneh. The OIB with its branch office in Cairo cooperates in the project with the German Historical Institutes Moscow and Warsaw, as well as other external supporting partners. The Cold War or East-West conflict has so far been mainly studied as a political and potentially military conflict between the USA (leading the "Western Bloc") and the USSR as the leader of the "Eastern Bloc". The manifold relations within the blocs have attracted less attention. A good part of these were shaped in a special way as 'relations of knowledge' within its metropolises and between these and numerous countries of the so-called Third World. In this vein, the Eastern Bloc can be described as a social space that was created through a common ideology which in turn created its own forms of knowledge – a 'knowledge space' marked by many contradictions in the "ideoscape" (Arjun Appadurai).

The group of researchers studies the relationships, actors and fields of knowledge created within the USSR, GDR, People's Republic of Poland (PRP), and Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR) and the Middle East/North Africa. Research is based on archives and on oral history interviews with former students enrolled in the humanities and the social sciences as well as art and architecture, which were sought after for the study of "communist/socialist modernism". It was "modernism" that the countries of the Middle East had been striving for since the 19th century and after the end of the Second World War it was "available" in a "Western" and a "socialist" form. Knowledge was thus also a commodity on the global market within the competition of ideological systems.

The start of the research coincided with the global COVID-19 lockdowns, so that researchers were largely confined to home office, interviews and archive visits were impossible for the first year. So everybody was very happy when from July 22nd to 24th, the internal workshop, which had been postponed by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and which had been planned for Moscow, took place in cooperation with the Seminar for Arabic and Semitic Studies at the University of Sofia, Bulgaria. The members of the research group, who had only met virtually for more than a year, discussed their research lively and enthusiastically – the long-missed direct exchange released a lot of creativity.

The Bulgarian colleagues were surprised that the subject of the project is so under-researched, and shared memories of their years as university students when there were many fellow students from the Middle East and Africa.

Results were presented at the Connecting Themes conference "Contested Knowledge in a Connected World" within the framework of the large-scale research project "Knowledge Unbound: Internationalisation, Networking, Innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung".

**For a list of researchers and projects see:**

[orient-institut.org/research/current-projects/ideoscape](https://orient-institut.org/research/current-projects/ideoscape)



# The Lebanese Popular Movement of 2019 //

## Perspectives from within

**BIRGIT SCHÄBLER**

SINCE 2020

The Lebanese Popular Movement of 2019: Perspectives from within is the working title of the publication coming out of the research project on the Intifada of October 17. Together with Armin Hasemann of Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Birgit Schäbler and OIB called for abstracts of research proposals leading to a publication. A dozen researchers from different universities and independent intellectuals formed a research group around the central issues of the movement which at the same time represent urgent problems Lebanon needs to tackle. The research group under the leadership of Birgit Schäbler met, shared and discussed their individual research projects, writings, and evaluations on the Popular Movement in regular fruitful discussions, internal workshops and public conferences during the course of the entire year of 2020. This process resulted in an extensive in-depth analysis which captures the historic events from a position of unique up-close proximity. Central themes are the political system and the question if the consociational system can be reformed, the love-hate relationship between the Dollar and the Lebanese Lira, the role of women in the movement. The volume goes beyond chronicling the protests by providing lively and sensory insights into the various appropriations of public spaces by cultural practitioners, activists and ordinary people alike, be it in the form of art and music productions or performances of public discussions. Sally Farhat, Claudia Kozman, and Jad Melki (Lebanese American University) explore the participation of women in the Movement and how gender intersects with media usage and media literacy. Adding to the discussion of gender, Zeina Tohme (Lebanese University) writes about how women's participation in protests leveraged emotional force to draw on collective memories and build collective identity. Jasmin Diab (American University of Beirut) contextualizes women's participation within the broader scope of Lebanese history and gender politics. Banking, corruption, and trust in Lebanese currency is another key topic. Jakub Jajcay (American University of Beirut) addresses the way in which the Movement turned towards banks and financial engineering shortly after the protests began.

Rayan Haykal (Sagesse University) investigates how Lebanese citizens perceive the Lira and its uses in contrast to the U.S. dollar. Turning to the nuts and bolts of Lebanese politics, Maximilian Felsch (Haigazian University) makes several suggestions for how the government might attenuate its problems without completely dismantling its consociational structure. Sami Ofeish (University of Balamand) places the Movement within the longer history of protests movements and civil society activism in Lebanon. Cherine Yazbeck attends to the aesthetic dimensions of the Movement. She describes the way in which artists and arts organizations both contributed to the Movement and also used it as a platform for the development of new artistic networks and practices. Serge Yazigi (Lebanese American University) draws attention to the manifold stimuli of the senses of Martyr's Square during the Movement, drawing comparisons with the openness of the pre-War souks.

Due to the multiple crises in Lebanon and the Corona crisis in the UK the volume will appear in 2022.



People in front of the central bank, which has been fortified with concrete walls and barbed wire.

# Crisis and Aspiration among Sudanese Migrant Workers in Beirut

ANNA REUMERT

OCTOBER 2020 – MAY 2021

My dissertation follows three generations of Sudanese migrant servants in Lebanon and links their history of labour to the contemporary moment of transregional political upheaval in both Lebanon and Sudan. The question of what kind of political subject the migrant worker is, or can be, in a country like Lebanon, became central to my research in 2020. My dissertation documents migrants' efforts of co-survival, solidarity, and political organizing. Migrant workers expressed that they did not feel welcome at the protests, which took part in Lebanon 2020 and, because they are legally excluded from unionizing and not protected by Lebanese labour laws, could not participate in the general strike even if they wanted to. Meanwhile, Lebanon's economic and political crises led migrant workers to build their own emergency networks of material support and care, including establishing mutual aid funds and sharing accommodation. The growing mass unemployment of migrant workers in Lebanon also brought a new urgency to discussions of anti-black racism in Lebanese society. The plight of migrant workers came therefore to occupy a more central place in Lebanese media and public debate during my research period. This spilled over into Lebanese activist circles, who led solidarity marches with migrant workers, workshops on anti-black racism and vigils for the Sudanese revolutionaries in Khartoum who had lost their lives in the sit-in there earlier that year.

I presented a dissertation chapter on this topic at the OIB weekly seminar in April 2021 and will be presenting it at the *Asian Conference on the Social Sciences* in a panel organized by postdoctoral fellows from OIB.





Sudanese workers, who lost their jobs due to the deteriorating economic situation in Lebanon. Protest outside their country's embassy in Beirut to demand repatriation. July 2, 2020.

©JOSEPH EID / AFP

CHRISTIAN THUSELT

OCTOBER 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2024

The research project aims to bring together two research paradigms that have rarely been connected so far: the study of spatially-bound identity patterns in political geography and a political-science perspective on the constitution of political orders. Using an interpretative-constructivist approach on statehood and borrowing from political philosophy and philosophical anthropology, it is argued that three dimensions of political-territorial orders can be analytically distinguished: (1) sociocultural differentiations separate an "us" from the "others" (identity) and (2) in many cases naturalise this differentiation with, among other things, the delimitation of spaces through a location of supposedly pre-existent spaces based on these practices. Finally, they connect these two dimensions with the conception of a "polity" (3), understood as the formal constitution of societies.

By focusing on "polity", we avoid limiting research to formal statehood without losing sight of the importance of polity. Empirically, we focus on the designs of "future spaces" that have been produced and disseminated by key actors in the region since 2003. The aim of this project is to gain, against the background of the destabilisation or "dislocation" of nation-state orders in Iraq, a comparative and systematic overview of the orders that have been designed by central actors in the region since 2003.

On this basis, we contribute to the debate on possible post-war orders in the region. Since the question now obviously arises in the Middle East whether analogous to Sub-Saharan Africa, a "post-Westphalian" order beyond legalistic statehood could also be a relevant vision of the future in the Middle East, the selection of cases must be oriented to the positioning of relevant actors in relation to the existing statehood of the region, i.e. Iraq as an internationally recognised subject of international law. First and foremost, we will focus on the communication of political orders, which is to be understood as a hegemonic practice and aims at hegemony in the sense of an unquestioned validity of the order.

The first group includes those actors who exercise governmental power in Iraq, or who at least refer most outspokenly to it. They thus strive for a re-establishment of a centralised polity. We will here analyse Muqtada a-Sadr's discourse. In a second group, we survey actors who strive for a new polity based on an ethnic "us"-identity, here: the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party.

A third group consists of those actors, who initially define their identity in a way, often dubbed "sectarianisation", which seems simply to be oriented primarily against the discursive hegemony of another actor. In their apparent retreat into the lifeworld of the "microstructure", they seem at first glance to be prototypes of a "denationalisation" of the Middle East, although that is rather doubtful.

Since October 2021, we have begun analysing Muqtada al-Sadr's discourse with the help of Atlas.ti. This year's election in Iraq and the demonstrations since 2019 functioned as relevant occasions for the articulation of his conceptions of order. In preliminary work before arriving at the OIB, we looked at the discourse of the former ruling Ba'th Party on statehood. This resulted in an essay that appeared in the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies in the first half of 2021.



© OPEN SOURCE



# Living in Liminality

SARAH EL BULBEISI

NOVEMBER 2019 – OCTOBER 2022

Based on biographical-narrative interviews, conversations, and participant observation, my project explores experiences and life-worlds of the Lebanese war and post-war generation. The project tells their stories and examines conceptions of the "self" and the "other", constructions of collective identities (familial, confessional, gender, class), as well as breaks with those and ways of self-actualization, against the backdrop of *subjective* and *objective violence* (Zizek). It investigates how actors of different generations make sense of a past that is not dealt with, a present, which does not seem to belong to them and a homeland which remains a place of alienation.

Especially the post-war generation, born from the 1990s on, shares a feeling of alienation from the country they were born in. Besides the permanent uncertainty in Lebanon's post-war era, one decisive factor seems to be that they grew up with their parents' wish not to realize themselves in the country (neither to build something nor to change something, e.g., to become politically active), but to leave it as quickly as possible. In a sense, life only begins with emigration. Also, often they do not feel at home in their families because they cannot identify with the values of their parents – the war generation – whom they perceive as confessionally oriented and authoritarian, and under whose way of dealing – or rather non-dealing – with the civil war past they suffer. For many, the October 2019 protests were the first opportunity to develop a sense of belonging to their country. For the first time, the civil-war past and its legacy were addressed more deeply in public discourse and in families. The confessional other was replaced by the state as the new other, which opened the possibility of perceiving and valuing social difference (from the confessional other) differently. This narrative was reinforced with the explosion in the harbour in August 2020.

The project looks at the family not only as a site of reproduction of social norms, but rather as space antagonistic to the social sphere, confining the individual to particular social groups and preventing him or her from fully joining the social sphere as a whole at the same time. It will ask how different forms of collective identity, such as familial, gender, confessional and class, relate to each other and how they serve each other. Furthermore, it will be considered to what extent forms of structural experience of violence influence relationships and conceptions of the self. How do they shape approaches to intimacy, but also to agency and self-actualisation in the world?

How does civil war influence the transgenerational relations/bonds of the war generation to the post-war generation and how does this in turn influence the relationships and identities of the post-war generation?

Based on biographical narrative interviews and conversations, the desires, fears, conflicts and self-interpretations of Lebanese of the urban middle and working class will be examined; in particular with regard to the question along which axes rupture and perpetuations of traditional forms of identity run. The research will examine why identity norms persist although they are visibly undermined by the realities of life; how they are handed down within the family and reproduced within relationship and in which contexts their subversion takes place.

These questions which touch the very secrets of contemporary Lebanese society and its relationships are what my research tries to make more visible and understandable.



©SARAH EL BULBEISI, 2022

# Security as Everyday Affect // The Mediation of Militarised Bodies on Iranian Social Media

SARA TAFAKORI

NOVEMBER 2020 – JUNE 2021

My postdoctoral fellowship at the OIB has been of immense benefit in allowing me to develop my early career research, which currently focuses on digital activism, solidarity, and political emotion in relation to Iranian women's movements, situating these movements in the context of international politics and political communication in the Middle East. I am deeply grateful to my colleagues at OIB for seeing potential in my proposed project and thus allowing me to build confidence and experience. During the fellowship, I completed my article *Digital Feminism Beyond Nativism and Empire: Affective Territories of Recognition and Competing Claims to Suffering in Iranian Women's Activism*. Grounded in a longitudinal study of two Iranian women's and human-rights campaigns, the essay contributes to current debates in political emotions, feminist theory and international political sociology by developing a post-colonial reading of solidarities in the Global South. The article thus critically analyses the binaristic discourses of liberal universalism and nativism in debates around women's rights and human rights in general.

Situated within the same research trajectory, I wrote another article called *Haunting Juxtapositions: COVID-19 in Iran and the Conservative Modern*. My focus here is on the visual attributes of digital media during the Covid crisis in Iran. I argue that the digital montaging of images of nurses in the present day with those of soldiers from the 1980s war with Iraq ties reconfigurations of gender to the reshaping of national memory.

During the fellowship, I also started working on my book manuscript, entitled *Feeling Digital Feminism: Iranian Women's Movements Beyond Nativism and Empire*. In this book, I analyse the potential and limits of building transnational solidarity around women's rights and human rights in Iran through examining how emotions operate, both to enable and to block recognition of injustices.

In an article I wrote, entitled *Affective Hierarchies of Mourning: Iranian Justice-Seeking Mothers and the Emotional Choreography of Online Collectivity*, I analyse the affective public generated on social media around the network of Iranian "justice-seeking mothers" who campaign for justice for their children's deaths at the hands of the state. It intervenes into current discussions on non-Western international relations, developing a decolonial understanding of digital activism.



Anonymous. Image  
based on photograph of  
Vida Movahed's protest.  
December 27, 2017.

©OPEN SOURCE

# The Social and Political History of Saida, 1958–1975

JAKUB JAJCAY

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

From September to December 2021, I used the OIB doctoral fellowship to conduct fieldwork for my PhD thesis studying the process of radicalization in the Lebanese city of Saida in the decades leading up to the Lebanese civil war of 1975–1990. In this stage of my research, I am focusing on conducting semi-structured interviews with people who were living in Saida in the period of 1958–1975. Organizing and conducting the interviews is a time-intensive process, but the OIB fellowship allowed me to focus fully on this essential aspect of my work and unburdened me from my teaching responsibilities that I normally have to undertake as a PhD student at the American University of Beirut. Thanks to the fellowship, I was able to successfully conduct over a dozen interviews, as well as studying existing literature on the history of Saida.

My research currently indicates that there were several institutions which were key to the process of politicization and radicalization in Saida in the lead-up to the civil war. Among the most prominent of these was the Islamic Makassed Secondary School, which became a hotbed of radical politics and indoctrinated a large part of Saida's youth into leftist and pan-Arabist ideologies. By the early 1970s, there was also a significant influx of weapons into the city and many radical political groups had formed militias, often in cooperation with armed Palestinian groups. The youth of the city, previously politicized by the schools and political parties, formed the backbone of these militias. When the civil war broke out in 1975, these Saidawi militant groups were able to quickly join the fighting, thus escalating and perpetuating the cycle of violence. Although history never repeats itself exactly, my research highlights the contemporary dangers of allowing radical parties to hijack institutions like schools to indoctrinate young people without any oversight. When weapons and military training are added to the mix, an explosive situation, which can quickly escalate out of control, is created. Therefore, understanding the processes that led to radicalization in the past can help prevent it in the future.





Research

Old Town of Saida.  
©OPEN SOURCE



# Sovereignty //

## Egypt and Qatar in hierarchy

**KARIM EL TAKI**

APRIL – SEPTEMBER

My sociologically-informed research in international relations explores the tension between hierarchy and sovereignty in the modern international with a focus on the Middle East. My thesis studies "sovereignty" in Egypt (2013–2015) and Qatar (2017–2021). Sovereignty, as I conceptualise it, is an ideology seeking the social recognition of a state's own sense of sovereign agency and status in reaction to subordination dynamics across domestic, regional, and global hierarchies. The Egyptian and Qatari regimes have held contrasting views on the regional order and have divergent nation-building histories, regime sociologies, economic and military resources, and state-society relations. Yet, in the face of external subordination dynamics weighing on their sovereign agency and status, they resorted to broadly similar sovereignist behaviours. Egypt faced stigmatisation and American military sanctions following the 2013 military coup that ousted the Muslim Brotherhood from power. Sanctions came in the form of a partial suspension of military assistance, employed ostensibly by the Obama administration to elicit change in the regime's domestic behaviours. As for Qatar, it was subjected between 2017 and 2021 to political and economic sanctions by the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Bahrain. The latter governments dictated policies pertaining to Doha's regional relations and domestic politics, such as curbing ties with Islamist groups, closing a Turkish military base, and shutting down Al Jazeera. In defiance of such external pressure, the Egyptian and Qatari regimes have adopted sovereignist attitudes across the domestic and the international and across the regional and the global. I study three areas in which their sovereignty has unfolded: regime legitimisation, state militarisation, and lobbying the United States. In doing so, I rely on four bodies of primary sources, namely regime media discourse, military procurement, lobbying documentation submitted to the US Department of Justice, and interview-based fieldwork in Cairo (2016–2017), Doha (2019), and Washington DC (2019).



تعيم في قلب الوطن ... والوطن في قلب # تعيم المجد



"Tamim the Glorious"  
in a Doha shopping  
centre during the  
Gulf crisis (2017–2021),  
January 2019.

©KARIM EL TAKI

# Women's Decisions, Experiences, and Access to Safe Abortion Care //

## Accounts from women in Lebanon

ZEINA FATHALLAH

DECEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021

The Lebanese Penal Code, promulgated in 1943, prohibits abortion under all circumstances and bans the selling of substances used to induce abortion (Articles 539–546). Under Article 541, a woman who undergoes an abortion is subject to imprisonment for six months to three years, and the person performing the abortion is subject to imprisonment for one year.

Nonetheless, Article 545 stipulates that a woman who has an abortion to "preserve her honour" would benefit from attenuating circumstances. Although, the circumstances under which an abortion is considered a means to preserve one's honour are not stated in the Penal Code, they include pregnancy of unmarried women and pregnancy resulting from rape. These attenuating circumstances also apply to the person contributing to an abortion in order to preserve the honour of a family member or relative, with or without the woman's consent. Presidential Decree No. 13187 of 20 October 1969 reaffirmed the prohibition on abortion but amended the Penal Code by permitting abortion in cases where it is necessary to save the pregnant woman's life (therapeutic abortion).

Lebanon's criminalisation of abortion is not an insurmountable obstacle for women who want to safely terminate their pregnancy under medical supervision. However, the ability to obtain a safe abortion becomes a privilege in the restrictive Lebanese context, where access to services hinges on a woman's capacity to afford the medical cost, social capital, networks, and ability to negotiate with partners and physicians. Single women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are particularly vulnerable in these negotiations. Thus, marital status and socioeconomic background determine women's access to safe abortion care and the experiences they have during the process.

The purpose of this study is to explore the intersectional effects of criminalisation on women's access to safe abortion in Lebanon, particularly within the context of the economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. The study explores, first, how women experience abortion depending on their marital status, religion, and socioeconomic status; and, second, the decision-making process of whether or not to have an abortion and access to safe abortion care.

The study employs semi-structured, face to-face interviews with twenty women aged between sixteen and forty-five years who have had an abortion in the last three years. The interview guide for women focused on the following themes: (1) the context in which they discovered their pregnancy; (2) their decision to have an abortion; (3) the support they received from others; (4) their search for a physician; (5) their interactions with physicians; (6) accessibility to medical care and constraints due to COVID-19 pandemic and the current economic crisis; (7) secrecy management; and (8) their personal experiences with abortion.

Participants were recruited through personal networks. This is both a strength and a limitation of my study: While close relationships of trust will give me unique access in a clandestine context, they will also result in a biased sample that will not allow me to generalise my findings across the entire Lebanese population. I am analysing the data using the grounded theory, whereby data collection and data analysis are conducted in parallel. I am drawing concepts out of each interview and then categorising them, and I am performing a comparative analysis and axial coding. An article will be produced based on the outcomes of this study.

# *Humans & the environment*

**Fossil Lebanon // Oil and the terrain of politics, 1920–1978** 44

**The Making of a Social Disease //**

Tuberculosis and the medicalization of late Ottoman society (1827–1922) 46

**Spatio-Visual Co-constructions //**

Communication and digitalization of urban planning in a mediatized world –  
Cairo as a global case 48

# Fossil Lebanon //

## Oil and the terrain of politics, 1920–1978

ZACHARY DAVIS CUYLER

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

This dissertation investigates how infrastructures of oil shaped the environmental, political, and economic history of Lebanon. Between 1920 and 1946, French colonial authorities built oil pipelines, oil ports, refineries, and highways that linked the new national space of Lebanon to Western Europe and the Arab *mashriq* via flows of oil and other commodities. From Lebanon's independence in the 1940s until the outbreak of civil war in the 1970s, Lebanese elites attracted further investment in oil infrastructures as well as flows of capital from oil-exporting states into Lebanon's banking and real estate sectors. But while elites used such infrastructure projects to engineer Lebanon's political and economic order, these infrastructures also created infrastructural vulnerabilities to road-blocking protests, disruptive strikes, acts of sabotage, and other tactical blockages of flow.

This project asks two related questions: how do infrastructures produce and shape national spaces within transnational relations of extraction, accumulation, and empire? And how do transnational infrastructures redistribute agency and imbue political projects with momentum at a national scale? It examines the history of a complex of oil pipelines, refineries, ports, highways, and financial institutions built to channel flows of energy, commodities, and oil-derived capital through Lebanon. It argues that this complex fostered the formation of an unequal polity designed to stabilize the future for transnational capital and a privileged stratum of Lebanon's working classes. This project is based on research in state and university archives and private paper collections, as well as oral history interviews, in Lebanon, France, the United Kingdom, Kuwait, and the United States.





©AYOUB SHAMI, 1966

# The Making of a Social Disease //

## Tuberculosis and the medicalization of late Ottoman society (1827–1922)

HRATCH KESTENIAN

JANUARY – AUGUST

My project investigates how tuberculosis became a social disease in the late Ottoman Empire. More specifically, I look at how medicine and disease acquired a new meaning with the centralization of government. Through the story of tuberculosis, I aim to tell how different communities (Western missionaries, Anatolian villagers, and Ottoman officials) reacted to the new challenges of "modern" and "scientific" medicine and medicalized society. In addition, I am concerned with revealing how tuberculosis influenced the construction of the Ottoman social body through its pathologizing of the gender, class, and economic status of the individual body. Finally, drawing on theories of biopolitics, colonialism, and state-building, I explore the story of tuberculosis in the Ottoman Empire during the period between the establishment of the Imperial Medical School in 1827, which led to the professionalization of medicine, and the end of World War I.

During my stay at the OIB, I enjoyed working on medical journals and periodicals published in the Ottoman world during the long nineteenth century. Medical sources can provide us with solid bases for making meaningful comparisons of conditions between different historical periods. In addition, physicians and public health officials published vast literature on the afflictions they confronted in their practice and on the circumstances that gave rise to them. Primarily, I focused on contemporaneous medical journals, newspapers, and hygienic manuals such as *Gazette Medical Oriental*, *Revue d'Hygiene*, *al-Tabib* (the Doctor), *al-Shifa* (Healing), *Tarman* (Remedy), *Vakayi-l Tibbiye* (Medical Affairs), all of which contain an almost inexhaustible – and little-used – wealth of investigations into the life of the Ottoman people, with extensive information on such issues as diet, housing, working conditions, education, social relationships, and religious beliefs. I found these journals at various libraries, such as the Ataturk Library and the National Library of Armenia in Istanbul and Yerevan, respectively. These materials could establish an important and novel vantage point from which we can examine the late Ottoman Empire and especially, as Frank Snowden says, "the life of the poor, who are overrepresented in the attentions of the medical profession and under-represented in the attentions of everyone else".



Tuberculosis ward  
of the Hasköy  
Hospital for Women  
in Constantinople  
Abdul Hamid II  
Collection, between  
1880 and 1893.

©ABDULLAH FRÈRES

# Spatio-Visual Co-constructions //

## Communication and digitalization of urban planning in a mediatized world – Cairo as a global case

**MENNATULLAH HENDAWY**

NOVEMBER 2020 – JANUARY 2021

This project begins with my observation that, in the current mediatized world, the popular media's image of cities hardly represents the everyday experiences of the majority of its citizens or their perceptions of their cities' futures. I argue that this misrepresentation creates visibilities and invisibilities that involve not only the general public, but also the urban planners enrolled in producing these cities (image). At the same time, it facilitates marginalization, disempowerment, and socio-spatial injustices, which exclude vulnerable groups from accessing necessary services and infrastructure. In Cairo and elsewhere, these vulnerable groups form a majority of the population. Studying Cairo as a local yet global context in the mediatized world, the gap that this research fills is focused on understanding the ways in which planning visualizations become a question of social and spatial justice in the mediatized world. Over three years, I have worked on five research papers to trace the many intersections of planning visualizations and issues of social and spatial justice via urbanization in order to explore how visual communications of urban schemes shape and are shaped by planning networks and the communicative situations that are entwined with the political economy of cities. This journey highlighted a theoretical gap with regard to the entanglement of planning visualizations and justice in planning and in cities. Therefore, during my stay at the OIB, I am working on developing a mid-range interdisciplinary planning theory that is empirically informed by my previous findings. Adapting retroductive reasoning and the analytic techniques of the grounded theory method, I propose a cumulative theory building process that makes use of my earlier papers as data to construct a mid-range theory of spatio-visual "injustice".





Street billboards in Cairo,  
March, 2019.

©MENNATULLAH HENDAWY

# *Humans & the divine*

### **Abrahamitic Interdependence //**

Religious and theological knowledge as a transcultural product of multi-confessional relations using the example of marriage and marriage law of Jewish communities in Muslim majority societies at the beginning of twentieth century 52

**Ethnic Typologies in *Ḳinālīzāde 'Alī Ḥelebī's Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī* 54**

**The New Testament Quotations in Ibrahīm al-Biqā'ī's (d. 885/1480) Commentary on the Koran 56**

**Redaction of the Third Chapter of my Dissertation on *Sufi mi'rāj* 58**



# Abrahamitic Interdependence //

Religious and theological knowledge as a transcultural product of multi-confessional relations using the example of marriage and marriage law of Jewish communities in Muslim majority societies at the beginning of twentieth century

AHMED ABD-ELSALAM

OCTOBER 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2024

It seems that the Arab-Israeli conflict causes a barrier to Islamic-Jewish dialogue outside of politics. It makes it difficult for many Muslims to imagine that in most Arab countries Jews, Christians, Muslims once formed a common society. In the Islamic religious discourse, it is repeatedly emphasised that the peaceful coexistence of Muslims and Jews was only possible in Andalusia. Andalusia is becoming a utopia or rather an illusion for many Muslims, especially younger generations, who did not experience the common life of Jews in their societies. Zionism and Israel are blamed for disrupting peaceful life in the Middle East. Anti-Zionism evolves into anti-Semitism and hatred of Jews. This disturbs the interreligious dialogue and comparative theology as a field of research, as long as one primarily researches differences instead of similarities and connections in the Arab-Islamic world.

With the project *Abrahamitic Interdependence*, I want to demonstrate that Jews and Judaism formed a significant part of the society, culture, and contemporary history of most Arab countries and societies until recently. The project emphasises the similarities between Judaism and Islam concerning social and religious concepts such as "marriage and divorce". With this project, I hope to throw a stone into the still water and thus stimulate the interreligious and intercultural Islamic-Jewish dialogue. Therefore, it is essential to network the project with relevant research institutions in the Arab world.

The project *Abrahamitic Interdependence* also explores the influence of social issues in plural communities on the built and rebuilt religious norms and knowledge. It examines exemplarily the relation of Islamic to Jewish marriage law in various social and historical contexts. When studying Islamic law, it is noticeable that numerous Islamic legal norms correspond to the Jewish ones (Bialblocki 1928). Bialblocki, in the tradition of Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), speaks about the influence of the Jewish on Islamic norms. According to him, the older religion, Judaism, influences the younger religion, Islam. However, commonalities in social institutions like marriage in both religions can have transcultural origins.

The project *Abrahamitic Interdependence* consists of three sub-projects. The results of each are to appear in one of three planned publications. Two of them will be in German and one in Arabic. The project is linked to the projects of the Cairo Office entitled *Interdependence Relations: Humans, religions and environments*.

The first sub-project is a historical-critical study of the book *Materialien zum islamischen und jüdischen Eherecht* by Samuel Bialoblocki (1928). This book discusses the concurrence of several norms concerning marriage and divorce in Islam and Judaism. Some verses of the Koran address Jewish debates in the Talmud on the issue of marriage. Bialoblocki does not recognise that the influences can be mutual and not just in one direction. Abrahamitic interdependence results from transcultural social relationships and encounters in everyday life. We do not know to which degree this was the case in the time of the Prophet Mohammed. Even more, following the traditions of Prophet Muhammad, their ethical concept is not necessarily based on the revelation (Koran). His concept is based closely on the life of his first wife, Khadija. That is why I call it the *Khadija Project* or *Issue*. The *Khadija Project/Issue* had the goal of liberating tribal women and strengthening their role and status in society by securing women's financial independence through *mahr* and *mīrāth*.

The second sub-project aims to provide Arabic readers and researchers with reliable scientific information on marriage and divorce in Judaism in the present and the past. Such work can enrich the Arabic specialist library. The results of the first part of the project will also be included here.

The third sub-project is the central part of the study. I will research the Jewish marriage law in Egypt and Iraq in the first half of the twentieth century. I will study normative changes in legislation and practical reality. The legislative change characteristics in Egypt and Iraq will be compared in order to be able to determine possible unique cultural influences through the integration societies. Several marriage certificates of the Egyptian Jewish communities in Cairo and Alexandria at the time of the study will be analysed to examine the reality of practice.



Marriage certificate  
from Cairo  
around 1940.

©THE NATIONAL LIBRARY  
OF ISRAEL, JERUSALEM

# Ethnic Typologies in *Ḳinālīzāde 'Alī Çelebī's Akhlāq-i 'Alā'ī*

FATİH ERMIŞ

JULY 2018 – JUNE 2023

Ḳinālīzāde 'Alī Çelebī (1510-1572) wrote his *Akhlāq-i 'alā'ī* (The Sublime Ethics) with the aim of making it the definitive book of ethics in the Ottoman Empire. Following the tradition of Naşīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (1201–1274), Ḳinālīzāde organized the book into three chapters: the science of ethics, the science of the governance of households, and the science of the governance of cities. In the second chapter, Ḳinālīzāde examines the dominant dispositions of people of various nations and ethnicities, such as the Arabs, Persians, Greeks, Turks, Mongols, Kurds, Bosnians, Hungarians, Albanians, Russians, Franks, Georgians, Circassians, Abazas, Indians, and Ethiopians. His aim was to enable both sultans and the citizenry to determine the most suitable people to employ in their households or their courts. When talking about the Greeks (*rūm*), for example, Ḳinālīzāde states that Greek women are suitable as treasurers due to their reputation for being miserly. Ḳinālīzāde's predecessor, Ṭūsī, also makes this point clear in his *Akhlāq-i Naşīrī* through an examination of the dispositions of nations in the chapter entitled "Concerning the government of servants and slaves".

Ḳinālīzāde argues that humankind is divided and subdivided into various types and that each nation has several dominant traits in the form of virtues or vices. He refers to these dispositions as the dominant characters (*akhlāq-ı ghāliba*), pointing out that although not every member of a nation may possess these traits, they are demonstrated in the general disposition of nations and ethnic groups.

Ḳinālīzāde also discusses how specific dispositions become dominant. Although he contends there are a variety of reasons for this, he specifies three: the genetic transmission of dispositions, the influence of the soil, air and water of respective nations, and the acquisition of dispositions by contact between members of a nation. Following this discussion, Ḳinālīzāde states that most of these groups of people are not useful as servants anymore. Evaluated together with the discussion on the naturalness or changeability of dispositions, Ḳinālīzāde suggests that the dominant characters of nations are not inherent but subject to change according to changing circumstances. Similar ideas about the changeability of the qualities of nations and their dependence on environmental factors can also be found in Ibn Miskawayh's (932–1030) *Tahzib al-Akhlāq*.



ʿĀrifī, Süleymānnāme.  
The recruitment  
of Devshirme Children.  
In: TSM, H. 1517, fol. 31b,  
1558.

© T.C. CUMHURBAŞKANLIĞI  
MILLÎ SARAYLAR İDARESİ  
BAŞKANLIĞI

He describes people from parts of the world that are either too north or too south as "distinguished from apes to a slight degree only" due to the effect of climates that are either too cold or too hot.

Ḳinālīzāde summarizes the ideas about the changeability of dispositions by exploring three different scholarly perspectives. The first group of scholars argue that character is something natural. Since nature does not change, it is impossible to change character. The second group differentiates between two kinds of character, one being natural and hence immutable, and the other resulting from habit, thus open to change. Ḳinālīzāde reports that one of the main proponents of this perspective is Galen. The third group argues that changeability in all types of character is possible since no disposition is natural and innate but instead are a result of external factors. After summarizing these theories, Ḳinālīzāde argues in support of the third idea, referring to the preference of the majority of the philosophers and scholars. Since he acknowledges the possibility of change in character, he also assumes that the dominant characters of nations may change with time.

In summary, Ḳinālīzāde provides a comprehensive account of the dominant characteristics of a long list of nations and ethnicities as a guideline for households or sultans when faced with selecting suitable servants for roles within the domicile.

# The New Testament Quotations in Ibrahīm al-Biqā'ī's (d. 885/1480) Commentary on the Koran

THOMAS WÜRTZ

MAY 2021 – APRIL 2024

There are numerous commentaries on the Koran, as the Koran has inspired Muslim scholars for centuries and the corresponding genre of exegesis (*tafsīr*) is still very productive today. The focus of my research is on the commentary on the Koran by Ibrahīm al-Biqā'ī (d. 885/1480), which dates from the fifteenth century and was written in Egypt. The title of this work is *Naẓm al-durar fī tanāsub al-ayāt wa-l-suwar* (Arrangement of Pearls in the Context of Verses and Suras). Its peculiarity lies in the fact that it uses quotations from the Bible in many places to explain the Koran. Al-Biqā'ī uses the Bible primarily by quoting the Old Testament and the four Gospels at length in Koranic passages that have a biblical reference. He found the Bible helpful in elucidating the meaning of numerous Koranic passages that contain echoes of biblical narratives, which the first Koranic listeners assumed were already known. Initially, it was a motive of this research work to make this special commentary accessible to a group of readers for whom it was not originally written, but for whom it can be very relevant, such as Non-Muslim experts. Yet, there is even more to it: in the interpretation of the Koran, attention currently is very much focused on new hermeneutical approaches. If, however, new impulses are only expected in relatively modern commentaries or contemporary approaches to hermeneutics, hitherto little-researched works of commentary literature are in danger of being forgotten. Thus, a work that bears witness to how a Muslim scholar made extensive use of the Bible to comment on the Koran deserves attention. As already mentioned, the work is unique in this respect and the author defended his approach, which is unusual for Muslim scholars, even against the objections of his colleagues, who since the time of Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) considered the Bible to be a distorted version of the original revelation given to Jesus. But al-Biqā'ī argued that Mohammad and the first generations of Muslims, as well as leading scholars of later generations, had consulted the Bible. Furthermore, a Muslim with knowledge of the Koran could well know, what was part of the original divine revelation in the current available Bible texts and what was product of textual distortion.



Taking together the quotations of nearly thirty Koranic verses, which we can find in the commentary, shows that al-Biqā'ī included a story of the life of Jesus combining all four Gospels in his work. The synopsis of all quotations results in a text that transforms the four Gospels of the New Testament into a compact version that is compatible with Muslim dogma: he narrates for example what happened before Jesus was sentenced to death, leaving out the crucifixion. According to the Islamic dogma, the crucifixion could not have taken place, because God would never let his messenger die and give a triumph to his enemies. The reconstruction of his quotations in detail is the main subject of my work.

In the research concept of *Relationships* the analysis of al-Biqā'ī's work can be located primarily at the level of the relationship between humans and the divine, since the interpretation of a revelation is men's attempt to understand how God desires the relationship to him as being part of His creation. Also, on the level of scriptures and texts, the Koran, Koranic commentary and the Bible, as well as Islamic and Christian theology, are interrelated. Al-Biqā'ī's commentary should be given more visibility again, so that Muslim theologians might also refer to it more often and discuss how his approach could fertilize contemporary Koranic hermeneutics.



The commentary  
*Naẓm ad-durar*  
of Ibrahīm al-Biqā'ī  
(d. 1480).

©THOMAS WÜRTZ

# Redaction of the Third Chapter of my Dissertation on *Sufi mi'rāj*

LOUISE GALLORINI

OCTOBER 2020 – APRIL 2021

The subject of my dissertation is the function and representation of angels in the Qur'ān and their evolution in Sufi texts of the pre-Mongol era (Quranic commentaries, *mi'rāj* literature and the works of Ibn 'Arabī). The drafts of the last two chapters of my PhD dissertation were submitted in 2020: one on *mi'rāj* literature and the last one on the Meccan Openings (*al-futūḥāt al-makkiyya*) by Ibn 'Arabī. The main contribution of these chapters is the increasing use of angels as a locus of a multiplicity of meanings: aside from descriptions of angels as ontological beings with different roles and functions, such as they are presented in the Quranic text, they are also used by Sufi authors as metaphors both in the text and outside of the text, providing the Sufi seeker with different signs to help him/her or challenge him/her on the Sufi spiritual journey. This tendency was already discreetly visible in the Quranic commentaries written by Sufi authors in the first centuries of Islam, while it gains a particular complexity within the writings of Ibn 'Arabī by the thirteenth century.



Drawing by Louise  
Gallorini, 2021.  
©LOUISE GALLORINI

# *Humans & their productions*

**Crisis and Translation in Contemporary Arab Thought** 62

**Disguised Writings as Visual Signs //**

Exploring transcultural dynamics of Arabic scripts in border areas 64

**Fictio Statis //**

Unreliable numbers, private statistics and experts' careers in Lebanon (1950–1990) 66

**The Forgotten //** Bridging worlds through knowledge and people 68

**LAWHA – Lebanon's Art World at Home and Abroad //**

Trajectories of artists and artworks in/from Lebanon since 1943 70

**Mainstreaming Islamophobia, Dismantling Eurabia //**

The Middle Eastern lineage of the far right's global language (1975–2016) 72

**Materialist Thought and Conceptual Critique after 1967 //**

Global capital, Arab society and social abstraction 74

**Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's (d. 672/1274) Practical Philosophy //**

From epistemology to value theory 76

**The New and the Conventional in Pre-Modern Arabic Poetry //**

Metaphor as vantage point 78

**Queer Discourses and Queer Politics in Lebanese Independent Cinema 80**

**Reflecting on Female Reflections 82**

# Crisis and Translation in Contemporary Arab Thought

ABDALLAH EL AYACHE

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

The generous support which the OIB has offered me as a doctoral fellow during 2021 has allowed me the chance to deepen my understanding of an intellectual phenomenon occurring in Arab intellectual history in the post-1980s. The phenomenon I am referring to is the development of Arabic philosophical translations of German Idealism. After the 1980s intellectuals from all regions of the Arab world have returned to German Idealism as a philosophy of enlightenment. Arab intellectuals and translators have often spoken about this resorting to translation practices as resulting from the impossibility to philosophize in Arabic. Some prominent Arab intellectuals have even claimed that the only mode of philosophy currently possible in the Arab world is translation.

My research as a doctoral fellow at OIB has disclosed for me this return as a complex historical and philosophical question. It became evident that this turn to translation is an attempt to work through an overarching crisis experienced by Arab intellectuals since the nineteenth and early twentieth century *Nahḍa* period. That is the experience of progress characteristic of modernity as a destructive storm, and historical time experienced in the Arab world as delay. I believe that Arabic translations of German Idealism post-1980s have to be understood as an answer to this historical crisis, a practice that aims to remake the subject's experience of historical time and move beyond the predicament posed as a binary between destructive progress or delay. It became evident to me that Arabic translation post-1980s was part of a larger linguistic turn taken in Arab thought during the period. Predominantly, this turn was conceptually reconstituting the Arab cosmopolitan subject and primarily remaking his/her commitment to the notion of universal freedom. Often, prominent intellectuals took translation as a philosophical practice that allowed them to rework Arabic philosophical language. Interestingly, underlying these linguistic strategies are vigorous debates on meaning, history, metaphysics, and ethics.





© ABDALLAH AYADCHE, 2022

# Disguised Writings as Visual Signs //

## Exploring transcultural dynamics of Arabic scripts in border areas

ENNIO NAPOLITANO

JULY 2021 – MARCH 2022

Writing in Arabic characters represents a topic of paramount importance in Islamic visual culture and a paradigm of Islamic civilization as it spread over one quarter of the world in the last fourteen centuries. Through time and space, Arabic was appreciated not only for its content, but above all for its aesthetic qualities, as it became the most evident cultural identifier of Islamic decoration. This explains why, together with its literary and religious expansion, the form of letters took on ever more intricate and complex shapes, which progressively lost, almost or completely, their semantic value. Since its appearance, Arabic epigraphic production has developed in a rich range of styles, depending on the dynasties and conquered territories, which often convert the ductus of Arabic letters into decorative pattern that are difficult to recognize.

The aim of my research is to investigate the cross-cultural dynamics of disguised Arabic writings and their impact on border areas, studying their changes, similarities, and functions in the process of crossing from a one different culture to another. Indeed, the use of debased Arabic inscriptions proves how the intrinsic power of characters assumes a priority role over textual meaning. The research work carried out so far has been the lever to tear down the mainstream stance according to which the so-called Arabic pseudo-inscriptions were simply an altered result of the transfer between different linguistic contexts, often attributed to the lack of linguistic knowledge. However, their appearance in the Middle East, the cradle of Islamic civilization seems to challenge this position. Most of the existing literature in art history has merely described these inscriptions as an exoticism and only highlighted the ornamental qualities of the so-called "pseudo-Kufic" or "pseudo-Arabic" script, concepts underling the idea of falseness expressed through an imitative action devoid of the values owned by the originals.

Nevertheless, the role played by the script goes by far beyond its meaning. For the owner, writing does not require to be read to spread its effects, but just to be observed, consumed, worn, and owned. This use, which privileges the visual aspect over its significant connection with speech, is also linked to the taste of Islamic culture for decorative epigraphic, geometric, and floral patterns. In some way, the greater the "envelope" that hides the word is, the more it assumes complex semantic implications.



One of the main objectives of my research is to demonstrate the validity of a reading method that is based on the recognition of "clues" hidden by the artisans in the inscriptions able to activate the reading of the debased signs. During the first four months of investigation, the application of this method has already allowed to trace the original meaning of several most degenerate epigraphic patterns on pottery considered so far as a mere decorative element. As these texts are part of a standardized language, they were recognized by the cultivated people even in their abbreviated and distorted versions. Indeed, the meaning is divided into two levels: the first aimed at all consumers and linked to daily usage and the second and more hidden, directed at those who are able to decipher its meaning. Indeed, the coding and decoding of the inscriptions give evidence for their use as a word game for literati. These texts, mostly present on ceramics, fabrics, metalworks and coins, are enriched not only with abbreviated words but also with elaborate modifications and alien elements, which contribute to the creation of a visual language consisting in a sort of epigraphic codes whose understanding and use is the goal of my research.



Composition of details of  
objects bearing debased  
inscriptions  
preserved at the  
Metropolitan Museum  
of New York.

©METROPOLITAN MUSEUM  
OF ART, NEW YORK CITY

- 1 Plate, late 14th–early 15th century, Spain
- 2 Incense Burner, late 13th–early 14th century, Syria
- 3 Dinar of Tughril 1052–53, Iran
- 4 The Lotto carpet, 16th century, Turkey, preserved at the Met Museum
- 5 Painting, Saints John the Evangelist and Mary Magdalene, Follower of Giotto, ca. 1335–45, Italy

# Fictio Statist //

## Unreliable numbers, private statistics and experts' careers in Lebanon (1950–1990)

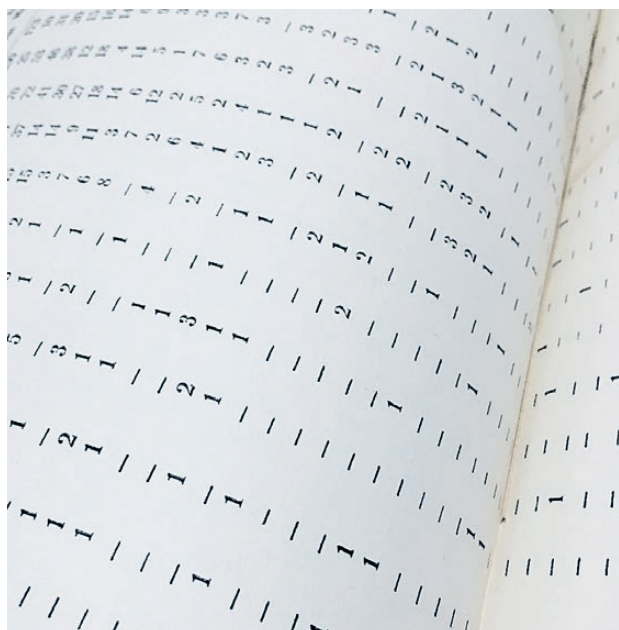
PIERRE FRANCE

OCTOBER 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2023

In Lebanon the issue of statistics is often reduced to an observation that has remained unchanged over time, based on a seemingly founding and well-known choice: the absence of a general population census since 1932. Other cases since then, such as the conflicts in the years 1990–2000 around the calculation of the GDP, price index, inflation, the absence of a reliable count of the demonstrators during the 2019 revolution or even that of the victims of the 4 August explosion, regularly serve as reminders of the supposedly constant difficulty of quantifying social or economic phenomena in Lebanon. However, it is easy to reverse the situation: many figures do appear in reports, official publications or press articles; they have their professionals, statisticians, economists, journalists, or nowadays data-scientists; they also have their institutions and companies, from the National Statistics to private consulting firms, banks, polling, and marketing institutes, to NGOs and international organizations. Rather than seeking to re-assess the gaps and unreliable figures, or those too politicized to be public, this project thus raises a new set of questions: how do we work with existing numbers in Lebanon? How are they being aggregated or disseminated? How can one conduct research to collect them? Aside from being the first political and social history of statistics in Lebanon, this project is taking stock of recent debates concerning the African continent (notably the works of Boris Samuel or Morten Jerven), and as such, it aims at standing as a contribution at a regional level and with a comparative view. This is the meaning of the two workshops held in Beirut and Cairo in 2021, *Alles ist Data? Everything is Data! From Official Statistics to Data-Activism – Exploring the Manufacture of Data*. The setting of a study group on the issue within the Egyclass project since 2021 (with Malak Labib) will form the basis for further reflections on the matter in the coming year.

### A MAPPING OF THE ACTORS

Who handles and produces statistics in Lebanon? This is the thorny question this research faced during the year 2021, starting from a very explicit initial observation: the scarcity of professional statisticians. Therefore, I have interviewed some statisticians, but mostly economic journalists, economists, professionals from NGOs and international institutions, senior civil servants and pollsters. These interviewees were questioned about their professional careers, the self-representation of their practice and finally their vision of statistics in general, both in Lebanon and in the Arab world.



©PIERRE FRANCE

This part of the research was based on recommendations from person to person, in the form of snowball sampling technique, but also a systematic search of online documents and profiles – especially on LinkedIn. This technique of searching for interlocutors also turned into the constitution of a database of professionals as well as institutions or companies involved in this issue, allowing to outline a real mapping of a *field of statistics* in Lebanon.

#### STATISTICS AND ARCHIVES

A second aspect explored during this first year has been archival documents, in order to give historical depth to this research and reconstitute the history of statistics in Lebanon. While doing so, the project intersects with another reflection on archiving in Lebanon. Sometimes crossing the logic of interviews – especially when it comes to interviewing actors who have been present in this small world of statistics for years – this part of the project has been an occasion to observe the extreme fragmentation of old statistical data. Most of the time they are present only in a single copy, with various availability, ranging from public collection in university libraries, to personal copies kept at home, private collections or even Beirut's antique shops – where they come with a price. Such fragmentation of data is both representative of the centrifugal logic of data production, then as now, and the logic of archiving at work in Lebanon. Just as national statistics in Lebanon are far from having a monopoly on their field of activity, national archives are in close proximity to a multitude of different actors.

# The Forgotten //

## Bridging worlds through knowledge and people

ROSY BEYHOM

OCTOBER 2021 – JUNE 2022

During the research for my doctoral thesis, I was trying to prove the life chronology of two authors through dates in order to determine which musical treatise was copied on the example of the other. The only way to do so was to find dates, but there were none on the surviving manuscripts. Upon non-stop consideration, biographical dictionaries seemed to be the only holders for the solution. Despite their wideness and abundance, it seemed impossible to find any information and I was nearly desperate until I thought of directing my search towards the fathers of my lost authors. And then, one father revealed himself with an interesting biographical entry written by the famous Ibn Aybak al-Şafadī. It was only in *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* that I came across the most interesting information about an individual linked indirectly to the world of music.

After I finished my dissertation, I was even more curious to explore *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* in the sole purpose of finding people who were unknown, lost, forgotten, but who can be traced to form the link between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries, known to scholars of the history of Arabian music as the "empty" centuries. It was not possible that a highly intellectual period in the Arab world would be completely empty of any musical activity, entertainment and most of all, no musical treatises being written. Finding these people will enable us to construct a bridge between the old Arab world and the old Latin world. Scholars admit that the translation activity between the Arab and the Latin world was quite vibrant, many sciences found their way to present-day Europe through this intellectual boom that started before the eleventh century. However, concerning music, many treatises were also lost or perhaps translated into Latin before getting lost in Arabic, hence the empty centuries. I intend to repopulate this time gap with the corresponding individuals and their musical legacy, be it written, sung or composed. *Al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* is only the start as the information it holds is selected subjectively and follows its author's taste and appreciation. Ibn Aybak al-Şafadī was a highly educated scholar in his times, yet his insight in writing each of his entries was a subjective exercise. The musical knowledge found so far in my research reveals diversity in the approach of al-Şafadī. During my fellowship stay at the OIB, I hope to complete a first study on all the volumes of *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* and retrieve in this first phase a survey on the musical knowledge as well as a musical glossary, until I establish a first cross-checking with *Kitāb al-Aghānī* in a near future that appears to be among the main sources for the musical entries by al-Şafadī.





*Al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt.*

©ROSY BEYHOM

# LAWHA — Lebanon's Art World at Home and Abroad // Trajectories of artists and artworks in/from Lebanon since 1943

NADIA VON MALTZAHN

OCTOBER 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2025

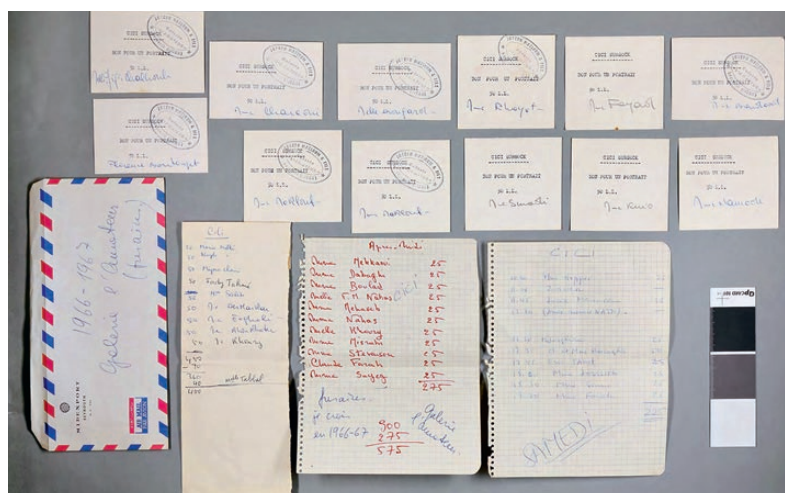
*LAWHA* examines the forces that have shaped the emergence of a professional field of art in Lebanon within its local, regional, and global context, against the background that Lebanon is regularly portrayed as a country with weak public institutions but a vibrant cultural sector. The project proposes a shift of perspective in approaching Lebanon's art world by focusing on the multi-dimensionality of artists' individual trajectories. *LAWHA* aims to identify new methods on how to interrelate context and artistic production, to serve as a model for revisiting art histories in contexts where institutionalized local art histories have largely been absent.

The main focus this year has been to set up the database and digital platform (DDP), which forms the spine of the project. The aim is to create a tool and central and open-access repository for future research. This includes the localisation and preservation of artistic records with the aim of building up artists' dossiers that draw on local and international networks. The DDP will help us in understanding who exhibited with whom and where, how an artist's productivity interrelated with phases and geographic locations in their life, who the artist interacted with, how artworks circulated (or did not circulate), and how the market has developed. The database is guided by the project's research questions, which revolve around the professionalization of Lebanon's art sector, the impact of the social, political, and economic environment on the art world and its protagonists, how artists are represented in relation to the nation, and the role of women artists and artists of Armenian origin in Lebanon's art world. It will allow us to trace patterns and networks, and will also highlight debates, criticism, and intellectual exchanges on art. It will permit us to be able to see links between artists that studied together, exhibited together, and exchanged ideas, as well as the connection between time and artistic production, time and movement, artist dossiers, video/audio interviews organised by subject, debates on art and artistic approaches, as well as to access primary material and reproductions of artworks. The starting point for the list of artists under consideration are the artists that participated in the Sursock Museum's Salon d'Automne.

Throughout the year, *LAWHA* connected to a number of digital humanities projects and technical experts, art historians and archives (including colleagues at our sister institute Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte, PalREAD/Freie Universität Berlin, Asia Art Archive, ArtI@s, Modern Art Iraq Archive, Asala, AMCA, Calibro, Venice Centre for

Digital and Public Humanities/VeDPH, NYUAD Arab Center for the Study of Art, Database of Modern Exhibitions/Universität Wien, National Gallery of Art Washington DC, Bologna's Digital Humanities Advanced Research Centre/DH.arc, Künstler- und Ausstellungsdatenbank ArtXpertise/Düsseldorf) in order to determine which software to use, how to organise the data, understand the needs of potential users and generally learn from other experiences. An ontology has been developed and the selected open-source software (Omeka-S) is being adapted to *LAWHA*'s needs in collaboration with the University of Bologna's Dh.arc. A partnership has been formed with the VeDPH of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, a direct beneficiary of *LAWHA*, in order to host the DDP during its initial phase and work together towards our shared aims of encouraging innovative academic perspectives in the humanities by collaboratively creating durable, reusable, shared digital resources for research and education.

In 2021, two new team members joined *LAWHA*. Monique Bellan joined in March as a post-doctoral researcher and focuses on the DDP, exhibition practices and art critique. In September, Flavia Elena Malusardi started as *LAWHA*'s first doctoral researcher, taking up her PhD research at Ca' Foscari's history of art department. Her thesis will focus on the role of Dar el Fan in the making of Lebanon's art world. In addition, Kristine Khouri and Marcel Gaida supported *LAWHA* through consultancies.



Extract from the archive of artist Cici Sursock (1923–2015).

©NICOLAS IBRAHIM  
SURSOCK MUSEUM



# Mainstreaming Islamophobia, Dismantling Eurabia // The Middle Eastern lineage of the far right's global language (1975–2016)

CHLOE KATTAR

SEPTEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021

This project will examine the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century intellectual production and subculture of the global far right by focusing on the role of ideas, authors, and activists from the Middle East. There's been a lot of interest recently in the new style of right-wing politics with an emphasis on its international aspect, also known as right-wing internationalism. The far right is now in power in Hungary, Poland, Turkey, Brazil and Colombia, and has evolved beyond Euro-Atlantic links. But there has been a too-easy assumption that this is a world whose coordinates are supplied by the European right. This focus has come at the expense of a more comprehensive investigation of radical right discourse, which has drawn from local and indigenous intellectual traditions, the borrowing of concepts and diasporic dynamics emanating from the Arab world. Using the case of a body of thought that was specifically developed in and around the Lebanese Phalanges in the 1970s, I will show how it made its way from these pockets of the Middle East into the discourse of far right and far right-adjacent commentators today.

An academic exploration of the concepts and print culture that have shaped the creation of the imagined territorial entity now known as "Eurabia" – a portmanteau of Europe and Arabia and a term coined by British author Bet Ye'or in the early 2000s to denounce the "islamisation" of Europe – my project will retrace the early history of such conservative political creeds to provide a fresh genealogy of the most recent tropes associated with Islamophobia. Combining intellectual, international and digital history, the work seeks to examine the peregrinations of Middle Eastern right-wing entrepreneurs from the 1970s onwards and the ramifications of their writings and activism in the global public sphere. The project will therefore uncover the encounters between Western and non-Western conservatives by examining the connected works of men and women from Lebanon, Egypt, and other parts of the world. The concept of "*dhimmitude*" is a primary example of a theoretical site where such right-wing literati met through different locales and spaces: a French neologism from the Arabic word *dhimmi* – which refers to non-Muslims living in an Islamic state under legal protection – this archaic term was revived in wartime Lebanon when Phalangist intellectual Antoine Najim published in 1978 a pamphlet in Arabic to alert to the risks of Christian Lebanese being relegated to second-class citizens in an Islamist theocracy.

Two years later, Najim deployed the same rhetoric in Paris, at a high time of Islamist militancy, helping to introduce French audiences to pessimistic ideas about Christian-Muslim coexistence. By 1980, Bat Ye'or had claimed to invent the term "*dhimmitude*" and by locating the afterlives of the concept in Europe and North America, one can map the transformation of a historical concept with Middle Eastern roots into a favourite catchphrase of right-wing milieus. Ye'or, an Egyptian-born Jewish author who migrated to the United Kingdom, popularized "*dhimmitude*" through her books, which were first published in French in the 1990s and 2000s. Although not a scholar, Ye'or's books are perceived by many with a veneer of academic respectability. More recently, the concept was picked up by Melanie Phillips of The Times, a British journalist of Polish descent, who has written about "*dhimmī* Britain" in 2006, followed by an essay published on her blog where she discussed "proleptic *dhimmitude*".

# Materialist Thought and Conceptual Critique after 1967 // Global capital, Arab society, and social abstraction

ZIAD KIBLAWI

OCTOBER 2020 – JULY 2021

My project is an intellectual history of critical thought in the Arabic language that draws on European theoretical and philosophical traditions during the second half of the twentieth century. The 1967 defeat has been historicized as a nodal point in the recommencement of critical theoretical practices, where the theoretical necessity to understand modern Arab societal contradictions usurped the political burden to address them. My doctoral research concerns a problematic that is logically prior to the historiographical narration of social positions, party relations and debates, and mediations of theory and politics through notions of commitment, practice, and disenchantment. I examine the conditions that necessitated the conceptual transformations of materialist thought.

For my doctoral dissertation, I build on my previous MA research on the development and critique of the post-1967 notion of *takhalluf* (underdevelopment of "Arab society", backwardness of an "Arab mind"), specifically, the prescriptive writings on questions of thought, knowledge, and society. I explicate symptomatic readings and immanent critiques of various thinkers, the neo-Kantian debates on culture, and the historical materialist re-reading of classical Arabic thought.

I am interested in the mechanisms by which thinkers sought to refashion their analytic tools to grapple with the problematics of an "Arab" modernity, reason, and culture based on theorizations of abstract social relations. Additionally, I investigate post-1967 readings, appropriations, and critiques of historical and dialectical materialism, structuralism, post-structuralism, and psychoanalysis, and critical theory. I argue that before analysing the aesthetic or pragmatic character of discursive enunciations, grounding the conceptual terrains in relation to their abstract object of thought provides a more productive illustration of the historical and epistemological status of these "traveling" theories. The OIB's research relief fellowship has made it possible to advance the methodological framework and enhance the historical scope of this project.





Aref El Rayess.  
Detail shot of  
*Jidariyat al-Istiqlal  
wa-l-Taif*. Collage  
on plywood,  
89x211 cm, 1992.

©AREF EL RAYESS  
FOUNDATION

# Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's (d. 672/1274) Practical Philosophy //

## From epistemology to value theory

HUSSEIN IBRAHIM

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

While research on history of philosophy and science in postclassical Islamic East is still in its early stages of development, it is quite clear that Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274) was one of the most prominent philosophers and scientists in the Islamic civilization who wrote some of the most influential works of practical philosophy, philosophical theology, and mathematical sciences in the postclassical Eastern tradition. Over the centuries, al-Ṭūsī's works on practical philosophy stimulated an outpouring of summaries, commentaries, popular imitations, and adaptations, none of which can bear comparison with the works themselves. The reasons for al-Ṭūsī's success have not yet been properly understood: Why can al-Ṭūsī's contribution to practical philosophy be regarded as an innovative presentation of this discipline in the Islamic world and what makes his writings in this discipline of foundational character to postclassical philosophy?

My research project aims at reconstructing the philosophical agenda scattered among al-Ṭūsī's works. It rebuilds the central components of the epistemology and practical philosophy of al-Ṭūsī, drawing out parallels between the three main areas of practical philosophy, namely ethics, household management, and politics.

The research project is divided into three parts. Part one focuses on the epistemological programme that, in al-Ṭūsī's view, should precede the analysis of problems of philosophy and science. In situating al-Ṭūsī's philosophy methodologically and epistemologically, I aim to understand the development of his practical philosophy from a non-linear model of development, where several epistemic sources collaborate to form a hybrid yet coherent system of practical philosophy. Part two studies al-Ṭūsī's practical philosophy. It presents a comprehensive analysis of his theoretical innovations in order to understand his method in approaching practical philosophy. In examining al-Ṭūsī's philosophical positions, I focus primarily on areas where his epistemology is applied practically, namely ethics, political ruling, education, and aesthetics. Part three represents my attempt to construct al-Ṭūsī's value theory after analyzing the fundamental notions of Islamic practical philosophy as presented by Miskawayh (d. 421/1030), Ibn Sīnā (d. 427/1037) and al-Ṭūsī, and understanding it in light of Islamic philosophical and religious epistemologies. In doing so, I examine, through a "Ṭūsīan" lens, the studied philosophical-religious system that presents God as the source of value, being the ultimate good and its ultimate source.

Over the span of my fellowship at OIB, I worked on part one of my research project, investigating al-Ṭūsī's epistemology, especially that which is related to his practical philosophy. I studied the organization of al-Ṭūsī's philosophical programme and argue that it is based on an approach which aims at preserving and developing the standard ordering of the Aristotelian classification of sciences. I further examined the extent to which al-Ṭūsī was able to reformulate Avicennism and subordinate it to a more full Aristotelian scientific scheme. This helped reveal how al-Ṭūsī's unique philosophical system is at once a methodological reflection of a modified Aristotelian philosophical project, and a conception of the world, in which rational reigns supreme. This further clarified the epistemic relativism of al-Ṭūsī, noting how he was able to use different epistemologies (philosophical and religious) interchangeably within the framework of practical philosophy.



From Naṣīr al-Dīn  
al-Ṭūsī's masterpiece  
*Akhlāq-i nāṣirī*  
(The Nasirean Ethics).  
School courtyard with  
boys reading and writing.  
Mughal period, circa  
1595 CE.

©MANUSCRIPT ATELIER,  
AKHLĀQ-I NĀṢIRĪ, LAHORE,  
PICTURE: TFOLIO



# The New and the Conventional in Pre-Modern Arabic Poetry //

## Metaphor as vantage point

ALFRED EL-KHOURY

OCTOBER 2020 – JUNE 2021

"Ancient vs New" is a ubiquitous pattern in literary histories. Or to put it the other way round: literary histories usually "proceed" by initiating a dynamic between ancient and new. The history of pre-modern Arabic poetry is no exception in this respect: the advent of the *muḥdathūn* (the new poets) at the end of the second/eighth century has widely been felt as a major turning point. It contributed to the formation of the opposition *qadīm* vs *muḥdath* (ancient vs new), which had various modulations and actors between the third/ninth and fifth/eleventh centuries. On the one hand, this opposition provided lasting incentives for the Arabic naqd tradition (approximately literary criticism). On the other hand, however, the establishment and sustainability of this opposition were themselves the product of widely held theoretical attitudes. The main question that this dialectic gives rise to is precisely what the experience of newness in literature consists of: What conveys to tradition its authority and conventionality? To what extent are "newness" and "conventionality" inherent features of literary artifacts? And which roles should be attributed to factors and circumstances that are extra-textual and/or extra-literary?

My doctoral project proposes to tackle these questions by using metaphor. Thus, the study of metaphor takes place at three distinct but interrelated levels:

First, as a conceptual mechanism, metaphor helps us understand and re-examine Arabic critical notions such as *isti'āra*, *majāz*, *sariqa*, *ma'nā* and *badī'*, to mention only a few ones. Second, as a twentieth century theoretical discourse, metaphor provides us with a toolbox and a vantage point to define our own historical and theoretical positioning. It links the problem of newness to other theoretical problems, such as context, interpretation and meaning production. Third, as a linguistic process, metaphor is a phenomenon that can be traced and studied in actual textual situations. In the present project, I take the war-metaphor as case study (precisely the metaphors involving the Arabic lexeme *ḥarb*) and proceed by looking at its patterns and configurations in various circumscribed poetry corpora belonging to the two aforementioned periods (i.e., *muḥdath* and *qadīm*).



Paul Klee. Untitled  
(Electrical Spook).  
Hand Puppet,  
painted plaster,  
socket and linen,  
9×6×5 cm, 1923.

©FELIX KLEE COLLECTION,  
BERN. PICTURE:  
OPEN SOURCE

# Queer Discourses and Queer Politics in Lebanese Independent Cinema

RITA BAROTTA

DECEMBER 2020 – AUGUST 2021

This thesis has multiple purposes, one of which is to shed light onto Lebanese independent cinematic production that tackles male same sex relations, from 1993 till 2021. No scholar nor academic writing has covered the subject of what queer individuals *produce*, but rather *who they are* and how their identities are built within the turbulent socio-cultural complex setting that is Lebanon.

A second purpose is to try to position the discourses those productions hold, within pro- or anti-Western discourses, as a part of the agenda set by local NGOs and the organizing strategies of Arab queer activism.

A third purpose is to draw a tentative model upon which to categorize these movies, between stand point movies and Queer movies, with an exhaustive analysis of movies that hold apparent queer politics.

What this thesis would like to achieve is to offer a new reading of how Lebanese queer men use their personal politics in their movies, how they disrupt and contest as many discourses set over them as subjects and how they negotiate their lives in Lebanon and outside of it.

Why movies about non-normative male sexualities, rather than women's or Trans'?

First, as a personal and epistemological choice. I do believe Lebanese queer men are misrepresented and fall under discourses that are not totally accurate.

Second, to try to disrupt two stereotypical discourses about Arab/Lebanese men: the first is them being patriarchs, religious fanatics, and terrorists, men who are pictured as violent, and the second is the picture of an "international gay modern man in a cosmopolite Beirut" as depicted by Western media outlets and many Orientalists' writings.

And third, because of the lack of readings/analyses of queer Lebanese productions, whether in academia or in the media – be it specialized publications or traditional ones. Bringing the discourses over non-normative male sexualities into the public sphere is a lacking queer strategy within the queer activism in Lebanon. This strategy is what I would like to contribute to implement.





Disrupting stereo-  
typical discourses  
about Lebanese  
Queer men, using  
movies as a tool.

©OPEN SOURCE

# Reflecting on Female Reflections

ENRICO BOCCACCINI

OCTOBER 2020 – JUNE 2021

In 1992, Leila Ahmed noted that there was an "absence of work attempting to conceptualize women's history and issues of gender in any Islamic society before the nineteenth century". Since then, a robust corpus of scholarly work has been produced on the issues of gender in Muslim communities, including those of the pre-modern period. Yet, as Julie Scott Meisami (2006) shows, the scholarship on issues of gender in Muslim communities continues to be hampered by a number of recurrent problems, most of which seem to be linked to the selection and usage of sources.

For one, scholarship on the social reality of women, their literary representation, and their participation in power in pre-modern Islamic societies often focuses exclusively on the representation of women in (sacred) canonical texts or other normative religious works. Other problems include assumptions on the absence of both women from processes of political power and female voices from literary discourses; a disregard for issues of genre, such as the impact that audience expectations and the authors' awareness of a genre tradition have on texts; assumptions of discursive homogeneity within societies; and the underestimation of the influence of the immediate socio-economic conditions on the production of texts. What thus seems to be needed, is a focused analysis of the discourse on women in one particular genre that gives space to discursive shifts and dissenting voices, recognises female agency in all its forms within male dominated spheres, and takes into consideration not only the genre's specifics, but also the context of each work that is analysed.

During my fellowship at OIB, I thus engaged in an analysis of the representation of women in one particular genre: *Mirrors for Princes*, that is, advice literature for rulers. Written and consumed exclusively within the homosocial circles of a male courtly elite, *Mirrors* represent a promising and easy to contextualise corpus for the study of the gendered discourses at the centres of power. The analysis of passages from around thirty Arabic and Persian *Mirrors*, written between the third/ninth and the eight/fourteenth centuries, that are either about women, feature female characters or are narrated/uttered by women, brings to light a host of female representations. Apart from being portrayed as seductive bodies or deceptive advisors, whose impact on men causes instability in the realm of male rational politics, female characters were summoned by the authors of Islamic *Mirrors* in a whole range of ways and to a number of different ends. Among the most surprising representations to emerge from these texts

are the powerful female rulers who serve as role models for their weaker male counterparts, the faithful wives and obedient slave-girls who support their male masters through their beauty and female cunning, and the non-courtly women who act as naive but honest informants on the needs of the weakest members of the realm whom they represent. As a result, my study shows how the authors of Islamic *Mirrors* used female representations to remind rulers of the virtues of ideal rulership and their responsibilities towards their subjects.



Unknown Artist.  
Sultan Sanjar and  
the Old Woman.  
Folio 17 from  
a Khamsa (Quintet)  
of Nizami of Ganja,  
A.H. 931/  
A.D. 1524–1525.

©METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM OF ART,  
NEW YORK CITY

# *Cooperations & Third-party Funding*

INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP // 2019–2022 "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950's–1991", within the sub-project, "Areas, Actors, and Knowledge Relationships" of the three-year research project "Knowledge Unbound: Internationalisation, networking, innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung", funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and in collaboration with the German Historical Institute (GHI) Warsaw and the GHI Moscow.

INTERNATIONAL STANDING WORKING GROUP // 2019–2022 "Medialization and Empowerment", part of the three-year research project "Knowledge Unbound: Internationalisation, networking, innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung", funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), led by German Historical Institute (GHI) London and in collaboration with the MWS India Branch Office, the OIB, and the GHI Washington.

RESEARCH PROJECT // 2020–2025 "Lebanon's Art World at Home and Abroad: Trajectories of artists and artworks in/from Lebanon since 1943" (LAWHA), funded by an ERC Starting Grant under agreement 850760 and hosted at the OIB. Ca'Foscari University of Venice is an additional beneficiary of LAWHA.

[CORDIS.EUROPA.EU/PROJECT/ID/850760](https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/850760)

RESEARCH PROJECT // SINCE 2020 "The Lebanese Intifada of October 17: Perspectives from within", OIB with Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung.





Guests talking  
in the Orient-  
Institut's entrance  
hall in the 60s.





# Researchers

# Research





## **Ahmed Abd-Elsalam**

Research Associate

AHMED ABD-ELSALAM joined the OIB in October 2021 as a research associate. He received his PhD in Islamic Studies from the Martin-Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg with the dissertation *Das Verhältnis des beduinischen zum islamischen Recht in sozialem und historischem Kontext*. His research focused on social and legal transformations in Muslim societies in past and modernity. Abd-Elsalam works at the OIB on social theological issues of Abrahamic interdependence in relation to marriage and divorce as human production of theological and religious knowledge. His project *Abrahamitic Interdependence: The relations of Jewish to Islamic concerning marriage and divorce* deals with legal issues of marriage and divorce in theory and praxis in the example of the Jewish communities in Egypt and Iraq in the first half of the last century and its relation to other trans-regional and trans-religious communities. The project is well networked with other research institutions in Egypt, Morocco, and Germany. Previously, Abd-Elsalam worked as a docent and researcher of Islamic Theology at the Centre for Islamic Theology at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (2012–2021) and as a visiting professor for Religious Comparative Studies at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (2019–2020). He has also taught at Al-Azhar University (2011–2012) and the Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck (2018–2021).



## **Abdallah El Ayache**

Doctoral Fellow

ABDALLAH EL AYACHE is a visiting doctoral fellow at OIB researching post-1980s Arabic translations of German Idealism. He holds an MA degree in Anthropology from the American University of Beirut. Previously, Abdallah has been a post-MA fellow under the Andrew W. Mellon Grant entitled *Extimacies: Critical theory from the Global South*, during which he did research on post-1967 Arab intellectual history. He has also served as a research assistant under the same grant and was responsible for leading a project entitled *Naqd*, compiling a database of modern Arab critical theory. Abdallah has published on the problem of translating "the subject" into Arabic in an edited volume entitled *The Marx Through Lacan Vocabulary*.



## ***Rita Barotta***

Doctoral Fellow  
Research Relief Fellow

RITA BAROTTA is pursuing her PhD at the Saint Joseph University of Beirut, majoring in Humanities (Option: Communication and Information). Her thesis subject is *Queer politics and Queer discourses in the Lebanese Independent Cinema*. She holds a master's degree in Journalism from Université Panthéon-Assas Paris II and a bachelor's degree in Written Press and International Agencies from the Lebanese University. She has a ten-year experience in higher education teaching and a twelve-year experience in Lebanese print and online media outlets. Her research interests are sexualities, gender, social constructs, and language.



## ***Rosy Beyhom***

Postdoctoral Fellow

ROSY BEYHOM is a visiting postdoctoral fellow at the OIB. She holds a PhD in Musicology (the Sciences of Music) from the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster. She is an active member of the CERMAA Research Centre, an international musicology hub based in Lebanon that promotes awareness via non-biased approaches to the analysis of music. She is a permanent co-editor of the NEMO-online peer-reviewed journal. Her current post-doctoral research emanates from many observations of lacunae in the history of Arabic music, noticed during the research undertaken for her doctoral dissertation. During her stay at the OIB, she will focus mainly on *al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* by Ibn Aybak al-Şafadī as an underestimated repository for musical matters and issues directly related to the history of music in the Arab world.





**Enrico  
Boccaccini**

Postdoctoral Fellow

ENRICO BOCCACCINI was a visiting post-doctoral fellow at the OIB from October 2020–June 2021. He received his PhD in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen with a dissertation on transcultural comparisons of mirrors for princes from Europe and the Middle East. For his dissertation, he was awarded the Christian Gottlob Heyne Award for the best dissertation submitted at the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Theology. He holds an MA degree in Persian Studies from the University of Leiden and a BA degree in Arabic and Persian Studies from the University of Cambridge. His current research focuses on the representation of women in pre-modern advice literature for rulers. His publications include the monograph *Reflecting Mirrors, East and West: Transcultural comparisons of advice literature for rulers (8th-13th century)* (Brill: Leiden, 2021) and an article on recurring themes in *Mirrors for Princes* (in *Knowledge and Education in Classical Islam*, ed. S. Günther, Brill: Leiden, 2020).



**Zachary  
Cuyler**

Doctoral Fellow

ZACHARY CUYLER is a PhD candidate at New York University. His dissertation examines how transnational infrastructures of oil shaped the political economy, built environment, and national scale of Lebanon from the 1920s through the 1970s. His work has appeared in *Historical Materialism*, the *Arab Studies Journal*, *Middle East Report*, and *Labor History*.



**Sarah  
El Bulbeisi**

Research Associate

SARAH EL BULBEISI joined the OIB in November 2019 after completing her PhD at the Institute for Near and Middle East Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU), Germany. Before joining the OIB, she coordinated the DAAD project *Violence, Forced Migration and Exile: Trauma in the Arab World and in Germany*, a higher education dialogue between Palestinian and Lebanese universities as well as with the LMU. Prior to that, she worked as a lecturer and research associate at the Institute for Near and Middle East Studies at the LMU. Her PhD thesis *Taboo, Trauma and Identity: Subject constructions of Palestinians in Germany and Switzerland, 1960 to 2015* draws on conversations, life stories and participant observation and explores the tension between the (family) histories of first and second generation Palestinians, which are characterized by the experience of expulsion and dispossession, and the reshaping of this experience in the Western European representation of the so called Middle East conflict. Sarah El Bulbeisi's postdoc research at the OIB revolves around the interrelations between systemic violence and gendered subjectivities as well as family and gender relations in Lebanon.



**Alfred  
el-Khoury**

Doctoral Fellow

ALFRED EL-KHOURY is a PhD candidate in the Department of Arabic Studies at the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg. He did his previous studies at the Lebanese University (BA, 2013) and the American University of Beirut (MA, 2015). His research focuses mainly on Arabic poetry, both modern and premodern, with a particular interest in questions of innovation, canonisation and interpretation. His other research interests include literary theory and its applicability across literary and critical traditions, Arabic surrealism and avant-gardist trends in Arabic literature. El-Khoury taught courses on Arabic poetry and literature as well as Arabic as a Foreign Language at the American University of Beirut, the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, and the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. He was editorial assistant for *Al-Abhath* journal (2015–2018) and translator at the Arabic edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique* (2010–2013).



## *Karim El Taki*

Doctoral Fellow

KARIM EL TAKI is a PhD candidate in Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge. His research project explores the tension between sovereignty and hierarchy in the modern international. In his doctoral thesis, he studies sovereigntism with an empirical focus on Egypt (2013–2015) and Qatar (2017–2021). During the course of his PhD, Karim has conducted fieldwork in Doha and Washington DC as a visiting doctoral student at Georgetown University Qatar and a visiting scholar at The George Washington University. He has also been a doctoral fellow at the OIB. Karim holds a bachelor's degree in Social Sciences and Middle Eastern Studies and a research master's degree in International Relations from Sciences Po Paris.



## *Fatih Ermiş*

Interim Deputy Director

FATİH ERMIŞ joined the OIB in 2018. 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 postdoctoral associate at the Centre for Islamic Theology at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. His main research interest is pre-modern Islamic intellectual history, with a particular focus on intellectual endeavours in the 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-ı 'alā'ī*, written in Damascus by the Ottoman scholar Kınālîzāde 'Alî Çelebî (1510–1572).



## ***Zeina Fathallah***

Postdoctoral Fellow  
Research Relief Fellow

ZEINA FATHALLAH completed her PhD in Sociology in 2011 at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. Her research focused on gender and sexuality in Lebanon. Her dissertation, *Moral Work and Construction of Abortion Networks: Health and sexuality of women in Lebanon*, explored, using both sociological and ethnographic approaches, how women who seek an abortion live this experience and create a space of autonomy in a clandestine context. She also examined the experiences of other actors (partners, physicians, midwives, pharmacists, and allies) and their moral role in situations of conflict. She holds a Diplôme d'Études Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS) in Economics and Health Systems Management from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and a Master of Public Health, concentration in Health Education, from San Jose State University, USA. She has worked as a social specialist in several development projects (UNDP and World Bank assisted projects) and taught as a lecturer at the American University of Beirut.



## ***Pierre France***

Research Associate

PIERRE FRANCE joined the OIB in 2020 as a research associate. A PhD candidate (defence in waiting) in Political Science at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, his doctoral research focuses on the process of the Lebanese State's survival throughout the Lebanese war (1975–1990). It led him to study the Lebanese State in its material and human forms, with a specific attention to several public institutions' and their civil servants' histories. This research resulted also in a broad revisit of the Lebanese war based on comparative and historical sociology. Aside of his PhD, Pierre co-wrote a book with Prof Antoine Vauchez in 2017, published in a revised English edition in 2021 (Cornell) on the phenomenon of top French civil servants becoming lawyers, a contribution to the study of the blurring lines between public and private social spheres in contemporary France. He has been also a full-time junior lecturer in Political Science at Sciences Po Aix (2016–2018).



## ***Louise Gallorini***

Doctoral Fellow  
Research Relief Fellow

LOUISE GALLORINI holds a PhD from the Arabic and Near Eastern Languages Department of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. She was able to complete her dissertation thanks to OIB's Relief Fellowship 2020, and she successfully defended her dissertation in April 2021. Before that, she studied a double BA in Cultural Anthropology and Arabic Literature at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 (France), and a MA on Modern Arabic Literature at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO) in Paris, focusing on contemporary Arabic literature from Lebanon and the Arabian Peninsula. These included a study year in the University of Yarmouk (Jordan), and an intensive linguistic training at the Institut Français du Proche-Orient in Beirut. The subject of her master's thesis was the symbolic dimension of the characters in Lebanese author Rasha el-Ameer's novel *Judgment Day* (yawm al-dīn).



## ***Mennatullah Hendawy***

Doctoral Fellow

MENNATULLAH HENDAWY is an interdisciplinary urban planner working on the intersection of cities and technology towards justice driven interactions. She received her PhD in Planning Building Environment from Technische Universität Berlin in Germany. In 2015, before pursuing her doctorate studies, Mennatullah completed an MSc in Integrated Urbanism and Sustainable Design with a focus on Urban Policies at the Universität Stuttgart. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering from Ain Shams University in Cairo, Department of Urban Planning and Design. Mennatullah was a research associate at the Chair of Urban Design, Technische Universität Berlin. Since 2017, Mennatullah is a visiting researcher at the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space in Erkner, Germany, and since 2012 she is a faculty member at the Department of Urban Planning and Design in Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt. Hendawy is co-founder of the Researchers' HUB, and Cairo Urban AI, a project working on exploring the potentials of using artificial intelligence to develop just and sustainable cities.





## *Hussein Ibrahim*

Doctoral Fellow

HUSSEIN IBRAHIM is a PhD candidate in Philosophy at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München. His dissertation project concerns practical philosophy and epistemology in the Islamic East with a special focus on Miskawayh (d. 421/1030), Ibn Sīnā (d. 427/1037), and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274). Hussein has been a visiting doctoral fellow at the OIB since September 2021. He holds an MA in Islamic Studies from McGill University with an extended thesis entitled *The Life and Intellectual Output of Muḥammad Muḥsin al-Fayḍal-Kāshānī (1007/1598–1091/1680)* and an MA in Philosophy from the American University of Beirut with an extended thesis entitled *Toward a Transcendent Political Philosophy: A philosophical study of Rūḥullāh al-Khumaynī's theory of wilāyat al-faqīh*. At the undergraduate level, Hussein studied Arabic Language and Literature, Physics, Theology, and Political Science and Administration. Hussein has taught courses in Philosophy, Religion, History, and Arabic Language in the universities and communities of Beirut and Montréal. He previously worked as a translator and research assistant for the project entitled *Women's War Stories: Building an archive of women and the Lebanese civil war* at McGill University, among other research projects. For the past five years, Hussein has served as an academic advisor for schools and institutions. His professional experience spans philosophy of education and educational fields in the Islamic East and North America, particularly in leadership, capacity-building, and student activism.



## *Jakub Jajcay*

Doctoral Fellow

JAKUB JAJCAY is a PhD student at the Department of History and Archaeology of the American University of Beirut. His research focuses on the modern history of Lebanon, specifically on the history of the Lebanese city of Saida in the decades leading up to the Lebanese civil war. In his research, Jakub investigates the causes of the civil war on the local level. Thereby he focuses on the processes of politicization and radicalization of individuals. Jakub also works as a researcher with Fighters for Peace, a non-governmental organization that aims to educate young Lebanese about the history of the civil war and counteract discourses of violence.



## *Chloe Kattar*

Doctoral Fellow

CHLOE KATTAR is a historian of the modern Middle East, interested in the global movement and exchange of ideas between the Arab-speaking world and Western societies, and an expert of the Lebanese civil war (1975–1990). She is a research fellow in History at Darwin College, where she also acts as the fellow librarian. In 2021–2022, she is also a postdoctoral fellow of Europe in the Middle East (EUME) at the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin.



## *Hratch Kestenian*

Doctoral Fellow  
Research Relief Fellow

HRATCH KESTENIAN has studied Middle Eastern History (BA/MA) at the American University of Beirut. His master's thesis was entitled *A Portrait of Armenian Student Life at the Syrian Protestant College: 1885–1918*. He is currently a PhD candidate in History at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. His dissertation explores how tuberculosis became a "social disease" in the Ottoman Empire during the long nineteenth century. It explores the different meanings of disease and medicine and their impact on Ottoman society. Through the story of tuberculosis, Kestenian is concerned with revealing how tuberculosis influenced the construction of the Ottoman social body through its pathologizing of gender, class, race, and economic status of the individual body. Kestenian has conducted archival research in Turkey, Armenia, and Lebanon, and was an affiliated researcher at OIB.



## Ziad Kiblawi

Doctoral Fellow  
Research Relief Fellow

ZIAD KIBLAWI is pursuing his Dr Phil in History at the University of Oxford. He is working on an intellectual history of Arabic social and critical theory. He holds degrees in Sociology and Anthropology from the American University of Beirut. His extended MA thesis entitled *Reading, Repeating, and Working Through: On Mahdi Amil's theoretical practice* examined modernist intellectual modes of critique and systematic conceptual and theoretical formulations during the second half of the twentieth century. Parts of this research project have been presented in seminars and conferences, including the *Arab Council for the Social Sciences, Extimacies: Critical Theory from the Global South, and Historical Materialism Athens*. His most recent publications are Mahdi Amel on Edward Said: Mechanisms of expansion in the reproduction of knowledge and capital and a five-chapter translation of Mahdi Amel's *Hal al-qalb li-l-sharq wa-l-'aql li-l-gharb? Marx fi istishraq Edward Said* (Is the Heart for the East and Reason for the West? On Marx in Edward Said's Orientalism), both forthcoming in *Critical Times* 4 (3). His research interests include the historiography of modern intellectual thought and modern art in the Middle East, symptomatic readings and immanent critique practices in the Arabic-speaking world, and translations of philosophical systems into Arabic.



## Nadia von Maltzahn

Research Associate

NADIA VON MALTZAHN is the principal investigator of the European Research Council-funded project *Lebanon's Art World at Home and Abroad* (LAWHA), which started in October 2020. She joined the OIB in 2013, first as a research associate (2013–2018) before being appointed deputy director (2018–2020, partly on parental leave). She holds a Dr phil and a MSt in Modern Middle Eastern Studies from St Antony's College, Oxford, and a BA Honours in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies from King's College, Cambridge. Her research interests include cultural policies, artistic practices, and the circulation of knowledge. Nadia is the author of *The Syria-Iran Axis: Cultural diplomacy and international relations in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013/2015), and a number of edited volumes such as *The Art Salon in the Arab Region: Politics of taste-making* (Beirut: Orient-Institut Beirut, 2018), co-edited with Monique Bellan. Her works have been published in a number of journals including *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, *Quaderni storici*, *Manazir*, *Middle East Topics & Arguments*, and the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. Nadia is formally on maternity leave since the end of April 2021 until May 2022.



**Ennio  
Napolitano**

Postdoctoral Fellow

ENNIO NAPOLITANO is a visiting postdoctoral fellow at the OIB. He received his PhD in Islamic Art and Archaeology from the Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg with a dissertation on Arabic inscriptions and pseudo-inscriptions in Italian art, funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation. He holds an MA degree in Islamic Studies and a BA degree in Trans-cultural Studies, both from the University of Naples "L'Orientale". Since 2016, he is a member of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants (UEAI). His current research focuses on the cross-cultural dynamics of Arabic scripts in border areas, especially in their disguised form. His publications include articles on recurring themes concerning the interpretation of Arabic inscriptions (Napolitano, E. and V. Grassi: Verses Carved in Stone. Islamic Funerary Inscriptions from the Northern Yemen. In: Straface, A., C. De Angelo, A. Manzo (EDS.). *Labor limae. Atti in onore di Carmela Baffioni*, (2), Napoli: Università Degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", pp. 395-393, 2017) and the transmission of Arabic and pseudo-Arabic epigraphic patterns in the European medieval cultural contexts, in painting, sculpture, and ceramics (The transfer of Arabic inscriptions In Italian Gothic and Renaissance painting. A new approach. In A. Pellitteri, N. Elsakaan, M.G. Sciortino & D. Sicari (EDS.), *Re-defining a Space of Encounter. Islam and Mediterranean: Identity, Alterity and Interactions. Proceedings of the 28th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, Palermo 2016, in *Orientalia Lovanensia Analecta*, Peeters Publishers. Leuven, pp. 337–356).



**Anna Simone  
Reumert**

Doctoral Fellow

ANNA SIMONE REUMERT is a PhD Candidate in Social Anthropology at Columbia University. She was a doctoral fellow at the OIB in 2020–2021. Her doctoral project holds the title *After Labor, Future Returns: Sudanese migrants between Lebanon's crisis and revolution*. Reumert holds an MA degree in Near Eastern Studies from New York University, and BA degrees in Global Studies and in Social Anthropology from the School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg. Her work has been published in *Mashriq&Mahjar*, *MERIP*, *Jadaliyya*, *Warscapes*, *Ajam Media Collective*, and *Borderlines-CSSAAME*. Reumert has been involved with migrant rights activism in Lebanon, New York, and Denmark, including as a volunteer with the Anti-Racism Movement and with International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP).



***Birgit Schäbler***

Director



***Sara Tafakori***

Postdoctoral Fellow

BIRGIT SCHÄBLER has been director of the Orient-Institut since October 2017. Since 2002 she holds the (only) Chair of Middle East History in Germany, at Erfurt University from which she is on leave. Between 1996 and 2002 she held fellowships and positions at Duke and Harvard Universities and was a professor of Middle East History in Georgia. She studied History, Islamic Studies and Political Science at the universities of Würzburg, Berkeley and Erlangen where she received her PhD. She founded the first transregional research platform in Germany in 2008 and was a fellow at Max-Weber-Kolleg. She served on various scientific boards and as an evaluator for numerous academic founding agencies, as well as with international accreditation agencies. Her research interests combine history and anthropology, focusing on the modern history of the Levant (Bilād al-Shām). Her last book analyzes nineteenth-century reform movements in Islam in their entanglement with Europe. Her research interests currently include the relations between Area History and Global History, between the Middle East, Islam, and Europe, as well as the history of Orientalism and Oriental Studies. She heads the international research group "Relations in the Ideospace: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s–1991", funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research.

SARA TAFAKORI'S research interests include feminist theory, media and critical race theory, affect and emotion studies, national identity, and popular culture, with a particular focus on the mediation of justice and human rights. Before joining the School of Media and Communication at the University of Leeds, she was a visiting fellow and guest teacher at the Centre for Media and Communication at the London School of Economics, holding a joint position as a 2020–2021 Max Weber Stiftung postdoctoral fellow. She was previously 2019–2020 a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Edinburgh and also held a teaching fellowship at the School of Oriental and African Studies. She completed her PhD at the University of Manchester. Her PhD explored the affective mediation of crisis through the lens of critical race and feminist theory, focusing on the mediation of Iran's economic sanctions on Persian Facebook. Her recent research has explored problematics of constructing feminist solidarity through engaging with critical race and postcolonial critiques of popular feminisms; her article addressing these issues, published in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, received the 2021 Catharine Stimpson Prize for excellence in feminist scholarship. The article explores how Iranian digital feminism, as part of global south feminism, navigates master narratives of globalism vs localism through an expansive politics of recognition, a solidarity framework that neither transcends nor fetishises the national, but is based on a dialogue of locales.





## *Christian Thuselt*

Research Associate

CHRISTIAN THUSELT joined the OIB in October 2021 as a research associate and is responsible for the in-house production of the *Beiruter Texte und Studien (BTS)*. He holds an MA from Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen and received his PhD in Social Sciences from Roskilde University with a study on Lebanese political parties as expressions of global modernity. His research interests have focused on modernity as a global asymmetric reference and, in relation to that, political self-locations as part of legitimating strategies. From 2009 till 2021 he worked at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, most recently as an assistant professor at the Institute of Political Science. His research at the OIB focuses on Iraqi statehood as part of a discourse on legitimacy.



## *Thomas Würtz*

Vice Director

THOMAS WÜRTZ joined the OIB in May 2021. His research interests lie primarily in the areas of the Koran and Koranic exegesis as well as Koranic translations and the history of theology, and in the Muslim view of the Crusades. He wrote his doctoral thesis on the history of Islamic theology at the Universität Zürich. The thesis is published under the title *Islamic Theology in the Fourteenth Century: Doctrine of resurrection, theory of action and conceptions of creation in the work of Sa'ad al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī*. He holds a master's degree in Islamic studies from Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg. In 2015, he taught as a guest lecturer at Freie Universität Berlin on the history of ideas in Islam and before this he was a research assistant at Universität Bern and Aarhus University. During the years from 2006 to 2014, he completed several research trips to Al-Azhar University in Egypt and to several religious and cultural institutions in Pakistan. For several years, he worked as an academic advisor at the Katholische Akademie in Berlin in the fields of Islam and the Middle East as well as Christian-Muslim dialogue. There, he was in charge of the reconciliation project *Recalled Future* ([www.erinnerte-zukunft.de](http://www.erinnerte-zukunft.de)). His project at OIB focusses on the Biblical quotations in the Koranic commentary of Ibrahīm al-Biqā'ī.

# *Affiliated Researchers and their Projects*

**AGNES RAMEDER** University of Zurich

*Picturing the (Un)Dead: Reflections and Deconstructions of Lebanese Martyr Posters  
in Contemporary Art-Practices* // SEPTEMBER 2020 – JUNE 2022

**NAY EL RAHI** Independent researcher

*Sexual Harassment against Women in Lebanon* // DECEMBER 2020 – JUNE 2021

**MARKUS SCHMITZ** Lebanese University

*DAAD long-term lecturer* // SINCE MAY 2021

Researchers

BEIRUTER TEXTE UND STUDIEN · BAND 1

DER ARABISCHE DIALEKT  
VON BIŠMIZZĪN

VOLKSTÜMLICHE TEXTE AUS EINEM  
LIBANESISCHEN DORF MIT GRUNDZÜGEN  
DER LAUT- UND FORMENLEHRE

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON  
MICHEL JIHA

BEIRUT 1964  
IN KOMMISSION BEI FRANZ STEINER VERLAG · WIESBADEN

First edition of the  
Orient-Institut's  
publication series  
*Beiruter Texte  
und Studien*, 1964  
by Michel Jiha.

# Publications

**Bibliotheca Islamica** 106

**Beiruter Texte und Studien** 110

**Orient-Institut Studies** 113

**Publications of the Researchers** 115

# *Bibliotheca Islamica*



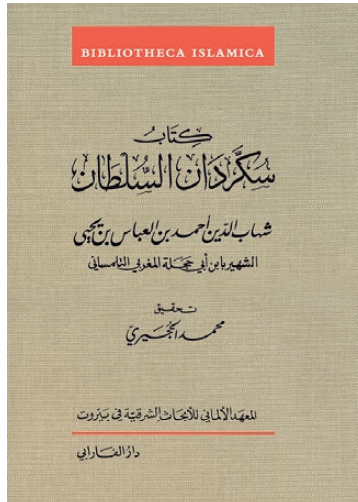
*Bibliotheca Islamica* (BI) is the OIB's platform for the critical edition of mainly Arabic (but also Persian and Turkish) manuscripts. The series dates back to 1929 when Hellmut Ritter edited the *Kitāb maqālāt al-islamiyyīn wa-iḥtilāf al-muṣallīn* of Abū I-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Aṣ'arī, a seminal text on dogmatic 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 thirty-volume biographical lexicon *Kitāb al-wāfī bi-l-wafayāt* (BI 6) by Ṣalāh al-Dīn Ḥalīl 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 PDF format from the OIB's website via the links to the MENAdoc repository, hosted by the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt in Halle.

In 2021 we published *Sukkardān as-Sultān* by Ibn Abī Ḥaḡala al- (BI 48), the notebook (*Ayyām*) of the Aleppan weaver Kamāl ad-Dīn (BI 59), and *Šuḡūr aq-ḡahab* by Ibn Arfa' Ra's (BI 62).

The publication team (academic editor Barraḡ Zakariya, publication consultant Bettina Fischer-Genz and research associates Fatih Ermiş and Abdallah Soufan) and the Institute's Director Birgit Schäbler also worked on an Arabic edition of her book *Moderne Muslime. Ernest Renan und die Geschichte der ersten Islamdebatte 1883* with the Arabic title *Muslimūn ḥidāṭūn: al-Afḡānī wa-Kamāl Nāmiq wa-Bāyazituf yaruddūn'alā Rīnān* which is going to be published in 2022.





Beirut, De Gruyter Verlag /  
Dār al-Farābī, 2021  
320 pp. Arabic  
ISBN: 9783110779271

The author of the *Sukkardān* is Šihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. Yahyā at-Tilmsānī, known as Ibn Abī Ḥaḡala, the distinguished Sufi writer and poet. He was an important figure of the poetic scene in the late Mamluk era and became the favourite poet at the court of Sulṭān Ḥasan b. Muḥammad bin Qalāwūn after he wrote many books for him, including the *Sukkardān as-Sulṭān*.

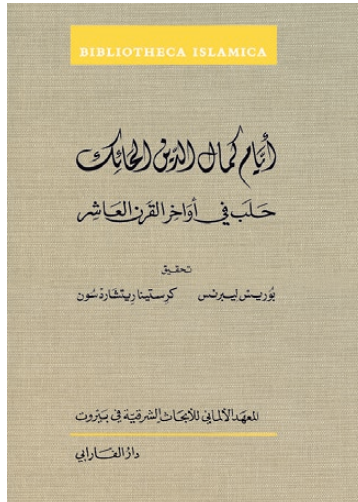
The book is structured around two themes about the number "seven". The first four chapters discuss its relationship and superiority to other numbers. The second theme illustrates the various connections between the number "seven" and the Sulṭān.

The book contains a large number of narrations and brilliant stories which the author himself considers to be elegant compositions and therefore suitable for their royal audience.

This wonderful intellectual journey can be considered a mirror of the cultural and literary sphere of the reign of Sulṭān Ḥasan and the late Mamluk period in Egypt and the Levant.

**Ayyām Kamāl ad-Dīn al-Ḥā'ik: Ḥalab fī awāḥir al-qarn al-'āšir (The Notebook of Kamāl ad-Dīn the Weaver: Aleppine notes from the end of the sixteenth century)**

Edited by Boris Liebrecht / Kristina Richardson

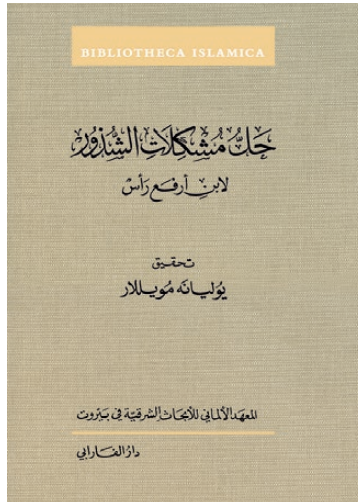


Beirut, De Gruyter Verlag /  
Dār al-Farābī, 2021  
140 pp. Arabic, 100 pp. English  
ISBN: 9783110688870 / 9786144850886  
e-ISBN: 9783110688924

At the end of the tenth/sixteenth century in Aleppo, a weaver, cloth merchant, and poet named Kamāl ad-Dīn would regularly take his time to fill blank pages with his varied observations. But it was not a linear narrative he produced, nor was it a diary. Rather, he scribbled down accounts on the political and social life of his city and the region; the climate; economic developments; his craft; poetry, much of it his own; anecdotes; reading excerpts; obituaries of dignitaries and friends; history. In doing so, Kamāl ad-Dīn upends assumptions about literary agency, faith, and class in the Ottoman Arab provinces and thus gives us insights rarely seen in other contemporary works.

Only a fragment of what once must have been a sizeable work survives, now preserved in the Forschungsbibliothek Schloss Friedenstein in Gotha under the shelfmark MS orient. A 114. It represents the earliest known Arabic notebook of an artisan or merchant.

Edited by Juliane Müller



Beirut, De Gruyter Verlag /  
Dār al-Farābī, 2021  
ISBN: 9783110779288

The alchemist Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Anṣārī al-Andalusī, known as Ibn Arfa' Ra's (fl. sixth/twelfth century) is the author of *Šudūr aḍ-ḍaḥab* (The Splinters of Gold), one of the most famous poetry collections of Arabic alchemy, which has been the object of no less than thirteen commentaries. The numerous manuscripts of *Šudūr aḍ-ḍaḥab* and its commentaries have been read and copied for more than 700 years in various parts of the Islamicate world, from Morocco to India. The very first commentary on *Šudūr aḍ-ḍaḥab* was composed by the author Ibn Arfa' Ra's himself. It was transmitted by his disciple Abū l-Qāsim Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī under the title *Kitāb ḥall muškilāt aš-šudūr* (The Unraveling of the Difficulties of 'The Splinters') and is extant in at least thirty-one manuscripts, of which twenty-seven have been used for this critical edition. This book provides the first edition of *Kitāb ḥall muškilāt aš-šudūr* along with an Arabic-English glossary of its alchemical terminology.

The editor DR JULIANE MÜLLER is a research associate at the Department of Oriental and Islamic Studies of Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen.

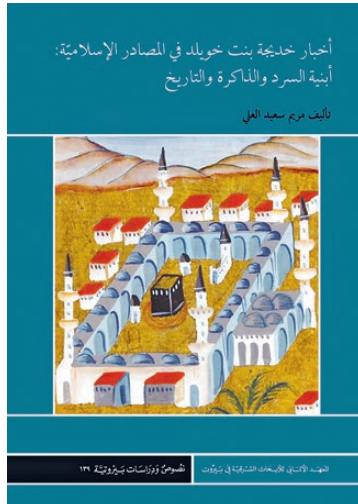
# *Beiruter Texte und Studien*



*Beiruter Texte und Studien* (BTS) is the OIB's peer-reviewed book series for research on the historic and contemporary Middle East. Since its inception in 1964, the series has published around 140 books and has served as a platform for innovative studies. With an established focus on Arabic language and literature, the Levant, and the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, BTS comprises a broad spectrum of themes, methods and periods within the wider region. It documents the rich and diverse history of Middle Eastern Studies and encourages advancements in the field. The series publishes monograph studies, OIB conference proceedings, and other collective volumes in German, English, Arabic and French.

**Akhbār Khadīja Bint Khuwaylid fī-l-Maṣādir al-Islāmiyya: Abniyyat al-sard wa-l-dhākira wa-l-tārīkh** (The Reports of Khadīja bt. Khuwaylid in Islamic Sources: Structures of narration, memory, and history)

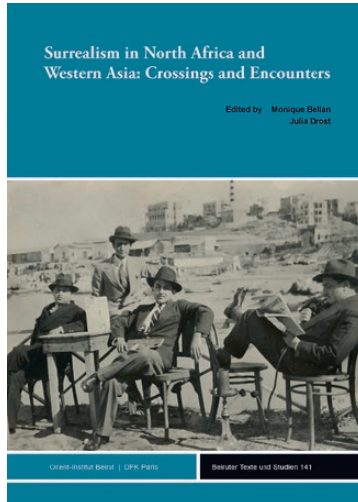
Edited by Mariam El-Ali



Würzburg, Ergon Verlag, 2021  
297 pp. Arabic  
ISBN: 9783956507731

This volume offers an extensive philological study of the reports (*akhbār*) featuring Khadīja bt. Khuwaylid (d. 3 B.H./619 A.D.) in the Arabic Islamic sources of various genres. Those reports are relatively limited when compared with the abundant reports featuring other prominent Islamic figures such as Fāṭima (d. 11/632) or 'Ā'isha (d. 58/687), or Abū Bakr (d. 13/634), or 'Alī (d. 40/661). Examining the mentioned reports in detail, the publication shows that they are affected by the books that encompass them. Following a narratological literal approach, this publication treats the collected reports as narrative units recurrently narrativized, conveyed, and employed. This depends on their appearance in different plots, such as *sīra*, biographical dictionaries, *ḥadīth* collections, *tafsīr* compilations, and *adab* literature.





Würzburg, Ergon Verlag, 2021  
ISBN: 9783956508585

This volume discusses surrealism in literature and art in Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey between the 1930s and 1980s. Surrealism emerged as a movement in art and literature in Europe in the 1920s and quickly spread across the globe. It only led to a few movements or official groups in the regions discussed here and was mainly received in poetry rather than in the arts. However, surrealism played a role, albeit a more discrete and individualistic one. The volume aims at drawing a clearer picture of the sporadic resonances of surrealism in these regions thereby contributing to the history of both transmodernism and surrealism. Methodologically, it seeks to explore connections, encounters, and exchanges on individual, institutional, and spiritual levels. A new look at global surrealism needs to consider these micro-level manifestations when addressing questions such as when, where, and what surrealism was. The answer might reveal that surrealism was far more widespread than presumed until now.

# ***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](http://perspectivia.net). The digital format facilitates the integration of images and diverse audio-visual material. Its open-access policy makes OIS particularly accessible.

DOI (English): 10.25360/01202100004  
DOI (Arabic): 10.25360/01202100005  
ISSN: 21943400

The publication *Insights into Cultural Policies in Lebanon* aims to create awareness about cultural policies and initiate debates on the subject. Cultural policy research is a new field in Lebanon, and access to data is limited. The volume aims to give initial insights and encourage further research on the frameworks guiding the cultural sector in Lebanon. It has been funded by *Culture Resource* within its support to national working groups on cultural policies in the Arab region. It presents three main themes, namely legal frameworks for culture (by Nayla Geagea), public financing of culture (by Célia Hassani) and heritage policies (by Katarzyna Puzon). It is available in both English and Arabic.

HANANE HAJJ ALI is an artist, activist, researcher, consultant, and trainer. Besides her renowned activity as an actress, writer, and director since 1978, Hanane Hajj Ali is a teacher in the department Theatrical Studies/Master program at IESAV-Saint Joseph University.

NADIA VON MALTZAHN is a researcher at the OIB and Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded research project LAWHA.

# *Publications of the Researchers*



Researchers

Publications

## RITA BAROTTA

**Women and Ecology. Bringing together feminist and environmental/ecological frameworks and movements.**  
Beirut: The Knowledge Workshop, 2022.

## ROSY BEYHOM

**A contribution to the Liber Amicorum volume.**

*Nemo-Online, Liber Amicorum* (Special Issue "In Memoriam Katy Romanou"), 2021–2022.

[nemo-online.org/archives/1846](http://nemo-online.org/archives/1846)

**George Dimitri Sawa. Ḥāwī l-Funūn wa salwat al-Maḥzūn. Annotated translation and commentary.**

*Nemo-Online*, (10), Leiden: Brill, 2021.

[review]

## ENRICO BOCCACCINI

**Reflecting Mirrors, East and West: Transcultural comparisons of advice literature for rulers (8th–13th Century).**

*Islamic History and Civilization*, (189), Leiden: Brill, 2022.

[brill.com/view/title/61143](http://brill.com/view/title/61143)

## SARAH EL BULBEISI

**Conference report to Neighborliness in Global Perspective. (12–14 December 2019, Cairo). *H-Soz-Kult*, 2021**

## ALFRED EL-KHOURY

**Unsī al-Ḥājj's Surrealist Encounters.**

In: Monique Bellan and Julia Drost (EDS.). *Surrealism in North Africa and Western Asia: Crossings and encounters. Beirut: Texte und Studien*, (141). Beirut: Orient-Institut Beirut, DFK Paris, pp. 175-196.

## FATİH ERMIŞ

**Gülşen-i Râz: Tercüme ve Şerh.**  
Istanbul: Ketebe Yayınları, 2021.

**İnal, Onur and Yavuz Köse. Seeds of Power. Explorations in Ottoman environmental history. *H-Soz-Kult*.** [review]

[www.hsozkult.de/review/id/reb-29034?](http://www.hsozkult.de/review/id/reb-29034?title=o-inal-u-a-hrsg-seeds-of-power)

[title=o-inal-u-a-hrsg-seeds-of-power](http://www.hsozkult.de/review/id/reb-29034?title=o-inal-u-a-hrsg-seeds-of-power)

## PIERRE FRANCE

WITH ANTOINE VAUCHEZ

**The Neoliberal Republic: Corporate lawyers, statecraft, and the making of public-private France. *Corpus Juris: The Humanities in Politics and Law*.**  
Cornell University Press, 2021.

**From Underpaid Minions to Cultural Ambassadors: The changing status of the Usherette 19th–21st centuries.**

In: Martine Stirling and Delphine Sangu (EDS.). *Working Women, 1800–2017: A never-ending (r)evolution*. Cambridge

Scholars Publishing, 2021.

## LOUISE GALLORINI

**Fitzroy Morrissey. Sufism and the Perfect human: From Ibn 'Arabī to al-Jīlī.**

*Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*, (70), Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. [review]

## MENNATULLAH HENDAWY

WITH PROF PATSY HEALY (GUEST ED.)

**[In]visibilities: The academic city versus ordinary cities – mediatizing planning knowledge in Egyptian universities.**  
(Special Issue "ARCPLAN"), 2021.

**How to structure a cumulative dissertation: Five strategies. *Elephant in the Lab*, 2021.**

[elephantinthelab.org/how-to-structure-a-cumulative-dissertation-five-strategies/](http://elephantinthelab.org/how-to-structure-a-cumulative-dissertation-five-strategies/)

WITH CHANDRIMA MUKHOPADHYAY,  
CHIARA BELINGARDI AND GIUSY PAPPAR-  
ALDO (EDS.)

**Special issue "Planning Practices and  
Theories from the Global South".**

Dortmund: Association of European School  
of Planning-Young Academic Network, 2021.

**NADIA VON MALTZAHN**

WITH HANANE HAJJ ALI

**Insights into Cultural Policies in Lebanon.**  
*Orient-Institut Studies*, (6). Beirut: Orient-  
Institut Beirut, 2021.

**Débats sur les politiques culturelles au  
Liban. Incertains Regards**, (3), 2021

**BIRGIT SCHÄBLER**

**Geschichtswissenschaft in der arabischen  
Welt: Der Libanon.** *VHD-Journal*, Der Nahe  
Osten als historischer Raum (10), 2021.

WITH ANNIKA BROCKSCHMIDT  
(MODERATOR)

**Transnationaler Wissensaustausch:  
Arabische Studierende in der Sowjetunion  
und der DDR.** Audio-Podcast, (4),  
In: *Wissen entgrenzen*. Max-Weber Stiftung,  
17 December 2021.

[open.spotify.com/episode/72VYsq3pawOKO-  
6JtjBWmcE?si=62ocYzvnRWql3R1SYkVLEg](https://open.spotify.com/episode/72VYsq3pawOKO-6JtjBWmcE?si=62ocYzvnRWql3R1SYkVLEg)

**Die Rückkehr der arabischen Studierenden:  
Nachwirkungen des transnationalen  
Wissensaustauschs** Audio-Podcast, (5),  
In: *Wissen entgrenzen*. Max-Weber Stiftung,  
22 December 2021.

[open.spotify.com/episode/2wEVVpH8fZihc-  
Jzb8yEIO?si=-GQMAxYjTPqc0ER0BT](https://open.spotify.com/episode/2wEVVpH8fZihc-Jzb8yEIO?si=-GQMAxYjTPqc0ER0BT)

**SARA TAFAKORI**

**Affective Hierarchies of Mourning: Iranian  
justice-seeking mothers and the emotional  
choreography of online collectivity.**

*European Journal of Cultural Studies*. [in print]

**Digital Feminism beyond Nativism and  
Empire: Affective territories of recognition  
and competing claims to suffering in Iranian  
women's campaigns.** *Journal of Women in  
Culture and Society*, 47 (1), pp. 47–80.

[doi.org/10.1086/715649](https://doi.org/10.1086/715649)

**Haunting Juxtapositions: Gender, Covid-19,  
and the conservative modern.** *Feminist  
Media Studies*, pp. 1–7, 2021.

[doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2021.1893781](https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2021.1893781)

**CHRISTIAN THUSELT**

**Libanon: Politökonomische Kurzanalyse  
(PÖK).** *Bundesministerium für wirtschaft-  
liche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung  
(BMZ)*, 2021.

**Lebanese Political Parties:**

**Dream of a republic.** *Routledge Studies  
in Middle Eastern Politics*, (107). London,  
New York: Routledge, 2021.

**Revolutionary Utopia in the Middle East  
as Steely Romanticism: The case of the  
al-Ba'th Party.** *British Journal of Middle  
Eastern Studies*, 2021, pp. 1–17.

[doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2021.1919992](https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2021.1919992)

**THOMAS WÜRTZ**

**Was ereignet sich? Ein Überblick über die  
Ereignisgeschichte der Kreuzzüge aus  
muslimischer Perspektive.** In: Amir Dziri,  
Angelica Hilsebein, Mouhanad Khorchide and  
Bernd Schmies (EDS.). *Der Sultan und der  
Heilige: Islamisch-christliche Perspektiven auf  
die Begegnung des Hl. Franziskus mit Sultan  
al-Kamil (1219–2019)*. Münster: Aschendorff  
Verlag, pp. 95–134, 2021.







Celebration in the  
former garden in  
the 60s, now part  
of the library of the  
Orient-Institut.

# Events

# Events

**60th Jubilee of the OIB** 122

**Conference Reports** 129

**Public Research Seminars** 140

**Internal Colloquia** 142

**Presentations & Moderations** 146



# 60th Jubilee of the OIB



In 2021 the Orient-Institut Beirut celebrated the diamond jubilee of its foundation in 1961 with two days of academic panels and greeting and honoring festivities on December 2nd and 3rd 2021.

The jubilee opened with a workshop on Hans Wehr (1909–1981), and the Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic and Arabic Studies in Germany. Hans Wehr's Arabic-German dictionary was one of the very first books establishing the library collection of OIB. Stefan Weninger, Hans-Hinrich Biesterfeldt, Hans Peter Pökel and Dirk Hartwig gave a detailed insight into Hans Wehr's work within its intellectual and historical context. Peter Heine and Sophia Grotzfeld remembered very personally Hans Wehr as a person at OIB and the early years of the institute.

The first day of the jubilee continued with a festive address by OIB director Birgit Schäbler on "Humanities in Germany and 60 Years of Scholarship at the OIB", which was followed by greetings from the German Ambassador in Beirut, Andreas Kindl, the Lebanese Ambassador in Berlin, Mustafa Adib, the former director of OIB from 1968–1973 Stefan Wild, the president of the German Oriental Society Stefan Weninger, and AUB professor Sari Hanafi.

The second day of the jubilee was introduced by a panel discussion on *The Surplus of Quranic Studies*. Leading scholar in Quranic Studies Angelika Neuwirth, a former director of OIB, held the opening statement, followed by Mouhanad Khorchide and Dina El Omari's presentations. Vice director Thomas Würtz moderated the panel. A round table on *Islamic Studies and Islamic Theology in Germany: Disciplinary Boundaries and Epistemologies* was introduced by OIB director Birgit Schäbler. Michael Borgolte presented in his function as former founding director of the Berlin Institute for Islamic Theology the opening talk, which was discussed by Gudrun Krämer, Tilman Seidensticker and Mohammad Gharaibeh from the perspectives of Islamic Studies.

The jubilee concluded with an honoring ceremony and festive tributes of Michel Geha, Ridwan El-Sayyid (represented by Ahmed Zoabi, the first researchers at OIB who received their doctorates in Germany, as did Abdel-Raouf Sinno (in absentia), Asad Khairallah, also a Lebanese researcher of the first hour at OIB, and Souad Slim, all longstanding and currently active pillars of OIB. We were very glad to have honored Michel Geha, whose tales of the beginnings of OIB were delightful, before he passed away shortly after. OIB director Birgit Schäbler was honored, too, in a surprise act, by the OIB research team.

JUBILEE PROGRAM [www.orient-institut.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/60OIBProg.pdf](http://www.orient-institut.org/fileadmin/user_upload/60OIBProg.pdf)



Festive tributes given to Asad Khairallah, Souad Slim, Birgit Schäßler, Michel Geha and Ridwan El-Sayyid (represented by Ahmed Zoabi), from left to right (TOP). Group picture of the OIB team and some research fellows taken during the jubilee festivity (BOTTOM).





A photo exhibition, organized by OIB's library team, looked back at the 1960s' inception of the Orient-Institut, with stories to tell of decades of research embedded in the cultural and intellectual life of Lebanon and the region. The exhibition also showcased old and rare library treasures, among them an Arabic Bible from the 19th century and a Syriac translation of the New Testament from 1622. The oldest book in the OIB's collection, a Latin-Arabic edition of the Psalms by the Maronite monk Victor Scialac, published 1614 in Rome, was also shown.



Treasures of the OIB library showcased at the photo exhibition.

## المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية في بيروت الوحيد في الشرق الأوسط: يوبيل الماسي ووفرة وبقعة ضوء في مشهد ثقافي مُنهك



فريق عمل المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية



محور المعهد منوسطة الباحثين المؤرخين.



البروفيسورة بروجيت شابر.

بلغ 350 ألف ليرة، بحسب البروفيسور الدكتور ميمشال جحا (91 سنة) الذي التقيناه في المدينة وهو أوّل المواكبين للمعهد منذ بداية تأسيسه التي تزامنت مع حيازته الدكتوراه وعودته من ألمانيا. "كانت المنطقة تعيش أجواء الوحدة المصرية السورية، وأنكر أن دمشق باعتبارها عاصمة عربية أصيلة، فيما بيروت تتمتع بعبورية كوسمبوليتية. لكن دمشق كانت تشترط رئيساً سوريا للمعهد فاستقر الاختيار على بيروت، فضلاً عن أبتنازمتها في الرقابة الفكرية في الجنوب والخطابة والنشر، وتضميلات إدارية كانت مدعومة من وزارة التربية لأنّ لا وزارة ثقافة في لبنان في ذلك الوقت". تدخل الغلا في رقابة استقلال لبنان، مؤسس المعهد "منا طبع الاستقلال". فالحسنة بود فرح الله كانت سيده صالون فكري وسياسي وأديبي، وكان الجنرال سيزر الذي جندس الاستقلال وساعد لبنان على التحرر من الانتداب الفرنسي، أحد أقرب أصدقاءه وجاراً للفرح ومن الرواد المميزين للمعهد، وصار زعيم الشارع المعاصر للمعهد باسمه". تلك كانت الأبرام الخوالي لبيروت الثقافية والنشر، "المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية" شهدنا وسامع بها، وبالرّبال الأجنبيات القاصية التي يصطدم بها الأكاديميون في لبنان. وفرة وبقعة ضوء، في مشهد ثقافي خنك.

أني سرزت التأسيس، والمعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية في بيروت هو واحد من عشرة معهد في العلوم الإنسانية أسسها ألمانيا في العالم، والوحيد في المنطقة العربية". كما "يخضع مكتبة تحتوي على أكثر من 140 ألف كتاب ومرجع في العلوم الإنسانية، وهي بذلك تعتبر المكتبة الأكبر في الإنسانيات على مستوى لبنان". وأقامت احتفاليةيوبيل الأقدم التي تعرضها للكتب والمخطوطات الأقدم التي تعودها المكتبة، وبعضها يرجع للقرن السابع عشر، وأولى الكتب التي تلقاها هبات، بما فيها قواموس تاريخ غير الشعير للغة العربية الألمانية، ومجموعه "ألف ليرة وأربعة"، والجمعية السريانية للمعهد الجديد مع ترجمة لاتينية، ومؤلفات إسلامية وأدبية مؤلفة في التاريخ. والحديث بالاشارة أنّ توسيع المكتبة شكل الدافع الأساسي لانتقال المعهد من مقره الأول في شقة من بنائية من مقره الأول في شقة من بنائية المعاصر، بالقرب من فندق الريستول، إلى فيلا مود فرح الله في راقا البقاع، وتسلّى من رقابة تأسيس المعهد تحقّقاً بين تاريخه الخاص وتاريخ بيروت ولبنان، أخيراً في الأضواء النسيمة التي لحقت به جبار، انفجار آب 2020 ثمّ ترميم واستئناف النشاط، وبدأ من انتقال المعهد في 20 حزيران عام 1964 كاملاً إلى فيلا مود فرح الله، بتسهيل من وزير الخارجية الأسبق ومصمم العلم اللبناني هنري فرعون، وتعميل من الجمعية الشرقية الألمانية التي اشترت الفيلا "ألف

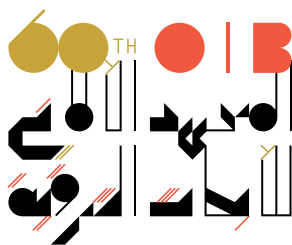
ليرة وأربعة"، وساعدتنا الحديثة في كونهما مؤلفاً ملحوظاً". استخاض المعهد أحاطة إشكاليات متصاعدة مع الأزمة اللبنانية من خلال "مبادرات مجتمع بحثي مؤلف من أكاديميين وطلة دكتوراه وباحثين في مرحلة ما بعد الدكتوراه، وتشارك أوزالهم البحثية في مؤتمرات محلية ودولية، وقوام المعهد في بيروت اليوم هو 30 عمالاً وأخصاً". وشغلت المنشورات الأخيرة للمعهد دراسات في الفكر المعاصر، عالجت في مشروع "إعادة إعمار أحياء الحرب"، الفعلي المعاصر والاجتماعي في الترميم وأيضاً في علاقة الناس مع الحي الأحياء المتخاطرة في ما بينهم، وذلك تحت مظلة بحثية بعنوان "علاقات"، رستما البروفيسورة شابر في عام 2017 في برنامج يغطي خمس سنوات، وأد تشكّل هذه القضية مع تفاعلات انفجار مرفأ بيروت، أعّد المعهد دراسة متعدّدة عن الانتفاضة الشعبية وهي بداية المتعلقات التي تشكّل الوضع الراهن، "استصدر قريباً في كتاب عنوانه الأول "الانتفاضة اللبنانية في 17 تشرين الأول 2019"، و"يارد حيزاً هاماً لمشاركة المرأة في الثورة والسياسية، وكذلك ثورة الفنون واستعادة لبنانيل للمساحات العامة وفي طابعها ساحة الشهداء، التي اتخذت دوراً اجتماعياً جديداً تبين أنّه أكثر انسجاماً مع تحوّلهم لإعادة بنائها في مرحلة ما بعد الحرب الأهلية". وفق تعبير الباحثة التي استندت إلى مشاهدات ميدانية مسبقة ومخاطباتها مع مظاهرين وفنانين

البروفيسورة بروجيت شابر تكثيف لرواية المعهد على طول العقود الستة المنقضية بما حملته من أنشائية فكرية ومنع وفرض أكاديمي يوسن الخميس والجمعة الماضيين في فيلا مود فرح الله في راقا البلاط، من خلال برنامج وفير بالمشاتات المتعقبة في إشكاليات عربية وإسلامية، تضمنت حلقة حول "فائض الدراسات الإسلامية" وأخرى عن العلاقة بين "الدراسات الإسلامية والألوهوت الإسلامي" في ألمانيا. وكثرت المناسبة شخصيات وباحثين برتبة "بروفيسور"، وكانوا المعهد على مدى عقود وأثروا مكتبته والمكتبة الإسلامية والمشاريع عمومها بكتب ومشتورات بحثية رفيعة، وهم أسعد خير الله، ميمشال جحا، زهوان السيد، عبد الرؤوف سنو وسعاد سليم. ولهم كانت المحادثات تتفاعل بين قاعة وحديقة المعهد الفلّارة، بالقي الرّازر عند مشواره مثارة على التاريخ التأسيسي للمعهد مؤلفاً بالصور والكتب، فيتمتع من قلب الأزمة البعرونية مع التّجهيز على المعهد في شعورهم "إننا في بيتنا حتى في أكثر الأوقات شدة". ومنذ العام 2003، ينتمي المعهد إلى مؤسسة ماكس فير - وهي مؤسسة ألمانية تدبر معاهد للعلوم الإنسانية في الخارج، وتؤمّل الوزارة الفدرالية الألمانية للتعليم والأبحاث هذه المؤسسة الأكاديمية المستقلة. ولعل في تجربة المديرية الحالية للمعهد،

### جودي الأسمر

أحياء "المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية" (OIB) برويله الأساسي بنشاطات أكاديميية يوسن الخميس والجمعة الماضيين في فيلا مود فرح الله في راقا البلاط، من خلال برنامج وفير بالمشاتات المتعقبة في إشكاليات عربية وإسلامية، تضمنت حلقة حول "فائض الدراسات الإسلامية" وأخرى عن العلاقة بين "الدراسات الإسلامية والألوهوت الإسلامي" في ألمانيا. وكثرت المناسبة شخصيات وباحثين برتبة "بروفيسور"، وكانوا المعهد على مدى عقود وأثروا مكتبته والمكتبة الإسلامية والمشاريع عمومها بكتب ومشتورات بحثية رفيعة، وهم أسعد خير الله، ميمشال جحا، زهوان السيد، عبد الرؤوف سنو وسعاد سليم. ولهم كانت المحادثات تتفاعل بين قاعة وحديقة المعهد الفلّارة، بالقي الرّازر عند مشواره مثارة على التاريخ التأسيسي للمعهد مؤلفاً بالصور والكتب، فيتمتع من قلب الأزمة البعرونية مع التّجهيز على المعهد في شعورهم "إننا في بيتنا حتى في أكثر الأوقات شدة". ومنذ العام 2003، ينتمي المعهد إلى مؤسسة ماكس فير - وهي مؤسسة ألمانية تدبر معاهد للعلوم الإنسانية في الخارج، وتؤمّل الوزارة الفدرالية الألمانية للتعليم والأبحاث هذه المؤسسة الأكاديمية المستقلة. ولعل في تجربة المديرية الحالية للمعهد،





OIB'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY











Former Institute  
Directors Prof  
Fritz Steppart  
(1963–1968, left)  
and Prof Stefan Wild  
(1986–1973, right)  
with their wives  
in 1968.



# *Conference Reports*

# Intellectual Property in Lebanon //

## Rights and reproductions

### WORKSHOP SERIES

Online

18 March, 25 March, 8 April, 12 April, 15 April

Convenors: Nadia von Maltzahn (LAWHA/OIB) / Kristine Khouri (independent)

Zeina Arida (Sursock Museum) / Heba Hage-Felder (Arab Image Foundation)

LAWHA collaborated with the Sursock Museum and the Arab Image Foundation on a series of workshops on intellectual property. This series aimed to understand common challenges and best practices of peer institutions (both globally and locally) in terms of copyright, rights, and reproduction policies; to have a grasp on how to deal with risk mitigation in finding a balance between the aspiration to grant wider access to collections and archival material for the public and respect rights; to understand the legal frameworks and laws under which our institutions and projects currently function, as well as strategies for open knowledge. A core group of participants was invited to take part in these sessions, all involved in Lebanon-based institutions that deal with questions of making digital images and material available online, including UMAM, Ashkal Alwan, the Association for Families of the Missing and Disappeared in Lebanon, IFPO library, AUB and USEK archives. To kick off the series, which took place virtually between mid-March and mid-April 2021, a first session was held in which peer institutions and initiatives on a global level shared their experiences, challenges, and practices. This was followed by a second session focusing on Lebanon-based institutions and initiatives. The third session was led by two expert lawyers (Pierre el-Khoury and Andrea Wallace) and was dedicated to understanding copyright law in Lebanon as it pertains to cultural heritage, and gaining a wider understanding of copyright and considerations towards open knowledge. The fourth session was an open discussion amongst the core group to recap on the first sessions, address open questions and think of ways forward. All sessions were to prepare for the final fifth session, which was a closed working session for the three organising institutions only. Thereby specific challenges that they faced were addressed, including the types of contracts and materials that each organisation was working with.



Screenshot from Session 1,  
18 March 2021: Peer in-  
stitutions and initiatives on  
a global level: experiences,  
challenges and practices in  
rights and reproductions  
management and sharing  
digital collections.

# From Cairo to Karl-Marx-Stadt //

## Studying in the Cold War

### EVENT SERIES

Berlin

11–23 June, 11–12 October

Convenors: Birgit Schäßler (OIB) / Ala Al-Hamarneh (OIB)

In the framework of OIB's project "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s–1991" a number of "public science" outreach events were held in June and October 2021 in Berlin. The format aimed to give insight and communicate results of the research at OIB to a broader public. Berlin was chosen for being the former "Front-City of the Cold War".

The first event was a photo exhibit at GDR Museum Berlin titled "From the Middle East to the Eastern Bloc – Student Lifeworlds in the Cold War", displayed June 11–20, 2021. On 18 panels with texts and numerous photos, the exhibit presented information on Middle Eastern students in the Eastern Bloc, especially in GDR. It showed how Iranian communist intellectuals in exile were involved in higher education in Berlin and Warsaw, tells the story of the Turkish communist radio in Leipzig "Bizim Radyo" and its student employees, presents the special Universities for foreign students in Moscow and Prague and documents the establishment of the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning at Mosul University in Iraq by the People's Republic of Poland. There were also women studying in the Eastern Bloc – Egypt's first prima ballerina Magda Saleh in Moscow or Turkish writer Oya Baydar in GDR. The digitization of the exhibition is underway.

A panel discussion on June 11 featured OIB's director Birgit Schäßler, Dr Sophia Hoffmann (ZMO, Berlin), Stella Kneifel M.A. (University of Erfurt), Dr Ala Al-Hamarneh (OIB) and Dr Patrice Poutrus (University of Erfurt), discussing the life-worlds of Middle Eastern students in the GDR. Between 1951 and 1991, ca. 75.000 foreign students studied at GDR universities; in 1988, there were 13.400 students from 126 countries, including 2.000 from the Middle East. How were the young people viewed by society, treated by the state, and controlled by state security? How did everyday life under socialism influence their view of GDR and of their countries of origin? What experiences did they bring back with them to their home countries? [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGSKNZukLpQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGSKNZukLpQ)

Next was a panel discussion with the title "From International Solidarity to Soft Power to Science Diplomacy – Is There a Continuity from the Cold War to Today?" on June 16, in Cinema Babylon.

Taking the Cold War as a starting point, panelists discussed what role "international solidarity" played in the foreign policy of Eastern Bloc countries, especially GDR and USSR, how this was a form of soft power and to what extent soft power politics continued in the period after the end of the Cold War. Who is engaged in soft power politics today and how? Can science be a form of soft power? The international race to develop Corona vaccines, also used to conduct foreign policy, demonstrates the current competition for knowledge. Soft power strategies are at play in these policies and actions. The panel was composed of Gabriele Krone-Schmalz (Journalist, Publicist, Former TV Correspondent USSR and Russia, Professor of Television and Journalism, University of Applied Sciences), Matthias Platzack (Chairman German-Russian Forum, former Chairman Social Democratic Party, former head of Brandenburg federal state), Zaur Gasimov (Member of the research project, Bonn University, Eastern European History Department) and moderated by Birgit Schäbler (OIB director, head of research project).

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVBk5FjeYHk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVBk5FjeYHk)

The film festival "Relations in the Cold War" took place October 11–12, Cinema Arsenal, Berlin. The Cold War is usually presented cinematically in the context of espionage and action. The festival films were about personal and social relationships. Outside the actual power blocs the competition of ideologies was enriched by people's own political and social conditions and world views. Relations between the Global South and the two main camps of the Cold War were also shaped by non-alignment, anti-colonialism, post-colonialism, liberation struggles, own, local interpretations of socialism and communism – topics that are often neglected in the context of the Cold War. The following films were shown: *Al Nil Wal Haya* (Once Upon a Time...The Nile; Egypt/USSR 1969), *Chronicle of the Years of Fire* (Algeria 1975), *Africa, Džungli, Baraban I Revoljucija* (Africa, The Jungle, Drums and Revolution; USSR 1979), *Wa Lakin Alardh Tadur* (It Still rotates; USSR 1978) and *Hunting Party* (GDR 1964). They were introduced by Ala al-Hamarneh.

Solidarity  
Ensemble of  
Karl-Marx-  
University  
Leipzig, 1984.  
©MAHMOUD  
DABDOUB





# Contested Knowledge in a Connected World // Connecting Themes

## MWS CONNECTING THEMES CONFERENCE

Berlin

16–17 September

The joint conference of all projects within "Knowledge Unbound: Internationalisation, Networking, Innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung", directly funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), took place on September 16–17, 2021 in Berlin under the title of "Contested Knowledge in a Connected World".

The conference was organized by OIB project coordinator Ala al-Hamarneh, together with OIB's directorate. The OIB research group and its director featured in 4 of 9 panels. The project was developed by the directors in March 2018 and started a year later – just before the world changed dramatically: the start of archival and field research often coincided with the first lockdown of the Corona pandemic. Individuals and research groups conducted research in two modules, "Areas, Actors and Knowledge Relations" and "Borders of Knowledge". In addition to the OIB's research group "Relations in the Ideoscape: Middle Eastern Students in the Eastern Bloc, 1950s–1991", there were projects on "Interaction and Knowledge in the Pacific Region: Entanglements and Disentanglements", "Genoese Merchant Networks in Africa and across the Atlantic Ocean (1450–1530)", and "Medialization and Empowerment and Iran and Beyond". The project comes to an end in February 2022.

All research dealt in an interdisciplinary way with key political and social issues of our time: the lessons that can be drawn from the Cold War in terms of knowledge and scientific relations with the postcolonial world, the scientific approach to threatened environments as a global and transnational challenge, the stigmatization of large migrant groups already in the 19th century, early capitalist knowledge production in regard to joint-stock companies and music in the context of globalization, the complex of socio-bio-technical body practices, and the interrelation between the media and the "women's question" or historical feminisms. The bearers of knowledge ranged from students to migrants, slaves, (house)wives, barbers, and other actors less considered elsewhere. The research was thus visibly innovative and impressively demonstrated the often underestimated potential of the humanities to address some of the burning questions of our times. The OIB research group and its director, who had been active in writing the overall proposal and had organized the Connecting-Themes-conference

together with the coordinator of the research group "Relations in the Ideoscape", Dr Ala al-Hamarneh, were prominently represented at the conference.

The first day of the conference opened with a keynote address by well-known public intellectual Herfried Münkler, in which he called upon the humanities to actively engage in what he called "Gesellschaftsberatung", i.e. advising society and being active at the science-society interface, as opposed to the science-policy interface of the political and social sciences. In this vein he discussed the need for so-called 'inter-discourses' to be added to the specialized discourses of academia. Max Weber's own writings mostly were such discourses at the science-society interface – and their legacy to the humanities today could be seen as providing the kind of 'deliberative and critical knowledge' needed to counterbalance the practical and partisan knowledge usually produced in politics.

In the first panel after the keynote speech the directors of the Max Weber foundation's institutes came together to discuss under the headline of "Knowledge Unbound: Multiple Perspectives on a Transregional Research Project/Group". This was followed by the panel on "Relations in the Ideoscape: Entanglements of Knowledge between the Middle East and the Eastern Bloc" chaired by Birgit Schäbler. Subsequently, a panel on "Migration and Exclusion in the Pacific Realm" and a thematic discussion under the title "Reshaping Gender Norms: The Intersections and Transformations of Gendered Empowerment" rounded out the first day.

The second day opened with the panel "Challenges in the Socialist Ideoscape: Experiences and Perspectives of Middle Eastern Students", which was followed by two thematic discussions on "Capitalism in Motion: Practice and Representation" and "Ties That (Un)Bind: The Performativity of Tradition in Knowledge Practices". The subsequent panel dealt with "Climate and Energy Policy in the Asia-Pacific". In the afternoon the conference closed with the presentation of a virtual exhibition called "Forms, Voices, Networks: The Media and the Fight for Women's Rights in Germany, India and the UK", before the last panel brought together the heads of the research groups, among them the director of OIB, for final words and future perspectives.

The OIB's  
Research Group  
"Middle Eastern  
Students in  
the Eastern Bloc"  
at Berlin  
Conference.



# Alles ist Data? Tout est Data! //

## From official statistics to data-activism – exploring the manufacture of data

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP  
Beirut (OIB) and Cairo (CEDEJ)  
15 November, 6 December  
Convenor: Pierre France (OIB)

The international workshop took place as an in-person conference with online invitation-only attendance, the first of its kind since the COVID-19 era started at the institute. This two-day workshop was organized by the OIB in Beirut, and a month later as a partnership with the Egyclass project in Cairo.

In Beirut, the first session focused on the history of statistics in Lebanon, through the testimonies of two household names whose careers have spanned the last sixty years in the field of statistics. Robert Kasparian, the first director of the Central Administration of Statistics, explained how everything started in the Chehab-era (1958–1964) and evolved up to the 1990s and later through the Lebanese wars. Riad Saadé shared a parallel experience while focusing on one specific sector, agriculture. As the head of the CREAL (Centre de recherches et d'études agricoles libanais), he discussed the shape of agricultural statistics and their demise for the last thirty years, closely following the fall of the agricultural sector itself.

The second session offered other insights and a different, less historical, perspective on statistics rooted in contemporary projects with the presentation of several projects from UN-Habitat and UNDP showing that regardless of the global situation, many projects are being conducted every day on the Lebanese territory. On top of that, Synaps' founders Rosalie Berthier and Peter Harling reflected on their own experiences with statistics in Lebanon and the limitations they faced as researchers and finally initiated a general discussion on the current shape and perspective for statistics in Lebanon.

The third session consisted of a thorough presentation of projects related to digitization and e-Governance in the ISF and Central Inspection and how it shakes up the bureaucracy in Lebanon. In the presence of a statistician working in another ministry, who reflected on the daily practices of the work, the discussion led to a debate on how these new platforms are being conceived by private actors, but also how they are being received at the other end, in the user community of civil servants.

Finally, the last roundtable ended up being an open discussion around three recent projects, including two "dataactivists" projects. First, Al Gherbal, whose aim is to gather and share as much public documents and data as possible and make it accessible to the public, following the new Lebanese Access to Information Law passed in 2017. Open Map Lebanon came next. Its activities started in the wake of the August 4 explosion as a grassroots activist movement that gathered data on the explosion as a form of emergency response, but its passionate volunteers have also pursued other forms of mapping since then. Both participants reflected on the challenges they face with data collection, but also on the future of their projects. So did the representative of the last organization, Smex. This organization advocates – not only in Lebanon but on a regional level – for data protection and the passing of real privacy laws. At present, their absence leaves too much room for political as well as commercial use of personal data without the consent of the users. As such, it rounded off the conference around the often disregarded question of citizens and users, bringing to the fore how data can empower communities, but also how data privacy is threatened in the digital age. The future of data and its democratic values being at play, the mainstream question in the US and Europe, needs to be urgently addressed in Lebanon too.



Theo van Doesburg,  
Kurt Schwitters.  
Kleine Dada Soirée,  
1922, with a little help  
from Pierre France,  
2022.

# Coexistence & Solidarity in Times of War //

## Dynamics of rapprochement and non-violence in Lebanon during the civil war (1975–1990)

### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

University of Balamand and Orient-Institut Beirut

24–27 November

Convenors: Souad Slim (University of Balamand) / Elias Kattan (University of Münster)

Birgit Schäßler (OIB)

War and also civil war are usually associated with violence. Violence actually seems to be the very essence of war. Nevertheless, in times of war there is action which is not permeated by violence, even if it is influenced by the fear of violence, such as many everyday activities (shopping, leisure activities) and the continuation of civilian employment. But there is also action directed against the omnipresent violence. It is characterized by enabling rapprochement and peaceful interaction, especially across enemy lines, and making it as productive as possible. The conference, which had been planned for December 2019 but then had to be postponed, was dedicated to the manifold manifestations and transformations of this kind of solidary action.

One part of the conference took place at the OIB and the other at the University of Balamand. It was organised by Souad Slim, Professor at Balamand University, Elias Kattan, Chair of Orthodox Theology at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, and Birgit Schäßler, Director of the Orient-Institut Beirut.

Professor Georges Corm opened the conference with his lecture on the numerous social dynamics without which the developments of the Lebanese civil war cannot be understood. Professor Birgit Schäßler gave a response, adding global examples of the fast breakdown of neighborly relations, including Germany, showing that Lebanon is not an exception.

The next day, interviews were presented to provide an empirical basis for forms of solidarity and non-violent action based on contemporary witnesses. The design was presented by Liliane Kfoury in the introductory panel. Souad Slim took a first approach and presented examples of civil solidarity when crossing demarcation lines, for example to enable students to participate in events at their university. This was followed by examples of direct help between different denominations and religions, which often existed, even if the adherents of the respective communities were on the front lines.

These questions were explored in greater depth in five further panels, two of which were held at the OIB and the others in Balamand the next day. Among many interesting contributions, the following presentations should be mentioned:



"Cause of the Lebanese War: Where does sectarianism fit?" (Sami Ofeish) and "Mitigation Processes of Violent Protracted Conflict: The Lebanese experience in the civil war" (Elias al-Halabi). Many other participants gave insight into the role of the different churches and also Muslim communities in Lebanon. A joint excursion to Tripoli concluded the conference with a concrete illustration of the historical foundations of the coexistence of faith communities on the territory of Lebanon. It is also these very historical foundations on which future processing of the civil war events can be based, rather than on current political and social actors. Accordingly, civil society is more likely to be able to provide impulses for coming to terms with the Lebanese civil war – this became very clear during the conference. Non-violent action on all sides must receive increased attention in this process, to which the conference was able to make a contribution.



Conference in  
the library of the  
Orient Institut.

# *Public Research Seminars*

2 JUNE Pierre France (OIB): *Not-So-Failed State, Militias' Invisible Hands & Inconspicuous Civil Servants: The war-time Lebanese central bank (1975–1993) as a case of state deformation*

10 JUNE Maryam Al-Ali (POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT): *Akhbār Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid fī al-Maṣādir al-Islāmiyya: Abniyyat al-sard wa-l-dhākira wa-l-tārīkh*

17 JUNE Sarah El Bulbeisi (OIB): *Taboo, Trauma, And Identity: Subject constructions of Palestinians in Germany and Switzerland, 1960–2015*

9 SEPTEMBER Mahmoud Al-Batal (PROFESSOR OF ARABIC STUDIES AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT): *Arabic as a Living Language: Challenges & Horizons*, in conversation with Abdallah Soufan

16 DECEMBER Charbel Batour, S.J. (RECTOR OF THE COLLÈGE NOTRE-DAME DE JAMHOUR): *Collège de Notre-Dame de Jamhour Past–Present: Some ideas on the future of education in Lebanon*

# *Internal Colloquia*

14 JANUARY Mennatullah M. Hendawy (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Imaging Power: Planning visualizations and the co-construction of spatio-visual injustice, Cairo as a global case*

21 JANUARY Enass Khansa (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *On Copious Knowledge and Ikhtiyār in Arabic Medieval Thought*

28 JANUARY Chloe Kattar (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Exploring Charles Malik's Itinerary during the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1982)*

4 FEBRUARY Louise Gallorini (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *The Function of Angels in Classical Sufi Literature: The example of the mi'rāj narratives*

11 FEBRUARY Zeina Fathallah (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Women's Decisions, Experiences and Access to Safe Abortion in Lebanon*

18 FEBRUARY Rita Barotta (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *The Representation of Male Homosexuality in Lebanese Cinema (1993/2016)*

25 FEBRUARY Hratch Yervant Kestenian (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Different in the Absence of "Difference": Tuberculosis and the medicalization of late Ottoman society*

11 MARCH Ziad Kiblawi (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Colonialism, Capitalism, and Knowledge-Effect: The historical epistemology of Mahdi Amel*

18 MARCH Jamal Aridi (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Why Blanchot? Language and the outside*

25 MARCH Sam Wilder (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Modes of Knowledge and Performance in Pre-Modern Arabic Verse*

1 APRIL Agnes Rameder (OIB AFFILIATED RESEARCHER): *Picturing the (Un)Dead: Reflections and deconstructions of Lebanese and Iranian "martyrs" in contemporary photo-related art-practices*

22 APRIL Anna Reumert (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *After Labor: Migrant workers in Lebanon's crisis*

6 MAY Karim El Taki (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Lobbying Washington: Egypt's bottom-up recognition*



27 MAY Enrico Boccaccini (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *First Glances at Female Reflections in Mirrors: The discourse on women in advice literature for rulers*

17 JUNE Alfred El-Khoury (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Is Isti'āra the Same Thing as Metaphor? The question and its bearing on the study of innovation in Arabic poetry*

1 JULY Chloe Kattar (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *"Are We the Last Byzantium?" The Evolution of Antoine Najim's thought and the radicalization of Christian conservatism in wartime Lebanon (1952–1982)*

15 JULY Hratch Yervant Kestenian (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Medical ImagiNation: Armenian doctors and the recreation of the nation (1918–1923)*

23 SEPTEMBER Karim el Taki (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Qatar in Washington: Capitalising on recognition from above*

30 SEPTEMBER Ennio Napolitano (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Disguised Writings as Visual Signs: exploring transcultural dynamics of Arabic scripts in border areas*

7 OCTOBER Rita Barotta (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Raed Rafei: Decentralizing the queer discourse, from Beirut's exceptionalism, to Tripoli's queer sites*

9 NOVEMBER Jakub Jajcay (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *Saida: Political & social history, 1958–1975*

16 NOVEMBER Hussein Ibrahim (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *(Re-)Aristotelizing Knowledge: epistemology in Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's (d. 672/1274) practical philosophy*

9 DECEMBER Sam Wilder (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Reexamining Poetic Anthologies of the "Long Twelfth Century": New audiences, new personas*

15 DECEMBER Sarah Tafakori (OIB VISITING POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW): *Imagining the "Crippled" Nation: A decolonial approach to intimate publics*

16 DECEMBER Zack Cuyler (OIB VISITING DOCTORAL FELLOW): *"Our principal aim is to secure stability in our beloved Lebanon": Lebanon's infrastructural terrain and the making of the post-shihābist welfare state*



# ***Presentations & Moderations***

AHMED ABD-ELSALAM

**"Ayāt Qur'āniyya wa-A'rāf 'Ashā'iriyya: Quranic verses and tribal commons"**

at the first study days of Tafkīr-Academy, NEW YORK // 3 OCTOBER (online).

**"Al-Zawāj fī l-Yahūdiyya wa-l-Islām: Marriage in Judaism and Islam"** at the second study days of Tafkīr-Academy, NEW YORK // 1 NOVEMBER (online).

**"The Contemporary Concept of Muwāṭana and the Constitution of Medina"** at the "The Relationship between State and Religion in the Arab and Islamicate Contexts: Civil state, secular state, religious/Islamic state" international workshop, Centre for Advanced Studies, Universität Leipzig, "Multiple Secularities – Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities", LEIPZIG // 9–10 DECEMBER (online).

FATİH ERMIŞ

**"Kınalızâde: Political system in the Ottoman Empire"**, Alliance of Civilizations Institute, Ibn Haldun University, ISTANBUL // 23 NOVEMBER (online).

**"New Garments for Old Wisdoms: Kınalızâde 'Alī Çelebî's ethics"**, Ibn Haldun University, ISTANBUL // 24 NOVEMBER (online).

**"Drawing Inspiration from Kınalızâde 'Alī Çelebî, Ottoman Scholar of Sixteenth Century"** in the radio show Shaping Tomorrow, Radio IKIM, MALAYSIA // 27 NOVEMBER.

**"The Soul, Virtues and Circle of Justice according to Kınalızâde 'Alī Çelebî"**, in the radio show Shaping Tomorrow, Radio IKIM, MALAYSIA // 11 DECEMBER.

**"Bin Altınlık Hazine: Gülşen-i Râz"**, Medeniyet University, ISTANBUL // 20 DECEMBER.

PIERRE FRANCE

Coordination of the seminar **"Working Group on Statistics (Egyclass Project)"**, co-organised by Malak Labib (CEDEJ), CAIRO // 25 NOVEMBER, 6 DECEMBER (online).

Coordination of the seminar **"Fake News and Conspiracism: Towards a political sociology of new deviances"**, co-organised by Ysé Vauchez (CRPS-CESSP), TÜBINGEN // 24 NOVEMBER, 10 DECEMBER (online).

LOUISE GALLORINI

**"The Angelology of al-Sulamī"**, communication on the occasion of the millennium anniversary of his death at the annual conference, European Academy of Religion, MÜNSTER // 30 AUGUST–2 SEPTEMBER (online).

MENNATULLAH HENDAWY

**"Negotiating the Degrees of Legality: De-tabooing urban informality in the Global North. Berlin, a neoliberal capital for socialists"** at the forum "Houses of Cards? The Rules and Institutions of Housing Illegality in Western Countries", co-presented by Jonas Le Thierry d'Ennequin, 20 APRIL (online).

**"Visualizing Climate Targets: Mapping 93 funded E.U. Erasmus+ projects versus SDGs and Horizon missions targets. The case of Knowledge Alliances program"** at the "2nd World Forum on Climate Justice" conference, co-presented with Maria Valverde (Glasgow Caledonian University), GLASGOW // 21–23 SEPTEMBER.

**"Hybrid Justice: Urban AI for equitable and sustainable semi-smart cities"** at the conference II Digital Geographies Conference, co-presented with Stephanie Sherman (University of Arts London), Katrien Pype (KU Leuven), Samah ElKhateeb (Ain Shams University), University of Lisbon, 29 OCTOBER (online).

CHLOE KATTAR

Moderation of the seminar **"The Role of New and Social Media in Managing Crisis in Lebanon post-2019"**, OIB, BEIRUT // 28 APRIL (online).

ALFRED EL-KHOURY

**"My Qasida Comes to You – a Noble She-Camel in a Leading-Rope': Closure in Abū Tammām's panegyrics"** at the "How to End Things in Arabic Literature" online workshop, American University of Beirut, Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, BEIRUT // 4–5 JUNE (online).

ANNA SIMONE REUMERT

**"On the Run and Out of Place"**, Institute for Research on Women's and Gender Studies, Columbia University, COLUMBIA // 7 MAY.

**"Migrants and Workers: Sudanese labor struggles in Beirut"** at the "New Perspectives on Middle East Migrations" conference, Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies, North Carolina State University, RALEIGH // 24–26 AUGUST.

**"Sanduk as Survival"** at the "Patronage and Dependency in Islamic Ethics and Economies of Care: Ethnographic inquiries from Africa and the Middle East" conference, American Anthropological Association, BALTIMORE // 18 NOVEMBER.

**"After Labor: Migrant workers in Lebanon's crisis"** at the "Interrogating the Social Sciences in the Vortex of Crises: Waves of discontent and demands for change" conference, The Arab Council for the Social Sciences, BEIRUT // 10 DECEMBER.



## BIRGIT SCHÄBLER

Convenor, introduction and moderation of the panel discussion **"From the Middle East to the GDR"**, with Dr Sophia Hoffmann, Dr Patrice Poutrus, Dr Ala al-Hamarneh and Stella Kneifel, DDR Museum Berlin, BERLIN // 11 JUNE.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGSKNZukLpQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGSKNZukLpQ)

Project Introduction at Foto exhibition **"From the Middle East to the Eastern Bloc – Student Life in the Cold War"**, DDR Museum Berlin, BERLIN // 11 JUNE.

Convenor, introduction and moderation of the panel discussion **"International Solidarity, Soft Power, Science Diplomacy – continuities since the Cold War"**, with Gabriele Krone-Schmalz, Matthias Platzeck and Zaur Gasimov, Cinema Babylon, BERLIN // 16 JUNE. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVBk5FjeYHk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVBk5FjeYHk)

Panelist at the directors' discussion panel **"Knowledge Unbound: Multiple Perspectives on a Transregional Research Project/Group"** at the "Connecting Themes: Contested knowledge in a connected world" conference, BERLIN // 16 SEPTEMBER.  
Closing Remarks at the conference **"Connecting Themes – Contested Knowledge in a Connected World"**, BERLIN // 17 SEPTEMBER.

Keynote at the **"Coexistence and Solidarity in Times of War"** conference, OIB and University of Balamand, response to Charles Corm, BEIRUT // 24 NOVEMBER 2021.

Lecture **"Humanism in Germany and 60 Years of Scholarship"** at the OIB Jubilee conference, BEIRUT // 2 DECEMBER.

## THOMAS WÜRTZ

**"Die Kreuzzüge – Teil eines groß angelegten Austauschprozesses oder Eskalation von Gewalt?"**, Landesinstitut für Schulqualität und Lehrerbildung Sachsen-Anhalt, HALLE // 20 SEPTEMBER (online).

Moderation of the discussion **"Formen Staaten Religionen?"**, co-organised by Katholische Akademie in Berlin e.V., Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Maecenata-Stiftung, BERLIN // 2 NOVEMBER.

Moderation of the workshop **"The Surplus of Quranic Studies"** at the Sixtieth Anniversary of the OIB, BEIRUT // 3 DECEMBER.

Closing remarks at the **"Islamic Studies and Islamic Theology in Germany: Disciplinary boundaries and epistemologies"** workshop at the Sixtieth Anniversary of the OIB, BEIRUT // 3 DECEMBER.



# Library





The library of the OIB is a specialized research and reference library for Near and Middle Eastern Studies and serves primarily the research needs of the OIB. The library provides researchers with research materials and in addition is, upon registration, open to a broader community of visiting international and Lebanese scholars.

The rich collections of the library cover mainly the scholarly disciplines in the broad field of Near and Middle Eastern Studies particularly the history, culture, geography, anthropology, sociology, and the lingual and religious pluralism of the region. The predominant language of our acquisitions is Arabic, followed by English, French and German, as well as other European languages.

The holdings of the library include a special collection about Lebanon and the Levant, as well as a growing section on Armenian culture in the Middle East. Arabic literature, history of the Near and Middle East, history of religions, cultural history, Arabic and Islamic intellectual history, particularly theology and philosophy, as well as Eastern Christianity, Christian Arabic literature and Semitic philology, are special foci of the library since its foundation in 1961.

In response to the cultural, lingual and religious pluralism of the region, the institute cultivates a collection policy that pays particular attention to this unique diversity. A large part of the library collection are printed Levantine and regional journals from the broader MENA region. In tradition and support of the OIB publication series *Bibliotheca Islamica*, the library continues to enrich its substantial collection of critical editions of classical Arabic literature and also holds some treatises in Persian, Hebrew and Syriac. A collection of more than 500 maps and several architectural and topographical plans from Beirut, Lebanon and the Levant as a whole are also a part of the library's holdings.

The library provides three reading rooms that are equipped with wireless access to the internet and offers a microfilm reader and a book scanner. Twenty-one study desks are available and equipped with daylight reading lamps and electric outlets. Our reading rooms and its entrance next to the OIB's garden offer an inviting atmosphere for our scholarly events and support the exchange of scholars and researchers on these occasions.

During the COVID 19-pandemic that continued in 2021, the library has primarily operated for our in-house researchers. External guests of the library had, in a limited capacity, the possibility to arrange consultation appointments in the reading room. Additionally, the library team provided mainly external guests with scanned materials as far as this was possible.

The library acquires approximately 2000 books per year, among them 206 electronic books. On behalf of the Max Weber Foundation, we advance to build up a shared digital library and to optimise the range of electronic material. 1302 electronic books which were bought within the *Max Weber Digital Library* were added to our catalogue, beside several new databases that are available and accessible within the OIB network. In this field, we closely collaborate with the *German Special Information Service Middle East, North Africa and Islamic Studies* (FID) in Halle, Germany, to offer access to the MENALIB Middle East Virtual Library.

In 2021, the library team was involved in the organization of the sixtieth anniversary of the OIB that took place in December 2021. In the framework of the anniversary, the library team has organized the workshop on Hans Wehr (1908–1981) and his Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, one of the earliest books of the library. An exhibition about the history of the early years of the OIB and a selection of the library's oldest and rarest books were shown to the public, including a collection of the first books that the library has bought in 1961.

# Team

---

## DIRECTORATE

Director

**Prof Dr  
Birgit Schäbler**

Deputy director

**Dr Thomas Würtz**

Interim deputy director

**Dr Fatih Ermiş**

Director's office

**Hussein Hussein**

**Caroline Kinj**

---

## ADMINISTRATION

Head of administration

**Angelika Sadek**

Administrative assistant

**Nirvana Ghandour**

IT manager

**David Kattan**

IT assistant

**Patrick Mzaaber**

Janitor

**Muhammad Syala**

Cleaning staff

**Rabia Omeirat**

**Ali Wehbe**

---

## LIBRARY

Head of library

**Dr Hans-Peter Pökel**

Deputy Head Librarian

**Dina Banna**

Librarian

**Fatima Shaheen**

Library assistant

**Nasma Tayara**

---

## ASSOCIATE RESEARCHERS

**Dr Ahmed Abd-Elsalam**

**Dr Sarah El Bulbeisi**

**Pierre France**

**Dr Christian Thuselt**

**Dr Nadia von Maltzahn** (Coordinator LAWHA)

---

## PUBLICATIONS

Academic editor (Arabic)

**Barraq Zakaria**



Office space  
in the 60s.



# Interns

5 JULY – 27 AUGUST

**Hugo Schiffers**  
University of Edinburgh

23 AUGUST – 20 SEPTEMBER

**Antonia Zinkler**  
Universität Leipzig

15 OCTOBER – 15 DECEMBER

**David Höhn**  
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

1 NOVEMBER – 12 DECEMBER

**Tatjana Klapp**  
Freie Universität Berlin

# Scientific Board

---

PROF DR CLAUDIA DERICHS (CHAIR) **IAAW – Transregionale Südostasienstudien,**  
**Humbolt-Universität zu Berlin**

---

PROF DR CHRISTIAN LANGE (DEPUTY CHAIR) **Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies,**  
**Utrecht University**

---

PROF DR THOMAS DEMMELHUBER **Institute for Political Science,**  
**Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg**

---

PROF DR TIM EPKENHAUS **Orientalisches Seminar, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg**

---

PROF DR BEATRICE GRÜNDLER **Seminar für Semitistik und Arabistik, Freie Universität Berlin**

---

PROF DR VERENA KLEMM **Orientalisches Institut, Universität Leipzig**

---

PROF DR BIRGIT KRAWIETZ **Institut für Islamwissenschaft, Freie Universität Berlin**







Reconstruction  
of the Orient-  
Institut, 1987.







Construction  
of the terrace and  
pavilion in 1987  
(TOP).  
Completion  
of the terrace  
and pavilion, early  
90s (BOTTOM).



# *Imprint*

---

Orient-Institut Beirut

Zokak el-Blat

Rue Hussein Beyhum

P.O.B. 11–2988

Beirut, Lebanon

T +961 1 35 94 23

F +961 1 35 91 76

sek@orient-institut.org

www.orient-institut.org

An Institute of the Max Weber Foundation,  
German Humanities Institutes Abroad

DIRECTOR

**Prof Dr Birgit Schäbler**

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

**Dr Thomas Würtz, Dr Sarah El Bulbeisi**

COPY-EDITING

**Dr Sarah El Bulbeisi, Rafael Forse,  
Felix Gunsenheimer, Philipp Hanke,  
Lina Zimmermann**

CONCEPT & DESIGN

**Andrea Illig, Berlin**

CREDITS PHOTOS

Cover illustration ©OIB

Pages 2/3, 16/17, 86/87,

104, 118/119, 126/127, 128

150, 153, 156/157, 159 ©OIB

*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

**OIB** ORIENT  
INSTITUT  
BEIRUT  
المعهد الألماني للأبحاث الشرقية